

# Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women





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## TARGET 4(A):

Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably, by 2005 and at all levels of education no later than 2015.

### INDICATORS:

10. Net enrolment ratios by gender, primary education level
11. Net enrolment ratio by gender, secondary education level
12. Literacy rates of 15-24 year olds by gender
13. Net completion rates by gender, for primary and secondary education
14. Percentage of enrolment and completion rate in universities

## TARGET 4(B):

Increase the participation of women in decision-making in all sectors and at all levels (to 40% for women in senior civil service positions and to 30% for women in Parliament) by 2005 and to 50:50 balance by 2015.

### INDICATORS:

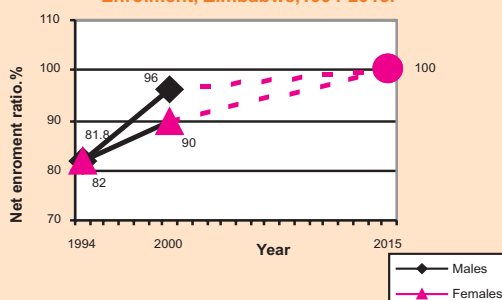
15. Percent of women in parliament
16. Percentage of women in the Civil service who are at Under Secretary level and above
17. Percentage of women in the private sector who are at managerial level
18. Percent of women in local government decision-making bodies

## STATUS AND TRENDS

Significant progress has been made in narrowing gender disparities in both primary and secondary education. In 1994, net primary school enrolment ratio was 81.8% male and 82% female. By 2000, a gender disparity had begun to emerge with the primary school net enrolment ratio for male rising to 96% and female to 90% (see fig. 3.1). The target is to reach 100% for both genders by 2015.

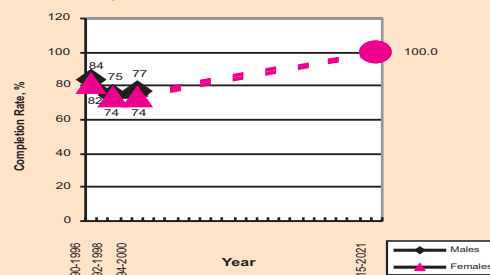
In 2000, Primary school completion rate was 77% male and 74% female (see figure 3.2). Net secondary school enrolment in 2000 was 42% male and 40% female, with completion rates of 82% male and 73% female (see figure 3.3). The target is to reach 100% enrolment and completion for both genders by 2015.

Figure 3.1: Gender Disparities in Primary School Enrolment, Zimbabwe, 1994-2015.



Source : Ministry of Education and Culture, Statistics Unit, Education Management Information System 2001

Figure 3.2: Gender Disparities in Primary School Completion Rates, Zimbabwe, 1992-2015.



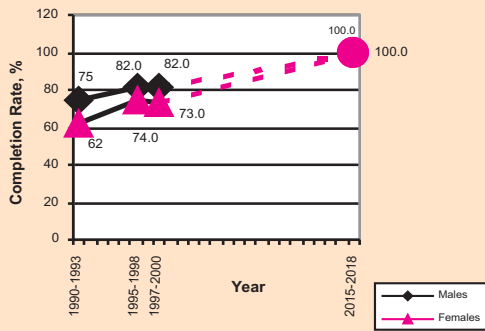
Source : Ministry of Education and Culture, Statistics Unit, Education Management Information System, 2001

### Key

- ◆ Actual
- Target
- Current rate of progress
- - - Rate of progress required to reach goal

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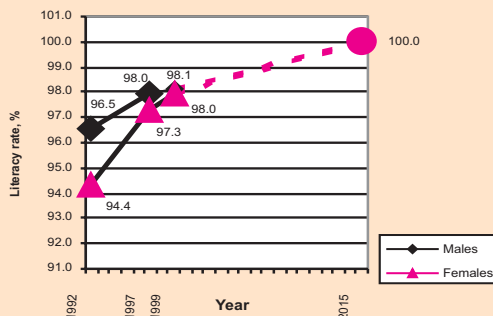
**Figure 3.3: Gender Disparities in Secondary School Completion Rates, Zimbabwe, 1992-2015.**



Source : Ministry of Education and Culture, Statistics Unit, Education Management Information System, 2001

Literacy rates of 15 - 24 year olds in 1999, by gender, were 98.1% male and 98% female (see fig. 3.4). The target is to reach 100% literacy rate for this age group by 2015.

