

# Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania: Developing an Equity Scorecard



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# Why This Research Is Important



# The Knowledge Economy

Higher education seen as a central site for:

- ✓ facilitating skills, knowledge and expertise essential to economic and social development in low-income countries
- ✓ generating research and analysis to improve effectiveness of government policy and services

(Roberts, 2005; UNESCO, 1998; World Bank, 2000; 2002; Commission for Africa, 2005).

# A Political Economy of Participation in Higher Education

Lack of data on:

- Higher education, poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals
- How different structures of inequality intersect e.g. gender and socio-economic background
- Private higher education and widening participation
- Socio-cultural theory in the context of African higher education.

# Higher Education and Poverty Reduction



Higher education may affect poverty by:

- raising the incomes of those with education
- fostering high level skills, knowledge and competencies, to promote economic growth.

Poverty increasingly perceived as capability, as well as material deprivation (Sen, 1997).

# Mass Higher Education?



- Student enrolment worldwide:
  - ✓ 13 million in 1960
  - ✓ 82 million in 1995
  - ✓ 137.8 million in 2005

(UNESCO, 1998; UNESCO, 2007).

# Interventions to Widen Participation

- Quota systems for:
  - ✓ deprived regions/schools (Ghana, Nigeria and Sri Lanka)
  - ✓ black students (South Africa)
  - ✓ marginalised groups, e.g. caste (India), ethnic group (Malaysia), indigenous peoples (Australia)
- Affirmative action programmes and scholarships for women (Uganda)
- Pre-sessional programmes for women (Tanzania)
- Changing aspirations of 'non-traditional students'
- ✓ 'Aim Higher' (UK)



# Higher Education Capacity in Africa



- Africa has:
- 54 countries
- Over 700 million people
- 300 universities

(Teferra and Altbach, 2004).



# African Participation Rates in Higher Education



- 5% in Sub-Saharan Africa
- 5% in Ghana
- 1% in Tanzania
- 24% globally

(UNESCO, 2007)

# Challenges Within the Higher Education Sector in Africa

- The rise of private higher education
- Management and governance
- Social inclusion v. expansion
- Policy implementation
- Over/under-representation by gender and social class (participation, service delivery and employment)
- Quality and relevance of the curriculum
- Brain drain
- Research capacity
- Languages and indigenous knowledges
- HIV/AIDS.

# International Policies on Widening Participation in Higher Education

Policies targeted at:

- Increasing access to HE globally
- Widening access to HE for less privileged groups
- Reducing the gap between conditions in HE in 'developed' and 'developing' countries
  
- UNESCO (1995)
- UNESCO World Declaration on Higher Education (1998)
- World Bank (2000; 2002)

# Criticisms of Widening Participation

- Lowers the value of HE
- Dilutes standards
- Creates unrealistic expectations for learners
- Overloads systems that are under-resourced
- Stigmatises 'non-traditional' students
- Leads to 'diploma disease' i.e. educational inflation.

# Some Policies for Widening Participation in HE in Ghana

## **Botsio Committee (1959)** recommended

- increasing access to university education for national development

## **University Rationalisation Committee (1988)** recommended

- expanded access to higher education
- sustainable funding
- broadening tertiary education to include post-secondary education institutions
- greater access for students previously disadvantaged through poverty or gender

## **White Paper on Reforms to the Tertiary Education System (1991)** recommended

- expanding access through private institutions
- cost-sharing and cost-recovery

# Recent Policies for Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana

**National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) Act (1993)** established new institutions

- NCTE to advise on the development and financing of tertiary education in Ghana, and to recommend norms and standards
- National Accreditation Board (NAB) and National Board for Professional and Technical Examinations (NABTEX) to accredit tertiary institutions

**Presidential Review Committee on Education (2002)** recommended

- expanding access through distance education and information communication technologies (ICT)

**White Paper on the Report of the Education Reform Review Committee (2004)** supported reforms to tertiary education

- gender equity at all levels in education
- private sector development
- cost-sharing and revenue diversification
- establishing an Open University

