Gender Integration Strategy for the In-Service Teacher Mentorship and Support (SITMS) Project in Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia

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Abstract- This paper examines the gender integration strategy for the In-Service Teacher Mentorship and Support (SITMS) project in Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia. A comprehensive gender analysis was conducted to assess the current status of gender mainstreaming in the project, identify key challenges and opportunities, and propose strategies for promoting gender equality in teacher professional development. The analysis employed a mixed-methods approach, including review of project documents, surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and classroom observations. Key findings revealed gender disparities in leadership positions, gender biases in teaching materials and practices, and barriers to women's career advancement such as lack of mentorship, unequal domestic responsibilities, and gender stereotypes. The paper proposes a set of targeted interventions to address these challenges, including setting targets for women's representation in leadership, reviewing curricula for gender responsiveness, providing gender-sensitive training and mentoring, and engaging male teachers as champions of gender equality. It also outlines an implementation plan with a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress on gender outcomes. The paper argues that mainstreaming gender in teacher professional development is critical for achieving the project's goals of improving education quality and equity. It calls on policymakers, education authorities, teacher training institutions, and civil society organizations to prioritize gender equality in their policies, practices, and budgets. By promoting gender equality in teacher professional development, the SITMS project can contribute to the global agenda of leaving no one behind in education.

I. INTRODUCTION

The In-Service Teacher Mentorship and Support (SITMS) project is a collaborative initiative aimed at enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia. The project focuses on providing continuous professional development opportunities for in-service teachers through mentorship, training, and support (SITMS, 2022). While the project has made significant strides in improving teaching practices and student outcomes, there is a growing recognition of the need to address gender issues in teacher professional development.

Gender disparities in the teaching profession are well-documented, with women being underrepresented in leadership positions and facing unique challenges in their career advancement (UNESCO, 2019). Research has shown that gender-responsive teacher professional development can not only improve the quality of teaching but also promote gender equality in education (Unterhalter et al., 2014). By addressing gender biases, stereotypes, and barriers in teacher training and support, the SITMS project can contribute to creating more inclusive and equitable learning environments.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

- Gender Issues in Teacher Education and Professional Development

Several theoretical frameworks have been used to understand and address gender issues in teacher education and professional development. Feminist theory, particularly the concept of gender as a social construct, has been influential in highlighting how

gendered norms, expectations, and power relations shape teachers' experiences and opportunities (Acker, 1990; Connell, 2002). Feminist scholars have argued that teacher education and professional development must challenge and transform these gendered structures to promote gender equality (Weiler, 1988). Intersectionality theory has also been applied to examine how gender intersects with other social identities, such as race, class, and ethnicity, to shape teachers' experiences and outcomes (Crenshaw, 1991; Collins, 2015). This framework emphasizes the need for an intersectional approach to gender integration that recognizes and addresses the multiple, overlapping forms of disadvantage and discrimination that teachers may face (Atewologun et al., 2020).

Social cognitive theory has been used to understand how gender stereotypes and biases influence teachers' self-efficacy, career aspirations, and professional development (Bandura, 1986). According to this theory, teachers' beliefs about their own abilities and the expectations of others can limit or enhance their motivation and engagement in professional learning (Goddard et al., 2019). Gender-responsive teacher education and professional development must therefore challenge and transform these beliefs and expectations to support teachers' agency and empowerment.

- Gender Disparities in the Teaching Workforce and Leadership Positions

Numerous empirical studies have documented the persistent gender disparities in the teaching workforce and leadership positions, both globally and in the specific contexts of Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia. A UNESCO (2020) report found that while women make up 94% of pre-primary teachers, 69% of primary teachers, and 54% of secondary teachers worldwide, they are significantly underrepresented in school leadership roles. In sub-Saharan Africa, only 22% of secondary school principals are women.

Country-specific studies have revealed similar patterns. In Tanzania, a study by Bandiho (2017) found that women made up 52% of primary school teachers but only 33% of secondary school teachers and 18% of school heads. In Kenya, a study by Wanjiku et al. (2022) found that while women comprised 68% of primary school teachers, they held

only 27% of principal positions. In Zambia, a study by Mulenga et al. (2023) found that women made up 75% of primary teachers and 40% of secondary teachers, but only 10% of school heads.

