



Actions and interactions:

Gender equality in teaching and education management in Cameroon



Supporting organisations

The International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All (EFA)

The International Task Force on Teachers for EFA is an international alliance of partners working together to address the global teacher gap. Its creation was officially endorsed by participants in the Eighth High-Level Group meeting on EFA, in Norway in December 2008. Recognising the critical role that teachers play in providing Education for All, the Task Force aims to foster collaboration on teacher provision worldwide, and focusing on teachers, to provide impetus in the drive for the achievement of EFA. The Task Force is supported by several key EFA partners, including at its inception, the European Commission, Norway, France, Germany and Indonesia. Its Secretariat is hosted at UNESCO. Its Action Plan is structured around the three major gaps facing countries: policy gap, capacity gap, and financial gap. For more information, please visit www.teachersforefa.unesco.org

The UK National Union of Teachers (NUT)

The NUT is the United Kingdom's largest union for qualified teachers in primary and secondary education. The NUT supports a number of campaigns that address international development issues, including VSO's Valuing Teachers campaign and the Global Campaign for Education. The NUT collaborates with unions and non-governmental organisations in the Global South on projects which aim to provide high-quality education for all children, safeguard the wellbeing and professionalism of teachers, and build the capacity of teachers' unions. This includes funding for short-term projects, commissioning research, and working in partnership with unions or civil society organisations on long-term development programmes. Through training, events, study tours and teaching resources, the NUT also supports UK teachers' professional development on global learning, and increases members' awareness and involvement in international development issues. For more information, visit www.teachers.org.uk

VSO International

VSO is the world's leading international development agency that works through volunteers to fight poverty. We have offices in over 36 countries working on our development programmes and building global understanding of the causes of poverty. Our volunteers work in partnership with local people and organisations, sharing their skills and expertise to help find long-term solutions to poverty. VSO has education programmes in 18 countries in Africa and Asia. Volunteers support improvements in education by working in teacher training colleges and with groups of schools on developing teaching methods. They also work within the mainstream education system to overcome the barriers facing marginalised groups. VSO also undertakes national-level advocacy research through its Valuing Teachers campaign and is an active member of the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA as well as the Global Campaign for Education, an international coalition of civil society organisations and education unions that mobilises the public to pressure governments to provide the free education for all children which they promised to deliver in 2000. For more information, visit www.vsointernational.org

Cuso International

Cuso International is the Canadian strategic alliance partner of VSO International, and is funded by the Canadian government through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), as well as by other institutional and foundation funders. Cuso International is an international development organisation that works to reduce poverty and inequality through the efforts of skilled volunteers. Volunteers collaborate with local groups on projects in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia, to tackle social justice and development issues, increase public awareness of global issues and encourage people to take action for equitable, sustainable development. For more details, visit www.cusointernational.org

Implementing organisations

VSO Cameroon

VSO Cameroon delivers a strategic programme in five regions by teams of volunteers. VSO Cameroon aims to increase the power of disadvantaged women to demand and access growth-oriented economic opportunities and quality education and health services. We work with a wide range of partners whose work aligns with our objectives, from community groups to government ministries, and provide organisational and institutional development support to these partners. International and national volunteers bring expertise in the areas of livelihoods, community mobilisation, community health, midwifery, educational inclusion, disability and inclusion, literacy, law and legal rights, advocacy, and the management of civil society and local government. Teams of volunteers with specific, complementary skills-sets work collaboratively to address the multiple-capacity needs of a range of partners. For more details, visit www.vso.org.uk/about/where-we-work/cameroon.asp

FAWECAM (Forum for African Women Educationalists Cameroon)

FAWECAM, the Forum for African Women Educationalists Cameroon, is a chapter of FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists), a pan-African non-governmental organisation (NGO) working in 32 African countries to empower girls and women through gender-responsive education. FAWE believes that through education of women and girls, livelihoods are improved for entire communities, and civic education and liberties are enhanced. FAWE works hand-in-hand with communities, schools, civil society, NGOs and ministries to achieve gender equity and equality in education through targeted programmes. For FAWECAM, this work includes policy gender mainstreaming, advocacy and awareness raising, networking among stakeholders at many levels, and vocational training. For more details, visit www.fawe.org

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Acronyms and abbreviations

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| AFD Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency) | ENS Ecole Normale Supérieure (higher teacher training college) | NGO non-governmental organisation |
| CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women | ENSET Ecole Normale Supérieure de l'Enseignement Technique (advanced technical teachers' college) | NUT United Kingdom National Union of Teachers |
| CSO Civil Society Organisation | FAWECAM Forum for African Women Educationalists Cameroon | PAN-EPT Plan d'Action National de l'Education Pour Tous (National Action Plan for Education for All) |
| DDEB Délégation Départementale de l'Education de Base (Divisional Delegation for Basic Education) | GESP Growth and Employment Strategy Paper | PTA parent–teacher association |
| DDES Délégation Départementale de l'Enseignement Secondaire (Divisional Delegation for Secondary Education) | GPI Gender Parity Index | SSE Document de Stratégie Sectorielle de l'Education (Document of the Sector Wide Approach to Education) |
| DREB Délégation Régionale de l'Education de Base (Regional Delegation for Basic Education) | IAEB Inspection d'Arrondissement de l'Education de Base (Sub-divisional Inspectorate for Basic Education) | UNDP United Nations Development Programme |
| DRES Délégation Régionale de l'Enseignement Secondaire (Regional Delegation for Secondary Education) | MDGs Millennium Development Goals | UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| EFA Education for All | MINEDUB Ministère de l'Education de Base (Ministry of Basic Education) | UNFPA United Nations Population Fund |
| EFA-FTI Education for All Fast Track Initiative (now the Global Partnership for Education, GPE) | MINESEC Ministère des Enseignements Secondaires (Ministry of Secondary Education) | UNIFEM United Nations Development Fund for Women |
| ENIEG Ecole Normale des Instituteurs de l'Enseignement Général (general teacher training college) | MINESUP Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur (Ministry of Higher Education) | VSO Voluntary Service Overseas |
| ENIET Ecole Normale des Instituteurs de l'Enseignement Technique (technical and professional teacher training college) | MINFI Ministère des Finances (Ministry of Finance) | ZEP zone d'éducation prioritaire (education priority zone) |
| | MINPROFF Ministère de Promotion de la Femme et de la Famille (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family) | |

Executive summary

This research examines gender equality in teaching and education management in primary and secondary education in Cameroon, with a focus on policy efforts and challenges. The context of this research is outlined in **Section 1**, which examines the significance of gender equality in teaching and education management. Globally, there has been progress in gender parity in school enrolment, retention and progression, but significant policy efforts are needed to achieve gender equality in education and ensure equitable opportunities and outcomes for girls and boys (UNESCO, 2011, 2012a). Gender parity has not yet been achieved in primary or secondary education in Cameroon, though education policy efforts have promoted gender equality by aiming to increase girls' school access, retention and completion.

Gender equality at the student level is linked with gender equality in education structure, teaching and management personnel, and pedagogical approaches and content, as well as the ways in which socially constructed female and male roles, responsibilities and opportunities are reflected in educational environments (Global Campaign for Education, 2011; UNESCO, 2005, 2012a). Gender (in)equality in education structure, content, interactions and opportunities influences teacher motivation and performance and, in turn, the experiences and outcomes of female and male students.

A number of international frameworks identify as a primary objective the achievement of gender equality throughout the educational system, including the Millennium Development Goals, the Education for All (EFA) goals, the Dakar Framework for Action on EFA, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the African Union's Second Decade of Education for Africa. Cameroon's education policies – the National Action Plan for EFA, the Sector Wide Approach to Education, and the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper – are guided by some of these international frameworks, and include references to gender equality and the reduction of gender disparities, focusing primarily on gender at the student level and with fewer references to gender in teacher and education management.

Section 2 describes the research methodology. This qualitative study was carried out in four of Cameroon's 10 regions: the Northwest, Centre, East and Far North. Focus group discussions were facilitated with 313 female and male students, teachers and parents from 10 sampled public primary and secondary schools. Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with 25 regional-level education managers and 16

national-level stakeholders. Following the analysis of focus group and interview transcripts, emerging findings and recommendations were reviewed and refined during regional and national validation workshops.

Section 3 focuses on gender parity in teaching and education management, examining the presence of female and male teachers and education managers, with respect to parity in numbers as well as their roles as models for female and male students. Men outnumber women in primary and secondary teaching and education management, with significant regional variations. No education policies identify specific strategies or targets for the recruitment of female teachers or managers. The proportion of female teachers is particularly low in priority education zones, where gender disparities in education are most pronounced, despite government efforts to deploy local female teachers to these zones (recognising their significance as role models for students and communities). Male teachers are more highly represented among contract, temporary and parent-teacher association (PTA)-hired teachers, who earn lower salaries and have access to fewer supports.

Section 4 examines gendered challenges facing female and male teachers. Socio-cultural beliefs, attitudes and expectations influence roles, responsibilities and experiences in the home, in schools and in the community, for both women and men. Female teachers face particular challenges in balancing their professional roles with household responsibilities, and both female and male teachers face maternity/paternity-related challenges. These, and other gender-related issues such as HIV-AIDS and gender-based violence in rural communities and in schools, significantly impact teaching performance and professional experiences.

Teachers in rural zones face significant challenges, including a lack of housing and services, isolation, and sexual harassment, and female teachers are particularly affected by these challenges. In all regions in Cameroon, male teachers outnumber female teachers in rural zones, and female teachers are often deployed or transferred to urban areas. Regional education managers and national officials described efforts to respond to teacher challenges, including government strategies to improve living and working conditions (eg, housing, access to benefits), simplified teacher transfer procedures, and ministry sensitisation programmes to reduce harassment of teachers and increase community support for teacher integration in rural zones.

Section 5 focuses on gender in the context of education manager experiences as well as education management approaches. Female teachers and managers face particular obstacles to advancement and promotion: family responsibilities may limit access to continuing training or feed perceptions that women are unavailable or unreliable; women may not apply for management positions and are often perceived as lacking ambition or confidence; and they face barriers to attaining necessary professional training or experience. No education policy strategies specifically aim to address these barriers, and gender is not mentioned in any career development policy objectives.

Insufficient specialised training and inconsistent or incomplete understandings of gender issues can impede gender-responsive personnel management approaches among education managers, who often adopt a “gender blind” approach. Perceptions of female and male roles or characteristics appear to influence perceptions of female and male managers’ impacts: for example, female managers were often described as efficient, with reference to their “maternal” character. Participants described complex gendered interactions between female and male teachers and managers, including tension between female managers and teachers. School management committees – school councils and parent–teacher associations – can play a significant role in teacher and school management. However, a focus on basic school needs, barriers to effective functioning, and women’s limited participation in committee boards, limit committees’ efforts to respond to gender issues among teachers and within schools.

Section 6 examines the gendered influence of teachers’ approaches,

in teaching as well as in responding to student psycho-social challenges, which have a significant impact on student learning experiences. A number of education policy strategies reference gender with respect to teaching approaches, though very few teachers mentioned these strategies. Teachers don’t have sufficient access to initial or continuing professional development and supports enabling them to consistently and effectively respond to gender-specific learning needs (generally adopting a “gender blind” pedagogical approach) and psycho-social challenges. Teachers, as well as school managers, described individual gender-responsive teaching and student support efforts, rather than efforts integrated into school or education policies. Participants discussed gendered perceptions of “female” and “male” teacher characteristics and roles, as well as complex gendered interactions between teachers and students, including tensions between female teachers and students.

Section 7 outlines positive school- and ministry-level efforts to integrate gender considerations in teaching and education management, as well as remaining practice and policy challenges. Inconsistent and incomplete understandings of gender and gender equality amongst teachers and education managers limit analyses of and responses to gender inequalities. Cultural or traditional factors impact teachers’ interactions with managers or students, as well as women’s opportunities in the home versus in the educational community, and regional disparities in teaching and education management are not consistently addressed in education policies. Participants described barriers to policy implementation and monitoring, including a lack of systematic, consistent communication of policy

information from the national ministry level to the ground (which limits teachers’ and school managers’ awareness of education policy content), as well as a need for clearer gender-responsive objectives, targets and indicators. Finally, budget constraints and obstacles to effective decentralisation limit efforts to implement policy initiatives at the national and regional level.

Section 8 the discussion, examines the implications of the findings outlined in the previous sections, focusing on the central gender-related experiences, interactions and challenges in teaching and education management, described by primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholders. Certain policy strategies and approaches aim to respond to these challenges, and include both positive aspects and challenges, as well as opportunities for development. The study findings have significant implications for the attainment of national and international education policy objectives relating to gender equality in primary and secondary education.

The recommendations that emerged during the research are identified in **Section 9**. These are grouped according to six themes: gender parity in teaching and education management, gendered experiences of teachers, gender equality in education management, gender-responsive approaches to teaching, understanding of gender and gender equality, and education policy development and implementation. Recommendations target five main stakeholder groups: education ministries, regional and divisional education managers, school managers and management committees, teachers, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)/civil society organisations (CSOs) and development agencies.

Summary of recommendations

| Stakeholders | Recommendations |
|---|---|
| Gender parity in teaching and education management | |
| Education ministries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop specific, measurable targets and strategies to train, recruit and retain qualified female secondary teachers • Develop specific, measurable targets and strategies to train, recruit and retain qualified male primary teachers • Set a clear vision with measurable objectives and indicators for women's representation in education management positions • Develop strategies to encourage and enable women to take on education management positions |
| Gendered experiences of teachers | |
| Education ministries, regional managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and implement supports for teachers in rural zones, particularly women • Arrange female teachers' work hours to accommodate childcare and family responsibilities • Ensure that male teachers are aware of their right to paternity leave, and enable access to full paternity leave • Facilitate active involvement of local authorities in teacher support and education management |
| Gender equality in education management | |
| Education ministries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement gender-responsive management training for education managers and school management committees • Facilitate opportunities for continuing professional development for female and male teachers • Develop, disseminate and implement national policies addressing gender-based violence in education |
| Regional managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that severe sanctions for teachers and managers responsible for gender-based violence are applied • Encourage women's representation in leadership positions in school management committees |
| NGOs, CSOs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity-building for school managers and school management committees |
| Gender-responsive approaches to teaching | |
| Education ministries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate specific training on gender and gender equality into teacher training curricula • Reinforce continuing teacher training and professional development programmes by integrating themes on gender and gender equality • Clearly define how pedagogical supervisors and inspectors will integrate gender considerations into teacher support and evaluation • Integrate themes on gender and gender equality into primary and secondary school curricula • Integrate clear and comprehensive student support measures into school policies and regulations |
| Teachers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seek out continuing professional development and self-development opportunities |
| NGOs, CSOs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity-building for teachers, focusing on practical pedagogical strategies and materials for gender-responsive pedagogy and responses to student challenges • Implement school-based capacity-building activities enabling students and teachers, particularly girls and women, to resolve social/academic challenges |
| Understanding gender and gender equality | |
| Ministries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear, consistent and practical definitions of gender and gender equality in education policy documents • Enhance knowledge- and capacity-building on gender and gender equality for education personnel at the ministry and school level |
| NGOs, CSOs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitise students, parents, teachers, education managers, school management committees and community leaders about gender equality in education |
| Policy development and implementation | |
| Ministries, regional managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear and specific gender-responsive targets and indicators in education policies • Ensure consistent communication of policies and procedures to teachers and managers • Ensure regular, comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of national education policy implementation • Consider regional realities and challenges in the development of policy strategies and indicators • Continue collecting reliable, detailed sex-disaggregated teaching and education management data |
| Teachers, managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seek out information on education policies and procedures |
| Development agencies, donors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require that gender considerations be integrated into national policy and development programmes • Support the implementation of government and NGO/CSO initiatives to promote gender equality in teaching and education management • Support research into specific gender issues in teaching and education management, to guide comprehensive policy development |

1. Introduction

1.1 Research context: gender equality in teaching and education management

Since the development of the Education for All (EFA) Goals and the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, significant progress has been made on a global level with respect to gender parity in school enrolment, retention, and progression from primary to secondary education. However, according to the 2012 EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2012a), significant work is needed to ensure that educational opportunities and outcomes are equitable for girls and boys, particularly in secondary education. This echoes the 2011 EFA Global Monitoring Report, which stated that achieving gender equality in education will not be possible without significant shifts in national education policies and priorities (UNESCO, 2011).

Cameroon's education policies are linked with EFA goals, and a national plan of action for EFA has been developed, referring to gender equality in education. However, gender parity¹ has not yet been achieved in primary or secondary education in Cameroon: in 2011, the gender parity² index (GPI) for gross enrolment was 0.87 in primary education and 0.84 in secondary education (UIS, 2012). Policy efforts promoting gender equality have focused on facilitating girls' school access, retention, and completion. These include free public primary education, the distribution of textbooks, bursaries and other supports to female students (including scholarships for scientific and technological studies), the construction of separate school latrines for girls and boys, and widespread community sensitisation projects (GTEG, 2009; Ministry of National Education, 2002; Republic of Cameroon, 2006, 2009b).

Gender equality in education refers not only to access and progress, but to safe, supportive and inclusive learning environments. This includes equality in education structure (eg teaching, personnel and management) and content (eg curriculum and teaching approaches) (Global Campaign for Education, 2011; UNESCO, 2012a). Examining gender equality in education involves examining the ways in which socially defined female and male roles and responsibilities are reflected in classrooms, schools and educational communities (UNESCO, 2005), and the ways in which these roles and responsibilities affect opportunities and interactions for students, teachers and managers.

Gender inequalities amongst teachers and education managers affect education quality, influencing teaching and learning approaches as well as teacher motivation and performance.

Inequalities are linked to women's and men's representation and responsibilities in teaching and management (including education level and disciplines), teaching and management approaches, and interactions between teachers and students or between teachers and managers. Gendered power relations can be reflected in the views and action of education actors, including teachers and managers, who model gendered interactions (amongst themselves and with students), influencing student attitudes, actions, and learning experiences and outcomes (Chege, 2006; Unterhalter & Heslop, 2011).

Gender equality in education at the student level has been the focus of recent studies, with recent research providing in-depth descriptions of girls' experiences in schools and barriers to girls' education in African, Asian and Latin American countries, as well as potential solutions (see Global Campaign for Education, 2011; Herz & Sperling, 2004; Lloyd & Young, 2009; UNICEF et al., 2010; Unterhalter & Heslop, 2011). A review of current literature revealed only a small number of studies (see Chisikwa & Indoshi, 2010; Kagoda, 2003) and reviews (see Kirk, 2006; VSO International, 2011) examining gender-related issues at the level of teaching and education management in African (and other) countries. The scale and depth of descriptions of teachers' and managers' gendered experiences are limited in comparison to descriptions of student experiences.

1.2 Research objectives

The purpose of this research is to:

- **examine gender equality in education in Cameroon, particularly in the teaching and education management workforce**
- **document policy initiatives which have contributed to the goal of gender equality in teaching and in education management at primary and secondary levels of education**

This qualitative study explores the intersection of diverse stakeholders' perspectives and experiences, to better understand how teachers and education managers (women and men) influence and are influenced by gender (in)equality in their educational communities, schools and classrooms. The recommendations emerging from this research are intended to inform gender-responsive policy development and practice at various levels of primary and secondary education, and are based on the perspectives of those who implement and are influenced by those policies and practices.

¹ Gender refers to socially constructed roles, responsibilities, and expectations of women and men, which can result in inequality in the home and workplace. Gender equality refers to the right of all people to contribute to their country's development and benefit equally from participation in society, with equal access to power, knowledge and resources as well as equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities. Gender equity refers to fair treatment of women and men, recognising and addressing their different needs, interests and power, which may require different treatment and redistribution of power in order to achieve gender equality (VSO International definitions).

² Gender parity refers to equal participation of girls and boys in education (enrolment, outcomes, etc) or women and men in teaching and education management, and is considered a first step towards gender equality. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) refers to the value of a particular indicator for girls divided by that value for boys. A GPI below 1 means that the value is higher for boys, indicating that girls are at a disadvantage for indicators where higher values are desirable (eg enrolment) (UNESCO, 2012b).

This research was commissioned and funded by the International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All, the United Kingdom's National Union of Teachers (NUT), VSO International and Cuso International. The study is part of VSO International's Valuing Teachers research and advocacy programme, which emphasises the importance of teacher training, management and working conditions in relation to education quality and learning outcomes. Gender and inclusion in teacher training and management are identified as being of particular importance.³ The research was jointly realised by VSO Cameroon and the Forum for African Women Educationalists Cameroon (FAWECAM).

1.3 Policy context

1.3.1 International context

This research, as well as education policy in Cameroon, is aligned with a number of international frameworks. Of particular relevance to this study are:

Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3:

the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, with Target 3 aiming to "eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015" (UNESCO, 2008:28).

Education for All (EFA) Goal 5: "eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality" (UNESCO, 2000:8).

Four of the 12 strategies identified in the

Dakar Framework for Action on EFA (UNESCO, 2000):

- develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management
- implement integrated strategies for gender equality in education which recognise the need for changes in attitudes, values and practices
- create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning, with clearly defined levels of achievement for all
- enhance the status, morale and professionalism of teachers
- systematically monitor progress towards EFA goals and strategies at the national, regional and international levels.

United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Article 10: the elimination of discrimination against women in order

to ensure equal rights in education (including equality in access to quality education and teaching staff) and "the elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education" (UN Division for the Advancement of Women).

The Second Decade of Education for Africa Plan of Action for 2006–15: "eliminate gender disparities and ensure gender equality [and] girls' and women's empowerment throughout the education system", with reference to increasing the proportion of female teachers and ensuring gender sensitivity in teaching and learning environments and materials (African Union, 2006:5).⁴

1.3.2 National policy context

Article 7 of Cameroon's 1998 Education Orientation Law (Loi d'Orientation de l'Éducation au Cameroun) guarantees equal access to education without discrimination based on sex (Republic of Cameroon, 1998). In the past 10 years a number of national policy documents have been developed, aiming to improve quality and equality in education services.

National Action Plan for Education for All⁵

In 2002, the Government of Cameroon validated a 12-year National Action Plan for Education for All (Plan d'Action Nationale de l'Éducation Pour Tous, PAN-EPT), outlining actions intended to facilitate the achievement of EFA goals by 2015 (Ministry of National Education, 2002). Objectives include equal and unrestricted access and retention in quality basic education (to eliminate gender disparities) and equal access to education programmes responding to the needs of all young people and adults, in order to acquire knowledge and skills necessary for daily life.

Sector Wide Approach to Education⁶

Cameroon's national Document of the Sector Wide Approach to Education (Stratégie Sectorielle de l'Éducation, SSE) for 2006–15 is aligned with the EFA Dakar Framework and the MDGs (Republic of Cameroon, 2006). Priority areas include:

- reduced disparities in access and retention in primary and secondary education, particularly for girls and children living in education priority zones⁷
- increased effectiveness and quality of education services, and the revision and professionalisation of teaching programmes (including the integration of a gender approach in teacher training and pedagogy)
- improved education governance, including improved human resource management and participative school management.

³ See VSO International, Valuing Teachers: www.vsointernational.org/valuing-teachers.

⁴ The Plan of Action states that "although women and girls tend to be the most disadvantaged in gender issues, it is imperative that men are partners in the fight for gender equality" (AfricanUnion, 2006:5).

⁵ A national EFA coordinator for MINEDUB reported that the PAN-EPT has not actually been implemented. Responsibility for implementation of different EFA strategies was divided between ministries, and unclear role definition and a lack of funding has impeded implementation. EFA officials in education ministries are engaged more in advocacy than strategy implementation.

