A Sociology of Absences: Interrogating Policies for Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania

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www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cheer

3 December, 2009
Researching Absences in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania

Professor Louise Morley
Why Research Higher Education in Africa?

Major site of:

✓ cultural practice
✓ identity formation
✓ knowledge/wealth creation and dissemination
✓ symbolic control.

Student enrolment worldwide:

✓ 13 million in 1960
✓ 82 million in 1995
✓ 137.8 million in 2005
✓ 24% globally
✓ 5% in Sub-Saharan Africa

• Global Gender Parity Index of 1.05 (UNESCO, 2007).
• Global gender gap (World Economic Forum, 2008).

• UK = 13
• Ghana = 77
• Tz = 38
• ‘Don’t study the poor and powerless, because everything you say about them will be used against them’ (Nader, 1972: 295).

• Representing the Other/ Orientalism (Said, 1995; Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 1996).

• De-parochialisation of research (Appadurai, 2004).

• Post-colonial power relations/ Higher education messaging systems of the North (Santos, 1995).

• Transnational feminisms (as opposed to masculinist discourses of transnational capitalism) (Mendoza, 2002).

• Hybridisation of public/private provision (Ball, 2008).

• Intersectionality, rather than fractured identities (Davis, 2008).

• Sociology of absences (Santos, 1999).

• Feminisation theory (Leathwood and Read, 2008).
Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania: Developing Equity Scorecards

Quantitative

Equity Scorecards Measuring:

- Sociological variables of gender, age, socio-economic status (SES)

In Relation to:

- Educational Outcomes: access, retention and achievement.

In Relation to:

- 4 Programmes of Study in each HEI.
- 2 Public and 2 private HEIs.

Qualitative

- 200 life history interviews with students from public and private universities (100 Ghana and 100 Tanzania);
- 200 interviews with academic staff and policy makers in Ghana and Tanzania.

(Morley, Leach and Lugg, 2008; Morley and Lussier, 2009)
Qualitative Overview: Narrating Higher Education

Main Themes: Key Staff and Policy Makers Interviews

- WP Institutional policies & strategies
- Support & retention services
- Under-represented groups
- Gender
- Recommendations
- National WP policies
- Monitoring & Accountability
- Uses and constraints of ESC
- Challenges to participation
- Barriers to participation

Main Themes: Life History Interviews

- Secondary school experiences
- Primary school experiences
- Early year experiences & family
- Private HE
- Motivations & Discouragement to enter HE
- Transition
- Future plans
- Impact of HE
- Decision making
- Barriers and Enablers to HE

Barriers and Enablers to HE
- Decision making
- Impact of HE
- Future plans
- Transition
- Motivations & Discouragement to enter HE
- Private HE
- Early year experiences & family
- Primary school experiences
- Secondary school experiences
Quantitative Overview: Absences and Inclusions

- **Women**
  - Majority on B.Sc. Admin Human Resources Management (Ghana, private);
  - Minority on B.Sc. Agri-business Management (Ghana, private).
- **Mature students**
  - Many on B.Primary Ed (Ghana, public), B.Ed with Maths (Tanzania, public)
  - Absent on B.Sc Optometry (Ghana, Public), and in small numbers elsewhere.
- **Poor students**
  - More in Tanzanian universities *e.g.* Law, Education (public), Business (private):
  - In Ghana some poor students on B. Primary Ed (public)
  - Absent from B.Sc. Agri-business Management (Ghana, private), B.Sc. Optometry (Ghana, Public).

**Conclusion**

- Studying Education is a route into HE for older and socially disadvantaged students.
- Women, poorer and older students less likely to enter STEM courses.
- Marginalised groups enter disciplines with lower exchange values in the labour market.
Quantitative Overview: Getting In, Getting On

Getting In: Ghana

Qualified to enter
• 12.7% of students qualified to enter HE were selected;
• 6.62% of these were from deprived schools.

Actually entering
• 15.32% of the students from non-deprived schools that qualified to enter HE were selected;
• 3.72% of the students from deprived schools that qualified to enter HE were selected.