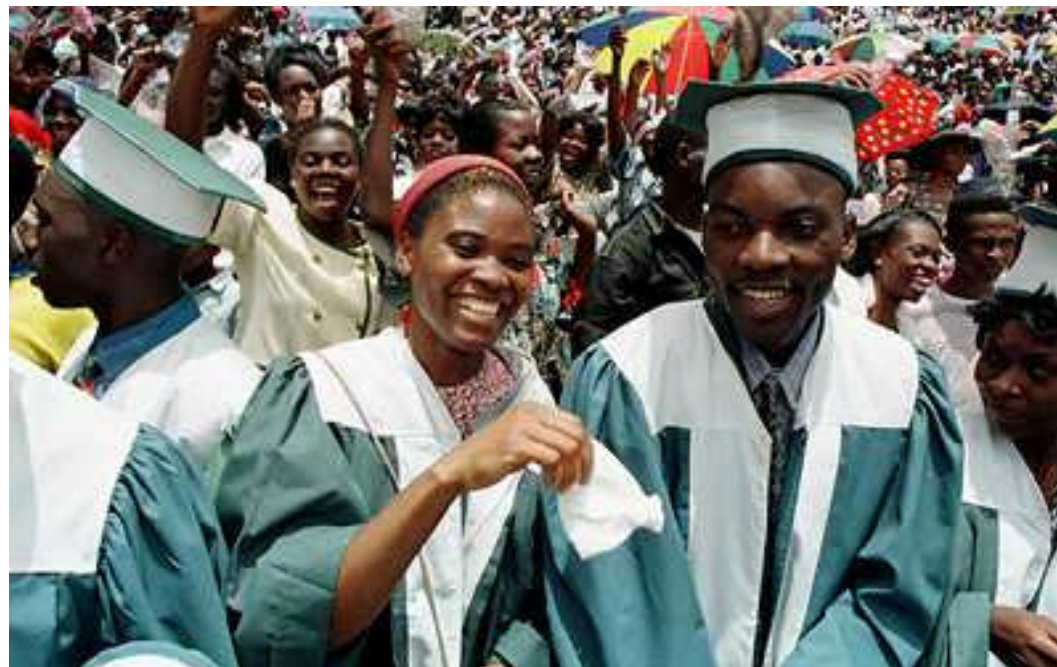
# Challenges to Widening Participation in Africa

- Triangle of family, school and community
- Micro-level decision-making
- Socio-cultural barriers
- Educating women perceived as unproductive
- Poverty
- Low participation rates in schooling
- Under-investment in HE
- Violence, war and disease
- HE as a public and private good. Cost sharing. Who pays?
- Access to what?

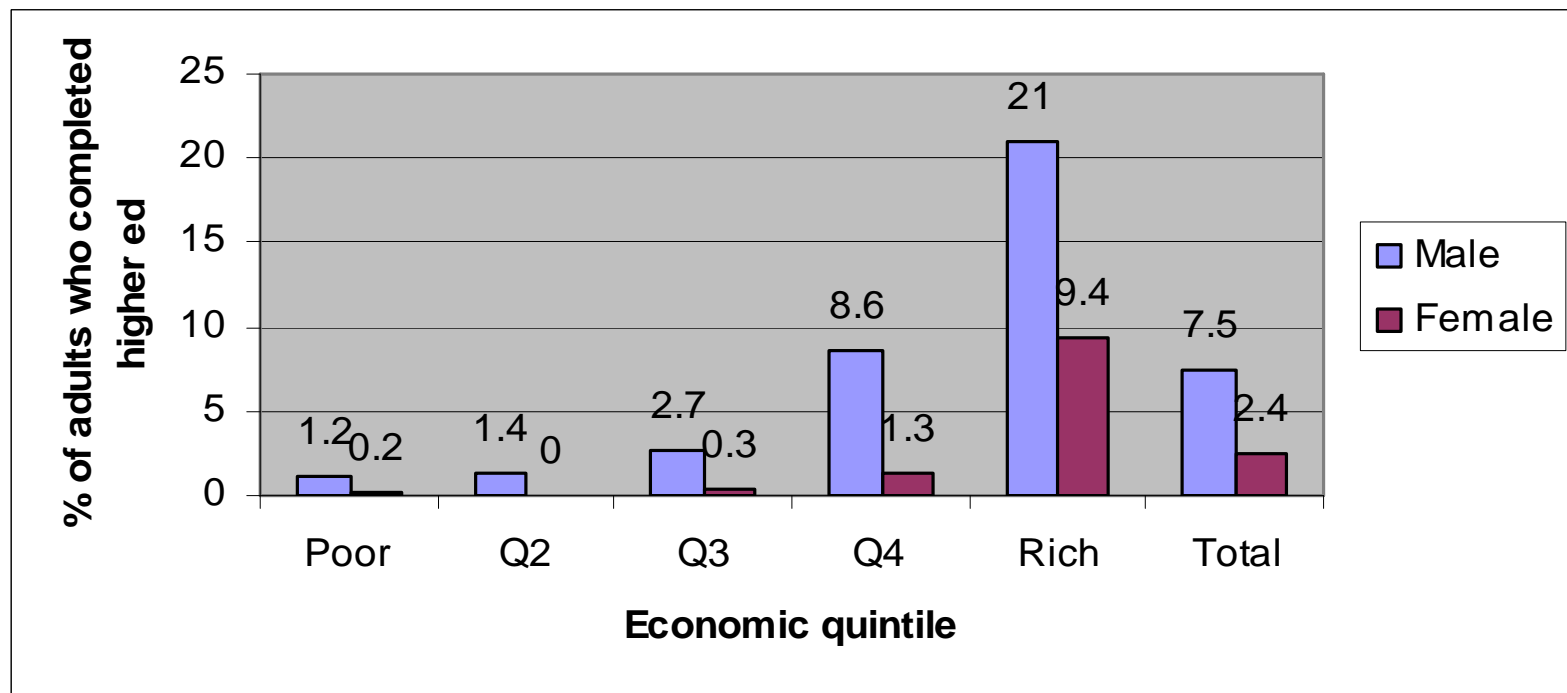
(Kwesiga, 2002; Morley *et al.* 2006)