⁶ The SSE served as the basis for Cameroon to join the EFA Fast Track Initiative; it is currently being redrafted.

⁷ In 2000, four regions (the East, Adamaoua, North and Far North) were identified as "education priority zones" (ZEPs, zones d'éducation prioritaires), due to low educational performance and disparities in girls' and boys' education. See Section 1.4.1 for select statistics.



Growth and Employment Strategy Paper

The Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP, Document Stratégique pour la Croissance et l'Emploi) for 2010–20 was adopted in 2009. The strategy emphasises the importance of women's participation in socio-economic development and decision-making as well as their equal representation in education and employment. The GESP identifies specific objectives for basic and secondary education, concerning improved access and equity among regions and between sexes, improved efficiency and quality, effective partnerships with stakeholders, and improved management and governance (Republic of Cameroon, 2009a, 2009b).

Although Cameroon's education policy documents emphasise equal access and retention in schools for girls and boys, references to gender equality in teaching and management are limited. In the GESP, which contains Cameroon's most recent education policies, systematic differences in the English and French versions complicate gendered policy analyses. The English version of the document states that a gender approach was considered in the elaboration of monitoring matrices (considering women's and men's different responsibilities and access to resources and decision-making) and contains references to gender in strategic objectives, outcomes and indicators. The French version does not include these specific references to gender.⁸

Gender policy documents

A Gender and Development Policy (Politique d'Intégration de la Femme au Développement) was elaborated by the Ministry of National Education in 2001, though no subsequent gender policies have been developed since the restructuring of education ministries. Objectives included the promotion of girls' access and retention in school, ending all forms of discrimination against girls and women, and the promotion of female human resources to enable the women in the Ministry of National Education to fully exercise their responsibilities and participate in decision-making.

A National Gender Policy Document (Document de Politique Nationale Genre) for 2011–20 has been developed by the Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme et de la Famille (MINPROFF, Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family). The document recommends the inclusion of gender issues in national policy and programme development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and refers to the promotion of girls' and boys' and women's and men's access to education and professional training. While the document has been validated, it has not yet been adopted.

⁸ A national MINEDUB official explained that this is due to the translation process, overseen by the Ministère de Planification et Aménagement du Territoire (MINEPAT, Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development).

1.4 Education in Cameroon

1.4.1 Basic and secondary education

Primary education is overseen by the Ministère de l'Éducation de Base (MINEDUB, Ministry of Basic Education), and secondary education by the Ministère des Enseignements Secondaires (MINESEC, Ministry of Secondary Education). As part of Cameroon's decentralisation strategy, responsibility for education management (including coordination of pedagogic activities and examinations as well as pedagogic and administrative personnel management) has largely been transferred to regional and divisional levels (Republic of Cameroon, 2012a, 2012b). Cameroon's 10 regions are divided into départements (divisions), which are in turn divided into arrondissements (sub-divisions). Basic education is overseen by inspections d'arrondissement (sub-divisional inspectorates), délégations départementales (divisional delegations) and délégations régionales (regional delegations). Secondary education is overseen by divisional and regional delegations.

Cameroon's national education system includes francophone and anglophone subsystems. Six years of free primary education are provided to children between the ages of six to 14. MINEDUB oversees public primary schools (which include application schools in which student-teachers carry out their field placements) as well as private secular, Catholic, Protestant and Islamic schools. Secondary education, for young people aged 12 to 18, includes two "streams" (general and technical) as well as two cycles. First-cycle secondary education is provided in general and technical collèges (four to five years respectively in the francophone and anglophone subsystems). Second-cycle secondary education is provided in general and technical lycées or high schools (two to three years respectively in the anglophone and francophone subsystems) (Republic of Cameroon, 2006) (see Appendix 1).

In 2009/10, 46% of all primary students and 44.5% of all secondary students in Cameroon were girls. Primary school completion rates were 68% for girls and 78% for boys, whilst secondary school completion rates (second cycle) were 18.1% for girls and 23.8% for boys (MINEDUB, 2010; MINESEC, 2010). In ZEPs, education performance is particularly low and gender disparities are particularly high. For example, in 2009/10 the completion rate for public primary education was 46% for girls and 57% for boys in the East and 41% for girls and 67% for boys in the Far North, compared to 77% for girls and 76% for boys in the Centre (MINEDUB, 2010). In 2009/10 the GPI for primary enrolment was 0.69 in the Far North and 0.86 in the East,

compared to 0.96 in the Centre (MINPROFF, 2012). In 2011, secondary enrolment rates were 41% for girls and 59% for boys in the East and 28% for girls and 72% for boys in the Far North, compared to roughly 50% for both girls and boys in the Northwest (MINESEC, 2010).

1.4.2 Teacher training

Teachers are trained in four types of teacher training colleges or écoles normales. MINESEC is responsible for the management of ENIEGs (école normale des instituteurs de l'enseignement général/general teacher training college), which train primary teachers, and ENIETs (école normale des instituteurs de l'enseignement technique et professionnel/technical and professional teacher training college), which train technical secondary teachers. The Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieure (MINESUP, Ministry of Higher Education) is responsible for the management of ENSs (école normale supérieure/higher teacher training college), which train general secondary teachers, and ENSETs (école normale supérieure de l'enseignement technique/advanced technical teachers' college), which train technical secondary teachers. The duration of teacher training programmes is between one and three years, depending on students' previous education (see Appendix 1).

1.4.3 Education financing

Education quality, and the implementation of policies intended to enhance education quality and gender equality, is influenced by the availability of financial resources. As stated by UNESCO (2010:2), "it is through budgets that policies and programmes are taken beyond paper promises and put into practice". Education financing in Cameroon is assured by State budget allocations, decentralised budget allocations, education partner (donor) contributions and other contributions. The Ministère des Finances (MINFI, Ministry of Finance) is responsible for education funding, and decisions regarding regional allocations are made in collaboration with MINEDUB and MINESEC. According to a World Bank report (2012a), these centralised decisions result in a lack of attention to specific regional needs, though there is a move towards regional budget preparation.

In 2010, 17.9% of Cameroon's total public expenditures were allocated to the education sector; of this sum, 34.4% was for basic education and 53.3% for secondary education (UIS, 2012). Funds are transferred from the Centre to regional, divisional and sub-divisional structures. Individual schools receive funding transferred by divisional delegations.

International donors, including the World Bank and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD, French Development Agency), also fund education services in Cameroon (primarily contract teacher programmes for basic education). The World Bank (2012a) refers to the significant under-funding of the education sector in all regions, leaving parent–teacher associations (PTAs) and communities to “top up” school budgets (responding to infrastructure, equipment and teacher needs) and raising questions as to the “free” nature of primary education. A gender-responsive budgeting strategy⁹ was launched in Cameroon

in 2005 by UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women) in partnership with MINPROFF, the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) and the UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund). Support for gender-responsive budgeting, including capacity building for ministry personnel, is provided by UNWomen, the UNFPA and other international organisations and development agencies (such as the Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA). However, as a 2008 UNIFEM report stated, budgeting (financing) efforts for gender equality are more often supported by donors than by the government.

2. Methodology

This qualitative study explores participants’ descriptions of their experiences and their perceptions of their educational communities. A qualitative approach enabled a deeper examination of diverse stakeholders’ observations and interpretations of gender issues in classrooms, schools and education management, including convergence and divergence between diverse (local, regional and national) perspectives. Data collection methodology and instruments were reviewed during a national workshop attended by ministry officials and non-governmental education stakeholders.

The research was carried out in four of Cameroon’s 10 extremely diverse regions: the Northwest, Centre, East and Far North (see Figure 1). Research regions were purposefully selected in order to capture as much variety as possible with respect to geographical and socio-cultural context and educational performance. The francophone education sub-system dominates in three research regions (the Centre, East and Far North), and the anglophone sub-system dominates in the fourth (the Northwest). Two regions are “education priority zones” (the East and the Far North).

2.1 Sampling and participants

2.1.1 School sample

Ten public primary and secondary schools were selected based on information collected from divisional and regional

authorities. Within each region, schools were purposefully selected in order to maximise diversity with respect to school level and type, location, and representation of female/male teachers and principals (see Table 2.1).

2.1.2 Participants

Participants included primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholders, whose experiences and perspectives were explored via focus group discussions and individual semi-structured interviews.

Focus group participants

Fifty-four focus group discussions were held with a total of 313 primary stakeholders¹², including, from each of the sampled schools, male and female students, teachers, and parents (including PTA members) (see Table 2.2). For the most part, single-sex focus groups were facilitated, to encourage more open discussion. Following these single-sex discussions, participants of both sexes were encouraged to come together (female and male students, female and male teachers or female and male parents) for follow-up discussions focusing on the main problems (and causes) identified by focus group participants, potential solutions, recommendations and actors involved.

Focus group participants self-selected (signed up) for the study after regional research coordinators, with support from school principals, presented the research to groups of students,

⁹ Gender-responsive budgeting aims to: increase awareness and understanding of impacts of policies and budgets on gender issues, ensure government accountability for policy commitments, and increase budget allocations to promote gender equality (Sharp, 2003).

¹² Primary stakeholders are those who are mainly affected by a particular policy issue, secondary stakeholders are those who both affect and are affected by the issue, and tertiary stakeholders are those involved in policy development (Tweedie, 2005).

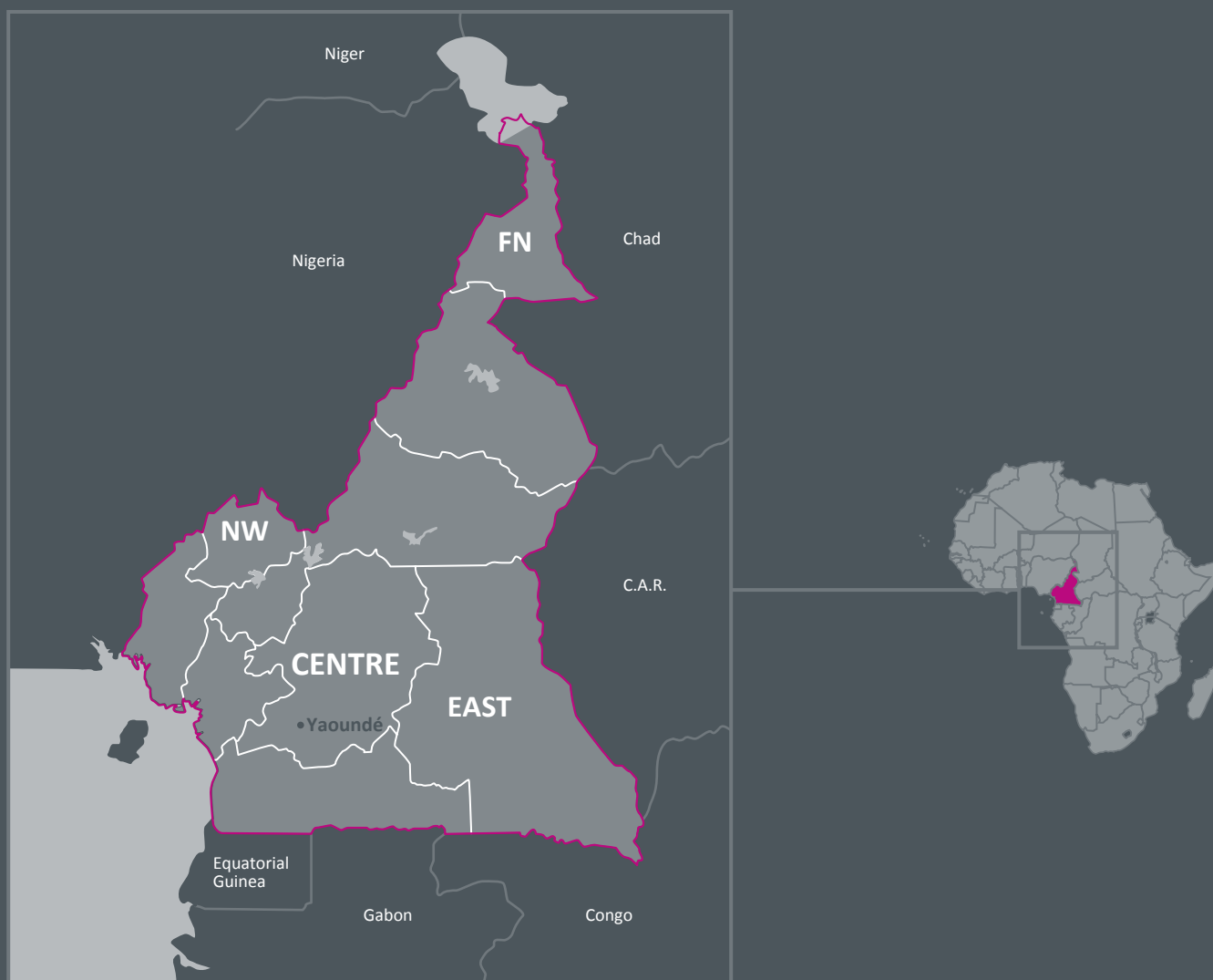


Figure 1

Table 2.1: Schools sampled for the research

| Region | School type | School location ¹⁰ | School principal (sex) | Proportion of female teachers in the school |
|-----------|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Northwest | Primary (inspectorate) | Rural | Male | 87.5% |
| | Primary (inspectorate) | Rural | Female | 80.0% |
| | Secondary (general) | Rural | Male | 53.9% |
| Centre | Secondary (general) | Urban | Male | 63.4% |
| | Secondary (technical) | Rural | Female | 57.5% |
| East | Primary (inspectorate) | Urban | Female | 3.6% |
| | Secondary (technical) | Urban | Male | 75.0% |
| Far North | Primary (ENIEG application): Group 1A and 1B ¹¹ | Semi-rural | School 1A: male School 1B: male | School 1A: ~50% School 1B: ~30% |
| | Secondary (general) | Semi-rural | Female | 62.5% |
| | Secondary (general) | Urban | Male | 35.4% |

Information obtained from divisional and regional MINEDUB and MINESEC delegations

¹⁰ No clear definition of “rural” and “urban” zones was available from government ministries. In the context of this study, an “urban” school was viewed as being located in the administrative centre of a division or region, whilst a “rural” school was viewed as being located at a considerable distance from an urban centre.

¹¹ “Urban”/“rural” classifications were based on information provided by regional research coordinators and were relative to the regions in which the schools were located.

¹² Two schools (Groups 1A and 1B) share the same premises through a double-shift system (MINEDUB, 2011), responding to school/classroom shortages.

teachers and parents, and invited them to participate. In some cases, school principals provided input on potential invitees to ensure participant diversity (eg students and teachers from different class levels and subjects, civil servant and contract teachers, PTA and non-PTA members, participants from remote rural communities and diverse ethno-cultural groups, etc).

Regional interview participants

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 25 education managers at the regional level, including head teachers, school principals, sub-divisional inspectors, divisional and regional MINEDUB and MINESEC delegates,

and directors of teacher training colleges (ENIEG/ENIET/ENS) (see Table 2.3).

National interview participants

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 16 tertiary stakeholders at the national level, including various MINEDUB, MINESEC and MINPROFF officials and representatives of national and international organisations (see Appendix 2).

2.2 Data collection

Research teams, comprising one research coordinator and two to three data collectors, were recruited

and trained to carry out data collection in each of the research regions. Each team included women and men (many of whom were current or former educators, education managers or involved in education initiatives). Centralised support was provided by the VSO project coordinator.

The use of two different data collection methods (focus groups and individual interviews) and the inclusion of perspectives from multiple levels of data sources (primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholders), in combination with the examination of statistical data, allowed for data and methodological triangulation (Denzin, 1978) or

Table 2.2: Focus group participants

| Participant type | Number of focus groups | | | Number of participants | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|------------|------------|
| | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total |
| Primary students | 3 | 3 | 6 | 18 | 18 | 36 |
| Secondary students | 6 | 6 | 12 | 36 | 39 | 75 |
| Total students | 9 | 9 | 18 | 54 | 57 | 111 |
| Primary teachers | 3 | 3 | 6 | 23 | 21 | 44 |
| Secondary teachers | 6 | 6 | 12 | 32 | 33 | 65 |
| Total teachers | 9 | 9 | 18 | 55 | 54 | 109 |
| Parents, primary | 3 | 3 | 6 | 17 | 14 | 31 |
| Parents, secondary | 6 | 6 | 12 | 29 | 33 | 62 |
| Total parents | 9 | 9 | 18 | 46 | 47 | 93 |
| Total | 27 | 27 | 54 | 155 | 158 | 313 |

Information obtained from divisional and regional MINEDUB and MINESEC delegations

Table 2.3: Regional interview participants

| Participants | F | M | Total |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Basic education (MINEDUB) | | | |
| Regional delegate | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Divisional delegate | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Sub-divisional inspector | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| School principal | 1 | - | 1 |
| Head teacher | - | 3 | 3 |
| Secondary education (MINESEC) | | | |
| Regional delegate | - | 2 | 2 |
| Divisional delegate | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| School principal | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| ENIEG/ENIET/ENS director | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Total | 9 | 16 | 25 |

“cross-checking” between different data sources and data collection methods. Secondary data was collected through literature and policy reviews, and some quantitative data was examined to illustrate conclusions pertaining to the representation and experiences of female teachers and managers.

2.2.1 Research instruments

Separate focus group guides were developed for each focus group type (students, parents and teachers), and separate interview guides were developed for regional managers and national stakeholders (see Appendices 3 to 5). Participants at a national stakeholder workshop as well as several VSO staff and volunteers and FAWECAM members reviewed and revised these guides. Data on regional managers’ awareness of relevant policy strategies was collected via written questionnaires.

The development of data collection instruments was guided by four main themes identified during a review of relevant literature as being of particular relevance to gender equality in education:

- the presence of female role models in teaching and management/leadership positions
- the impacts of gendered socialisation on roles and experiences
- the role of education managers in teacher and school management
- teacher training and continuing professional development

Focus group discussions and interviews were digitally recorded using audio recorders, and data collectors took notes during discussions. Focus group discussions and interviews were carried out in French (in the Centre, East and Far North) and English (in the Northwest). A small number of focus groups were carried out in local languages (Baka in

the East and Fulfulde in the Far North), and data collectors provided French translated reports for these discussions.

Field research timeline

- February–April 2012: recruitment and induction of regional research teams (coordinators and data collectors)
- late March 2012: presentation and review of research methodology and data collection instruments during a national stakeholder meeting
- April–July 2012: focus groups and regional interviews in the four research regions
- late July–early August 2012: sharing of preliminary findings with participant representatives during regional validation workshops in all four regions
- August–September 2012: interviews with national stakeholders
- November 2012: sharing of findings and recommendations with regional and national officials during a national validation workshop

2.3 Data analysis

Focus group and interview reports and transcripts were analysed using a template coding approach¹³. Regional researchers were asked to reflect on the research process (including primary problems or barriers, promising initiatives and solutions), and their input also contributed to the analysis process. The data analysis was finalised during a workshop involving VSO and FAWECAM members. Regional and national validation workshops provided opportunities to share and review findings and recommendations with various primary, secondary and tertiary education stakeholders (see Appendix 6 for regional and national validation workshop participants).

2.4 Research findings

The findings emerging from this research are grouped according to five primary themes, linked with the four initial themes that guided the data collection:

- **gender parity in teaching and education management** (exploring the presence of female – and male – role models in teaching and management positions)
- **gendered experiences of teachers** (exploring the impacts of gendered socialisation on roles and experiences)
- **gender equality in education management** (exploring the role of education managers in teacher and school management)
- **gender-responsive approaches to teaching** (exploring gender in teacher training and continuing professional development)
- **changes and challenges in gender equality in teaching and education management**

Each of these sections includes a brief description of the general policy context (relevant policy strategies) followed by an examination of findings emerging from focus groups and interviews (the realities and challenges on the ground as described by participants). The findings are followed by a discussion and by recommendations intended to inform gender-responsive policy development and practice in Cameroon.

¹³ Themes and sub-themes were identified through the analysis of a sample of data, and were then used to organise the remaining data for more in-depth analysis (see Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

3. Gender parity in teaching and education management

This section examines the presence of women and men in teaching and in education management, in basic and secondary education, with respect to parity in numbers as well as their roles as models for female and male students, especially in priority education zones.

3.1 General policy context

Teacher recruitment has been identified in the PAN-EPT, the SSE and the GESP as a strategy to improve education quality by reducing student:teacher ratios and improving student supervision. These three policy documents each set different targets and approaches for the recruitment of primary and secondary teachers, including recruitment of qualified civil servant teachers, recruitment of qualified contract teachers, and integration of contract and PTA teachers into the civil service.¹⁴ Only the PAN-EPT refers specifically to the recruitment of female teachers, in public primary education. The English version of the GESP (though not the French) indicators includes the number or percentage of women and men recruited or promoted. However, none of these documents sets specific targets for the recruitment or retention of female teachers, nor do they describe clear recruitment and retention strategies for female or male teachers.

The SSE and the GESP emphasise the need to encourage girls to pursue scientific, mathematical and technical fields of study, particularly through scholarships and bursaries (though the impacts of these efforts are unclear). Although GESP strategies include the recruitment of teacher trainees to ENIETs and ENSETs (technical teacher training colleges), with reference to the proportion of male and female teachers recruited, no government policies aim to attract female secondary teachers to specific scientific or technical disciplines (in an attempt to move away from the mindset of traditional “feminine/masculine” disciplines).

The importance of female teachers as role models for girls was emphasised by study participants (students, parents, teachers and managers) as well as being examined in existing research (Herz & Sperling, 2004; Kirk, 2006; Lloyd & Young, 2009; UNESCO, 2011). However, only one policy document specifically acknowledges the importance of female teachers as role models. The SSE refers to “the posting to areas hostile to the education of girls [ZEPs] by teachers who originate from those areas”, to serve as role models for girls and other community members and promote girls’ access and retention in primary schools (Republic of Cameroon, 2006:70). The presence of female role models is of special importance in ZEPs, where gender disparities in education are particularly high: for example, in 2009/10 the GPI for primary enrolment was 0.69 in the Far North and 0.86 in the East, compared to 0.96 in the Centre (MINPROFF, 2012). However, no specific recruitment, deployment or outcome targets were identified in the SSE strategy, and the deployment of secondary teachers was not mentioned.

¹⁴ PAN-EPT (2002): recruitment or integration of 2,000 qualified public primary teachers, primarily women. SSE (2006): recruitment of 8,000 to 9,000 contract teachers and integration of PTA and temporary contract teachers (no specific target) in primary education, and recruitment of 500 secondary teachers (civil servants and contractuels) per year over three years. GESP (2009): promotion of 5,000 contract primary teachers to civil servant status by 2012 (with reference to the number of female and male teachers absorbed as civil servants), and recruitment of 8,877 civil servants in general secondary education (over three years) and 2,801 civil servants and qualified contract teachers in technical secondary education. The GESP also refers to the recruitment of 1,101 new teachers to ENSETs and 1,700 new teachers to ENIETs (indicators include the percentage of females and males recruited).

