

Hear Our Voices

Do adolescent girls'
issues *really* matter?



Because **I am a
Girl**

Acknowledgements

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ACRONYMS

PUs – Plan Programme Units

CCCD – Child Centred Community Development

CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

CO – Plan Country Office

CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child

M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organisations

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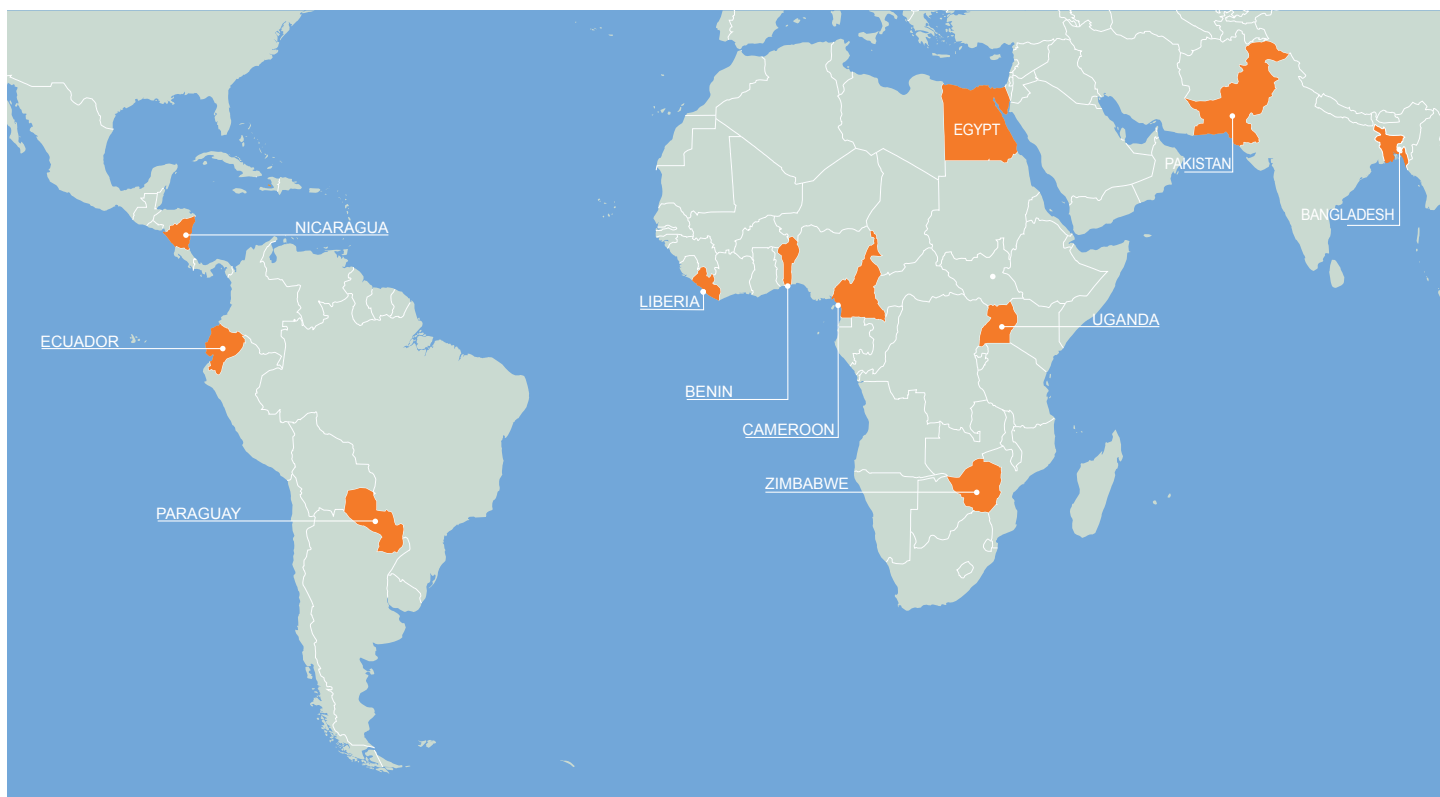
Section 1: Introduction

October 11th, 2012 marked the very first United Nations 'International Day of the Girl Child'. This key moment reflected the increasing focus and momentum on girls' rights by governments, private sector companies, and NGOs across the globe. At the same moment, Plan International officially launched a global initiative on girls' rights, namely the 'Because I am a Girl' campaign. Because I am a Girl was founded on the basis that discrimination against girls and women is one of the main causes and consequences of child poverty, globally. Plan believes that girls and boys have the same entitlements to human rights, but face very different challenges in accessing them. Plan has committed to better understand girls' daily realities, and to amplify the voices of girls themselves as a core part of this campaign.¹

To put girls' voices at the centre of its work, Plan developed participatory research methods based on current theory and practice, which provide a new way of involving girls and boys to reflect on their experiences of

gender equality and child rights. Through the study presented in this report, Plan spoke directly with over 7,000 adolescent girls and boys in 11 countries across four regions.² Collectively this is one of the largest studies of adolescent girls' rights and empowerment ever undertaken in the development sector.

This method builds on Plan's core approach to development work, Child Centred Community Development (CCCD). CCCD articulates how Plan supports children, youth, families and communities to be active and leading participants in their own development. A set of standards provides the framework for how CCCD is integrated into Plan's programmes, through five entry points: working with children and communities; tackling exclusion and gender inequality; engaging with civil society; influencing government; and strengthening Plan's accountability. The concepts of empowerment and participation underpin these standards. So the study methodology is consistent with CCCD and actively reinforces it.



¹ As part of our monitoring framework for the **Because I am a Girl** campaign, we are committed to encouraging girls and other development actors to reflect on girls' situations and how they can improve them. We seek to provide our field managers with relevant information to drive continual improvements in our gender-targeted programmes. See: Plan International (2013), 'Plan's Because I am a Girl Monitoring & Evaluation Framework', Plan International: Woking, UK.

² The 11 countries involved in the study are: (Asia): Bangladesh and Pakistan; (Central and South America): Ecuador, Nicaragua and Paraguay; (Eastern and Southern Africa): Egypt, Uganda and Zimbabwe; and (West Africa): Benin, Cameroon, Liberia.

The purpose of the study was to help girls, communities and Plan to understand the key issues that adolescent girls face today – in their own words. The study had three objectives:

- I. To **empower** adolescent girls and boys;
- II. To help Plan's field staff **learn** more from adolescent girls and boys about the issues and improvements needed to directly benefit these youth; and
- III. To **report** data and analysis about adolescent girls' and boys' perceptions of their own empowerment and gender equality at school in order to provide senior decision makers with credible information to impact change.

The research process aimed to combine social action with social research, by placing explicit value on girls' and boys' views. It focused on girls and boys themselves as valuable social actors whose opinions and aspirations matter. In so doing, the methodology builds on emerging good practice from across the development sector.

In order to achieve the three study objectives, the methodology used structured participatory methods to generate a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data allowed participants' perceptions to be easily summarised and compared (within strict limits). The qualitative data, generated through participatory focus group discussions on findings from the quantitative tools, provided detailed insight into how participants viewed the issues on a personal level and the underlying factors beneath their perceptions to contextualise the findings from the quantitative study.

The research process yielded substantive results across all three objectives, notwithstanding inherent challenges. Notably, the research process created safe spaces for adolescent girls and boys to share their views on girls' empowerment and gender equality at school. The study demonstrated that actively listening to girls and boys opened up critical opportunities for them to take more charge of their own development. The study generated findings that can be analysed at local, national and international levels, and can inform strategic decision-making by development agencies, including Plan. There is great potential to influence programme practice: the findings show great promise to empower field managers to respond with greater focus to the most pressing issues of adolescent girls localised at community level.

The study participants were girls and boys between the ages of 12 and 16 from the 11 countries who lived in identified communities and had some level of participation in Plan's on-going activities. Due to this purposive approach to sampling, different findings might be generated if the study was repeated with adolescent girls and boys who live in more remote rural areas than those targeted in the study, or do not attend school, or do not participate in Plan's development projects. The findings of this study cannot be taken as representative of any wider population.

Voices of Girls and Boys:

The voices of adolescent girls and boys form the epicentre of this study. Their voices paint a vivid picture about the opportunities and constraints that girls so often face.

The evidence illustrates that the social norms which underpin gender inequality are changing for the better for adolescent girls, but this progress is unjustifiably slow in many areas. Girls around the world are working every day to improve their lives and create a better future for themselves and their families. For example, 2 out of 5 (41%) adolescent girls Plan spoke with said that girls 'always' or 'often' complete at least nine years of school in their communities. Girls also described how they need support from everyone in their lives in order to flourish.

A darker story also emerged from this research process as well which shows the stark reality about girls' lives around the world. Through this study, girls revealed that they are constantly limited, constrained and subjected to injustices that stunt their opportunities in life. These findings were reinforced by the perspectives of their male peers. For example, both girls and boys highlighted how adolescent girls sometimes have to drop-out of school due to early pregnancy, early marriage, or poverty.

The evidence from this study describes how girls in the poorest regions of the world are among the most disadvantaged people on the planet. They face unique barriers to survival and development, simply because they are girls. This lack of opportunity and care is unfair and unjust.

The Stark Reality About Girls – In Their Own Words

The findings generated by both the Girls Empowerment Star and the School Equality Scorecard revealed a range of different issues of critical concern to girls, and equally recognised by boys as being indicative of the challenges facing adolescent girls. Some of the most striking are as follows:

Household work: Nearly half (48%) of all adolescent girls involved in the study said that girls and boys ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ share household chores. Being responsible for household chores takes time away from their studies.

“We are burdened with all household tasks. After marriage, we work even more.”

Adolescent girl, Egypt

Speaking up: Adolescent girls have difficulties claiming their rights to express themselves and discuss their concerns in front of men and boys. Over half (51%) of girls involved in the study said that adolescent girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ say what they think when a boy or man is around.

“I can’t talk in front of men or in front of anyone, even in front of my siblings. I feel that I will be embarrassed by anything I say, so I don’t speak at all.”

Adolescent girl, Egypt

Marriage: Some girls felt supported by their family to control if and when to get married. Mothers who were forced into early marriage often do not want the same fate for their daughter. However, another complex set of realities also emerged: many girls are forced into marriage due to poverty, economic exploitation, sexual harassment, and abuse, and girls seldom have the ability to decide if, when and whom to marry. 39% of girls Plan spoke to claimed that girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ decide over their own marriage.

“Some parents use their girl children to settle debts thereby forcing them to get married to people they don’t love.” Adolescent girl, Cameroon

Violence: The findings reveal that violence against girls is frighteningly normative – girls expect to be victims of violence, and the levels of violence that they experience are seen as normal. Girls seldom feel free from violence at home, in communities, and at school. For instance, 80% of girls in one area in Ecuador and 77% of girls in one area in Bangladesh claimed that they ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ feel safe in their community. Adolescent girls experience violence in the form of sexual harassment, rape, sexual and economic exploitation and abuse, forced marriage through black mailing, and silencing through intimidation.

“I just feel safe with my family, because no one else cares for us. Rape and kidnapping cases are a given.”

Adolescent girl, Nicaragua

“At home, we are sometimes sexually harassed by our relatives whom we can never report as they will be our guardians.”

Adolescent girl, Zimbabwe

Safety in and around school: Over a quarter (28%) of girls Plan spoke to claimed that girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ feel safe on their way to and from school. Adolescent boys often felt that they were safer than girls when travelling to and from school.

“Fear is also felt in the school especially when any girl comes too early or goes back too late.”

Adolescent girl, Pakistan

School latrines: Adolescent girls only sometimes have access to safe, single-sex, clean sanitation facilities at school. Girls claimed that school latrines are health hazards and crime zones. Over a third (38%) of girls Plan spoke to claimed that adolescent girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ feel comfortable using latrines at schools.

“We do not go to the bathroom when the boys spy by putting a cell phone in a shoe and take video and see everything. They also lift our skirts when we walk by.”

Adolescent girl, Nicaragua

This report explores all these themes in depth, and provides a coherent picture of the key results and findings of the study. The report is structured according to discreet sections as follows:

Section 2: Methodology

Section 3: Girls Empowerment Star (Results and Key Findings)

Section 4: School Equality Scorecard (Results and Key Findings)

Section 5: Conclusion and Call to Action

Appendices: Country results and key findings, tools, and data tables

Looking Ahead:

While many of these findings are not new, the level of inequality and injustice described in this study cannot be ignored. The study's results bring the daily realities that girls face into vivid colour. The study provides consistent, disturbing illustrations of the most pressing concerns for adolescent girls, giving powerful insights into the issues facing them, in their own words. This is evidence that policy makers and practitioners cannot ignore.

The research findings reveal that there is much work to be done to ensure that adolescent girls live in a world that supports them to fulfill their potential. One of the most striking findings across all countries showed that adolescent girls essentially do not see themselves as having rights. Girls are not aware of their power and rights to make decisions about their own lives. People around them in society consistently reinforce and recreate this perception, as a result of established – and often unexamined – ideas about what it means to be a 'good girl' and to prepare to be a 'good woman'. The situation of girls can only truly improve when everyone in society values girls equally as boys. Plan recognises that this requires urgent action to address long-term change, in ways that are rooted in different societies and cultures.

Ultimately, the study results are a call to action, with adolescent girls and boys as central, strong advocates for change. Unacceptable violations and denials of adolescent girls' rights must not be allowed to continue. Inequitable social norms influence girls' perceptions of their own capacities as much as others' social expectations for their behaviour. Girls can only flourish when social norms are addressed in serious ways through intentional action, over the long term. Girls and boys seek change and want a more enabling environment for girls' empowerment and gender equality at school. Plan will continue working towards change at three levels for adolescent girls' rights, including with: 1) girls as rights holders; 2) family and community leaders to strengthen their support for girls' rights; and 3) government and other principal duty bearers to achieve changes in institutional support for girls' rights.

Section 2: Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This section describes the methodology used to generate the results presented in this report.

The methodology was intentionally ambitious. It was designed to do more than just collect data. The research process was intended to contribute directly to development aims, within the context of Plan's on-going development projects centred on advancing child rights and reducing poverty, for which gender equality is essential. The study goal was to build a comprehensive picture of key challenges facing adolescent girls today—in their own words—to inform Plan programming and advocacy. To achieve that overall purpose, the study had three objectives:

- Firstly, to provide opportunities for girls and boys to reflect on their own empowerment and understanding of gender equality, to inform action to address critical issues they identify;
- Secondly, to help Plan's field staff learn more together with adolescent girls and boys about their concerns, in order to make direct improvements to the projects that they run and so provide greater benefits to girls and boys; and
- Thirdly, to generate data that could be summarised to present useful information and analysis about girls' and boys' perceptions of their empowerment and equality, as a contribution to knowledge and to provide decision makers with credible information in order to help them make strategic decisions about Plan and other agencies' work.

These three objectives were summarised as: empowerment, learning and reporting. Together, they summarise the study's attempt to align the research goal, objectives and process with the core values and aims of Plan's projects, and the Because I am a Girl campaign.

At the forefront, the research process was not seen as a purely academic exercise. It was designed to combine social action with social research. By placing explicit value on girls' and boys' views, it intended to demonstrate to all stakeholders (including the participants themselves) that girls and boys themselves are valuable social actors whose opinions and aspirations matter. This approach conceptualised empowerment through the research process as a development objective in itself. It is aligned with Plan's commitment to research being developmental in nature, and importantly, Plan's overall approach of Child Centred Community Development, which emphasises the importance of girls and boys (and community members) developing the skills and confidence they need to play a more active role in shaping their own development.³

Secondly, the methodology aimed to strengthen the understanding of local Plan staff regarding the issues that girls and boys face. Involving Plan staff with expertise in community development facilitation and building their skills in focus group moderation helped staff strengthen organisational learning to inform the development projects that Plan runs, which in turn supports girls and boys to reach their full potential. Duncan Green, author of *From Poverty to Power*,⁴ noted in a recent issue of the journal *Gender & Development* that building NGO staff skills in qualitative methods, rather than outsourcing, may be an important way forward in development research.⁵ Taken together with the methodological goal of building a comprehensive picture of adolescent girls' and boys' views of empowerment and equality, the methodology was intended to deepen both adolescents' and staff understanding of the issues so that projects could be kept relevant and engage better with local realities. An additional benefit was that the methodology encouraged a non-hierarchical relationship between Plan staff and the research participants and a high level of rapport between them. This, in turn, strengthened the relationships and built trust among local girls and boys, and between them and Plan's staff, which are foundation stones of effective development interventions.

³ For further information about Plan's Child Centred Community Development approach, please see Plan International (2014), 'Short introduction to CCCD'. (Internal document, copy available upon request.)

⁴ Green, D. (2012), *From Poverty to Power: How Active Citizens and Effective States Can Change the World*, Oxfam International: Oxford.

⁵ Green, D. (2014), 'What's the best way to measure empowerment?' *Oxfam Blogs*, Oxfam International: Oxford.

Finally, the methodology aimed to generate findings, as presented in this report, that could be analysed at local, national and international levels. It was intended that these analyses could be used to inform efforts to bring about changes in girls' empowerment and school equality, in order to fuel the wider debate on girls empowerment and equality, as well as to inform strategic decision making by development agencies (including Plan) and high level advocacy and lobbying.

This combination of three objectives (empowerment, learning, and reporting) was seen by the research team as an important component of the study's ethical practice. The research team was aware that the study would deploy a series of limited resources, which they had an obligation to ensure made the greatest possible contribution to development efforts by all the different actors involved. The limited resources included: girls' and boys' time, Plan staff's time and the financial and organisational resources to support a study on these issues at this scale. The team took the view that all actors should benefit from the process, including the people intended to benefit from Plan's development efforts: the adolescent girls and boys themselves.

As described below, the methodology was partially but not entirely successful across these three objectives. The tools' methodology worked best for the 'empowerment' and organisational 'learning' objectives, while further investments are needed to improve quantitative sampling and data quality to support more advanced 'reporting' benefits as monitoring tools related to development projects with girls' empowerment or gender equality as explicit goals. The results from the application of the methodology support an important set of conclusions in themselves, alongside results drawn from the data generated by the methodology, which are set out hereunder.

In order to achieve the three objectives, the methodology used structured participatory methods to generate a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data. Both quantitative and qualitative data were crucial to the study. Quantitative data were generated by applying a 'participatory numbers' approach.⁶ The quantitative data allowed participants' perceptions to be easily summarised and compared (within strict limits). This allowed all stakeholders (including participants, staff, managers and analysts) to gain initial headline insights into the issues, as the basis for further reflection and discussion. The qualitative data, generated through participatory focus group discussions based on an anonymised summary of findings from the quantitative tools, provided detailed in-

sight into how participants viewed the issues on a personal level and the underlying factors beneath their perceptions to contextualise the findings from the quantitative study.

When examining the findings as presented in the report, it is critical that the quantitative and qualitative data must be read together and should not be viewed as stand-alone studies as they mutually inform each other.

The methodology relied on two carefully designed tools implemented through a participatory process. Both the tools and the process were equally important in achieving the study goal and objectives set out above. It would not have been ethical or practical to use the tools without the accompanying process. This approach drew from established good practice and recent innovations in the field of participatory monitoring (see the section on developing the methodology below).

2.2. A Note on Terms

Due to the study goal and objectives described above, the entire exercise has been referred to in a range of ways. Within Plan and the research team, it has been referred to as a 'research study' and a 'feedback exercise' among other terms. The staff from Plan who conducted the fieldwork have been referred to as 'staff', 'facilitators', and 'researchers'. The girls and boys who took part have been referred to as 'participants', 'respondents', and 'primary stakeholders'.

Each of these terms reflects only one or two of the overall methodological objectives. We have not found a single satisfactory set of terms that properly reflects the full range of the exercise's intentions. Within this report, the term 'participant' is used to describe the girls and boys who participated in the process and discussed their views with us. The terms 'field staff', 'facilitators', and 'researchers' are used interchangeably.

2.3. The Tools

This section presents the final version of the two tools that the study used: the Girls Empowerment Star and the School Equality Scorecard. The process used to implement the tools is described below. The section after that describes how the tools and process were developed, including the theoretical basis and lessons learned during piloting.

⁶ See Chambers, R. (2007), 'Who Counts? The Quiet Revolution of Participation and Numbers', IDS Working Paper – 296, Institute of Development Studies: Sussex.

The Girls Empowerment Star

The Girls Empowerment Star is a simple visual presentation of eight dimensions of adolescent girls' empowerment, as experienced by adolescent girls themselves. A key question is presented for each dimension and responses are invited on a five-point scale. The eight questions were intentionally designed to be relevant to many different adolescent girls in many different contexts. The response scale used was: 'never', 'seldom', 'sometimes', 'often' and 'always' with points assigned from one to five respectively.

Table 1: Dimensions and Key Questions of the Girls Empowerment Star

Dimension	Key Question
1. Household work	Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?
2. School	Do girls complete at least nine years of school?
3. Speaking up	Do girls say what matters to them in front of an adult male?
4. Money	Do girls help decide what to spend money on?
5. Marriage	Do girls decide when they marry?
6. Pregnancy	Do girls decide if they get pregnant?
7. Safety	Do girls feel safe in this community?
8. Feeling valued	Do girls' concerns matter in this community?

The School Equality Scorecard

The School Equality Scorecard is a one-page presentation of ten dimensions of how equal a school is for girls and boys, as experienced by both adolescent girls and boys. A key question is presented for each dimension, and responses are invited on the same five-point scale as the Girls Empowerment Star.

Table 2: Dimensions and Key Questions of the School Equality Scorecard

Dimension	Key Question
1. Sports participation	Do girls participate in sports activities as much as boys?
2. Class participation	Do girls participate in class as often as boys?
3. Chore burden	Do girls spend the same amount of time doing chores (tidying, sweeping, cleaning) at school as boys?
4. Latrines	Are there toilets at school that girls feel comfortable to use?
5. Seeking help	Do girls talk to teachers about their concerns as much as boys?
6. Leadership	Do girls participate as leaders of student groups as much as boys?
7. Encouragement	Are girls encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys?
8. Safety going to school	Are girls as safe as boys on their way to and from school?
9. Safety at school	Are girls as safe as boys when they are at school?
10. Early pregnancy	Do girls continue to attend school after having a baby?

Figure 1: Toolfaces: Girls Empowerment Star and School Equality Scorecard

Girls Empowerment Star

Issue	Key Question	Response (circle)				
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. Household work	Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	1	2	3	4	5
2. School	Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Speaking up	Do girls say what matters to them in front of an adult male?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Money	Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Marriage	Do girls decide when they marry?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Pregnancy	Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Safety	Do girls feel safe in this community?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Feeling valued	Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	1	2	3	4	5

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School Equality Scorecard

SCHOOL EQUALITY SCORECARD		Please circle one response per question.				
Girl _____ Boy _____ Age: _____		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. Sports participation:	Do girls participate in sports activities as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Class participation:	Do girls participate in class as often as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Chore burden:	Do girls spend the same amount of time doing chores (tidying, sweeping, cleaning) at school as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Latrines:	Are there toilets at school that girls feel comfortable to use?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Seeking help:	Do girls talk to teachers about their concerns as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Leadership:	Do girls participate as leaders of student groups as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Encouragement:	Are girls encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Safety going to school:	Are girls as safe as boys on their way to and from school?	1	2	3	4	5
9. Safety at school:	Are girls as safe as boys when they are at school?	1	2	3	4	5
10. Early pregnancy:	Do girls continue to attend school after having a baby?	1	2	3	4	5

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2.4. The Process for Implementing the Tools

This section describes the participatory process that was followed during fieldwork, designed to achieve the three objectives described above in section 2.1. In turn, the fieldwork was supported by a wider process of managing the study and providing support to field teams.

The process was designed to create the conditions for safe, open and honest dialogue among adolescent girls and boys on the dimensions described above. The study recognised that participants would be under the age of 18 years and the dimensions relate to a range of child protection issues. The dialogue could (and did) raise discussion of real threats that girls and boys face to their well-being, including issues of coercion and abuse. In these cases, Plan's Child Protection Policy applied.⁷ Training and support was provided to Plan's staff to respond to these circumstances. See also section 2.6. below on ethics.

Due to the subjects being discussed, it was assumed that much of the dialogue would be of a personal and sensitive nature, covering issues that participants might find difficult to think and speak about. It was also assumed that participants might be reticent about expressing their opinions to their peers, as much as to external researchers, and some would not immediately recognise that it was legitimate for them to hold their own opinions on these issues. Finally, it was assumed that many participants would normally think and speak about these issues in local dialects rather than national languages. As a result, the study was designed to engage with girls and boys on their own terms and in their own languages.

Both tools were implemented using the same five-step process for fieldwork, described below. The fieldwork was managed by trained Plan staff in local field offices, each of which implemented the tools in a number of different communities. (See section 2.5. on sampling.) Like the tools, the steps were also carefully designed on the basis of long discussion and knowledge of local environments and factors; and were piloted and refined. (See section 2.10. on piloting the methodology.)

Step 1. Plan the Field Work

This step involved identifying specific staff, communities and participants to participate in the study (see also section 2.5. on sampling). Facilitators and observers⁸ were identified to run focus groups and trained in the research study's participatory methodologies. They were drawn from Plan staff who worked in nearby communities, but not the same community where the research was taking place. This aimed to generate a certain level of independence in the process and to provide additional opportunities for staff to learn about different communities than those they normally work with. Parents of the girls and boys who would be invited to participate were asked for their informed consent. Materials were prepared for each focus group and focus groups were scheduled in times and places that were convenient for girls and boys, with minimum disruption to their other activities, including school activities.

Step 2. Hold a Translation Workshop

In each participating Plan Programme Unit (PU) across the 11 study countries, Plan staff held a translation workshop with a group of 8-10 adolescent girls ages 12-16 to translate the tools into participants' daily spoken language. The purpose of each translation workshop was to ensure that the youngest among the adolescent girls understand the tools' key questions, response options and discussion prompts. In each workshop, facilitators worked with the girls to find and compile a list of relevant local language words and phrases that adolescent girls and boys use in daily conversation, including slang, to ensure that the tools could be understood clearly by participants. Translations covered the tools' dimensions, key questions and response options, as well as the discussion prompts provided in the guidance notes for each tool. Following the translation workshop, focus group facilitators were trained in the translated local terms to increase language and conceptual consistency across focus groups conducted in participating local communities and schools. All translation workshop and focus group facilitators spoke fluently the main daily language of participating girls and boys in the study communities and schools.

⁷ See Plan International (2013), 'Child Protection Policy', Plan International: Woking, UK. (Internal document, copy available upon request.)

⁸ 'Observer' is used in a colloquial sense in this report, and should not be taken to suggest that participant observation methodology was used.

Step 3. Conduct Focus Groups

Focus groups were held with groups of six to eight participants. They were single sex groups, each facilitated by one facilitator and one observer, both also of the same sex. They started by asking for participants' informed assent to participate. Then, each participant was invited to record their own personal ratings of their views across the dimensions, using the response scales. An anonymous summary of the personal ratings was presented back to the group as a 'tally chart', which did not identify which participant gave any specific rating. This was followed by a group discussion of the tally chart, including the different ratings and underlying factors beneath each dimension. The observer documented key discussion points and examples provided by the participants.

Step 4. Complete Forms and Identify Follow-up Actions

After the focus groups, the facilitator and observer worked together to record key points from the discussion notes and document quotes on a focus group Report, and to enter all ratings on a Tally Chart form. Completing the focus group Report and Tally Chart forms together also allowed the facilitator and observer to note and comment on any discrepancies between quantitative and qualitative findings, and the reasons participants gave during the focus groups to explain them. Any discrepancies were weighed and analysed in the overall mixed-methods data analysis process, and any significant findings documented in this technical report.

After completion, the Focus Group Report forms and Tally Charts were reviewed by a member of Plan's staff at the local office and the office manager, who also drafted a short overall PU reflection report on the findings and process to help inform future management decisions. Office managers and focus group facilitators then met together to review the local office reflection report to prioritise two key actions to carry out in the next year in response to the study's find-

ings from local communities and schools where Plan works. For example, where the study found that adolescent girls and boys identified urgent needs for sexual and reproductive health training to address problems of early pregnancy, Plan sought to prioritise action on this issue, such as planning training workshops over the coming year in the relevant communities and schools. The local office PU reflection form instigated this key planning process for Plan to ensure that the study insights could be turned into locally prioritised actions.

Step 5. Submit Forms and Share Results

Country offices and local offices were encouraged to share the findings with community members, and to discuss them internally in order to inform their understanding of key issues raised in the focus groups and identify opportunities to improve Plan's projects with adolescent girls and boys. The local office reflection report served to ensure that learning from the focus groups was discussed together with local Plan management and community members. Each local office manager and staff were to host discussions with community members to review key actions identified and plan activities accordingly in context of their on-going work together. All local offices also submitted study findings and forms to Plan's country office and head office, for further analysis and to inform this overall synthesis report.

At a global level, the methodology was designed by a cross functional team within Plan, combining expertise in gender equality theory and practice, social research, and monitoring development projects. The study was managed by a suitably qualified research manager, employed by Plan. The research manager worked with staff across Plan to pilot, refine and implement the methodology. She developed the participatory training materials and ran a five-day introductory workshop for each country team that was involved in the study. She supported country teams at every step of the process, including initial translation of all materials. She played a leading role in managing, entering, and analysing the data and preparing this report.

2.5. Sampling

After a great deal of debate, the study chose to focus on participants who were between 12 and 16 years old. Although the study participants were both boys and girls, the decision on age range was influenced mainly by the fact that adolescence has long been recognised as a crucial development stage in girls' lives.⁹ The tools address social changes in their relationships to each other and society, as well as physical changes in their bodies. These include the potential for pregnancy as well as starting to assume adult roles and responsibilities. It was not felt appropriate to discuss the issues with groups of girls from a wider range of ages, as the issues would be experienced differently by different age groups and younger girls may naturally feel more constrained to speak openly in front of older girls.

The study was carried out by Plan staff in 11 countries: Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Ecuador, Egypt, Liberia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Uganda and Zimbabwe. These countries were selected on a pragmatic, purposive basis from the 50 countries where Plan runs projects. Plan's four regional offices invited country offices to participate in the study. Country management teams discussed the opportunity with their regional colleagues, with the aim of identifying three countries in each of the four regions. For practical reasons, only two countries completed the study in Plan's Asia Region. In a similar manner, specific communities and participants were selected within each country on a pragmatic, purposive basis.

In each country, two local offices (known in Plan as Programme Units, or PUs) were selected by country management teams to implement the Girls Empowerment Star and two others to implement the School Equality Scorecard. Separate Programme Units were chosen in some countries in order to ensure availability of adequate women and men facilitators to implement the tools, and to ensure that

facilitators ran focus groups in communities or schools where they do not normally implement Plan development activities. This helped ensure organisational learning across programme unit areas. In some cases, the same two Programme Units implemented the two tools where they had adequate women and men staff to serve as facilitators of single-sex focus groups. For both tools, one Programme Unit was identified in a more urban area and the other in a more rural area.

For the Girls Empowerment Star, each Programme Unit team selected three communities where Plan was running projects that related to gender issues for adolescents. Four focus groups were run with girls in each community. For the School Equality Scorecard, each Programme Unit team selected five schools where Plan runs gender-related programmes involving adolescents. At each school, four focus groups were run with girls and four focus groups with boys. Each focus group involved six to eight participants.

For practical reasons, not all country teams achieved the targets set out above. Table 3 describes the actual number of communities and schools reached. In total, this report summarises data from 1,196 focus groups held for which reports and tally charts were submitted: 790 focus group reports and accompanying tally charts for the School Equality Scorecard in 95 schools, and 436 focus group reports and accompanying tally charts for the Girls Empowerment Star in 60 communities. There were a few instances where focus groups were planned, but not held and reports not submitted ultimately due to inclement weather, local insecurity or lack of sufficient participants for a focus group. Please note also that in Egypt, only the Girls Empowerment Star was applied in the research because of a lack of mixed-sex schools where Plan conducts development activities, which was necessary to apply the School Equality Scorecard.

⁹ Mensch, B, Bruce, J and Greene, M. (1998), 'The Uncharted Passage: Girls' Adolescence in the Developing World,' Population Council: New York.

Table 3: Numbers of Plan Programme Units (PUs), Communities and Schools Involved in 11-Country Study

Country	Girls Empowerment Star		School Equality Scorecard			
	# PUs	# Communities	# PUs (Girls)	# Schools (Girls)	# PUs (Boys)	# Schools (Boys)
Bangladesh	2	6	2	10	2	10
Benin	1	3	1	5	2	10
Cameroon	2	5	2	10	2	10
Ecuador	2	6	2	10	2	10
Egypt	2	4	0	0	0	0
Liberia	2	6	2	6	2	6
Nicaragua	2	6	2	10	2	10
Pakistan	2	6	2	9	2	9
Paraguay	2	6	2	10	2	10
Uganda	2	6	2	10	2	10
Zimbabwe	2	6	2	10	2	10
Total	21	60	19	90	20	95

N.B. Numbers in each country only include PUs and communities or schools for which data are available for the 11-country study. Participation numbers from the two pilot studies in 2012 in Egypt and Paraguay are not included in these figures.

Table 4: Numbers of Participants Involved in 11-Country Study

Country	Girls Empowerment Star	School Equality Scorecard		Total participants
	# Girls	# Girls	# Boys	
Bangladesh	165	271	266	702
Benin	83	131	297	511
Cameroon	134	256	299	689
Ecuador	189	313	325	827
Egypt	167	N/A	N/A	167
Liberia	167	187	184	538
Nicaragua	175	270	284	729
Pakistan	176	263	252	691
Paraguay	162	266	278	706
Uganda	192	320	310	822
Zimbabwe	192	303	302	797
Total	1,802	2,580	2,797	7,179

N.B. Numbers in each country only includes participants from communities for which data are available for the 11-country study. Participation numbers from the two pilot studies in 2012 in Egypt and Paraguay are not included in these figures.

The people who invited to participate in focus groups for the study were girls and boys between the ages of 12 and 16 who lived in the selected communities or attended the selected schools, and had some level of participation in Plan's on-going activities. Due to this purposive sampling approach, different findings might be generated if the study were to be repeated with adolescent girls and boys who live in more remote rural areas than those targeted in the study, or do not attend school, or do not participate in Plan development projects. Further, the findings may not be representative of a wider range of profiles of adolescent girls or boys, such as those who are married, have children, who combine school with work, have functional disabilities, or who are young single household heads. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be taken as representative of any wider population than those who participated, who were mostly unmarried adolescents without children, who attended school and Plan activities. The findings represent the views of the adolescent girls and boys whose parents gave their informed consent for their child to participate, and of those, the girls and boys who were present, gave their assent and participated in focus groups on the planned day and time.

Fieldwork was carried out between April and September 2013.

2.6. Research Ethics

The design of the study was subject to ethical review and approval by Plan's senior management. The key ethical considerations were as follows.

Child Protection

A variety of serious child protection issues were raised by the nature of the study. This included ensuring that no participant came to harm as a result of the research. In addition, the study involved asking children to discuss sensitive issues around their perceptions of their safety, intimate relationships and opportunities in life. This had the potential to bring up harmful experiences that they were already suffering in ways that could cause distress and potentially demanded response.

All Plan's staff who carried out the research were bound by Plan's Child Protection Policy. This sets out their obligations in relation to protection issues. In addition, training and support was provided to staff on how to respond to sensitive issues that emerged during the research process. This included referring issues to relevant authorities, where necessary. Each Plan country office has a designated Child Protection Advisor, who co-facilitated the training and supported the research staff. Staff carried out the research in pairs, both being the same sex as participants, which further reduced the risks to children and staff.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

The anonymity and privacy of the research participants was respected. Any personal information regarding the research participants was kept confidential. All data was retained and analysed on an anonymous and confidential basis.

Informed Consent and Assent

Plan staff took careful steps to secure community leaders' and school officials' approval, primary caregiver informed consent and permission, and children's assent. The study adapted the forms for parental informed consent, and children's informed assent from the World Health Organisation's materials.¹⁰

The informed consent and assent processes included information on the intended purposes of the research, how Plan would maintain confidentiality of the focus group discussions and data, the anonymity of participants, potential risks and benefits of participation, participants' rights of silence and disclosure, and plans to communicate and utilise the research findings.¹¹ Participants were reassured that their decision whether to remain involved in the study would have no implications on their involvement in Plan's on-going work.

Respect for Participants

As described above, a central aim of the study was to reinforce the respect with which all stakeholders viewed girls and boys as significant actors in shaping their own development. This principle was applied to the design and implementation of the study itself.

¹⁰ See the World Health Organisation's 'Informed Consent Form Templates' available at: http://www.who.int/rpc/research_ethics/informed_consent/en/ (last accessed 17 June 2014).

¹¹ See Plan International's 'Hear Our Voices Practitioner's Guide' (2014) for Plan's adapted versions of the WHO 'Informed Parental Consent for Research Involving Children (qualitative)' (source: http://www.who.int/entity/rpc/research_ethics/ICFparentalConsent-qualitative.doc?ua=1), and for the 'Informed Assent for Children/Minors' (source: http://www.who.int/entity/rpc/research_ethics/InformedAssent.doc?ua=1) templates used in this study.

Staff were trained in listening to girls and boys with respect, and creating a safe space within which they could reflect on their own perceptions and experiences. The tools and process were designed to aid active reflection, rather than simply to extract information. The research process aimed to minimise the burden on participants' time and to ensure to the greatest extent possible that the results of the research were used by local actors to inform improvements by and for girls and boys. This aspiration was partly constrained by practical considerations of staff time and budgets, as discussed below. However, some significant results were seen at a local level as a result of the study. For example, in Paraguay, a group of girl participants recommended key actions to improve gender-related programmes in their community (such as trainings in sexual and reproductive health for adolescent girls and boys) and formed a committee to work with parents and Plan staff to help guide implementation and provide feedback over the following year.

2.7. Data Verification and Analysis

The data were verified at different stages of the process. First in the focus group - group discussion of the tally chart allowed the facilitator and observer to probe and verify participants' understandings of the key questions and explanations behind their ratings. For example, where girls rated their ability to decide over marriage highly, focus group discussions were able to reveal how and why girls' views on child marriage influenced their ratings. Focus group facilitators aimed to foster inclusive debate and participants' reflections on high scores, low scores and variation in group members' ratings for each question. Qualitative exploration in the focus groups of participants' quantitative ratings was essential to documenting the meaning of ratings. Any discrepancies between quantitative ratings and qualitative examples that participants' gave to explain them were to be explored and then documented in the Observer's notes. For example, in a few focus groups from Central and South America, girls' high ratings on the marriage dimension contrasted with group discussions in which they revealed that girls in their communities often opted to marry in their teens to older, wealthier men in order to escape poverty at home. This underlined the point of why the quantitative ratings were not to be taken at face value, and could only be interpreted in light of the qualitative group discussion.

Second, facilitator debriefing meetings following focus groups allowed each pair of facilitators and observers to

identify key themes and ensure relevant quotes and examples from participants were recorded while they were still fresh in their minds. The observer also checked the group tally chart against individual ratings sheets from each focus group, and entered this information into an electronic version of the tally chart in order to facilitate data entry, aggregation and analysis by the research manager in a database of findings across all focus groups and study sites.

Third, debriefing meetings at the local office level involved all focus group teams presenting and discussing their findings across communities with local office managers. Finally, when data were brought together from all focus groups conducted within each local office, the qualitative and quantitative aspects could be further triangulated and any discrepancies documented could be discussed in detail with the staff who undertook the research and who completed the Focus Group Report and Tally Chart forms.

The Focus Group Report forms and local office debriefing meetings provided opportunities for facilitator and observer teams to ensure documentation of participants' reasons given for ratings and explanations, including those for counterintuitive quantitative and qualitative findings. The results section and appendices of this global synthesis report note in the country snapshots any qualitative reasons given to interpret counterintuitive quantitative results. Instances were few. Another example was in Asia, where girls' ratings on "feeling valued" on the Girls Empowerment Star were high, and yet qualitative discussions revealed that girls defined feeling valued according to socially ascribed gender roles and responsibilities. Asked if they felt their concerns mattered in their community, responses often revealed that girls felt they do not. This discrepancy became a key message of the global report—that girls are often 'valued' only insofar as they perform traditional gender roles and responsibilities. Their concerns are often not heard and they are seldom valued as whole people beyond stereotypes—with intrinsic worth, rights and wide potential for contributing to their own development, families, communities and nations.

Concerning participants' understanding and localised interpretations of the response scale, 'never' to 'always', context-specific examples were established during each translation workshop to illustrate a common 'never' and 'always' example for adolescent girls and boys in that PU area. There was no process to ensure that participants from different communities or countries were interpreting the scales using the same illustrative examples for response options, but rather that the outer extremes were defined

with contextually relevant examples. Developing a process to generate strict quantitative cross-comparability would have been complicated and expensive. It would also have risked the principle of ensuring that the study was valuable to the participants on their own terms.

For this reason, and due to the purposive approach to sampling, the raw quantitative data cannot be directly compared between communities and countries. However, the ratings assigned to each dimension within each focus group can usefully be compared to each other. So, this report presents data on which dimensions received the highest and lowest ratings by participants, within each community (for the Girls Empowerment Star) or school (for the School Equality Scorecard). These data can be compared between communities or schools as appropriate to inform useful analysis about broader themes related to the key dimensions of each tool. Dimensions of each tool that participants rated the highest or lowest most frequently emerged as key findings of the study, with the most often lowest rated dimensions representing issues of pressing concern for participants.

2.8 How Plan Calculated the Quantitative Results of the 11-Country Study

The global team first aggregated tally chart ratings from all focus groups from participating communities and schools grouped by girls versus boys, community or school, programme unit area, country and region. Plan assigned

progressive points to each response category from ‘never’ (1 point) to ‘always’ (5 points). This allowed Plan then to calculate average ratings and weighted percentages per response option for each tool by community (for the Girls Empowerment Star) or school (for the School Equality Scorecard).

To analyse aggregated focus group ratings, Plan calculated weighted average ratings ratings grouped by girls versus boys, by community and by PU to calculate the **highest and lowest average rated dimensions** across the selected communities or schools in each PU. Quantitative results were then grouped also according to country and region. The study global team identified emerging themes in results grouped by country and region by tabulating how many times girls and boys rated a dimension (per tool) the highest or lowest on average to generate tables of average response frequencies. While average ratings present aggregated findings at the local level, frequencies of the ‘most often’ highest or lowest average rated dimensions present key themes in the study findings grouped by country and region. All frequencies reported in the results for the study refer to the number of times girls or boys rated a dimension their highest or lowest on average in the selected communities or schools in a given PU area and country. All weighted average percentages reported present aggregated responses on each tool dimension from girl and boy participants from selected communities and schools—grouped by PU, country and region.

