

Measuring educational inequality: “inclusion and fair distribution”

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1 . Context and Key question

Context and key question

HIGH LEVEL PANEL AND POST-2015 DEBATES

Strong focus on learning outcomes and quality

Considerable wider buy-in to concern about 'quality' and learning

But less clear on educational inequalities?

And wider confusion over different forms of inequality – of income vs. opportunity.

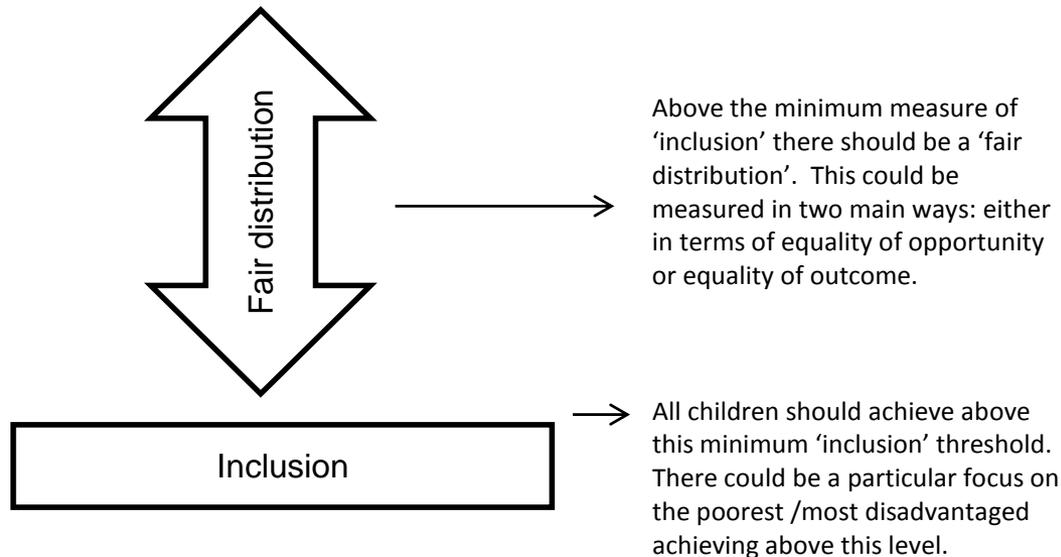
KEY QUESTION FOR THIS PAPER

How can we best measure educational inequality in a way which captures, in a relatively simple way, the inequalities that matter most?

2. Educational inequality: “inclusion and fair distribution”

“inclusion and fair distribution”

Diagram 1. Conceptualising inclusion and fair distribution



“All children should achieve above a given threshold and then over-and-above this threshold there should be a fair distribution of educational opportunity.”

Potential 'inclusion and fair distribution' policies

ACHIEVING 'INCLUSION'

- *Starting early: pre-school and early literacy focus*
- *Starting early: shifting funding into the early years & towards the poorest*
- *Workforce policies to ensure best teachers teach pupils with most need.*