Table 3.1: Female and male teachers in primary and secondary education in Cameroon

| | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 2010/11 | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Total | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male |
| Primary education (total) | 72,634 | 33,053 45.3% | 39,581 54.5% | 77,236 | 36,852 47.7% | 40,384 52.3% | 94,760 | 54,472 57.5% | 40,288 42.5% |
| Public primary education | 48,916 | 21,192 43.3% | 27,724 56.7% | 52,411 | 24,148 6.1% | 28,263 53.9% | 53,452 | 25,564 47.7% | 27,888 52.2% |
| Secondary education (total) | Data not available | | | 31,410 | 10,993 35% | 20,417 65% | 37,414 | 11,514 0.8% | 25,900 69.2% |
| General secondary | | | | 23,358 | 7,512 32.2% | 15,846 67.8% | 26,736 | 7,775 29.1% | 18,961 70.9% |
| Technical secondary | | | | 8,412 | 3,841 45.7% | 4,571 54.3% | 10,678 | 3,739 35% | 6,939 65% |

Sources: MINEDUB, 2009, 2010, 2011; MINESEC, 2010, 2011

3.2 Gender parity in primary and secondary teaching

Although no specific strategies have been put in place to train, recruit and retain qualified female teachers (no positive discrimination initiatives or specific targets or quotas), their numbers have increased in the past 10 years. The proportion of female primary teachers rose from 36% in 2000 to roughly 40% in 2005 to 47.7% in 2011, whilst the proportion of female secondary teachers rose from 22% in 1999 to roughly 26% in 2005 to 30.8% in 2010 (UIS, 2012). Despite female teachers' increasing representation in primary and secondary education, gender disparities persist at both levels.

3.2.1 Gender parity in primary teaching

Although female teachers outnumber male teachers in primary education in general (public and private primary education), male teachers slightly outnumber female teachers in public primary education. National figures mask regional disparities (particularly between ZEPs and other regions), limiting responses to specific regional needs and feeding beliefs (at the national level or in regions with higher gender parity

indices, for example) that gender equality is not a concern. For example, female teachers slightly outnumber male teachers in the Northwest and Centre, female and male teachers are nearly equal in the East, and female teachers are significantly outnumbered by male teachers in the Far North.

Inequalities can also exist in the distribution of teaching responsibilities in primary schools, with female teachers often responsible for lower-level classes and male teachers for higher-level classes. Perceptions of teachers' personalities or characteristics can influence management approaches, such as class (level or subject) assignments. For example, a national-level NGO representative explained that women are naturally better suited to working with younger children, while men are nervous when faced with young children who require a particular sort of attention, which they can't naturally provide ("ce n'est pas dans la tête des hommes"). This and other participant statements (see Section 6.4) echo a 2011 Commonwealth Secretariat and UNESCO study, which referred to "a high degree of gender-role association with primary teaching in particular" (2011:61).

Table 3.2: Primary and secondary teachers by region and sex in 2010/11

| Cameroon | | | Northwest | | | Centre | | | East | | | Far North | | |
|---|------|------|-----------|------|------|--------|------|------|-------|------|------|-----------|------|------|
| Total | %F | %M | Total | %F | %M | Total | %F | %M | Total | %F | %M | Total | %F | %M |
| Primary teachers* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 53,452 | 47.8 | 52.2 | 5,061 | 56 | 44 | 8,141 | 55.7 | 44.3 | 3,115 | 49.9 | 50.1 | 8,927 | 25.4 | 74.6 |
| Secondary teachers (general and technical)** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 37,414 | 30.8 | 69.2 | 4,732 | 39.5 | 60.5 | 7,594 | 38.7 | 61.3 | 1,195 | 20.4 | 79.6 | 2,688 | 12.2 | 87.8 |
| General secondary teachers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26,736 | 29.1 | 70.9 | 3,606 | 40.1 | 60 | 4,553 | 35.3 | 64.7 | 927 | 22.2 | 77.8 | 2,302 | 11.9 | 88.1 |
| Technical secondary teachers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10,678 | 35 | 65 | 1,126 | 37.7 | 62.3 | 3,041 | 43.7 | 56.3 | 268 | 14.2 | 85.8 | 386 | 14 | 86 |

Sources: MINEDUB, 2011; MINESEC, 2011

* Statistics for public primary teachers

** Statistics for all secondary teachers

The proportion of male primary teachers in Cameroon has decreased in recent years. In many countries, fewer men enter or remain in the (primary) teaching profession due to its low status, low salaries and limited or unclear opportunities for career progression (Commonwealth Secretariat & UNESCO, 2011).¹⁵ These challenges were reflected in statements made by regional basic education managers in the Northwest (though not in other regions):

- “If you go to the ENIEG, the teacher training colleges... there are only two males in the class, they run away to other professions. They feel like they are in the wrong profession. My son went there... It was embarrassing for him, in a class of 50, for three weeks you’re the only male and the other [male students] are reluctant to come.” (Female regional MINEDUB delegate)
- “Sometimes to get one male teacher is a problem... Sometimes [they are] looking for quick money because they think that to follow the educational ladder will be too long for them.” (Male sub-divisional inspector)

“Sometimes to get one male teacher is a problem... Sometimes [they are] looking for quick money because they think that to follow the educational ladder will be too long for them”
(Male sub-divisional inspector)

¹⁵ During the national workshop for the validation of the research findings, regional and national education officials reported that these same factors also dissuade women from entering the teaching profession.

3.2.2 Gender parity in secondary teaching

In the secondary school system, male teachers outnumber female teachers. Significant regional disparities exist: for example, in the Far North nearly 90% of secondary teachers are male, compared to 60% in the Northwest. Regional gender disparities in primary and secondary teaching might be explained by geographical location and socio-cultural barriers. For example, a 2012 World Bank report explained that attrition of contract teachers (particularly female teachers) in the Far North is due to remoteness, a lack of housing, distance from family, and a lack of health and other services, and intercultural challenges (including language barriers).

Although female students and teachers are greatly outnumbered by males in technical secondary schools, their numbers have increased in recent years (see Table 3.2). In 2010/11, of 10,678 technical secondary teachers, 35% were female (MINESEC, 2011), and in 2009/10 girls made up 39% of the total number of technical secondary students. Within secondary technical teaching, however, inequalities may exist with respect to class (subject) assignments. Although sex-disaggregated statistics for teachers of specific technical and scientific classes were unavailable at the time of publication, national and regional education managers explained that classes such as home economics (ESF, économie sociale et familiale) and clothing industry (l'industrie de l'habillement) are dominated by female teachers. A male divisional MINESEC delegate explained that "Actually, there are posts that are reserved specifically for women... There are also series that were created for women, for girls, [such as] industrie de l'habillement and ESF.

When you have posts specially reserved for women, they are typically 'feminine' series... because the people who work [better] there are women."

The idea of traditional "female/male" disciplines persists among parents, students and managers. A female rural secondary head teacher described a female civil engineering teacher who was rejected by her students because she taught a "male" subject. After her classes, her students would approach a male teacher to ensure that what she had taught was correct. A group of male rural secondary students reported that male teachers are better at teaching certain scientific subjects than female teachers: "Female teachers are not as serious as the male teachers to teach some of the subjects like physics and maths. Male teachers reason more than female teachers." Perceptions about so-called "female/male" disciplines also persist in teacher training. When asked about gender considerations in technical teacher training, a national MINESEC official reported, "When we are talking about gender here, we are looking at introducing specialities that are more demanded by the girls, by our female students, and then here we are looking at things like accounting, secretaryship, clothing industry, computer studies... those areas where the girls and the women prefer to go." No specific measures were described to encourage women to pursue "non-traditional" disciplines in teacher training.

3.2.3 Female and male teachers and teacher type

Primary education teachers include qualified civil servants (fonctionnaires), qualified and unqualified state-supported contract teachers (instituteurs contractuels), qualified contract teachers (contractuels) supported by

international donors as part of the former EFA Fast Track initiative (EFA-FTI) (now the Global Partnership for Education, GPE), and locally recruited (generally unqualified) teachers hired by PTAs (maîtres des parents) or councils (maîtres communaux). Secondary teachers include qualified civil servants and long-term contract teachers (contractuels) and temporary qualified or unqualified teachers (vacataires) hired by regional delegations or PTAs. Contract and PTA/council teachers are recruited to respond to teacher shortages.

Cameroon's contract teacher programme aims to integrate all contract teachers into a single group, registered as contract state employees (contractualisés) with specific benefits and career paths. Qualified contract teachers as well as unqualified contract teachers with 10 years of teaching experience (and requisite secondary or post-secondary certificates: see Republic of Cameroon, 2000) can be integrated into the civil service. However, according to a World Bank (2012a) report, the civil service registration process, for new civil service¹⁶ recruits and contract teachers, can take from a few months to three years and salaries aren't paid until the process is complete. A national teachers' syndicate official reported that many contract teachers aren't integrated into the civil service after 10 years.

Between 2007 and 2011, 37,200 qualified contract teachers were recruited in MINEDUB's contract teacher programme (of these, 60% were female and most were hired to work in rural areas) (World Bank, 2012b). In 2011, the government of Cameroon announced the recruitment of 25,000 civil servants, including qualified teachers, though information on the number of female and male teachers who have been recruited is not available.

¹⁶The contract teacher programme has been supported by the international community since 2007, primarily by the World Bank and the AFD's Debt Reduction and Development Contract (C2D) (a debt-clearing development contract through which Cameroon's debt repayment is financed through aid donations from France). The World Bank supervised a EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund grant (2007–08) for contract teacher recruitment to reduce student:teacher ratios in primary education (World Bank, 2012b). The AFD-C2D supported the teacher integration (contractualisation) programme in collaboration with the EFA-FTI grant.

Table 3.3: Primary and secondary teachers by teacher type and sex in 2010/11

| Teacher type | Total | % total teachers | Female | | Male | |
|---|--------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | | | % teacher type | % female teachers | % teacher type | % male teachers |
| Primary teachers* | | | | | | |
| Civil servants | 10,339 | 19.3% | 39% | 15.8% | 60.1% | 22.6% |
| Contractualisés | 30,521 | 57.1% | 55.4% | 66.1% | 44.6% | 48.8% |
| Contractuels | 13,465 | 6.5% | 56.1% | 7.6% | 43.9% | 5.5% |
| PTA teachers | 9,127 | 17.1% | 29.4% | 10.5% | 70.6% | 23.1% |
| Total | 53,453 | 100% | – | 100% (25,564) | – | 100% (27,888) |
| Secondary teachers (general and technical)** | | | | | | |
| Qualified civil servants | 18,932 | 50.6% | 34.8% | 57.2% | 65.2% | 47.7% |
| Contractuels | 3,714 | 9.9% | 35.2% | 11.3% | 64.8% | 9.3% |
| Vacataires | 14,768 | 39.5% | 24.5% | 31.4% | 75.5% | 43% |
| Total | 37,414 | 100% | – | 100% (11,514) | – | 100% (25,900) |

Sources: MINEDUB, 2011; MINESEC, 2011

* Statistics for public primary teachers

** Statistics for all secondary teachers

Contract (including state-supported contract teachers) and PTA teachers significantly outnumber civil servants in public primary education (81%, compared to 19%), and in secondary education, contract and temporary teachers make up half the teaching force (see Table 3.3). State-supported teachers and temporary and PTA teachers receive different salaries; salary is determined according to teacher type.¹⁷ According to a World Bank report (2012a), the salaries received by primary and secondary temporary/PTA teachers are roughly 30–40% of civil servant teacher salaries.

Female primary teachers are more highly represented among civil servant and state-supported contract teachers (contractualisés) than male teachers; both state-supported civil servants and contractualisés are eligible for benefits and career paths. Male teachers are significantly more highly represented among PTA primary teachers (nearly a quarter of all male primary teachers are hired by PTAs), who do not have access to these benefits and receive the lowest teacher salaries. In secondary education, whilst male teachers represent a higher proportion of all

civil servant teachers, the proportion of female teachers who are civil servants is greater than the proportion of male teachers who are civil servants. Over three-quarters of temporary secondary teachers (vacataires, often supported by PTAs) are male, and nearly half of all male teachers are temporary teachers, with the lowest secondary teacher salaries and ineligible for state supports and opportunities.

¹⁷ According to a World Bank report (2012a), primary civil servant teachers earn roughly 110,000 to 150,000 FCFA per month, state-supported contract teachers earn 70,000 to 100,000 FCFA (85% of the civil servant salary), regular contract teachers earn 35,000 to 65,000 FCFA (50%) and PTA teachers earn 15,000 to 45,000 FCFA (30%). Secondary education civil servants earn upwards of 150,000 FCFA per month, while temporary/PTA teachers earn 35,000 to 60,000 FCFA.

Significant regional differences exist with respect to the composition of the teaching corps. In the Far North, for example, civil servants make up just fewer than 8% of the total number of public primary teachers, whilst contract teachers make up 67% and PTA teachers 25%. In contrast, 18% of primary teachers in the Northwest are civil servants. These disparities persist at the secondary level, with qualified teachers and temporary teachers making up 28% and 70% of the total number of secondary teachers, respectively, in the Far North, compared to 62% and 32% respectively in the Northwest (MINEDUB, 2011; MINESEC, 2011).

3.3 Gender parity in education management

Female managers can serve as role models to both female and male students, as well as to female and male teachers. During focus group discussions, a number of girls identified specific female education managers as role models, particularly those who challenge traditional gender roles or stereotypes: for example, a group of female urban secondary students reported that it makes them happy to see a woman at the head of the school where men are teachers. Although the number of women in education management has increased in recent years, no policies aim to increase women's representation in education management in Cameroon.

Female managers are significantly outnumbered by men at the school level, as primary and secondary school principals, and at the ministry level, as regional delegates for basic education (DREB, *délegué régional de l'éducation de base*) and secondary education (DRES, *délegué régional des enseignements*

Table 3.4: Women in education ministries in Cameroon

| | MINEDUB* | | | MINESEC** | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| | DREB | DDEB | IAEB | DRES | DDES |
| Regional delegates | | | | | |
| Total | 10 | 58 | 360 | 10 | 58 |
| Female delegates | 1 (10%) (2011/12: 3.30%) | 7 (12.1%) | 33 (9.2%) | 0 | 3 (5.2%) |

* MINEDUB statistics for 2009/10

** MINESEC statistics for 2010/11 (obtained from the MINESEC Department of Human Resources)

Table 3.5: Primary and secondary school principals in Cameroon

| Primary schools (public)* | | | Secondary schools (general and technical)** | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|---|-------------|----------------|
| Total | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male |
| 9,695 | 1,320 13.6% | 8,375 86.4% | 1,927 | 110 5.7% | 1,817 94.3% |

* MINEDUB statistics for 2009/10

** MINESEC statistics for 2010/11 (obtained from the MINESEC Department of Human Resources)

secondaires), divisional delegates for basic education (DDEB, *délegué départemental de l'éducation de base*) and secondary education (DDES, *délegué départemental des enseignements secondaires*) and as sub-divisional inspectors for basic education (IAEB, *inspecteur d'arrondissement de l'éducation de base*) (see Tables 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6). As one male divisional MINEDUB official stated, "Equality is not really established, because there are many more men who are promoted compared to women."

Regional disparities exist with respect to women's representation in education management. For example, the proportion of female primary school principals¹⁸ is particularly low in the Far North, at 3.4% in 2009/10, compared to 20.9% in the Northwest. In 2010/11, the proportion of female secondary school principals was 3.4% in the Far North compared to 9.2% in the Centre.

According to data provided by regional education managers, men outnumber women in education management at nearly every level in all sampled regions (see Table 3.6).

¹⁸ At the primary level, schools are managed by school principals. At the secondary level, schools are managed by the proviseur or chef d'établissement, with pedagogic and disciplinary assistance from the censeur (in lycées) or the surveillant général (in collèges).

Table 3.6: Women and men in positions of responsibility at the regional and school level

| | Northwest | | Centre | | East | | Far North | |
|--|-----------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-----|
| | %F | %M | %F | %M | %F | %M | %F | %M |
| Primary education | | | | | | | | |
| Regional delegation (sub-directors, chiefs of service, chiefs of office, inspectors) | - | - | - | - | 42.9% | 57.1% | - | - |
| Schools in the region (principals) | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5% | 95% |
| Sampled divisional delegation (sub-directors, chiefs of service, chiefs of office, inspectors) | - | - | - | - | 14.5% | 85.5% | - | - |
| Schools in the division (principals) | - | - | - | - | 9.2% | 90.8% | 8% | 92% |
| Sampled sub-divisional inspectorate (chiefs of office) | 0% | 100% | - | - | 25% | 75% | - | - |
| Schools in the sub-division (principals) | 44% | 66% | - | - | 23.2% | 76.8% | - | - |
| Sampled schools (principals, chiefs of service, chiefs of office, etc) | 0% | 100% | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Secondary education | | | | | | | | |
| Regional delegation (sub-directors, chiefs of service, chiefs of office, inspectors) | 22% | 78% | 23.7% | 76.3% | 23.7% | 76.3% | - | - |
| Schools in the region (chefs d'établissement, chiefs of service) | 24.3% | 75.7% | - | - | 17.2% | 82.8% | - | - |
| Sampled divisional delegation (sub-directors, chiefs of service, chiefs of office, inspectors) | 24% | 76% | 31.8% | 68.1% | - | - | - | - |
| Schools in the division (chefs d'établissement) | 63% | 37.3% | 32.7% | 67.3% | 2.7% | 97.4% | - | - |
| Sampled schools (chefs d'établissement, chiefs of service, chiefs of office, department heads) | 37.4% | 62.5% | 30.8% | 69.2% | 25% | 75% | 25% | 75% |

(-) Data not available

*Due to inconsistencies in the data collected, these figures are approximations.

Regional education managers were asked to provide data on personnel in positions of responsibility under their management (at the regional, divisional, sub-divisional or school level), see table 3.6. However, complete data was not accessible from many participants or structures and there were inconsistencies in personnel types included in the counts by different regional managers.

Gender equality in education management is linked not only with the number of women and men in leadership positions, but also with type of responsibility: assignment of schools with high student and staff numbers, rural versus urban schools, and so on. However, detailed sex-disaggregated statistics concerning school management positions were not available at the time of publication.

3.4 Female and male teachers and managers as role models

“The presence of a woman in a classroom brings her students, especially female, to want to be like the teacher who is in front... And that means that from year to year, the number of girls in the classrooms increases. The girl wants to be like the teacher, so there’s a positive influence”
(Male ENIEG director)

The importance of female teachers and managers as “non-stereotypical” role models for female and male students has been described in recent reviews (Kirk, 2006). In all research regions, managers reported that female teachers and managers act as role models for female students, serving as examples of success and increasing girls’ motivation and confidence in their ability to succeed. The presence of female teachers also influences male students’ perceptions, providing a different image of girls and women. Male teachers can also serve as role models for both male and female students, by challenging gendered stereotypes and roles, modelling non-discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, and pointing out positive examples of successful women. As a female rural primary teacher explained, “If a man handles younger children lovingly, the boy child will start admiring the man the way he does it... So let the men go and take care of the children.” This is of particular significance in primary education,

as primary-level male teachers are outnumbered by female teachers in certain regions.

3.4.1 Local female teachers

Recent studies and reviews report that the presence of female teachers positively impacts girls’ enrolment rates, participation, retention and outcomes in primary and secondary education (Herz & Sperling, 2004; Kirk, 2006; Lloyd & Young, 2009; UNESCO, 2011). However, the importance of female teachers as role models for girls, especially in zones with significant gender disparities in education, is explicitly recognised in only one policy strategy: the SSE’s deployment of local female teachers to ZEP communities, where they can serve as role models for girls and other community members (Republic of Cameroon, 2006).

A number of education managers in the East and Far North (both ZEPs) spoke of the positive impacts of this strategy. A male ENIEG director reported, “You’ll see that here at the ENIEG for example, the women are from here, it’s because they saw their sisters who came here and who are teachers in the same area. It is for this [reason] that they are here. The husbands have also accepted this... Many people have allowed their wives to come to school [because of] this.” Local female teachers can more easily adapt to life in rural communities because they are familiar with local culture, language and customs, and because they often receive support from relatives. As a result, they may be more diligent and stable in their profession. Some managers, however, reported that local female teachers are less focused and disciplined and are more often absent (due to work with local NGOs, for example). Whilst managers discussed this policy strategy, it was not mentioned by any female teachers participating in this study.

There is a lack of qualified female teachers who originate from ZEPs, due in part to girls’ low rates of enrolment in and completion of at least one cycle of secondary education, enabling them to access teacher training programmes (as some regional education officials explained, this is also linked to cultural beliefs concerning the value of education). In 2011 secondary enrolment rates were 40.6% for girls in the East and 27.9% for girls in the Far North compared to, for example, 49.6% in the Northwest (MINESEC, 2010). ENIEGs have been established in ZEPs to facilitate primary teacher training (particularly for women), but the impact of this action is unclear. A primary school principal in the East reported that in the past six years her school has received only three local female teachers.

It is also difficult to retain female teachers in rural zones (as explained in Section 4.3, they often make significant efforts to be transferred out of these zones, due to a lack of housing and services, isolation and experiences of sexual harassment). In 2010/11, there were more male teachers than female teachers in public primary schools in rural areas in all regions, including ZEPs. For example, 82% of rural teachers in the Far North and 62% of rural teachers in the East were male (MINEDUB, 2011). A national MINEDUB official explained that this policy initiative (the deployment of local female teachers to ZEPs) has not been successful (due primarily to challenges in retaining female teachers in these zones), so it was not included in the GESP. It does not appear that specific measures were taken to address recruitment and retention challenges.

3.5 Conclusion

Men outnumber women in primary and secondary teaching as well as in education management (at the school and ministry level). No education policy texts refer specifically to the recruitment of female managers, and teacher recruitment policies contain only limited specific references to female teachers. However, no clear targets or strategies are identified for the recruitment of female teachers, for primary and secondary teaching in general or for fields traditionally dominated by men, such as scientific and technical education. Traditionally “feminine” and “masculine” roles appear to persist, in terms of the distribution of teaching responsibilities and subjects.

Participants spoke of the importance of female and male role models for girls and boys, in teaching and in education management, who challenge gendered stereotypes. Only one policy text (the SSE) acknowledges the importance of female teachers as role models for students (especially girls) and communities, referring to the deployment of local female teachers to ZEPs. The positive impact of this strategy was described by regional managers, but no female teachers spoke of it – and again, no specific targets or recruitment and retention strategies were identified in the policy text.

Contract, temporary, and PTA teachers outnumber civil servant teachers in both primary and secondary teaching. Male teachers represent the greatest proportion of teachers (non-state-supported contract, temporary and PTA teachers) who receive lower salaries and are not eligible for formal benefits. These challenges, and other challenges facing female and male teachers and managers, will be described in more detail in the following sections.

“If a man handles younger children lovingly, the boy child will start admiring the man the way he does it... So let the men go and take care of the children”
(Female rural primary teacher)

4. Gendered experiences of teachers

The sharing and learning of socially constructed female and male roles and responsibilities (gendered socialisation) impacts female and male teachers' roles and experiences, in schools as well as in the community. This section examines challenges related to family responsibilities, experiences in rural communities, and gender-based violence, as well as government responses to teacher challenges.

Participants at all levels, from students to national stakeholders, spoke of "female" and "male" roles and responsibilities, in the home and at school. Male and female students, teachers, parents and managers in all regions reported that girls' and women's domestic responsibilities (household tasks, childcare, etc) have a significant (negative) impact on academic and professional performance. National ministry officials referred to the "weight of tradition" ("le poids des traditions") with respect to female teachers' and managers' experiences and challenges. Socio-cultural beliefs, attitudes and expectations shape gender power dynamics, influencing domestic roles and experiences (for both girls/women and boys/men) as well as experiences of gender-based violence in schools and in rural communities.

4.1 General policy context

Teachers' working and living conditions impact motivation, performance and the quality of the education they provide. Conditions are particularly difficult for teachers, especially female teachers, in rural zones, due to insufficient housing and services and sexual harassment. The PAN-EPT and the GESP identify the construction of housing for primary teachers as a means of improving working and living conditions and performance, particularly in rural

areas. At the secondary level, the GESP cites the construction of housing for school managers (though not teachers).¹⁹ The GESP refers to the improvement of housing conditions for female teachers and the number of women benefiting from housing initiatives (without setting specific objectives or targets), as well as to gender mainstreaming in social security benefits for teachers.