The **dimensions** include the eight points of the Girls Empowerment Star and the ten points of the School Equality Scorecard:

Table 5: Dimensions of the Girls Empowerment Star and School Equality Scorecard

Girls Empowerment Star	School Equality Scorecard
1. household work	1. sports participation
2. school	2. class participation
3. speaking up	3. chores burden
4. money	4. latrines
5. marriage	5. seeking help
6. pregnancy	6. leadership
7. safety	7. encouragement
8. feeling valued	8. safety going to school
	9. safety at school
	10. early pregnancy

Participants rate their responses to a key question for each dimension on a 1-5 scale; 1 meaning 'never' and 5 meaning 'always'. To calculate the average rating for each dimension, the total number of participant responses was calculated with the girls' or boys' ratings aggregated separately. For instance, 92 girls were involved in the Girls Empowerment Star in Cotopaxi, Ecuador. For the household work dimension, girls said that they 'never' (0%), 'seldom' (4%), 'sometimes' (52%), 'often' (25%) and 'always' (18%) share household work equally with boys. Therefore, the average rating for this dimension for girls interviewed in selected communities of PU Cotopaxi, Ecuador was 3.5.

Table 6: Girls Empowerment Star: Ecuador, PU Cotopaxi average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Girls Empowerment Star: Ecuador, PU Cotopaxi average ratings across three selected communities and percentages – Girls, ages 12-16							
Dimension	N=	1 - Never (%)	2 - Seldom (%)	3 - Sometimes (%)	4 - Often (%)	5 - Always (%)	Average Rating*
Household work	92	0%	4%	52%	25%	18%	3.5
School	93	0%	10%	22%	42%	27%	3.9
Speaking up	93	25%	9%	35%	15%	16%	2.9
Money	93	13%	6%	32%	13%	35%	3.5
Marriage	93	6%	14%	17%	40%	23%	3.6
Pregnancy	93	13%	38%	32%	12%	5%	2.6
Safety	93	8%	6%	28%	28%	30%	3.7
Feeling valued	93	31%	11%	17%	28%	13%	2.8

* Average ratings across three selected communities

The **highest average rated dimensions** represent aspects that girls reported feeling more empowered to control (i.e. a dimension that girls most commonly rated as 'always' or 'often' having power over). The **lowest average rated dimensions** are aspects of life girls in the selected communities see themselves as being least empowered over (i.e. the dimensions that girls on average said they 'never', 'seldom' or 'sometimes' feel empowered to control).

Therefore, the highest average rated dimension for girls using the Girls Empowerment Star in Cotopaxi was **school**, and the lowest average rated dimension was **pregnancy**. This means that girls in these selected communities of PU Cotopaxi claimed that they see themselves as most empowered around school and completing nine years of education, and least empowered around deciding whether to get pregnant. (See Appendix III for more details.)

It must be noted that in order to achieve the three study objectives, the methodology used semi-structured participatory methods to generate a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data allowed participants'

perceptions to be easily summarised and compared (within strict limits). The qualitative data, generated through participatory focus group discussions on findings from the quantitative tools, provided detailed insight into how participants viewed the issues for girls like themselves and the underlying factors beneath their perceptions to contextualise the findings from the quantitative study.

2.9. Developing the Methodology

The research tools were developed to satisfy a range of design criteria. They had to describe aspects of empowerment and gender equality that were highly relevant to adolescent girls and boys in a wide range of different countries and cultural contexts. They had to generate quantitative data about participants' reflections, as well as qualitative data. They had to be simple for staff and participants to understand and use. When combined with an appropriate process, they had to satisfy the three objectives of the

process, they had to satisfy the three objectives of the study concerning empowerment, learning and reporting. They also had to be practical to use within the constraints of time and funding.

A draft set of tools and process was developed by the global team within Plan between January-March 2012. These were informed by areas of established practice and theory concerning girls' empowerment, gender equality and participatory numbers.

Girls' empowerment and gender equality are increasingly recognised globally in civil society, government, academic, and private sector organisations as vital to achieving development goals.

"Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance." Kofi Annan

Girls' empowerment and gender equality are key concepts for tools as grounded in the **Because I am a Girl** Campaign and Plan's Gender Equality Policy. These concepts informed the design of the Girls' Empowerment Star and School Equality Scorecard, and forward multi-dimensional and human rights-based definitions. Plan's commitments to girls' empowerment and gender equality are founded on international norms and standards set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Girls' empowerment and gender equality are fundamental parts of Plan's rights-based Child Centred Community Development approach. Plan defines the concepts as follows:

Empowerment

Power is the ability to shape one's life and one's environment. The lack of power is one of the main barriers that prevents girls and women from realising their rights and escaping cycles of poverty. This can be overcome by a strategy of empowerment. Gender-based empowerment involves building girls' assets (social, economic, political and personal), strengthening girls' ability to make choices about their future, and developing girls' sense of self worth and their belief in their own ability to control their lives.

Gender equality

Gender equality means that women and men, girls and boys enjoy the same status in society; have the same entitlements to all human rights; enjoy the same level of respect in the community; can take advantage of the same opportunities to make choices about their lives; and have the same amount of power to shape the outcomes of these choices. Gender equality does not mean that women and men, or girls and boys are the same. Women and men, girls and boys have different but related needs and priorities, face different constraints, and enjoy different opportunities. Their relative positions in society are based on standards that, while not fixed, tend to advantage men and boys and disadvantage women and girls. Consequently, they are affected in different ways by policies and programmes. A gender equality approach is about understanding these relative differences, appreciating that they are not rigid but can be changed, and then designing policies, programmes and services with these differences in mind. Ultimately, promoting gender equality means transforming the power relations between women and men, girls and boys in order to create a more just society for all.

Source: Plan International (2012), 'Plan's Policy on Gender Equality: Building an Equal World for All Children', Plan International: Woking.

The terminology, 'girls' empowerment' reflects a significant range of emphases. For adolescent girls, it concerns family and other relations across the different spheres of their lives during a period of transitioning to adulthood. Empowerment encompasses a process and the exercise of informed decision-making power. Kabeer proposed a definition of empowerment as 'the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them'.¹² Important decisions concern, for example, time use, education, money, marriage, pregnancy, employment or where to live. Strategic choices and opportunities seized in adolescence can influence the course of girls' lives for the better.

As with girls' empowerment, gender equality is understood differently by different audiences. For adolescent girls, gender equality is often defined in policy relating to education. Girls' education has been recognised as a right and a strategy for breaking cycles of poverty and poor health outcomes for girls and the next generation. Plan's Because I am a Girl campaign advocacy goal of girls completing at least nine years of education informs the concept of gender equality underpinning the School Equality Scorecard. A recently published literature review,¹³ defines gender equality in education beyond the usual policy concern with gender parity—equal numbers of girls and boys. The paper recognises school as an important site of intervention and argues for new concepts of gender equality in education as part of:

'A substantive approach to gender equality [that] draws out the interconnections of relationships associated with power and meaning in different sites, both between men and women, and girls and boys, and how both material and discursive relations form and reform this within and beyond education. It explores how schools and processes of learning operate both to reproduce and transform inequalities'.¹⁴

Participatory Numbers

Recent experience in the field of 'participatory numbers' has demonstrated that it is possible for research processes to generate credible quantitative data from participatory processes.¹⁵ This allows research studies to satisfy multiple goals of generating data to inform policy and academic analysis, as well as oversight of development projects by decision makers, while also supporting research participants to deepen their understanding and ownership of the issues under consideration. The approach builds on substantial experience in the field of participatory monitoring and evaluation.¹⁶

'Participatory Numbers' has been described as a methodological breakthrough in applying core development values to the practice of monitoring and social research.¹⁷ It has been applied at scale in the UK, for instance in the fields of support for homeless people and people suffering mental health disorders and alcohol addiction. Organisations working in these fields have found that the approach can directly link the experience and priorities of service users and front line staff to management and reporting processes.¹⁸ These findings suggest that, properly implemented, the approach may have the potential to substantially enhance practices of management, monitoring and accountability in organisations working on social issues. Further research is needed on the opportunities and constraints to applying the approach within development agencies such as Plan.

¹² Kabeer, N. (2001), 'Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment', in *Discussing Women's Empowerment: Theory and Practice*. Sida Studies 3. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency: Stockholm.

¹³ Unterhalter, E, et al (2014), 'Interventions to Enhance Girls' Education and Gender Equality: Education Rigorous Literature Review'. Department for International Development: London.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 18.

¹⁵ See Holland (2013), *Who Counts? The Power of Participatory Statistics*. Practical Action Publishing: Warwickshire; Keystone (2013) 'Technical Note 1: Constituent Voice'. Autumn 2013. Keystone Accountability: London.; O'Hagan, P. (2011), 'People First Impact Method Assessment, West Darfur, Sudan'. War Child Canada: Toronto.

¹⁶ Estrella M. & J. Gaventa (1998), 'Who Counts Reality? Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: A Literature Review'. IDS Working Paper 70. Institute of Development Studies: Sussex.

Chamber, R. (2010) 'Preface' in D. Jupp et al, *Measuring Empowerment? Ask Them*. Quantifying qualitative outcomes from people's own analysis. Sida Studies in Evaluation. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency: Stockholm.

¹⁷ References available from <http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk/validation/> (accessed: 15th July 2014); Burns, S., et al (2008), 'Using the Outcomes Star: Impact and Good Practice', Homeless Link: London.; Killaspy, H., S. White and M. King (2012) 'Psychometric properties of the Mental Health Recovery Star', in *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 201: 65- 70: London.; York Consulting (2013), 'Family Star Evaluation: Summary Report', Family Action: London.; Harris, L and A. Andrews (2013), 'Implementing the Outcomes Star well in a multi-disciplinary environment,' RMIT University, published by the Salvation Army, Crisis Service Network: Victoria.

¹⁸ References available from <http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk/validation/> (accessed: 15th July 2014); Burns, S., et al (2008), 'Using the Outcomes Star: Impact and Good Practice', Homeless Link: London.; Killaspy, H., S. White and M. King (2012) 'Psychometric properties of the Mental Health Recovery Star', in *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 201: 65- 70: London.; York Consulting (2013), 'Family Star Evaluation: Summary Report', Family Action: London.; Harris, L and A. Andrews (2013), 'Implementing the Outcomes Star well in a multi-disciplinary environment,' RMIT University, published by the Salvation Army, Crisis Service Network: Victoria.

Table 7: Numbers of Plan Programme Units (PUs), Communities and Schools Involved in the 2012 Pilot Studies

Country	Girls Empowerment Star		School Equality Scorecard			
	# PUs	# Communities	# PUs (Girls)	# Schools (Girls)	# PUs (Boys)	# Schools (Boys)
Egypt	1	3	1	2	1	2
Paraguay	1	4	1	2	1	2
Total	2	7	2	4	2	4

Table 8: Numbers of Participants Involved in 2012 Pilot Studies in Egypt and Paraguay

Country	Girls Empowerment Star	School Equality Scorecard		Total participants
	# Girls	# Girls	# Boys	
Egypt	61	20	20	101
Paraguay	58	58	60	176
Total	119	78	80	277

2.10. Piloting the Methodology

Plan pilot tested all aspects of the methodology, including a draft version of the tools and the process, in Paraguay and Egypt during 2012. This involved implementing the pilot tools in at least two communities or schools in two PUs per country. The piloting process involved a training workshop, selection of PUs and piloting teams, test runs of all five steps in the tools' implementation process, including translation workshops and focus groups, as well as debriefing meetings and practice in report writing. A total of 197 adolescent girls, and 80 adolescent boys, participated in Plan's piloting process of the tools in 2 PUs in both Egypt and Paraguay.

Following the Egypt and Paraguay pilot tests, Plan then held workshops to reflect on the pilot process and findings, and to revise the piloted tools, guidance notes and report forms. The piloted methodology was seen as successful by field staff and managers. Qualitative and quantitative data from the pilot appeared to be credible, within the limitations of the

study. Staff felt that they had learned important new insights into girls and boys' lived realities. Managers appreciated the summary data and considered how to use it to inform Plan's projects. Some pilot focus group facilitators and observers shared anecdotally that girls and boys who participated shared positive reactions to the tools. Some girls, in particular, reportedly said that they liked the tools' exercises because they gave them space to voice concerns and articulate changes they would like to see boys, parents and teachers take forward in their community or school. For example, girls in Paraguay raised the issue that they want equal time on the football field at school as boys. They also raised the need for sexual and reproductive health training for all family and community members. As girls moved from reflection to identifying actions, the pilot focus groups suggested that the tools could be powerful for their objective of empowering adolescent girls and boys who engage with them.

Some of the positive feedback from the pilots included:

Tools:

- The piloted tools proved highly relevant to adolescent girls and boys across diverse settings in both countries. Participants found them interesting and useful, describing issues that they saw as important. Staff and teachers also greatly appreciated the insights that flowed from using them, some of which were new to them.
- The mixture of quantitative and qualitative findings generated by the piloted tools was powerful. The quantitative data made it easy to identify and discuss trends in participants' perceptions. It was particularly useful to discuss the highest and lowest rated issues in each focus group. The qualitative data provided powerful insights into girls' real experiences and underlying causes.

Process:

- The training and support provided to pilot facilitators played a crucial role in ensuring that pilot processes were carried out as intended and maintaining the quality of the resulting data. This included training in all aspects of the pilot methodology, including participatory facilitation of adolescents, ethics, child protection, responding to sensitive issues, use of terms, documenting findings, maintaining privacy and anonymity, reporting and analysis of the data. The pilot training and support needed the active involvement of Plan's managers. Many of Plan's staff found that piloting the methodology helped them build their professional skills. This training was identified as an important component of meeting the ethical standards required for implementing the methodology.
- Staff teams worked best when they brought together individuals with experience in a variety of areas, including: child protection, gender analysis, project implementation, project management, and monitoring and evaluation.
- Translation workshops were essential in order to customise the pilot tools' dimensions, key questions and discussion prompts, and make them relevant to girls and boys in the local context.
- The processes of asking for informed parental consent and informed children's assent fostered a greater sense of clarity, trust and candidness in the research process.
- Single-sex focus groups with same-sex facilitators helped girls and boys discuss sensitive topics openly.

- Pilot facilitator and observer teams conducting focus groups in communities or schools where they do not normally conduct development activities helped assure participants of the confidentiality of the focus group discussions, as well as provide cross-PU organisational learning opportunities.

The following specific opportunities to improve the methodology were identified. Many of them may be familiar to others who have undertaken large scale participatory social research exercises.

Tools:

- Some aspects of the pilot tools were too complicated to understand and use within the time available. As a result, the tools were simplified in a number of ways. The number of dimensions was reduced from 10 to eight on the Girls Empowerment Star, and from 16 to 10 on the School Equality Scorecard. The rating scales were also simplified from 10-point to 5-point scales, and changed to be time based.
- The pilot version of the Girls Empowerment Star included one 'open' dimension, that participants were invited to define for themselves. This was intended to increase the relevance of the tool to local context. But the additional step took too much time to manage within focus groups and added confusion to data collection, reporting and analysis. As a result, this aspect was removed.
- The precise wording of the dimensions and all of the key questions used on the pilot Girls Empowerment Star was amended in light of experience. For instance, the draft question on 'safety' was 'how safe do you feel from violence?'. This was found to risk moving into very sensitive areas for participants who were actually suffering from violence. The wording was made more general in the final version. A dimension on 'decision making' was cut completely, as it was found to add limited value beyond the issues covered in the other dimensions. Further, questions on money, marriage and pregnancy inquired about girls' decision-making power on these dimensions key to their empowerment. The pilot dimension on 'safe sex' (with key question: 'how easy is it for you to find out about safe sex?') was amended to the more direct dimension of 'pregnancy', which experience showed was the core issue and could be discussed in relatively direct terms.

- The pilot version of the Girls Empowerment Star invited participants to rate their responses to each of the key questions on a 10-point scale. The preparation for using the pilot tool in each country included identifying local examples for points '1' (very low) to '5' (mid level) to '10' (very high). This was found to be time-consuming to set up and difficult to use. The range of results from 1 – 10 set up too much choice for participants and was confusing for adolescents. Secondly, a significant proportion of participants were not used to expressing opinions in these terms. As a result, the response scale was reduced to a five point scale about the frequency which participants perceived each key question could be answered in the affirmative, ranging from 'never' to 'always'. This had the additional advantages that it could be universally applied without further modification and simplified the reporting and analysis processes. The same approach was adopted in the final version of the School Equality Scorecard.
- The pilot version of the School Equality Scorecard included two dimensions specifically for teachers, to explore their knowledge and support for gender equality in school. However, these were time consuming to implement and did not generate very useful data. So they were dropped, with the aim of simplifying both the tool and the process. The precise wording of the dimensions and key questions for this tool were also amended and simplified. The final versions all directly addressed pupils' experiences of equality, in simple terms and from their perspective.
- The pilot tools were found to work only when they were translated into the local languages used by participants in their daily lives, and when facilitators were fluent in participants' main spoken language and familiar with local examples of the tools' dimensions.
- In Egypt, the visual presentation of a star in the pilot Girls Empowerment Star was perceived to be closely associated with religious symbolism, which staff recommended was not appropriate. As a result, the visual presentation was simplified.
- Staff needed additional support to write up and analyse the findings of pilot focus groups. So, it proved beneficial to simplify the forms used for reporting and analysis as much as possible.
- The amount of time that all stakeholders could reasonably dedicate to each pilot focus group emerged as an important constraint for the methodology. It became apparent that the original scope of the study had to be adapted as the intended scale of the research would not be able to be met. There were two aspects of the originally conceived study which therefore were no longer proceeded with in order to account for the time constraints, and these are discussed directly below.

First, the original methodology included a second exercise for use with both tools, in which participants were invited to reflect on the value of Plan's work in relation to the issues under consideration. The intention was that this data would be used to monitor and improve Plan's projects. When planning the pilots, it became clear that it would not be practical to carry out the second exercise within the time available for focus groups. The exercise would have entailed a significant shift in the subject matter of the focus groups, from an open conversation about issues from participants' perspectives to a focused conversation on Plan's work.

In addition, staff found that it would have been difficult to identify and explain appropriate linkages between the study and Plan's on-going projects. The research methodology focused on pre-determined outcome and impact level issues that were not consistently relevant for all the projects undertaken in the research communities. In many cases, Plan's projects addressed different issues than those discussed during the study. These issues may have been equally significant to other local stakeholders. So the exercise was cut from the process before the pilot. This limited the extent to which the methodology could be used to monitor Plan's on-going projects.

Second, the original methodology also included an intention to report anonymous summaries of the findings back to communities and schools through structured feedback meetings at the end of each research exercise in each community, and to encourage local stakeholders to identify ways of addressing the issues. This was planned as a way of enhancing the developmental results of the process for participants and local stakeholders. However, it became clear that, due to the range of issues discussed, this

Process:

- The practical details of arranging and running pilot focus groups needed careful attention, to ensure that the process worked smoothly. This required a considerable amount of staff time

activity would effectively launch a new development intervention, which would need dedicated and on-going support. It also proved difficult to analyse the data and organise these meetings in the time available, given the practical constraints mentioned above. Instead, Plan's staff were tasked with finding ways of discussing the findings with local stakeholders in their on-going work, and to use the findings to inform and improve their projects. In the pilot and rollout of the tools for the 11-country study, this was to be achieved through community reflection meetings to present and discuss key findings from the research in participating communities and schools.

2.11. Limitations and Mitigating Steps

The research presented with a number of limitations relating to the design, implementation and quality of data. These limitations were mitigated to the best possible extent, but need to be borne in mind when examining the findings. They are as follows:

Unrepresentative Sample:

- The purposive approach to sampling limits the general conclusions that can be drawn from the study. The results are qualitative in nature and are not intended to provide statistically reliable data. They are illustrative and exploratory. Participant quotes provide insight into key issues, and do not define the views of all participants. The results presented in this report cannot be seen as statistically representative of the wider populations beyond those participants who participated in the study.
- The profiles of adolescent girls and boys were limited to those aged 12-16 who participated in Plan project activities and who were in school. This was due to the practical constraints of a study of this size.

Bias in Implementation:

- There is a 'Plan' bias in the research process and results, as Plan staff implemented the research, and the study contexts and participants were related to Plan's on-going projects. Local teams mitigated this by introducing a measure of independence into the process, with staff facilitating focus groups in areas where they did not normally work. Overall coordination and analysis

by the global research manager introduced additional independence in this global report.

Data Quality:

- The quality of quantitative and qualitative data varied across Plan offices, depending upon the time, technical and human resources available during the study period. Some focus group reports and tally charts were detailed and insightful, while others reflected that teams were overstretched in time and technical capacity. Although all staff had experience of engaging children in development project activities, few had prior training and experience in this kind of participatory research on sensitive issues. This limitation was mitigated as best as possible through training and on-going support, strengthened after the pilot process.
- Plan Egypt did not implement the School Equality Scorecard for lack of mixed-sex schools where Plan conducts development activities. Otherwise, there were minimal data missing for both tools. Data were unreported where focus groups were canceled due to security issues on location, limited staff availability, or inclement weather and prohibitive traveling conditions for staff and participants. For the Girls Empowerment Star, Plan Benin did not report data for the three communities of the Programme Unit in Atacora. Plan Cameroon's data are missing from one community in the Programme Unit of Bamenda. For the School Equality Scorecard, Plan Liberia reported data for three out of five schools in both the Programme Unit of Bomi and the Programme Unit of Lofa. Plan Pakistan reported data for four of five schools of the Programme Unit of Thatta.
- Plan implemented the tools verbally in the local language spoken daily of each group of participants. There were on average between 1-5 different languages used locally in PU areas in the study. Plan translated all quotes and commentary into English for analysis and global reporting purposes. However, some quotes' meanings may be lost in translation. To address this issue, the report presents quotes preserving where possible linguistic irregularities in the English translations. This was done in an effort to communicate the "voice" of the adolescent girl or boys who participated in the study as much as possible.
- Limited time, financial, technical and human resources

Interpretation of Findings:

- The quantitative findings should not be seen as reliable, stand-alone indications of “girls’ empowerment” or “gender equality at school”. They require the qualitative inquiry and data to triangulate and interpret the ratings. For example, in the Girls’ Empowerment Star, high average ratings on the ‘marriage’ dimension in response to the question, “Do girls decide if they marry?” contradict some of the qualitative comments given to explain high ratings. Some adolescent girls decided to marry an older man with money to escape a poor or abusive home, sometimes only to enter an exploitative and abusive new home. Or, in the School Equality Scorecard, high scores on girls’ perceptions of ‘safety at school’ sometimes contradicted qualitative explanations that girls felt marginally safer at school relative to how safe they felt walking on roads or at home.

Ethical Challenges:

- Where government systems for child protection were weak, it was difficult for Plan to respond to some child protection issues. Local Plan managers voiced concerns and distress over cases that called for responses beyond the capacity of Plan’s work in these instances. Mitigating steps included internal group discussion and professional peer support support for Plan’s staff to assess resources and options to facilitate a protection response for the children involved.
- The study raised expectations in communities and schools for Plan to respond to the issues under discussion. This was not always possible given that the country offices have existing strategies in place. Responses in the interim included changes to existing project activities and outreach strategies to accommodate some communities’ concerns. However, the findings are being used to inform the design of new projects where indicated.

2.12. Conclusion

Through the methodology of the Girls Empowerment Star and School Equality Scorecard, Plan strived to build a rich and diverse picture of the pressing challenges adolescent girls contend with today. Plan heard from girls in their own

words about areas of progress and positive change, and unembellished truths from girls about the state of their own

development and rights in areas where Plan works in 11 countries. The three objectives - *empowerment, learning, and reporting* - summarised the how the study endeavored to bring together the research purpose and objectives with Plan’s projects with adolescents, and with girls in particular as part of the Because I am a Girl campaign.

This action-oriented research sought to provide safe spaces within which adolescent girls and boys could voice their views in confidence with a development agency that will strive to be responsive. Hearing girls and boys perspectives on empowerment and gender equality is vital to Plan’s commitment to building inclusive, Child Child Centred Community Development projects and advocacy. This research created opportunities for adolescent girls and boys to become advocates for their own rights, social change and justice.

The methodology and research process also built the skills and understanding of Plan staff and contributed to organisational learning to inform innovative project design for and with adolescents. Plan facilitators, now experienced in implementing the tools, have built skills in qualitative and participatory numbers research methods, as well as in concepts of girls’ empowerment and gender equality related to schooling. This can help ensure that projects are of high quality and relevance, engaging with the local realities of diverse adolescent girls and boys lives.

Finally, the methodology generated findings useful at local, national and international levels. Immediately following focus groups, girls and boys, communities and schools, and local Plan offices began discussing and benefitting from the findings locally. The quantitative and qualitative findings read together mutually informed and strengthened discussion of results. Having a global research manager coordinate data management, analysis and reporting allowed for identifying recurring themes and actionable insights that persisted within and across study contexts. The research results can be useful to peer NGOs, as well as other civil society organisations and governments. Future implementation of the tools will require careful planning to deploy adequate resources needed for ethical

Section 3: Results

Girls Empowerment Star

3.1. Overview

The results and key findings from the study are organised into three sections within the report:

- **Girls Empowerment Star (Section 3)**
 - o Global results and key findings
 - o Cross-Regional results and key findings
 - o Regional results and key findings
- **School Equality Scorecard (Section 4)**
 - o Global results and key findings
 - o Cross-Regional results and key findings
 - o Regional results and key findings
- **Country Data Snapshots (Appendix I)**
 - o Girls Empowerment Star
 - o School Equality Scorecard

As noted in the methodology section of this report, these findings reflect the views of the specific groups of adolescent girls and boys who participated in the study in the 11 countries. The results are not nationally representative of all girls and boys in those countries. Further, the results may not be representative of all girls and boys in the communities and schools where Plan works in those countries. Finally, for more information on how Plan calculated the results, please see Section 2.8 Methodology.

3.2. Girls Empowerment Star: Global Results and Key Findings

The research findings reveal that there is much work to be done to ensure that adolescent girls transition to adulthood in an environment that supports their empowerment. Girls' capacities to make decisions important for their futures requires not only knowledge and support from others, but also feeling confident and safe in taking a course of action.

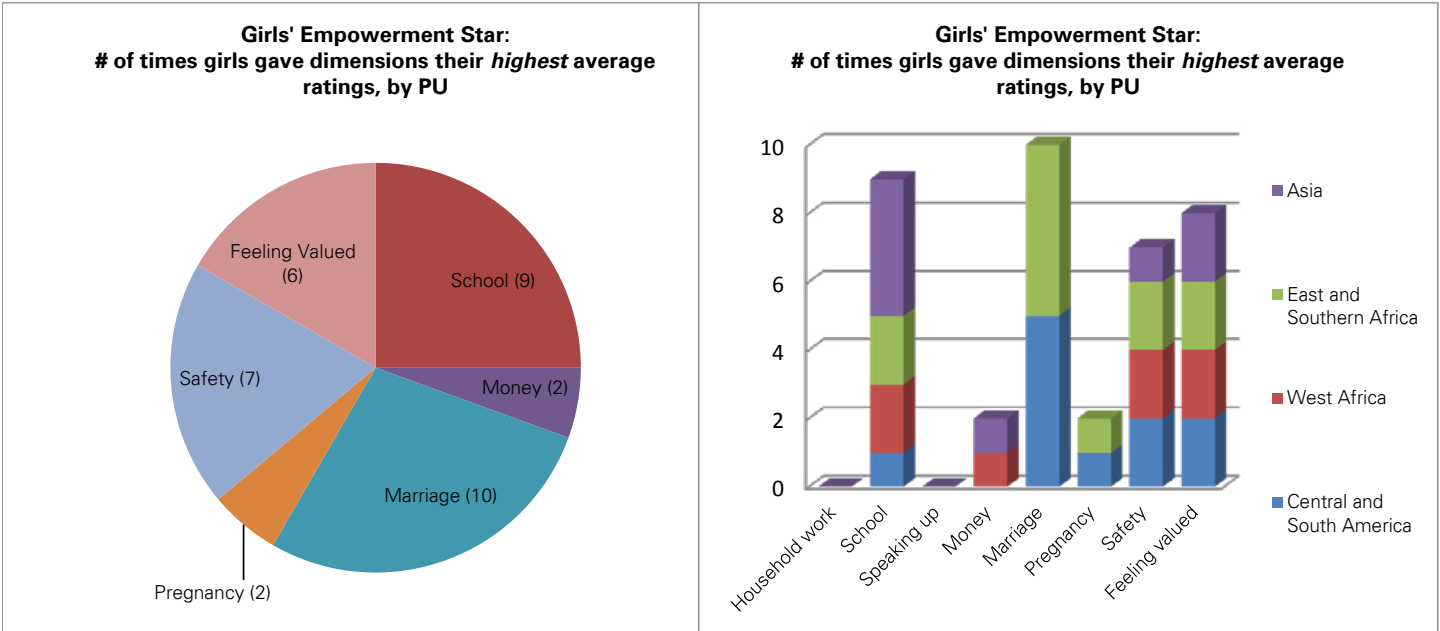
The Girls Empowerment Star generated powerful results from each of the participating four regions, 11 countries, 21 Programme Units (PUs), and 60 selected communities. A total of 1,802 adolescent girls participated in focus group discussions using this tool. In all 11 countries in the study, girls raised issues of pressing concern across all dimensions of the Girls Empowerment Star: **household work, school, speaking up, money, marriage, pregnancy, safety** and **feeling valued**. The highest average ratings per community rarely presented uncomplicated pictures, but rather showed a range of girls' opinions and lived experiences. Rather than a world in which girls' ratings were consistently 'often' and 'always', the highest ratings most often were in the lower middle of the road: 'sometimes' and 'seldom'. Girls have told us across four regions that there is much more progress to be made on girls' empowerment—from their perspective.

Highest Rated Dimensions of Girls' Empowerment Across 11 Countries

Across all 11 countries, adolescent girls involved in the study most frequently rated **marriage** (in 10 PUs), **school** (in 9 PUs) and **safety** (in 7 PUs) as the highest dimensions of girls' empowerment (see Figure 2). For the most part, girls felt that they had some control over if and when to marry, they could complete at least nine years of school, and they often felt safe in their community. **Marriage** showed significant variability, having also received lowest average ratings from girls interviewed in participating communities in five PUs.

The qualitative data on **marriage** show a complex picture of girls' opinions on why marriage was often rated highly in some countries. For example, some girls in East and Southern Africa felt empowered around deciding when to marry. Girls felt supported by their families to control if and when to marry, and mothers who were forced into early marriage often did not want the same fate for their daughters. On the other hand, many girls in Asia and West Africa claimed they did not feel empowered around decisions relating to marriage, claiming that girls are forced into marriage due to poverty, economic exploitation, sexual harassment, and abuse.

Figure 2: Girls Empowerment Star: 11-country frequencies of dimensions girls rated the highest - by PU and region

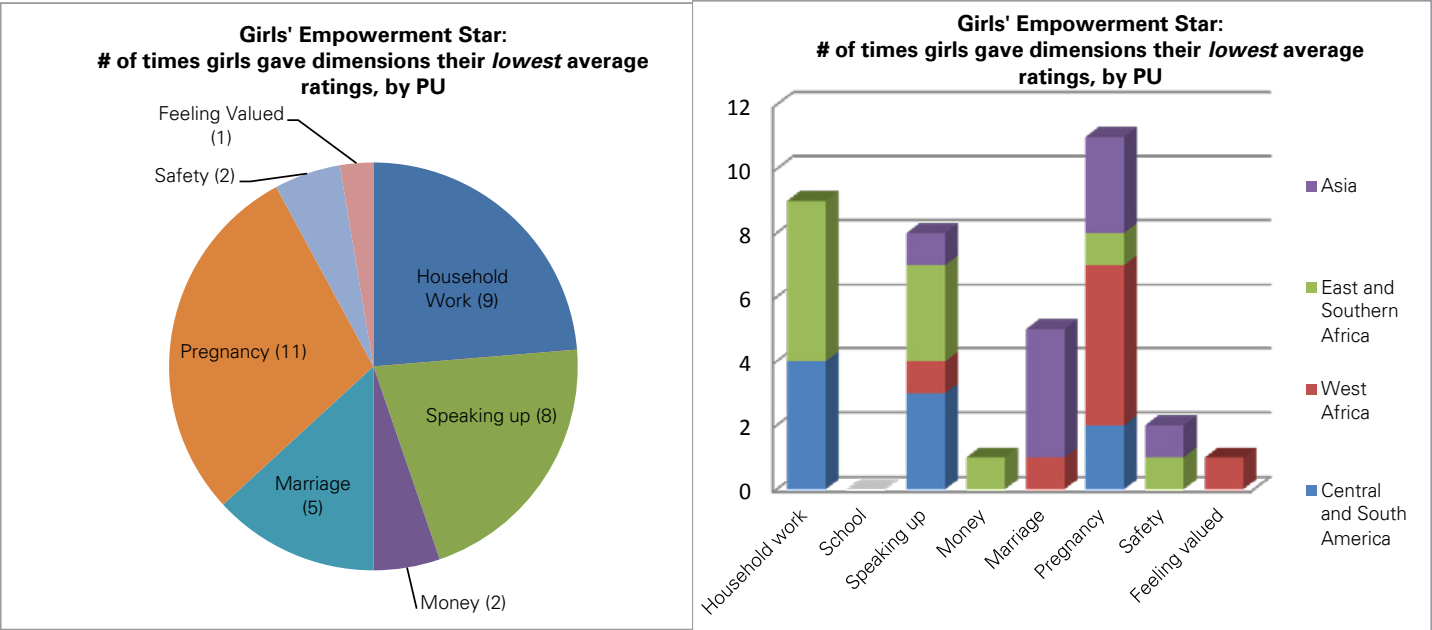


* Graphs refer to data from three selected communities per PU and 21 PUs total across 11 countries and four regions. Regions include: Central and South America, West Africa, East and Southern Africa, and Asia. Countries include: Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Ecuador, Egypt, Liberia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries each in Central and South America, West Africa, and East and Southern Africa, and two countries in Asia. Note: no data were reported from one PU from Benin.

Lowest Rated Dimensions of Girls' Empowerment Across 11 Countries

Across all 11 countries, girls most frequently rated **pregnancy** (in 11 PUs), **household work** (in 9 PUs), **speaking up** (in 8 PUs), and **marriage** (in 5 PUs) as the lowest and least empowering dimensions for adolescent girls (see Figure 3). Adolescent girls involved in the study reported they rarely decide if and when to get pregnant, they seldom share household chores and duties with boys, they do not feel confident speaking up in front of men and boys, and they sometimes have difficulties controlling if and when to marry.

Figure 3: Girls Empowerment Star: 11-country frequencies of dimensions girls rated the highest - by PU and region*



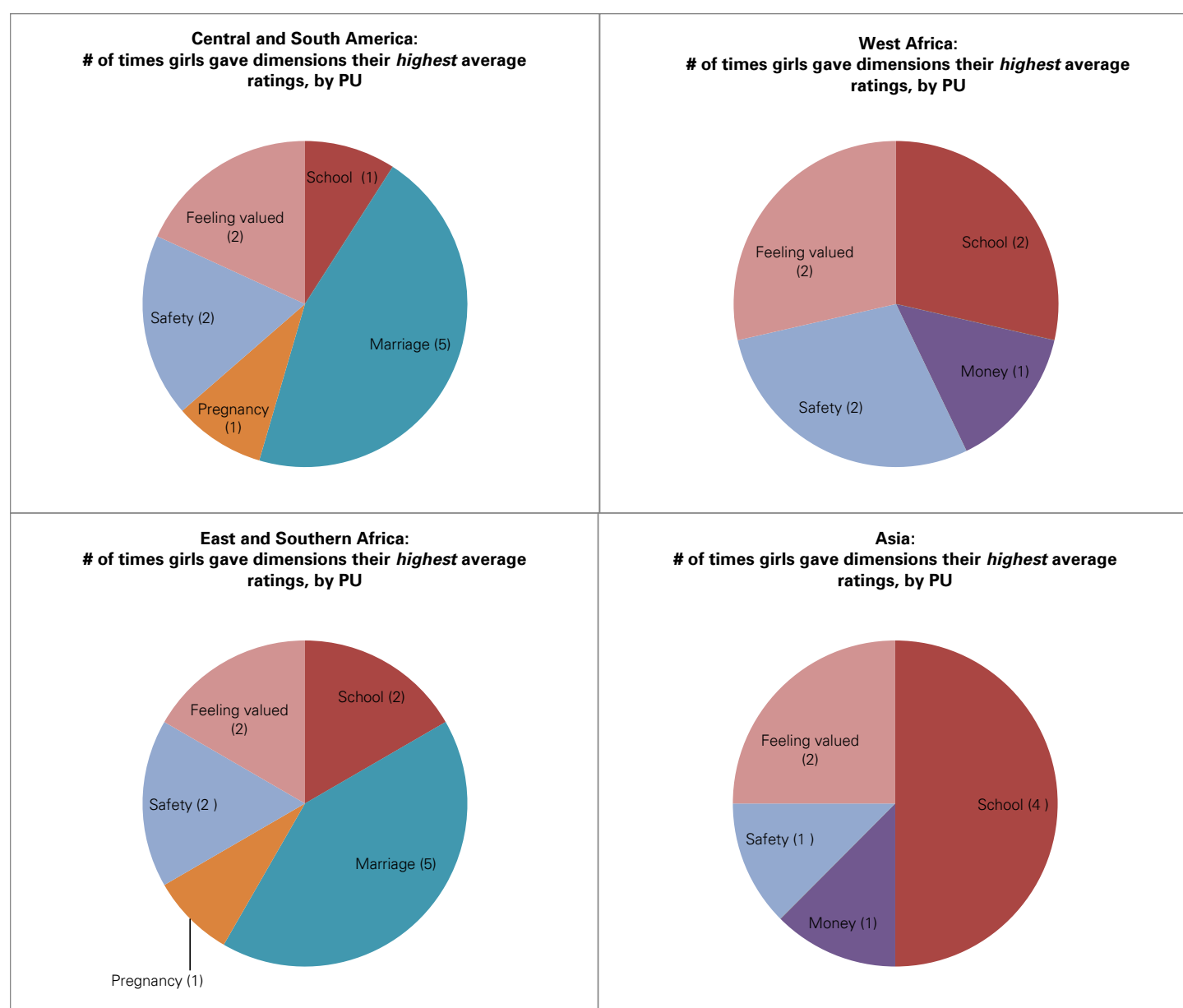
* Frequency data refer to numbers of PUs in which girls rated a dimension highest on average. Graphs refer to data from three selected communities per PU and 21 PUs total across 11 countries and four regions. Regions include: Central and South America, West Africa, East and Southern Africa, and Asia. Countries include: Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Ecuador, Egypt, Liberia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries each in Central and South America, West Africa, and East and Southern Africa, and two countries in Asia. Note: no data were reported from one PU from Benin.

3.3. Girls Empowerment Star: Cross-Regional Results and Key Findings

Highest Rated Dimensions of Girls' Empowerment Across all Regions

Across the four regions, adolescent girls Plan spoke with outlined a variety of aspects that influence their empowerment. In **Central and South America** and **East and Southern Africa**, adolescent girls most frequently rated **marriage** as an area they have relatively high level of influence over, claiming that adolescent girls can often decide if and when to marry. In **West Africa**, girls most frequently rated access to **school, safety, and feeling valued** as the highest dimensions of empowerment for adolescent girls. In **Asia**, access to **school** was rated the highest dimension of empowerment most frequently, as adolescent girls often felt they could complete at least nine years of school (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Girls Empowerment Star: Frequencies of dimensions girls rated the highest on average, by PU and by region*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from countries in a given region. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries each in Central and South America, West Africa, East and Southern Africa, and two countries in Asia. Note: no data were reported from one PU from Benin.

Across the four regions, adolescent girls involved in the study felt that access to **school**, deciding if and when to **marry**, **feeling valued**, and feeling **safe** in the community were common aspects that influenced girls' empowerment. While the findings vary within and between regions, these dimensions of empowerment are worth exploring in more detail.

School

School was the second most frequently rated highest dimension for girls' empowerment. Across 11 countries in the study, 41% of girls reported 'always' or 'often' complete at least nine years of school. This was most prevalent in Asia where half of girls said they 'always' or 'often' complete at least nine years of school.

In **Asia**, girls rated school the highest level of girls' empowerment. The finding may be attributed to the sample encompassing adolescent girls who live in communities where Plan has implemented rights-based approaches to child-centered community development over many years. In Bangladesh, adolescent girls explained that many more girls are now going to school because of scholarships and free books from the government, and that there are now more girls than boys in school. Adolescent girls said that more parents are aware of the value of girl's education as a result of these government programmes.

“The government is now giving free books and scholarships, so girls want to be educated. No girls want to be unemployed and stay at home.”
Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

Girls in Pakistan shared the view that literacy and education for girls are expected to make an entire family more literate.

Girls involved in the study across all countries claimed that their fathers, and mothers, support girls' education. While often more educated fathers are the ones to support girls' education, even some who did not complete their schooling want a better life for their girls.

“My parents like education because they are both uneducated and they want us to be the best and to be highly educated.”
Adolescent Girl, Egypt

Marriage

Marriage was rated one of the highest dimensions of girls' empowerment – 38% of girls Plan spoke with said they 'always' or 'often' decide if they marry. This was most prevalent in **Central and South America** where over half (53%) of girls claimed they 'always' or 'often' decide when they marry. Some girls explained they hope to get married only after they have finished school, and others have older sisters who set a good example and finished secondary school first before marrying.

Girls in **East and Southern Africa** also felt empowered around deciding when to marry (53% of girls reported 'always' or 'often' deciding when to marry). This was most prevalent in Egypt where 75% of girls reported they 'always' decide. Adolescent girls in this region, for the most part, felt supported by their families to control if and when to marry, and mothers who were forced into early marriage often did not want the same fate for their daughters.

“Parents don't want what happened to them to happen with their girls.”
Adolescent Girl Egypt

On the other hand, many girls involved in the study also reported that they do not feel empowered around decisions relating to marriage – 39% of girls Plan spoke with claimed that girls 'never' or 'seldom' decide over their own marriage. This was most prevalent in **Asia** and **West Africa** – over two-thirds (69%) of girls in Asia and over half (52%) of girls in West Africa said they 'never' or 'seldom' control decisions about their marriage.

Safety

Some adolescent girls involved in the study revealed that they often feel **safe** in their community, however the findings reveal a set of complex realities. For instance, 77% of girls in one area in Bangladesh reported they 'never' or 'seldom' feel safe in their community, while only 33% girls from another area of the country 'never' or 'seldom' feel safe. In Paraguay, 75% of girls in one area 'always' or 'often' feel safe, while only one-third (35%) of girls from another area in the country reported 'always' or 'often' feeling safe in their community.

Some girls in **Asia** claimed that they rarely walk alone in their community because of high levels of crime and violence, and they feel safer when they are with others.

“Once when I was on the way to school, a boy [tried to bother] me, but I did not feel fear. We walk in a group of girls so we don’t feel fear.”

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

Other girls involved in the study across all 11 countries only feel safe at school because at home they are victims of physical and sexual violence by their family.

“At home, we are sometimes sexually harassed by our relatives whom we can never report as they will be our guardians.”

Adolescent Girl, Zimbabwe

“We feel safe at school.” Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

Feeling valued

Girls involved in the study on average **felt valued** and said their concerns matter in the community. This was most prevalent in **Asia** and **Central and South America**, followed by **West Africa** and **East and Southern Africa**. However, girls' interpretations of feeling valued varied. Most girls reported that others value them when they fulfill socially ascribed roles and expectations. Few reported a sense of feeling valued for their intrinsic worth as a person or unique contributions at home or in the community.