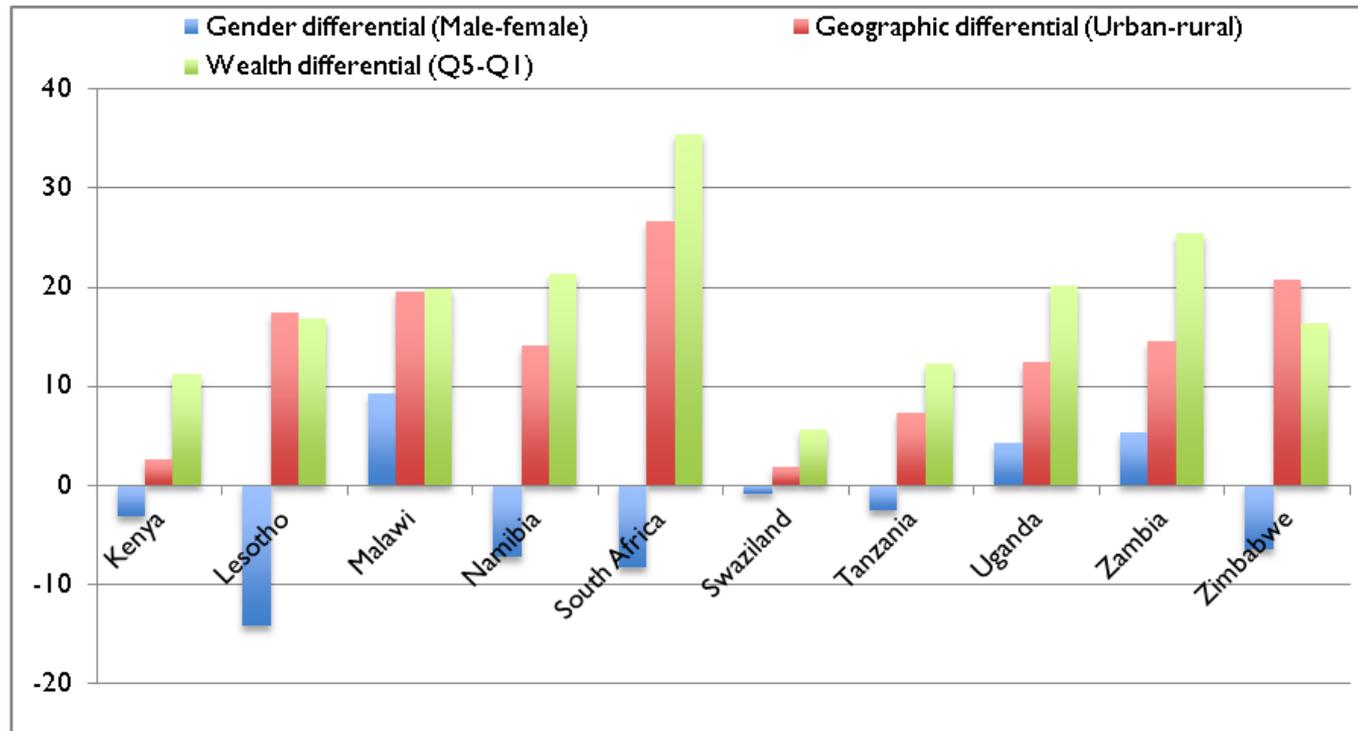
ACHIEVING 'FAIR DISTRIBUTION'

- Ensuring progress for pupils beyond basic education (abolish gateway exams, create range of learning routes etc.)
- Targeted financial support for the poorest
- Reducing school segregation (?)

3 ■ **What dimension of inequality?**

What dimension of inequality?

Figure 1. Literacy gaps in effective enrolment by gender, location, and wealth



Source: Based on data from Spuull and Taylor (2012). 'Effective enrolment' Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers 21/12.

4 . Options for measuring 'inclusion' and 'fair distribution'

Options for measuring inclusion

OPTION 1: DISAGREGATION OF DATA

Allows for fine grained account of which inequalities matter in particular contexts. But as part of a global (or national) framework, past experience suggests that alone it will not lead to a focus on the most disadvantaged.

OPTION 2: 'EQUITY ADJUSTED WEIGHTING'

Similar approaches could be used in other policy areas (an advantage in the post-2015 debates) but complex and difficult to explain?

OPTION 3: 'PROGRESS TARGETS' FOR DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

Would set tailored targets for most disadvantaged in each country and is relatively easy to understand. In theory, however, it may be possible to make progress for the poorest, but for 'gaps' to still widen.

OPTION 4: 'GAP NARROWING' TARGETS

Relatively simple, chimes with sense of 'fairness' and is a more demanding measure. Progress on a gap narrowing target is very dependent on (a) countries' starting points and (b) the chosen 'inclusion' threshold.

Options for measuring fair distribution

OPTION 1: GINI (BASED ON YEARS OF SCHOOLING)

The Gini has been used to look at inequality across the whole population, mainly in terms of 'years of schooling'. However, it's difficult to explain & does not capture inequality of opportunity?

OPTION 2: RICH-POOR RATIO OF YEARS IN SCHOOLING

This would capture some sense of inequality of opportunity. However, if it were just based on years in school this would not capture achievement as effectively as either a learning outcomes measure or 'completion of secondary education'.

OPTION 3: INEQUALITY IN PROGRESSION TO LATER PHASES

This would assess the relative chances of different groups completing, say, secondary education. It is easy to understand and would provide a clear focus on some of the policies listed on slide 6, but still does not capture learning outcomes.