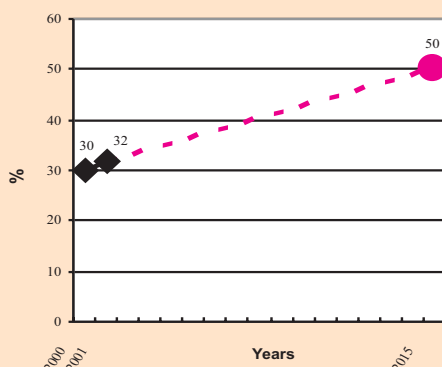
**Figure 3.4: Literacy rates of 15-24 year Olds by Gender, Zimbabwe, 1992-2015.**



Source: Central Statistical Office, 1992 Population Census, 1997 Intercensal Demographic Survey and 1999 Indicator Monitoring, Labour Force Survey.

The higher one progresses in the education system, the lower the representation of women. For example, enrolment in Universities shows that in 2000 30% of enrolment in the five main state and private universities were women. This figure rose slightly to 32% in 2001 (see figure 3.5). This is despite the fact that there is an affirmative action policy being implemented in the country. The target is to reach 50% by 2015.

**Figure 3.5: Enrolment in Universities\*, % Women Zimbabwe, 2000-2015.**



Source: Ministry of Higher Education And Technology, Zimbabwe, 2002.

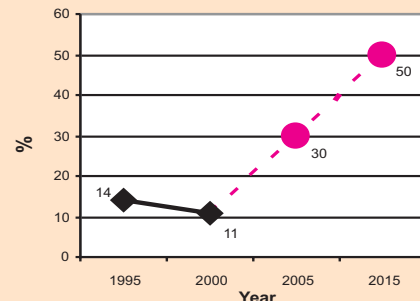
Note : \* Refers to 5 Universities where data is available namely University of Zimbabwe, Bindura University, National University of Science and Technology, Solusi University and Africa University

Despite the current economic problems the country is facing, the target of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably, by 2005 and at all levels not later than 2015 is achievable.

The status of women in Zimbabwe, though being continuously addressed, remains low. This is because the issue of gender inequality goes beyond empowerment to encompass issues of social justice and discrimination. For this reason, it is important that adequate measures are taken not just to encourage the empowerment of women, but also to address those imbalances driven by customary practices at different levels (political, social and economic) of society.

For example, women are still under represented in political decision making, particularly in Parliament. In the first two parliaments after independence, women constituted fewer than 10% of Members of Parliament. In the third parliament (1990-1995), there was an improvement in female representation to 14%. And this proportion has since fallen to 11% by 2000 (fig. 3.6). The target is to reach 30% by 2005, and 50% by 2015.

**Figure 3.6: Women in Parliament, Zimbabwe, 1995-2015.**

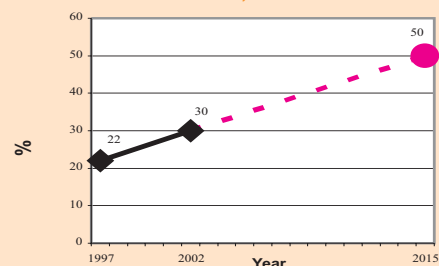


Source: Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2002

In the area of decision-making in 2003, 3 out of 21 cabinet ministers are women, and of the 8 provincial governors, only 1 is a woman.

In 1997, about 22% of senior civil service positions were held by women, which rose to 30% in 2002 (see figure 3.7). The target is to reach 50% by 2015.

**Figure 3.7: Senior\* Civil Servants , % Women, Zimbabwe, 1997-2015.**



Source: Public Service Commission, Zimbabwe, 2002.  
Note : \*Senior refers to Under Secretary Level and Equivalent



Though statistics are not available on the number of women executives in the private sector, it is common knowledge that the situation of women in the private sector is less representative than that of the public sector.

The past years have seen a dramatic increase in the number of women that suffered from physical and sexual violence. This is partly explained by the deteriorating socio-economic situation, as well as, the negative cultural beliefs related to the cure of HIV and AIDS and STIs.

## CHALLENGES

There are a number of challenges associated with promoting gender equality and empowering women in Zimbabwe. These include:

### ■ Cultural factors

Certain negative cultural practices and norms continue to constrain women's enjoyment of rights, such as matrimonial, inheritance and reproductive rights, as well as, protection from all forms of violence. The challenge is to do away with such negative cultural practices.

### ■ Elimination of gender disparity in education

While the achievement to date in gender equality for education is commendable, the challenge is to prevent the widening gap in enrolment and completion rates in secondary and tertiary education, as well as, ensuring high quality education at all levels. After all, education is the main tool for women empowerment.

### ■ Political and Economic empowerment

The current weak economic performance has worsened the gender imbalances in the economy. The challenge is to design and implement a broad-based economic growth and development strategy that is pro-poor and pro women empowerment. On the political side, the challenge is to implement a quota system to achieve fair representation of women.