“Our parents give respect to us, they honor us, because in our communities, girls are signs of honor.”
Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

Findings ranged widely in the regions. For instance, in **East and Southern Africa**, 41-46% of girls in Zimbabwe claimed they 'never' or 'seldom' feel valued, while only 3-12% of girls in Egypt said they 'never' or 'seldom' feel valued in their community. In **West Africa**, girls Plan spoke with shared both positive and negative experiences about feeling valued in their community. For instance, in Benin over half (55%) of the girls Plan spoke with said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel valued. On the other hand, in Liberia, more than half (57-64%) of girls who participated in the study said that the concerns of adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' matter in the community and they feel valued by their parents.

“[Girls] feel valued because their parents speak on their behalf when there are problems.”

Adolescent Girl Liberia

Other girls expressed concerns that they rarely feel valued in their community.

“The girls are like servants of boys and men. Their issues don’t really matter.”

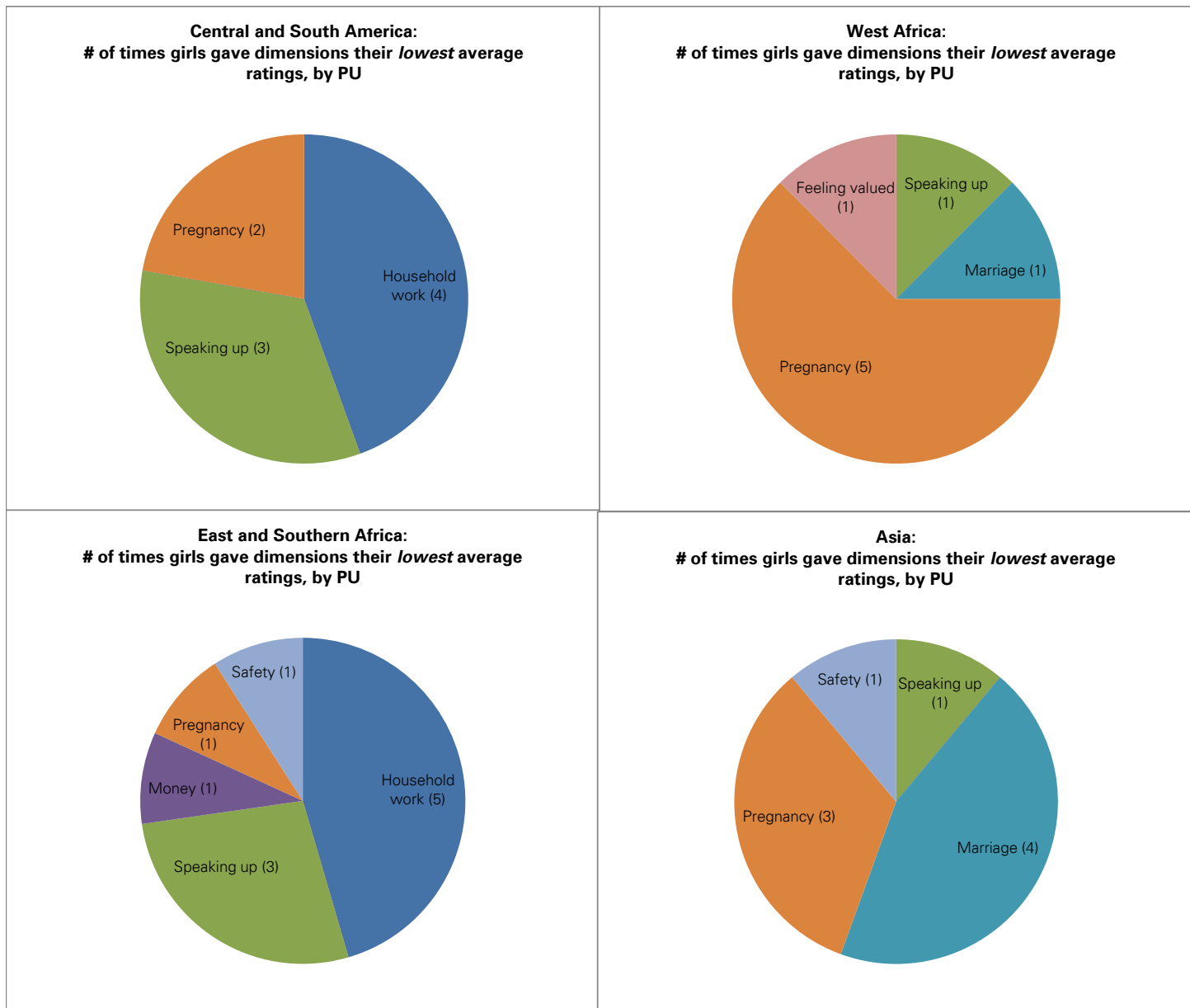
Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

The predominant theme from focus groups was that adolescent girls mostly only feel appreciated when they conform to and perform traditional gender roles and responsibilities.

Lowest Rated Dimensions of Girls' Empowerment Across all Regions

Across the four regions, adolescent girls involved in the study outlined a variety of aspects that influence their empowerment. In **Central and South America** and **East and Southern Africa**, adolescent girls most frequently rated **household work** and **speaking up** as the lowest dimensions of girls' empowerment, claiming that adolescent boys rarely share household work equally with girls, and that girls seldom say what matters to them in front of a man or boy. In **West Africa**, girls most frequently rated **pregnancy** as the lowest dimension stating that adolescent girls rarely control if and when to get pregnant. In **Asia**, deciding if and when to **marry** and get **pregnant** were rated the lowest dimensions of girls' empowerment most frequently.

Figure 5: Girls Empowerment Star: Frequencies of dimensions girls rated the lowest on average, by PU and by region*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from countries in a given region. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries each in Central and South America, West Africa, East and Southern Africa, and two countries in Asia. Note: no data were reported from one PU in Benin.

Across the four regions, adolescent girls Plan spoke with felt that **pregnancy, household work, speaking up, and marriage** were the lowest dimensions of girls' empowerment. While the findings vary within and between regions, PUs and communities, these dimensions negatively influencing girls' empowerment are worth exploring in more detail.

Pregnancy

One of the key themes that came across most powerfully in the study is **pregnancy**, showing how adolescent girls across diverse contexts are often unable to claim their rights to control their own body, negotiate sexual relations, or make decisions about their reproductive health. Over half (53%) of girls Plan spoke with across the 11 countries claimed that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' decide if they become pregnant.

"We do not know how to avoid pregnancy. Nobody speaks to us of that."

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

Girls Plan spoke with rated pregnancy as the lowest dimension of girls' empowerment across all four regions – 71% of girls in **West Africa**, 55% of girls in **Asia**, 48% of girls in **East and Southern Africa**, and 42% of girls in **Central and South America** reported they 'never' or 'seldom' decide if they get pregnant. Girls across all regions said they are not educated about safe sex nor do they know how to prevent pregnancy. Some girls become sexually active at a young age or their parents force them into early marriage. Sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation and abuse are all drivers of early pregnancy for many girls involved in the study.

"Girls seldom decide whether or when to get pregnant because sometimes their parents push them to ask for money from boys and boys never give money for nothing."

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

"My sister was forced to get married because she got pregnant at school."

Adolescent Girl, Uganda

This data are all the more stark when understood in light of the reality that complications in pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death for girls aged 15 to 19 years.¹⁸

Household work

Nearly half (48%) of all adolescent girls involved in the study said that girls and boys 'never' or 'seldom' share **household chores**. These findings were most prevalent in **East and Southern Africa** and **West Africa** where 56% and 54% of girls respectively reported they 'never' or 'seldom' share household work equally with boys.

"We are burdened with all household tasks. After marriage, we work even more."

Adolescent Girl, Egypt

The findings were striking in some countries in these regions. For instance, nearly two-thirds (64%) of girls in Egypt said they 'never' or 'seldom' share household chores with boys.

Over one-third of girls (47%) interviewed in **Asia** and 35% of girls in **Central and South America** reported they 'never' or 'seldom' share household work equally. However, this was much higher in certain areas in some countries in Asia—for instance, 59% of girls Plan spoke with in one area in Pakistan and 54% of girls in one area in Bangladesh reported that girls and boys 'never' or 'seldom' share household work.

Being responsible for household chores takes time away from girls' studies.¹⁹ Household work is also related to early marriage and pregnancy. Poverty drives early marriage as parents seek to reduce financial constraints on the household. Early marriage increases adolescent girls' already heavy household work burdens. Early pregnancy often results in early school dropout, and further adds to girls' caregiving responsibilities.

¹⁸ UNFPA (2012), 'Marrying Too Young: End Child Marriage', UNFPA: New York, USA.

¹⁹ In every country and region of the world, women perform the majority of unpaid care work – and work longer hours than men overall. The 2012 World Development Report found that globally women devote 1 to 3 hours more a day to housework than men; 2 to 10 times the amount of time a day to care (of children, elderly, and the sick), and 1 to 4 hours less a day to market activities. Source: World Bank (2012), 'World Development Report 2012: Overview Gender Equality and Development', The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank: Washington.

Speaking up

Adolescent girls have difficulties claiming their rights to express themselves and discuss their concerns in front of men and boys. Over half (51%) of girls involved in the study said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' say what they think when a boy or man is around.

"We are embarrassed to speak in the presence of men."

Adolescent Girl, Egypt

"My mother does not speak to my father of what she feels and she needs, what more of me."

Adolescent Girl Cameroon

On the other hand, some girls claimed that they were supported by their families to speak up and share their concerns:

"My father asks me my opinion and he is not embarrassed to do so because my opinion may be correct."

Adolescent Girl, Egypt

Speaking up was featured as the third lowest dimension of girls empowerment across all of the 11 countries. This finding was most prevalent in **East and Southern Africa** and **Central and South America** where over half of all girls involved in the study said they 'never' or 'seldom' say what they think when a boy is around (57% and 53% respectively). However the findings are much higher in certain countries across all regions. For instance, 93% of girls in one area in Ecuador said girls 'never' or 'seldom' say what they think when a boy or man is around, and nearly three-quarters of girls in one area in Uganda (72%) and Pakistan (70%) reported 'never' or 'seldom' speaking up in front of a man.

Marriage

Although many girls involved in the study claimed they feel empowered around **marriage**, marriage was also the fourth most frequently lowest average rated dimension. Many girls involved in the study also reported that they do not feel empowered around decisions relating to marriage – 39% of girls Plan spoke with claimed that girls in their communities 'never' or 'seldom' decide over their own marriage. Girls in **Asia** and **West Africa** felt least empowered about deciding when to marry – over two-thirds (69%) of girls in Asia and over half (52%) of girls in West Africa said they 'never' or 'seldom' control decisions about their marriage. Many girls are forced into marriage due to poverty, economic exploitation, sexual harassment, and abuse, and many girls seldom have the ability to decide if, when and whom to marry.

"Some parents use their girl children to settle debts thereby forcing them to get married to people they don't love." Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

"Our marriages are arranged with the choice of our parents." Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

In Asia, girls reported that some parents believe girls are not able to make the right decisions regarding marriage. Many girls' mothers and sisters have also experienced early and forced marriage making it more commonplace to arrange marriages for their daughters. Girls said parents see themselves as more experienced and better decision-makers, especially fathers who girls said see themselves as knowing better than women and girls.

Violence against adolescent girls

The findings reveal that violence against adolescent girls is frighteningly entrenched – girls expect to face violence, and the levels of violence that they experience are seen as normal. Adolescent girls seldom feel free from violence at home, in communities, and at school. For instance, 80% of girls in one area in Ecuador and 77% of girls in one area in Bangladesh claimed that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel safe in their community. Adolescent girls experience violence in many forms, including sexual harassment, rape, sexual and economic exploitation and abuse, forced marriage through blackmailing, and silencing girls through intimidation.*

"I just feel safe with my family, because no one else cares for us. Rape and kidnapping cases are a given," Girl, Nicaragua

"I'm scared to go outside home after sunset because there is no security now to protect the girls," Girl, Egypt

These findings reinforce many previous studies on the types and scope of violence against adolescent girls. The evidence provided through the study should send a sobering message that continued action must be taken to eliminate all types of violence against girls.

* Across the world, over a third of women will experience gender-based violence from an intimate partner. Source: World Health Organisation (2013), 'Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women, Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-Partner Sexual Violence', World Health Organisation: Geneva.. See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures#sthash.LmzUbRJd.dpuf>

Table 9: Girls Empowerment Star, Global and Regional Weighted Average Percentages for Most Striking Findings

Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	1,802	24%	24%	37%	9%	6%
Central and South America	525	13%	22%	45%	12%	9%
West Africa	378	26%	26%	35%	7%	7%
East and Southern Africa	589	34%	22%	33%	5%	5%
Asia	342	22%	25%	36%	12%	5%
School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	1,802	6%	18%	35%	21%	20%
Central and South America	527	1%	16%	40%	25%	19%
West Africa	381	9%	26%	36%	19%	10%
East and Southern Africa	588	7%	14%	41%	16%	23%
Asia	340	10%	19%	22%	25%	25%
Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	1,802	32%	19%	25%	13%	11%
Central and South America	525	38%	15%	23%	11%	13%
West Africa	381	24%	22%	29%	15%	11%
East and Southern Africa	585	40%	17%	22%	11%	11%
Asia	336	22%	23%	28%	16%	12%
Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	1,802	25%	14%	23%	12%	26%
Central and South America	527	9%	11%	28%	21%	32%
West Africa	360	31%	21%	24%	10%	14%
East and Southern Africa	560	21%	8%	19%	9%	44%
Asia	343	48%	21%	19%	8%	4%
Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	1,802	34%	19%	23%	10%	14%
Central and South America	522	18%	24%	31%	12%	16%
West Africa	364	52%	19%	17%	6%	6%
East and Southern Africa	589	39%	9%	20%	9%	23%
Asia	265	30%	25%	23%	17%	5%

* Table refers to data from participants interviewed in 62 communities across 21 PUs across 11 countries and four regions. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries for each of the four regions, except for Asia where only two countries participated. Note: no data were reported for one PU in Benin.

3.4. Girls Empowerment Star: Region Specific Results and Key Findings²⁰

3.4.1. Central and South America

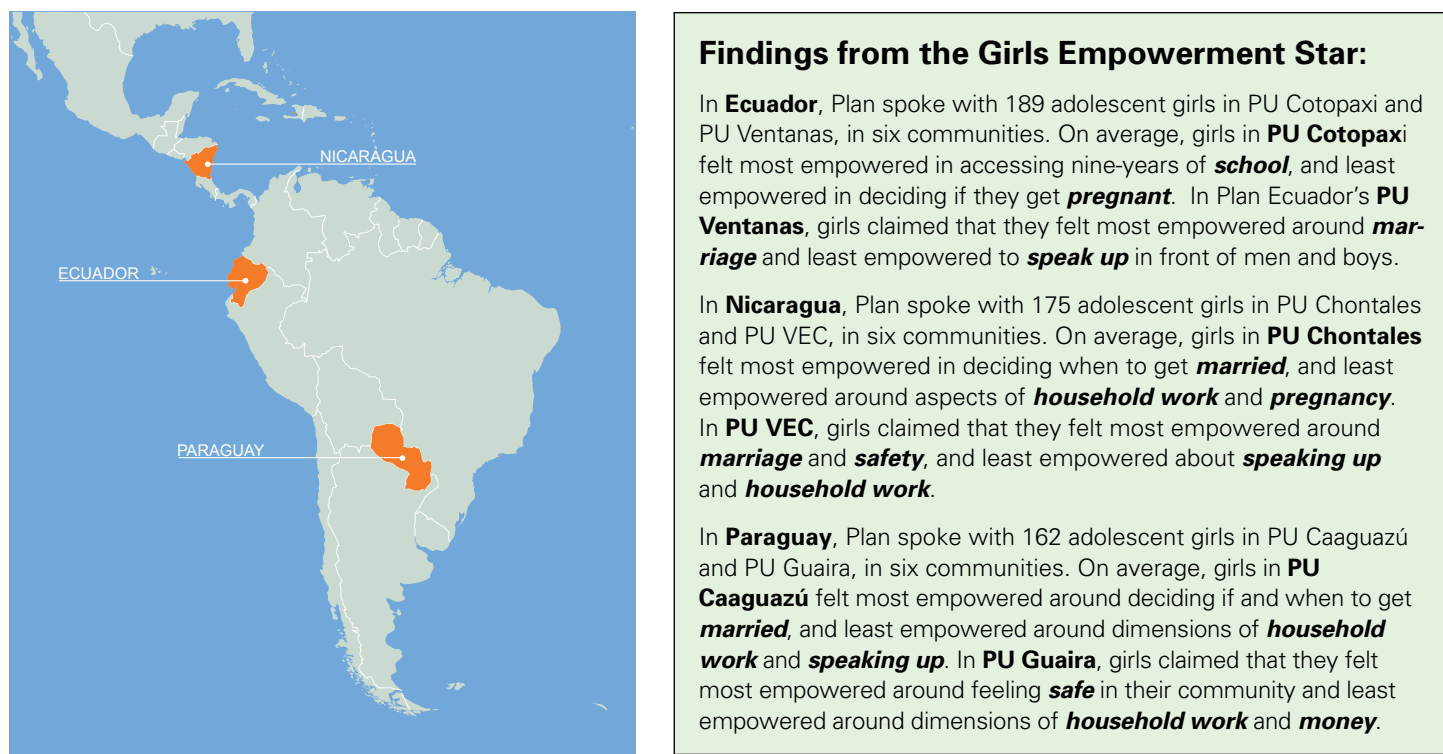
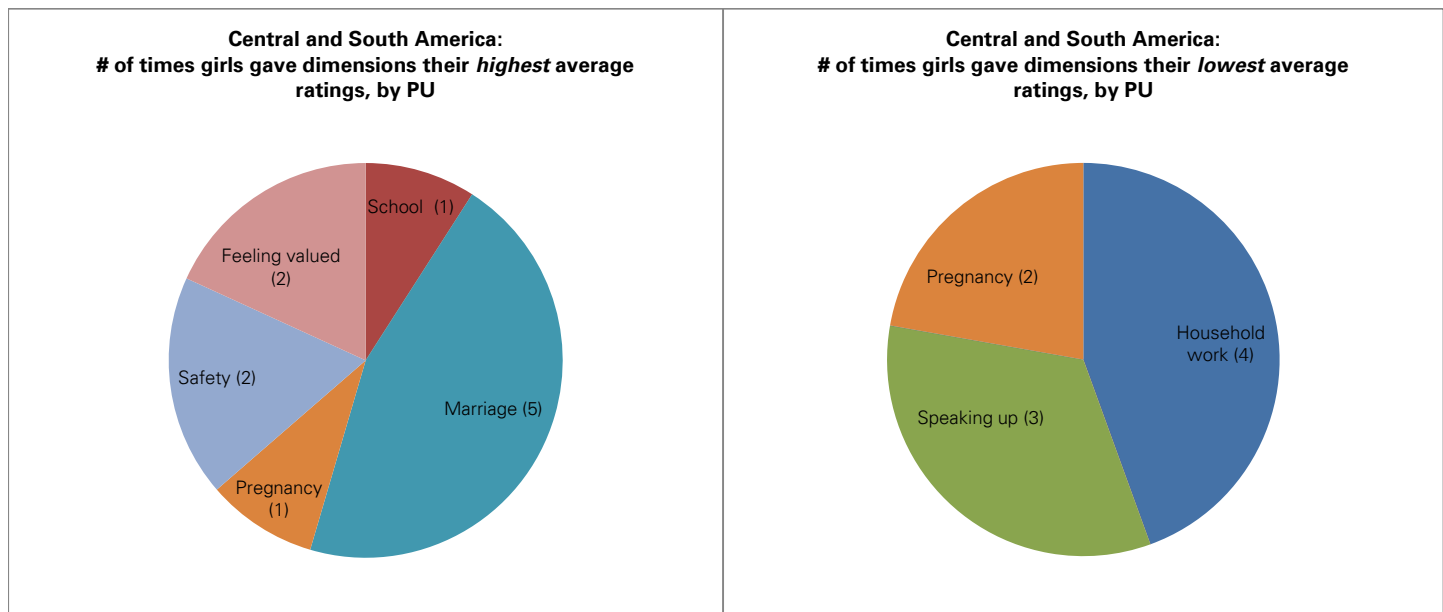


Figure 6: Girls Empowerment Star: Frequencies of highest and lowest average rated dimensions of girls’ empowerment by PU in Central and South America



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected communities. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, and three countries in Central and South America. Frequencies derive from data from three selected communities per PU and may not be representative of all adolescent girls in all communities in all PUs in Ecuador, Nicaragua or Paraguay.

²⁰ See Appendix II for Girls Empowerment star distribution tables of weighted average percentages and ratings by region, country and PU, with an average of three selected communities per PU. See also Appendix III Girls Empowerment Star: Selected communities’ highest and lowest average rated dimensions and variability by country and by PU.

Marriage

While findings suggest that adolescent girls Plan spoke with in Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Paraguay often feel empowered around decisions pertaining to **marriage**, their responses varied and revealed a complex set of realities. For instance, girls Plan spoke with in Paraguay (PU Guaira) said that 71% of adolescent girls ‘always’ or ‘often’ decide if they marry. They explained that they hope to get married only after they have finished school, and some have older sisters who set a good example and finished secondary school first before getting married. On the other hand, girls in Nicaragua (PU VEC) claimed that only 32% of adolescent girls ‘always’ or ‘often’ decide if they marry, however marriage was still rated highest by girls as an aspect in their lives they felt most empowered (relatively speaking) to control. Adolescent girls in this programme area in Nicaragua said that while they did not know of any girl forced into marriage, they have heard of girls’ parents arranging to marry them for land or money.

Girls interviewed in Ecuador shared similar stories whereby some parents, particularly those of poorer households, force their daughters to marry older men with money and resources.

“The girls do not decide to marry, but the parents oblige them to do so for ambition (men that have land, a car or a job) with older men. For example, if the girls are 14 years old, their parents marry them with someone that is 25-30 years old. In other cases, girls leave their house because they get pregnant.”

Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

“... overall, the girls think that they almost never decide if they want to get pregnant or not, ... they do not know how to avoid pregnancy and think that nothing is going to happen to them. This shows that there is a lack of knowledge about pregnancy prevention method.”

Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

Early marriage increases girls’ already heavy **household work** burden, and early pregnancy results in early **school** dropout, further adding to girls’ caregiving responsibilities and time burden.

Pregnancy

Girls involved in the study across these three countries felt least empowered over decisions about **pregnancy**, and findings from the selected communities revealed that girls are sometimes forced into marriages because they become pregnant. In Ecuador, 41-51% of girls Plan spoke with claimed that adolescent girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ decide if they get pregnant. Reasons given were that adolescent girls do not see themselves as having power to decide over their own bodies or when they become pregnant.

“... overall, the girls think that they almost never decide if they want to get pregnant or not, ... they do not know how to avoid pregnancy and think that nothing is going to happen to them. This shows that there is a lack of knowledge about pregnancy prevention methods.” Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

In Paraguay, between 26-54% of girls in the study said that adolescent girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ decide to get pregnant. A majority of girls become pregnant by the age of 16 or 17, and few girls know methods of how to prevent pregnancy.

“We do not know how to avoid pregnancy. Nobody speaks to us of that.”

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

“Pregnant girls need help and encouragement in order to continue studying.”

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

In Nicaragua, 35-42% of girls who participated said that girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ decide whether to become pregnant. Girls claimed that men often leave pregnant girls without helping them. Some Nicaraguan adolescent girls decide to abort the pregnancy, while others become single mothers. Girls also emphasised that many become pregnant by rape.

“There are girls who are forced to marry because they are pregnant. They get married with the pregnancy, but they do not want it. Many are pregnant by rape. They did not choose to become pregnant.” Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua

Safety

On average, many girls Plan spoke with in Ecuador, Nicaragua and Paraguay claimed that girls often feel **safe** in their communities, however the findings vary considerably. For instance in Paraguay, 75% of girls Plan spoke with in one area (PU Guaira selected communities) said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' feel safe in their communities, while only 35% of girls in another area (PU Caaguazú selected communities) felt that girls 'always' or 'often' feel safe. In Paraguay (PU Guaira), girls said that family members often accompany them when walking in the community and therefore they feel safer, and parents advise girls to only speak with people they know outside of the home and not with strangers. In PU Caaguazú, adolescent girls feel safer in their homes and at school than in the community or walking in the streets, and they referred to ongoing violence in the community that makes them feel unsafe.

The range of responses also varied in Ecuador – 58% of girls in one area (PU Cotopaxi selected communities) said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' feel safe.

“With respect to safety, the majority of girls often feel safe in the community. In rare occasions, they feel threatened by the presence of drunk men, or when there are parties where young men fight.”

Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

In contrast, 80% of adolescent girls in another area of Ecuador (PU Ventanas) claimed that girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel safe. Adolescent girls linked safety to feeling valued and speaking up: girls' sense that they cannot speak up about their needs safely. They feel that their concerns about safety do not matter and they seldom feel valued in their community.

Girls' perceptions of a lack of **safety** at home and in the community indicate that both fear and incidences of violence against girls, including sexual and gender-based violence, present major barriers to all aspects of girls' empowerment and development in Ecuador, Nicaragua and Paraguay.

“At night, I do not feel safe. I don't feel safe in school either, as the boys don't respect us. A girl, my cousin, was raped in daytime in the park. Another cousin also was raped. Girls cannot go out, only in short moments, even in the day, and should go accompanied.”

Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua

“The majority of girls never feel safe since they are afraid that something will happen to them, such as violence, assaults, and rapes. There have been cases of girls who have gotten raped by the fathers, brothers, uncles, and cousins. Additionally, the rapists threaten the victim to kill their family if she is to tell anyone.”

Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

“There are neighbourhoods that are dangerous, and there are gangs. Also in the house, girls do not feel safe. [...] There are stepfathers abusing stepdaughters and mothers do not believe them. Girls feel confused.”

Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua

The findings from Ecuador, Nicaragua and Paraguay reinforce the study key finding that indeed violence against adolescent girls is frighteningly entrenched – girls expect to be victims of violence, and the levels of violence that they experience are seen as normal. Girls who participated in the study from these countries seldom feel free from violence at home, in communities, and at school. For instance, 80% of girls in one area in Ecuador claimed that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel safe in their community. Adolescent girls experience violence in many forms, including sexual harassment, rape, sexual and economic exploitation and abuse, forced marriage through blackmailing, and silencing girls through intimidation.

“I just feel safe with my family, because no one else cares for us. Rape and kidnapping cases are a given.”

Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua

These findings reinforce those of previous studies on the types and scope of violence against women. The evidence provided through the study should send a sobering message that further action must be taken to eliminate all types of violence against adolescent girls.

Household work

Girls in participating communities rated **household work** as being one of the lowest dimensions of girls' empowerment. Girls interviewed in Ecuador, Nicaragua and Paraguay (from four out of six PUs) felt least empowered about household work and said that girls and boys rarely share household work equally. This was the highest in Nicaragua whereby 42% of girls Plan spoke with said that girls and boys 'never' or 'seldom' share household work equally. In Paraguay, 35-38% of girls said that girls and boys 'never' or 'seldom' share household work. In Ecuador, 47% of girls from one area (PU Ventanas) said that girls and boys 'never' or 'seldom' share household work, while only 4% of girls from another area (PU Cotopaxi) said that they don't share household work with boys.

Speaking up

Adolescent girls in these communities felt that girls had difficulty **speaking up** in front of men and boys, however the responses vary considerably both within and between countries. For instance, in Ecuador, 93% of participants in one programme area (PU Ventanas) said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' say what they think when a boy is around, while 34% of girls from another programme area (PU Cotopaxi) said that girls 'never' or 'seldom' speak up. In Nicaragua, between 36-71% of girls Plan spoke with said that girls 'never' or 'seldom' speak up in front of males, and in Paraguay between 37-50% of girls said they 'never' or 'seldom' speak up in front of males.

“Trust in relation to men is very little because of fear of being judged or battered. If something bad happens to me, I will not tell my dad because it can enrage him.” Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua

“In my house I keep quiet just because I do not want to create problems or ask for anything.”

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

“My mom does not want us to tell problems to dad as he doesn't want problems.”

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

3.4.2. West Africa

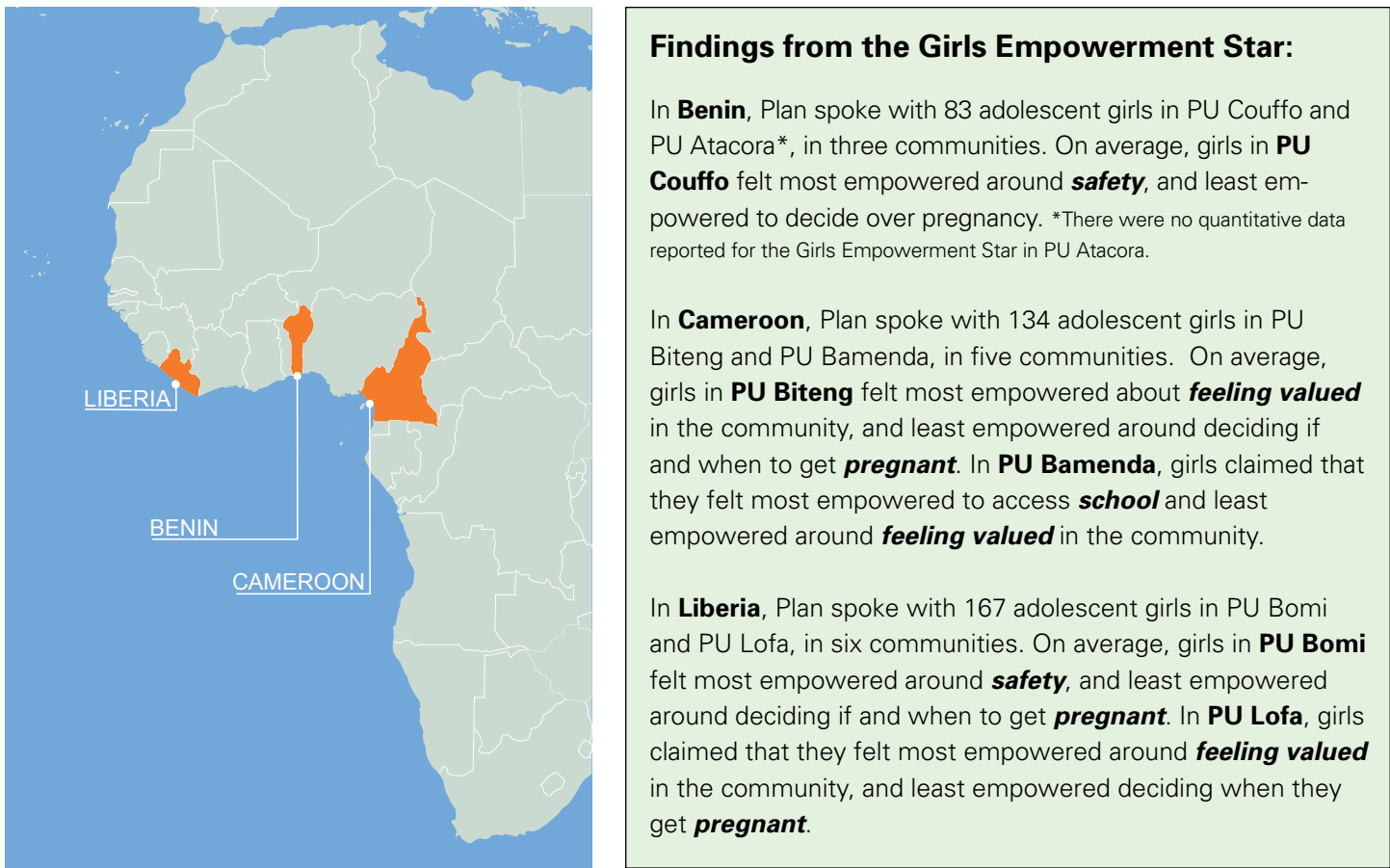
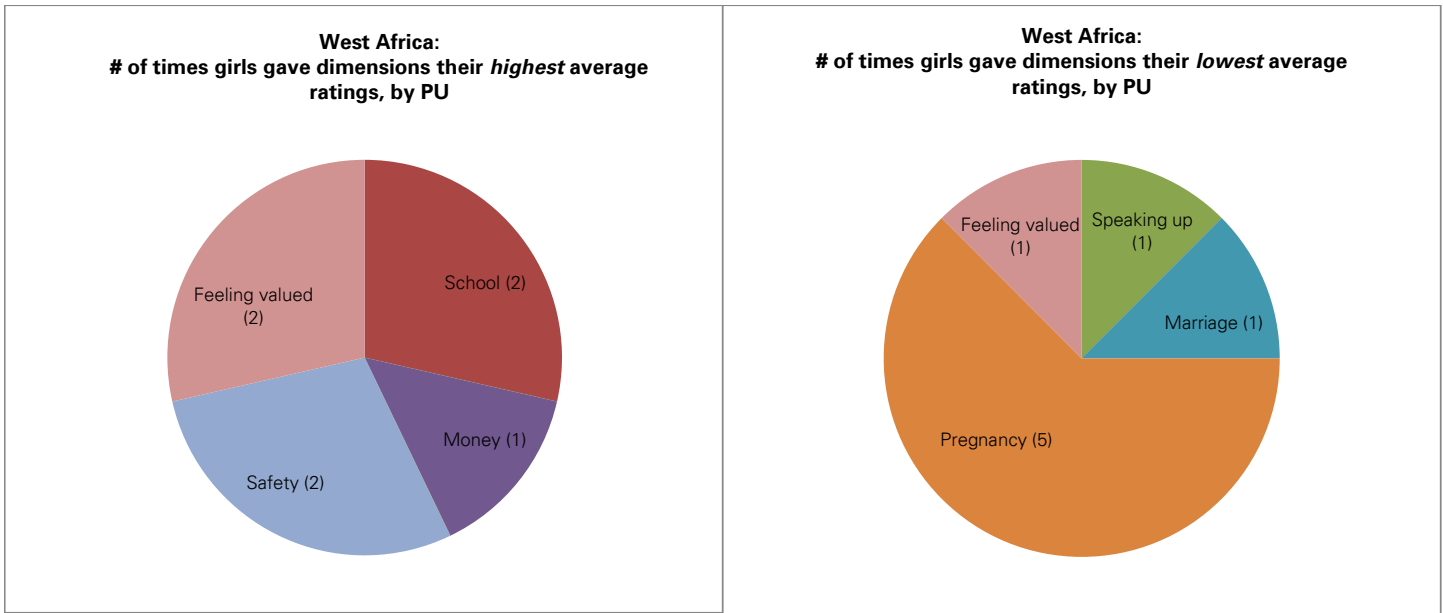


Figure 7: Girls Empowerment Star: Frequencies of highest and lowest average rated dimensions of girls’ empowerment by PU in West Africa



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected communities. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, and three countries in West Africa. Frequencies derive from data from three selected communities per PU and may not be representative of adolescent girls in all communities in all PUs in Benin, Cameroon or Liberia. Note: no data were reported for one PU in Benin.

Feeling valued

Girls involved in the study in West Africa said that adolescent girls felt empowered as well as least empowered around **feeling valued** in their community. For instance, in Benin over half (55%) of the girls Plan spoke with said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel valued. On the other hand, 57-64% of girls who participated in the study in Liberia said that the concerns of adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' matter in the community. Girls often feel valued and supported by their parents.

“[Girls] feel valued because their parents speak on their behalf when there are problems.”

Adolescent Girl, Liberia

In Cameroon, the responses from adolescent girls varied. For instance, in one area in Cameroon (PU Biteng), 50% of girls Plan spoke with said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' feel valued in their community, while 47% of girls in another area (PU Bamenda) said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel valued in the community.

“The girls are like servants of boys and men. Their issues don't really matter.”

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

Some girls in Cameroon claimed that adolescent girls were only appreciated when they conformed to and performed traditional gender roles and responsibilities.

Safety

Girls involved in the study felt relatively more empowered around **safety**, especially in Benin and Liberia. In Benin, 59% of girls involved in the study said girls 'always' or 'often' feel safe in their community (although 33% said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel safe). In focus group discussions, adolescent girls commonly associated an increase in a sense of safety to a recent decrease in kidnappings in these communities around the time Plan implemented the Girls Empowerment Star.

In Liberia, between 48-57% of girls Plan spoke with in nine communities said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' feel safe in the community. Many of the girls said that 'we are safe in our community. There is no one chasing after us'. This common theme may be understood as a relative view in light of Liberia as a post-conflict context following the civil wars of 1989-1996 and 1999-2003. Girls interviewed provided no comments to illustrate current issues that leave some feeling less safe than others. Simply, many girls opted not to disclose specific safety concerns. This finding could also suggest a link between speaking up and expressing concerns about safety. For instance, 41-48% of girls Plan spoke with in Liberia said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' say what they think in front of a man or boy. Girls' relative quiet in sharing examples of feeling unsafe may be related to lingering social, economic and political aftermath of Liberia's recent wars. Many adolescent girls interviewed were born during the second civil war may still feel that it is not safe to speak up about their needs for safety or that their concerns do not matter in the post-conflict period.

Pregnancy

One of the major issues for adolescent girls living in study communities is **pregnancy**. In West Africa, girls interviewed from all five participating PUs reported a lack of decision-making over pregnancy as a top pressing concern and major constraint to girls' empowerment. In one programme area in Cameroon (PU Biteng), 77% of girls whom Plan spoke with claimed that they 'never' are the ones to decide if they get pregnant. Girls are not educated about safe sex and how to prevent pregnancy. Some girls start having sex at a young age or their parents force them into early marriage. Sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation and abuse are all drivers of early pregnancy for many girls in Cameroon.

“Girls seldom decide whether or when to get pregnant because sometimes their parents push them to ask for money from boys and boys never give money for nothing.”

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

“Many boys refuse to use condoms or remove the condom during sex.” Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

“Some girls are victims of rape.” Girl, Cameroon

“Some parents use their girl children to settle debts thereby forcing them to get married to people they don’t love.” Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

In Benin, 71% of girls involved in the study said that adolescent girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ decide if they get pregnant. Adolescent girls felt that decisions about pregnancy were often made by men as it is men who hold the power to decide over pregnancy. Girls involved in the study in Benin were also largely unaware of contraceptive methods and sexual and reproductive health information. Of the girls who were aware of prevention methods such as condoms, they lacked the money to purchase them. In Benin, it was also revealed that girls who are more educated and who have educated parents sometimes exercise greater decision-making power over pregnancy than their less educated peers.

“Often, it is the husband that decides—girls rarely have the option to decide if they want to become pregnant. There are some isolated cases—very often among educated individuals—where a husband support his wife’s choice.” Adolescent Girl, Benin

In Liberia, 78-79% of girls involved in the study claimed that adolescent girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ decide if and when to get pregnant. Many participants claimed that adolescent girls have no say over pregnancy and many girls are not familiar with contraceptive methods. Many parents force girls into marriage early to avoid stigma or early pregnancy, and some parents reportedly encourage daughters to pursue gifts and money from boys and men, for which girls are expected to provide sex in exchange.

“We get pregnant because we are not protected.” Adolescent Girl, Liberia

“[...] we are not taking prevention and we drop out of school when we get pregnant.” Adolescent Girl, Liberia

“Because some of us are poor, we look for our daily needs to make it, and in the process get pregnant.” Adolescent Girl, Liberia

Early pregnancy is a major factor for early and forced **marriage** and school dropout in these communities as parents are concerned with avoiding social stigma while also coping with poverty. Sexual and gender-based violence, and economic exploitation and abuse often factor in to girls’ lack of **safety**, early pregnancy, and ultimately school dropout.

3.4.3. Eastern and Southern Africa



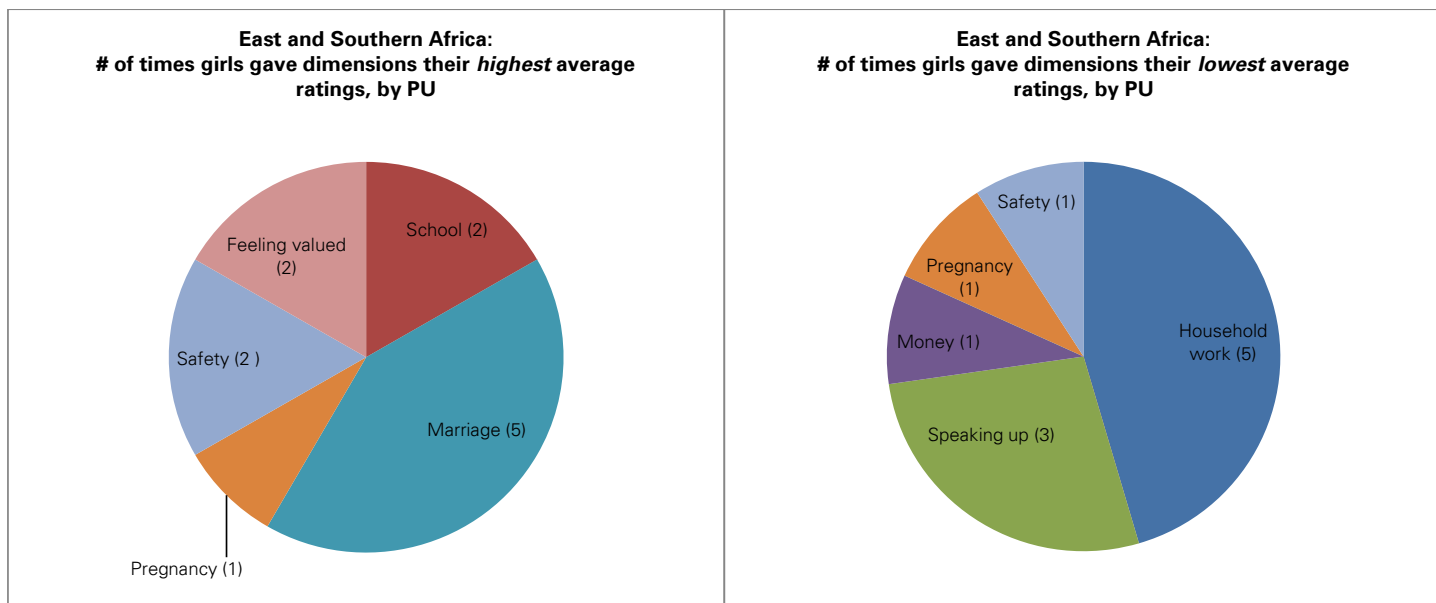
Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Egypt**, Plan spoke with 167 adolescent girls in PU Qalubia and PU Assiut, in three communities. On average, girls in **PU Qalubia** felt most empowered around dimensions of **marriage** and **pregnancy**, and least empowered about **household work** and **speaking up** in front of men and boys. In PU Assiut, girls claimed that they felt most empowered to access at least nine years of **school** and to decide when they **marry**, and least empowered around aspects of **household work**.

In **Uganda**, Plan spoke with 192 adolescent girls in PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North, in six communities. On average, girls in **PU Kamuli** felt most empowered around **marriage**, and least empowered around aspects of **money**. In **PU Tororo North**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered around dimensions of **marriage**, **safety**, and **feeling valued**, and least empowered about **household work**.

In **Zimbabwe**, Plan spoke with 192 adolescent girls in PU Chiredzi and PU Chipinge, in six communities. On average, girls in **PU Chiredzi** felt most empowered about their **safety** in the community, and least empowered around **pregnancy**. In **PU Chipinge**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered deciding when to **marry**, and least empowered around deciding if and when to get **pregnant**.