# Who is Participating?



# Who is Participating in Ghana?



Source: [www.devdata.worldbank](http://www.devdata.worldbank) (2007). Data source Ghana DHS Indicator 26, 2003

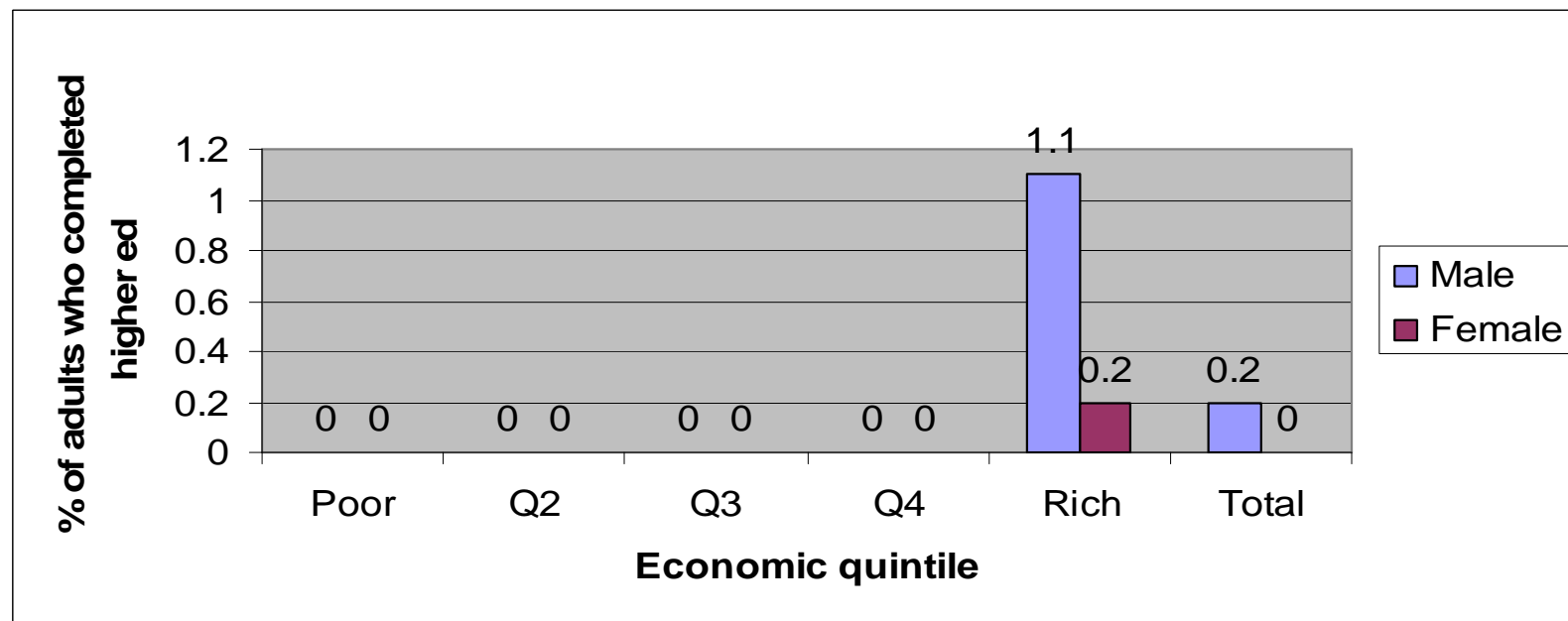
# Higher Education in Ghana

- In 2005, GER for tertiary education rose to 5% (UNESCO, 2007)
- 34.3% of students in public universities are women (2006/7) (NCTE, 2007a)
- 41% of students in private universities are women (2005/6) (NCTE, 2006)
- 10% of university students are enrolled in private institutions (2005/6) (NCTE, 2006)
- Demand for public HE: 43% of 'qualified' applicants to public universities are new entrants (2006/7) (NCTE, 2007b)
- Cf: 75% of qualified applicants to private universities are new entrants (2005/6) (NCTE, 2006)
- The majority of HE students continue to be men from wealthy backgrounds
- Women's participation is highest in Education, Social Sciences and Arts
- Women's participation is lowest in Science, Engineering and Agriculture

## **BUT**

- Where are mature students, and students from disadvantaged backgrounds, found in the HE system?

# Who is Participating in Tanzania?



Source: [www.devdata.worldbank](http://www.devdata.worldbank), (2007). Data Source: Tanzania DHS Indicator 26, 1999.

# Higher Education in Tanzania

- In 2005, GER for tertiary education was 1% (UNESCO, 2007)
- 30% of HE students are women (MHEST, 2005)
- 10% of university students are at a private university (MHEST, 2005)
- 36% of undergraduates at private universities are women (MHEST, 2005)
- Women's participation is lowest in Commerce, Science and Engineering
- Women's participation is highest in Law, Education, Medicine
- The majority of students continue to be men from wealthy backgrounds.

BUT

- Where are mature students, and students from disadvantaged backgrounds?