### ■ HIV and AIDS

If the gender dimensions of HIV and AIDS are not clearly addressed, then the nation risks undermining the achievements made so far in all sectors of the economy. The challenge is to adopt a gender and human rights approach to HIV and AIDS interventions at all levels.

### ■ Attitude Change in women

Generally, women have resigned themselves to accepting certain culturally stereotyped roles. The challenge is to educate and expose women and girls to non-traditional role models of their gender, so as to create a new positive attitude in them with respect to what they can be and do.

### ■ Gender Mainstreaming:

Implementing gender mainstreaming into all national policies and programmes is a critical challenge that requires financial, human and technical capacity.

### ■ Gender disaggregated data

Lack of gender disaggregated data makes informed policy formulation and evaluation difficult. The challenge is to instil a tradition of disaggregation of data by gender at all levels.

## SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

The post independence period saw the formulation of policies and programmes that were designed to create an enabling environment for the attainment of gender equality and empowerment of women.

### ■ Adoption of the National Gender Policy and legislation

The National Gender Policy adopted in 2002 is expected to guide the implementation of gender sensitive programmes and policies. This is also supported by various legislation which include: Equal Pay Regulation, Legal Age of Majority Act (LAMA), Sexual Discrimination Removal Act, Amendment of the Administration of the Deceased Estates Act and the Sexual Offences Act. In addition, the country is a signatory to the most important global instrument that protects the rights of women, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

### ■ The Establishment of a Gender Department

The establishment of a Gender Department in the Ministry of Youth Development, Gender and Employment Creation enhanced the institutional framework for addressing gender issues.

### ■ Mainstreaming Gender in Education

In addition to the other educational policies enacted by government, there is the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM), where 50% of the benefits go towards education for the girl child from primary to secondary schooling.

## PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

To achieve the target of promoting gender equality and empowering women by 2015, the following national priorities need to be addressed:

### ■ Accelerated and sustained effort in Education

There is need to sustain the effort of gender equality in education at all levels, particularly at secondary and tertiary levels, and without



compromising quality. As such, education must remain a priority sector in the national budget so as to improve completion rates for boys and girls.

### Political and Economic Empowerment

There is need to design and implement a broad-based economic growth and development strategy that is pro-poor and is supportive of women empowerment. Political empowerment will, in the first instance, require the application of affirmative action or the quota system to facilitate the achievement of targets in parliament and other political decision making bodies.

### Gender Dimension to HIV and AIDS

The gender dimensions to HIV and AIDS will need to be addressed explicitly in policies and programmes in all sectors. The multi-sector response to HIV and AIDS should emphasize the gender and human rights approach to HIV and AIDS interventions at all levels. There is need to build national capacity in the collection and analysis of gender disaggregated data for policy intervention.

### Gender Mainstreaming

Since the issues of gender are closely linked to HIV and AIDS, it is important to build the national capacity to mainstream gender and HIV and AIDS into national policies and programmes. This mainstreaming will also need to be monitored for impact to ensure effectiveness.

### Cultural factors

In order to overcome entrenched cultural attitudes that discriminate against women, there is need to undertake countrywide advocacy campaigns to do away with such negative cultural attitudes. In addition, internalising already ratified international conventions and declarations on gender would help consolidate all efforts.

## COSTING THE GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT GOAL

*Overview:* Since target 4 (A) under this goal is primarily about gender equality and empowering women through education, the assumption is that the costs for attaining this goal are partially captured under the primary education goal (Goal 4). To fully cost gender, it would require information on how much it costs to get an equal proportion of women into secondary and tertiary education, as well as an estimate of the skills gap for some of the critical skill areas, such as medical doctors, engineers, economists, business executives, R&D scientists, etc. In addition, target 4 (B) can also be argued to be partially captured in the costing of the poverty and health goals, which are linked to economic empowerment and the general welfare of women. The overall costing of gender, therefore, has a heavy data demand, which could not be met during the preparation of this first report. It is hoped that the attempt to cost this goal will be made in subsequent reports.

While it is useful to know the costs associated with the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment, the greatest challenge in attaining this goal is in the implementation of gender equality and women empowerment strategies in all sectors of the economy. This implies that the implementation of the other MDG goals in a gender sensitive manner is of greater importance.

## PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Zimbabwe's progress towards promoting gender equality and women empowerment could be enhanced by channelling development assistance to the following areas:

- Gender targeted credit and ancillary support services
- Capacity building for collection and analysis of gender policy and disaggregated data
- Supporting gender equitable education
  - Public awareness campaigns to eliminate discriminatory practices and attitudes including domestic and sexual violence
- Support to HIV AND AIDS gender awareness campaigns and home-based care programmes.





“ As a Nation with Oneness  
of Purpose, Together we can  
Score this Goal! ”