Figure 8: Girls Empowerment Star: Frequencies of highest and lowest average rated dimensions of girls' empowerment by PU in East and Southern Africa*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected communities. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, and three countries in East and Southern Africa. Frequencies derive from data from three selected communities per PU and may not be representative of all communities in PUs in Egypt, Uganda or Zimbabwe. data were reported for one PU in Benin.

Marriage

Many adolescent girls Plan spoke with in Uganda, Zimbabwe, and Egypt said that girls felt empowered to decide when to **marry**. This was most prevalent in Egypt (PU Qalubia) where 87% of adolescent girls involved in the study claimed girls 'always' decide when to marry. However, the qualitative data reflects the varied understanding of child marriage and the key influencing factors behind girls' perceptions.

Although some girls in Uganda and Zimbabwe reported higher rates of empowerment around deciding over marriage, there was a considerable variability in responses. For instance, in Uganda between 29-42% of girls claimed that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' decided if they marry, however in one programme area (PU Tororo North) 48% of girls claimed that girls 'never' or 'seldom' decide about marriage. In Zimbabwe, between 32-48% of girls said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' decide if they marry, however in one programme area (PU Chiredzi) half of the girls involved said that girls 'never' or 'seldom' decide if they marriage.

Some girls felt supported by their families to control if and when to marry, and mothers who were forced into early marriage often did not want the same fate for their daughters:

"Parents don't want what happened to them to happen with their girls." Adolescent Girl, Egypt

Other girls, however, revealed they have challenges deciding over marriage and parents more often have a say in who their daughters marry. The data revealed that gender-based violence is a key driver for early marriage.

"A lot of girls here are marrying at their tender age, some as early as 13." Adolescent Girl, Zimbabwe

"Apart from the capacity to decide, girls are often victims of sexual assaults, rapes and early marriage in their communities. Girls are raped and are forced to marry at a very young age and get pregnant." Adolescent Girl, Zimbabwe

Household work

In East and Southern Africa, 56% of girls involved in the study reported 'never' or 'seldom' sharing **household work** equally with boys.

"We are burdened with all household tasks. After marriage, we work even more."

Adolescent Girl, Egypt

In these communities, girls from five out of six participating PUs reported household work as one of the lowest dimensions of empowerment for adolescent girls. In one community in Uganda, 97% of girls Plan spoke with claimed that girls 'never', 'seldom', or 'sometimes' share household work equally with boys.

"We are only safe when at school because we are abused and overburdened with chores whilst at home."

Adolescent Girl, Zimbabwe

Heavy household work and sexual harassment often keeps adolescent girls from going to school.

"I work at home first to please my mother and then I do my homework. The boy in our house does his homework and I do the household chores."

Adolescent Girl, Egypt

Safety

Some girls involved in the study felt more empowered around **safety** while others felt less empowered. For instance, over half of all girls Plan spoke with in some programme areas in Zimbabwe and Egypt claimed that girls 'always' or 'often' feel safe in their community: 59% of girls said that girls always or often feel safe in one programme area in Egypt (PU Qalubia), and 54% of girls in one area in Zimbabwe (PU Chiredzi) said that girls 'always' or 'often' feel safe.

On the other hand, some girls expressed concerns about feeling unsafe in their homes and communities; some reported levels of sexual harassment, abuse, and violence. In one programme area in Egypt (PU Assiut), only 28% said that girls 'always' or 'often' feel safe, and only 35% of girls in Uganda (PU Tororo North) said that girls 'always' or 'often' felt safe.

“At home, we are sometimes sexually harassed by our relatives whom we can never report as they will be our guardians.”

Adolescent Girl, Zimbabwe

“I am scared to go outside home after sunset because there is no security now to protect the girl.”

Adolescent Girl, Egypt

In Zimbabwe, the focus group discussions with adolescent girls revealed opposing views and results. For instance, some girls claimed that adolescent girls are not safe in the community as there are kidnappings, sexual assaults, rapes, and physical and emotional abuse. Girls' perceptions of safety also differ between school and home. Adolescent girls reported feeling safe at school but not at home due to kidnappers, boys who bully, and parents who force them to marry when they are still young. Adolescent girls reported feeling safer at school where they are protected from sexual abuse and have fewer chores. Girls are also free at school from guardians' verbal and physical abuses.

Speaking up

Adolescent girls also revealed limitations in being able to **speak up** and express their concerns. Over half (57%) of girls involved in the study in East and Southern Africa said they 'never' or 'seldom' say what they think when a boy is around. In Uganda, nearly three-quarters of the girls Plan spoke with said that girls 'never' or 'seldom' say what they think when a man or boy is around.

“I can't talk in front of men or in front of anyone, even in front of my siblings. I feel that I will be embarrassed by anything I say, so I don't speak at all.”

Adolescent Girl, Egypt

While some girls said that their fathers support their education, others reported not being able to ask their fathers for money for school fees due to social constraining girls have in speaking up in front of adult men.

3.4.4. Asia

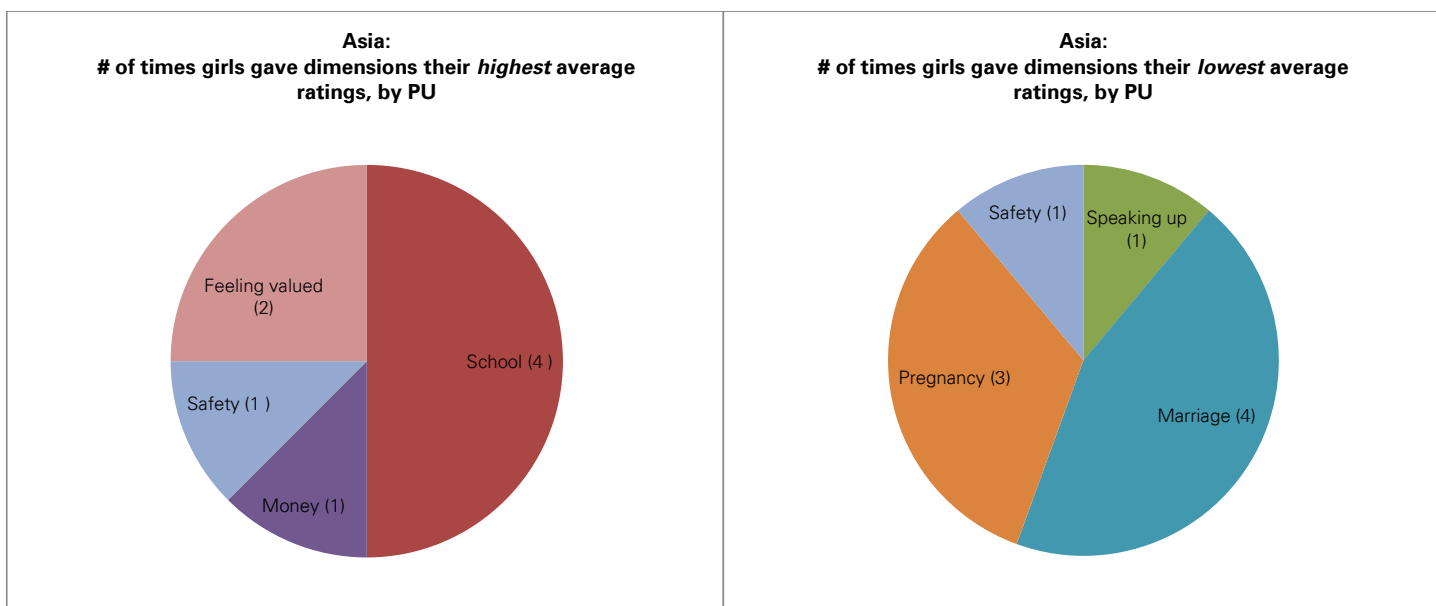


Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Bangladesh**, Plan spoke with 165 adolescent girls in PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari, in six communities. On average, girls in **PU Barguna** felt most empowered in accessing nine years of **school**, and least empowered in **feeling safe** in their community. In **PU Nilphamari**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered around **school** and **feeling valued**, and least empowered around **household work** and deciding when to **marry**.

In **Pakistan**, Plan spoke with 176 adolescent girls in PU Thatta and PU Vehari, in six communities. On average, girls in **PU Thatta** felt most empowered around the dimensions of **school**, **safety**, and **feeling valued**, and least empowered around aspects of **marriage**, **pregnancy**, and **speaking up**. In **PU Vehari**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered completing **school**, and least empowered deciding if and when to **marry**.

Figure 9: Girls Empowerment Star: Frequencies of highest and lowest average rated dimensions of girls' empowerment by PU in Asia*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected communities. The maximum number of PUs per region in the study is six, with two PUs per country, and two countries in Asia. Frequencies derive therefore from data from three selected communities in two each of two PUs in Asia and may not be representative of all communities in PUs in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

School

Half of all girls that Plan spoke with in Bangladesh and Pakistan said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' complete at least nine years of **school**. In Bangladesh, adolescent girls explained that many more girls are now going to school because of scholarships and free books from the government, and that there are now more girls than boys in school. Adolescent girls said that more parents are aware of the value of girl's education as a result of these government programmes.

"The government is now giving free books and scholarships, so girls want to be educated. No girls want to be unemployed and stay at home."

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

Adolescent girls involved in the study in these communities revealed that parents are supportive of girls' education and see education as a path to respect and status within society. Girls in Pakistan shared the view that literacy and education for girls are expected to make an entire family more literate.

"Parents want to educate their child and establish them in society. If girls are educated, society people respect them."

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

"My father loves me a lot, so he encourages me. Teachers don't do this."

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

"Education is important as it empowers a girl to become economically independent and break the cycle of poverty. It also improves women's status in the community as they will be having control over economic resources."

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

Still, girls' education is less valued in poorer households and some girls are forced to drop out of school due to poverty or early marriage. Girls from poorer households are sometimes married off by their parents at early ages and unable to continue their schooling.

"Not all girls go to school. What is the benefit of high education for poor people? Parents marry them off at an early age."

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

The findings from Bangladesh and Pakistan also reveal that weak state education systems, security issues, poverty, sexual harassment, early pregnancy, and early marriage prevent many girls from going to secondary school within these communities.

Marriage

Adolescent girls involved in the study in Asia claimed that adolescent girls did not feel empowered around deciding if they **marry**. In Bangladesh and Pakistan, girls from all PU communities said that marriage is the lowest aspect of adolescent girls' empowerment. In Pakistan, 71-86% of all girls involved in the study said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' decide if they marry. In Bangladesh, 54-61% of girls who Plan spoke with said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' decide if they marry. Parents arrange girls' marriages and adolescent girls rarely have a say in the matter. Some parents believe that girls are not able to make the right decisions regarding marriage. Many girls' mothers and sisters have also experienced early and forced marriage making it more commonplace to arrange marriages for their daughters. Girls said parents see themselves as more experienced and better decision-makers, especially fathers who girls said see themselves as knowing better than women and girls. Some parents think that if a girl does not want to marry, then she must be having an affair.

"Our marriages are arranged with the choice of our parents."

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

"Parents think it is a very important decision of life. Girls can't make right decisions regarding marriage."

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

"Girls cannot talk to their parents about their liking or disliking regarding marriage. Otherwise, the parents get angry and say, 'you have to accept our decision; we are not going to listen to whatever you say.'"

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

Some adolescent girls referred to laws or policies in their country that can protect them from being forced into marriage. In Bangladesh's PU Nilphamari, adolescent girls referred to a law against marriage before the age of 18 and they hope that early marriage will end as a practice. Other girls in Bangladesh's PU Barguna said that there is a law against child marriage in their community, however it is not being implemented properly. Some girls in Pakistan said that early marriage is being practiced less often since NGO activities have been raising awareness on the issue in the area (PU Thatta).

Early marriage is also linked to school dropout. In some cases, husbands, parents, or in-laws refuse to allow married adolescent girls to continue school, and in other cases schools do not permit married or pregnant girls to attend class.

“The in-laws do not allow them to come to school as they mean there is no use of education after getting married.”

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

“They never have a single example for married girls who come to school after having a baby.”

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

Pregnancy

Adolescent girls involved in the study in Asia felt that girls were least empowered around **pregnancy**. Pregnancy is linked with early marriage, and both pregnancy and marriage directly affects girls' ability to continue school and to be safe and healthy. In Pakistan, 50-74% of girls Plan spoke with said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' decide if they get pregnant.

“Girls do not have decision-making power over pregnancy. The male says to them ‘you are machines to birth children’.”

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

The findings from Bangladesh varied considerably within and between programme areas. This may be due to differences in ethnic backgrounds and religious belief systems, as well as varying levels of exposure to Plan and other NGO project activities. For instance, in one programme area (PU Barguna), 65% of girls Plan spoke with said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' decide if they get pregnant.

“Husbands oppress females into compulsory conception, and sometimes mother and father-in-laws also. Girls do not know which age is perfect for conception. Mainly, males take decisions about pregnancy.”

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

On the other hand, 29% of girls involved in another programme area in Bangladesh (PU Nilphamari) said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' decide if they get pregnant, while 41% said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' decide if to get pregnant. In PU Nilphamari, there might be a link between early pregnancy, feeling valued, and speaking up. For example, 41% of girls Plan spoke with in this programme area said that adolescent girls' concerns were 'always' or 'often' valued in the community, and 38% of girls said adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' speak up and say what they think in front of men and boys.

Feeling valued

Girls Plan spoke with in these communities of Bangladesh and Pakistan felt that adolescent girls are often **valued** by their community, although the data reveals complexities and large variability between and within countries. For instance, in Bangladesh, 26-59% of girls involved in the study said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' felt valued, and 23-41% said that adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' valued in their community. In Pakistan, 38-39% of girls Plan spoke with said adolescent girls' concerns 'never' or 'seldom' matter, while 35-45% said adolescent girls' concerns 'always' or 'often' matter.

“Our parents give respect to us, they honor us, because in our communities, girls are signs of honor.”

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

“Do women have intelligence? What is the use of showing them respect; they are good for nothing.”

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

However, some girls reported feeling valued for their conformity to traditional gender roles and responsibilities, and fulfilling the expectations of husbands, in-laws and parents around bearing children.

Section 4: Results

School Equality Scorecard²¹

4.1. Overview

The findings from the School Equality Scorecard reveal the stark reality from adolescent girls and boys – in their own words. Girls’ and boys’ highest average ratings for the School Equality Scorecard most often were in the middle of the road: ‘often’, ‘sometimes’, or ‘seldom’. Girls and boys have told Plan that there is much more progress to be made on gender equality at school—from their perspectives.

The School Equality Scorecard generated powerful results from each of the participating four regions, 10 countries, 20 PUs, and 95 selected schools. Plan interviewed a total of 2,580 adolescent girls and 2,797 adolescent boys with this tool. In all study countries, girls and boys raised concerns and priorities across all dimensions of the tool: **sports participation, class participation, chore burden, latrines, seeking help, leadership, encouragement, safety going to school, safety at school, and early pregnancy.**

Note: In order to identify trends across regions and within countries, the highest and lowest average rated dimensions provided by girls and boys were analysed. The dimensions include the ten points of the School Equality Scorecard. For more details on how the results were calculated, please refer to section 3.8. in the methodology section. As noted in the methodology section, these findings reflect the views of the specific groups of adolescent girls and boys who participated in the study. The results are not nationally representative of all girls and boys in those countries. Further, the results may not be representative of all girls and boys in the communities and schools where Plan works in those countries.

²¹ See Appendices IV, V, and VI for distribution tables of weighted average percentages and ratings for the School Equality Scorecard for all countries.

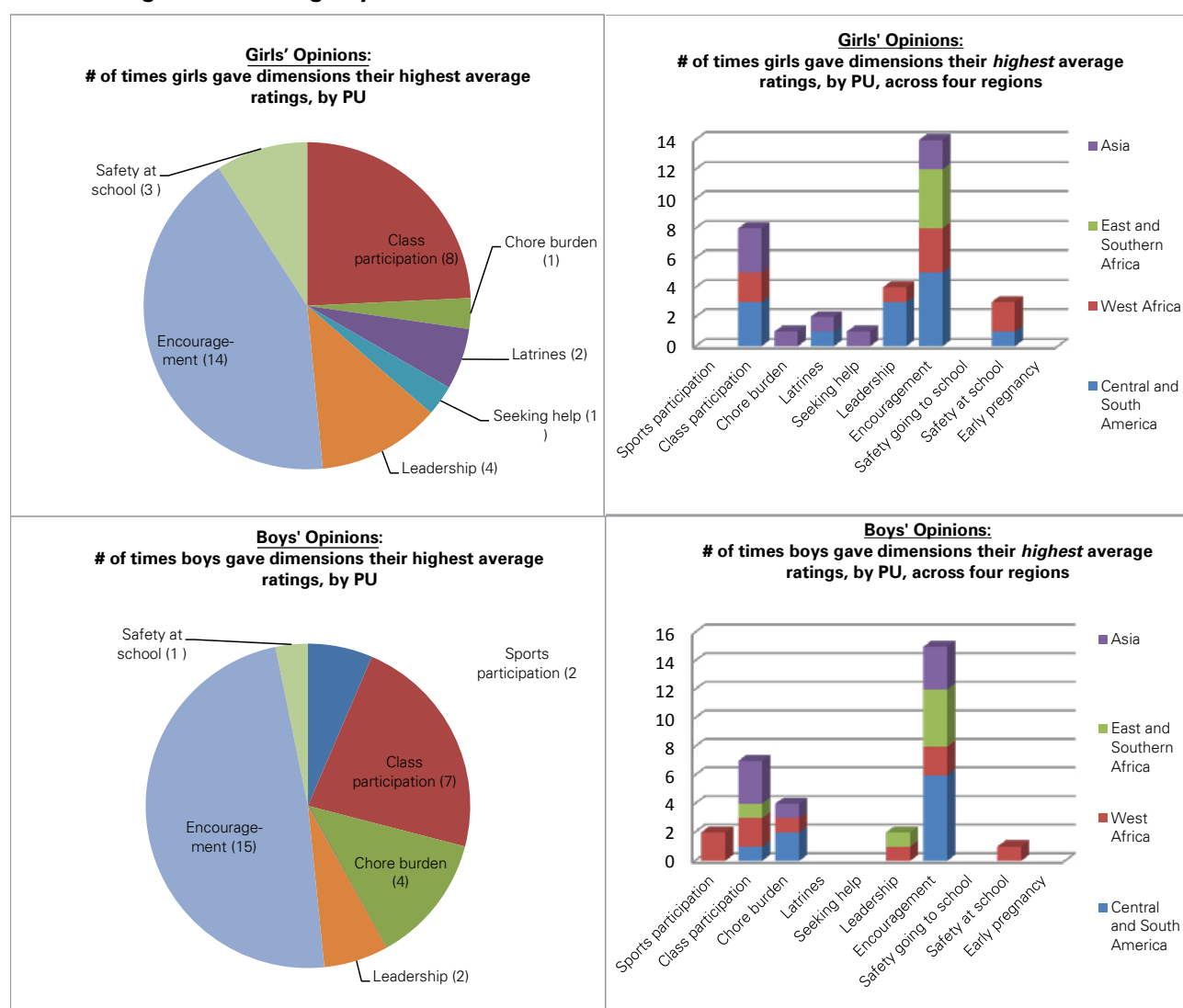
4.2. School Equality Scorecard: Global Results and Key Findings

Highest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls

Across all 10 countries, adolescent girls reported the highest average ratings on gender equality at school for the dimensions of **encouragement**, **class participation**, **leadership**, and **safety at school**. Participants expressed that in their views, adolescent girls are often encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys; participate in class as often as boys; participate as leaders of student groups as often as boys; and feel they are as relatively safe at school as boys.

Across all 10 countries, adolescent boys rated the highest on average dimensions of gender equality at school for girls as **encouragement**, **class participation**, **chore burden**, **leadership**, and **sports participation**. Boys felt that adolescent girls were encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as them; girls participated in class as often as boys; girls and boys spent an equal amount of time doing chores at school; girls participated as leaders of student groups as frequently as boys; and girls and boys participated in sports activities as often as boys (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: School Equality Scorecard: 10-country and regional frequencies of dimensions girls and boys rated the highest on average by PU*



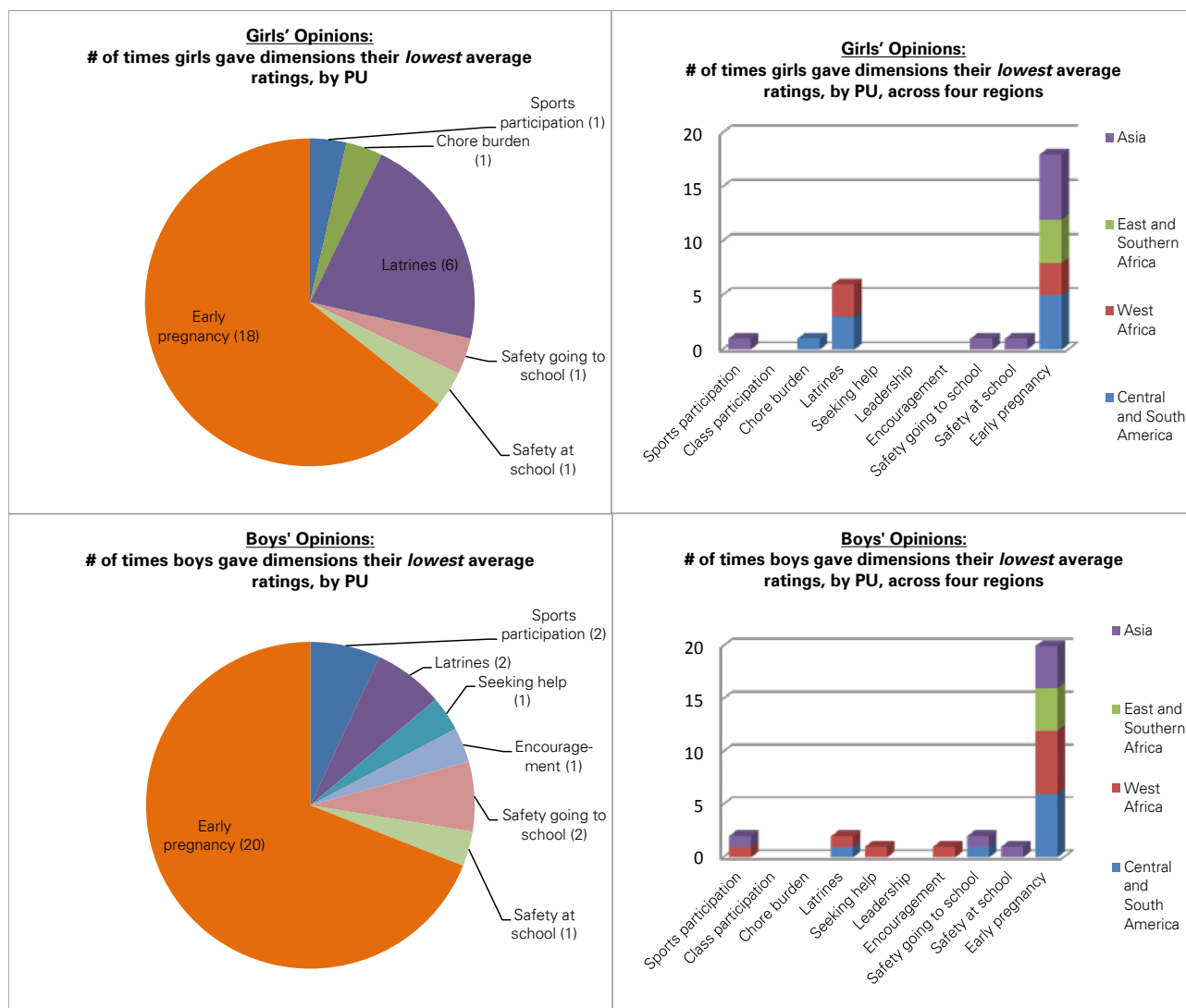
* Charts refer to data from adolescent girl and boy participants from five selected schools per PU and 20 PUs total across 10 countries and four regions. Regions include: Central and South America, West Africa, East and Southern Africa, and Asia. Countries include: Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Ecuador, Liberia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries each in Central and South America, and West Africa, and two countries in East and Southern Africa, and in Asia. Note: Egypt did not implement the School Equality Scorecard.

Lowest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls

Across all 10 countries, adolescent girls felt that the lowest dimensions of gender equality at school for girls included **early pregnancy**, **latrines**, **safety going to school**, and **safety at school**. Adolescent girls Plan spoke with claimed that girls rarely return to school after having a child; they do not feel comfortable using school latrines; they feel unsafe travelling to and from school; and they often worry about their safety at school.

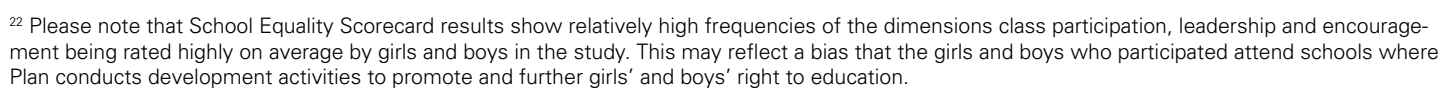
Across all 10 countries, adolescent boys also felt that the lowest dimensions of gender equality at school for girls included **early pregnancy**, **latrines**, **safety going to school**, and **sports participation**. Boys agreed that girls seldom continue their studies after having a child; that school latrines were unsafe and dirty; that girls were at risk when travelling to and from school; and felt also that girls participate less than boys in sports at school (see Figure 11).

Figure 11: School Equality Scorecard: 10-country and regional frequencies of dimensions girls and boys rated the lowest on average by PU*



* Charts refer to data from adolescent girl and boy participants from five selected schools per PU and 20 PUs total across 10 countries and four regions. Regions include: Central and South America, West Africa, East and Southern Africa, and Asia. Countries include: Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Ecuador, Liberia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries each in Central and South America, and West Africa, and two countries in East and Southern Africa, and in Asia. Note: Egypt did not implement the School Equality Scorecard. School Equality Scorecard.

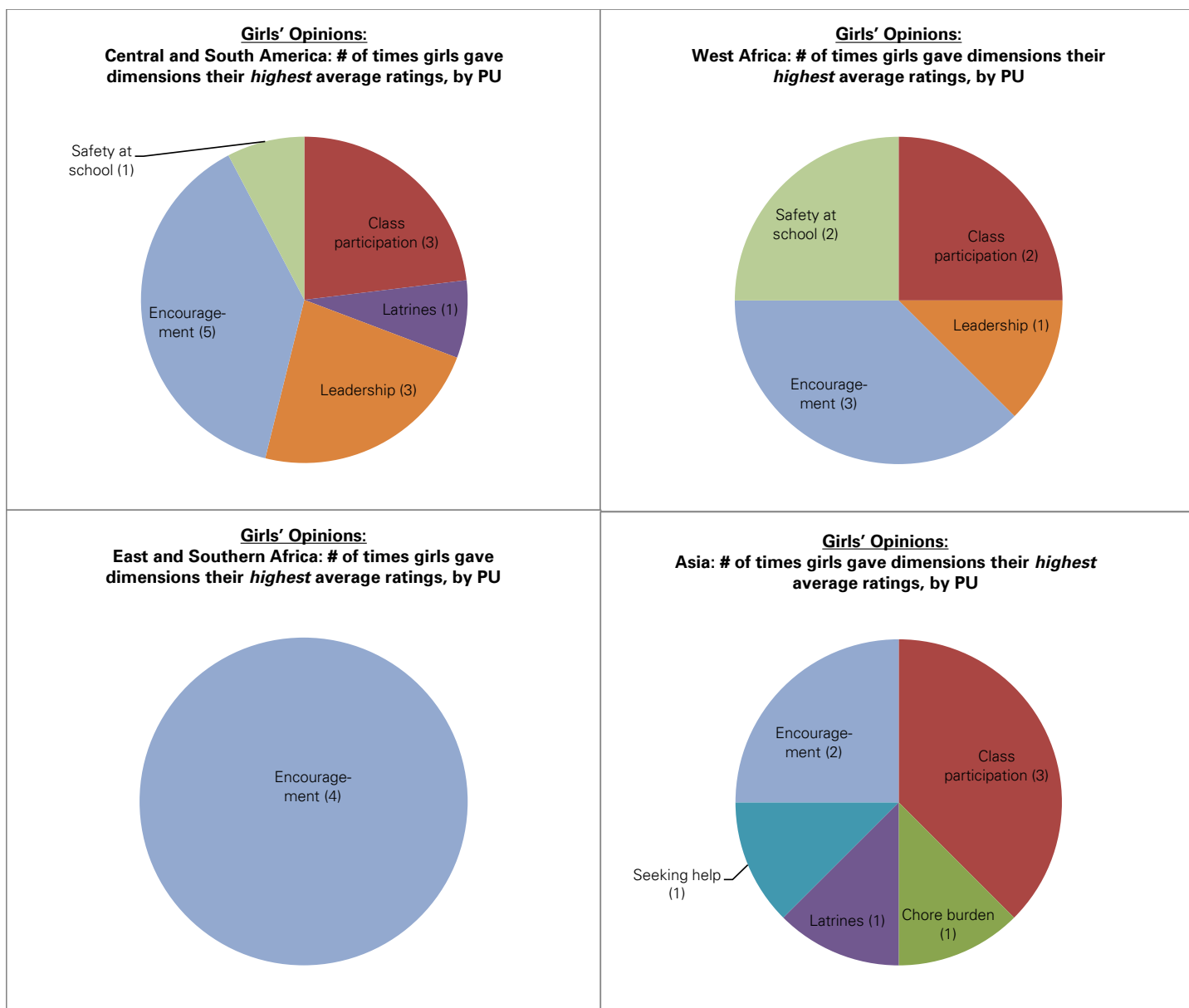
4.3.1. Highest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls Across all Regions²²



Girls' Opinions

Across the four regions, adolescent girls involved in the study outlined several areas that affect gender equality at school for girls. In **Central and South America**, adolescent girls Plan spoke with felt that **encouragement**, **class participation**, and **leadership** were the highest relative levels of gender equality at school for girls. In **West Africa**, girls involved in the study said that **encouragement**, **class participation**, and **safety at school** were the highest relative areas of gender equality at school for girls. In **East and Southern Africa**, adolescent girls most frequently rated **encouragement** as the highest relative level of school gender equality for girls. In **Asia**, girls claimed that **class participation** and **encouragement** were the highest relative areas of gender equality at school for girls.

Figure 12: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions girls rated the highest on average, by PU and by region*

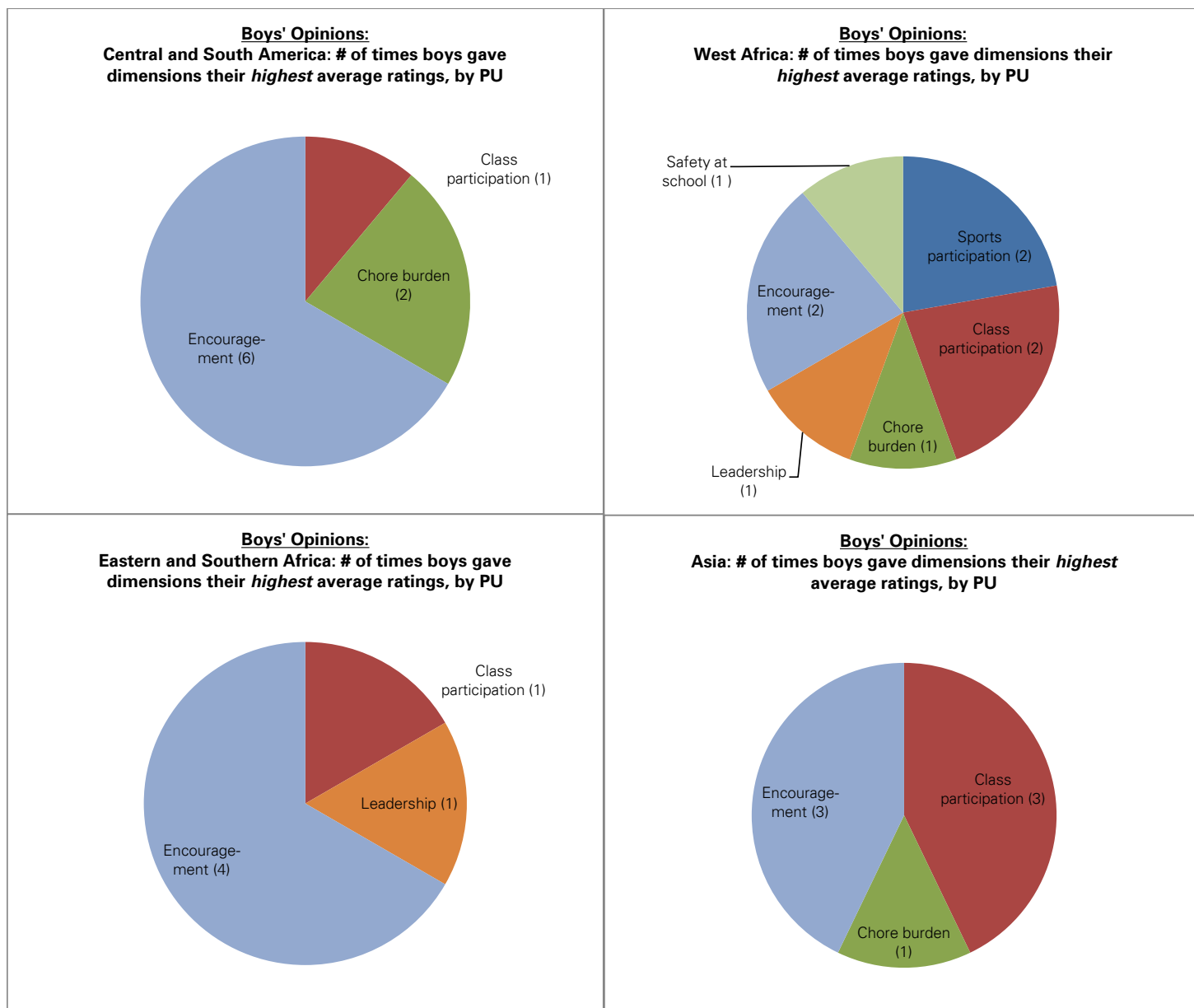


* Charts refer to data from adolescent girl and boy participants from five selected schools per PU and 20 PUs total across 10 countries and four regions. Regions include: Central and South America, West Africa, East and Southern Africa, and Asia. Countries include: Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Ecuador, Liberia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries each in Central and South America, and West Africa, and two countries in East and Southern Africa, and in Asia. Note: Egypt did not implement the School Equality Scorecard. School Equality Scorecard.

Boys' Opinions

Across the four regions, adolescent girls involved in the study outlined several areas that affect relative levels of gender equality at school for girls. In **Central and South America**, adolescent boys Plan spoke with felt that **encouragement**, **class participation**, and **chore burden** were the highest relative levels of gender equality at school for girls. In **West Africa**, boys involved in the study said that **encouragement**, **class participation**, and **sports participation** were the highest relative areas of gender equality at school for girls. In **East and Southern Africa**, adolescent girls most frequently rated **encouragement**, **class participation**, and **leadership** as the highest relative levels of gender equality at school for girls. In **Asia**, girls claimed that **class participation**, **encouragement**, and **chore burden** were the highest relative areas of gender equality at school for girls.

Figure 13: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions boys rated the highest on average, by PU and by region*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected schools from participating countries in a given region. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries each in Central and South America and West Africa, and two countries in East and Southern Africa and in Asia. Note: Egypt did not implement the School Equality Scorecard.

Across the four regions, adolescent girls and boys Plan spoke with felt most often that **encouragement** and **class participation** were the highest relative levels of school equality for girls. While the findings vary within and between regions, these two areas positively affect gender equality at school for girls and are worth exploring in more detail.

Encouragement

Across all four regions, **encouragement** was rated the highest dimension of school equality most frequently by both adolescent girls and boys. Of girls interviewed, 72% said that adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys. Similarly, 71% of adolescent boys Plan spoke with said that girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged academically as much as boys in the classroom.

This was most prevalent in East and Southern Africa, Asia, and Central and South America. In **East and Southern Africa**, 80% of girls and 78% of boys Plan spoke with said girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys – 95% of boys in one area in Zimbabwe reported that girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged equally.

“Girls are even encouraged more than boys and the teachers highlight the risks they are bound to face if they are not educated.”

Adolescent Girl, Zimbabwe

Some boys in Uganda referred to Plan's programmes and policies that promote girls' education as being a contributing factor.

“... due to Plan policies like equality ... girls are encouraged to succeed academically for future equality.”

Adolescent Boy, Uganda

In **Asia**, 77% of girls and 82% of boys reported girls 'always' or 'often' being encouraged to succeed equally as boys – in one area in Bangladesh, 94% of girls said they are 'always' or 'often' as encouraged as boys.

“Girls are as intelligent as boys.”

Adolescent Boy, Bangladesh

Girls and boys interviewed reported views that they are often supported and treated equally by teachers.

“There is no discrimination between boys and girls in [the] classroom. Teachers give equal importance to both boys and girls.”

Adolescent Boy, Bangladesh

“Teachers create opportunity equally for all. Teachers mostly do not prefer to ask questions to intelligent girls, but give preference to girls who appear [to be] slow learners.”

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

In **Central and South America**, 76% of girls and 79% of boys claimed that girls 'always' or 'often' are encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as often as boys. In one area in Paraguay, 90% of girls 'always' or 'often' felt encouraged as much as boys.

“The encouragement of teachers and students towards boys and girls is equal at school.”

Adolescent Boy, Paraguay

“With respect to encouragement [...] girls are encouraged to study; the teachers, fathers, mothers and their classmates encourage the girls to continue their studies so that they can enhance their condition and reach their goals and objectives.”

Adolescent Boy, Ecuador

The research findings in Central and South America suggest a link between encouragement and **class participation** (this was evident in Ecuador) and encouragement and **leadership** (as was found in Nicaragua). Girls who reported higher ratings on encouragement in class also tended to report higher ratings on feeling empowered to participate in class or take a leadership role in school.

Although most girls and boys reiterated common themes that they are equally encouraged to succeed academically, some adolescent girls noted that they think some male teachers listen to boys more, or take them more seriously. Some girls feel shamed or ridiculed by boys, and in some cases the teacher, if they raise their hand and give an incorrect answer. Girls reported that those from poorer households or pregnant girls receive less academic encouragement overall.

Class participation

As indicated above, the findings suggest a link between encouragement and **class participation**. Adolescent girls and boys involved in the study felt that class participation was the second highest dimension of gender equality at school for girls. 70% of girls and 69% of boys reported that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' participate in class as often as boys. This was most prevalent in communities in **Central and South America, East and Southern Africa**, and **Asia**. 78% of girls and boys involved in the study in Central and South America reported girls 'always' or 'often' participate as often as boys in class. Three-quarters of girls (76%) and boys (74%) who Plan spoke to in East and Southern Africa said that girls 'always' or 'often' participate in class as much as boys. And in Asia, 69% of girls and 82% of boys claimed that girls 'always' or 'often' participate in class as much as boys.

"We participate more in class [than boys]."

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

"Girls can participate in class freely like boys, because the teacher has treated boys and girls equally in the class. Girls also can share their problem with their female teacher."

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

On the other hand, girls involved in the study explained that societal norms in their context sometimes prohibit them from directly addressing adult males, who are often teachers (this was evident in Egypt, Bangladesh and Pakistan). This becomes an issue concerning girls seeking help at school where there is a majority of male teachers. Also, girls explained that some teachers, whether men or women, favour boys' concerns and participation where boys' behaviours appear more 'dominant' than girls'.

Chore burden at school

Over half of girls (53%) and boys (56%) involved in the study across the 11 countries reported that girls 'always' or 'often' spend the same amount of time doing **chores at school** as boys. Girls and boys revealed mixed findings pertaining to chore burden at school. On average, boys felt that this area of gender equality at school was higher for girls than girls did themselves. For instance, in **Central and South America**, 70% of boys and only 52% of girls said that girls and boys 'always' or 'often' share chore responsibilities at school equally.

"[Girls and boys] participate equally because there is a cleaning role that we do together."

Adolescent Boy, Nicaragua

"Boys do not perform nearly any cleaning tasks at school."

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

In **Asia**, over half of all girls (55%) and boys (61%) reported that they 'always' or 'often' equally share chores at school and that chore burden was a relatively high dimension of gender equality at school for girls. For instance, in one programme area in Pakistan, 84% girls and 81% of boys said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' spend the same amount of time doing chores at school as boys. One explanation is the use of a rotating schedule of chores involving boys equally as girls helping to promote gender equality in chore burden in the classroom.

"Children do participate in the cleanliness of the room regularly. There is a turn for every two students per day and almost all the students take their turn. Those who have the turn to clean the classroom environment would come earlier than the school time and would do their task."

Adolescent Boy, Pakistan

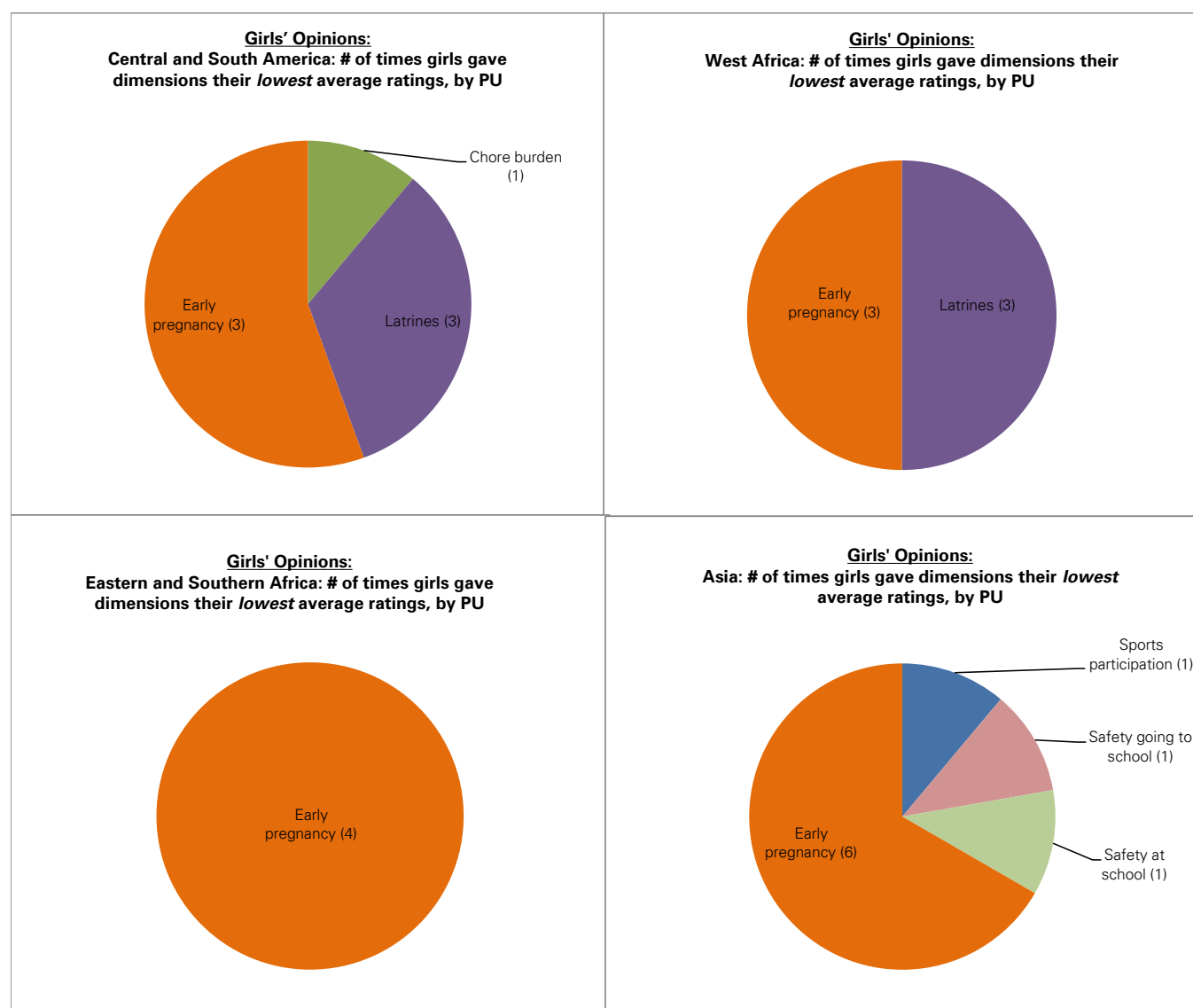
This is a unique example across the 10 countries that implemented the School Equality Scorecard and it could be considered as a model practice to replicate in other schools and countries.