5 Exemplifying ‘inclusion and fair distribution’

Inclusion and fair distribution in south and east africa

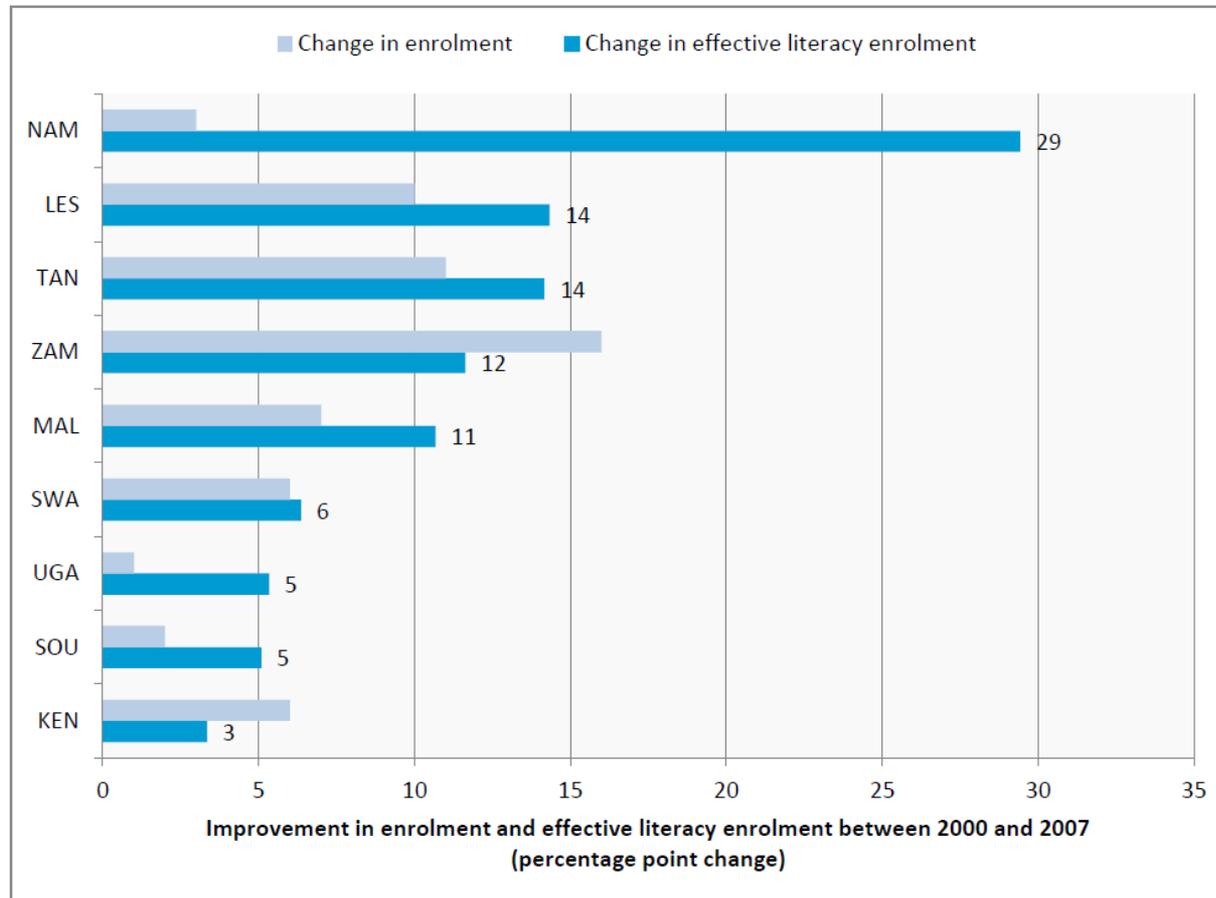
Baseline data for selected Sub-Saharan African countries: implementing an 'inclusion and fair distribution' approach.