Getting On: Ghana and Tanzania

• Variability in completion rates relate more to programmes than to student identities;
• No significant difference between completion rates for men and women;
• The majority of students in both countries obtain 2nd class degrees;
• There is no significant difference between the achievement of marginalised and non-marginalised groups.
Equity Scorecards: Measuring Access, Retention and Achievement in Ghana and Tanzania

Dr Kattie Lussier
### Ghana: Access to Level 300, Public University 2007-8

#### % of Students on the Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Low SES</th>
<th>Age 30 or over</th>
<th>Mature and Low SES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Sc. Optometry</td>
<td>81.82</td>
<td>18.18</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Commerce</td>
<td>67.19</td>
<td>32.81</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Education (Primary)</td>
<td>56.13</td>
<td>43.87</td>
<td>7.74</td>
<td>7.10</td>
<td>58.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Mgt. Studies</td>
<td>58.96</td>
<td>41.04</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 December, 2009
### Ghana: Applications and Admissions, Private University, 2007/08

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Number of Applicants</th>
<th>% Women Applicants</th>
<th>Reason for rejection</th>
<th>% of Applicants Accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>BC¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Economics</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>31.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Human Resources Management</td>
<td>1575</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>1,008</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Agri-Business Management</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Accountancy</td>
<td>1050</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>40.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Below the cut off point for the programme
2. Not meeting criteria for admission to university
## Tanzania: Access, Level 100, 2007-8

### Public University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Women Students</th>
<th>Students from Low SES</th>
<th>Mature Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Age 30 or over</td>
<td>% Low SES</td>
<td>% Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Commerce</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>23.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLB. Law</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>18.52</td>
<td>21.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Engineering</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>12.26</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Science with Education</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>13.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Private University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Women Students</th>
<th>Students from Low SES</th>
<th>Mature Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Age 30 or over</td>
<td>% Low SES</td>
<td>% Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Business Administration</td>
<td>14.81</td>
<td>25.93</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLB. Law</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD. Medicine</td>
<td>10.71</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Ed. Maths</td>
<td>35.71</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Ghana: Retention, Level 400, 2007-08

#### Withdrawal Public University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>% of all students on the programme</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
<th>Withdrawal Low SES</th>
<th>Withdrawal Age 30 or over</th>
<th>Withdrawal Mature &amp; Low SES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Optometry</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Commerce</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.67</td>
<td>7.82</td>
<td>20.49</td>
<td>9.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Ed. (Primary)</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.83</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>10.56</td>
<td>8.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Mgt Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>10.87</td>
<td>15.84</td>
<td>6.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Withdrawal Private University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>% of all students on the programme</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
<th>Withdrawal Low SES</th>
<th>Withdrawal Age 30 or over</th>
<th>Withdrawal Mature and Low SES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Economics</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Human Resources Management</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.61</td>
<td>13.22</td>
<td>19.83</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Agri-Business Management</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Accountancy</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>6.21</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## Tanzania: Retention Level 100, 2007-08

### Withdrawal Public University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Poor Student</th>
<th>Mature Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% on programme</td>
<td>% withdrawal</td>
<td>% on programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Commerce</td>
<td>33.23</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>8.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLB. Law</td>
<td>28.13</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Engineering</td>
<td>26.04</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>10.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Science with Education</td>
<td>16.18</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>19.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Withdrawal Private University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Poor Student</th>
<th>Mature Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% on programme</td>
<td>% withdrawal</td>
<td>% on programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Business Administration</td>
<td>43.55</td>
<td>7.41</td>
<td>19.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLB. Law</td>
<td>41.04</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>8.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD. Medicine</td>
<td>26.42</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Ed. Maths</td>
<td>13.02</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Ghana: Completion and Achievement, 2007-08

### Completion Rate Public University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Poor Students</th>
<th>Mature Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% on programme</td>
<td>% who completed</td>
<td>% on programme</td>
<td>% who completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Commerce</td>
<td>70.62</td>
<td>57.95</td>
<td>29.38</td>
<td>21.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Management Studies</td>
<td>54.35</td>
<td>49.38</td>
<td>45.65</td>
<td>34.78</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Education (Primary)</td>
<td>56.52</td>
<td>49.69</td>
<td>43.48</td>
<td>39.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Sc. Optometry</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Student Achievement Private University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Poor Students</th>
<th>Mature Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% on progr.</td>
<td>% 1st class</td>
<td>% 2nd class</td>
<td>% on progr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Economics</td>
<td>83.33</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Human Resources Mgt.</td>
<td>29.52</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>67.16</td>
<td>70.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Agri Business Mgt.</td>
<td>72.73</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>27.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Accountancy</td>
<td>57.76</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>83.87</td>
<td>42.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Tanzania: Achievement, 2007-08