4.3.2. Lowest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls Across all Regions

Girls' Opinions

Across the four regions, adolescent girls involved in the study outlined several dimensions that affect gender equality at school for girls. In **Central and South America**, adolescent girls Plan spoke with felt that **early pregnancy**, **latrines**, and **chore burden** were the lowest relative levels of gender equality at school for girls. In **West Africa**, girls involved in the study said that **early pregnancy** and **latrines** were the lowest relative areas of gender equality at school for girls. In **East and Southern Africa**, adolescent girls most frequently rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest relative levels of gender equality at school for girls. In **Asia**, girls claimed that **early pregnancy**, **safety at school**, **safety going to school**, and **sports participation** were the lowest relative areas of gender equality at school for girls.

Figure 14: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions girls rated the lowest on average, by PU and by region*

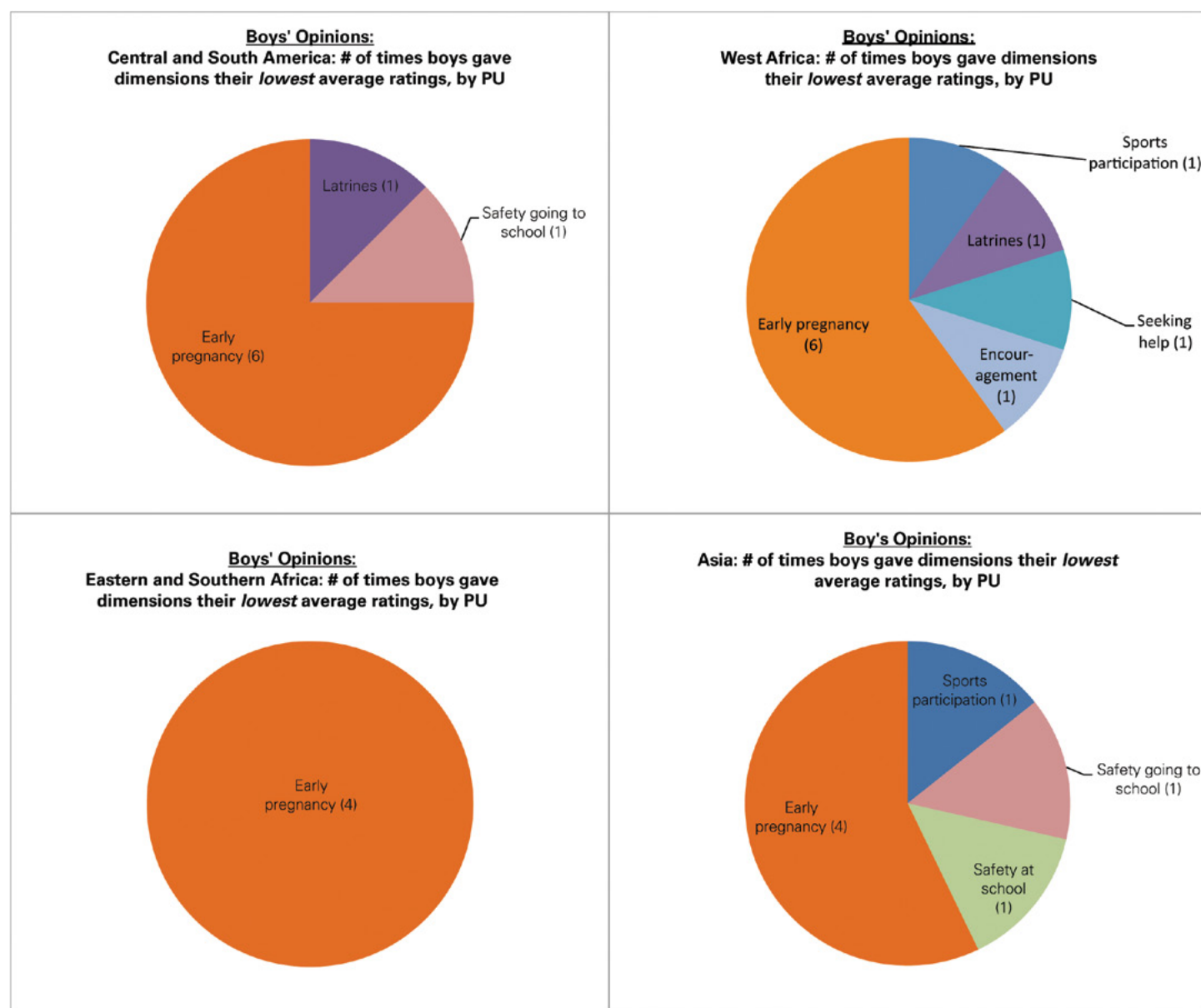


* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected schools from participating countries in a given region. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries each in Central and South America and West Africa, and two countries in East and Southern Africa and in Asia. Note: Egypt did not implement the School Equality Scorecard.

Boys' Opinions

Across the four regions, adolescent girls involved in the study outlined several areas that affect gender equality at school for girls. In **Central and South America**, adolescent boys Plan spoke with felt that **early pregnancy, latrines,** and **safety going to school** were the lowest relative levels of gender equality at school for girls. In **West Africa**, boys involved in the study said that **early pregnancy, sports participation, latrines, seeking help,** and **encouragement** were the lowest relative areas of gender equality at school for girls. In **East and Southern Africa**, adolescent boys most frequently rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest relative levels of gender equality at school for girls. In **Asia**, boys claimed that **early pregnancy, safety at school, safety going to school,** and **sports participation** were the lowest relative areas of gender equality at school for girls.

Figure 15: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions boys rated the lowest on average, by PU and by region*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from countries in a given region. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries each in Central and South America and West Africa, and two countries in East and Southern Africa and in Asia. Note: Egypt did not implement the School Equality Scorecard.

Across the four regions, adolescent girls and boys Plan spoke with felt that early pregnancy, school latrines, and safety in and around school were the lowest relative levels of school equality for girls. While the findings vary within and between regions, these areas negatively affect school equality for girls and are worth exploring in more detail.

Early pregnancy

In the study, **early pregnancy** was also a large contributing factor to girls dropping out of school. Adolescent girls and boys interviewed across all four regions felt that early pregnancy was the lowest dimension of gender equality at school for girls. 58% of girls and 61% of boys Plan spoke with reported that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' continue to attend school after having a baby. This was most prevalent in Asia where 84% of girls and 82% of boys reported that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' return to school after having a baby. In selected schools of one programme area in Pakistan, 94% of participants said that adolescent girls 'never' return to school after becoming a mother.

"Pregnant girls hardly come to school. It happens rarely, at the time of exams. There are some who came once in a month to ask about the course of subject, but there is no one who came regularly after being pregnant."

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

"[We've] never had a single example for married girls who come to school after having a baby."

Adolescent Boy, Pakistan

In **West Africa**, over half of all girls (56%) and boys (55%) involved in the study said that girls 'never' or 'seldom' return to school after having a baby, yet boys claimed they are often able to return after having a baby.

"We have [the] chance to go to school when we have baby, but not girls."

Adolescent Boy, Liberia

In **Central and South America**, half of girls (50%) and boys (56%) said girls 'never' or 'seldom' return to school, while in East and Southern Africa, nearly half of girls (46%) and over half of boys (58%) reported that girls 'never' or 'seldom' return to school after having a baby.

"Girls who become pregnant in the community are not attending classes after having their babies because they have to work and care for their children."

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

"If the school authority discovers that one is pregnant, she is expelled from school."

Adolescent Girl, Zimbabwe

"How nice it would be for women to have a child when they are prepared."

Adolescent Boy, Paraguay

Early pregnancy in many contexts precedes early marriage. In some contexts, early marriage and early pregnancy are viewed as 'compulsory' for girls. Social stigma and unofficial school rules against pregnant girls or young mothers attending classes keep many from continuing their education. Schools do not provide alternate pathways to young mothers for completing their secondary education, or childcare facilities on-site, which would address the issue of a lack of childcare as a reason why many young mothers do not return to school. Further, girls explained that sometimes early pregnancy leading to school dropout is a consequence of sexual exploitation of girls and rape on the way to or from school, and around school latrines.

School latrines

Many adolescent girls involved in the study reported they only sometimes have access to safe, single-sex, clean sanitation facilities at school. Teachers and students often share the same **latrines**, and girls claimed that, for them, school latrines are often health hazards and crime zones. Over a third (38%) of girls Plan spoke with reported that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel comfortable using latrines at school. This was most prevalent in **West Africa** and **Central and South America**, yet there was significant variability across all regions and schools in the study. Boys' responses suggested slightly different views, with more positive views with 31% saying that they think adolescent girls 'never' (19%) or 'seldom' (12%) have a latrine at school they feel comfortable using.

"We do not go to the bathroom when the boys spy by putting a cell phone in a shoe and take video and see everything. They also lift our skirts when we walk by."

Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua

“The toilets are away from the classrooms and have become a ‘crime area’. This is where girls are brutalised and raped and it is equally where boys and girls have their rendezvous.”

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

In **West Africa**, both girls and boys involved in the study rated school latrines as one of the lowest dimensions of gender equality at school for girls – 62% of girls and 47% of boys reported that there are ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ toilets at school that adolescent girls feel comfortable using. In Benin, the percentage was much higher with 86% of girls reporting there are ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ toilets at school that girls can use comfortably and safely.

“Girls never feel comfortable using the existing latrines because they are cracked and in poor condition, so they are afraid to use them. They also worry that boys will walk in on them, because the latrines are shared.”

Adolescent Girl, Benin

In **Central and South America**, 30% of girls and 28% of boys Plan spoke with claimed girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ feel comfortable using school latrines. The findings in Nicaragua were much higher though, with nearly two-thirds (65%) of all girls and boys in one area reporting they ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ can use school toilets. Many adolescent girls voiced issues of latrines being filthy, not having doors, and not functioning. Many girls are afraid of contracting diseases from using a dirty latrine, and some girls feel they ‘suffocate’ from the odor and poor functioning of school latrines. Some latrines have doors, however girls reported that many doors have holes in them through which others can see inside. Issues of boys spying on girls, locking girls inside latrines, and sexually harassing girls around latrines, all emerged as pressing concerns in Nicaragua.

“We feel we suffocate in there.”

Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua

“The latrines are dilapidated and boys spy on us when we go into them, so we prefer to hold it until we return to our homes.” Girl, Nicaragua

In one PU area in Ecuador, 67% of girls said that they ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ feel like the bathrooms are adequate. In contrast, in another PU area of Ecuador, 52% of girls interviewed said they ‘always’ or ‘often’ have latrines at school they feel comfortable using.

“The bathrooms are dirty, the walls are scratched and the girls say that the boys climb on the doors to spy on them.”

Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

“We can use the bathroom without a problem, and we like them.”

Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

Common themes in girls’ positive perceptions of latrines emerged in areas where schools provide designated single-sex, student-only latrines. For example, in one PU area of Paraguay, 73% of girls reported they ‘always’ feel comfortable using the latrines at school.

“We feel safe in the bathrooms at school because they are separate [girls versus boys].”

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

Safety in and around schools

Participants also claimed that girls often feel unsafe on their way to and from school – over a quarter (28%) of girls and boys (31%) Plan spoke with across the 11 countries claimed that girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ **feel safe on their way to school**. Adolescent boys often felt they were safer than girls when travelling to and from school. However, the findings are complex. For instance, in **Central and South America**, over a quarter of girls (28%) and boys (29%) involved in the study said girls are ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ as safe as boys when travelling to school. Yet in Nicaragua, a considerably larger number of girls (42%) and boys (50%) reported that girls are ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ as safe as boys on the way to school.

In **Asia**, both girls and boys rated safety going to school as one of the lowest dimensions of gender equality at school for girls, claiming that girls are often victims of violence and harassment.

“Fear is also felt in the school especially when any girl comes too early or goes back too late.”

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

“Three years back a guy took photo of a girl without her consent on the way to school. Then he attached his photo to hers and started threatening her by saying that, if she didn’t agree to have an affair with him then he would show that photo to her family and tell false story of their relationship. Although not willing, still she had to get involved with him. Some days after [the start of] their love affair he got physically close to her and then left her. Out of shame the girl committed suicide.”

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

“Male teachers are a threat to girls.”

Adolescent Boy, Pakistan

However, in one area in Pakistan, 78% of girls and 63% of boys Plan spoke with said that adolescent girls are ‘always’ or ‘often’ as safe as boys on their way to and from school, yet in another area in the country, only a third of girls (33%) and boys (30%) said that adolescent girls are ‘always’ or ‘often’ as safe as boys when travelling to and from school. Participants in Pakistan revealed that adolescent girls rarely walk to school alone because of safety risks, and that girls are often accompanied by a male family member or walk in groups with other girls to make them feel safer.

The impact of low levels of safety for girls when travelling to and from school can result in them missing class or even dropping out of school.

The following tables report average weighted percentages for girls' and boys' responses to those dimensions that they frequently rated highest or lowest of all dimensions of the School Equality Scorecard. These dimensions emerged areas of greater and lesser gender equality at school for adolescent girls from the perspectives of girls and boys who participated in the study.

Table 10: School Equality Scorecard, Global and Regional Weighted Average Percentages for Most Striking Findings - Girls' Opinions

School Equality Scorecard - GIRLS						
Class participation						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,580	4%	8%	18%	21%	49%
Central and South America	846	2%	5%	16%	32%	46%
West Africa	575	6%	11%	25%	15%	44%
East and Southern Africa	623	2%	5%	18%	18%	58%
Asia	536	6%	11%	14%	16%	53%
Chore burden						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,573	10%	13%	24%	19%	34%
Central and South America	850	6%	16%	27%	22%	30%
West Africa	576	12%	13%	22%	15%	37%
East and Southern Africa	623	10%	14%	24%	17%	36%
Asia	524	14%	9%	23%	20%	35%
Latrines						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,570	25%	13%	16%	11%	35%
Central and South America	851	18%	12%	18%	13%	40%
West Africa	573	42%	20%	12%	9%	18%
East and Southern Africa	623	22%	10%	17%	12%	41%
Asia	523	18%	10%	18%	12%	43%
Leadership						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,568	8%	10%	21%	21%	42%
Central and South America	844	5%	6%	21%	28%	41%
West Africa	574	14%	14%	21%	20%	31%
East and Southern Africa	623	2%	6%	18%	18%	56%
Asia	527	9%	14%	22%	14%	41%
Encouragement						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,573	4%	7%	16%	16%	57%
Central and South America	844	3%	4%	18%	20%	56%
West Africa	575	7%	13%	19%	18%	42%
East and Southern Africa	621	2%	5%	13%	11%	69%
Asia	533	5%	7%	12%	14%	63%

*Table refers to data from participating adolescent girls from 90 schools across 19 PUs across 11 countries and four regions. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries in all of the four regions, except Asia where only two countries participated.

Safety going to school						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,571	14%	14%	26%	19%	27%
Central and South America	845	13%	15%	24%	21%	28%
West Africa	575	15%	15%	22%	20%	27%
East and Southern Africa	623	11%	14%	36%	14%	26%
Asia	528	20%	11%	23%	19%	27%
Early pregnancy						
	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,571	38%	20%	25%	8%	9%
Central and South America	842	27%	23%	30%	11%	10%
West Africa	575	32%	24%	26%	8%	10%
East and Southern Africa	623	29%	17%	32%	7%	15%
Asia	531	71%	13%	8%	4%	4%

Table 11: School Equality Scorecard, Global and Regional Average Weighted Percentages for Most Striking Findings – Boys’ Opinions

School Equality Scorecard - BOYS						
Class participation						
	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,793	3%	9%	19%	23%	46%
Central and South America	888	1%	4%	18%	31%	47%
West Africa	780	8%	16%	26%	17%	34%
East and Southern Africa	610	2%	7%	18%	19%	55%
Asia	515	1%	6%	10%	27%	55%
Chore burden						
	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,793	12%	11%	21%	20%	36%
Central and South America	889	2%	9%	20%	28%	42%
West Africa	778	27%	13%	24%	16%	21%
East and Southern Africa	610	7%	12%	21%	16%	45%
Asia	516	11%	10%	19%	20%	41%
Latrines						
	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,787	19%	12%	17%	15%	37%
Central and South America	888	14%	14%	23%	17%	33%
West Africa	778	34%	13%	13%	11%	29%
East and Southern Africa	608	12%	7%	12%	17%	52%
Asia	513	13%	12%	18%	16%	41%
Leadership						
	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,784	6%	11%	23%	23%	38%
Central and South America	889	2%	6%	21%	28%	42%
West Africa	771	10%	16%	27%	22%	26%
East and Southern Africa	610	2%	8%	20%	18%	52%
Asia	514	8%	13%	24%	22%	34%
Encouragement						
	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,798	4%	8%	17%	19%	52%
Central and South America	890	1%	4%	16%	24%	55%
West Africa	782	9%	16%	23%	19%	34%
East and Southern Africa	610	2%	5%	16%	13%	65%
Asia	516	2%	5%	11%	18%	64%

*Table refers to data from participating adolescent boys from 95 schools across 20 PUs across 11 countries and four regions .The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries in all of the four regions, except Asia where only two countries participated.

Safety going to school						
	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,793	17%	14%	26%	19%	23%
Central and South America	889	12%	17%	29%	23%	20%
West Africa	780	23%	14%	24%	15%	25%
East and Southern Africa	609	17%	14%	32%	18%	19%
Asia	515	17%	10%	19%	24%	31%
Early pregnancy						
	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
GLOBAL	2,688	40%	21%	23%	8%	8%
Central and South America	880	33%	23%	30%	6%	7%
West Africa	779	33%	22%	23%	10%	12%
East and Southern Africa	608	32%	26%	25%	6%	11%
Asia	421	69%	13%	9%	9%	1%

*Table refers to data from participating adolescent boys from 95 schools across 20 PUs across 11 countries and four regions .The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, three countries in all of the four regions, except Asia where only two countries participated.

4.4. School Equality Scorecard: Regional Results and Key Findings

4.4.1. School Equality Scorecard: Results from Central and South America (Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay)

Highest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls in Central and South America



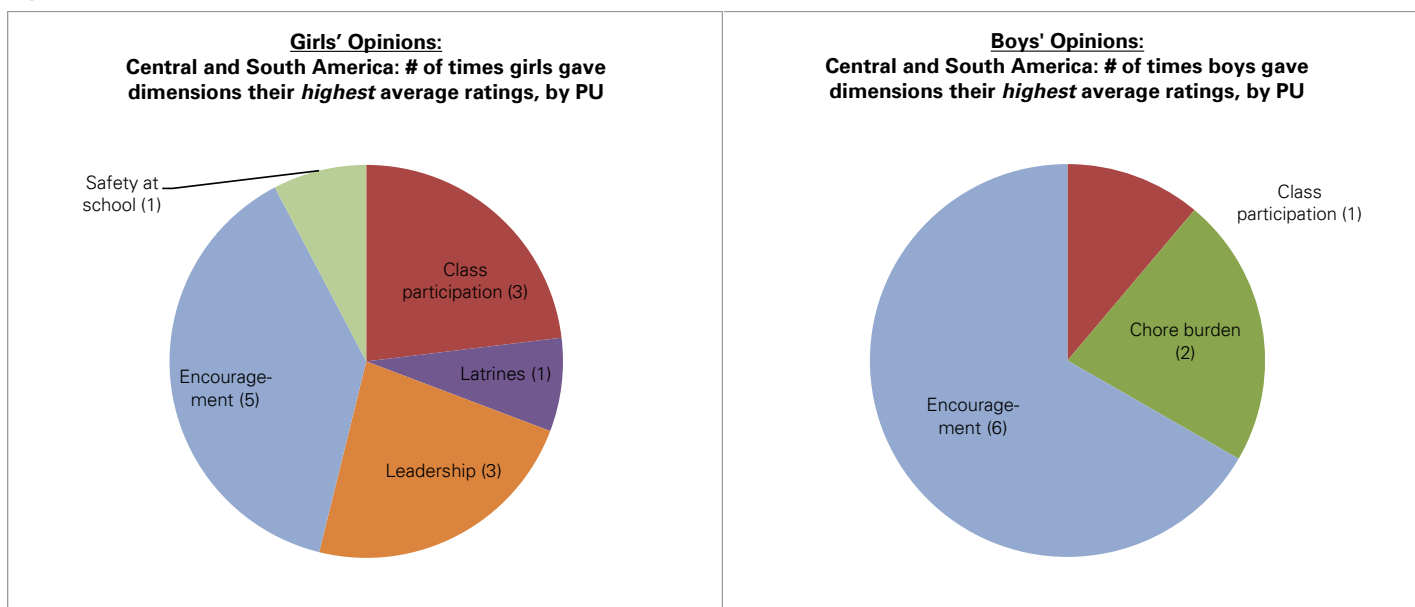
Findings from the School Equality Scorecard: Highest Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls

In **Ecuador**, Plan spoke with 313 girls in 10 schools and 325 boys in 10 schools in PU Chimborazo and PU Quito. In **PU Chimborazo**, girls rated **encouragement** as the highest dimension of gender equality at school for girls, while boys rated **encouragement** and **class participation** as the highest. In **PU Quito**, both girls and boys rated **encouragement** as the highest and girls also felt that **class participation** was a high area of gender equality at school for girls.

In **Nicaragua**, Plan spoke with 270 girls in 10 schools and 284 boys in 10 schools in PU Chontales and PU VEC. In **PU Chontales**, girls rated **encouragement** and **leadership** as the highest dimensions of gender equality at school for girls, while boys said that encouragement and chore burden were the highest. In **PU VEC**, girls felt that **class participation** and **leadership** were the highest areas of school gender equality for girls, while adolescent boys said that **chore burden** and **encouragement** were the highest areas.

In **Paraguay**, Plan spoke with 266 girls in 10 schools and 278 boys in 10 schools in PU Caaguazú and PU Guaira. In **PU Caaguazú**, girls felt that **encouragement**, **class participation**, and **latrines** were the highest areas of gender equality at school for girls, while boys said it was **encouragement**. In **PU Guaira**, both girls and boys felt that **encouragement** was the highest, and girls also felt that **leadership** and **safety at school** were high areas of gender equality at school.

Figure 16: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions girls and boys rated the highest on average by PU in Central and South America*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected schools. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, and three countries in Central and South America. Frequencies derive from data from selected schools and PUs and may not be representative of all schools in all PUs in Ecuador, Nicaragua or Paraguay.

Encouragement

Adolescent girls and boys who Plan spoke with in Ecuador, Nicaragua and Paraguay felt that adolescent girls are largely **encouraged** to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys. Between 53-90% of girls Plan spoke with in these countries said that girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys (Paraguay had the highest ratings with 83-90% of girls), while 73-88% of boys Plan spoke with in these countries felt that adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged to succeed just as much as boys.

“With respect to encouragement [...] girls are encouraged to study; the teachers, fathers, mothers and their classmates encourage the girls to continue their studies so that they can enhance their condition and reach their goals and objectives.”

Adolescent Boy, Ecuador

“We are encouraged equally as boys.”

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

“Teachers encourage everyone equally to move forward.”

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

While some participants claimed that they are encouraged, girls revealed that teachers often listen to boys more.

“The same encouragement is given to a girl, but [teachers] do not take them more seriously. They listen to boys because they are more dominant.”

Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua

The research findings suggest a link between encouragement and class participation (this was evident in the Ecuador results) and encouragement and leadership (as was found in the Nicaragua results). Girls who reported higher ratings on feeling encouraged in class also tended to report higher rates of class participation and taking leadership roles in school.

Class Participation

Girls and boys in these communities also felt that on average girls **participate in class** as often as boys. Between 68-87% of girls involved in the study across the three countries claimed that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' participate as regularly as boys, and 66-85% of boys Plan spoke with said that adolescent girls participate in class as often as boys.

“We participate more in class [than boys].”

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

“When we are asked for a response in class and we speak, the majority of the time we participate more than boys, because we are more applied to studies. If we get low grades, fathers and boys threaten to throw us out of school. Boys are restless and do not pay attention in class. They participate less than the girls.”

Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua

However, some girls expressed concern that their participation was sometimes interrupted by boys.

“We all participate in class because it gives us the opportunity to talk and to present in front of class. The boys interrupt us when we participate, pull our hair, bother us, push us, ask to borrow things in a rude manner, and take our things. Girls participate more than boys in the grade. Only three boys participate and the teachers do not say anything. They don't know the answer when the teachers ask or they make fun of things. The teacher has to tell the girls not to answer so that the boys answer.”

Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

Lowest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls in Central and South America

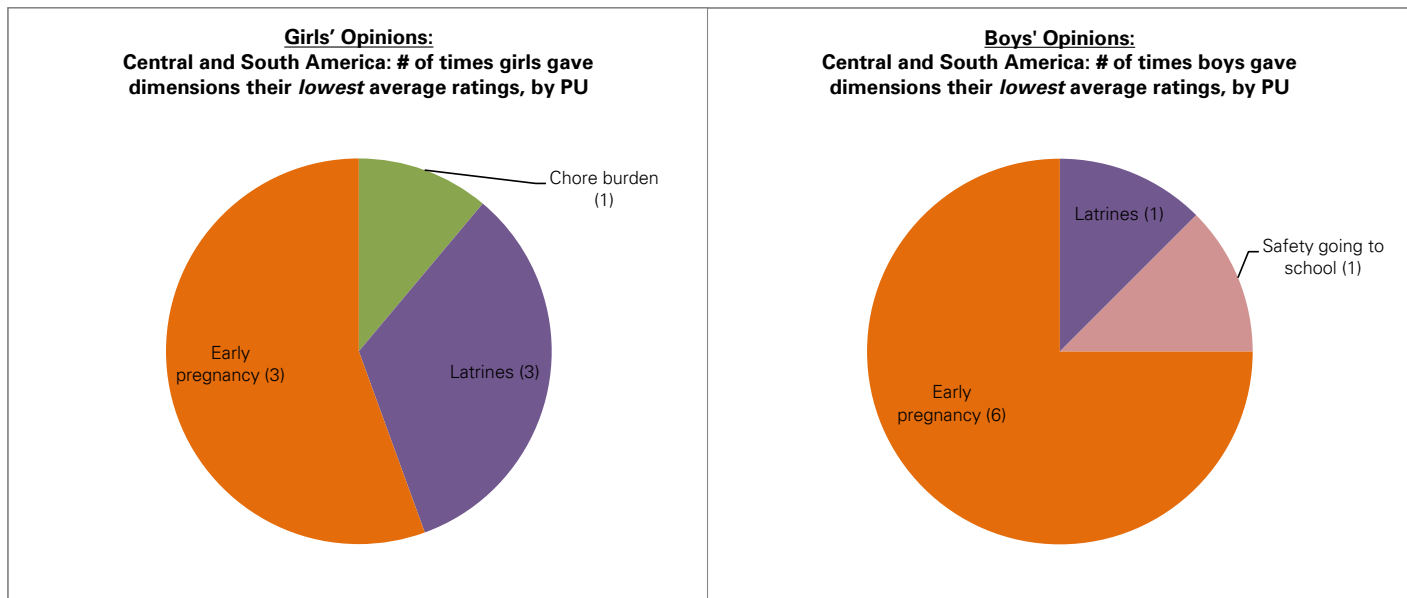
Findings from the School Equality Scorecard: Lowest Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls

In **Ecuador**, Plan spoke with 313 girls in 10 schools and 325 boys in 10 schools in PU Chimborazo and PU Quito. In **PU Chimborazo**, girls and boys said that **early pregnancy** was the lowest dimension of gender equality at school for girls. In **PU Quito**, girls rated latrines as the lowest and boys felt that **early pregnancy** was the lowest area of gender equality at school for girls.

In **Nicaragua**, Plan spoke with 270 girls in 10 schools and 284 boys in 10 schools in PU Chontales and PU VEC. In **PU Chontales**, both girls and boys said that **latrines** and **early pregnancy** were the lowest dimensions of gender equality at school for girls. In **PU VEC**, girls felt that **latrines** and **early pregnancy** were the lowest areas of school equality, while boys claimed **early pregnancy** and safety going to school were the lowest areas of school gender equality for girls.

In **Paraguay**, Plan spoke with 266 girls in 10 schools and 278 boys in 10 schools in PU Caaguazú and PU Guaira. In **PU Caaguazú**, girls and boys felt that **early pregnancy** was the lowest area of school equality, and girls also said **chore burden**. In **PU Guaira**, both girls and boys felt that **early pregnancy** was the lowest dimension of gender equality at school for girls.

Figure 17: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions girls and boys rated the lowest on average by PU in Central and South America*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected schools. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, and three countries in Central and South America. Frequencies derive from data from selected schools and PUs and may not be representative of all schools in all PUs in Ecuador, Nicaragua or Paraguay.

Early pregnancy

When discussing the lowest relative levels of gender equality at school for girls, adolescent girls and boys who Plan spoke with in these communities expressed concern with **early pregnancy** and being unable to continue school. As discussed in results from the Girls Empowerment Star, early pregnancy in many contexts precedes early marriage, and many girls are unaware how to prevent pregnancy.

In Ecuador (PU Chimborazo), 65% of girls and 71% of boys interviewed with the School Equality Scorecard said that adolescent girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ continue to attend school after having a baby.

“...it is complicated for an adolescent [girl] to continue studying when they get pregnant. They have to take care of their baby and have to work to be able to support him. [...] if the girl wants to continue studying, she needs to have someone else take care of the baby.”

Adolescent Boy, Ecuador

“...the girl would not continue school because: Other girls may make fun of them... the husband, parents and in-laws will no longer support them and they feel ashamed to go back. Additionally, they have to work to support the baby and take care of the husband.”

Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

In Nicaragua, 50% and 60% of girls interviewed in the two PU areas reported that girls never or seldom return to school after having a child. Girls explained that although in many schools in Nicaragua in theory allow pregnant adolescent girls and young mothers to attend school, in practice, early pregnancy usually leads to school dropout for girls. A lack of infant care in the home and at school often prevents young mothers from continuing school. Girls whose partner, mother or another family member agrees to provide childcare or support her financially can create opportunities for the adolescent mother to return to school, although sometimes at a cost to household income and economic opportunities for the girls’ mother.

Some parents do not allow their adolescent daughters to return to school after having a child. Some girls feel distressed and unwell following the birth and do not want to return to school. Many fear being laughed at, social stigma from peers, and being singled out by teachers as an example.

Across participating schools in Ecuador, Nicaragua and Paraguay, girls reported that many young mothers end up not returning to school for reasons of stigma, the lack of childcare and the need to earn money to support herself and the child.

“At school, teachers do not accept or allow further study [after a girl becomes pregnant] because it is a bad example for the school.”

Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua.

“Girls who become pregnant in the community are not attending classes after having their babies because they have to work and care for their children.”

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

The majority of adolescent boys who Plan spoke with in these countries were aware that early pregnancy was an enormous concern to adolescent girls. The study revealed that boys do want to support girls’ empowerment through addressing barriers to girls’ education, including early pregnancy and its effects on girls’ school dropout.

“Concerning pregnancy, the boy should also have responsibility/guilt.”

Adolescent Boy, Paraguay

“Young men should be trained in how to avoid pregnancy.”

Adolescent Boy, Paraguay

“How nice it would be for women to have a child when they are prepared.”

Adolescent Boy, Paraguay

Adolescent boys have the opportunity to become champions of change and play an active role in challenging

Latrines

School **latrines** also emerged in the region of Central and South America as a pressing concern for adolescent girls and boys in the study, especially those from Nicaragua and Ecuador.

In Nicaragua's PU Chontales, nearly two-thirds (65%) of all girls and boys involved in the study said that adolescent girls are 'never' comfortable using toilets at school. Adolescent girls and boys said that there are not separate latrines for them to use. Many adolescent girls voiced issues of latrines being dirty, not having doors, and not functioning. Many girls are afraid of contracting diseases from using a dirty latrine, and some girls feel they 'suffocate' from the odor of dirty and poorly functioning latrines. Some latrines have doors, however the doors have holes in them through which others can see inside. Issues of boys spying on girls, locking girls inside latrines, and sexually harassing girls around latrines, all surfaced as pressing concerns for adolescent girls at school in Nicaragua.

"We do not go to the bathroom when the boys spy by putting a cell phone in a shoe and take video and see everything. They also lift our skirts when we walk by."

Adolescent Girl, Nicaragua

"Most girls feel that they have no security when they go to the latrines. Boys look at them when they go to urinate. The facilities are dirty and the floor is full of urine with no toilet. The girls have to endure because the latrines are dirty, and find it better to wait until they get home from school."

Adolescent Boy, Nicaragua

In Ecuador (PU Quito), 67% of girls involved in the study said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel comfortable using the school latrines.

"Girls do not like going into the bathrooms because they share them with boys."

Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

"The bathrooms are dirty, the walls are all scratched and girls say that the boys climb on the doors to spy on them." Adolescent Girl, Ecuador

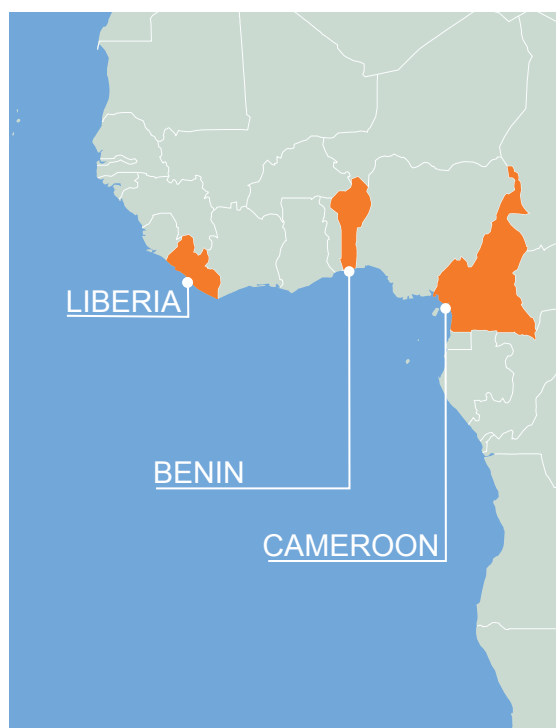
On the other hand, 66-82% of girls involved in the study in Paraguay said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' feel comfortable using the school latrines.

"We feel safe in the bathrooms at school because they are separate [girls versus boys]."

Adolescent Girl, Paraguay

4.4.2. School Equality Scorecard: Results from West Africa (Benin, Cameroon, Liberia)

Highest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls in West Africa



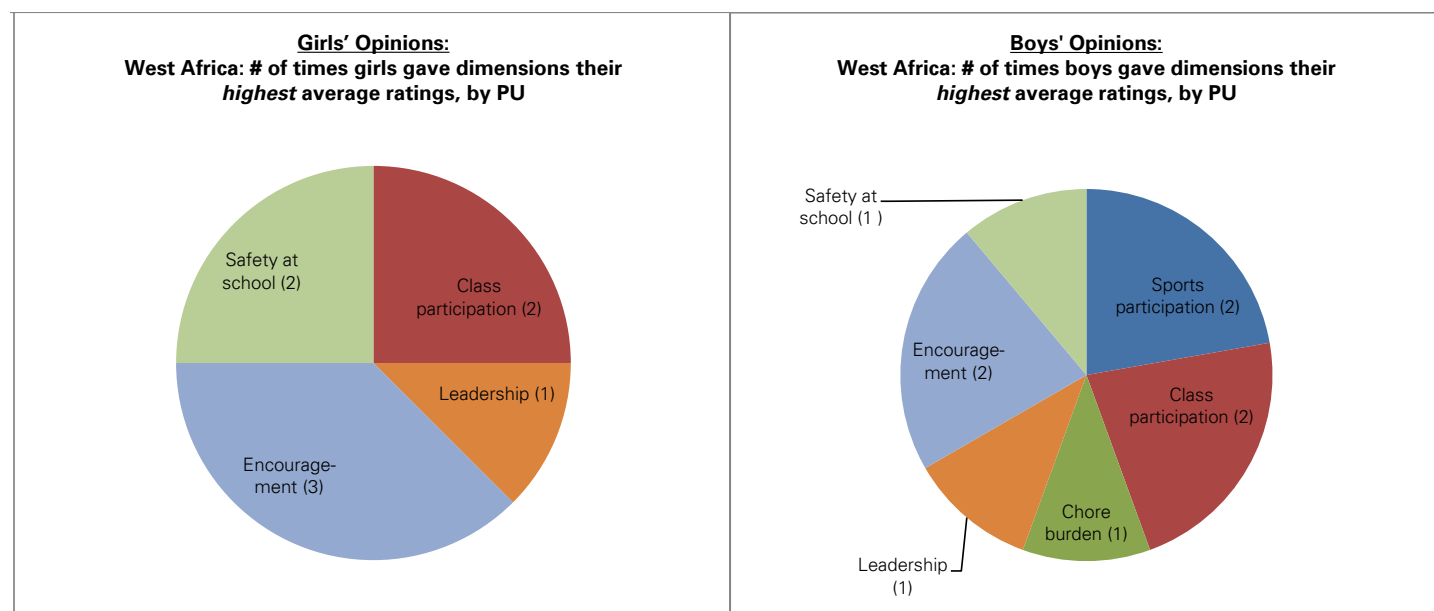
Findings from the School Equality Scorecard: Highest Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls

In **Benin**, Plan spoke with 131 girls in 5 schools and 297 boys in 10 schools in PU Atacora and PU Couffo. In **PU Atacora**, boys rated **encouragement** as the highest dimension of gender equality at school for girls (no data was available for girls in this PU). In PU Couffo, both girls and boys rated **encouragement** as the highest dimension of school gender equality for girls.

In **Cameroon**, Plan spoke with 256 girls in 10 schools and 299 boys in 10 schools in PU Biteng and PU Bamenda. In **PU Biteng**, girls felt that **class participation** and **encouragement** were the highest areas of gender equality at school for girls, while boys said that class participation and sports participation were the highest. In **PU Bamenda**, girls felt that **class participation** and **leadership** were the highest areas of school gender equality for girls, while adolescent boys said that **class participation** and **chore burden** are the highest areas.

In **Liberia**, Plan spoke with 187 girls in 6 schools and 184 boys in 6 schools in PU Bomi and PU Lofa. In **PU Bomi**, girls felt that **safety** and **school** was the highest dimension of gender equality at school for girls, while boys said it was **sports participation**. In **PU Lofa**, both girls and boys felt that **safety at school** was the highest area of gender equality at school for girls.

Figure 18: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions girls and boys rated the highest on average by PU in West Africa*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected schools. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, and three countries in West Africa. Frequencies derive from data from selected schools and PUs and may not be representative of all schools in all PUs in Benin, Cameroon or Liberia.

Encouragement

Girls and boys involved in the study in West Africa said that adolescent girls are often **encouraged** to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys, especially in Benin and Cameroon. In Benin, 87% of girls and 67-71% of boys involved in the study claimed that adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged in their schoolwork. When it comes to school, girls reported that they receive as much social and academic support as boys from their teachers. They are encouraged to participate and work hard to obtain good grades.

“Girls, like boys, are always encouraged to get good marks – the teachers encourage the girls to participate in class by giving them compliments like ‘very good!’ and ‘bravo!’”

Adolescent Girl, Benin

“There is no discrimination in class.”

Adolescent Girl, Benin

In Cameroon, 59-63% of girls and 52-58% of boys said that adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged in their schoolwork as much as boys. There may be a correlation between levels of encouragement and leadership in these communities. Adolescent girls commented both on the encouragement of parents and teachers, noting that some parents give equal opportunity to daughters as sons to attend and succeed in school. Some commented that more parents value and prioritise girls' education than in the past.

“Parents now recognise the credits of an educated girl; many are making efforts for their girls to complete their education.”

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

Still, not all adolescent girls are equally encouraged, as education may be considered less important for their future roles as wives and mothers, than it is for boys' roles as husbands and fathers. Boys are expected to get jobs after completing school and provide for a wife and children. Attitudes and gender roles are changing, though, with some parents recognising that girls who complete their studies and work can contribute economically.

“Some parents still encourage boys more than girls to succeed in schools and will invest limited resources only on boys education as opposed to girls, as they still believe girls are ‘property of other families’, and hope that their boy children’s success will mean success for their families.”

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

“Because girls can likely be pregnant at any moment, encouraging and investing in their education may mean ‘wastage of resources for the family’.”

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

In Liberia, only 30-53% of girls and 34% of boys involved in the study felt that adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged equally as boys.

Class participation

Girls and boys involved in the study in Cameroon felt that **class participation** was one of the highest levels of school equality. For instances, 67-76% of girls and 61% of boys said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' participate in class as often as boys.

“The teacher never asks questions only to boys or girls, but to the whole class so that boys and girls give their answer freely.”

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

“Some girls are very intelligent and to show off, they respond to all questions asked.”

Adolescent Boy, Cameroon

The findings in Cameroon revealed that girls and boys participate equally in theory, but less consistently in practice. Some adolescent girls see certain girl classmates as 'more intelligent' and it is these girls who participate in class activities as much or more than boys. Some girls also work very hard to succeed academically in part to fight negative views of their academic capabilities among peers, teachers or parents. On the other hand, others adolescent girls fear shaming and mockery by boys if they raise their hand and offer wrong answers in class. Some girls have internalised negative gender stereotypes about their capabilities, believing that girls generally learn more slowly than boys. Some girls, particularly from poorer families, voiced feeling ashamed to stand up in front of the class because of state of their clothes. Others said that girls who 'go out with teachers' behave in a shy, reserved manner in class, and therefore participate less. Adolescent boys felt that while some girls are intelligent and bold, others participate less as they are afraid to give wrong answers and risk being mocked in class. Some boys, like some girls, have internalised a negative gender stereotype that boys are more intelligent than girls. Others raised assumptions that girls who participate less in class are preoccupied with concerns over their dating partners or their children while they are at school.