Country	"Inclusion" – achievements of 'functional literacy		"Fair distribution" – completion of lower secondary school
	Total (%) *	Gap (ppts)	Ratio for poorest to richest
Kenya	87.3	11	1.8
South Africa	71.2	43	?
Malawi	54.4	20	3.3
Tanzania	82.3	12	5.4
Uganda	71.0	20	7.7
Zambia	49.3	25	3.9

6 ■ **And finally, Reasons for optimism ... on 'inclusion'**

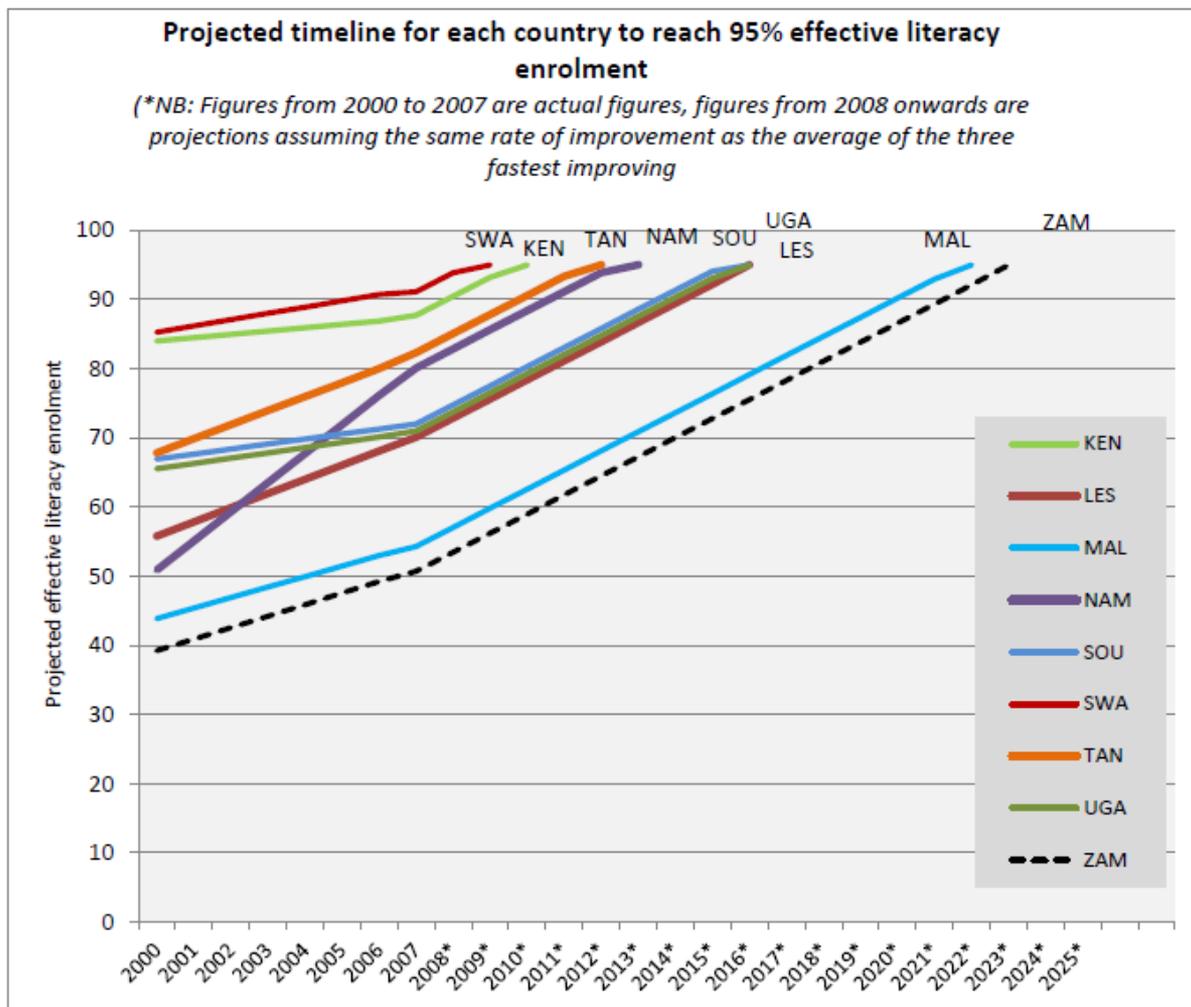
New sc commissioned work on improvements in learning

Figure 1: Improvement in enrolment and effective literacy enrolment between 2000 and 2007 (percentage point change; using SACMEQ and DHS)



This work is from new Save the Children commissioned work by Nic Spaul of Stellenbosch University, South Africa (it is based on SACMEQ and Household Surveys in S & E African countries).

Projections of potential improvements in learning



Clearly extrapolations of previous trends like this have limitations, but the progress rates that some countries have achieved do give some reasons for optimism.

**Thanks and any
questions**