HIV-AIDS is an issue significantly affecting teacher and manager health and performance. The PAN-EPT refers to sensitisation and curriculum content on HIV-AIDS, as well as support of people living with HIV-AIDS in schools (without specifying students or teachers as beneficiaries). The GESP includes strategies addressing HIV-AIDS in basic education, including ENIEG training modules on HIV-AIDS and support and monitoring systems for administrative personnel living with HIV-AIDS (without specifying if teachers are included among administrative personnel). The SSE also refers to the inclusion of HIV-AIDS in teacher training programmes. Cameroon's National Strategic Plan for the Fight against HIV-AIDS refers to the inclusion of HIV-AIDS primary and secondary school curricula and the training of primary and secondary teachers for HIV-AIDS prevention (National AIDS Control Committee, 2010). Despite the fact that HIV-AIDS prevalence rates are higher among women (5.6%) than men (2.9%)

¹⁹ PAN-EPT (2002): target of 1,000 houses/year for primary teachers between 2006 and 2015. GESP (2009): target of 6,000 houses for primary teachers and head teachers in remote rural areas and 60 residences for school managers by 2012.

in Cameroon (Institut National de la Statistique, 2012), education policies make no mention of sex or gender in addressing HIV-AIDS.

Gender-based violence is a particularly significant factor linked with gender equality in schools (UNESCO, 2005). Although the 1998 Education Orientation Law prohibits all forms of violence, gender-based violence was identified by study participants as one of the most serious problems in schools, impacting both student and teacher experiences and performance, reflecting findings of previous studies (Parker & Heslop, 2011; UNICEF et al., 2010). Cameroon's two main, most recent education policy documents, the SSE and the GESP, make no specific mention of gender-based violence in schools, amongst students or teachers. The PAN-EPT recommended the establishment of regional, divisional and sub-divisional monitoring committees for female students' protection in primary schools, to protect against risks (eg violence and exploitation) limiting their ability to learn. However, as a MINEDUB EFA official explained, this initiative was not implemented due to lack of funding. MINPROFF's National Strategy for the Elimination of Gender Based Violence identifies strategies targeting education stakeholders, including sensitisation of school managers and the identification of violence in schools, though only MINEDUB is mentioned whilst MINESEC is not (MINPROFF, 2011). Finally, government circulars²¹ have responded to general violence in schools, though no teachers or school or regional managers mentioned these texts.

4.2 Gendered experiences and challenges of teachers

A number of common difficulties were identified by male and female teachers, including high student: teacher ratios, lack of teaching and learning materials, lack of housing and long distance from schools (particularly in rural communities), and insufficient or unpaid salaries. Contract teachers (non-state-supported) and temporary/PTA teachers, in particular, face difficulties related to insufficient or unpaid salaries, deployment and transfers (some remain in the same villages for many years at a time), and a lack of advancement opportunities.²² Nearly three-quarters of primary teachers are non-state-supported contract teachers and PTA teachers, and contract and temporary teachers represent approximately half of secondary teachers (MINEDUB, 2011; MINESEC, 2011). Male teachers are more highly represented among these teachers, at both the primary and secondary level, and, as such, a greater proportion of male teachers face these particular challenges.

4.2.1 Impacts of family responsibilities on female and male teachers

Female teachers face significant challenges related primarily to family and household responsibilities. They must balance domestic and professional roles, which impacts punctuality and performance:

- "At home you have to take care of the children, prepare your lessons, come to school and teach. As you are finishing your classes you are rushing home again to start all over, doing work at home and marking papers." (Female rural secondary teacher)
- "A woman remains a woman, they are always with their own families. When family matters come up, they cannot be as regular as possible... Men, I think they are more regular and punctual to school than the women." (Male divisional MINESEC delegate)

The impact of household responsibilities is compounded by transportation costs and distance from school. For example, a group of female urban teachers explained that after completing household chores in the morning, they must take a long shared-taxi ride to work and arrive late to school. Another group of female teachers explained that punctuality affects incentives and as they are often late due to domestic tasks, they don't receive incentives. Although transportation and distance challenges also impact male teachers, the combined impact of female teachers' household responsibilities and these added challenges has a greater impact on their professional performance.

²¹ A 2000 circular concerning the fight against violence in schools, a 2002 circular concerning the state of violence in public schools, and a 2006 letter-circular concerning the prevention of violence in schools.

²² For more information on challenges faced by teachers in Cameroon, including contract and PTA teachers, see Kom, 2007.

Distance from their husband or family also presents a challenge for female teachers, who often request transfers to join their husbands/families. Married women can be granted transfers to join their husbands in an effort to keep couples and families together (regroupement familial, “family regroupment”). The impacts on female teachers’ performance may be greater because women are generally expected to follow their husbands.

- “Often they deploy her husband or... they deploy her [to different locations]... so you see there are two households. She feels displaced, so she does not come normally to classes. She seeks to join, to join the husband or the family.” (Male semi-rural primary school principal)
- The family today is separated more than ever, and that affects performance a lot. It’s most often the female partners seeking transfers to join their husbands. If they were together, they’d perform better.” (Female regional MINEDUB delegate)

Regroupement familial was perceived as a significant challenge by education managers in all regions: “If we have 1,000 [transfer] requests, we have 600 people who want to leave to find their family, so it’s a serious problem” (National MINEDUB official). Some stated that female teachers may try to marry men working in urban centres so as to be transferred there.

Perceptions of the impact of female teachers’ family responsibilities on their professional performance can influence managers’ approaches to teacher recruitment and management; they may be less willing to work with female teachers. As a national MINEDUB official reported, “Education managers have asked [what] to do because they have a serious problem in the management of female teachers... Some proposed that we send them men instead of women because they think that it’s more difficult with women... We have to identify the reasons why the women aren’t available enough and see how to work on those problems to allow them to be stable in their work posts.”

Parenthood (maternity and paternity) affects both female and male teachers. Women are granted a 14-week maternity leave and one hour of breast-feeding time per day for 15 months, though breast-feeding hours are not always respected: “Before, nursing mothers could come 30 minutes later. But now it’s not like that. That’s why you see it causes problems. At first, they used to give nursing hours, but now they don’t do that” (Female rural primary teacher). Male teachers are granted a three-day paternity leave, though participants had different understandings of the length of time accorded and male teachers are not always aware of, encouraged or allowed to take leave:

- “The wife is already there, your wife is already there taking care of the child and then you too want to go and take care of the same child?... To me, I don’t see any need that a [paternity] leave should be given to the male.” (Male rural primary head teacher)
- “Giving the husband a leave is too much because the work will accumulate and slow down. The husband might not be given a leave but if he does it will be so limited.” (Male rural primary teacher)



“When we have 10 requests for transfers, in general it’s eight women who are asking us to be deployed from certain zones towards urban zones”
(National MINEDUB official)

Male teachers, however, did not discuss the impacts of these challenges on their family or professional experiences.

A number of male and female teachers and managers reported that maternity leaves and breast-feeding hours impact female teachers’ performance, causing tardiness and absenteeism. Maternity leaves can also result in extra work for male (and female) teachers who are expected to take over the teaching responsibilities, as female teachers are not always replaced during maternity leave: “When a woman is pregnant... you go for your maternity leave and within that period, the classes that you were handling are taken off by the male teachers” (Male divisional MINESEC delegate). The added burden for male teachers was identified as a problem primarily in schools with a high proportion of female teachers.

Despite the impact of domestic and family responsibilities on professional experiences and opportunities, very few participants (including teachers) suggested strategies to address these issues or spoke of school-level efforts to support female or male teachers

to minimise negative professional impacts. Some of the only concrete examples described were measures to facilitate return to work for female teachers after maternity leave (eg they are given later class hours to allow them to nurse their infants in the morning). A number of national ministry officials stated that this simply reflects the application of existing texts, rather than representing special efforts by school managers.

4.3 Teaching in rural communities

The government has made efforts to bring schools closer to students by constructing schools in rural communities. However, teachers in rural communities face significant challenges, including a lack of housing, transportation and access difficulties, inadequate health and other services, communication challenges, isolation and family separation, suspicion or rejection by community members and authorities, and sexual violence. Female teachers are more vulnerable to, and are particularly affected by, these difficulties. As a male rural secondary school principal explained, “The males easily bear working in the rural areas, but the females don’t bear.” Similarly, a male semi-rural secondary teacher explained, “When teachers are deployed... women are favoured, it is the men who are sent to the bush because it is said that the man is stronger and can adapt better than the women.”

Female teachers often face harassment by men in rural communities, including local authorities. A female regional MINEDUB delegate reported that “Sometimes the local chiefs think they’re wives that we’re sending them.” In communities where housing is rare, women may be even more vulnerable to violence: “They go to the village and want to rent... The landlords try to harass or marry them. And when they refuse, they charge them fabulous rents... We even had a case where the landlord was extremely kind to her, and starts dating her. She thinks of everything he’s done and is unable to refuse” (Female regional MINEDUB delegate). Male teachers also experience harassment in rural zones, though such cases were less frequently described.

Female teachers often go to great lengths not to work in remote rural communities, as they are unwilling to work in areas where they feel insecure, are vulnerable to violence and cannot access certain services. As a national MINEDUB official explained, “When we have 10 requests for transfers, in general it’s eight women who are asking us to be deployed from certain zones towards urban zones.” A male regional MINESEC delegate reported that “Women only want to work in town... Not wanting to stay in enclaved zones, they claim fictional illnesses, they claim fictional marriages, they claim fictional pregnancies.” Similarly, a female regional MINEDUB delegate from another region explained, “Every day, I have a line of them coming here to complain that they’re too sick and too ill to work in those enclaved areas... The lengths they go to, to object to the rural areas. If you send the boys there, they wouldn’t have those complaints.”

Female teachers are more often deployed or transferred to urban centres (on the basis of regroupement familial as well as the difficulties they face in rural communities), and male teachers to rural zones (see Table 4.1). However, as one male

regional MINESEC delegate stated, gender inequality can result “when the difficult zones are reserved only for men, and women only want to work in town.” Inequality in opportunities exists when male teachers have a greater chance of being deployed to rural zones where they will face significant living and working difficulties.

In all regions in Cameroon, there are more female primary teachers in urban zones than rural zones, and in nearly all regions male teachers outnumber female teachers in rural zones (MINEDUB, 2011), particularly in ZEPs where the need for female role models for students and communities is greatest, due to significant gender disparities in education. The presence of female teachers creates a school environment favourable to girls’ education, associated with improved enrolment, participation, retention and outcomes in primary and secondary education (Herz & Sperling, 2004; Kirk, 2006; Lloyd & Young, 2009; UNESCO, 2011). When male teachers significantly outnumber female teachers in schools, girls’ enrolment, retention and educational outcomes may be negatively affected.

Table 4.1: Public primary teacher location by region, zone, and sex in 2010/11*

| Teacher location | Cameroon | | | Northwest | | | Centre | | | East | | | Far North | | |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|--------|-------------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------------|-------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| | %F | %M | Total | %F | %M | Total | %F | %M | Total | %F | %M | Total | %F | %M | Total |
| Total | 53.452 | | | 5.061 | | | 8.141 | | | 3.115 | | | 8.927 | | |
| Urban zones | 63.9 | 36.1 | 16,396 | 71.9 | 28.1 | 652 | 73.8 | 26.2 | 3,136 | 70.8 | 29.2 | 1,109 | 50.5 | 49.5 | 2,036 |
| Rural zones | 40.7 | 59.3 | 37,056 | 53.7 | 46.3 | 4,409 | 44.3 | 55.7 | 5,005 | 38.4 | 61.6 | 2,006 | 18 | 82 | 6,891 |

Source: MINEDUB, 2011

* Data for secondary teachers was not available

4.4 Responses to teacher challenges

4.4.1 Efforts to improve living and working conditions

Government efforts to respond to living and working challenges faced by teachers include housing and incentive measures, streamlined transfer procedures, and sensitisation initiatives intended to enhance community support for teachers. Many of these efforts have focused on teachers in rural areas. Although some housing for primary and secondary education personnel has been constructed by the government, it is often reserved for principals or head teachers, and government efforts are limited by the large scale of the housing shortage and budget constraints. However, national ministry officials described recent initiatives to respond to teacher housing shortages: teacher housing (logements d'astreinte) is being built for primary teachers with funding from the AFD, and the government has constructed some "clé en main" secondary schools, where classrooms and teacher accommodation are built in the same location. Although the GESP specifically mentions female teachers as beneficiaries of housing initiatives, no participants spoke of gender considerations in existing projects.

Benefits and incentives provided to primary and secondary state-supported teachers include housing bonuses, health and transport incentives, family allowances, performance bonuses (primes de rendement), bonuses for teacher deployed to "difficult" zones, and measures to ensure that salaries are paid quickly.²⁴ Though the GESP refers to gender mainstreaming in social security and benefits instruments for secondary teachers,²⁵ benefits and incentives are the same for all teachers, based on performance and output with no apparent consideration of gender. Very few teachers, female or male, reported receiving any incentives or benefits. Many teachers are unaware of possible benefits, and may be deterred from accessing them by lengthy, complicated application procedures. Only state-supported civil servants and contract teachers are eligible for housing and incentive measures. Male teachers are more highly represented among non-state-supported (contract, temporary, PTA) teachers, at both the primary and secondary level, and, as such, a greater proportion of male teachers are ineligible for government supports.

The government has taken some steps to facilitate transfer requests for teachers, which can aid those experiencing harassment or violence in rural communities. Civil servants can request transfers after three years in a school, and contract teachers after five years. Transfers can be requested early if

one's spouse is a government official who is transferred, or in cases of danger or illness. For state-supported teachers, deployment/transfer request processes have been streamlined. Teachers can submit requests to the nearest ministry structure,²⁶ from where their files will be transmitted "up the chain"; they don't have to personally transmit and monitor their files. However, transfer procedures are lengthy and complex (World Bank, 2012a) and many teachers still believe they must monitor their files themselves. A national MINESEC official reported that whilst deployment and transfer choices are based on merit, female teachers are given priority, with marriage certificate verification. Although transfers may be facilitated, very few interventions actually address the challenges faced by teachers – female and male – in rural communities in an effort to increase retention.

Divisional and regional delegates in the Northwest described community sensitisation efforts carried out in response to sexual harassment of teachers in rural communities. Sensitisation activities are carried out during community gatherings, often targeting local administrative and traditional authorities and elites. "What we can do for now to handle [sexual harassment] is to do sensitisation through the PTA and the school boards, who can bring in a lot of elites in the residences and areas. If we... come together as a conference to identify these things as problems... As long as the harassment continues, we won't send teachers to those schools... [We] warn those people not to frustrate those people and harm the chances of the schools" (Female regional MINEDUB delegate).

One specific intervention, described by a national MINEDUB official, is a recent campaign (campagne de sensibilisation pour l'accompagnement et la stabilisation des instituteurs à leur poste) intended to support teachers' integration and retention in rural communities. Education managers, administrative and traditional authorities, local elected officials and other village leaders come together during "welcome and integration meetings" (réunions d'accueil et d'insertion) to meet arriving teachers, discuss potential difficulties (housing, salary, etc), and emphasise their role in ensuring teacher safety. "When it was done like that, the whole village takes on the importance of the teacher [and] all the authorities monitor the situation closely. So if you bother this or that [male or female] teacher, you could have problems because he or she was officially introduced in the village."

Strategies (housing initiatives, transfer processes, campaigns) intended to improve teachers' living and working conditions

²⁴ Decentralised responsibility for salary payment: the government has implemented SIGIPES (Système Informatique de Gestion Intégrée des Personnels de l'Etat et de la Solde/Integrated Computerised State Personnel and Payroll Management System) to improve administrative management of its employees.

²⁵ The English version of the GESP, though not the French, refers to gender mainstreaming.

²⁶ Additionally, MINESEC has developed an internet-based programme (website) through which state-supported teachers can submit choices for deployment and monitor their files online.

were described by ministry representatives, but aside from a few mentions of housing initiatives, these strategies were not discussed by teachers themselves. No participants, teachers or managers, spoke of the impacts of these efforts, and, as such, the effectiveness of these initiatives is unclear.

4.4.2 HIV-AIDS in teaching and management

HIV-AIDS is an issue that significantly impacts gender equality, in both teaching and education management. The physical and psychological impact of HIV-AIDS on teachers – absenteeism, mortality, and stigma and discrimination – has been examined in recent studies (see Commonwealth Secretariat & Education International, 2008). One male regional MINEDUB delegate reported that HIV-AIDS among teachers is a serious problem in his region: “Most who die, it’s because of AIDS... Most are children coming out of ENIEGs.” The SSE estimates that 500 teachers per year are unable to teach due to HIV-AIDS and that by 2015, between 1,200 and 1,500 primary teachers per year will have to be replaced (current statistics for education were not available at the time of publishing). Teachers’ absences and deaths due to HIV-AIDS interact with general teacher shortages, significantly impacting the quality of education services. In Cameroon, HIV-AIDS affects women more widely than men: the prevalence rate for women aged 15 to 49 is 5.6%, compared to 2.9% for men (Institut National de la Statistique, 2012), which suggests that HIV-AIDS has a particularly significant impact on female teachers and managers.

Managers reported that teachers living with HIV-AIDS don’t receive specific supports, such as medication or treatment supports, which can cause significant difficulties: “There was a lady who was HIV positive, so sometimes she doesn’t want to go to school because she tells me she’s spent all her money on drugs and [to] pay her transport to school” (Female divisional MINEDUB delegate). Some divisional and regional delegates explained that they try to deploy teachers who are HIV-positive to communities near health services. Sensitisation appears to be the primary regional-level response to HIV-AIDS among teachers, with the aim of reducing stigma and discrimination and encouraging teachers to seek support. Discussions on HIV-AIDS are integrated into teacher and manager training. For example, a male divisional MINESEC delegate reported that during training for school principals, topics such as HIV-AIDS, sexual health, and relations between women and men in schools are discussed.

It may be difficult for education managers to support or monitor teachers living with HIV-AIDS because they

are ashamed to reveal their status. As a female regional MINEDUB delegate reported: “People protect this kind of information very jealously. So among head teachers you only know about it when they died or when they have a crisis, or if they’re bold enough to look for a transfer.” No teachers or school managers described their experiences concerning HIV-AIDS, either at the personal level or in a personnel management context.

4.5 Gender-based violence in schools

4.5.1 Experiences and impacts of gender-based violence

Recent research and reviews have identified gender-based violence as a severe problem in schools, including those in Central and West Africa (Parker & Heslop, 2011; UNICEF et al., 2010). Participants in the current study identified gender-based violence, particularly sexual harassment, as one of the most serious issues in primary and secondary schools, impacting student and teacher experiences, performance and outcomes. Violence experienced or perpetrated by students and teachers includes verbal or physical harassment, psychological violence and bullying, and sexual activity in exchange for good reports or grades. Teachers and school managers play a central role in reporting and responding to gender-based violence, and their own actions and attitudes influence the attitudes and actions of students and other personnel.

Nearly all cases of gender-based violence described by participants were perpetrated by male teachers against female students. Girls described many cases of being pressured to perform sexual acts in order to obtain better grades or to obtain money to cover school costs, as well as other harassment by teachers, with significant negative psychological and academic impacts. Male students also experience harassment (from female or male teachers), though this was discussed by only one male student and by some regional and national education officials.

Female teachers experience harassment by male managers and other colleagues, though few specific cases were described.²⁷ These experiences have negative psychological and professional impacts, such as the loss of one’s position: “There was a female teacher who came up with a report... that the head teacher was trying to violate her sexually and finally, since she refused, the head teacher then asked her to go and be teaching the final class” (Male sub-divisional inspector). Female teachers also experience sexual harassment

²⁷ Cases of harassment of male teachers weren’t described by participants, aside from experiences of harassment in rural communities

by older male students: “A male student... started to beep me. When I turned around and I asked, ‘Who beeped me?’, all I heard was students’ laughter behind my back... One day, he said to his friends, ‘We’ll go bring firewood to the teacher at midnight. You’ll go home, and me, I’ll stay with her’... He even beeped me at midnight and created reasons to come to my house with his friends” (Female urban primary teacher). Male teachers also face violence by older male students, though this was described by regional and national education officials rather than by teachers.

4.5.2 Factors associated with gender-based violence in schools

The primary barrier to addressing gender-based violence is the systematic lack of reporting by students and teachers. Both students and teachers may feel that, because the perpetrators of the violence are teachers/colleagues or managers in the school, they can’t report (due to fears of reprisal, for example). The lack of reporting as a barrier to addressing gender-based violence in schools was acknowledged by managers at the divisional and regional level: “If the report doesn’t come, we can’t react” (Male regional MINEDUB delegate). The lack of clear reporting procedures at the school and ministry levels prevents both reporting and sanctions.

As explained in a review of research in South and East Africa (Chege, 2006), teachers significantly influence attitudes and actions that promote or challenge gender-based violence and perceptions of gendered power dynamics. Teacher and manager attitudes impact teachers’ reactions to violence in the classroom, students’ and teachers’ willingness to report cases of violence, and school-level preventive actions and responses to violence. Girls are often blamed for the violence they experience, a response echoed by teachers through to national ministry officials. It is said that they provoke, tempt or harass male students and teachers, or that their early sexuality is to blame: “Young girls are premature with respect to sexuality, which is a fundamental problem... From the first years, there is strong provocation” (Male secondary head teacher). Other statements made by certain participants, primarily male teachers, reflect attitudes minimising or justifying sexual violence: “the gardener has a right to the nice flowers in his garden”, “they’re already a woman”. These perceptions of female students probably reflect similar perceptions of female teachers, justifying or minimising their experiences of gender-based violence.

4.5.3 Responses to gender-based violence in schools

Cameroon’s 1998 law on the orientation of education prohibits all forms of violence in schools. For cases of violence by

teachers against students, specific articles are often included in school regulations, disciplinary procedures are followed (including school or ministry disciplinary councils, or conseils de discipline²⁸) and legal processes or sanctions might be initiated in serious cases. However, concrete actions or sanctions are rarely specified, reporting procedures are vague, and even when regulations do exist they are rarely enforced. Regulations and procedures concerning harassment between teachers and/or managers are even less clear. Existing texts (including policy texts guiding teacher conduct, such as statutes for civil servant teachers, and decrees and circulars on the organisation of public schools and duties of school administrators) are often not known by teachers and school managers, and disciplinary procedures can be quite complicated. A national teachers’ syndicate official reported that no specific measures exist for teachers with respect to gender-based violence. Such cases are generally addressed in the same way as other staff conflicts, at the school or divisional level.

The most common response to cases of gender-based violence in schools appears to be the transfer of the teacher involved, to another school or village or to an administrative post, without additional professional or legal sanctions.²⁹ As a regional MINEDUB delegate explained, “One of them was harassed by a male teacher in the school. She’s a married lady... the male teacher harassed and tried to rape her... So we have to move him away from there to the inspectorate, since we couldn’t keep him there in the village.”

Primary and secondary education managers, including divisional and regional delegates, also identified teacher sensitisation as a strategy to respond to and prevent gender-based violence in schools – often as the sole preventative strategy. For example, a female regional MINEDUB delegate described a response to problems of harassment of female teachers by their male colleagues: “We tried to talk to head teachers... about the fact that if the schools are about 70% female [teachers], and if you start doing that, when your females ask for transfers and leave, you are the one to suffer. So if you want to keep the female teachers you need to be as good to them as possible.”