These studies have also identified various factors contributing to these gender disparities, such as societal gender norms, lack of mentorship and support for women's career advancement, and gender biases in recruitment and promotion practices (Bandiho, 2017; Wanjiku et al., 2022; Mulenga et al., 2023). For example, Bandiho (2017) found that female teachers in Tanzania faced challenges such as heavy domestic responsibilities, lack of confidence, and negative attitudes towards women's leadership. Wanjiku et al. (2022) found that female teachers in Kenya lacked access to professional networks and faced discrimination in selection for leadership positions.

- Best Practices and Strategies for Promoting Gender Equality

Several empirical studies have evaluated the effectiveness of different strategies for promoting gender equality in teacher education and professional development. Gender mainstreaming, which involves integrating gender considerations into all aspects of project design and implementation, has been found to be an effective approach (Nabbuye, 2021; Ogachi et al., 2020). A study by Nabbuye (2021) in Uganda found that gender mainstreaming in a teacher training program led to increased awareness of gender issues, more gender-responsive teaching practices, and improved learning outcomes for girls.

Gender-responsive pedagogy, which involves using teaching methods and materials that are inclusive and promote gender equality, has also been shown to be effective (Kagoda & Muema, 2020; Kombo & Bwisa, 2022). A study by Kagoda and Muema (2020) in Kenya found that training teachers in gender-responsive pedagogy led to more equitable classroom interactions, increased girls' participation, and better academic performance. Kombo and Bwisa (2022) found that using gender-responsive teaching materials in a Kenyan secondary school led to more positive attitudes towards gender equality among both teachers and students.

Mentorship and networking programs have been found to be valuable for supporting women teachers' career development and leadership aspirations (Akala, 2020; Nyamwange et al., 2022). A study by Akala (2020) in Kenya found that a mentorship program for female teachers increased their self-confidence, job satisfaction, and motivation to pursue leadership roles. Nyamwange et al. (2022) found that networking opportunities helped female teachers in Tanzania to share experiences, access resources, and build professional connections.

While these studies provide valuable insights into effective strategies for promoting gender equality, they also highlight the need for further research in several areas. More longitudinal studies are needed to assess the long-term impact of these interventions on teachers' careers and student outcomes (Nabbuye, 2021; Kombo & Bwisa, 2022). There is also a need for more context-specific research to understand how these strategies can be adapted and scaled in different cultural and socioeconomic settings (Akala, 2020; Nyamwange et al., 2022).

III. METHODOLOGY

The analysis used a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative techniques through three main components:
1. Stakeholder Engagement
- Consulted project staff, teachers, school leaders, and community members
- Conducted participatory workshops with government officials and civil society organizations
2. Data Collection Methods
- Surveys of teachers and school leaders
- In-depth interviews with key informants
- Focus group discussions
- Direct observation of project activities
- Document review of training materials and reports
3. Analysis Framework
- Applied multiple analytical frameworks (Harvard, Moser, and Women's Empowerment Framework)
- Used descriptive statistics for quantitative data
- Employed thematic analysis for qualitative data

This comprehensive approach ensured thorough assessment of gender integration in the project while identifying challenges and opportunities for promoting gender equality.

IV. FINDINGS

The gender analysis conducted for the In-Service Teacher Mentorship and Support (SITMS) project in Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia revealed several key findings related to the current status of gender integration, challenges and barriers, and opportunities for promoting gender equality in teacher professional development.

- Current Status of Gender Integration

The review of project documents, including the proposal, logical framework, and monitoring reports, showed that gender considerations have been incorporated to some extent in the SITMS project's design and planning. Gender-specific objectives, indicators, and activities are included, demonstrating an intention to address gender disparities and promote women's empowerment in the teaching profession. The project has also made efforts to collect sex-disaggregated data on key indicators such as teacher participation in training and mentorship activities.

However, the implementation of gender integration strategies has been uneven across the project's components and target countries. Table 1 presents the gender parity in teacher training participation, showing that while Tanzania has achieved gender parity with a parity index of 1.08, Kenya and Zambia still have significant disparities with indices of 0.61 and 0.75, respectively. This suggests that the project's approach to ensuring equal participation of male and female teachers in professional development opportunities has not been consistently effective in all contexts.