# What the Project is Doing



# Methodology

- Examining the influence of social processes on differential participation in, progression through, and outcomes for under-represented social groups
- Quantitative methods:
  - ✓ international, national and institutional statistics
  - ✓ Equity Scorecard
- Qualitative methods:
  - ✓ analysis of policy documents
  - ✓ life history interviews with students
  - ✓ interviews with staff



# Research Sites



## Public Universities

- ✓ University of Cape Coast, Ghana
- ✓ University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

## Private Universities

- ✓ Central University College, Accra, Ghana
- ✓ Tumaini University, Tanzania



# Quantifying Inequalities

# What is an Equity Scorecard?

- A **Scorecard** provides quantitative measures of critical moments in complex processes.
- An ***Equity*** Scorecard compares these measures for different groups.
- Datasets can be explored in multiple ways;

# What We Are Measuring

- Sociological variables e.g. gender, age, socio-economic status

In Relation to:

- Educational indicators e.g. access, retention and achievement

In Relation to:

- Programmes of Study e.g. medicine, management
- Institutional Sites e.g. public and private HEIs.

## Scorecard 1: Public University, Ghana

	<b>% students women</b>	<b>% students 'deprived schools'</b>	<b>% students women from 'deprived schools'</b>
BSc Physical Sci	15.3	2.2	0.6
B Commerce	28.8	3.3	1.0
B Mgmt	42	2.8	1.4
B Ed (Primary)	41.2	4.6	1.2

## Scorecard 2: Public University, Ghana

	<b>Equity Index</b> (% women on prog/% women in uni)	<b>Equity Index</b> (% students from deprived schools / quota)
BSc Physical Sci	0.5	0.4
B Commerce	0.9	0.7
B Mgmt	1.3	0.9
B Ed (Primary)	1.4	0.6