When responses to gender-based violence are limited to sensitisation or transfers, in the absence of more serious sanctions, the severity of the violence is minimised, influencing teacher and student actions, attitudes and responses. These actions often fail to address the root causes of sexual violence (individual and collective beliefs and attitudes), contributing to the persistence of this problem.

²⁸ Basic and secondary education officials explained that procedures for responding to cases of teacher violence involve a request for explanation (demande d’explication), a letter of warning (lettre d’observation), and the transmission of a file to the minister (and possibly other officials). Certain legal or administrative actions (sanctions) may be taken, including transfers.

²⁹ National-level stakeholders explained that in cases of violence against students, teachers who are transferred are monitored by education ministries. One teacher reported that civil servants are transferred and PTA teachers dismissed.

4.6 Conclusion

Social and cultural beliefs and expectations shape gender roles and gender power dynamics, in the home and at school. These gendered perceptions and dynamics can determine the professional effects of “traditional” family roles for female (and male) teachers, as well as influencing experiences of gender-based violence in schools and rural communities. Family roles and responsibilities (including childcare and regroupement familial) have a heavy (often negative) impact on female teachers’ professional performance and on managers’ views regarding the recruitment and management of female teachers. Teachers in rural communities experience particular difficulties, and whilst female teachers are more vulnerable to challenges such as sexual harassment, male teachers significantly outnumber female teachers in difficult rural zones. Inequalities can exist when male teachers are more likely to be deployed to these zones. Non-state-supported contract and temporary/PTA teachers, of whom male teachers represent the highest proportion, also face additional difficulties and cannot access state supports.

Efforts to address living and working challenges faced by teachers, primarily those in rural communities, include housing initiatives and streamlined transfer requests. No strategies aim to increase teachers’ retention in the rural zones, with the exception of some individual delegates’ efforts and a recent MINEDUB campaign. Other efforts to address teacher challenges include benefits and incentive measures and delegates’ attempts to support teachers living with HIV-AIDS. These initiatives were described almost exclusively by education managers and the regional and national level, and not by teachers themselves. Despite the significant impact of family responsibilities for all teachers, no policy strategies aim to minimise the negative professional impacts of these responsibilities for both female and male teachers.

Although certain GESP policy strategies (the English version only) contain some references to gender, gender considerations do not appear to be put into practice in addressing teacher challenges. The general education policy context doesn’t fully respond to gendered challenges faced by teachers, particularly the burden of family responsibilities and gender-based violence. This represents an area for policy development: the integration of gender considerations in policy strategies intended to respond to female and male teachers’ living and working challenges, which influence their motivation, performance, interactions and the quality of education they provide.

“We tried to talk to head teachers... about the fact that if the schools are about 70% female [teachers], and if you start doing that, when your females ask for transfers and leave, you are the one to suffer. So if you want to keep the female teachers you need to be as good to them as possible”
(Female regional MINEDUB delegate)

5. Gender equality in education management

This section examines gender in the context of education manager experiences as well as in education management approaches. This examination of the roles, experiences and approaches of education managers, with respect to teacher and school management, focuses on career development processes (including the particular obstacles to advancement and promotion faced by female teachers and managers), personnel management approaches (including gendered interactions between teachers and managers), and gender considerations in school management committees.

5.1 General policy context

Regional education delegations (MINEDUB and MINESEC) are responsible for the pedagogic and administrative management of state-supported teachers (civil servants and contractualisés), including deployment, transfers, advancement, supervision, evaluation and the organisation of ongoing training for personnel. Regional MINEDUB delegations are also responsible for appointing school principals (Republic of Cameroon, 2012a, 2012b). Local councils and PTAs are responsible for the management of council- and PTA-supported teachers, respectively, though their specific responsibilities are unclear. Despite the transfer of teacher management responsibilities to the regional level, many regional managers rely on centralised decision-making (GTZ & DED, 2009; World Bank, 2011, 2012b).

At the school level, school principals or chefs d'établissement play a pivotal role with respect to education management and teacher management. They are responsible for pedagogic, administrative, financial and material school management, the application of school rules and regulations, monitoring and supervision of teachers, and the recruitment of temporary teachers (Republic of Cameroon, 2001a). At the regional and school level, managers' understandings or definitions of gender and gender equality are often inconsistent or incomplete (see Section 7.2.1), and they don't receive sufficient specialised management training,³⁰ limiting their capacity to analyse and respond to gender issues at the teacher or school level.

As stated in the SSE, "the educational corps suffers from the lack of professional prospects: there is no existence of a veritable career profile for Cameroonian teacher[s], or where it exists, it is not put in to practice" (Republic of Cameroon, 2006:52). Whilst teachers of both sexes face challenges in career development, women face particular obstacles in advancement or promotion to management positions. These barriers, identified by participants in the current study as well as in previous research on women in education management in African countries (Chisikwa & Indoshi, 2010; Kagoda, 2003; Oplatka, 2006), include lack of access to ongoing education opportunities enabling them to acquire the qualifications needed for management positions, as well as personal and societal doubts about women's capacity (in terms of skills and availability) to fulfil management responsibilities. At the same time, teachers in rural zones may face added barriers due to communication and transport challenges, with male teachers most highly represented in rural areas.

³⁰ Although school legislation and administration courses are included in teacher training programmes, they may not sufficiently prepare managers for school realities, and by the time teachers attain management posts a significant amount of time has passed since their initial training. The GESF recommends administrative and financial management training for private primary school managers, though not for public school managers. Training for school managers may be initiated at the divisional or regional level.

The SSE and the GESP refer to the revision of teacher status with clearly defined career profiles (paths) for primary and secondary teachers, through “the putting in place of a promotion policy of the teaching corps which will ensure that pedagogic excellence will be the basis for a promotion” (Republic of Cameroon, 2006:78). A 2000 decree outlined recruitment and advancement processes for civil servants and state-supported contract teachers. A 2001 instruction outlined criteria for the nomination of civil servant teachers to school management positions, including grade, training and professional experience, seniority and pedagogic and administrative scores (Republic of Cameroon, 2000, 2001b). The SSE and the GESP also refer to the development of special career profiles for teachers in rural areas, but don’t explain what this entails. With respect to career profiles for teachers, the SSE and GESP, as well as texts outlining procedures and criteria for advancement and promotion, make no mention of gender.

Aside from the GESP’s mention of gender mainstreaming in secondary education resource management (in the English version only) and references to gender training for teachers and pedagogic supervisors, no policy strategies specifically address gender in education management. National ministry officials reported that sex or gender are not considered in personnel management procedures (recruitment, nominations or promotions, transfers, etc), and that no positive discrimination approaches are applied – opportunities for promotion are the same for women and men. As a national MINPROFF official explained, when a position is posted it is said “that female candidates are appreciated, or that

they’re welcome, we encourage women to apply,” but no specific strategies aim to encourage women’s appointment.

In addition to education managers at the regional and school level, school management committees such as school councils and PTAs play a role in education management, and provide a forum through which teachers can participate in school management processes. The SSE promotes good governance in education through participatory school management. School councils (conseils d’école in primary schools, conseils d’établissement in secondary schools) are meant to formalise partnerships with education stakeholders³¹ (Republic of Cameroon, 2001a, 2001b, 2006). To promote good management and governance in basic education, the GESP recommends awareness-raising and training of education staff and school council members on participatory education management (Republic of Cameroon, 2009b). PTAs aim to involve parents and teachers in monitoring the “material, educational, cultural and moral interests of the school” (Ministry of National Education, 1990:1). As school councils and PTAs play a central role in school financing and budgeting, as well as teacher recruitment, they can also play a central role in promoting gender considerations in school-level financial and human resource management – though they don’t regularly address gender issues.

5.2 Career development

5.2.1 Professional advancement of teachers

Career development refers to the advancement of teachers (between classes or échelons or pay scales),

as well as nomination or promotion to leadership (education management) positions. State-supported teachers can advance from one grade (échelon) to the next every two years (on the basis of performance evaluations), moving up the pay scale and developing career profiles. They can also advance or upgrade through continuing studies, though they must seek out and self-finance training opportunities and obtain ministry authorisation.³² Although these challenges affect all teachers, female teachers face particular challenges with continuing studies, related to family responsibilities: “Some of us are willing to go to school again and forward our education, but how do we do it, are you going to leave back your kids? At times... you need to go to the university out of the region, your husband will not take it lightly... For the males its easier for them to forward, but the female its difficult because you will leave your children back at home” (Female rural primary teacher). Similar career development barriers faced by female teachers are described in a Ugandan study (Kagoda, 2003), including lack of information on professional development opportunities, lack of fees to study, distance from study opportunities, and lack of spousal support.

Teachers and managers in rural communities face particular difficulties with respect to career development. They may not have access to information or study opportunities facilitating career advancement (due to communication challenges), so they advance less quickly than teachers and managers in urban centres. Some secondary education stakeholders (regional and national managers, not teachers or school managers themselves), however, perceived that teachers and managers in rural schools advance more quickly,

³¹ School councils are meant to include school managers, PTA board members, and teacher, parent and student representatives, as well as representatives of teacher syndicates, local councils, local NGO and development associations, and traditional authorities.

³² Study authorisations are necessary even for night classes or distance learning; without authorisation, certificates aren’t recognised and teachers may face disciplinary action. One group of rural female primary teachers explained that it can take years to obtain an authorisation.

as they are assigned greater responsibility (eg school management) more quickly than those in urban schools. A national teachers' syndicate official reported that special career profiles for teachers in rural areas "don't exist... because there is a teachers' statute, we would have found it there. Nothing is mentioned."

5.2.2 Promotion to positions of responsibility

Procedures and decisions related to nomination or promotion to positions of responsibility are not consistently understood by teachers and school managers. Many stated that promotion depends on individual competence or ability, professional experience, qualification or grade, and seniority (as defined in government texts³³), whilst others stated that promotion is based on favouritism or nepotism. Though texts outlining career profiles and promotion criteria exist, they are not perceived as being consistently applied. Even certain divisional delegates reported that career profiles are not adhered to: "For chefs d'établissement, it is not entirely linked to abilities. It can be linked to personal connections" (Male divisional MINESEC delegate). An official from the MINEDUB human resources department explained that promotions are "discretionary" (discretionnaire), as the ministry has the final say. Indeed, "discretion" ("discretion de la hiérarchie") was cited by many local, regional, and national participants. As a national teachers' syndicate official explained, teachers don't know what criteria need to be met for nominations and that "it's enough to hear the term 'discretionary' to understand."

A 2001 government "instruction" outlined criteria for the nomination of civil servant teachers to school management positions. These criteria include training and professional experience as well as pedagogic and administrative scores (Republic of Cameroon, 2001b). Female teachers may have particular difficulty meeting these criteria, due to the impact of family responsibilities on training opportunity and professional performance (eg punctuality).

5.2.3 Obstacles for female managers

Participants identified multiple reasons for women's lack of representation in education management, describing barriers limiting women's nomination or promotion to positions of responsibility, as well as their access to opportunities enabling them to meet criteria necessary for nomination/promotion. Statements made by research participants echo previous studies on women in education management. For example, a review of research from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean (Oplatka, 2006) outlined primary barriers to women's advancement in education management: household and family responsibilities, gendered cultural and social values (defining traditional female roles), women's low participation in secondary education (limiting the acquisition of skills and training needed to advance), lack of confidence and self-esteem, and male-dominated decision-making power.

As with female teachers, the weight of family and household responsibilities presents a significant challenge for female managers. They are often viewed as unavailable or unreliable, limiting their prospects of promotion to positions of responsibility and creating an environment that may discourage women from seeking such positions:

³³ Including a 2000 decree outlining advancement processes for civil servant and state-supported contract teachers, and a 2001 instruction outlining nomination of civil servants to school management positions (Republic of Cameroon, 2000, 2001b).

- “Females should be included in the management of schools. However, they should not be exclusively left to manage the schools because they have other household chores that disturb them.” (Male secondary teacher)
- “If most principals were women the work will not have been going on well because of house chores. They will be tied down by babies and maternity leaves. They can only better do the job after they stop putting to birth, but by then they are already weak and preparing for retirement.” (Male rural secondary teacher)
- “We can appoint someone a head teacher when the husband is somewhere [else], but two to three days later she’ll ask to join her husband. There’s even one now, she’s abandoned her job.” (Female divisional MINEDUB delegate)

Many participants reported that the primary barriers to career development exist at the individual level. That is, women are under-represented in education management because they do not seek out such positions (sometimes they may not recognise their own skills), because they are unwilling to accept positions in rural areas, or because of their “difficult” character or lack of confidence and self-esteem, initiative or ambition. Statements concerning these individual-level barriers were made in 11 separate teacher focus groups and regional manager interviews (with nearly two-thirds of the responses coming from male participants):

- “Often we don’t have women who correspond to the profile, but often too... they don’t apply or they don’t put themselves forward.” (Female INGO representative)

- “With respect to management [positions], women do not accept to go to the villages. They prefer to remain in town as a vice-[principal].” (Female sub-divisional inspector)
- “It is difficult to name women to management positions... We do not discriminate, but it is the woman’s character that is difficult.” (Male ENIEG director)



“We can appoint someone a head teacher when the husband is somewhere [else], but two to three days later she’ll ask to join her husband. There’s even one now, she’s abandoned her job”
(Female divisional MINEDUB delegate)

Women's lack of professional training or experience was often cited as a barrier to advancement. Some managers reported that more men than women fulfil conditions for promotion (professional experience, grade, etc) and, as such, more men are promoted to positions of responsibility. Challenges faced by women (including family responsibilities) in accessing ongoing training opportunities can prevent them from acquiring necessary skills or qualifications. Other systemic barriers to women's advancement, such as male-dominated decision-making, were only cited by members of one female teacher focus group and one regional ministry official: "It's men who manage all of that, it's them who propose, it's them who decide... All my colleagues who started in '97, I'm the only one who doesn't have a management position. They're all men" (Female divisional MINEDUB official).

Despite widespread recognition that women face particular barriers to promotion, participants didn't describe strategies, at either the local or national level, to address specific barriers (such as the burden of household responsibilities) in order to facilitate women's equal access to career development and advancement (moving beyond offering the "same chances for women and men"). The professional impacts of household and family responsibility appear to be accepted as natural (by both women and men), based on socio-cultural expectations concerning women's roles and responsibilities. This widely-held perception doesn't create an environment favourable to women's advancement to management positions. Some national stakeholders reported that older women (aged 45–50) can be considered for promotion to positions of responsibility, as they have fewer family responsibilities and can concentrate on

their career. Although a number of female education managers (school principals, inspectors and delegates) participated in the research, they didn't specifically describe their personal experiences, either their challenges or their successes.

5.3 Approaches to personnel management

5.3.1 Gender considerations in personnel management

Due to multiple responsibilities and a lack of formal management training/skills, female and male school managers may be unable to address all aspects of school management (student support, teacher management, school functioning and administration, etc). A lack of comprehensive management training and training on gender issues, as well as inconsistent or incomplete understandings of gender and gender equality, may also limit their ability to examine and respond to gender inequalities, in the management of schools as well as of school personnel.

Many managers expressed a "gender neutral/blind" approach to personnel management, reporting that opportunities (such as workshops) and incentives are based solely on individual teachers' competencies, character or output. However, several managers explained that when selecting teachers to attend workshops or seminars, they select equal numbers of women and men, or prioritise women. One male semi-rural primary school principal explained that he prioritises local female teachers for professional development opportunities, as they have more contact with the local population and can serve as role models in the school and the community. However, during one focus group discussion in the Far North,

female semi-rural primary teachers reported that male teachers are more often selected for training, as they are considered more available than women (who have more family responsibilities), though this was not reiterated by participants in the other regions.

Many teachers reported that school tasks or responsibilities (other than teaching) are assigned to female and male teachers based on ability, regardless of sex. Others reported that task assignment is based on traditional gender roles. A group of female urban secondary teachers reported that when ceremonies are organised at school, women are assigned "secondary" tasks such as decorating, preparing food and buying gifts, while more important tasks are reserved for male teachers.

5.3.2 Perceptions of managers' impacts and interactions

Despite barriers for women in education management, a number of participant statements suggest that women are increasingly accepted as managers. In 13 of 18 teacher focus groups, participants (with female and male primary and secondary teachers) reported that managers' ability depends on the individual (character, merit, etc) and not their sex, and that there is no real difference between female and male managers.

Statements about women being more efficient managers were made in 17 separate focus groups (with primary and secondary students and teachers) and regional interviews. Participants reported that women are more rigorous, are better administrative and financial managers and maintain a cleaner school environment, as well as more efficiently managing personnel (due in part to their "maternal" character):

- “When women are at the head, they behave themselves in a maternal manner... She puts a lot of feeling in her interactions with her students and even the personnel. Therefore people who act under her behave themselves in a more trusting manner. People are less stressed. They are not very afraid [as] with men.” (Male divisional MINESEC delegate)
- “We have had a good number of head teachers who embezzled PTA levies, examination fees and collect exorbitant amounts of money, but you will hardly find that in schools headed by a woman.” (Female regional MINEDUB delegate)
- “Generally, in our context when a woman is named to a position of responsibility, she always tries to leave her mark, while men generally let themselves go.” (Male urban secondary parent)

A number of participants, including female and male teachers in rural and urban primary and secondary schools, as well as some regional education managers, reported that female managers are particularly strict or severe towards women.³⁴ As one male semi-rural primary teacher reported, “The [female] principal and the men, there were no problems, but the principal and the women, there were more problems. She had too many things to reproach to the women, and you know, ‘les corps de même nature se repoussent’. She was not too sensitive to the women’s problems.” Similarly, a female rural primary teacher stated that “Most of the male head teachers understand [more] than the female, that how I have been seeing it... the female head teacher will always want to sit on the female [teachers], whether it is because of the thing that they are the same or what, I don’t understand.” However, no female managers discussed such conflicts or challenges with female teachers.

5.3.3 Efforts to promote gender equality in education management

National MINEDUB and MINESEC officials reported that training activities have been organised for educational managers at the divisional, regional and national level, focusing on gender approaches, challenges faced by women and men in the field, gender mainstreaming in administrative procedures, gender in school environment, and gender and development. However, gender training is not provided at all levels of education and school management. Such training is a promising start with respect to gender-responsive human resource, school and education management, as it reflects an awareness of gender as an important issue, at least in higher levels of education management. However, these strategies do not appear to have been transmitted to (or translated into practice on) the ground; rather, they seem to remain at the national or regional level.

All education managers (at the school, sub-divisional, divisional or regional level) interviewed for this research play a role in promotion procedures (with varying levels of influence), through recommendations, nominations or appointments to positions of responsibility (head teachers, school principals, inspectors, etc). Of 25 regional managers interviewed, only three described efforts to promote women’s representation:

- “The divisional delegation makes proposals to us as to when an inspector retires or dies... When it comes to character and responsibility, we have to depend on their proposal. Quite often, they give us the males. So we try to see among their proposals the ladies. At your level, you’re able to influence appointments.” (Female regional MINEDUB delegate)

³⁴ Some national stakeholders reported that this is not necessarily a “negative” interaction, that it is rather a sign of effective management and high expectations.

“Generally, in our context when a woman is named to a position of responsibility, she always tries to leave her mark, while men generally let themselves go”

(Male urban secondary parent)

- “The [female] regional delegate for basic education makes an effort because if you make a proposal for appointment, if there are no women, she will not sign it. But when you see the proportion, it’s always minimal. But she makes a lot of efforts.” (Male ENIEG director)
- “We say that when you have the files in front of you, the men [and] women, you give a proportion. We know that there can’t be the same number, because it will go progressively... For example, of 100 principals, you maybe have to name 10 women... The files, we study them, we say, ‘Well, as we’ve received the files... we have to name a certain number of women.’” (Female divisional MINEDUB official)

Education ministry officials at the national level explained that management positions are managed at the central (national) level. As such, whilst regional or divisional delegates can make efforts to promote gender equality, their influence may be limited. Ministry officials also reported that a lack of clear objectives and indicators for women’s representation in education management impedes actions to promote gender equality.

5.4 School management committees

Committees such as school councils and PTAs provide a forum through which teachers can participate in school management processes and influence decision-making in collaboration with parents, school managers and other stakeholders. Teacher focus group discussions examined activities carried out by school councils and PTAs, although female and male teachers rarely spoke of their own involvement in these committees.

5.4.1 Roles of school management committees

School councils are responsible for the adoption of “school projects” (annual school development programmes) and school regulations as well as school performance evaluation (Republic of Cameroon, 2001a). As such, they can play a central role in ensuring the integration of gender considerations in school management. PTAs are meant to work in collaboration with school principals, addressing teacher behaviour and working and living conditions (Ministry of National Education, 1990). Primary and secondary school PTAs are responsible for recruiting temporary teachers, and some study participants reported that PTAs provide incentives to teachers. A semi-rural secondary school principal in the Far North reported that all of his PTA funds are used to support teachers and other school personnel. PTAs can play a role in ensuring gender considerations in teacher recruitment, management and support.

School councils are responsible for school budget development, and PTAs play a central role in school financing: as one national MINEDUB official explained, schools cannot function without PTA funding for infrastructure, materials and teachers. The central role of parents and communities in contributing to school budgets was cited in a World Bank report (2012a) on education governance. These committees can play a central role in addressing gender (in)equality, following a gender-responsive budgeting approach, as actions often depend on the availability of financial resources.

Many education managers, in all regions, reported that their school councils are not operational and are not involved in school management: “Generally, these councils exist in name only” (Male ENIEG director).

A lack of financial resources (decrease in budgets transferred from ministries) is a primary reason behind the lack of action by school councils. PTAs were generally described as being much more active than school councils, though they play a less direct role in school governance and respond primarily to school infrastructure and equipment needs, student discipline and support, and the recruitment of temporary teachers. PTAs also face financial difficulties, as many parents are unable to pay fees, as well as budget-related conflicts between PTA heads and school managers.

School council and PTA members did not describe efforts to integrate gender considerations in education management, beyond some responses to socio-sexual challenges facing female and male students. As with regional education managers and school managers, management committee members may not have sufficient understanding of gender to examine and respond to gender issues. General participatory management approaches don’t appear to be implemented by school councils or PTAs, probably due to a lack of knowledge or application of policy texts.

Only regional and divisional delegates in the Northwest described efforts to engage PTAs and school councils in addressing gender-based violence – violence against girls and women in schools and against female teachers in rural communities. For example, as a female regional MINEDUB delegate explained, “[We] talked to the divisional delegates to get their PTAs to put up surveillance kinds of committees, to identify teachers with these low moral attitudes, that could be responsible and could report to us...

We had a coordination meeting, we like to work with them, to work with discipline, not to just transfer him [the teacher].” However, this represents an initiative by delegates in one region, not necessarily reflecting approaches applied in other regions.

5.4.2 Women’s participation in school management committees

Although Cameroon’s PTA statutes recommend the equal distribution of positions of responsibility between women and men (Ministry of National Education, 1990), only a small number of study participants reported that their PTA boards include both women and men or that PTAs are headed by women. Most parents, teachers and managers reported that PTA boards are composed primarily of men, though there are often many female parents at meetings (although in some Far North groups it was reported that men outnumber women). Reasons for women’s low representation or participation on PTA boards include a lack of time (due to household or farming responsibilities), lack of confidence or interest, and illiteracy.

A female semi-rural secondary school principal explained, “We weren’t able to have a woman on the board. The mothers were there, they refused outright... We absolutely wanted to entrust the treasury to a woman, [but] there were no candidates... I tell myself that it’s the area, these are not educated women, so they tell themselves they’re incapable.”