Table 1: Gender Parity in Teacher Training Participation

Country	Male	Female	Parity Index
Tanzania	48%	52%	1.08
Kenya	62%	38%	0.61
Zambia	57%	43%	0.75

Furthermore, the project's monitoring and evaluation system lacks robust gender-sensitive indicators and targets, which hinders the tracking and reporting of progress on gender equality outcomes. The analysis found that while sex-disaggregated data is collected for some indicators, there are no specific targets set for women's representation and participation in leadership roles, decision-making processes, or professional growth opportunities. This gap in the monitoring framework makes it challenging to assess the project's impact on addressing gender disparities and empowering women in the education sector.

- Key Gender Issues and Challenges

The gender analysis identified several critical issues and challenges that hinder the full and equal participation of women in the teaching profession and the SITMS project:

1. Underrepresentation of women in leadership positions

Despite women comprising the majority of the teaching workforce in the project countries (52% in Tanzania, 48% in Kenya, and 56% in Zambia), they are significantly underrepresented in school leadership roles, as shown in Table 2. The proportion of female principals is much lower than the share of female teachers, with only 28% in Tanzania, 22% in Kenya, and 31% in Zambia. This disparity reveals a "leaky pipeline" where women's representation diminishes at higher levels of the education system.

Table 2: Representation of Women in School Leadership

Country	Female Teachers	Female Principals
Tanzania	52%	28%
Kenya	48%	22%
Zambia	56%	31%

The analysis found that women face multiple barriers to career advancement, including lack of mentorship and support, gender stereotypes about leadership, and unequal domestic and caregiving responsibilities. Focus group discussions with female teachers highlighted the challenges they face in balancing their professional duties with household and family obligations, which are often disproportionately borne by women. Many participants also reported experiencing gender bias and discrimination in the recruitment and promotion processes, with leadership positions often being viewed as "male roles."

2. Persistence of gender biases and stereotypes

The review of project training materials and classroom observations revealed the persistence of gender biases and stereotypes in teaching content and practices. Many of the training resources and curricula reinforced traditional gender roles, depicting women primarily in domestic and caregiving roles while men were shown in leadership and decision-making positions. This lack of diverse and empowering representations can perpetuate limiting gender norms and expectations among both teachers and students.

Focus group discussions and interviews with teachers and students also highlighted the prevalence of gender-biased language, expectations, and disciplinary practices in the classroom. For example, some teachers reported having different academic expectations for boys and girls, with boys often being viewed as naturally gifted in subjects like mathematics and science while girls were seen as less capable. Students also shared experiences of gender-based discrimination, such as girls being discouraged from participating in certain extracurricular activities or being subjected to more stringent dress codes than boys.

These biases and stereotypes can have negative impacts on girls' learning experiences, self-esteem, and future aspirations. They can also reinforce harmful gender norms and power dynamics that disadvantage women in their personal and professional lives. Addressing these deep-rooted attitudes and practices requires a concerted effort to raise awareness, challenge stereotypes, and promote more equitable and inclusive teaching and learning environments.

3. Barriers to women's participation and advancement

The gender analysis identified several structural and sociocultural barriers that hinder women's full participation and advancement in the teaching profession and the SITMS project. These include:

a. Lack of female role models and mentors: The underrepresentation of women in leadership positions means that there are few female role models and mentors to inspire and support other women in their career development. This lack of visible examples of

successful women leaders can perpetuate the perception that leadership is a male domain and discourage women from pursuing higher-level positions.

b. Gender-blind recruitment and promotion practices: Many of the current recruitment and promotion processes in the education sector do not take into account the specific barriers and challenges faced by women. For example, job advertisements may use masculine language or prioritize qualities that are stereotypically associated with men, such as assertiveness or competitiveness. Selection committees may also have unconscious biases that favor male candidates over equally qualified women.

c. Unequal access to professional development opportunities: Women teachers often face additional barriers to accessing professional development opportunities, such as training workshops or conferences. These may include family and childcare responsibilities that make it difficult to travel or attend events outside of regular working hours. Women may also have less access to information about available opportunities or to the informal networks that can provide support and guidance in navigating career advancement.

d. Sexual harassment and gender-based violence: Sexual harassment and gender-based violence in schools and communities create unsafe and hostile environments for women and girls. Female teachers and students may face unwanted sexual advances, physical or verbal abuse, or discrimination based on their gender. These experiences can have severe psychological and emotional impacts, affecting women's well-being, job satisfaction, and career progression.

e. Prioritization of domestic roles over professional aspirations: Societal norms and expectations often place a disproportionate burden of domestic and caregiving responsibilities on women, which can limit their ability to fully participate in and benefit from professional development opportunities. Women may face pressure to prioritize their roles as wives and mothers over their careers, leading to higher rates of absenteeism, turnover, or stagnation in their professional growth.