### Public University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Poor Students</th>
<th>Mature Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% on final year programme</td>
<td>% 1st class</td>
<td>% 2nd class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Commerce</td>
<td>29.64</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>93.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLB. Law</td>
<td>41.10</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>69.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Sc. Engineering</td>
<td>25.60</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>85.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Science with Education</td>
<td>38.46</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>96.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Private University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Poor Students</th>
<th>Mature Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% on final year of programme</td>
<td>% 1st class</td>
<td>% 2nd class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Business Administration</td>
<td>28.67</td>
<td>16.28</td>
<td>76.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLB. Law</td>
<td>44.65</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>39.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Ed. Maths</td>
<td>29.82</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Messages from the Equity Scorecards

- When structures of inequality are intersected, poor, older women disappear from majority of programmes.

- Equity Scorecards provide evidence that often contradicts national and organisational policy aspirations to widen participation.

- Variation across programmes and year groups needs closer monitoring.
Policy Activity, Contradictions and Aspirations

Professor Louise Morley
Policy Context

**International**
- UNESCO (1995): international solidarity in strengthening HE
- UNESCO (1998): WP as equity and social justice
- Commission for Africa (2005): WP for building social institutions

**Ghana**
- University Rationalisation Committee (1988): WP of ‘non traditional’ students
- National Council of Tertiary Education (1993): WP of students with special needs
- National Council for Distance Education (1995)

**Tanzania**
- Tanzania Development Vision 2025 (1999): WP for development
- The National HE policy (1999): Expansion & private HE
- The Universities Act (2005): Equitable access
Why Widen Participation in Higher Education?

- National Economic Development
- Social Development, Inclusion and Equity
- Labour Market Requirements
- Human Capital and Capacity Development
## Organisational Challenges to Widening Participation

### Staffing
- Capacity
- Workload
- Recruitment
- Succession Planning

### Funding/ Demand Exceeding Supply
- Students’ fees
- Unfunded expansion

### Lack of Quality Facilities
- Classrooms
- Student accommodation
- Libraries
- Laboratories
- IT

So, limitations… one, critically is the capacity. (…) Conditions were very good in the universities at the time but the situation has changed. If you compare conditions with say conditions in the banks and other organisations, you find that the balances are tilting and therefore many people, first class people, who normally take the university as the first line of action do not come. Therefore you have a situation now that we call an ‘ageing faculty’. Many people who have retired from the university continue to be there. One is the lack of teachers in medicine, in the critical areas… in engineering; you do not have the people to teach.

National Policymaker, Ghana
Perceptions of Staff and National Policymakers

**Barriers to participation**

- Poverty
- Quality of secondary schools
- Different cultural priorities
- Early marriage/pregnancy
- Lack of information/awareness of HE

**Effective strategies to widen participation**

- Poverty
- Quality of secondary schools
- Different cultural priorities
- Early marriage/pregnancy
- Lack of information/awareness of HE

**Under-represented groups**

- Disabled students
- Mature students
- Poor students
- Women
- Rural background
- Other marginalized groups

**Effective strategies to widen participation**

- Pre-entry programmes
- Evening/Weekend programmes
- Scholarships/loans
- Distance education
- Outreach programmes
Messages from Academics and Policymakers

To Governments and Donors

- Funding and quality HE are linked;
- Financing of HE to be reviewed e.g. student loans and scholarships/ fee distribution;
- Quality enhancement of secondary education/ preparedness for HE;
- Policy initiatives for deprived regions.