A study of girls’ education in Tanzania (Unterhalter & Heslop, 2011) reported that higher levels of female membership in school management committees can translate to increased gender parity in school enrolment, attendance, progression and completion. A lack

of women on PTA boards means that decisions are often influenced solely or primarily by men, though the importance of women’s participation was recognised by some participants. As a rural father explained, “The composition of the PTA is made up of eight persons, five men and three women, thus this tries to bring up gender equity in school... Women can take some important decisions that help the girl child to study. In a case where we have only males they may under-look certain aspects that concern girls.”

One male semi-rural primary school principal in the Far North also explained that women are not well represented on PTA boards because they are involved in Mother–Teacher Associations (MTAs) (Associations des Mères d’Elèves). MTAs have been established by UNICEF and VSO Cameroon in ZEPs, enabling mothers to be more actively involved in their educational community. Education managers in the East and the Far North reported that the MTAs in their schools carry out effective sensitisation activities and support girls’ education.

5.5 Conclusion

Regional-level education managers, school managers, and school management committees are responsible, to varying degrees, for teacher (personnel) management and other aspects of education management, including budgeting/ financing. There appears to be a lack of gender considerations in personnel management, with many managers adopting a “gender blind” approach. Inconsistent and incomplete understandings of gender among managers and insufficient comprehensive management and gender training impede gender-responsive approaches and

interventions. A lack of clear policy objectives and indicators for human resource management in education probably limits gender-responsive management practices.

Socio-cultural roles and expectations regarding gender roles are reflected in perceptions of managers’ impacts and interactions. Female managers are often perceived as maternal figures, ensuring more responsive personnel (and school) management. At the same time, however, female managers were also described as particularly severe towards female teachers, reflecting the complexity of gendered interactions. Although education ministries promote equality of chances for women and men in teaching and in management, female teachers and managers face challenges in career development, due primarily to socio-cultural perceptions and expectations regarding family responsibilities (which also influence access to training and other criteria for promotion). The negative impacts of family responsibilities on women’s professional advancement appear to generally be perceived as “natural”. Education management policies and career development texts (advancement or promotion procedures) make no specific mention of gender. Efforts to promote gender equality in education management or to respond to gender issues were described by some regional-level managers, but these don’t necessarily reflect systematic or widespread approaches.

6. Gender-responsive approaches to teaching

This section examines gender issues in teachers' pedagogic approaches, interactions with students and responses to student challenges, and gender considerations in initial teacher training and continuing professional development. These aspects have a significant influence on gendered experiences at the student level.

6.1 General policy context

Classroom experiences for teachers and students (including their interactions) are influenced by factors such as pedagogy (teaching and learning approaches) and teacher training. CEDAW Article 10 emphasises the importance of classroom and teaching approaches with respect to gender equality, recommending the adaptation of teaching methods, revision of school programmes and textbooks, and access to reproductive health information. As stated in a UNESCO report (2000:16), "biases in teacher behaviour and training, teaching and learning processes, and curricula and textbooks often lead to lower completion and achievement rates for girls".

Gender-responsive³⁵ education depends on teachers having techniques and tools enabling them to address inequalities in and out of the classroom. The SSE and the GESP refer to the implementation of teaching approaches sensitive to gender and to individual student needs, including:

- the consideration of gender issues in initial and continuing primary teacher training
- training primary and secondary teachers on l'approche par les compétences (skills approach), including discussions of gender themes³⁶
- capacity-building of secondary teachers in pedagogic techniques that consider the gender approach
- continuing pedagogic training programmes and supervision for primary and secondary teachers and school managers, including training workshops on gender approaches

- improved quality and frequency of pedagogic supervision of primary and secondary teachers as a means of enhancing teaching quality, including (in the GESP) gender training for divisional MINESEC pedagogic advisors.³⁷

6.2 Gender-responsive approaches to teaching and learning

6.2.1 Pedagogic approach

Specific pedagogic approaches identified in policy documents (eg l'approche par les compétences) were rarely mentioned by teachers or school managers. Though a small number of teachers acknowledged the importance of language or gender considerations in teaching, many teachers reported that they had never heard of or were not familiar with gender-sensitive pedagogic techniques.³⁸ Gender-responsive teaching initiatives are due mainly to personal sensitivity ("sensibilité personnelle") and not to a particular policy or strategy. As a national MINESEC official explained, with respect to pedagogy "we haven't really yet implemented a real policy that considers gender".

Most teachers defined a gender-responsive classroom as one in which female and male students are treated in the same manner (eg mixed seating, equal distribution of classroom tasks and roles), without consideration of gender. Others perceived gender-responsive pedagogy as different or separate approaches, activities or resources for girls and boys. A male secondary teacher described his teaching approach,

³⁵ According to FAWE (2005b), gender sensitivity refers to a person's ability to recognise problems related to gender, whereas gender responsiveness refers to a person's capacity to take appropriate measures to correct gender biases and discrimination in the interests of gender equity and equality.

³⁶ The English version of the GESP, though not the French, refers to the discussion of gender themes in training.

³⁷ Gender training for pedagogic advisors is mentioned in the English version of the GESP, though not the French version.

³⁸ Gender-responsive pedagogy refers to teaching and learning approaches that take into account girls' and boys' specific needs and promote equal participation and performance, such as inclusive classroom arrangement, the use of non-discriminatory language and materials in teaching, and responses to student challenges (such as sexual development) (FAWE, 2005b).

reflecting approaches described by many other female and male teachers: “During lesson planning and preparation I don’t think about some particular activities to be performed by boys or by girls, but I design activities to be performed by the learners and no partiality nor preferential treatment. However, while in the class I consider some gender aspects in the arrangement of their sitting positions... no separate benches for boys and no separate benches for girls.”

In some cases, teachers’ efforts to encourage girls’ participation may reflect gender biases, suggesting that even when teachers are aware of approaches to promote equal participation they can maintain gender inequalities in attitudes and beliefs and reproduce them among students: “Since I know that the girls are the weaker sex, I try to motivate them by giving specially to them pencils and pens when they attempt some challenging questions [more] than to the boys” (Male secondary teacher).

Teachers’ ability to implement pedagogic approaches responding to students’ specific needs is hindered by high student:teacher ratios. During a regional validation workshop, secondary teachers and managers reported that with high ratios, more time is spent on discipline and evaluation and less time on teaching activities. The GESP aimed to reduce student:teacher ratios to 40:1 in basic education and 60:1 in secondary education by 2012, through the construction of more classrooms and the recruitment of qualified teachers. In 2009/10, the average national student:teacher ratio in public primary schools was 52:1. Significant regional disparities exist, however, with ratios of 46:1 in the Centre, 51:1 in the Northwest, 56:1 in the East and 72:1 in the Far North (MINEDUB, 2010).

In the classroom, gender-responsive teaching is guided not only by pedagogic approaches but by curriculum content as well as textbooks and other pedagogic tools, which serve as vehicles for socialisation (Education International, 2011; UNESCO, 2009). Gender-responsive curricula, at the primary and secondary level, address the needs of girls and boys and ensure that all students benefit from curriculum content. Education on sexual and reproductive health is one aspect of gender-responsive curricula, providing students with information necessary to make informed decisions as they mature, particularly with respect to interactions between girls, boys, women and men. Primary and secondary school curricula in Cameroon include a sexual education component, and students reported that teachers discuss sexual health issues during breaks or spare hours.

The GESP aims to improve the quality of textbooks and didactic materials through the consideration of gender in textbook selection and the training of teachers and managers on textbook assessment.³⁹ During one focus group discussion, urban female secondary teachers observed that efforts are made to remove stereotypes from textbooks. However, many teachers, both female and male teachers in rural and urban primary and secondary schools, stated that gender is not considered or discussed in their textbooks and teaching materials.⁴⁰

6.3 Responses to student challenges

Teachers play a central role in responding to students’ social and academic challenges that lead to absences, grade repetition and drop-outs. Teacher attitudes are at least as important as formal pedagogic

approaches. The 2011 EFA Global Monitoring Report emphasises the importance of teacher attitudes with respect to beliefs about students’ abilities, responses to student challenges, and interactions with students. This was echoed by a national MINESEC official, who emphasised the need to examine teacher attitudes (such as sensitivity to sex-specific student issues) as they often have more influence than formal teaching approaches.

Male and female students, at the primary and secondary level, face many common difficulties, including tardiness and absenteeism resulting from household and farming chores, schooling costs (PTA costs, exam fees, etc), and lack of school materials, insufficient parental support or supervision, and experiences of violence. Girls’ education, in particular, is negatively affected by household chores, as they are often responsible for cleaning, cooking, and caring for siblings: as a male rural primary teacher stated, “Most of those who come late are the girls... Their parents send them elsewhere to do this or that before they come to school. This issue of late coming on the girls than the boys is because of too many house chores.”

Primary and secondary students also face challenges related to physical and sexual development. Students, teachers, parents and regional managers discussed the significant negative impacts of menstruation and pregnancy on girls’ education, resulting in psychological distress, repeated absences and school drop-out: “If she has her period, she does not come to school even for a week... They are ashamed” (Female primary semi-rural teacher). Student challenges, as well as the manner in which teachers view their students, vary according to regional or cultural context;

³⁹ The English version of the GESP, though not the French, refers to textbooks promoting gender equality and reducing discrimination between boys and girls.

⁴⁰ Access to textbooks and teaching materials (gender-sensitive or not) presents a significant challenge and, despite government efforts to distribute didactic materials, primary and secondary teachers and students cited a lack of textbooks as a central challenge.

for example, forced marriage was only discussed by participants in the Far North. Challenges faced by primary students often become more serious at the secondary level, particularly for girls.⁴¹

Female and male teachers in primary and secondary schools expressed an awareness of the gendered impacts of these challenges, particularly household responsibilities and sexual development (influenced by socio-cultural norms and expectations), on girls' school performance. Girls' physical development is often viewed as impacting their educational performance. As a female rural primary teacher explained, "The girls... by the time they are reaching say Class 5, Class 6, they start dropping [in performance]... When girls are maturing and then certain things go like that, you see they start focusing their minds on other things and then less interest in books and they end up dropping." It seems that these negative outcomes are often accepted as "natural" by teachers, though as one national stakeholder stated, physical development shouldn't be viewed as "fatal" for girls' education.

Teacher responses to student and classroom situations are moments for sensitisation: although school regulations guide responses to certain situations (such as student pregnancy), the ways in which teachers respond to challenges faced by students impacts school experience, performance and retention, and influences student interactions and attitudes. For example, female students, teachers, and parents at the primary and secondary level reported that when a girl is menstruating or is pregnant, female and male teachers sometimes make hurtful or humiliating comments, causing the girl to miss classes or drop out of school.

Responses to student challenges are primarily the initiatives of individual teachers or school managers, rather than being integrated into school policies. Examples provided by participants illustrate teacher initiatives, discussed primarily by secondary teachers:

- an urban secondary mother explained that certain teachers had observed that girls frequently arrived late to school due to morning household tasks and allowed them to enter the class late rather than making them wait outside

- a female rural secondary teacher's response to student menstruation: "There was once a girl [who] found herself in this situation... Many people had seen it, and some boys had seen and were so curious about it... I spoke with her and when she went to the office I stayed behind [and] told the others that what has happen to her is just a natural phenomenon that occurs in human beings... this happens to a woman naturally, it is not an illness, so you don't have to laugh at her... all of them were so quiet and sympathetic."
- a male rural primary teacher's intervention in a case of student pregnancy: "We realised this girl was pregnant. I then assigned a female teacher to examine and investigate... The student was retained in school. We guarded this child, advised the parents. The child finally wrote her exams and succeeded."

Teachers reported that they lack training or guidance on responding to specific student challenges, and that student:teacher ratios prevent close student supervision. As a MINESEC official explained, it is unrealistic to expect teachers to respond to students' psycho-social challenges, as teachers' tasks are already sufficiently complex without additional responsibilities requiring more time/availability. However, a female rural secondary teacher explained that teachers will be better prepared to teach students if they are trained to respond to their psychological challenges.⁴²

6.4 Interactions between teachers and students

Interactions with teachers, both in and out of the classroom, influence student learning and performance, and are often influenced by perceptions of female/male characteristics. Participants' perceptions of female and male teachers and their interactions with students often reflected traditional gender roles. Statements describing female teachers as maternal and affectionate and more sensitive to student challenges were made in 21 separate focus groups (with students, parents and teachers) and regional

⁴¹ Focus group discussions focused primarily on challenges facing female students. Limited attention was paid to boys' specific experiences and challenges.

⁴² Guidance counsellors (consellers d'orientation) are responsible for providing psycho-social support to students. However, their actions are limited by a lack of understanding or valuing of their role (on the part of the chefs d'établissement, students, or counsellors themselves), a lack of effective management and supervision, and high student:counsellor ratios.

interviews in all regions (statements were made equally by male and female and primary- and secondary-level participants):

- Female teachers “take care of the children, in the same way they take care of their own children” (Male rural primary head teacher)
- “The maternal instinct makes it so that when a woman enters a classroom, the children are less afraid... children are more open to women compared to men... This stems from the maternal instinct.” (Male urban secondary teacher)

Statements describing male teachers as stronger authority and discipline figures, and as harsher towards students, were made in 14 separate focus groups (with students, parents and teachers) and regional interviews in all regions (statements were made equally by male and female and primary- and secondary-level participants):

- “With me the pupils really sit up but since they [female teachers] are loose on the students, they take things for granted... So I think there is a difference in the influence because when you are hard on an aspect the children will sit up [more] than when you are loose.” (Male rural secondary teacher)
- “[Male teachers] are too authoritative. As soon as they enter there, the children will be tense, they do not want to develop themselves mentally. That’s the negative side.” (Male divisional MINEDUB delegate)

Statements about female teachers providing particular encouragement or advice to female students were made in 15 regional interviews. However, a number of participants (including female students) reported that female teachers are particularly harsh or severe towards girls. “Instead of considering girls’ problems, it is them who are against women... Maybe they want these girls to do better or well, I don’t know, they want to keep these women behind, I don’t know... The decisions that these women take against women, we men, we have to say, ‘No, it’s not like that. You have to consider them as students’” (Male ENIEG director). Participants also described rivalries between male teachers and students or reported that male teachers favour female

students. Students’ perceptions that male teachers often favour female students and are harsher towards male students were also described in a review of studies on teachers in South and East Africa (Chege, 2006).

Although female teachers were described as friendly and maternal, they were perceived as less available (due to household responsibilities) than male teachers by some participants, including students and parents: “The [female] teacher has other preoccupations as opposed to the [male] teacher. The [male] teacher gives his all in his work, he has all his time, after even his class, he still takes care of the students, he can stay with the students even two hours or three hours. But the [female] teacher, as soon as she’s finished her class she has to quickly leave to take care of the home” (Female urban secondary parent).

“The maternal instinct makes it so that when a woman enters a classroom, the children are less afraid... children are more open to women compared to men... This stems from the maternal instinct”
(Male urban secondary teacher)

6.5 Gender considerations in teacher training and professional development

Discussions of gender in initial teacher training and continuing professional development are of importance not only with respect to considerations of and responses to student needs, but as a means of enabling teachers and school managers to examine and address gender issues at their own level and in broader education management, including gendered roles, responsibilities and opportunities influenced by local or regional socio-cultural aspects.

6.5.1 Initial teacher training

During their initial training, teachers are taught general pedagogic approaches applicable to all students, and, in some cases, approaches considering the needs of students with learning difficulties. Primary and secondary teachers reported that there was no examination of gender as a specific topic during their initial training. As a male ENIEG director stated, discussions of gender are “scattered” in teacher training. A female primary teacher explained, “During my training, gender was not discussed as a theme during my course, but it was carried out globally... both boys and girls were given the same treatment when it came to teaching and learning process... Gender issues were only discussed as a theme when we had to carry on a debate, for example, ‘a woman’s place is in the kitchen’.”

A number of primary and secondary teachers (as well as ENIEG directors) explained that courses such as professional ethics and morals, child psychology, sociology or philosophy prepare them to respond to certain gender-related issues among students. A male ENS director reported that students are increasingly discussing issues of sexuality, sexual health and female and male social roles during various teacher training courses, and a male ENIEG director reported that teacher trainees carry out research projects on gender-related topics (focusing primarily on experiences of students). However, gender biases in student and teacher management can emerge during teacher training. As a male secondary teacher reported, during his training managers favoured female students, causing frustration among male students.

6.5.2 Continuing training and professional development

Teachers reported recently attending training or seminars on topics such as general teaching and classroom management approaches (eg group dynamics, student motivation, communication, lesson planning). These training topics may include references to gender, though not as a specific focus and not in depth: “Gender might come in the sense that you find that, but not so deeply... At the level of the ministry... what we do is to [inject] issues of gender in it while passing but it is not a main theme” (Male divisional MINESEC delegate).

Continuing training activities (*journées pédagogiques*) for state-supported primary and secondary teachers are organised at the divisional and sub-divisional levels, during which pedagogic approaches (including those intended to respond to individual student needs) and tools are presented. These activities are generally organised once



a year (occasionally more frequently, as described by some participants), due to limited financial resources. Though journées pédagogiques are mandatory for all teachers, they were only specifically mentioned by one group of secondary teachers, which may indicate that teachers do not perceive these activities as continuing training or professional development.

Training on pedagogic approaches and teacher professional development is reinforced by pedagogic supervision. Divisional and sub-divisional pedagogic advisors (conseillers or animateurs pédagogiques) and regional pedagogic inspectors are responsible for monitoring teachers' application of teaching programmes and approaches. Pedagogic supervisors (at the secondary level, at least) have been encouraged to consider a gender approach during inspections, though no formal guidelines are provided, monitoring is limited, and teachers are often unaware of new pedagogic approaches. Limited financial and human resources prevent consistent pedagogic supervision (field visits) and data collection in primary and secondary education (CONAP, n.d.; World Bank, 2012a). Insufficient or inconsistent continuing professional development and support via pedagogic training and supervision means that teachers don't have access to opportunities to learn and practise new teaching approaches, including those responsive to gender and/or individual student needs.

Formal continuing professional development and supervision are provided to state-supported teachers. It is unclear whether other contract or temporary teachers (such as PTA teachers) have access to continuing training or supports enabling them to learn and implement gender-responsive pedagogic approaches. This is of significance due to the proportion of non-state-supported primary and secondary teachers in certain regions, such as the Far North, as well as the high proportion of male teachers who are employed as non-state contract, temporary or PTA teachers (see Section 3.2.3).

6.6 Conclusion

Teachers' awareness of gender-responsive approaches influences gendered experiences and gender equality at the student level. Although most references to gender in education policy texts concern pedagogical training and supervision for teachers, gender-specific content doesn't appear to be fully integrated into primary and secondary teachers' initial training and continuing professional development. Current teacher training doesn't necessarily provide teachers with the practical knowledge and skills needed to fully respond to girls' and boys' specific learning (academic) and psycho-social needs and challenges. Inconsistent continuing training and supervision for teachers as well as high student:teacher ratios also impede the implementation of gender-responsive pedagogical approaches.

Female teachers are often perceived as maternal and male teachers are more authoritative, reflecting stereotypical "feminine" and "masculine" characteristics and roles, and shaping the gendered socialisation of students. However, descriptions of conflict or tension between female teachers and female students (and between male teachers and male students) once again illustrate the complexity of gendered interactions in classrooms and schools.

7. Changes and challenges in gender equality in teaching and education management

Although a number of initiatives, at the school or ministry level, have resulted in positive changes or progress in gender considerations in teaching and education management, significant practice and policy challenges remain with respect to gender equality, concerning understanding of gender and gender equality, cultural factors, regional disparities, and barriers to policy implementation and monitoring.

7.1 Progress in gender equality in teaching and education management

A number of factors impede education actors' understanding and analysis of, and response to, gender inequalities. Challenges also exist with respect to the development and implementation of gender-responsive education policies. Although significant challenges impact gender equality in education in Cameroon, stakeholders at all levels identified a number of promising changes and initiatives promoting gender equality in teaching and education management. Some of these initiatives are described in preceding sections, although others are not. It is important, however, to acknowledge efforts made at the school and education ministry level, as they can represent a starting point for increased attention to, and action for, gender equality in teaching and management.

Promising changes or initiatives at the school level include:

- increasing numbers of female teachers in primary and secondary education
- the application of gender-responsive teaching and classroom management approaches by individual teachers
- increasing awareness among teachers, female and male, of the importance of responses to specific needs of girls and boys and individual teacher/manager initiatives to support students in cases of pregnancy, forced marriage, sexual violence and other gender-related challenges
- increasing awareness of the specific challenges faced by female teachers and managers
- involvement of PTAs (and MTAs) in responding to sexual violence and other gender issues
- efforts to promote women's representation on PTA boards and to encourage participation of women and men during meetings, as well as the establishment of MTAs in ZEPs
- involvement of local authorities and community members in preventing female and male teacher harassment in rural communities
- school collaboration with international and local NGOs and CSOs to address gender issues, such as violence against female students and teachers.

Promising changes or initiatives at the ministry level (MINEDUB and MINESEC) include:

- references to improvement of teachers' living and working conditions (including some sex-disaggregated indicators⁴³) in GESP education policy strategies
- collection of some sex-disaggregated data on students, teachers and managers
- teacher training on l'approche par les compétences, encouraging attention to individual students' needs
- selection of gender-sensitive textbooks, in collaboration with UNESCO, and the integration of sexual education and human rights components in primary and secondary school curricula
- training of regional and national education management personnel on gender issues
- managers' individual efforts, at the regional level, to encourage women's representation in education management
- efforts to construct teacher housing (logements d'astreinte), in partnership with international donors, though it's unclear if these efforts focus on rural areas
- involvement of local authorities in responding to teacher challenges, such as integration into rural communities (eg MINEDUB campaign on teacher integration and retention)
- "gender focal points" (MINPROFF representatives) within ministries, responsible for implementing a gender approach at the ministry level (see Section 7.2.1)
- advocacy efforts of EFA officials within MINEDUB/MINESEC on the importance of teachers' working and living conditions and gender equality in education
- integration of education considerations in MINPROFF policy documents, including the National Gender Policy and the National Strategy for the Elimination of Gender Based Violence.

7.2 Factors influencing gender equality

7.2.1 Understanding of gender and gender equality

Gender-biased attitudes, at all levels of teaching and management, present a significant obstacle to gender equality in education in Cameroon. Perceptions of "natural"

⁴³ Indicators for basic education strategies include the number of female and male teachers trained in the skills approach, the number of female and male contract teachers absorbed as civil servants, and the number of female beneficiaries of residences for school managers in rural areas. Indicators for secondary education strategies include the number of female beneficiaries of residences for school managers in rural areas and the percentage of female and male teachers recruited (Republic of Cameroon, 2009b).

obstacles (primarily family/ domestic responsibilities) facing female teachers and managers as well as perceptions concerning school-wide issues such as gender-based violence can limit efforts to address experiences of gender-related inequality, which in turn has a significant impact on professional experiences for female and male teachers and managers and education outcomes for female and male students.

Whilst education managers discussed their definitions of gender, only a small number of teachers discussed gender specifically, and of those most stated that they lacked knowledge of the term: “We don’t apply gender-sensitive practices because we aren’t trained. We only have an idea about gender, [but] not very much” (Male urban secondary teacher). A female divisional MINEDUB official stated that on the rare occasions that gender is discussed, it is in vague terms and not well defined. Many different understandings of gender emerged during the research (see Table 7.1), reflecting the lack of a clear and consistent definition of gender/gender equality in education management. This can hamper critical analyses of gender and inequality as well as efforts to respond to gender inequalities.