- Opportunities and Entry Points for Promoting Gender Equality

Despite the challenges identified, the gender analysis also highlighted several opportunities and entry points for promoting gender equality in the SITMS project and the broader education sector in Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia.

1. Leveraging partnerships for advocacy and policy change

The SITMS project can leverage its existing partnerships with teacher training institutions, teacher unions, and civil society organizations to advocate for gender-responsive policies and practices in the education sector. By collaborating with these stakeholders, the project can amplify its impact and reach in promoting gender equality.

For example, the project can work with teacher training institutions to review and revise their curricula to incorporate gender-sensitive content and pedagogies. This can include integrating modules on gender awareness, inclusive teaching strategies, and addressing gender-based violence in schools. The project can also advocate for the inclusion of gender equality principles and commitments in teacher codes of conduct and professional standards.

Partnering with teacher unions can help raise awareness about gender issues among their members and mobilize support for gender-responsive policies and practices. The project can work with unions to develop and implement gender equality action plans, provide training on gender mainstreaming, and promote women's leadership and representation within union structures.

Collaboration with civil society organizations, particularly women's rights and gender equality advocates, can strengthen the project's advocacy efforts and provide valuable expertise and resources. These partnerships can help generate evidence, develop policy recommendations, and build public support for gender equality in education.

2. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation for gender equality

To better track and report on progress towards gender equality, the SITMS project should strengthen its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system by incorporating gender-sensitive indicators and targets.

This involves moving beyond just collecting sex-disaggregated data to setting specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) targets for women's representation and participation at all levels of the project.

For example, the project could set targets for increasing the proportion of female teachers in leadership positions, such as school principals or district education officers. It could also establish targets for women's participation in decision-making processes, such as school management committees or teacher training advisory boards. These targets should be based on a thorough analysis of the current situation and challenges, and should be accompanied by concrete strategies and actions to achieve them.

The project should also conduct regular gender audits and assessments to identify gaps, monitor progress, and adapt its strategies based on evidence. This can involve collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, such as surveys, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews, to understand the experiences, needs, and priorities of women and men in the project. The findings of these assessments should be used to inform project planning, implementation, and reporting, and to make course corrections as needed.

Strengthening the M&E system for gender equality also requires building the capacity of project staff and partners to effectively collect, analyze, and use gender-sensitive data. This can involve providing training on gender analysis, M&E methods, and data management, as well as establishing clear guidelines and protocols for data collection and reporting. By investing in robust M&E systems and capacities, the project can better track its progress, demonstrate its impact, and contribute to the evidence base on what works in promoting gender equality in education.

3. Engaging male allies and champions for gender equality

Achieving gender equality is not just a women's issue; it requires the active engagement and support of men and boys as allies and champions for change. The SITMS project should therefore intentionally involve male teachers, school leaders, and community members in its gender equality efforts.

This can start by raising awareness among men about gender issues and the benefits of gender equality for all. The project can organize sensitization workshops, dialogues, and campaigns to challenge gender stereotypes, promote positive masculinities, and encourage men to take an active role in promoting gender justice. Male teachers and leaders who demonstrate commitment to gender equality can be highlighted as role models and champions, inspiring others to follow their example.

The project can also provide training and resources to equip male allies with the knowledge, skills, and tools to promote gender equality in their spheres of influence. This can include training on gender-responsive pedagogy, strategies for addressing gender-based violence, and methods for creating inclusive and equitable learning environments. Male teachers and leaders can also be engaged as mentors and coaches for their female colleagues, providing guidance and support for their career development.