“Some girls want to prove their parents wrong, so they tend to work very hard to succeed in their exams.”

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

“Most girls do not participate in class because they are day dreaming and thinking of the teachers who they are dating, or their boyfriends whom they will meet at the end of classes or their children left at home.” Adolescent Boy, Cameroon

Participants in Liberia rated class participation as lower levels of gender equality at school for girls – 26-52% of girls and 32-58% of boys involved in the study felt that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' participated in class. In Benin, more girls (72%) than boys (45-46%) said that adolescent girls participate equally in class as boys.

Safety at school

The majority of girls and boys Plan spoke with in Liberia felt that **safety at school** was a relatively high level of gender equality at school for girls – 40% of girls in one area (PU Bomi) and 50% of girls in another area (PU Lofa) claimed that adolescent girls 'always' feel safety at school. Adolescent girls said that feeling safe at school was a key factor in allowing them to concentrate on their studies and achieve good grades. It was revealed that teachers often create a safe learning atmosphere and protect the students.

“We and the boys are friendly and the teachers serve as parents to protect us at school.”

Adolescent Girl, Liberia

“When we are at school, we feel free because no one is disturbing us.” Adolescent Girl, Liberia

“We are always safe at school because our teachers create safe learning environment for everybody.” Adolescent Boy, Liberia

On the other hand, some students in Benin felt that safety at schools was a relative low level of gender equality at school for girls. For instance, in Benin (PU Couffo) 48% of boys and 27% of girls claimed that girls are 'never' as safe as boys when they go to school.

Lowest Levels of Gender Equality at School for Girls in West Africa

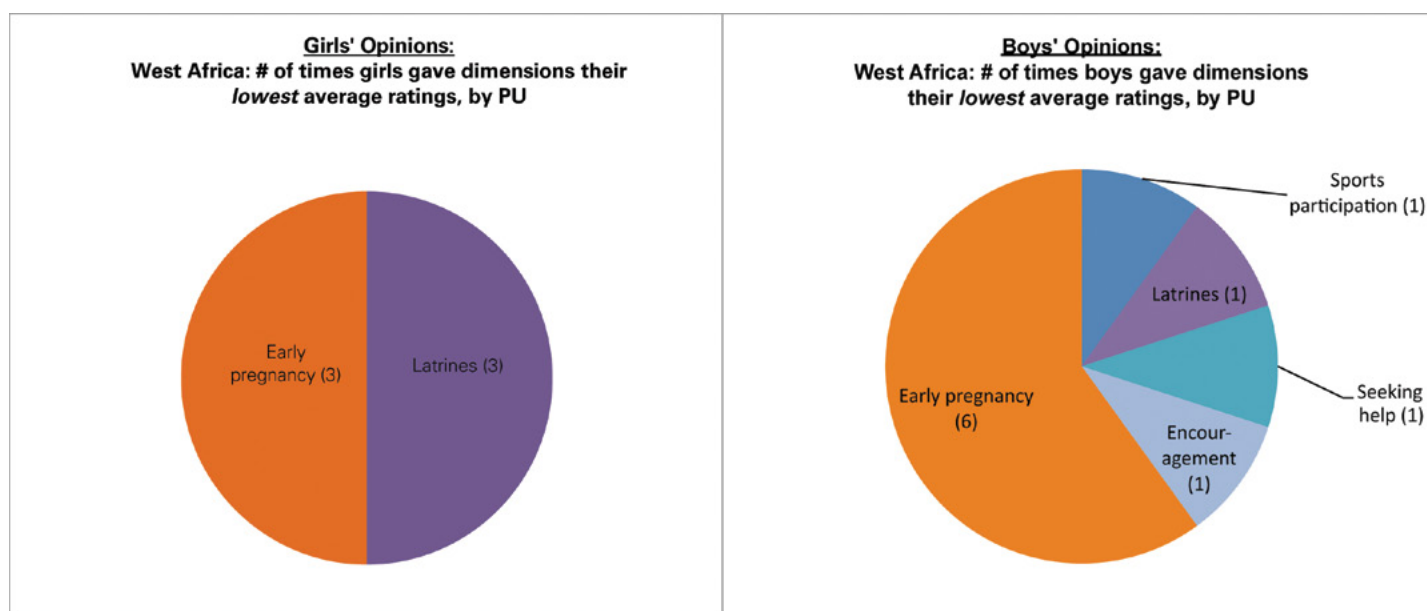
Findings from the School Equality Scorecard: Lowest Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls

In **Benin**, Plan spoke with 131 girls in 5 schools and 297 boys in 10 schools in PU Atacora and PU Couffo. In **PU Atacora**, boys rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest dimension of gender equality at school for girls (no data were available for girls in this PU). In **PU Couffo**, girls said that **latrines** were the lowest dimension of gender equality at school for girls, while boys said **early pregnancy**.

In **Cameroon**, Plan spoke with 256 girls in 10 schools and 299 boys in 10 schools in PU Biteng and PU Bamenda. In **PU Biteng**, both girls and boys felt that **latrines** and **early pregnancy** were the lowest scored dimensions of school gender equality for girls. In **PU Bamenda**, girls felt that **early pregnancy** was the lowest dimension of school gender equality for girls, while adolescent boys said that **sports participation** and **early pregnancy** were the highest areas.

In **Liberia**, Plan spoke with 187 girls in 6 schools and 184 boys in 6 schools in PU Bomi and PU Lofa. In **PU Bomi**, girls felt that **latrines** were the lowest area of school gender equality for girls, while boys said it was **early pregnancy**. In **PU Lofa**, both girls and boys felt that **early pregnancy** was the lowest dimension of school gender equality for girls.

Figure 19: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions girls and boys rated the lowest on average by PU in West Africa*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected schools. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, and three countries in West Africa. Frequencies derive from data from selected schools and PUs and may not be representative of all schools in all PUs in Benin, Cameroon or Liberia.

Early pregnancy

Both girls and boys involved in the study in West Africa rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest level of gender equality at school for girls. This was most prevalent in Benin whereby 88% of girls and 61-86% of boys involved in the study claimed that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' continue school after having a baby.

“After giving birth, girls do not want to return to school because they fear being mocked by their peers. They tell themselves: ‘If I go to school, I will feel humiliated.’ [...] Girls do not go back to school for many reasons, including the fact that they must care for their newborn. They also worry that classmates, teachers and administrators will make fun of them and single them out for setting a bad example.”

Adolescent Girl, Benin

“Girls never come back to school quickly after an early pregnancy. Two years ago at our school, a 16-year-old boy who was a good student started seeing a girl, who then became pregnant. Both were expelled. While the boy was able to attend a different school, the girl stayed home after giving birth: her classmates mocked her and she refused to go back.”

Adolescent Girl, Benin

In Benin, girls who are pregnant and young mothers most often drop out of school and often are not encouraged by peers, teachers or parents to return to their studies. High levels of encouragement may be linked conversely to boys' and girls' low ratings of early pregnancy. While boys and girls perceive that considerable encouragement may be given to girls in the classroom, notably when they set a good 'example' for their peers, pregnant girls or young mothers are instead socially and academically excluded. Low scores on early pregnancy were associated with examples of shaming and mockery of pregnant girls and young mothers. Boys reported that, to improve gender equality in schools, emphasis needs to be placed on sexual and reproductive health training, including early pregnancy prevention, and an encouraging classroom dynamic between all students and teachers.

In Cameroon, between 31-54% of girls and 44-64% of boys claimed that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' return to school after having a baby. Participants said that adolescent girls rarely return to school after having a baby because: it is challenging for girls to catch up academically; girls are mocked and bullied by classmates; parents fear their daughters will become pregnant again; marriage and husbands forbid girls to continue their studies; and girls lack time, childcare support, and financial resources for school.

“Most girls after putting to birth will not like to go back to school because of shame due to jeering by their peers.”

Adolescent Boy, Cameroon

“With a baby as another responsibility, some parents do not have the means to send back these girls to schools.”

Adolescent Boy, Cameroon

“Their husbands do not allow them to continue going to school.”

Adolescent Boy, Cameroon

In Liberia, 53-55% of girls and 37-39% of boys claimed that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' return to school. Some girls said that an increase in household responsibilities and childcare limits adolescent girls' ability to return to school, and other participants cited the absence of sexual and reproductive health information and services available for girls. Some boys said that they often continue school after having a child, while others claimed that boys are also at risk of dropping out of school after having a baby.

“We have [the] chance to go to school when we have baby, but not girls.”

Adolescent Boy, Liberia

“Sometimes we do not attend school after having babies. Because we have additional responsibility.”

Adolescent Boy, Liberia

Latrines

Participants, especially adolescent girls, said that **latrines** were one of the lowest levels of gender equality at school for girls in West Africa, however responses varied considerably. In Benin, 86% of girls and 55-62% of boys involved in the study said that there are 'never' or 'seldom' toilets at school that girls feel comfortable using. Girls feel uncomfortable using the school latrines and tend to only use them in emergencies or when boys are not around.

“Girls never feel comfortable using the existing latrines because they are cracked and in poor condition, so they are afraid to use them. They also worry that boys will walk in on them, because the latrines are shared.”

Adolescent Girl, Benin

In Cameroon, 67% of girls and 70% of boys involved in the study in one area (PU Biteng) claimed that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel comfortable using school latrines. Participants said that school latrines are often filthy, cause illnesses, are mixed sex, and lack privacy and security. Latrines that are far away from school increase risks and incidences of school-related sexual and gender-based violence. On the other hand, 59% of girls and boys from another area (PU Bamenda) claimed that girls always or often feel comfortable using the latrines at school.

“Teachers and pupils use the same toilets. Girls are uncomfortable sharing their toilets with boys and adults.”

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

“The toilets are away from the classrooms and have become a ‘crime area’. This is where girls are brutalised and raped and it is equally where boys and girls have their rendezvous.”

Adolescent Girl, Cameroon

“The toilets have some opening where boys peep on girls using the toilet, thereby making girls uncomfortable using them.”

Adolescent Boy, Cameroon

In Liberia, more girls (60-71%) than boys (33-37%) said that adolescent girls 'never' or 'seldom' feel comfortable using the school latrines.

“Our school toilet is used by the community members ... it can be nasty and if you sit on it you get sick.”

Adolescent Boy, Liberia

“Others misuse the latrine and when we sit on it, we can suffer from infections. [...] boys and girls use the same toilet.”

Adolescent Girl Liberia

4.4.3. School Equality Scorecard: Results from East and Southern Africa (Uganda and Zimbabwe)²³

Highest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls in East and Southern Africa

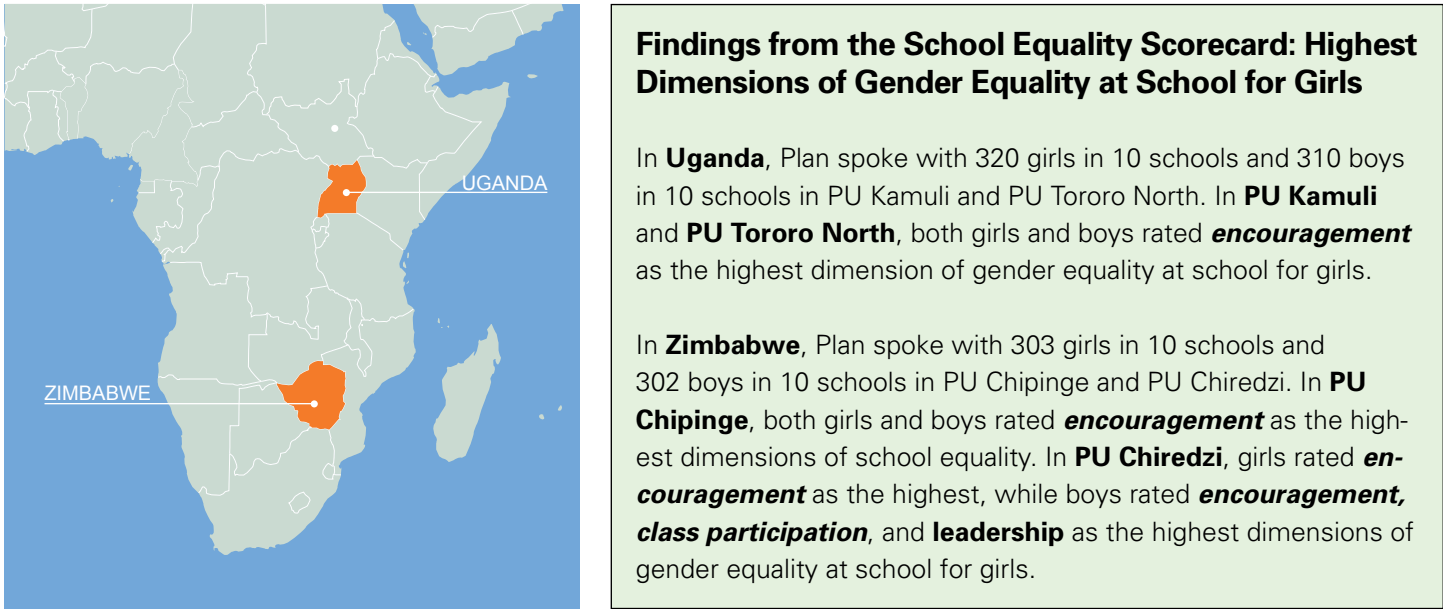
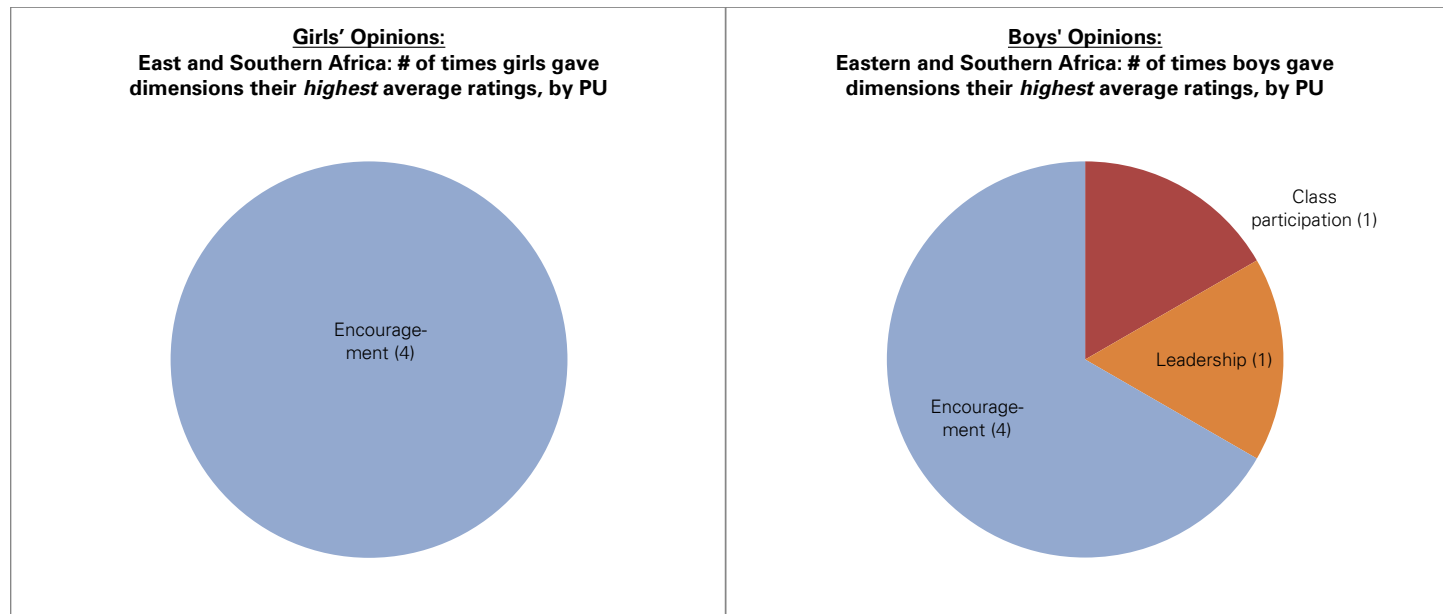


Figure 20: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions girls and boys rated the highest on average by PU in East and Southern Africa*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected schools. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, and two countries in East and Southern Africa. Frequencies derive from data from selected schools and PUs and may not be representative of all schools in all PUs in Uganda and Zimbabwe. Note: Egypte did not implement the School Equality

²³ Note that Egypt did not use the School Equality Scorecard and there is no data for Egypt in this section.

Encouragement

The highest levels of gender equality at school reported by adolescent girls and boys Plan spoke with in Uganda and Zimbabwe was **encouragement** and being encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys. In Uganda, between 75-87% of girls involved in the study claimed adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged as much as boys, while only 63-69% of boys felt that girls are 'always' encouraged equally. Boys in Uganda referred to Plan's programmes and policies that promote girls' education as being a contributing factor.

"... due to Plan policies like equality ... girls are encouraged to succeed academically for future equality."

Adolescent Boy, Uganda

"Girls are sometimes encouraged to succeed in school because Plan has preached about equality and motivated them to go to school since Plan had spread the gospel. The teachers at times use key figures of successful women to motivate the students to work and become like them."

Adolescent Boy, Uganda

In Zimbabwe, 78-81% of girls said that girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys, and even more boys (85-95%) felt that girls were encouraged equally.

"Girls are even encouraged more than boys and the teachers highlight the risks they are bound to face if they are not educated."

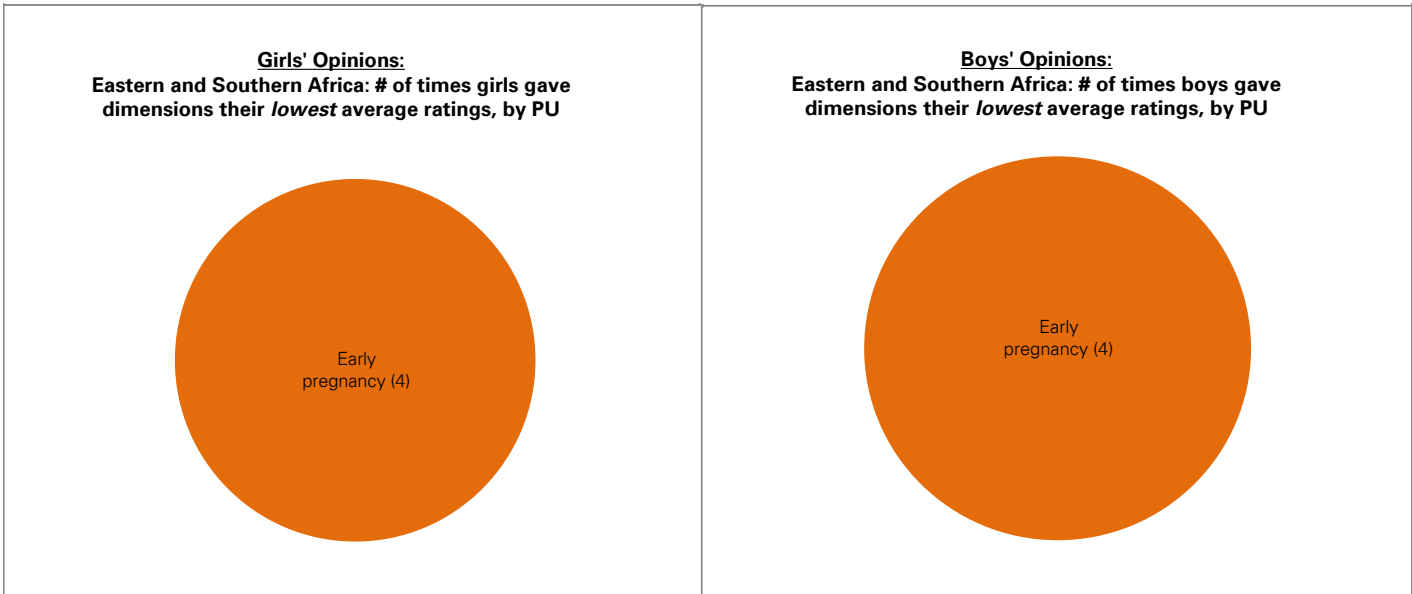
Lowest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls in East and Southern Africa

Findings from the School Equality Scorecard: Lowest Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls

In **Uganda**, Plan spoke with 320 girls in 10 schools and 310 boys in 10 schools in PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North. In **PU Kamuli** and **PU Tororo North**, both girls and boys rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest dimension of gender equality at school for girls.

In **Zimbabwe**, Plan spoke with 303 girls in 10 schools and 302 boys in 10 schools in PU Chipinge and PU Chiredzi. In **PU Chipinge** and **PU Chiredzi**, both girls and boys rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest dimension of gender equality at school for girls.

Figure 21: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions girls and boys rated the lowest on average by PU in East and Southern Africa*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected schools. The maximum number of PUs per region is six, with two PUs per country, and two countries in East and Southern Africa. Frequencies derive from data from selected schools and PUs and may not be representative of all schools in all PUs in Uganda and Zimbabwe. Note: Egypt did not implement the School Equality Scorecard.

Early pregnancy

Girls and boys involved in the study in Uganda and Zimbabwe said that **early pregnancy** was the lowest level of gender equality at school for girls. In Uganda, 38-44% of girls and 60-71% of boys involved in the study said that girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ continue to attend school after having a baby. In Zimbabwe, 44-57% of girls and 48-53% of boys who participated claimed that girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ stay in school after they have a baby. Early pregnancy is also linked with early and forced marriage.

“My sister was forced to get married because she got pregnant at school.” Adolescent Boy, Uganda

Girls and boys also shared concerns about early pregnancy being directly linked to school dropout.

“If the school authority discovers that one is pregnant, she is expelled from school.”
Adolescent Girl, Zimbabwe

“I do not think a girl can come to this school when she is pregnant. Girls never come to school when pregnant because they are regarded as adults.” Adolescent Boy, Zimbabwe

4.4.4. School Equality Scorecard: Results from Asia (Bangladesh and Pakistan)

Highest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls in Asia

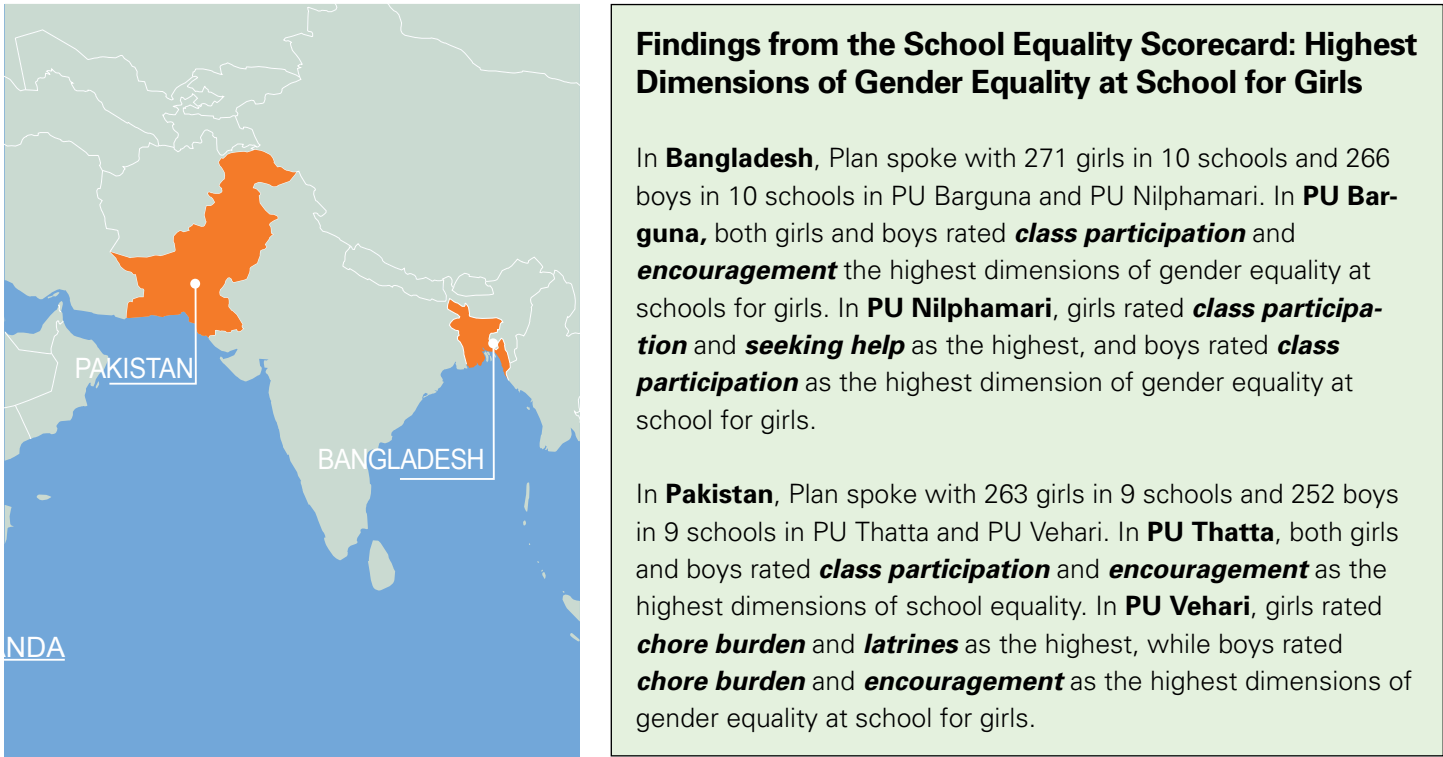
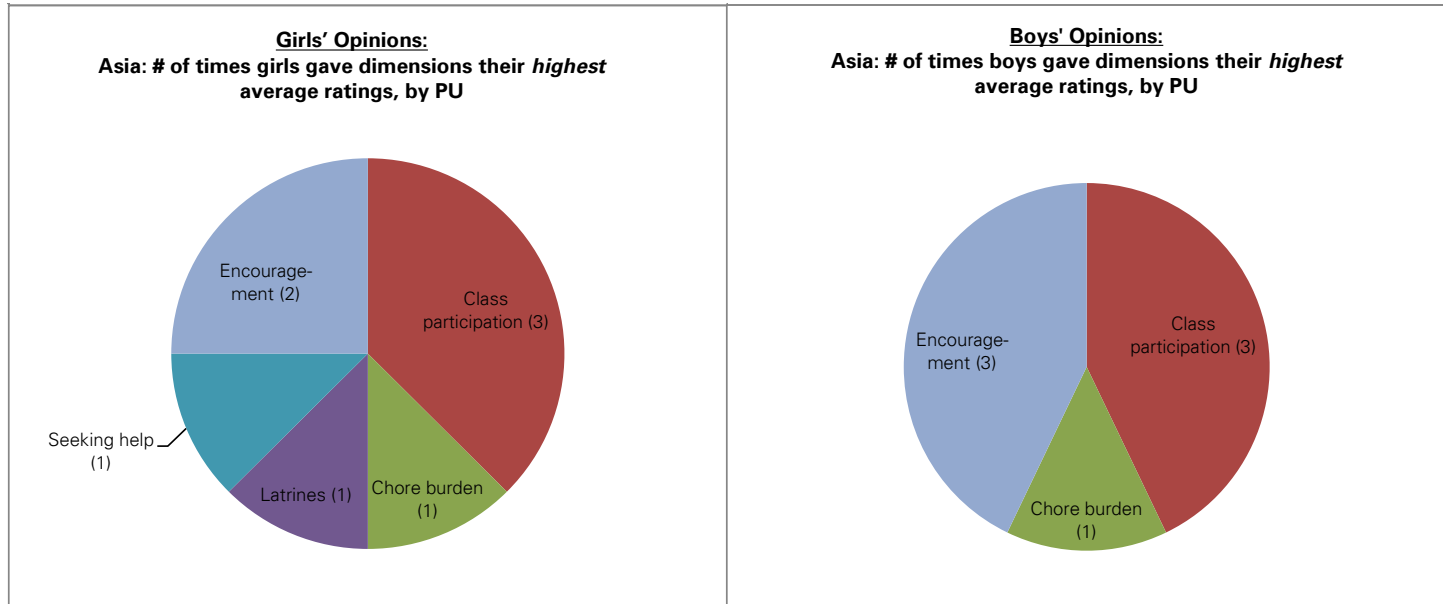


Figure 22: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions girls and boys rated the highest on average by PU in Asia*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected schools. The maximum number of PUs per region in the study is six, with two PUs per country, and two countries in Asia. Frequencies derive from data from selected schools and PUs and may not be representative of all schools in all PUs in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Class Participation and Encouragement

Girls and boys Plan spoke with in Bangladesh and Pakistan claimed that **class participation** and **encouragement** were the highest levels of gender equality at school for adolescent girls. In many schools in the study, girls are often encouraged to succeed academically as much as boys. High levels of encouragement also influence girls' participation in class. For instance, in Bangladesh, 85-87% of girls involved in the study claimed that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' participate in class as often as boys, and 78-94% stated that adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys. In Pakistan, 51-53% of girls involved in the study claimed that girls participate in class as often as boys, and 62-75% stated that adolescent girls are encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys.

"We are all equal in the classroom."

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

"Girls can participate in class freely like boys, because the teacher has treated boys and girls equally in the class. Girls also can share their problems with their female teachers."

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

Boys involved in the study reported higher levels of class participation for adolescent girls than girls did themselves: 90-91% of boys in Bangladesh and 74-75% of boys in Pakistan said that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' participate in class as often as boys.

"Girls usually do best, so they receive encouragement."

Adolescent Boy, Pakistan

"There is no discrimination between boys and girls in classroom. Teacher's give equal importance to both boys and girls."

Adolescent Boy, Bangladesh

"Girls are as intelligent as boys."

Adolescent Boy, Bangladesh

Girls and boys involved in the study also revealed that adolescent girls are often supported and treated equally by teachers.

"Girls can participate in class freely like boys, because the teacher has treated boys and girls equally in class. Girls also can share their problem with their female teacher."

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

"There is no discrimination between boys and girls in [the] classroom. Teachers give equal importance to both boys and girls."

Adolescent Boy, Bangladesh

"Teachers create opportunity equally for all. Teachers mostly do not prefer to ask questions from intelligent girls, but give preference to girls who appeared slow learners."

Adolescent Boy, Pakistan

On the other hand, some girls in Pakistan expressed concern that they were encouraged and valued less than boys in the classroom.

"Mostly students said as a girl they are not encouraged by teachers or parents to take leadership responsibilities, because they think only boys can be leaders."

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

"My father loves me a lot, so he encourages me. Teacher's don't do this."

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

Chore burden

In Asia, girls and boys who Plan spoke with revealed that **chore burden** at school was another high level of school equality by adolescent girls. In one programme area in Pakistan (PU Vehari), 84% of girls and 81% of boys claimed that adolescent girls 'always' or 'often' spend the same amount of time doing chores at school as boys. The findings were considerably lower in another programme area in Pakistan (PU Thatta): only 35% of girls and 42% of boys said that adolescent girls spend an equal amount of time doing chores at school. The findings were also lower in Bangladesh whereby 45-55% of girls and 53-67% of boys claimed that adolescent girls and boys 'always' or 'often' equally share chore burden at school.

One explanation for the higher levels of gender equality at school for girls around chore burden in Pakistan (PU Vehari) includes having a rotating schedule of chores involving boys equally as girls helping to promote gender equality in chore burden in the classroom. This is a unique example across the 11 countries in the study and it could be considered as a model practice to replicate in other schools and countries.

“Children do participate in the cleanliness of the room regularly. There is a turn for every two students per day and almost all the students take their turn. Those who have the turn to clean the classroom environment would come earlier than the school time and would do their task.”

Adolescent Boy, Pakistan

Although this system is in place, girls and boys said that adolescent girls are still seen as being largely responsible for chores in the classroom.

“The girls participate in cleanliness and tidiness more than boys.”

Adolescent Boy, Pakistan

“Mostly girls do chores because they are interested in this activity.”

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

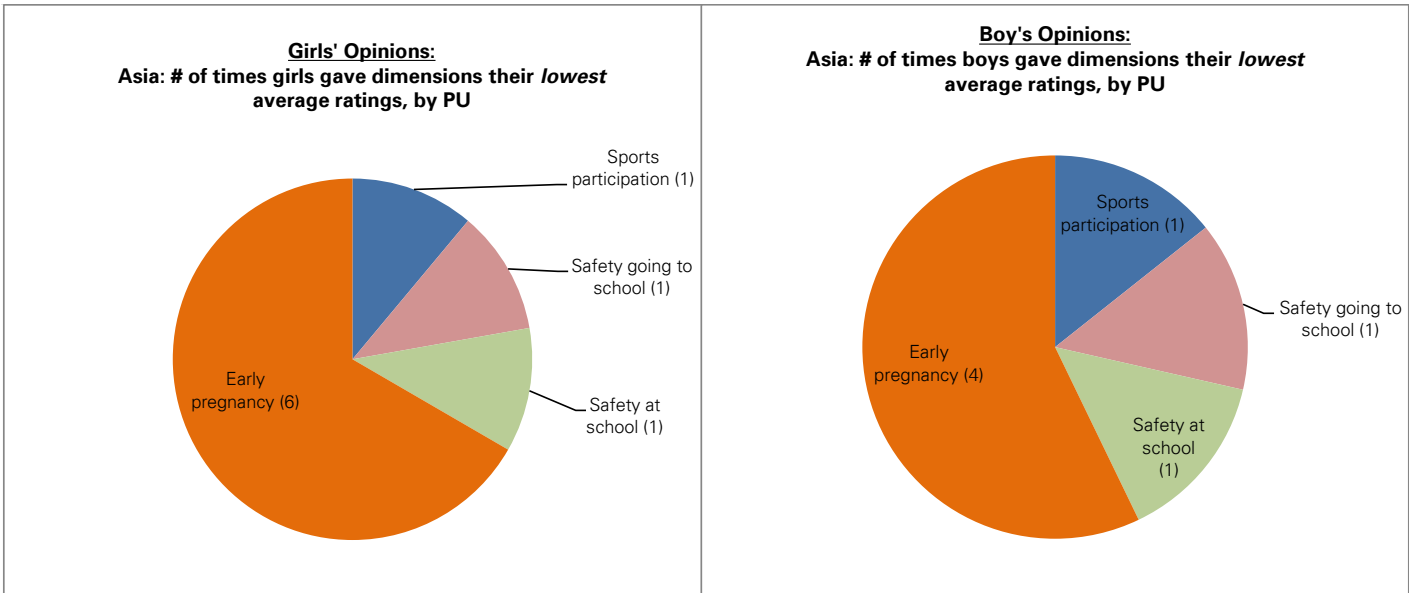
Lowest Rated Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls in Asia

Findings from the School Equality Scorecard: Lowest Dimensions of Gender Equality at School for Girls

In **Bangladesh**, Plan spoke with 271 girls in 10 schools and 266 boys in 10 schools in PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari. In **PU Barguna**, both girls and boys rated **safety going to school** and **early pregnancy** as the lowest dimensions of gender equality at schools for girls. In **PU Nilphamari**, girls and boys rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest dimension of school equality, and boys also rated **sports participation** as low.

In **Pakistan**, Plan spoke with 263 girls in 9 schools and 252 boys in 9 schools in PU Thatta and PU Vehari. In **PU Thatta**, both girls and boys rated **safety at school** and **early pregnancy** as the lowest levels. In **PU Vehari**, girls rated **sports participation** and **early pregnancy** as the lowest, while boys rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest area of gender equality at schools for girls.

Figure 23: School Equality Scorecard: Frequencies of dimensions girls and boys rated the lowest on average by PU in Asia*



* Frequencies refer to numbers of PUs by region in which girls rated a dimension highest on average across data from selected schools. The maximum number of PUs per region in the study is six, with two PUs per country, and two countries in Asia. Frequencies derive from data from selected schools and PUs and may not be representative of all schools in all PUs in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Early pregnancy

Girls and boys who participated in the study in these communities largely said that the lowest level of gender equality at school for girls relates to **early pregnancy** and girls not being able to return to school after having a baby. In Pakistan, over three-quarters of all girls (76-95%) and boys (74-84%) said that adolescent girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ continue school after having a baby.

“After pregnancy [...] girls do not attend the classes, because this is a mixed school. If it was a girls’ school, then they might come.”

Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

“Some of the pregnant girls are not allowed to appear even in the exam.” Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

Some of the girls noted that their schools will not allow a pregnant or married girl to attend school and they did not know of an example of an adolescent mother returning to school. These girls also mentioned that child marriage is common in communities of particular ethnic groups. In contrast, adolescent girls from educated families tend more often to return to their studies after childbirth or early marriage, particularly when their fathers or husbands value girls’ education and support them in doing so. Girls suggested that creating all-girls’ schools could be a way of increasing opportunities for pregnant girls, young mothers and married girls to continue their education.

Girls and boys in Bangladesh also expressed concerns about early pregnancy – over three-quarters of all girls (79-88%) and boys (74-84%) involved in the study said that adolescent girls ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ return to school after having a baby.

“Due to illness during pregnancy, they stop coming to school” and “They also stop coming to school as they meet their death while giving birth.”

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

“The husband does not permit his wife to come to school.”

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

“The in-laws do not allow them to come to school as they mean there is no use of education after getting married.”

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, girls interviewed reported that pregnant adolescent girls and new young mothers fear bullying and stigma if they try to continue their studies. Also, adolescent mothers’ increased caregiving and household work responsibilities reduce their time, energy and resources for returning to school. Married girls are considered ‘adults’ and it becomes no longer socially appropriate for them to attend school and interact with students in a classroom. Husbands, in-laws, and parents often expect an adolescent mother to focus on traditional gender roles and tasks of being a wife and mother. Some young mothers do not return to school because of health problems from early pregnancy and childbirth, or due to maternal mortality. In contrast, some girls who come from educated families in participating communities in Bangladesh tend to have more support for returning to their studies after having a child. Further, girls who have healthy pregnancies and safe childbirth experiences sometimes continue their studies, however this is rarer than girls leaving school, and rarer still the younger the girl may be given early pregnancy health risks and poor maternal outcomes.

Safety going to school

Safety going to and from school was another low rated aspect of gender equality at school, although the findings varied considerably. For instance, in one programme area in Pakistan (PU Vehari), 78% of girls and 63% of boys Plan spoke with said that adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' as safe as boys on their way to and from school. In another area (PU Thatta) however, only 33% of girls and 30% of boys said that adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' as safe as boys when travelling to and from school. Participants in Pakistan revealed that adolescent girls rarely walk to school alone because of safety risks, and that girls are often accompanied by a male family member. Some girls said they walk in groups with other girls to feel safer on their way to and from school.

“Rarely a girl came to school alone. Abnormal persons and hooting of bad boys restrict us from coming alone.” Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

“Once when I was on the way to school, a boy [tried to bother] me, but I did not feel fear. We walk in a group of girls so we don't feel fear.” Adolescent Girl, Pakistan

In Bangladesh, more boys (50-75%) than girls (34-42%) said that adolescent girls are 'always' or 'often' as safe as boys when travelling to and from school. Girls and boys cited similar reasons for adolescent girls being less safe than boys. These included:

- bullying, verbal abuse, and sexual harassment by boys and men on the streets;
- unsafe transportation due to abuse and attack by drivers or other passengers;
- being blackmailed with photos taken forcibly with mobile phones and posted on the internet;
- early and forced marriage as a result of blackmailing and threats;
- acid attacks; and
- sexual assault.

“Boys throw acid. If anything happened on the way to school, then girls cannot attend school. Boys share it with the others. Girls may even commit suicide for the abusive happening.”

Adolescent Boy, Bangladesh

Girls corroborated examples of some having committed suicide following an attack. Girls also emphasised that poorer girls are targeted more for attacks than girls from wealthier families. Also, girls who live closer to the school reported feeling safer on the way to and from school than girls who live farther away and must walk long distances.

“Three years back a guy took photo of a girl without her consent on the way to school. Then he attached his photo to hers and started threatening her by saying that, if she didn't agree to have an affair with him then he would show that photo to her family and tell false story of their relationship. Although not willing, still she had to get involved with him. Some days after [the start of] their love affair he got physically close to her and then left her. Out of shame the girl committed suicide.”

Adolescent Girl, Bangladesh

“Girls are not safe as boys because they are often harassed by the eve teasers. In transports, helpers try to hold their hand and stay closely.” Adolescent Boy, Bangladesh

The negative effects of low levels of safety when travelling to and from school can result in adolescent girls missing class or even dropping out of school.

Section 5: Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion

Speaking directly with adolescent girls and boys has allowed Plan, and diverse communities and schools where Plan works, to understand better the issues they face today—in their own words. In doing so, the unique tools and methodology used for this study have helped put adolescent girls' and boys' voices at the center of the Because I am a Girl campaign. The Girls Empowerment Star and School Equality Scorecard have provided innovative ways of asking girls and boys about their views and insights into factors underlying local experiences of adolescent girls' empowerment and gender equality in education. The results are already informing strong development programming and advocacy to support adolescent girls in accessing their rights as children.

Grounded in theory and practice on girls' empowerment, gender equality and child rights, the study aimed to build a discerning picture of adolescent girls' and boys' opinions and experiences through achieving three objectives: 1) to empower adolescent girls and boys; 2) to help Plan staff learn directly from girls and boys about their experiences and thereby improve development programming; and 3) report credible findings to influence programmes and advocacy to effect change. First, qualitative data from focus group discussions reflecting on the group's anonymous individual ratings provided rich insights into adolescent girls' and boys' lived realities. Group discussions conducted in girls' and boys' daily spoken language provided detailed, localised examples and interpretation of the findings, as well as facilitated participants' self-expression. The research process created safe environments in which adolescent girls and boys shared their perspectives candidly. Actively hearing adolescents' concerns opened up opportunities for them to take charge of their own development and advocate for relevant and responsive programmes and potential policy changes.

Second, in-depth consultations with over 7,000 adolescent girls and boys in the study are already supporting field managers in adjusting or designing programmes in the communities and schools where Plan works to align them with adolescents' voiced concerns. The tools' mixed-methods, active listening process helped enable field

managers and staff to respond to adolescent girls' priority issues locally. The quantitative data, using a 'participatory numbers' approach, allowed participants' perceptions to be summarised and compared within the study limitations. The study method builds on CCCD – Plan's core approach to development work. Given that a set of standards has been developed, which provides the framework for how CCCD is integrated into Plan's programmes and that the concepts of empowerment and participation underpin these standards, the study methodology is both consistent with CCCD and actively reinforces it.

Third, through the Hear Our Voices study, Plan, participating communities and schools gained current, actionable insights into the daily lives, struggles, accomplishments and aspirations of diverse adolescent girls and boys. While the findings are not nationally representative in each study country, they reflect the views of those who participated from a wide range of communities and schools where Plan works. Plan learned that while the situation on adolescent girls' empowerment and gender equality at school is improving in some areas, much work remains to be done to support girls in accessing their rights. While all girls in the study work daily to manage their resources and risks, keep themselves safe, learn and grow, they also all face persistent barriers fundamentally underpinned by gender inequality. Across the 11 countries, girls aspire to brighter futures than those lived by their mothers and grandmothers, and yet they face many of the same barriers and injustices that constrained their mothers' and grandmothers' empowerment and development. The situation of girls' empowerment and gender equality can only advance and improve when all members of society value girls equally to boys and support gender equality in all spheres of their lives.