Perceptions of gender equality in terms of equal numbers of men and women or in terms of gender neutrality/ blindness can mask gender-related issues which results in discrimination. They ignore girls’ and boys’ or women’s and men’s specific experiences, and limit attention to processes, practices and beliefs favouring males or impeding women (or vice versa) among students, teachers or managers. As a male divisional MINESEC delegate reflected, “When we talk about the case of gender equality... it relates to what?”

Table 7.1: What does “gender equality” mean to education managers?

Gender equality means equal numbers of women and men

- “At the level of my division, in PTA meetings, we ensure that if there [are] four people elected in the board of the school council, two should be men and two women.” (Male divisional MINESEC delegate)
- “When a board is set up, we should consider the gender aspect... nominate people while considering the gender approach. If it’s six, we should have three men and three women.” (Female sub-divisional inspector)

Gender equality means quotas for women

- “We say that when you have files before you, the men [and] women, we give a proportion... We know that there can’t be the same numbers, because it will be progressive... For example, of 100 principals, ten women should maybe be appointed.” (Male divisional MINEDUB official)

Gender equality means the same chances for women and men

- “Equality for me does not mean having 55 women, 55 men... There are among the teachers those who fulfil the conditions, the intellectual conditions, the conditions of seniority, the professional conditions. So we select among these people, and we give each an independent possibility of admission according to these conditions. For me, that’s equality of chances.” (Male divisional MINESEC delegate)
- “Gender equality, it rests on the possibility... of giving equal chances to all, with equal qualifications, rather than in terms of number.” (Male divisional MINESEC delegate)

Gender equality means gender neutrality

- “Well, gender equality in the school environment... we should consider competencies without considering gender.” (Male semi-rural primary school principal)
- “We do not distinguish between girls and boys... When they arrive in training, we don’t discriminate. Those who succeed, succeed, and those who do not succeed, fail... We don’t say this number of girls or boys.” (Male ENIEG director)

It relates to equality, for example '5/5' or else equality of chances? That is, that behaviours that could prevent [girls] or that favour boys are not considered."

As one national-level stakeholder explained, the lack of a clear definition of "gender" at the policy level presents a significant challenge. For example, the GESP (one of Cameroon's most important, overarching policy documents) doesn't include a definition of gender or gender equality, though it uses those terms repeatedly, including in sections on education. Only the English version of the GESP partially defines a "gender approach". The lack of a clear policy definition means that many people (including education ministry officials) perceive gender as referring only to women's issues or to women's empowerment/feminism. Although MINPROFF's national gender policy could guide people's understanding of gender and gender equality, the document has not yet been adopted or disseminated. In addition, whilst MINPROFF gender focal points are responsible for promoting and implementing a gender approach at the ministry level, national ministry officials reported that their roles and actions aren't clear and that they don't have the means (capacities or resources) necessary to implement regular, concrete activities.

When examining participants' gender awareness or gender-responsiveness, it is important to move beyond their direct statements about gender equality and to pay attention to the awareness they demonstrate of the specific needs and experiences of girls, boys, women and men: "We have met many groups... groups of teachers, of female managers, of students from the lycée, from primary... After a brief definition of the gender concept, these women realised that they do gender activities, they are

sensitive to certain behaviours of men with respect to girls/women, without realising that it's gender" (Female PTA board member). This reflects the importance of engaging in critical discussion about gender, which can encourage people, women and men, to be more conscious of the ways in which they already respond to gender issues.

7.2.2 Cultural and traditional factors

A large number of national, regional and divisional education officials referred to cultural tradition as a significant influence or barrier with respect to gender equality, influencing professional opportunities and interactions in schools and classrooms (between students, teachers and managers). Specific cultural and religious influences were discussed primarily by participants in the Far North:

- "According to religion, the woman must not speak loudly to the man. When it's a male teacher [who] speaks to boys, they stop talking, when a female teacher scolds a boy he gets angry. You see how he sits there and looks at you with resentment." (Female semi-rural primary teacher)
- "It's difficult, especially here. The State has made efforts, but in the context of the Far North, we can't yet speak of parity in management posts. But women outnumber men, so we should find many female principals... Instead, it's the opposite... There is culture that comes into it. Women, here among Muslims, should not command men." (Male ENIEG director)⁴⁴

Even when progress towards gender equality is made within the educational community, traditional gender roles and inequalities often persist in the home, including amongst education managers. As a male ENIEG director stated, "Women, in school, we can promote gender towards her students, towards

her colleagues, towards everyone, but at home, she remains a woman. That's why I say that schools, at that level, haven't yet succeeded in breaking cultural taboos." Another male ENIEG director explained that "[if a] woman can become the director of an ENIEG, we have the same duties. We have to take on the same responsibilities... but in the context of the home, the woman has to know that the man is the head of the family." This indicates that efforts to increase gender equality in teacher and education management ought to be aligned or integrated with gender equality and women's empowerment efforts at the broader community level.

7.2.3 Regional gender disparities in teaching and education management

Factors influencing gender equality, including women's representation in teaching and education management as well as cultural and traditional factors, vary widely across the research regions, and across all of Cameroon's 10 regions. Although many stakeholders, especially those at the regional and national level, emphasised the importance of considering regional differences in policy development, implementation and evaluation, regional disparities are not explicitly acknowledged in most education policy strategies. The GESP identifies as a primary objective at the basic education level the development, by 2012, of a national plan and regional plans intended to bridge regional and gender disparities in primary education access and completion (for students, with no mention of teachers). A number of managers, however, reported that these plans do not exist, at either the national or regional level. Though certain programmes or partnerships aim to reduce gender disparities, no comprehensive plans have been developed by ministries or delegations.

⁴⁴ During the regional validation workshop in the Far North, participants emphasised that these obstacles result from interpretations of Islam, and not from Islam itself.

Table 7.2: Variations in education indicators across the research regions

| | | Basic education (public) | | | | Secondary education (general and technical) | | | |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------|------|------|---|--------|------|------|
| | | NW | Centre | East | FN | NW | Centre | East | FN |
| Student:teacher ratio | | 51:1 | 46:1 | 56:1 | 72:1 | Data not available | | | |
| Total teachers | Female (%) | 56 | 55.7 | 49.9 | 25.4 | 30.8 | 39.5 | 38.7 | 12.2 |
| | Male (%) | 44 | 44.3 | 50.1 | 74.6 | 69.2 | 60.5 | 61.3 | 87.8 |
| Contract/temporary (C/T) teachers* | % total teachers | 82.3 | 70.1 | 84.2 | 92.1 | 40.7 | 53.7 | 49.6 | 29.1 |
| | Female C/T teachers (%) | 58.3 | 56.3 | 51.8 | 27.1 | 35.6 | 34.1 | 15.8 | 9.1 |
| | Male C/T teachers (%) | 41.7 | 43.7 | 48.2 | 64.9 | 64.4 | 65.9 | 84.2 | 90.9 |
| Qualified civil servant (CS) teachers | % total teachers | 17.7 | 29.8 | 15.8 | 7.9 | 59.3 | 46.3 | 50.4 | 70.9 |
| | Female CS teachers (%) | 45.3 | 54.1 | 40 | 5.8 | 41.9 | 25.1 | 42.6 | 20.4 |
| | Male CS teachers (%) | 54.7 | 45.8 | 60 | 94.2 | 58.1 | 74.9 | 57.4 | 79.6 |
| Rural teachers | Female (%) | 53.7 | 44.3 | 38.4 | 18 | Data not available | | | |
| | Male (%) | 46.3 | 55.7 | 61.6 | 82 | | | | |
| School principals | Female (%) | 20.9 | 20.2 | 12.7 | 3.4 | 5.8 | 9.2 | 3.8 | 3.4 |
| | Male (%) | 79.8 | 79.8 | 87.3 | 96.6 | 94.2 | 90.8 | 96.2 | 96.6 |

Sources: MINEDUB, 2010, 2011; MINESEC, 2010, 2011

*All non-civil servant teachers (including contract, temporary and PTA teachers)

“According to religion, the woman must not speak loudly to the man. When it’s a male teacher [who] speaks to boys, they stop talking, when a female teacher scolds a boy he gets angry. You see how he sits there and looks at you with resentment”
 (Female semi-rural primary teacher)

7.3 Policy implementation: the gap between policy and practice

Cameroon’s education policies concerning gender equality are focused primarily on equality at the student level, that is, equal access and retention in schools for girls and boys. Although only a limited number of policy strategies refer to gender at the teacher level (addressing pedagogic approaches and teacher living and working conditions), and although no policies target gender parity in teaching and education management, references to gender and gender equality in education represent a positive first step. However, the lack of a clear and coherent definition of gender impedes the development of gender-responsive policies, and insufficient consideration of regional realities impedes the development of policies that respond to local realities. Additionally, policy communication and other implementation challenges limit impacts of existing policies on the ground.

“There are all of these positive measures, but are all of those measures put into practice? That’s it! That’s the problem!... We produce texts, some of which are positive texts, but no one takes care of the implementation aspect”
(National MINPROFF official)

Table 7.3: Managers’ knowledge of certain policy strategies

Regional education managers were asked to complete a checklist of policy strategies related to gender equality in education. 17 of 25 managers completed the checklist.

| Policy strategies | Ministry officials | School managers | TTC directors | Total |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------|
| Teacher training on gender approach in schools (GESP-MINEDUB) | 6 | 2 | 1 | 9 |
| Gender mainstreaming in instruments for teacher incentives (GESP-MINEDUB) | 4 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| The posting to ZEPs of female teachers originating from those areas (SSE) | 6 | 4 | 2 | 12 |
| Residences for teachers and managers in rural zones (GESP-MINESEC) | 5 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Special career profiles for teachers in rural areas (GESP-MINESEC) | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| Teacher training on pedagogic techniques considering gender (GESP-MINESEC) | 1 | 1 | - | 2 |
| Consideration of gender in curricula and initial/continuous teacher training (SSE) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| PTA statutes (concerning care for material, cultural and moral school interests) | 8 | 5 | 2 | 15 |

7.3.1 Policy communication

Policy information (gender-related objectives, outcomes and strategies outlined in education policy documents) does not appear to be systematically and consistently communicated between national ministries and regional and divisional delegations, inspectorates and schools, which represents a major barrier to policy implementation. As one male rural primary head teacher stated, “You can only implement what you have seen.” Teachers and school managers are often unaware of policy strategies directly affecting them. Though many divisional, regional and national education managers referred to policy initiatives and government texts (pedagogic approaches, ongoing training, specific criteria for promotion, etc), very few teachers and school-level managers did.

Even basic and secondary education delegates reported that they do not receive information on government policy. As one female divisional MINEDUB delegate stated, “Divisional delegates are supposed to receive this information, but we don’t receive it. How do we work? When it starts from Yaoundé, maybe it reaches somewhere and remains there... I’ve never seen these policies.”

Policy information was said to be transmitted from person to person (“de bouche à oreille”), rather than being communicated in a systematic manner. Managers may receive information on policies (during meetings or via circulars, for example), concerning specific decisions made at higher levels or specific tasks to be carried out. Certain official channels of communication exist in Cameroon. Policy decisions made at the national level are published and communicated via circular to the regions, and government texts formalising aspects of policy initiatives are published in English and French in the official national newspaper and are disseminated via other media outlets. National MINEDUB and MINESEC officials explained that information is communicated from the national level to the school level via regional and divisional delegates and pedagogic supervisors (through meetings and inspections). However, this often concerns pedagogic approaches rather than policy strategies. A national teachers’ syndicate official reported that the syndicate distributes relevant texts to members, although resources are limited.

Whilst teachers and school managers identified a lack of access to policy information as a significant challenge, officials at the ministry level perceived that policy information is accessible but that teachers and school managers don’t seek it out or don’t read the information they receive. Some national ministry officials stated that teachers’ lack of initiative is a barrier to policy dissemination, and that they must seek out information

on policies and procedures (for example, from teachers’ syndicates/unions or local administrative services).

7.3.2 Policy implementation and monitoring

Policy monitoring is impeded by a lack of clear, measurable objectives. As a male regional MINEDUB delegate stated, when discussing the deployment of local female teachers, “It’s a problem from the start. The objectives... it’s what we should see at the start. The number of girls attending school should increase... Objectives should be fixed from the start. What do we set as an objective, so we can try to deploy them in their villages?” In the PAN-EPT, SSE and GESP, objectives often lack precise, measurable indicators, limiting effective goal-setting and monitoring. When specific targets are set, they often vary between policy documents (for example, the SSE and GESP set different targets for teacher recruitment and the construction of staff housing). In addition, with limited exceptions, these education policy documents do not describe the ways in which specific strategies will contribute to the attainment of broader policy objectives or the ways in which they will be implemented.

Regional and divisional delegations (decentralised administrative structures) are responsible for putting policy into practice. Decentralisation is meant to improve service delivery at the local level, but according to reports by the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and German Development Service (DED) (2009) and the World Bank (2011, 2012b) effective decentralisation in Cameroon is limited by overlapping responsibilities, centralised budget procedures that don’t fully reflect local realities, significant disparities in service quality between regions, and dependence on national-level decision-making. Divisional and regional delegates reported that policies are actually implemented at the (national) ministry level, and then communicated to the regions. A number of delegates perceived that they can only transmit information or implement decisions passed down by the hierarchy.

Finally, budget constraints and a lack of funding impede policy implementation and monitoring. Budget difficulties have limited the implementation of policy strategies such as the construction of housing for school personnel and the recruitment of civil servant teachers. A national MINEDUB official reported that the PAN-EPT has not actually been implemented due in large part to a lack of funding, and that international support was expected following the validation of the PAN-EPT and the SSE (both developed at the request of the international community, with the SSE developed in order to join the EFA-FTI) but little support was received.



8. Discussion

8.1 Reflection on the research findings

Gender-related challenges in teaching and education management, identified through discussions with students, teachers, parents, education managers and national stakeholders, include: gender disparities in primary and secondary teaching and education management; the impacts of family responsibilities on female and male teachers, gender-related deployment and retention challenges in rural zones, and gender-based violence; obstacles to career development for female teachers and teachers in rural zones, and to women's participation in education management; barriers to the application of gender-responsive personnel management and teaching approaches; inconsistent and incomplete understandings or definitions of gender and gender equality, amongst teachers and education managers; and barriers to the development, implementation and monitoring of gender-responsive education policies.

These findings reflect the reality that “gender” and “gender equality” refer to both women and men. Although most gender-related inequalities have a particularly significant impact on female teachers' and managers' experiences and opportunities, gendered challenges facing male teachers in particular emerged during this research, including deployment to rural zones, access to paternity leave, and challenges for non-state-supported contract and temporary teachers (amongst whom men are more heavily represented). Findings concerning conflict between female managers and teachers and between female teachers and students also reflect the complexity of gendered interactions.

As outlined in international frameworks such as the Dakar Framework for Action, CEDAW and the Second Decade of Education for Africa, the elimination of gender disparities and the achievement of gender equality in primary and secondary education, for female and male students, is linked to: responsive education governance (management); safe, inclusive and gender-sensitive teaching and learning environments; enhanced professionalism of teachers; the elimination of stereotyped attitudes and practices concerning women and men at all levels of education; and equal rights for women and men in education.

In Cameroon, socio-cultural attitudes and expectations concerning “female” and “male” roles and characteristics influence female and male teachers' responsibilities (family responsibilities, class assignments, etc), teaching

and management approaches and interactions (between managers and teachers, among teachers, between teachers and students) and professional development opportunities (deployment, career development, etc). Gender-related challenges facing female and male teachers and managers can influence motivation and performance, in turn affecting the quality of teaching and learning environments and the school experiences of students – both girls and boys. Participants in all regions described gender-related challenges facing primary and secondary students, particularly girls, which are influenced by gendered roles and responsibilities in the home, by complex interactions with female and male teachers, and by factors limiting teachers' (and schools') capacity to respond to girls' and boys' psycho-social difficulties (including, for example, sex-specific sexual development challenges or individual learning needs).

Cameroon's current education policy documents – the PAN-EPT, the SSE and the GESP – are based on EFA and MDG goals, and include references to gender equality, primarily at the student level. The strongest consideration of gender in Cameroon's teaching and education management policies relates to teacher pedagogical training and supervision, promoting gender equality in teaching and focusing on impacts at the student level, with less attention to gender equality amongst teachers and managers. Some teacher management strategies refer specifically to women in teacher recruitment or as beneficiaries (housing and benefits, for example) or to gender mainstreaming, although without concrete objectives or specific targets.

Although some education policy texts make reference to gender, they do not appear to be widely or consistently implemented on the ground – probably due to the lack of clear targets, comprehensive strategies to achieve these targets, and specific indicators to monitor progress. The integration of gender language (“gender approach”, “gender mainstreaming”, “gender equality”) in policy documents is a first step, but this must also be put into practice, linked with specific actions and measurable indicators. Some efforts have been made at the level of national education ministries and regional delegations, such as gender-related training for personnel – although gender-responsive knowledge and skills aren't necessarily transmitted to school managers and teachers on the ground. These efforts present an opportunity for action: the reinforcement and full implementation of existing gender considerations in education policies, and the development of new concrete, measurable

gender-responsive policies strategies and indicators, responding to the challenges and recommendations emerging from this research. Effective policies promoting gender equality amongst teachers and managers can ensure the presence of positive female and male role models in teaching and education management, in turn encouraging school access, retention, completion and progression for girls and boys. Female and male teachers also need positive role models of both sexes, amongst colleagues and in education management. With respect to female and male role models for both students and teachers, the presence of teachers and managers who challenge gendered stereotypes and model gender equality in roles, responsibilities, opportunities and interactions is as important as parity in numbers.

Stakeholders at all levels – students, teachers, parents, school managers, regional managers and national officials – described significant basic school concerns: teacher shortages, high student:teacher ratios, inadequate school infrastructure (classrooms, latrines, water points, etc), and a lack of textbooks and other didactic materials. Gender equality may often be perceived as a secondary priority, outweighed by these more immediate needs. Basic educational needs and gender considerations, however, are not mutually exclusive concerns: gender considerations ought to be integrated into strategies addressing these needs (policy strategies and well as budget decisions), not considered as a separate priority.

8.2 Limitations

Several factors influenced the data collection process, impacting school selection, interview participation, focus group facilitation, research team supervision, and statistical data collection:

- remote rural schools, in which gender inequalities may be more pronounced, were not included due to time and logistical constraints
- the end of the regional data collection period coincided with the national school exam period, limiting opportunities for interviews with education managers in certain regions
- due to regional communication challenges and geographical distance, opportunities for direct supervision of sampling and data collection processes were limited and regional research teams had to work semi-independently and received varying degrees of support from VSO volunteers and managers
- though regional research teams received a standard

focus group facilitation guide, approaches differed across the research regions, due to data collectors' individual facilitation styles and skills, time constraints and research coordinators' knowledge of local norms (one significant limitation regarding focus group facilitation was the omission of specific prompt questions during some discussions)

- certain statistical data, which would have illustrated or reinforced qualitative focus group and interview data, wasn't available prior to the publication of the report (eg sex-disaggregated data for school level managers other than school principals and for teachers of specific scientific and technical secondary courses).

Limitations concerning the consistency of data collection across regions were partially mitigated by the regional validation process. This process allowed general preliminary findings based on data from all regions to be reviewed and validated by stakeholder representatives in each of the four regions, with the aim of enhancing the validity of the findings. Finally, inconsistent and incomplete understandings or definitions of gender, by study participants as well as data collectors, meant that discussions often focused on girls' and women's experiences and concerns, without according equal attention to boys' and men's experiences and concerns. Analysis of, and responses to, gender inequalities require an examination of women's and men's roles, responsibilities, experiences and opportunities, as well as the gender dynamics that shape interactions among women, among men, and between women and men.

9. Recommendations

The implementation of these recommendations depends on effective decentralised governance and individual and collective initiative at national, regional, divisional, school and community levels. Effective implementation also depends on consistent communication and collaboration between different government actors (between ministries, such as MINEDUB, MINESEC and MINPROFF, as well as between central and decentralised structures), and between government bodies and NGOs/CSOs or donors. Regional diversity must be considered and strategies developed in collaboration with regional and local actors, responding to diversity and disparities within and across regions. Finally, a comprehensive, collaborative advocacy strategy must be developed to ensure effective dissemination and monitoring of these recommendations at the national and regional level.

9.1 Gender parity in teaching and education management

Recommendations for education ministries (MINEDUB, MINESEC)

- **Develop specific, measurable targets and strategies (such as positive discrimination) to train, recruit, and retain qualified female secondary teachers**, particularly in scientific/technical subjects traditionally taught by male teachers (targeted action focusing on specific subjects/disciplines).
- **Develop specific, measurable targets and strategies to train, recruit and retain qualified male primary teachers**, to ensure balanced female/male representation in primary teaching, emphasising the importance of male teachers as positive role models for girls and boys.
- **Set a clear vision with measurable objectives and indicators for women's representation in education management positions, in primary and secondary schools and ministries.** This might include setting and monitoring national targets (eg quotas, gender parity) as well as positive discrimination policies to ensure that women have equal access to decision-making positions.
- **Develop strategies to encourage and enable women to take on education management positions**, such as sensitisation, mentoring, capacity-building, and leadership training.

9.2 Gendered experiences of teachers

Recommendations for education ministries (MINEDUB, MINESEC) and regional managers (regional, divisional, sub-divisional and school managers)

- **Enhance and implement support for teachers in rural zones, particularly women**, including affordable housing for teachers and simplified access to incentives and benefits,⁴⁵ to encourage equal distribution and retention of male and female teachers in urban and rural zones.
- **Arrange female teachers' work hours to accommodate childcare and family responsibilities**, for example, arranging work schedules according to family responsibilities (eg enabling them to end their work day early) or according to breast-feeding hours for a specific period of time.
- **Ensure that male teachers are aware of their right to paternity leave**, and enable access to full paternity leave.
- **Facilitate active involvement of local authorities (including councils⁴⁶ and traditional and religious leaders) in teacher support and education management**, including responses to housing and harassment challenges faced by female and male teachers in rural zones (eg developing local support networks and building on the MINEDUB campaign on teacher integration and retention), working in collaboration with school councils.

9.3 Gender equality in education management

Recommendations for education ministries (MINEDUB, MINESEC)

- **Develop and implement gender-responsive management training for education (ministry and school) managers and school management committees**, focusing on personnel, administrative and financial management, enabling more effective responses to inequalities in education management. Education administration/management content in teacher training programmes should also be enhanced.

⁴⁵ Link with regional development (decentralisation) efforts to ensure adequate school infrastructure and local services (transportation, communication, health, etc) in rural zones, to improve working and living conditions. The GESP refers to the need to improve conditions (socio-economic, infrastructure, community) in rural areas, but doesn't outline specific strategies (Republic of Cameroon, 2009a).

⁴⁶ A 2010 decree transferred certain responsibilities for basic education from the State to local councils.

- **Facilitate opportunities for continuing professional development for female and male teachers**, enabling them to develop career profiles and attain positions of responsibility. Measures include simplified study authorisation procedures and distance learning enabling teachers with families and rural teachers to study from home.
- **Develop, disseminate and implement national policies addressing gender-based violence in education**, building on existing texts addressing violence in schools and focusing on teachers as well as students. Include specific, consistent and simplified reporting, disciplinary (sanctions), and follow-up procedures (included in official documents such as school regulations), and ensure that students, parents and school personnel understand these procedures.⁴⁷

Recommendations for regional managers (regional, divisional, sub-divisional and school managers)

- **Ensure that severe sanctions for teachers and managers responsible for gender-based violence (against students or teachers) are applied**, taking a strong stand against violence against teachers and students in schools by applying serious professional and legal sanctions.
- **Encourage women's representation in leadership positions in school management committees**, including school councils and PTAs (eg setting targets for women on boards, positive discrimination, or sensitisation of committee members to promote women's leadership).