Engaging men and boys as partners in promoting gender equality requires addressing the root causes of gender inequalities, including patriarchal norms and power imbalances. The project should therefore work with communities to challenge harmful gender norms and practices, such as early marriage, female genital mutilation, and unequal division of household labor. This can involve collaborating with traditional and religious leaders, as well as women's rights organizations, to promote dialogue, reflection, and action on gender issues.

By actively involving men and boys as allies and champions, the SITMS project can create a more enabling environment for gender equality and women's empowerment. This approach recognizes that gender equality is not a zero-sum game, but rather a collective responsibility and a shared benefit for all.

4. Creating opportunities for women's leadership and voice

To address the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions and decision-making processes, the SITMS project should proactively create opportunities for women's meaningful participation and influence within its own structures and activities. This involves taking deliberate steps to promote

women's leadership, provide mentorship and support, and amplify women's voices and perspectives.

One key strategy is to set targets for women's representation in project leadership and decision-making bodies, such as the project steering committee, technical working groups, or teacher training facilitation teams. These targets should be accompanied by clear selection criteria and processes that prioritize competence, experience, and potential, while also taking into account the specific barriers and challenges faced by women. The project should also provide leadership training and mentoring to support women in assuming and excelling in these roles.

Mentorship and coaching can be powerful tools for building women's confidence, skills, and networks. The project can establish formal mentorship programs that pair experienced female leaders with emerging talent, providing guidance, advice, and opportunities for growth. Informal mentoring and peer support networks can also be encouraged, creating spaces for women to share experiences, challenges, and strategies for success.

In addition to promoting women's leadership within the project, it is important to create platforms and spaces for women's voices and perspectives to be heard and valued. This can involve conducting regular consultations and focus group discussions with female teachers, students, and community members to understand their needs, priorities, and experiences. The project can also support the formation and strengthening of women's networks and associations, such as female teacher unions or student clubs, which can serve as collective voices for advocacy and change.

Finally, the project should strive to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that enables women to thrive and reach their full potential. This includes establishing clear policies and procedures for preventing and addressing sexual harassment and gender-based violence, as well as providing psychosocial support and referral services for survivors. It also involves promoting work-life balance and flexible arrangements that recognize and accommodate women's multiple roles and responsibilities.

By intentionally creating opportunities for women's leadership and voice, the SITMS project can contribute to a more inclusive, equitable, and effective education system that benefits all learners and communities.

5. Discussion

Implications of the Findings for the SITMS Project

The findings of the gender analysis have significant implications for the SITMS project's strategies, activities, and outcomes. The identified gaps and challenges in gender integration, such as the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles, persistence of gender biases in teaching practices, and barriers to women's professional development, underscore the need for a more comprehensive and targeted approach to promoting gender equality.

The project will need to revisit its design and implementation plans to ensure that gender considerations are fully mainstreamed across all components. This may involve setting more specific and ambitious targets for women's representation and participation, developing tailored interventions to address identified barriers, and allocating adequate resources for gender-responsive activities. The project will also need to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation framework to better track and report on gender equality outcomes, using both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

The findings also highlight the importance of adopting a multi-stakeholder and multi-level approach to gender integration. The project will need to engage diverse partners, including teacher training institutions, teacher unions, civil society organizations, and community leaders, to build a broad coalition for change. It will also need to work at different levels of the education system, from national policies to school-level practices, to create an enabling environment for gender equality.

- Alignment with National Gender Policies and International Frameworks

The SITMS project's gender integration efforts should align with and contribute to national gender policies and international frameworks on gender equality in education. Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia have all made commitments to promote gender equality and

women's empowerment through their national development plans, education sector policies, and gender strategies. For example:

- Tanzania's Vision 2025 and National Strategy for Gender Development prioritize women's access to education and leadership opportunities.
- Kenya's Vision 2030 and National Gender and Equality Commission Act aim to eliminate gender disparities in education and promote women's representation in decision-making.
- Zambia's Vision 2030 and National Gender Policy focus on increasing girls' access to quality education and women's participation in leadership and governance.

At the international level, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 on quality education and SDG 5 on gender equality, provide a framework for advancing gender equality in and through education. The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action also outline key principles and actions for promoting gender equality in education.