## Findings from the ESC

- Rates of participation for students from 'deprived schools' are low;
- Rates of participation of women from 'deprived schools' are extremely low;
- Women are clustered in Education and Business Management, and not in Science

Women make up 31% of the undergraduate population at UCC (UCC, 2006)



## Scorecard 1: Admissions to 2 Degree Programmes at Univ B in Tanzania

Programme	% admissions women (2007/8)	Equity Index % F Admissions / %F Enrolment (general)	% admissions aged 30+ (2007/8)
LLB (Law)	<b>42.20</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>13.70</b>
B BA	<b>42.10</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>15.00</b>

*Data source: Admissions to 2 programmes (Dataset 1, 2007)*

Enrolment in first degree programmes at Univ B (2005/6)

%F=40.9% (MHEST, 2006:2)

## Scorecard 2 : Admissions to Programmes at Uni A and Uni B in Tanzania, 2007/8

	Univ A		Univ B	
	%F	Equity Index	%F	Equity Index
B Com / B BA	35.4	0.95	42.1	1.03
LLB (Law)	26.0	0.70	42.2	1.03
BSc Engineering	8.2	0.22		
B Ed (Sci)	16.4	0.44		

*Datasource:* Admissions to 4 programmes (Dataset 1, 2007/8)

% F enrolment 2005/6 Uni A: u/g 37.2%      Uni B: u/g 40.9% (MHEST, 2006)

# Findings From The ESC

- Rates of access for women in Law and Commerce degrees at this university are higher than the national average for women's participation in HE
- Rates of access for women in Law and Commerce degrees at this university are similar to their rates of participation in this university as a whole
- Rates of access for mature students to Law and Commerce have been measured.

Women make up 30% of the undergraduate population at in Tanzania, and 36% of students at private universities (MHEST, 2005)

# Illuminating the Statistics



# Life History Interviews with Students

Soliciting data from 100 students per country on:

- ✓ enablers & barriers to participation;
- ✓ social and learner identities;
- ✓ how identities might influence educational choices;
- ✓ linkages between material, cultural, and social factors.

# Why Life History?

- **Participation in HE can be influenced by long-term factors in students' lives**
- **Inequalities in participation in HE are evident throughout the lifecourse of participants and non-participants**
- **Opportunities in the early stages of education can play a key role in whether HE is an option**
- **Life history interviews can deepen understanding of how disadvantaged learners overcome barriers to participation, and how they negotiate their identity as learners in HE.**

(Gorard et al. 2006; Reay et al. 2001; Archer and Hutchings 2000).

# Interview Findings from Students in Ghana and Tanzania

- Gender (domestic duties, motherhood, non-traditional subjects for women)
- Agents of support (mothers and fathers, extended family, teachers, peers, colleagues)
- Influence of early years (schooling; urban/rural)
- Motivations for entering HE (career aspirations, escaping poverty)
- Decision-making process (strategic, delayed)
- Diverse experiences of HE (pedagogy, skills acquired, social networks, confidence, status).

# Interviews with Staff

- 100 policy-makers per country:
  - ✓ in Ministries with responsibility for higher education
  - ✓ in national organisations with an interest in higher education / equity / poverty reduction
  - ✓ in the case study sites.



## Preliminary Findings from Staff Interviews

- HE is critical to national development, but has been under-invested e.g. by the World Bank;
- Excluded groups include: women, rural communities, the poor, mature people, the disabled;
- Uneven engagement with policy and implementation gaps e.g. between international, national and institutional levels;
- Diverse recommendations for action e.g. affirmative action programmes, developing quality and standards of junior and high schools for all students; effective policy monitoring; support and facilities to retain, as well as attract 'non-traditional' students.

# Working Towards...



- Constructing knowledge that can contribute to the democratisation of higher education.

## Website

[www.sussex.ac.uk/education/  
wideningparticipation](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation)

# Acknowledgements



- ESRC and DFID for funding this 3-year project.

## Some Questions For Your Consideration

- Why do you consider this research project to be important?
- What do you see as some of the major challenges?
- What do you think that the research team needs to take into consideration in the Ghanaian context?
- How can *you* support the project?
- What impact would you like the project to make? Who could benefit from the research findings? How can the research findings be applied and disseminated?

[www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation)

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