Recommendations for NGOs and CSOs

- **Capacity-building for school managers and school management committees**, in collaboration with ministries, encouraging gender considerations in school and personnel management, and focusing on women's participation in education management, managers' and committees' role in addressing gender inequalities, and participatory management skills.

9.4 Gender-responsive approaches to teaching

Recommendations for education ministries (MINEDUB, MINESEC, MINESUP)

- **Integrate specific training on gender and gender equality into teacher training curricula**, developing specific courses or modules on gender, examining gender themes as part of field placements, and intensifying pedagogical, child development, and sexual education training (focusing on practical gender-responsive approaches). Also ensure

that teacher trainers have the knowledge and skills necessary to provide effective gender training.

- **Reinforce continuing teacher training and professional development programmes (eg journées pédagogiques) by integrating specific themes on gender and gender equality**, including practical strategies for gender-responsive pedagogy and responses to student challenges (sexual development, gender-based violence, etc).
- **Clearly define how pedagogical supervisors and inspectors will integrate gender considerations into teacher support and evaluation** (eg including gender criteria in teacher and manager observation and evaluation checklists⁴⁸).
- **Integrate themes on gender and gender equality into primary and secondary school curricula**, including gendered interactions/power dynamics (integrate into existing courses and textbooks with gender or sexual education components).
- **Integrate clear and comprehensive student support measures into school policies and regulations**, to guide and support teachers' and managers' responses to gender-related student challenges such as early pregnancy or marriage (eg strategies to encourage and enable girls to return to school after giving birth).

Recommendations for teachers

- **Actively seek out continuing professional development and self-development opportunities**, to be up to date on current (gender-responsive) pedagogical approaches and education policies.

Recommendations for NGOs and CSOs

- **Capacity-building for teachers, focusing on practical pedagogical strategies and materials for gender-responsive pedagogy and responses to student challenges**, for example, building on FAWECAM's training for teachers on gender-responsive pedagogy, or facilitating access to tools such as FAWE's Gender Responsive Pedagogy teachers' handbook (for civil servant, contract, temporary, council and PTA teachers).
- **Implement school-based capacity-building activities enabling students and teachers, particularly girls and women, to resolve social/academic challenges** (eg gender-based violence), in collaboration with education ministries (eg FAWE's Tuseme programme⁴⁹).

⁴⁷ MINPROFF ought to be involved in responding to gender-based violence in schools (eg build on MINPROFF's existing policies, such as the National Strategy for the Elimination of Gender Based Violence, and services, such as psycho-social supports for victims of violence).

⁴⁸ Also ensure that pedagogical supervisors/inspectors have the resources needed for consistent visits to schools, including rural schools.

9.5 Understanding gender and gender equality

Recommendations for ministries (MINEDUB, MINESEC, MINPROFF)

- Develop clear, consistent, and practical definitions of gender and gender equality in education policy documents, outlining gender/gender equality issues in teaching and management, and aligned with MINPROFF's National Gender Policy Document.
- Enhance knowledge- and capacity-building on gender and gender equality for education personnel at the ministry and school level, including discussions during sectorial meetings, seminars and other national or regional events.

Recommendations for NGOs and CSOs

- **Sensitise students, parents, teachers, education managers, school management committees and community leaders about gender equality in education, in collaboration with PTAs and MTAs**, examining gender roles and gendered interactions, the importance of female and male teachers and managers as role models, and strategies to address gender inequalities.

9.6 Policy development and implementation

Recommendations for ministries (MINEDUB, MINESEC, MINPROFF) and regional managers

- **Develop clear and specific gender-responsive targets and indicators in education policies** (eg quotas or targets for female primary and secondary teachers and managers), ensuring that gender-responsive indicators are consistent in English and French policy documents.
- **Ensure consistent communication of policies and procedures to teachers and managers** (gender approaches, career development, standards of conduct, etc), by collaborating with NGOs/CSOs and teachers' syndicates, informing teachers where to find information (eg ministry websites, local administrative structures), media involvement (eg rural community radio) or developing policy summary documents.
- **Ensure regular, comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of national education policy implementation**, involving regional and school managers, MINPROFF/gender focal points and other education stakeholders, building on the GESP's participatory monitoring framework.⁵⁰
- **Consider regional realities and challenges in the development of policy strategies and indicators.**

Specific objectives and indicators should be developed based on regional disparities in education, and rural zones in all regions ought to be considered ZEPs.

- **Continue collecting reliable, detailed sex-disaggregated teaching and education management data (at the sub-divisional, divisional and regional level)**, to inform national decision-making.

Recommendations for teachers and school managers

- **Actively seek out information on education policies and procedures** (gender approaches, career development, standards of conduct, etc), by approaching teachers' syndicates, local administrative services, ministry websites and Teachers' Resource Centres.

Recommendations for development agencies and donors

- **Require that gender considerations be integrated into national policy and development programmes**, such as the funding of teacher recruitment programmes (eg targets for female teachers) and teacher housing initiatives (eg targets for female beneficiaries).
- **Support the implementation of government and NGO/CSO initiatives to promote gender equality in teaching and education management**, including capacity-building for teachers and managers, and facilitating access to gender-responsive pedagogical and management tools.
- **Support research into specific gender issues in teaching and education management, to guide comprehensive policy development**, including retention strategies for female teachers in rural areas and the impacts of HIV-AIDS and disability in teaching and management.

⁴⁹ The Tuseme ("speak out") empowerment programme aims to help girls and boys to understand gender issues and enable girls to identify, analyse and resolve challenges. Guidance/counselling training is provided to teachers and school managers (FAWE, 2005a).

⁵⁰ During the national validation workshop, national officials spoke of the need to revise and clarify the role of MINPROFF gender focal points and reinforce their capacities, enabling them to implement a gender approach within education ministries, participating in policy development and monitoring, personnel training and other activities.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Basic and secondary education and teacher training systems in Cameroon

Basic and secondary education systems in Cameroon

| Level | School type | Francophone subsystem | | Anglophone subsystem | |
|--|---|---|----------|--|----------|
| | | Certificate | Duration | Certificate | Duration |
| Basic (primary) education | | | | | |
| Primary schools | | CEP (Certificat d'Etudes Primaires) | 6 years | FSLC (First School Leaving Certificate) | 6 years |
| Secondary education, 1st cycle | | | | | |
| General | General secondary colleges | BEPC (Brevet d'Etudes de Premier Cycle) | 4 years | GCE O/L (General Certificate of Education, Ordinary Level) | 5 years |
| Technical | Technical colleges | CAP (Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnel) | 4 years | CAP (Certificate of Professional Aptitude) | 4 years |
| Secondary education, 2nd cycle | | | | | |
| General | General high schools | Baccalauréat | 3 years | GCE A/L (General Certificate of Education, Advanced Level) | 2 years |
| Technical | Technical and professional high schools | Brevet de Technicien | 3 years | GCE Technical Certificate | 3 years |

Sources: Republic of Cameroon, 2006, 2012a, 2012b

Teacher training system in Cameroon

| Institution | Teaching level | Duration | Certificate |
|-------------|---------------------|---|--|
| ENIEG | Primary | BEPC/GCE O/L: 3 years Probatoire: 2 years Baccalauréat/GCE A/L: 1 year | CAPIEMP (Certificat d'Aptitude à la Profession d'Instituteur de l'Enseignement Maternel et Primaire/Teacher Grade 1 Certificate) |
| ENIET | Technical secondary | CAP: 3 years Probatoire: 2 years Brevet de Technicien/GCE Technical Certificate: 1 year | CAPIET (Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle des Instituteurs de l'Enseignement Technique/Technical Teacher Certificate) |
| ENS | General secondary | Baccalauréat: 3 years First degree: 2 years | DIPES I (Diplôme de Professeur d'Enseignement Secondaire, Grade I) DIPES II (Diplôme de Professeur d'Enseignement Secondaire, Grade II) |
| ENSET | Technical secondary | Baccalauréat: 3 years First degree: 2 years | DIPET I (Diplôme de Professeur d'Enseignement Technique, Grade I) DIPET II (Diplôme de Professeur d'Enseignement Technique, Grade II) |

Sources: MINEDUB, 2010; UNESCO & International Bureau of Education, 2010

Appendix 2: National interview participants

| Structure | Role | Gender | | |
|---|--|--|----------|----------|
| | | F | M | |
| Government ministries | MINEDUB | 2 | 3 | |
| | Senior official, Inspection générale des enseignements/Inspectorate general of education | | | |
| | Senior official, Direction des ressources humaines/Department of human resources | | | |
| | Senior official, Inspection des services/Inspectorate of Services | | | |
| | Senior official, Scolarisation des filles (SCOFI)/Girls' education | | | |
| | Senior official, Coordination d'EPT (Education Pour Tous)/EFA Coordination | | | |
| | MINESEC | 2 | 3 | |
| | Senior official, Inspection générale des enseignements/Inspectorate general of education | | | |
| | Senior official, Direction des ressources humaines/Department of human resources | | | |
| | Conseiller technique No. 1/Technical advisor No. 1 | | | |
| | Senior official, Direction de l'enseignement normal/Department of teacher training | | | |
| Senior official, Direction de l'enseignement secondaire technique et professionnel/Department of technical and professional secondary education | | | | |
| MINPROFF | Senior official | 1 | - | |
| Non-governmental structures | International organisations | National organisations | 3 | 2 |
| | UNESCO | FAWECAM | | |
| | World Bank | CEFAN (Cameroon Education for All Network) | | |
| | | Syndicat National Autonome de l'Education et de la Formation | | |
| Total | | 16 | 8 | 8 |

Appendix 3: Focus group guides

| Discussion questions for students | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Role models for students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Primary students) Would you like to continue your studies and go to secondary school? Why? • (Secondary students) What or who influenced you to finish primary school and continue to secondary school? Would you like to continue your studies? Why? • Who do you admire, who you'd like to be like them when you're an adult? (At home? At school?) Why do you admire them? |
| Gendered socialisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What tasks are performed (mostly or only) by girls/women, or by boys/men? At school? At home? • How do these tasks affect boys' or girls' school experience? • What subjects do you like more/less at school? • Is there a difference between girls and boys in different subjects? What are the differences? • What problems or difficulties do you have, as a girl/boy at school? • Do teachers help you with these problems? How do they help you? • Is there a Code of Conduct at your school? What do teachers do when a girl or boy misbehaves? • Can you describe times when students face bullying, teasing, hurtful language, sexual harassment, sexual violence or negative messages? • What happens if the victim is a girl or a boy, who is bullied, teased, hurt, harassed or abused? • What happens when a girl at your school gets pregnant? What happens when a girl gets her period at your school? • What resources are available at school? Do boys and girls use these resources equally? |
| Models/ women in leadership positions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the head teacher a man or a woman? • (If it's a man) Why do you think the head teacher is a man? What prevents women from being head teachers? • What are the effects of having a head teacher who is a woman/man? • What difference do you think it would make, to have a man/woman as a head teacher? |
| Teacher training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do girls and boys place themselves in the classroom? • Do female teachers treat you differently from male teachers? If so, how? • Are there other differences between how male and female teachers act at school? • Do you get taught about sex and sexual health at school? If so, what information do you get? • According to your teachers, how should girls behave at school? According to your teachers, how should boys behave at school? |

Appendix 3: Focus group guides

| Discussion questions for teachers | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Gendered socialisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What tasks are performed (mostly or only) by girls/women, or by boys/men? At school? At home? • How do these tasks affect boys' or girls' school experience? • Do girls and boys have different behaviour and competency at school? What are the differences? |
| School management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What problems or difficulties do girls face at this school, regarding their studies? What problems or difficulties do boys face, regarding their studies? • How do you react to these difficulties? To help girls? To help boys? Are there differences? • Is there a Code of Conduct at your school? If so, is it gender-sensitive? What happens if it's a girl or if it's a boy who misbehaves? • Can you describe times when students face bullying, teasing, hurtful language, sexual harassment, sexual violence or negative messages? • What happens if the victim is a girl or a boy, who is bullied, teased, hurt, harassed or abused? • Do you think that female teachers and male teachers act differently toward students? If so, how? • What happens when a girl at your school gets pregnant? What happens when a girl gets her period at your school? • Do boys and girls use the school's resources equally? |
| Teacher management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What problems or difficulties do female teachers face? At school? At home? What problems or difficulties do male teachers face? • What help or support do they receive? • What happens when a teacher at your school gets pregnant? • Do you think there are differences in how male and female teachers are managed at this school? • Are there differences between your interactions between female and male manager figures? |
| Teacher training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the context of your teacher training programme, how was "gender" discussed as a theme? • How do you apply gender-sensitive practices in teaching? • Do you find school books and teacher guides to be sensitive to gender issues? If not, why? If so, how? • How do you approach themes of sexual health, sexuality and HIV-AIDS with students? • How have you received support for responding to inequalities related to gender, during meetings or trainings? • What do you think ENIEG/ENIET/ENS teacher training colleges should do to respond to problems related to gender? |
| Models/women in leadership positions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the head teacher a male or a female? • (If it is a male) Why do you think the head teacher is a male? What do you think prevents your opinion, what is the effect of having a head teacher who is a male/female? • What do you think would be the effect of having a male/female as a head teacher? • Are there more female or male teachers at your school? Why are there so few/so many female teachers at your school? • What is the effect of having so few/many female teachers at your school? • What kinds of role model does the school want and expect of its teachers? |

Appendix 3: Focus group guides

| Discussion questions for parents | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the PTA/School Council do to help manage the quality of education at your school? • What measures are taken by each of these groups to promote gender equality in school management, or to respond to cases of gender inequality? |
| Gendered socialisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What tasks are performed mostly or only by girls/women? By boys/men? At school? At home? • How do these tasks affect girls' and boys' schooling? • Do girls and boys have different behaviour or competence at school? What are the differences? • In your view, do teachers at school act differently with your daughters than with your sons? If yes, what are the differences? |
| School management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What problems do girls face at this school? What problems do boys face at this school? • How do you respond to these difficulties? What decisions has the PTA/School Council taken in response to these problems that girls face, or problems that boys face? • Can you describe times when students face bullying, teasing, hurtful language, sexual harassment, sexual violence or negative messages? • What happens if the victim is a girl or a boy, who is bullied, teased, hurt, harassed or abused? • What happens if a girl misbehaves at school? If a boy misbehaves? • What happens when a girl at your school gets pregnant? What happens when a girl gets her period at your school? |
| Teacher management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What problems do female teachers face? What problems do male teachers face? • Are there different problems that women and men face in certain positions or situations? What help or support do they receive? • Are there differences in how male teachers and female teachers are managed at this school? |
| Models/women in leadership positions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the head teacher a man or a woman? • (If it is a male) Why do you think the head teacher is a male? What do you think prevents women from being head teachers? • (If it is a woman) What is the effect of having a head teacher who is a female? • What do you think would be the effect of having a male/female as a head teacher? • Are there more female or male teachers at your school? What is the effect of having so few/many female teachers at your school? • Do you know if education managers have taken action in the past few years, to increase the balance of male and female teachers at your school? • In your view, what role models do girls need? What role models do boys need? |

Appendix 4: Interview questions for regional education managers

| Theme | Questions for regional education managers |
|---|--|
| <p>Role models</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe a good role model, in terms of gender equality in schools? Among teachers? Among head teachers? Among other staff? In the wider community/ society? • In what ways do female teachers influence girls' and/or boys' education? How do they influence the education of disadvantaged or vulnerable girls? • In what ways do male teachers influence girls' and/or boys' education? How do they influence the education of disadvantaged or vulnerable girls? |
| <p>Teacher management/ mentorship and school management</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the most frequent problems that female teachers and girls face at your school(s)? Problems that male teachers and boys face? • How do you take gender into account in managing/supervising your school personnel? • What specific measures have you taken to promote gender equality in teaching and school management? • What changes or progress have you observed? • What challenges have emerged? What would you recommend as possible solutions? • What specific measures have you taken to create a gender-friendly workplace? |
| <p>Presence of females as teachers/leaders/ education managers</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do you think the government's efforts to increase the number of women teachers and education managers are successful? • What measures have you taken to increase the number of female teachers, head teachers and heads of school management committees? • What changes or progress have you observed? • What have been the challenges? What do you suggest as possible solutions? |
| <p>Teaching training and continuing professional development</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your experience, how are gender issues addressed in teacher training and professional development? • To what extent does teachers' pre-service and in-service training and continuing professional development equip them with strategies to address gender problems? • To what extent does professional development for education managers equip them to supervise and manage teachers with gender sensitivity? • If you have sent personnel to trainings, on gender or other topics, what criteria do you consider to select the men or women to participate? • In what ways do you address gender equality issues in meetings and trainings? • What changes or progress have you observed? • What have been the challenges? What do you suggest as possible solutions? |
| <p>Community engagement on gender equality in education</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there partnerships that exist between your school/organisation and others to accelerate gender equality in education and school management? If yes, describe these partnerships. • Can you describe the involvement of Parent Teacher Association(s) (PTA) AND School Council in your structure (school, inspectorate or division)? • What measures have been taken by the PTA/School Council to promote gender equality in school management, or to address cases of gender inequality? • Are there other kinds of partnerships you would consider developing with other people, organisations or specific groups that could improve gender equality? |
| <p>Other relevant questions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there other factors to take into account for gender equality, for teachers and for education managers, and for school councils or committees that oversee the quality of education? • Are there other concrete plans you have (if not yet mentioned) to implement gender-sensitive projects or policy strategies? What information or support would you need from other members of the educational community to do so? |

Appendix 5: Interview questions for national stakeholders

1-MINEDUB officials, 2-MINESEC officials, 3-MINPROFF official, 4-Technical/financial partners, 5-Teacher syndicate official

| Theme | Questions | Target group |
|---|---|--------------|
| Knowledge of “gender” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy texts use terms such as “gender approach” and “gender mainstreaming”. What do these concepts mean to you? | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| Curriculum and pedagogy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are gender issues integrated into primary/secondary education programmes? In the francophone and anglophone sub-systems? | 1,2,3,5 |
| Teacher training and professional development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are gender issues addressed during teacher training? | 1,2,5 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What measures are taken for female teachers to pursue “male” fields of study (eg scientific/industrial fields)? With respect to the training of 116 pedagogic counsellors on pedagogic techniques considering a gender approach (GESp-MINESEC): What was done? Was there any follow-up? | 2,5 |
| Teacher management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the main difficulties faced by female teachers? Male teachers? (In rural/urban zones? Regional specificities?) | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are gender issues considered in teacher management? (eg code of conduct, sanctions, deployment, nominations) | 1,2,4,5 |
| Managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the main difficulties faced by female managers? Male managers? (In rural/urban zones? Regional specificities?) What measures are taken to increase the number of women in positions of responsibility? (National-level efforts? Regional? Divisional?) | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| School management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What changes have you observed with respect to gender equality in schools? What are the impacts of these changes? Sexual harassment was identified as one of the biggest problems in schools. What measures have been taken to respond to this problem? What has been done to reduce/prevent cases of sexual harassment? | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| Specific policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A national plan and regional plans aiming to reduce disparities between regions and sexes (GESp): How do these plans respond to sex-based disparities? Follow-up committees for the protection of girls in schools (PAN-EPT): What are the goals of this strategy? Impacts? The posting to areas hostile to the education of girls of teachers who originate from those areas (SSE): How is the impact of this strategy measured? - Greater consideration of gender-specific problems in curricula and initial and continuing teacher training (SSE): Implementation of this strategy? | 1,3,5 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing special career profiles for teachers in rural/priority areas (GESp): Is this strategy implemented? Capacity building of teachers in pedagogic techniques taking into account the gender approach (SSE): Is this strategy implemented? | 2,3,5 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are policies related to gender, established by the Cameroon government, implemented on the ground? If yes, what can be improved? If no, what are the difficulties in implementation? | 1,2,3,5 |
| Policy implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are policies transmitted from the national level to the ground? How are policies monitored and evaluated? What could be done to improve policy communication, implementation and monitoring? | 1,2,3 |
| Promotion of gender equality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What specific projects have you carried out to respond to gender-related problems in educational communities? How can gender inequalities be addressed at the local level, in a way that is sensitive to the cultural context? | 4 |

Appendix 6: Validation workshop participants

Regional validation workshop participants

| Participants | Northwest | Centre | East | Far North |
|---|---|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| DREB official | X | | X | X |
| DDEB official | X | | X | X |
| DRES official | X | | X | |
| DDES official | X | X | X | |
| IAEB (inspector) | | | X | |
| ENIEG representative | | | | X |
| Secondary school chef d'établissement/proviseur | | | X | X |
| Primary teachers | X | | X | X |
| Secondary teachers | X | X | X | X |
| Primary students | | | X | X |
| Secondary students | X | X | X | X |
| Parents (primary) | X | | X | X |
| Parents (secondary) | X | X | X | X |
| NGO/CSO representatives | Teachers' Resource Centre, VSO Cameroon | UNESCO, CEFAN, FAWECAM, VSO | VSO Cameroon | VSO Cameroon |

National validation workshop participants

| | Ministry/structure |
|-----------------------------|--|
| MINEDUB | IGE official (1) (Inspection générale des enseignements/Inspectorate general of pedagogy) |
| | DREB officials (3): Centre, East, Far North |
| | Other national MINEDUB official (1) |
| MINESEC | DRH officials (2) (Direction des ressources humaines/Department of human resources) |
| | IGE official (1) (Inspection générale des enseignements/Inspectorate general of education) |
| | Cellule de la coopération/Cooperation Unit official (1) |
| | DRES officials (4): Northwest, Centre, East, Far North |
| Other ministries | MINPROFF official (1) |
| | MINEPAT official (1) |
| International organisations | UNESCO: Gender focal point |
| | UNWomen (1) |
| National organisations | CEFAN: Vice-president |
| | FAWECAM (9) |
| | VSO Cameroon (3) |

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www.teachersforefa.unesco.org

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In addition to this publication, the following research may also be of interest, available from the VSO International website: www.vsointernational.org/valuingteachers

- Gender Equality and Education (2011)
- How Much is a Good Teacher Worth? A report of the motivation and morale of teachers in Ethiopia (2009)
- Leading Learning: A report on effective school leadership and quality education in Zanzibar
- Learning From Listening: A policy report on Maldivian teachers' attitudes to their own profession (2005)
- Lessons from the Classroom: Teachers' motivation and perceptions in Nepal (2005)
- Listening to Teachers: The motivation and morale of education workers in Mozambique (2008)
- Making Teachers Count: A policy research report on Guyanese teachers' attitudes to their own profession (2004)
- Managing Teachers: The centrality of teacher management to quality education. Lessons from developing countries (2008)
- Qualifying for Quality: Unqualified teachers and qualified teacher shortages in The Gambia (2011)
- Seen But Not Heard: Teachers' voice in Rwanda (2004)
- Teachers for All: What governments and donors should do (2006)
- Teachers Speak Out: A policy research report on teachers' motivation in The Gambia (2007)
- Teachers Talking: Primary teachers' contributions to the quality of education in Mozambique (2011)
- Teachers' Voice: A policy research report on teachers' motivation and perceptions of their profession in Nigeria (2007)
- Teaching Matters: A policy report on the motivation and morale of teachers in Cambodia (2008)
- Valuing School Leaders: An investigation into the constraints facing school leaders in The Maldives (2009)