Ultimately, the study results are a call to action, with adolescent girls and boys at the center as their own strong advocates. The study complements years of vital research into girls' rights and development and reinvigorates the call for action put forth by the 2008 'Girls Count: A Global Investment & Action Agenda' report.²⁴ The Hear Our Voices study underlines the broad agenda set forth in

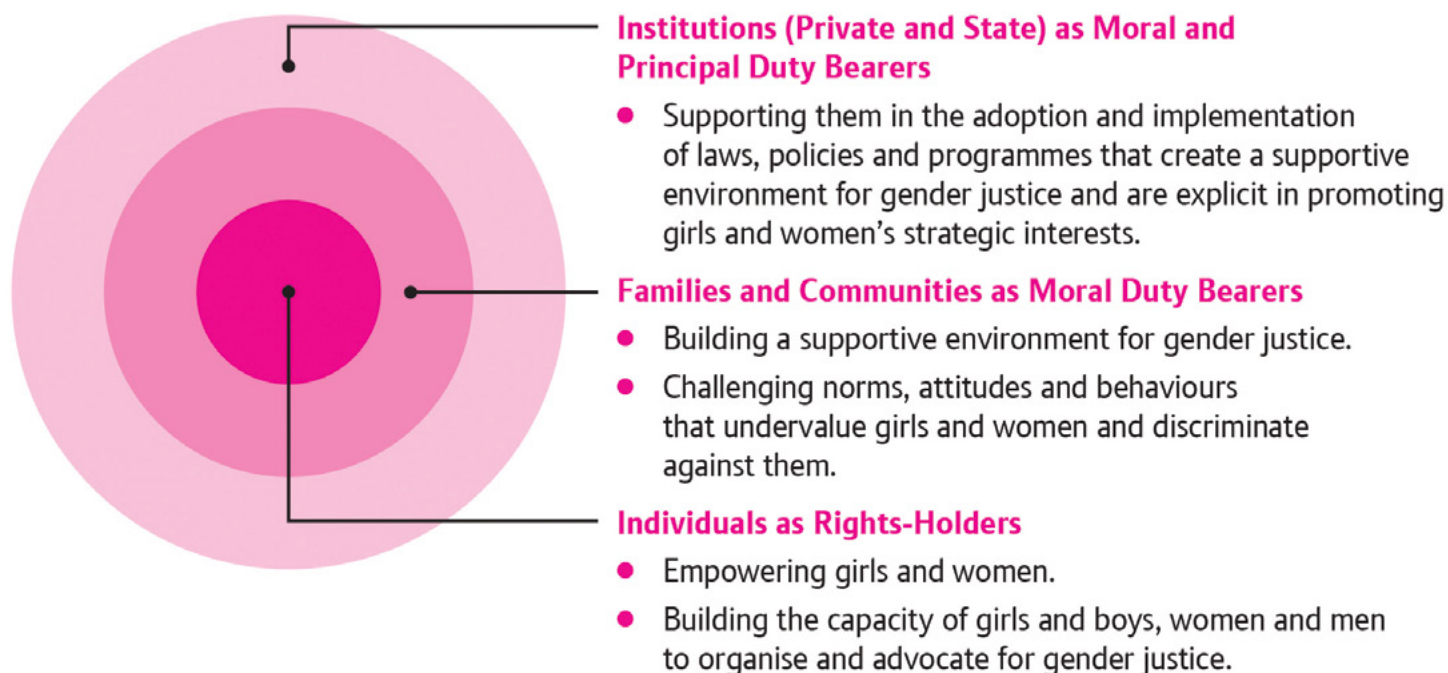
²⁴ Levine, R. C. Lloyd, M. Greene and C. Grown (2008) 'Girls Count: A Global Investment & Action Agenda', Center for Global Development: Washington.

the Girls Count series and movement for adolescent girls' rights in equitable development processes. The global agenda called for three actions: 1) count girls; 2) invest in girls; and 3) give girls a fair share.²⁵ Primary research from the Hear Our Voices study, and the call for action for girls' rights further complement Plan's annual State of the World's Girls report series advocating for an end to discrimination against girls and women, which is one of the main underlying causes of child poverty.²⁶

Ongoing violations and denials of adolescent girls' rights simply must not be allowed to continue. Inequitable social norms influence girls' perceptions of their own capacities

as much as others' social expectations for their behaviour. Integrating social norm change strategies into gender transformative programming and advocacy is needed over the long-term. Girls and boys seek change and have recommendations on entry points for interventions. Plan's Because I am a Girl campaign will continue working towards change at three levels for adolescent girls' rights, including with: 1) girls as rights holders; 2) family and community leaders to strengthen their support for girls' rights; and 3) government and other principal duty bearers to achieve changes in institutional support for girls' rights (see Figure 23).

Figure 24: Three Levels of Change Plan Works Across to Promote Adolescent Girls' Rights



²⁵Ibid.

²⁶See Plan International, *Because I am a Girl, State of the World's Girls* reports at: <http://plan-international.org/girls/reports-and-publications/all-reports-en.php?lang=en> (last accessed August 17, 2014).

5.2. Priorities to be Addressed Going Forward

Listening to girls' voices can inform Plan's work and the wider field of programmes and advocacy for adolescent girls' rights and development. Girls are full of smart, creative ideas for their empowerment and gender equality. These range from asking for equal time on sports fields at school, to enjoying parents' support for their education, to taking leadership to end all forms of violence against girls. Girls' ideas can bring about change in all spheres of their lives and across this critical life stage of adolescence. In the Hear Our Voices study, girls made key recommendations to help civil society support their empowerment and gender equality better. Boys and men are also ready to support adolescent girls' rights and empowerment. Fresh insights from the study will equip allies and advocates with knowledge, passion and strategies to influence policy makers and leaders. Much work needs to be done to tackle entrenched violations of girls' rights and create a more enabling and gender equal environment for their greater wellbeing and empowerment.

Girls' rights: Underpinning all recommendations is the observation that awareness must be raised of girls' rights, their power to make decisions, and of girls' own views of themselves as rights holders. This requires working with girls and boys, women and men directly. It also requires safe spaces for family and community reflection, discussion and priority setting to address pressing local violations of adolescent girls' rights.

School: Parental support for girls' education, particularly fathers', must be promoted, along with teachers' equal support and treatment of girls in the classroom. Barriers to girls' secondary school completion—early pregnancy, poverty, violence, and social stigma—must be addressed before serious advances in girls' education outcomes can be achieved globally.

Pregnancy: Adolescent girls must be able to claim their rights to control their own body, negotiate safer sexual relations, and make decisions about their reproductive health. Girls must be able to return to school after having a child and enjoy equal encouragement and support from parents, teachers and classmates. NGO trainings to address early pregnancy and promote girls' rights to education are making inroads.

Household work/chore burden at school:

Adolescent girls' abilities to complete their education requires that they are not overburdened with household work and chores at school. Being responsible for the majority of chores at home and at school takes time away from their studies, frustrates their aspirations, and limits their achievements.

Speaking up and feeling valued: While some adolescent girls feel supported by their families in expressing their concerns, their abilities to speak up and feel that their concerns matter to the men, boys, women and other girls in their lives can make a large difference in girls' needs being addressed and their rights upheld.

Marriage: While some girls feel supported by their family to control if and when to get married, many girls are denied their right to have a say and have the last word in this important life decision. While many mothers who were forced into early marriage do not wish for their daughters to face the same fate, many turn to early or forced marriage as answers to poverty and social pressures. Girls and parents must be supported in ending early and forced child marriage as a harmful practice and violation of girls' rights.

Violence: Violence against girls emerged as frighteningly normative. Girls have a right to be free from violence, including fear of violence. It is girls' right to feel and be safe in their home and community. Girls also have a right to a safe school environment, which is an essential factor for improving girls' school completion.

School latrines: Adolescent girls must have access to safe, single-sex, clean sanitation facilities at school. It is unacceptable for school latrines to persist as health hazards and crime zones for girls.

Engaging boys and men as champions

of change: Men and boys' engagement as allies is vital for addressing persistent barriers to adolescent girls' rights, empowerment and gender equality at school. Boys have the opportunity to become champions of change and play an active role in challenging harmful social norms that perpetuate gender inequality.

Innovative and sustained efforts are needed to accelerate change and tackle entrenched violations of girls' rights to create an enabling environment for their empowerment.

Plan will promote the Girls Empowerment Star and School Equality Scorecard, and their methodology as a contribution to knowledge and practice for others working on adolescent girls' empowerment and gender equality at school.

The tools are in line with current international efforts to bring girls' voices and priorities into the post-2015 development agenda. These include the 2014 'Girl Summit Charter on ending Female Genital Mutilation and Child, Early and Forced Marriage'²⁸, and also 'The Girl Declaration', which set forth agreements to uphold girls' rights, and forward calls for post-2015 development actions for girls' rights and ending poverty. Vital to all of these are efforts to actively listen to girls, value them, and—together with them—advocate for and monitor progress on their empowerment, gender equality and the fulfillment of their rights.

Adolescent girls and boys both can be powerful forces for change in ending harmful practices and creating more just and equal societies. Everyone in the lives of adolescents are needed to take action to transform the pressing con-

cerns that adolescent girls and boys identified in this study. The tools provide a way to improve active listening and data collection processes as empowering for adolescent girls and boys to reflect on their experiences, and express their views in a safe, confidential space where their concerns will be heard. Using insights directly from adolescent girls and boys can inform the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of relevant, quality programmes and services. Hearing adolescent girls voices helps raise their profile and visibility to development practitioners and managers, family members, school officials, community leaders, decision-makers and policy makers. Responding to adolescent girls' expressed priorities can help them seize opportunities equally to boys, and help drive sustainable change in their homes, communities, schools and nations. Adolescence is a vital and opportune time to hear girls' concerns and design programmes and policies to ensure their safe, healthy development into adults.

²⁸ Girl Summit (2014) 'The Girl Summit Charter on Ending FGM and Child, Early and Forced Marriage', Girl Summit: London. See: <http://www.girlsummit2014.org/content/docs/CharterEnglish.pdf> (last accessed, August 20, 2014).

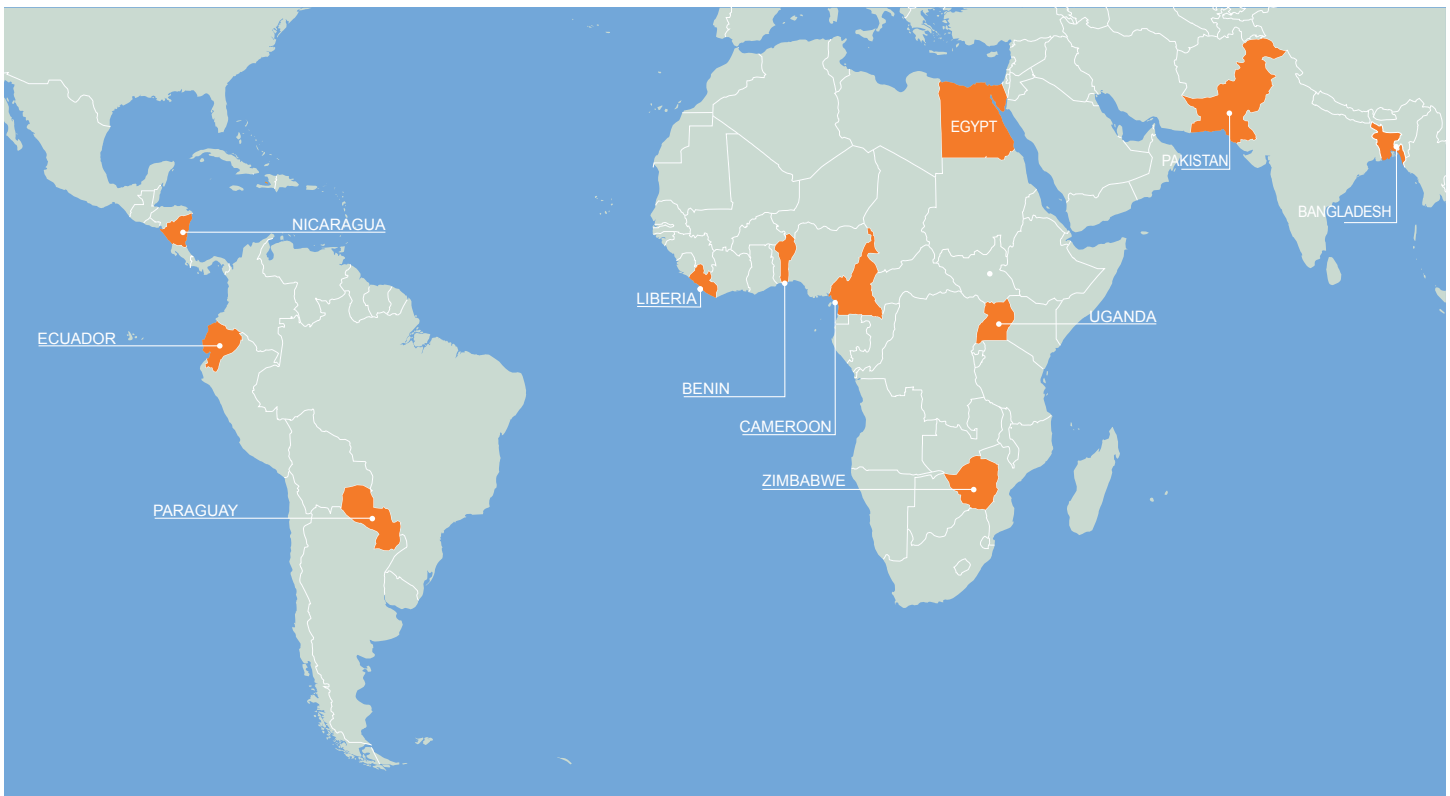
²⁹ Girl Effect (2013) 'The Girl Declaration: A Call to Action for the Post-2015 Development Agenda', Girl Effect: Portland. See: <http://www.girleffect.org/2015-beyond/the-declaration/> (last accessed August 20, 2014).

Appendix 1: Country data snapshots*

Plan International spoke directly with over 7,000 adolescent girls and boys, ages 12-16, in 11 countries across four regions. This unique and innovative study puts adolescent girls' and boys' voices at the centre of Plan's work – a core belief that underpins strong development programming.

Across the 11 countries, adolescent girls and boys involved in the study shared insights about girls' empowerment and levels of gender equality at school. Things are getting better for girls, albeit slowly in many areas. Many girls are now able to dream of completing school and having a better future, beyond being wives and mothers. On the other hand, girls also revealed that they are constantly limited, constrained and subjected to injustices that stunt their opportunities in life. While many of these findings are not new, we cannot ignore the level of injustice described in this study. The study's results bring the daily realities that girls face into vivid colour.

These country snapshots provide an overview of key themes and patterns in girls' and boys' perceptions. The country snapshots present the quantitative and qualitative findings from: three selected communities (on average) for the Girls Empowerment Star, and five selected schools (on average) for the School Equality Scorecard. 'Spider' or 'radar' charts have been provided to show differences between participants' ratings between communities (for the Girls Empowerment Star) or between schools (for the School Equality Scorecard). Finally, the country results provide a discussion of findings across selected communities (Girls Empowerment Star) or schools (School Equality Scorecard) according to dimensions for which participants gave their highest average responses and their lowest average responses.



*See Appendices II-VII for distribution tables of weighted average percentages and ratings per dimension, by PU and by country.

Country Results and Key Findings: Central and South America (Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay)

ECUADOR

Ecuador: Girls Empowerment Star



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Ecuador**, Plan spoke with 189 adolescent girls in PU Cotopaxi and PU Ventanas, in six communities.

On average, girls in **PU Cotopaxi** felt most empowered in accessing nine-years of **school**, and least empowered in deciding if they get **pregnant**.

In Plan Ecuador's **PU Ventanas**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered around **marriage** and least empowered to **speak up** in front of men and boys.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Ecuador's PU Cotopaxi selected communities

Across three communities of Plan Ecuador's PU Cotopaxi, the highest ratings girls gave on average were for the **school** dimension. Of 93 girls interviewed, many reported that girls in their communities "often" (42%) or "always" (27%) complete at least nine years of school. In the focus group discussions, girls attributed educational attainment to parental support, particularly from fathers. Girls aspire to develop livelihoods with their academic skills, and feel encouraged by their parents and teachers to do so. Still, a further 22% of girls interviewed in PU Cotopaxi reported that girls in their communities only "sometimes" finish nine years of school. Examples given for why some girls do not continue their studies included a heavy household work burden and normative expectations that girls do domestic chores. Girls also explained that those who lack parental encouragement or financial support for their studies are more likely to abandon their studies. Finally, girls raised early **pregnancy** as a prime and frequent factor in school dropout in their communities.

"... some girls do not finish tenth grade because they get pregnant and sometimes the parents do not make themselves responsible. They get married and leave school and some parents abandon them, then they don't have anyone to support them to work and advance in life. On the other hand, for the majority of girls in this community, parents do support girls to finish with basic education."

Girl, PU Cotopaxi community

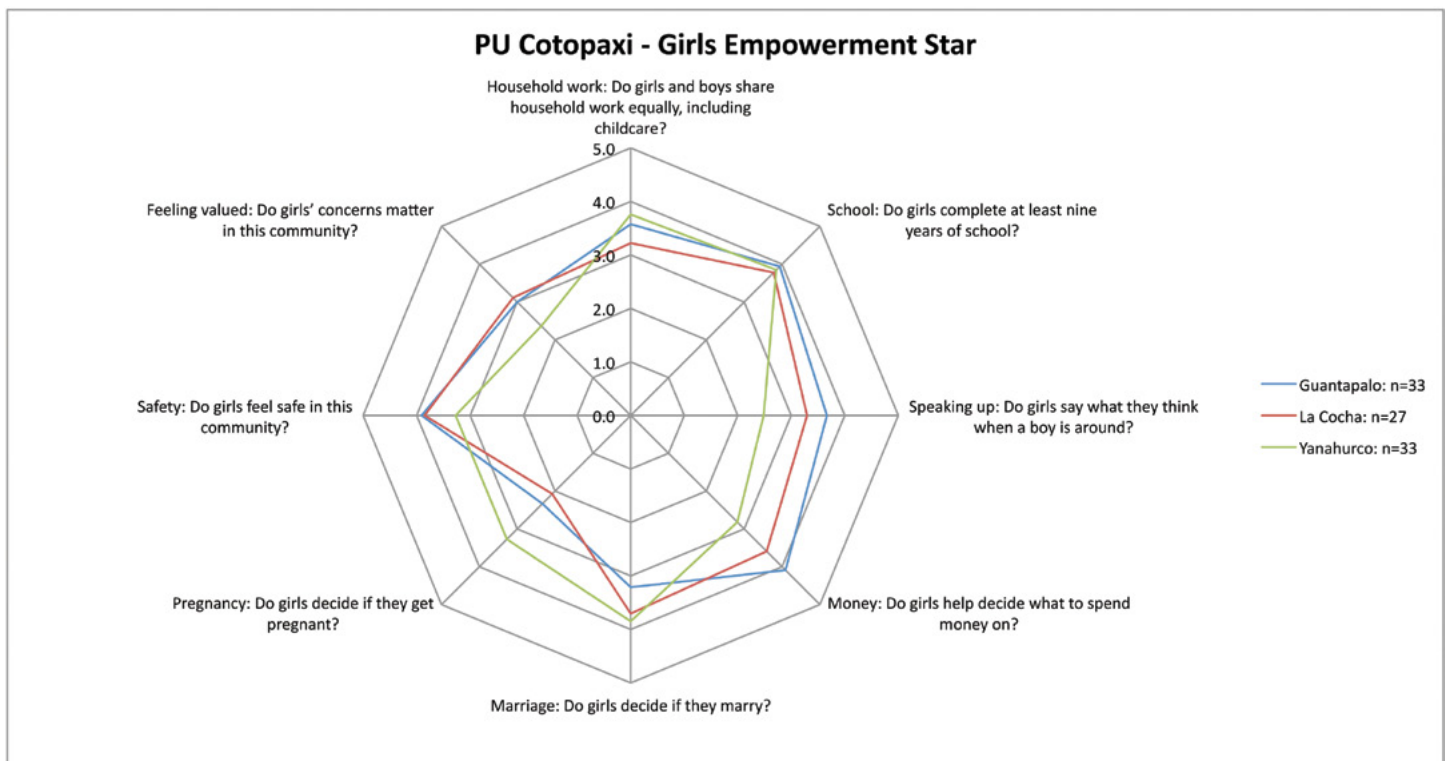
Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Ecuador's PU Ventanas selected communities

In Ecuador's PU Ventanas, girls interviewed across three communities rated the **marriage** dimension most highly on average. Of 96 girls interviewed, 44% reported that girls "sometimes" decide over marriage. A further 41% reported that girls "often" (30%) or "always" (11%) decide over marriage in their communities. Reasons in support of girls' decision-making over marriage included that girls love their male partners and want to be with them. Girls decide to get married and live with their partners also in order to leave their natal homes. Some girls marry young for fear of being judged or punished for having sex without being married. Many girls cited early pregnancy as a driver of marriage at a young age. Some explained that their partner or parents coerce them into the decision to marry due to social expectations. Some parents, particularly those of poorer households, force their daughters to marry older men with money and resources.

"The girls do not decide to marry, but the parents oblige them to do so for ambition (men that have land, a car or a job) with older men. For example, if the girls are 14 years old, their parents marry them with someone that is 25-30 years old. In other cases, girls leave their house because they get pregnant."

Girl, PU Ventanas community

Figure 25: Girls Empowerment Star: Ecuador, PU Cotopaxi average ratings by community



N= 3 communities per PU; Cotopaxi n=93 girls, ages 12-16

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Ecuador's PU Cotopaxi selected communities

The lowest average ratings that girls from PU Cotopaxi communities gave were for the pregnancy dimension. In their views, girls on average "seldom" (38%) decide over **pregnancy**. Reasons given were that girls are not seen as, and do not see themselves as decision-makers over pregnancy or over their own bodies. Girls' voiced a sense of not having the ability to decide, as decisions are 'not up to them', due to young age and being a girl. Girls lack information and knowledge of contraception methods, and of their sexual and reproductive anatomy and physiology. Family planning methods are a subject that girls listed as causing fear and embarrassment. Most simply hope that 'nothing will happen to them' concerning pregnancy. Many do not have negotiating power with male sexual partners, and said that it is the boy or man

who decides over whether or not to use a condom. Girls also said boys and men deceive girls saying they will take responsibility for a child, but then abandon the girl upon a pregnancy. Factors that protect against early pregnancy in girls' views are awareness that they are not ready to raise a child, and a desire not to get pregnant early. Girls linked the concept of 'empowerment' to the ability to become decision-makers over pregnancy, negotiate safe sex with male partners and prevent early pregnancy.

“... overall, the girls think that they almost never decide if they want to get pregnant or not, ... they do not know how to avoid pregnancy and think that nothing is going to happen to them. This shows that there is a lack of knowledge about pregnancy prevention methods.”

Girl, PU Cotopaxi community

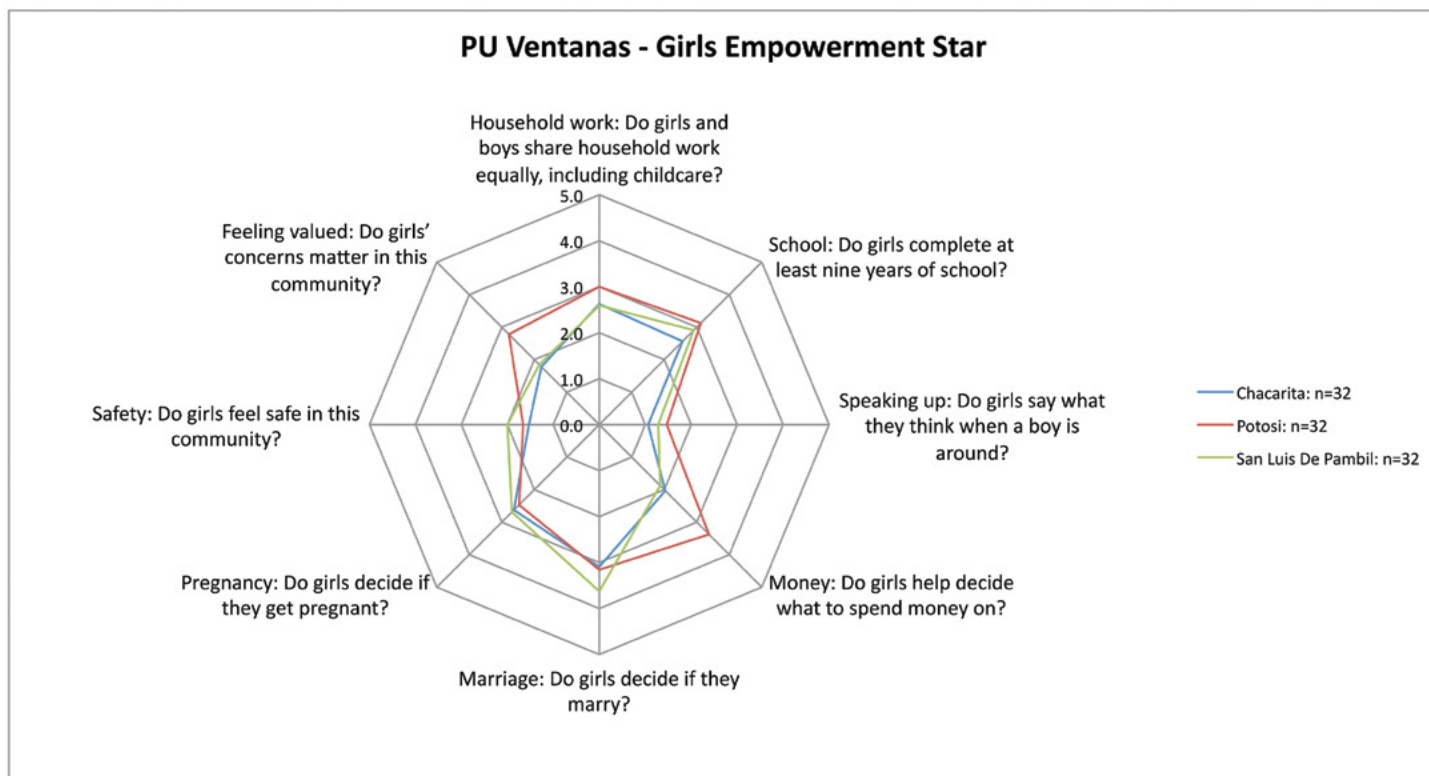
Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Ecuador's PU Ventanas selected communities

Girls from participating PU Ventanas communities rated **speaking up** the lowest on average of all dimensions of the Girls Empowerment Star. In these communities, girls “seldom” (13%) or “never” (80%) say what they think in front of a male. Girls said that they never say what they think when a man is around, as they are embarrassed and afraid to speak up. In their views, girls in their communities lack self-confidence. Many do not talk to adults in general. Girls think that ‘men should not know about girls’ problems,’ and fear that men will not ‘respect their confidentiality’ in the community. Some girls recognised that not speaking up, or keeping quiet, can increase girls’ risks of harm and violations of their rights. Girls from PU Ventanas also gave low average ratings to the **safety** and **feeling valued** dimensions, suggesting a connection between girls’ sense that they cannot speak up about their needs, that they seldom feel safe, that their concerns do not matter, and they seldom feel valued in their communities.

“Girls want to have more self-confidence to not feel afraid or ashamed to express their feeling and needs.”

Girl, PU Ventanas community

Figure 26: Girls Empowerment Star: Ecuador, PU Ventanas average ratings by community



N= 3 communities per PU; Ventanas n=96 girls, ages 12-16

Ecuador: School Equality Scorecard



Findings from the School Equality Scorecard:

In **Ecuador**, Plan spoke with 313 girls in 10 schools and 325 boys in 10 schools in PU Chimborazo and PU Quito.

In **PU Chimborazo**, girls rated **encouragement** as the highest level of gender equality at school for girls, while boys rated **encouragement** and **class participation** as the highest. Girls and boys said that **early pregnancy** was the lowest level of gender equality at school for girls.

In **PU Quito**, both girls and boys rated **encouragement** as the highest and girls also felt that **class participation** was a high area of gender equality at school for girls. Girls rated **latrines** as the lowest and boys felt that **early pregnancy** was the lowest area of gender equality at school for girls.

Table 12: School Equality Scorecard: Ecuador, dimensions with highest and lowest average scores, girls and boys ages 12-16

Ecuador	Dimensions with highest average scores		Dimensions with lowest average scores	
	PU Chimborazo	PU Quito	PU Chimborazo	PU Quito
Girls	Encouragement 4.2	Class participation 3.8	Early pregnancy 2.1	Latrines 2.1
		Encouragement 3.8		
Boys	Class participation 4.3	Encouragement 4.1	Early pregnancy 2.0	Early pregnancy 2.7
	Encouragement 4.3			

Highest average scored dimensions: Plan Ecuador, PU Chimborazo and PU Quito selected schools

Girls and boys interviewed in PU Chimborazo and PU Quito in Ecuador gave their highest average scores corresponding to “often” to the **class participation** and **encouragement** dimensions. There appeared to be a correlation between the two dimensions, with girls’ and boys’ scores suggesting that most think they participate equally in class activities, and are encouraged equally to succeed academically. However, girls’ scores on class participation from PU Quito were slightly lower than those from PU Quito boys or PU Chimborazo boys or girls.

“With respect to encouragement [...] girls are encouraged to study; the teachers, fathers, mothers and their classmates encourage the girls to continue their studies so that they can enhance their condition and reach their goals and objectives.”

Boy, PU Chimborazo school

“The girls and boys are encouraged by their family and teachers, especially by their parents. Their parents and teachers support them in completing their studies and advise them to complete high school, obtain good grades, and study in order to pass their year. When they have good grades, their parents reward them with money and congratulations.”

Girl, PU Chimborazo school

“Boys are encouraged as much as girls to excel in their school work. The boys say that both boys and girls need that encouragement.”

Boy, PU Quito school

“We all participate in class because it gives us the opportunity to talk and to present in front of class. The boys interrupt us when we participate, pull our hair, bother us, push us, ask to borrow things in a rude manner, and take our things. Girls participate more than boys in the grade. Only three boys participate and the teachers do not say anything. They don’t know the answer when the teachers ask or they make fun of things. The teacher has to tell the girls not to answer so that the boys answer.”

Girl, PU Quito school

Lowest average scored dimensions: Plan Ecuador, PU Chimborazo and PU Quito

Girls and boys of PU Chimborazo and PU Quito also commonly gave their lowest average scores of “seldom” to the **early pregnancy** dimension. For the two PUs, there was considerable variability in girls’ responses, suggesting a range of views on whether girls continue school after having a baby. Reasons girls voiced mostly illustrated “never” and “seldom” as response options, however views differed between girls, and between PUs. Overall, girls and boys’ average scores for early pregnancy tended to be lower among those interviewed from schools in PU Chimborazo than those in PU Quito.

“...the girl would not continue school because: Other girls may make fun of them...the husband, parents and in-laws will no longer support them and they feel ashamed to go back. Additionally, they have to work to support the baby and take care of the husband.”

Girl, PU Chimborazo school

“Boys say that there are no young girls who have become pregnant, but there have been cases of adolescents who have and also have married. However, they do not continue school because they are embarrassed to go to school with the baby. They do not have the money for food and studies. Their husbands don’t allow them to go to school, are jealous, and make them cook and clean. Further, schools do not allow pregnant girls or girls with babies because they cry.”

Boy, PU Chimborazo school

“...they continue to study because they have all the right.”

Girl, PU Quito school

“The majority of boys commented that it is complicated for an adolescent to continue studying when they get pregnant; they have to take care of their baby and have to work to be able to support him [or her]. The boys also mention that if the girl wants to continue studying, she needs to have someone else to take care of the baby.”

Boy, PU Quito

Average scores across most dimensions tended to be higher in PU Chimborazo than PU Quito participating communities. Key differences in scores included much lower average scores on **latrines** in PU Quito than in Chimborazo, particularly for girls. Scores varied most among girls and between schools of PU Chimborazo, and both girls and boys of PU Quito schools.

“[Girls] can use the bathroom without a problem and they like them.”

Girl, PU Chimborazo school

“Girls do not like going into the bathrooms because they share them with boys.”

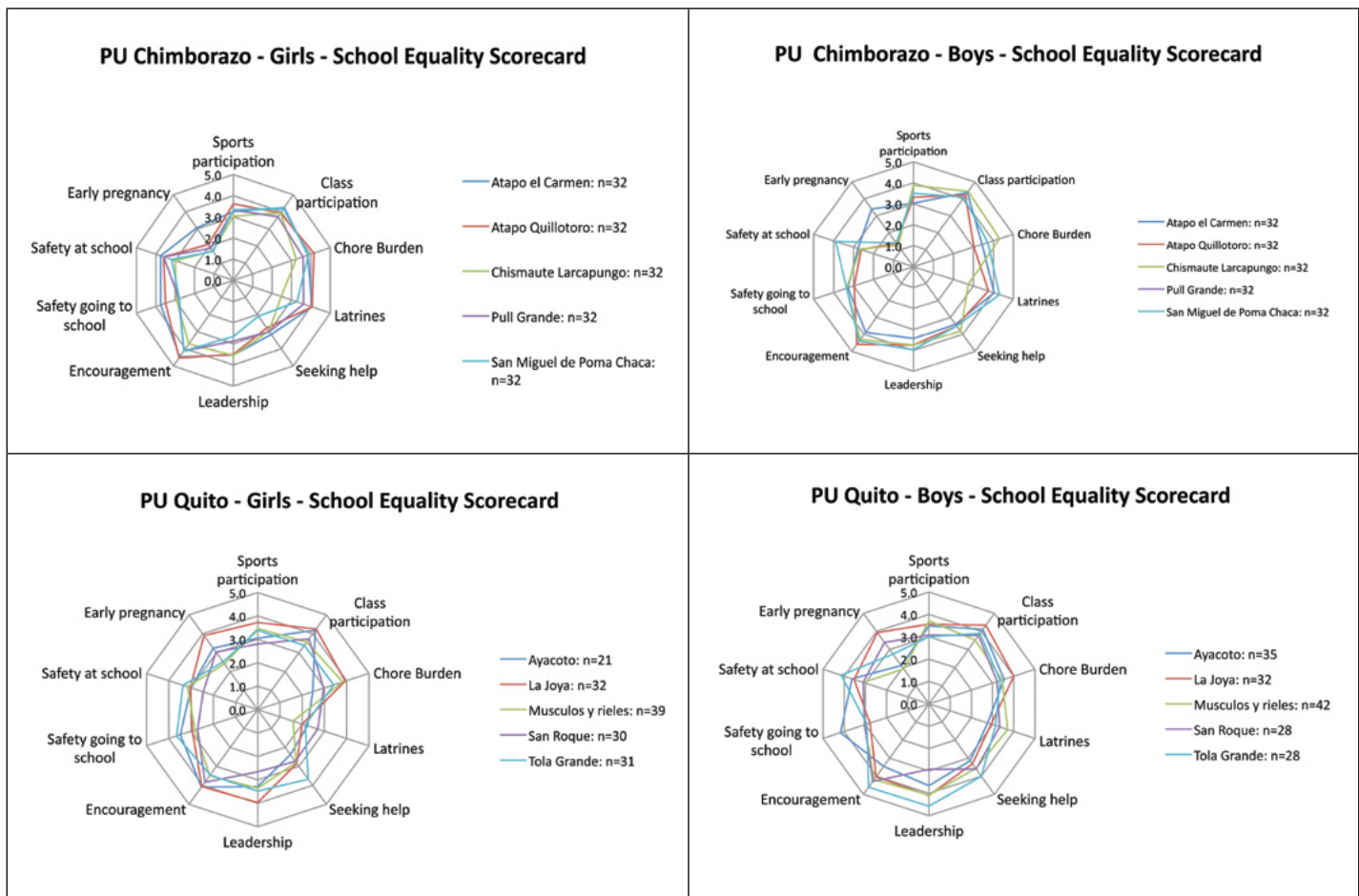
Girl, PU Chimborazo school

“The bathrooms are dirty, the walls are all scratched and girls say that the boys climb on the doors to spy on them.”

Girl, PU Quito school

Across PU Cotopaxi and PU Ventanas, ratings averaged across participating communities showed significant similarities and differences. The **marriage** and **pregnancy** dimensions showed similar average ratings across the two PUs. The **safety** dimension showed the lowest variability in ratings of all dimensions, and yet a great difference in average ratings. PU Ventanas average ratings on **safety**, **speaking up**, and **feeling valued** were significantly lower than those girls reported for PU Cotopaxi.

Figure 27: School Equality Scorecard:
Ecuador, PU Chimborazo and PU Quito average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16



NICARAGUA

Nicaragua: Girls Empowerment Star



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Nicaragua**, Plan spoke with 175 adolescent girls in PU Chontales and PU VEC, in six communities.

On average, girls in **PU Chontales** felt most empowered in deciding when to get **married**, and least empowered around aspects of **household work** and **pregnancy**.

In **PU VEC**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered around **marriage** and **safety**, and least empowered about **speaking up** and **household work**.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Nicaragua's PU Chontales selected communities

In the three communities that participated from Plan Nicaragua's Chontales PU, girls rated the **marriage** dimension most highly. In their views, girls in their communities "always" (43%) or "often" (10%) are the ones to decide over their own marriages. Girls explained factors in marriage decisions to include marrying boys or older men with money for convenience, particularly when parents are no longer able to maintain them due to poverty. Of girls interviewed in Chontales communities, 28% responded that they "sometimes" decide over marriage, explaining that for some girls, their religion forbids them to marry a boy or man of a different religion.

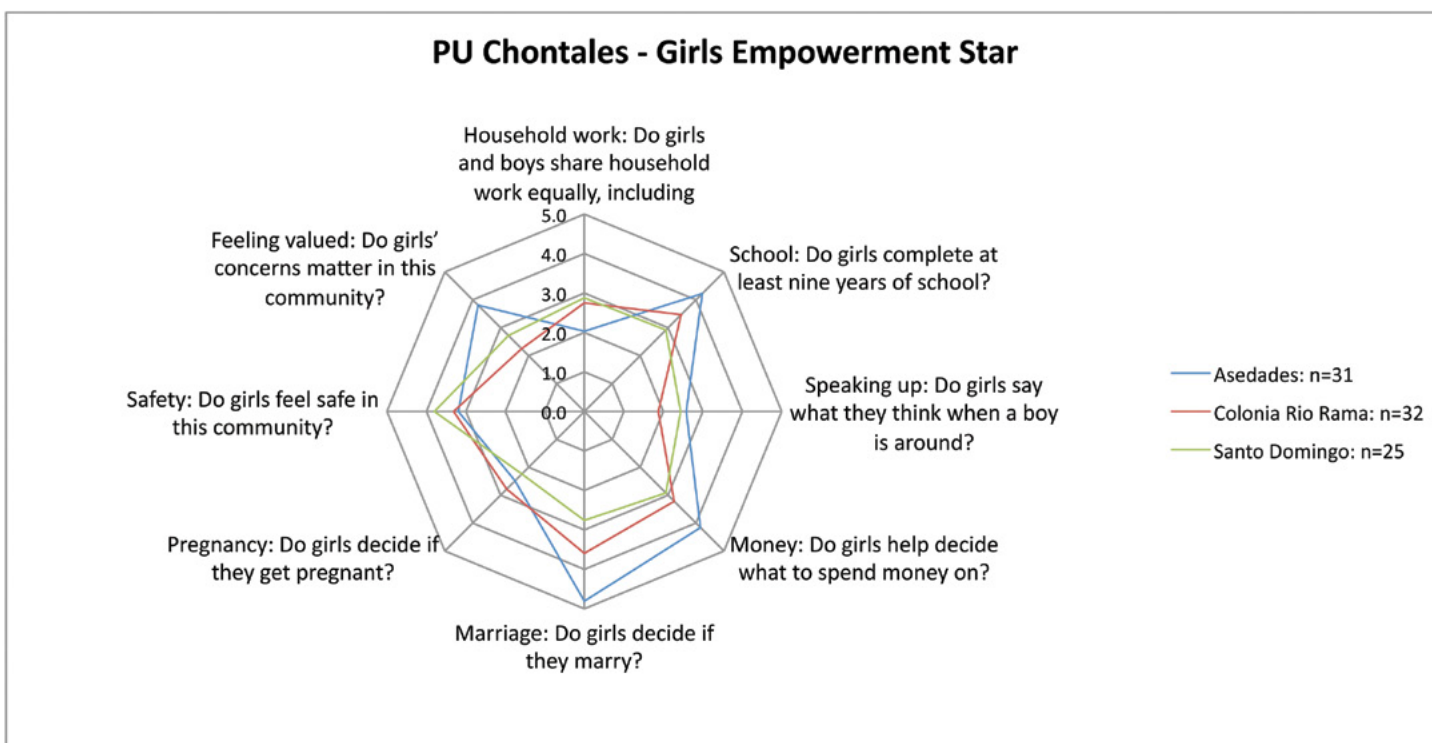
"Some girls marry because their boyfriends have money. There are girls 16 years old that marry adults 22 to 24 years old."

Girl, PU Chontales community

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Nicaragua's PU VEC selected communities

In PU VEC, girls rated **marriage** and **safety** higher on average than other dimensions. Of those interviewed, 41% responded that girls in their community "sometimes" and 10% "often" decide over marriage. Girls in this PU did not know of any girl who had been forced to marry, and saw girls as being the ones to decide over if, when and whom to marry. Factors working against girls' decision-making over **marriage** included when boyfriends pressure girls for "proof of love" by having unprotected sex. Also, some girls' parents arrange marriages with men for land or money. Asked about their **safety** in their community, 42% of PU VEC girls interviewed responded they "sometimes" feel safe. A further 19% reported, "often" and 21% "always." Girls who are always with a sister, cousin or other family member in or outside of the house, reported feeling safe more regularly. Girls who only sometimes or seldom feel safe reported the view that 'there is no security' for girls in their community, and that 'drunk and aggressive men' make walking in the streets hazardous, particularly at night. Girls said that boys are also often harmed when walking in the streets at night.

Figure 28: Girls Empowerment Star: Nicaragua, PU Chontales average ratings by community



N= 3 communities per PU; Chontales n=88 girls, ages 12-16

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Nicaragua's PU Chontales selected communities

The lowest rated dimensions on average in PU Chontales participating communities were **household work** and **pregnancy**. While 45% of girls interviewed reported that girls and boys "always" share **household work** equally, including childcare, 19% responded "seldom" and 24% responded, "never." Examples to illustrate their ratings included that girls are expected to work with their mothers in and outside of the house, and to help provide for their families. Further, girls "always" do the work of caring for younger siblings when the mother is working. Expectations for girls' household work negatively affect girls' time for school studies and leisure. Concerning **pregnancy**, while 47% reported that girls "sometimes" decide over pregnancy, a further 16% responded, "seldom," and 26% said "never." Girls said that it is not they who decide over pregnancy. Men often leave pregnant girls without helping them. Some girls decide to abort the pregnancy, while others become single mothers. Girls emphasised that many become pregnant by rape.