By aligning its strategies and activities with these national and international frameworks, the SITMS project can contribute to the achievement of broader gender equality goals and targets. It can also leverage these frameworks to advocate for greater political commitment, policy coherence, and resource allocation for gender-responsive teacher professional development.

Potential Impact on Quality and Equity of Education
Promoting gender equality in teacher professional development has the potential to significantly improve the quality and equity of education in Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia. Research has shown that gender-responsive teaching practices, such as using inclusive language, challenging gender stereotypes, and providing equal opportunities for participation, can enhance learning outcomes for all students, particularly girls.

Moreover, increasing women's representation in leadership roles and decision-making processes can bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the education sector, leading to more inclusive and responsive policies and practices. Studies have found that female leaders in education tend to prioritize issues such as gender equality, social inclusion, and learner well-being, which are critical for achieving equitable and quality education for all.

By equipping teachers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to promote gender equality, the SITMS project can contribute to creating more inclusive, safe, and supportive learning environments. This can help reduce gender-based barriers to education, such as child marriage, early pregnancy, and gender-based violence, which disproportionately affect girls. It can also challenge gender stereotypes and biases that limit girls' and boys' aspirations and opportunities, both in education and beyond.

Furthermore, promoting gender equality in teacher professional development can have spillover effects on the wider community. Teachers are often influential figures and role models in their communities, and can play a key role in shaping attitudes and norms around gender. By modeling gender-equitable behaviors and practices, teachers can contribute to shifting social norms and promoting women's empowerment and gender equality more broadly.

Lessons Learned and Applicability to Other Contexts
The gender analysis of the SITMS project offers valuable lessons and insights that can inform gender integration efforts in other education projects and contexts. Some key lessons include:

1. The importance of conducting a comprehensive gender analysis to identify specific gender gaps, barriers, and opportunities in the project context. This analysis should be based on sex-disaggregated data, stakeholder consultations, and a review of relevant policies and literature.
2. The need for a holistic and multi-pronged approach to gender integration that addresses both individual and structural barriers to women's empowerment. This may involve a combination of capacity building, policy advocacy, community engagement, and partnerships with diverse stakeholders.
3. The value of setting specific, measurable, and time-bound targets for gender equality outcomes,

and regularly monitoring and reporting on progress. This can help hold the project accountable and drive action towards achieving its gender goals.

4. The importance of engaging men and boys as allies and champions for gender equality, and challenging harmful gender norms and stereotypes that limit opportunities for both women and men.

5. The potential of teacher professional development as a key entry point for promoting gender equality in education, given teachers' central role in shaping learning experiences and outcomes.

While the specific findings and recommendations of the SITMS gender analysis are context-specific, the overarching approach and principles of gender integration can be adapted and applied to other education projects and settings. This may involve tailoring strategies and activities to the local cultural, social, and political context, building on existing Gender initiatives and partnerships, and continually learning and adapting based on evidence and feedback.

Sharing the lessons and best practices from the SITMS project through publications, conferences, and knowledge exchange platforms can contribute to building a broader evidence base on what works in promoting gender equality in teacher professional development. This can inform policy and practice at the national, regional, and global levels, and support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and other international commitments on gender equality in education.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the gender analysis, the following strategies and interventions are proposed to mainstream gender equality in the SITMS project:

Increasing Women's Representation and Leadership

To address the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, the project should set specific targets for increasing the proportion of female school principals, district education officers, and other decision-making roles. This can be achieved through a combination of affirmative action measures, such as setting quotas for women's representation, and targeted leadership development programs for women. The project should also establish mentorship and networking initiatives to support women's career advancement and create a pipeline of female leaders in education.

- Addressing Gender Biases in Curriculum and Pedagogy

To tackle the persistent gender stereotypes and biases in teaching materials and practices, the project should conduct a comprehensive review of curricula, textbooks, and other learning resources to identify and remove gender-biased content and imagery. This should be done in collaboration with teacher training institutions, education authorities, and gender experts. The project should also develop and disseminate gender-responsive teaching and learning materials that promote gender equality and challenge traditional gender norms. Training and support should be provided to teachers to help them integrate these materials into their classrooms and adopt gender-responsive pedagogies.