To HE Management

- Ear-marked funding for WP students;
- Outreach activities in deprived areas;
- Improvement of support/ welfare/ retention services;
- Develop staff capacity/ professionalise HE;
- Invest in infrastructure e.g. estate, learning resources.
Student Voices in Ghana and Tanzania

Dr Linda Dzama Forde
Overview of Themes

Barriers to HE

Motivations for entering HE
Overview of Themes

**Impact of HE**

- **Self-confidence**
- **Social Skills**
- **Broadening thinking**
- **Exposure to a different social group**
- **Subject Knowledge**

- **Female**
- **Male**
- **Deprived**
- **Non deprived**
- **Private uni.**
- **Public uni.**

**Future plans**

- **Further Studies**
- **Social responsibilities**
- **Pursuing profession**
- **Start business-commerce**
- **Other Employment**
## Narrating Higher Education Experiences: Support Growing Up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Support</th>
<th>Counter - Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Mothers at primary stage</td>
<td>✓ Poverty leading to school exclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Fathers’ aspirations</td>
<td>✓ Gendered choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Parents’ social capital</td>
<td>✓ Teacher absenteeism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Siblings’ prior educational experiences</td>
<td>✓ Large classes/ overcrowding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Teacher encouragement</td>
<td>✓ Domestic/ agricultural labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Peer group aspirations</td>
<td>✓ Violence (home and school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Imagined futures</td>
<td>✓ Bereavement, polygamy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Long distances to travel to school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Narrating Higher Education Experiences: Support for Entering HE

Drivers
• Parental education and occupation
• Quality of schools/ teachers
• Proximity/ knowledge of universities
• Professional aspirations
• Desire to escape poverty/ wanting to ‘become a somebody’
• Experience of HE in extended family

Barriers
• Lack of family social and material capital
• Gender
• Rural marginalisation
• Age: family and employment responsibilities
• Negative educational experiences
• Perception of HE as poor investment
Narrating Higher Education Experiences: Support at University

Positive
• Loans Boards bursaries and scholarships
• Affirmative action programmes
• Part-time study
• Independent and Peer learning

Negative
• Poor quality lecturers/ lack of availability of lecturers/lack of professionalism
• Transmission pedagogy
• Lack of resources e.g. IT, Library
• Large classes
• Sexual harassment
• Gender stereotyping
• Student unrest, boycotts, strikes
• Assessment: lack of transparency
• Favouritism
Narrating Higher Education Experiences: Impact of HE

- Self confidence
- Social skills
- Broadening thinking
- Exposure to a different social group
- Subject knowledge
- Independence
- Social status
- Maturation
- Social networks
- Learning

“University I would say has affected me positively in so many ways (...) I can now stand in front of a whole crowd, talk to people even debate and if I can remember, it is something that I didn’t know how to do. I was so shy of people but now I can say that I can now stand confidently in front of people, interact with people without even being afraid.”
Narrating Higher Education Experiences: Gender, Poverty, Disability and Age

Gender
- Women and academic identity
- Sexualisation of relations
- Women treated differently
- Women and non traditional subjects
- Heteronormativity

Poverty
- Lack of social/material capital
- Rural marginalisation
- Capacity to imagine the future
- Earning while learning
- HE as exit route

Disability
- Lack of support in education
- Prejudice/social models of disability
- Importance of Education
- HE as escape route
- Being different/other

Age
- Transgressing norms of ideal students
- “Off time” educational events
- HE/ family = greedy institutions
- Mature entry routes/ programme structure?
- Private HE more flexible
Summing Up

Professor Fiona Leach
Messages to Academic Managers, Policymakers and University Teachers

- Quality Assurance procedures and practices in higher education *e.g.* service-level agreements, codes of practice *i.e.* for sexual harassment, transparency for assessment, professionalisation of university teachers;

- Widening Participation Policies: evaluation and monitoring;

- Robust management information systems, with more detailed indicators;

- Developing research capacity in African universities.
Summing Up: Unequal Geographies of Knowledge

- Widening participation is often associated with quantitative change.
- Less emphasis on power relations, qualitative considerations of higher education experiences.
- Globally, enrolment in higher education is rising.
- Participation rates from a range of social groups are not increasing.
- In the globalised knowledge economy, wealth distribution, as well as wealth creation, needs to be considered.

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www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation

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Project Outputs

• **Publications**


• **Working papers**

  - **Working Paper 2 (2007) Country Profiles for Ghana and Tanzania:** Economic, social and political contexts for widening participation in higher education (Lugg, Morley, Leach)