- Providing Gender-Responsive Training and Mentoring

To equip teachers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to promote gender equality, the project should develop and deliver gender-responsive training and mentoring programs. These programs should cover topics such as gender awareness, inclusive teaching strategies, preventing and responding to gender-based violence, and promoting girls' participation and leadership in education. The training should be delivered through a mix of in-person workshops, online courses, and on-the-job coaching and mentoring. The project should also establish communities of practice and peer learning networks to facilitate ongoing learning and support among teachers.

- Engaging Men and Boys as Partners and Advocates

To create a supportive and enabling environment for gender equality, the project should actively engage men and boys as partners and advocates for change. This can involve sensitization and awareness-raising activities to challenge harmful gender norms and stereotypes, and promote positive masculinities. Male teachers and leaders who demonstrate commitment to gender equality should be identified and supported as

champions and role models. The project should also work with community and religious leaders to promote gender-equitable attitudes and practices, and address gender-based barriers to education, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.

- Implementation Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

To operationalize these strategies, the project should develop a detailed implementation plan with clear timelines, roles and responsibilities, and resource requirements. The plan should prioritize interventions based on their potential impact, feasibility, and alignment with project objectives and national priorities. It should also include a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress and measure results.

The framework should include specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) indicators for each intervention, as well as targets and baselines. Data should be collected regularly through a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods, such as surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and observation. The project should also establish mechanisms for regular reporting, review, and adjustment of interventions based on monitoring data and feedback from stakeholders.

- Resource Requirements and Sustainability Considerations

Implementing these gender mainstreaming strategies will require significant financial, human, and technical resources. The project should conduct a detailed costing exercise to estimate the resource requirements for each intervention, and identify potential sources of funding, including project budgets, government allocations, and donor contributions. The project should also explore partnerships and collaborations with other organizations and initiatives working on gender equality in education to leverage resources and expertise.

To ensure the sustainability of the interventions beyond the project lifecycle, the project should work closely with government partners to institutionalize gender-responsive policies, practices, and budgets in the education sector. This can involve capacity building of education officials, advocacy for gender-responsive education planning and budgeting, and integration of gender indicators in national education monitoring and evaluation systems. The project should also invest in building the capacity of local organizations and community groups to continue promoting gender equality in education after the project ends.

CONCLUSION

The gender analysis of the In-Service Teacher Mentorship and Support (SITMS) project in Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia has revealed significant gaps and challenges in promoting gender equality in teacher professional development. Key findings include the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, the persistence of gender biases and stereotypes in teaching materials and practices, and the multiple barriers women face in accessing professional growth opportunities. At the same time, the analysis has identified promising entry points and strategies for mainstreaming gender in the project, such as leveraging partnerships for advocacy, strengthening gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation systems, engaging male allies, and creating opportunities for women's leadership.

Integrating gender considerations into all aspects of the SITMS project is critical for achieving its goals of improving the quality and equity of education in the three countries. Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but also a necessary condition for effective and sustainable teacher professional development. By empowering female teachers and leaders, challenging gender stereotypes, and creating inclusive learning environments, the project can contribute to better learning outcomes for all students, particularly girls. Moreover, promoting gender equality in education can have ripple effects on women's economic empowerment, health, and social status, contributing to broader development goals.

The findings and recommendations of this gender analysis should serve as a call to action for all stakeholders involved in the SITMS project and the wider education sector in Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia. Policymakers should prioritize gender equality in education policies, plans, and budgets, and create an enabling environment for gender-responsive

teacher professional development. Education authorities and teacher training institutions should integrate gender considerations into their curricula, materials, and practices, and provide ongoing support and resources for gender-responsive teaching. Civil society organizations and community groups should advocate for gender equality in education and hold duty-bearers accountable for their commitments. Development partners should provide technical and financial support for gender mainstreaming initiatives and promote knowledge sharing and collaboration across countries and regions.

While this gender analysis provides a comprehensive assessment of the current situation and proposes concrete strategies for action, there are still areas that require further research and analysis. For example, more studies are needed to understand the specific needs and experiences of female teachers and leaders in different contexts, and to evaluate the effectiveness of different interventions in promoting gender equality in teacher professional development. There is also a need for more collaboration and knowledge sharing among different stakeholders and initiatives working on gender equality in education, to leverage resources, avoid duplication, and scale up best practices.

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