"There are girls who are forced to marry because they are pregnant. They get married with the pregnancy, but they do not want it. Many are pregnant by rape. They did not choose to become pregnant."
 Girl, PU Chontales community

Girls from both PU Chontales and PU VEC reported serious security concerns with views suggesting that violence against girls has become normative in their communities.

"I just feel safe with my family, because no one else cares for us. Rape and kidnapping cases are a given."
 Girl, PU Chontales community

"At night, I do not feel safe. I don't feel safe in school either, as the boys don't respect us. A girl, my cousin, was raped in daytime in the park. Another cousin was also raped. Girls cannot go out, only in short moments, even in the day, and should go accompanied."
 Girl, PU Chontales community

“There are neighbourhoods that are dangerous, and there are gangs. Also in the house, girls do not feel safe. [...] There are stepfathers abusing stepdaughters and mothers do not believe them. Girls feel confused.”

Girl, PU Chontales community

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Nicaragua’s PU VEC selected communities

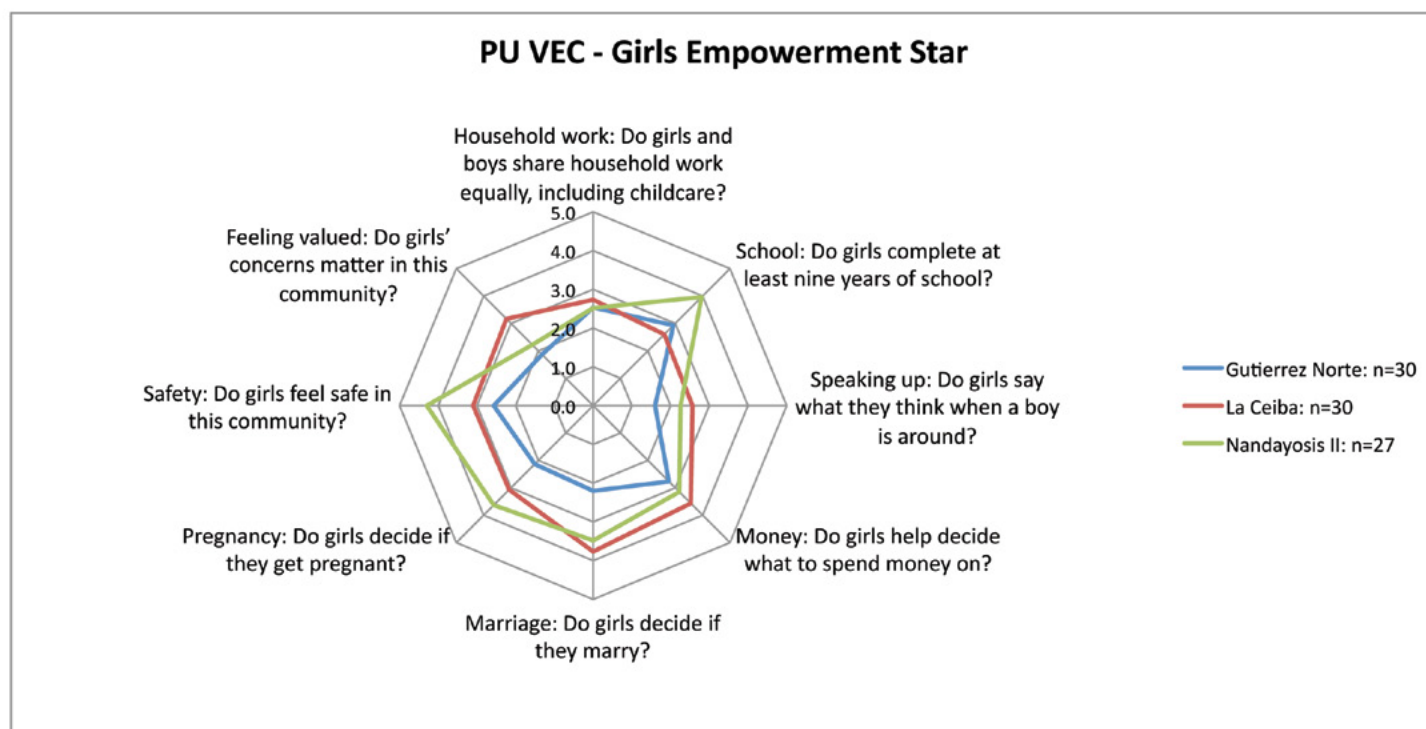
The lowest average ratings reported by girls in PU VEC communities included **household work** and **speaking up**. 47% of girls said that boys “sometimes” share household work equally, including childcare. A further 31 % reported, “seldom” and 11 %, “never.” Brothers do not help girls and use gender roles and responsibilities of what is considered ‘girls work’ versus ‘boys work’ as an excuse. Concerning whether girls say what they think in front of a boy, girls on average reported, “seldom” (38%) or “never” (33%). Girls explained that although boys sometimes listen to them, they do not help them with their concerns. Girls do not trust men, and fear men will verbally or physically abuse them if they speak up. Some girls particularly fear angering their father. **Speaking up** appears connected with **feeling valued**, with PU VEC girls reporting that they only “some-times” (36%), “seldom” (22%) or “never” (28%) feel that girls concerns matter in their community.

Similarities in average ratings across PU Chontales and PU VEC communities include moderate to low ratings on the **household work** and **pregnancy** dimensions. **Speaking up** shows higher average ratings among girls interviewed in PU Chontales versus PU VEC. **Safety** and **pregnancy** show greater variability in ratings. Girls from both PU Chontales and PU VEC emphasised grave security concerns with views suggesting that violence is entrenched in their communities.

“In the community, there is no security. There are aggressive people making big problems out of little problems. Drunk and lazy people can be a hazard. Women tend not to go out late at night. The boys also face danger, but they go out, walking in the streets, and can also be harmed.”

Girl, PU VEC community

Figure 29: Girls Empowerment Star: Nicaragua, PU VEC average ratings by community



N= 3 communities per PU; VEC n=87 girls, ages 12-16

NICARAGUA

Nicaragua: School Equality Scorecard



Findings from the School Equality Scorecard:

In **Nicaragua**, 270 girls in 10 schools and 284 boys in 10 schools in PU Chontales and PU VEC.

In **PU Chontales**, girls rated **encouragement** and **leadership** as the highest levels of gender equality at school for girls, while boys said that **encouragement** and **chore burden** were the highest. Both girls and boys said that latrines and early pregnancy were the lowest levels of gender equality at school for girls.

In **PU VEC**, girls felt that **class participation** and **leadership** were the highest areas of gender equality at school for girls, while adolescent boys said that **chore burden** and **encouragement** were the highest areas. Girls felt that **latrines** and **early pregnancy** were the lowest areas of school equality, while boys claimed **early pregnancy** and **safety going to school** were the lowest areas of gender equality at school for girls.

Table 13: School Equality Scorecard: Nicaragua, dimensions with highest and lowest average scores, girls and boys, ages 12-16

Nicaragua	Dimensions with highest average scores		Dimensions with lowest average scores	
	PU Chontales	PU VEC	PU Chontales	PU VEC
Girls	Leadership 4.3	Class participation 4.1	Latrines 2.0	Latrines 2.3
	Encouragement 4.3	Leadership 4.0	Early pregnancy 2.5	Early pregnancy 2.4
Boys	Chore burden 4.3	Chore burden 4.3	Latrines 2.3	Early pregnancy 2.0
	Encouragement 4.3	Encouragement 4.2	Early pregnancy 2.4	Safety going to school 2.6

Highest average scored dimensions: Plan Nicaragua, PU Chontales and PU VEC selected schools

Girls interviewed from participating schools in PU Chontales and PU VEC scored **leadership** the highest of the School Equality Scorecard dimensions, responding on average “often” to the question of whether they participate as leaders in student groups as much as boys. Girls’ comments and examples illustrate some variability in views. Some girls emphasised that in theory they have the same opportunities, but in practice girls rather “sometimes” serve as leaders of student groups as often as boys.

“...there are more girls than boys and this gives space for girls to participate more in the classroom. Most girls hold the post of vice president... two boys occupy the post of president.”

Girl, PU Chontales school

“There are ‘always’ those who feel like leaders. [...] Also ‘sometimes’ because most of the time we are dealing with more male than female leaders, with few classrooms that have more girls than boys.”
Girl, PU Chontales school

“More than half believe that girls’ leadership is more or equal to that of boys. In this [grade], we are equal in leadership. We take both [boys and girls] into account. Most presidents are women. [...] To make this choice is to choose the most intelligent and voted for.”
Girl, PU VEC school

“If there are more girls than boys in an assembly, only the boys will put forth ideas, because they say that only boys have skills [...] they don’t see what we are. But I always give my opinion. If we say something they ask why or for what.”
Girl, PU VEC school

Encouragement also earned similar average responses of “often” from girls in PU Chontales, and may be correlated with high average scores on **leadership** in this same PU. A combined 92% of girls interviewed reported that they are “always” (63%), “often” (19%) or “sometimes” (10%) encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys. Girls’ comments and examples from PU Chontales schools illustrated the high scores, but qualified them as well. Some girls emphasised that there are teachers who focus at times more on male students, but that girls still feel also encouraged and motivated in the classroom. Overall, girls and boys receive fairly equal encouragement in most girls’ views.

“The same encouragement is given to a girl, but [teachers] do not take them more seriously. They listen to boys because they are more dominant.”
Girl, PU Chontales school

“[Girls] are treated equally as they congratulate you when you get good grades and study to have a good future.”
Girl, PU Chontales school

“[...] teachers always encourage us, girls as much as boys. They save us when we do wrong, not just one, but all of us.”
Girl, PU Chontales school

In PU VEC, **class participation** received a slightly higher average score than **leadership** with a possible correlation between the two dimensions in girls’ experiences in the classroom. A combined 96% of girls responded that they “always” (32%), “often” (55%) or “sometimes” (9%) participate in class as much as boys. But there was some debate, or variation in responses, with the majority of girls qualifying their scores as “often.”

“Most girls ‘always’ think that girls are as involved as boys in class because teachers promote equal participation in order to enable them to pass their subjects.”
Girl, PU VEC school

“When we are asked for a response in class and we speak, the majority of the time we participate more than boys, because we are more applied to studies. If we get low grades, fathers and boys threaten to throw us out of school. Boys are restless and do not pay attention in class. They participate less than the girls.”
Girl, PU VEC school

For boys, **chore burden** was scored highly on average as the response option “often” in both PUs. Boys from PU Chontales gave high scores to the question of whether girls spend the same amount of time doing chores (tidying, sweeping, cleaning) at school as boys. A combined 96% reported “always” (56%), “often” (25%) and “sometimes” (15%). From PU VEC, the distribution of average scores was similar to that of PU Chontales. A combined 96% of boys interviewed across participating PU VEC schools reported that girls “always” (58%), “often” (25%) or “sometimes” (13%) spend the same amount of time doing chores (tidying, sweeping, cleaning) at school as boys. Views expressed across both PUs varied on gender roles and responsibilities in dividing up chore responsibilities at school.

“[Girls and boys] participate equally because there is a cleaning role that we do together.”

Boy, PU Chontales school

“[Still,] there are some that are lazy and do not participate in cleaning.” Boy, PU Chontales school

“Teachers force girls to do the cleaning and so sometimes we do the same.” Boy, PU Chontales school

“These are shared responsibilities.” Boy, PU Chontales school

“Girls and boys participate equally because there is a role of cleaning the toilets, which we do at the same time.” Boy, PU Chontales school

“Girls are more concerned to see the classroom clean.” Boy, PU Chontales school

It is significant to consider that girls’ scores on chore burden in both PU Chontales and PU VEC were lower than those of boys’. Whereas boys’ average scores corresponded to “often” sharing the chore burden at school equally with girls, girls averaged scores of “sometimes” in both PUs, with higher proportions of “seldom” scores than boys. This may indicate that boys perceive the division of chores at school to be more gender equitable than it is from girls’ perspectives.

Also for boys, encouragement also earned average scores of “often” in both PU Chontales and PU VEC. A combined 96% of boys in PU Chontales reported that they “always” (58%), “often” (21%) or “sometimes” (17%) perceive that girls are encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys. The distribution of boys’ average scores for PU VEC was similar to that of PU Chontales. A combined 98% of boys in PU VEC schools reported that girls are encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys “always” (51%), “often” (25%), or “sometimes” (22%).

“Most boys thought the teachers help “always” or “almost always” because when someone has low performance, after class the teacher is there to help. Teachers want equally to help and do exercises with boys and girls so that they improve.”

Boy, PU Chontales school

“Most teachers congratulate everyone equally and make fun games with applause to give recognition. We are always encouraged alike because they say we all have the same rights.”

Boy, PU Chontales school

“The teachers equally encourage boys and girls, ask questions, answer requests for clarification, assess the classroom and encourages learning depending on girls’ and boys’ interests.”

Boy, PU Chontales school

“Teachers support everyone equally irrespective of gender, and also encourage us to overcome limitations. They do not allow anyone to become depressed or have low self-esteem.”

Boy, PU Chontales school

Lowest average scored dimensions: Plan Nicaragua, PU Chontales and PU VEC selected schools

Across both PU Chontales and PU VEC participating schools, girls and boys gave their lowest average scores to the **early pregnancy** dimension. They indicated that in their schools, girls and boys think that adolescent girls on average “seldom” continue attending school after having a child. In PU Chontales, 86% of girls interviewed reported that girls “never” (22%), “seldom” (28%) or “sometimes” (36%) continue to attend school after having a baby. Boys’ scores from PU Chontales were similar to those of girls’ from the same PU. A combined 92% of boys responded “never” (19%), “seldom” (27%), and “sometimes” (46%) to the question of whether girls return to school after having a baby. In PU VEC participating schools, a yet higher proportion of girls than those in PU Chontales, 96%, reported that girls “never” (11%), “seldom” (49%) or “sometimes” (36%) are the ones to decide over pregnancy. Similarly, a combined 93% of boys in PU Chontales schools responded that girls “never” (38%), “seldom” (29%), or “sometimes” (26%) continue to attend school after having a baby.

Although many schools in theory allow pregnant adolescent girls and young mothers to attend school, in practice, early pregnancy usually leads to school dropout for girls. A lack of infant care in the home and at school often prevents young mothers from continuing school. Girls whose partner, mother or another family member agrees to provide childcare or support her financially can create opportunities for the adolescent mother to return to school, although sometimes at a cost to household income and economic opportunities for the girls’ mother. Some parents do not allow their adolescent daughters to return to school after having a child. Some girls some feel distressed and unwell following the birth and do not want to return to school. Many fear being laughed at, social stigma from peers, and being singled out by teachers as an example. Many young mothers end up not returning to school for reasons both of childcare and also the need to earn money to support herself and the child.

Scores and qualitative comments across schools and the two PUs showed little variability in girls and boys’ views.

“Girls whose partners or parents help them manage to continue studying.” Girl, PU Chontales school

“At school, teachers do not accept or allow further study [after a girl becomes pregnant] because it is a bad example for the school.”

Girl, PU Chontales school

“When girls become pregnant, they drop out of school because friends talk about them, criticize them. They leave school to care for their child, more if their mother does not help with the child.”

Boy, PU Chontales school

“In early pregnancy, most girls said that after having a baby, they do not continue studying because parents tell them they cannot study because they have to care for the baby.”

Boy, PU Chontales school

“Some girls who are pregnant should not have left studying daily for fear of judgment or discrimination. [...] Although the school does support them, they feel bad, sad, unmotivated and regretful for having made bad decisions.”

Girl, PU VEC school

The **latrines** dimension also earned low average scores from girls in both PU Chontales and PU VEC. Boys in PU Chontales gave low average responses of “seldom” to this issue as well. For girls in PU Chontales schools, 85% reported that they “never” (55%), “seldom” (18%) or sometimes (12%) have latrines at school that they feel comfortable using. Of boys also interviewed in PU Chontales schools, 75% responded that in their understanding, girls “never” (42%), “seldom” (23%), or “sometimes” (10%) have a latrine at school that they feel comfortable using. For girls in PU VEC, a similar combined 73% of girls reported that they “never” (51%), “seldom” (14%), or “sometimes” (8%) feel comfortable using the latrines at school. Not only are average scores similar across girls and boys of PU Chontales, and girls of PU VEC, but the distribution of scores and degree of variability are also similar. Boys of PU VEC show a higher average score of “sometimes” on the **latrines** dimension, suggesting some difference of opinions in PU VEC schools between girls and boys on the issue.

Girls and boys raised the concern of there not being separate latrines for them, and said that there should be separate facilities wherever currently there are not. Many girls voiced issues of latrines being dirty, not having doors, and not functioning. Many girls are afraid of contracting diseases from using a dirty latrine. Many girls feel they “suffocate” from the odor of dirty and poorly functioning latrines. Some latrines have doors, but with holes in them through which others can see girls inside. Issues of boys spying on girls, locking girls inside latrines, and sexually harassing girls around latrines, all emerged as pressing concerns.

“There is no privacy. Boys are very naughty. One left me a snake in the latrine and after that I did not go again because I was scared. Also a boy was spying on me. I do not go because of animals, messiness, odor, no privacy, and fear there may be diseases.” Girl, PU Chontales school

“Most girls feel that they have no security when they go to the latrines. Boys look at them when they go to urinate. The facilities are dirty and the floor is full of urine with no toilet. The girls have to endure because the latrines are dirty, and find it better to wait until they get home from school.” Boy, PU Chontales school

“...found condoms and sanitary napkins there. We do not sit with confidence, we are always uncomfortable because you can get a vaginal infection.” Girl, PU VEC school

“Although there are latrines for boys and girls, they are not in good condition. Boys leave the girls inside as the locks are on the outside. When girls go to the bathroom alone, they pursue them and ask them for kisses. And as for cleaning these, sometimes the director orders teachers to send girls to clean the male and female latrines. In the afternoon and evening, latrines have limited availability and we have to go to other latrines that are usually dirty.” Girl, PU VEC school

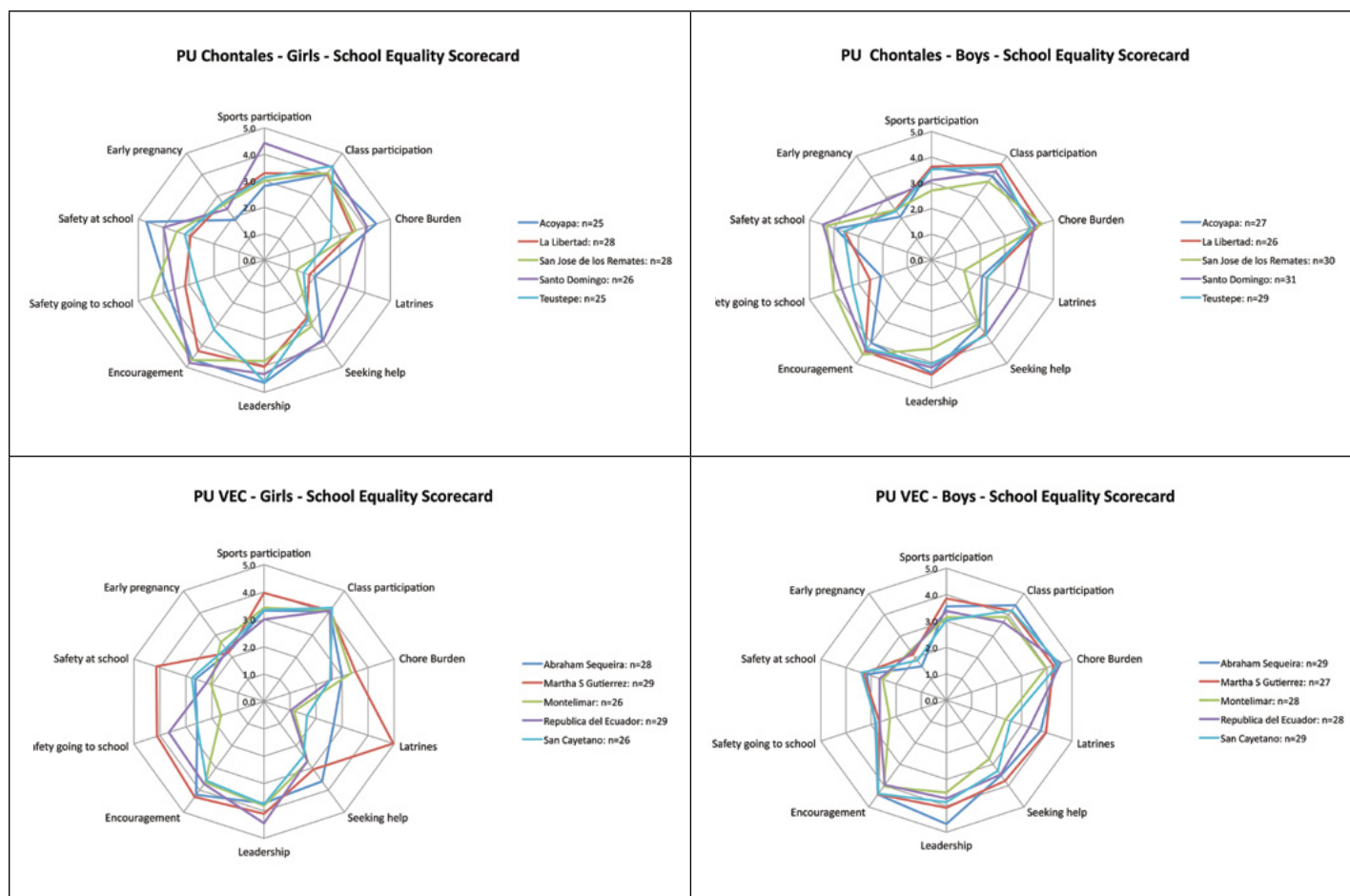
“We do not go to the bathroom when the boys spy by putting a cell phone in a shoe and take video and see everything. They also lift our skirts when we walk by.” Girl, PU VEC school

For boys of PU VEC, the **safety going to school** also earned low scores with an average response of “seldom,” meaning that in boys’ views, girls and boys are not equally safe on the way to school. Boys’ responses to this dimension varied somewhat in PU VEC. A combined 63% of those interviewed in participating PU VEC schools reported that girls are “never” (15%), “seldom” (16%) or “sometimes” (32%) as safe as boys on their way to and from school. Boys urged that families, schools and the police must coordinate and work together to create a safer environment for girls walking to and from school. Boys thought that girls should walk in groups and take transportation, although transportation options also present risks and lack of security. Girls and boys who live far away from school are at greater risk of harm walking to and from school, being exposed to traffic accidents and drunken people with bad intentions.

“Abusers are men who bully and threaten, some coming from distant communities. Some induce students to drink alcohol. The road is a risk. Girls are safe when they are accompanied or driven in a vehicle, or by bus or taxi. Although a driver raped a girl.”

Boy, PU VEC

Figure 30: School Equality Scorecard: Nicaragua, PU Chontales and PU VEC average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16



PARAGUAY

Paraguay: Girls Empowerment Star



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Paraguay**, Plan spoke with 162 adolescent girls in PU Caaguazú and PU Guairá, in six communities.

On average, girls in **PU Caaguazú** felt most empowered around deciding if and when to get **married**, and least empowered around dimensions of **household work** and **speaking up**.

In **PU Guairá**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered around feeling **safe** in their community and least empowered around dimensions of **household work** and **money**.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Paraguay's PU Caaguazu selected communities

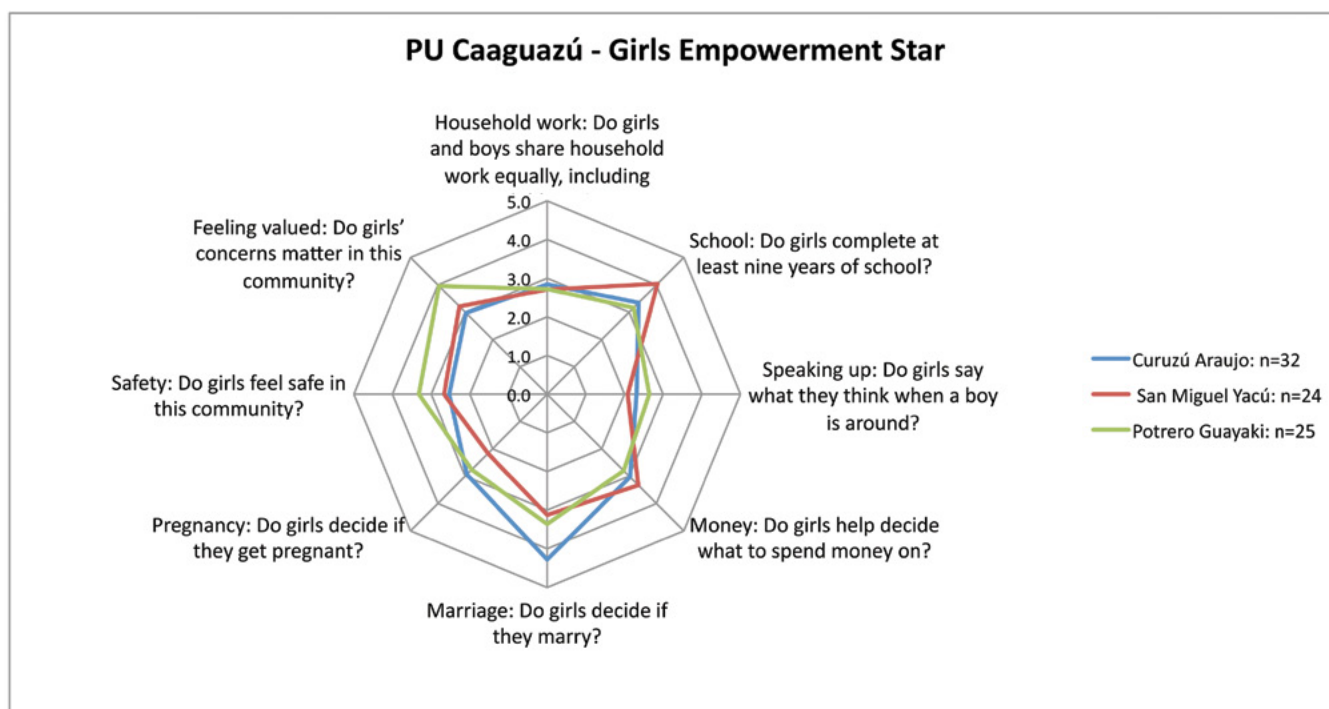
In Plan Paraguay's PU Caaguazu, girls rated the **marriage** dimension most highly.³⁰ Of 81 girls interviewed, 40% reported that in their community, girls "always" decide over marriage. A further 15% responded, "often," and 27%, "sometimes." Girls' wishes are respected in the views of those Plan spoke with. Marriage is not the parents' decision, but that of the couple. Most girls prefer to marry around 20-25 years of age, however, views on the ideal age at marriage varied.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Paraguay's PU Guaira selected communities

In PU Guaira, the average ratings for **safety**, **marriage**, and **pregnancy** were higher than those girls gave in PU Caaguazu. Of the 81 girls interviewed in PU Guaira, average ratings on these three dimensions suggest the views that these girls "often" or "always" decide over their own marriages or pregnancies, and feel safe in their community. Girls explained that they hope to get married only after they have finished their studies. Some have older sisters who finished secondary school first, and set an example for their younger sisters. Concerning the question of whether girls decide over pregnancy, girls explained that some girls in PU Guaira communities have received training in school on sexual and reproductive health, and have learned contraceptive methods to avoid early and unwanted pregnancy. Also in these communities, girls explained that family members accompany them often when walking in the community. Still, girls cited fears that others will bring drugs into their community. Girl's mothers or parents have advised them only to speak with their friends outside the home, and not to strangers.

³⁰ See Appendix III, Girls Empowerment Star: PU Caaguazu ratings, Girls ages 12-16 Girls Empowerment Star: PU Caaguazu average ratings, Girls ages 12-16

Figure 31: Girls Empowerment Star: Paraguay, PU Caaguazú average ratings by community



N= 3 communities per PU; Caaguazú n=81 girls, ages 12-16

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Paraguay's PU Caaguazu selected communities

Girls in PU Caaguazu rated the **household work**, **speaking up**, **safety**, and **pregnancy** dimensions the lowest of the eight dimensions of the Girls Empowerment Star. Of the 81 interviewed, a combined 75% of girls reported that boys "sometimes" (44%), "seldom" (15%) or "never" (20%) share household work equally, including childcare. Girls said that they felt they cannot do anything about the gendered division of labour, and that 'it is part of the culture'. Asked whether girls are comfortable **speaking up** to say what they think when a boy is around, 32% of PU Caaguazu girls responded, "sometimes," while 28% responded, "never." Girls explained that they don't share their concerns with boys or men. Some girls will talk with their mothers or female school directors, but most of the time girls do not have someone to speak with about their personal concerns. Asked about **safety** in their community, 30% of girls interviewed responded, "sometimes," while a further 10% reported "seldom," and 26%, "never." Girls feel safer in their homes and at school than in the community or walking in the streets. They feel unsafe in the community from ongoing violence, and because of 'strangers who visit the community'. Concerning **pregnancy**, the same 81 girls responded that in their communities, girls "sometimes" (13%), "seldom" (30%) or "never" (24%) decide over pregnancy. A majority of girls become pregnant by the age of 16 or 17. Few girls know methods of how to prevent pregnancy.

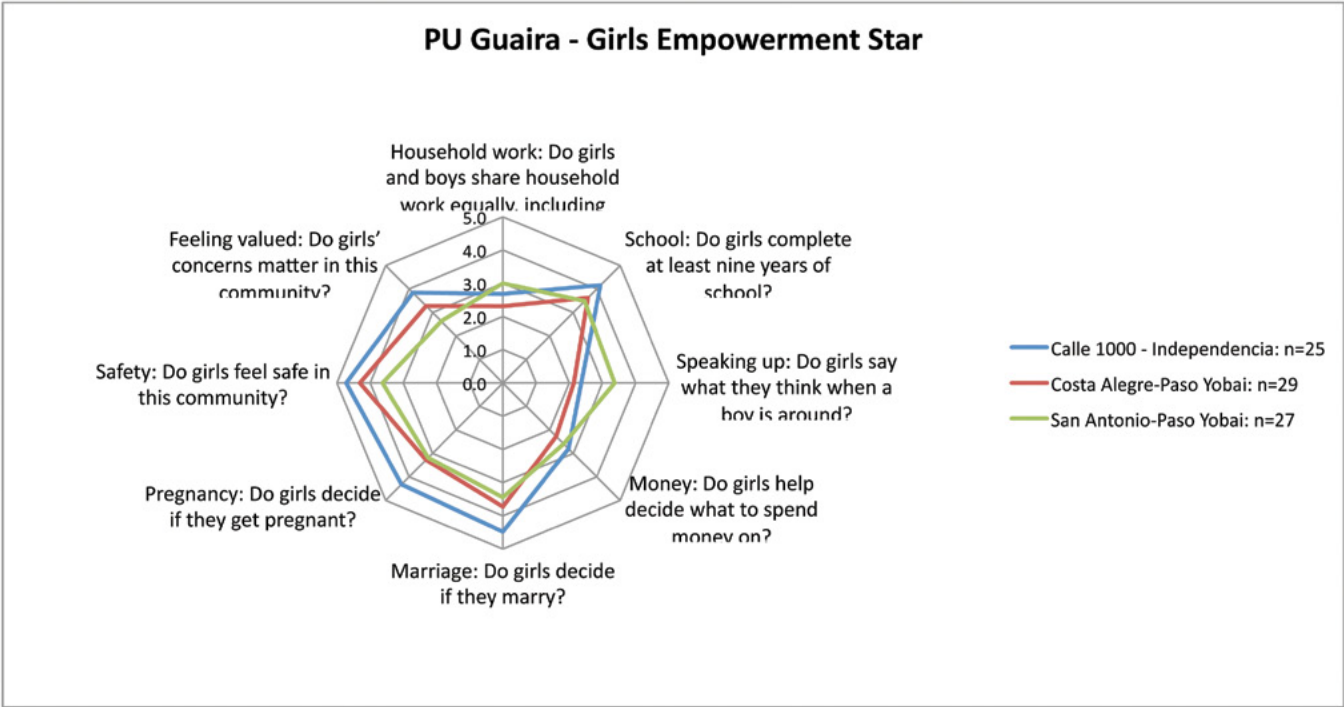
Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Paraguay's PU Guaira selected communities

The dimensions girls from PU Guaira rated the lowest included **money**, **speaking up**, and **household work**. Of the 81 girls interviewed, 48% reported that boys "sometimes" share household work, including childcare, equally with them. A further 22% reported, "seldom" and 16%, "never." Girls are expected to help their mothers with household work and childcare for younger siblings. Asked whether girls help decide over money, 25% reported "sometimes," while 21% said "often," and 36% responded, "never." While girls sometimes participate in decisions over what to spend money on for household expenditures, some girls have internalised a negative stereotype that women are not good managers of money.

“Women are not good at managing money, my mother said.” Girl, PU Guaira community

Across PU Caaguazu and PU Guaira, similarities and differences include similar average ratings across all dimensions, except for **school**, **pregnancy**, and **safety**. Girls from participating PU Guaira communities rated pregnancy and safety significantly higher than those from PU Caaguazu communities.

Figure 32: Girls Empowerment Star: Paraguay, PU Guaira average ratings by community



N= 3 communities per PU; Guaira n=81 girls, ages 12-16

Paraguay: School Equality Scorecard



In **Paraguay**, Plan spoke with 266 girls in 10 schools and 278 boys in 10 schools in PU Caaguazú and PU Guairá.

In **PU Caaguazú**, girls felt that **encouragement**, **class participation**, and **latrines** were the highest areas of school equality, while boys said it was **encouragement**. Girls and boys felt that **early pregnancy** was the lowest area of gender equality at school for girls also said **chore burden**.

In **PU Guairá**, both girls and boys felt that **encouragement** was the highest, and girls also felt that **leadership** and **safety at school** were high areas of gender equality at school for girls. Both girls and boys felt that **early pregnancy** was the lowest level of gender equality at school for by girls.

Table 14: School Equality Scorecard: Paraguay, PU Caaguazu and PU Guaira dimensions with highest and lowest average scores, girls and boys ages 12-16

Paraguay	Dimensions with highest average scores		Dimensions with lowest average scores	
	PU Caaguazu	PU Guaira	PU Caaguazu	PU Guaira
Girls	Class participation 4.5 Latrines 4.5 Encouragement 4.5	Leadership 4.4 Encouragement 4.6 Safety at school 4.4	Chore burden 3.3 Early pregnancy 2.9	Early pregnancy 2.4
Boys	Encouragement 4.1	Encouragement 4.0	Early pregnancy 2.0	Early pregnancy 2.3

Highest average scored dimensions: Plan Paraguay, PU Caaguazu and PU Guaira selected schools

Girls gave their highest scores to the **encouragement** dimension in both PUs. In PU Caaguazu, 73% of girls interviewed from participating schools said they “always” are encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys. A similar proportion, 74%, of girls interviewed in PU Guaira participating schools expressed the view that they are “always” encouraged as much as boys to succeed in their schoolwork.

“We are encouraged equally as boys.” Girl, PU Caaguazu school

“Teachers encourage everyone equally to move forward.” Girl, PU Guaira school

Class **participation** and **latrines** also earned girls’ high scores in PU Caaguazu. Similarly to boys’ scores for PU Caaguazu, girls rated the **class participation** dimension highly, with 69% reporting that they “always” participate in class as often as boys, including raising their hands, answering teacher questions and participating in class activities.

“We participate more in class [than boys].” Girl, PU Caaguazu

On **latrines**, 73% of girls interviewed in participating schools in PU Caaguazu reported that they “always” feel there are toilets at school that they feel comfortable using.

“We feel safe in the bathrooms at school because they are separate [girls versus boys].”

Girl, PU Caaguazu

In PU Guaira, girls scored **leadership** and **safety at school** highly. Concerning **leadership**, a combined 84% of girls interviewed across participating schools in PU Guaira reported that girls participate “always” (58%) or “often” (26%) as leaders of student groups as much as boys. Girls commented:

“Girls are the more often elected because they are more responsible, dedicated and have confidence.” Girl, PU Guaira school

“Girls are almost always elected in their grades for school governance as they are considered more responsible, but boys don’t always want to do what girls tell them to do.” Girl, PU Guaira school

Regarding **safety at school**, 82% of girls interviewed expressed the view that they “always” (69%) or “often” (13%) feel as safe as boys when they are at school.

“We feel safe at school.” Girl, PU Guaira school

Similarly as for girls, boys’ highest average scores went to the **encouragement** in PU Caaguazu and PU Guaira participating schools. Boys in PU Caaguazu reported they perceive that girls “always” (57%) and “often” (31%) are encouraged to succeed in the schoolwork as much as boys. Scores on **encouragement** were particularly high, with 64% of boys reporting that girls and boys receive the same encouragement to succeed in their schoolwork. However, some disagreement persisted in conversations, with some boys elaborating that in some cases boys enjoy more encouragement at school than girls.

“The encouragement of teachers and students towards boys and girls is equal at school.”

Boy, PU Caaguazu school

“Boys receive more encouragement than girls for cultural reasons.” Boy, PU Guaira school

Lowest average scored dimensions: Plan Paraguay, PU Caaguazu and PU Guaira selected schools

For girls interviewed in both PU Caaguazu and PU Guaira, **early pregnancy** earned the lowest scores. A combined 69% of girls from PU Caaguazu reported that girls “never” (21%), “seldom,” (12%), or “sometimes” (36%) return to school after having a child.

“Girls who become pregnant in the community are not attending classes after having their babies because they have to work and care for their children.” Girl, PU Caaguazu school

Some girls noted from one school (unlike most other schools in the study), that girls do continue their schooling after having a child. Many commented on a lack of dialogue about pregnancy with their parents, and their need for parental guidance on the matter.

“Girls who become pregnant are studying hard.” Girl, PU Caaguazu school

In PU Guaira, 82% of girls interviewed in participating schools in PU Guaira reported that girls “never” (29%), “seldom” (24%) or “sometimes” (30%) return to school after having a child.

“Pregnant girls need help and encouragement in order to continue studying.” Girl, PU Guaira school

“We do not know how to avoid pregnancy. Nobody speaks to us of that.” Girl, PU Guaira school

Chore burden also emerged among the highest scores from girls from PU Caaguazu schools. A combined 63% of girls interviewed in PU Caaguazu reported that boys “never” (10%), “seldom” (16%) or “sometimes” (37%) spend the same amount of time doing chores (tidying, sweeping, cleaning) at school as girls.

“Boys do not perform nearly any cleaning tasks at school.” Girl, PU Caaguazu school

For boys in both PU Caaguazu and PU Guaira, **early pregnancy** earned their lowest scores. Boys interviewed in PU Caaguazu schools reported that girls “never” (31%), “seldom” (22%) or “sometimes” (35%) return to school after having a child. Comments elaborating on this dimension included a recommendation to provide training to both young women and men in sexual and reproductive health, including pregnancy prevention methods. Boys also would like there to be workshops on sexual and reproductive health in which fathers and mothers participate to help prevent teenage pregnancy.

“Pregnant girls do not return to school because of embarrassment.” Boy, PU Caaguazu school

“Conduct training for women not to become pregnant more.” Boy, PU Caaguazu school

“Young men should be trained in how to avoid pregnancy.” Boy, PU Caaguazu school

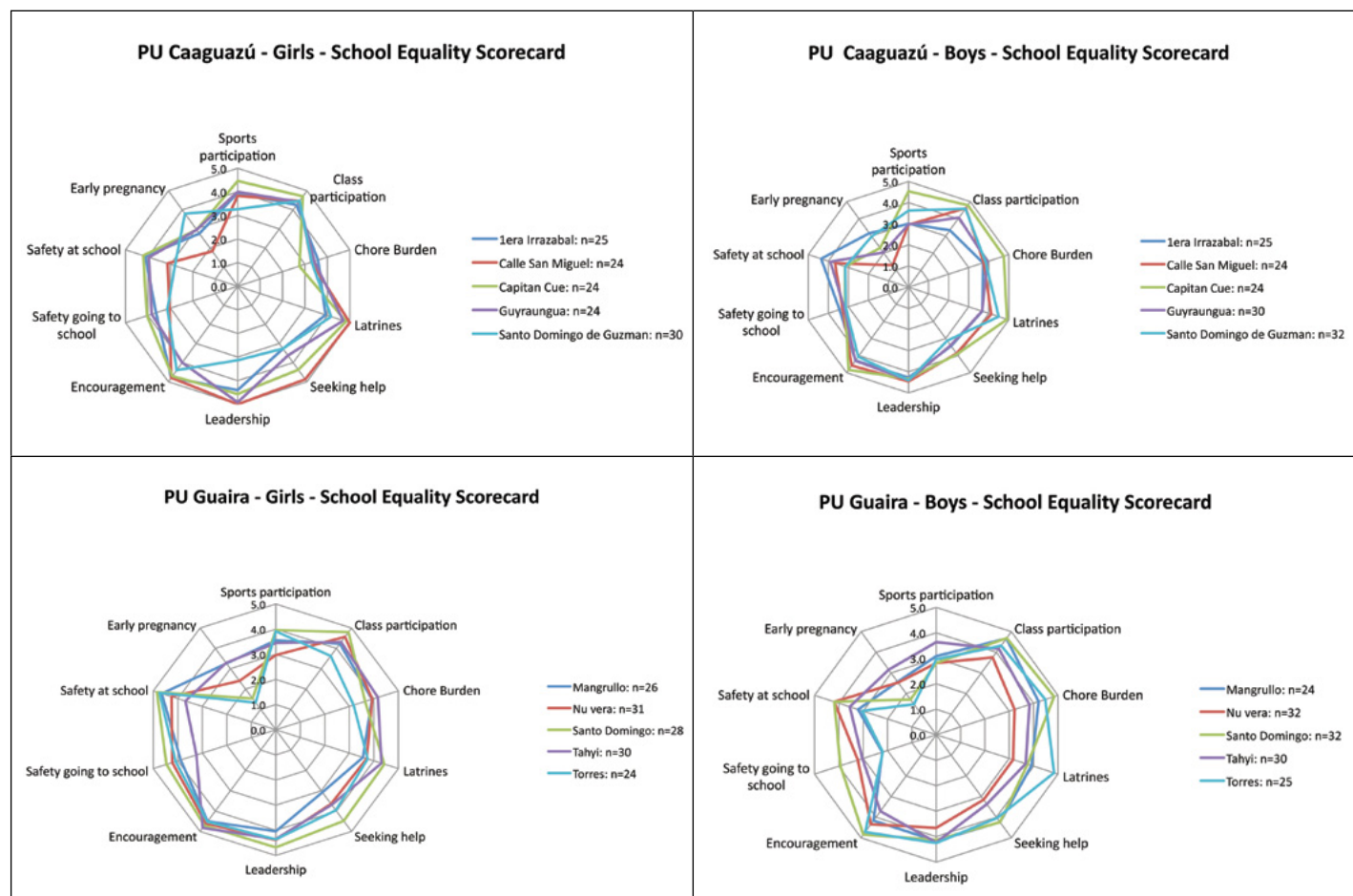
Among boys interviewed in the five selected schools in PU Guaira, fewer responded to the question on early pregnancy (136 out of 146 boys interviewed). With the lowest average score of all dimensions (2.3), this issue generated debate and variability in responses. PU Guaira boys commented that there are many cases of pregnant girls who do not return to school. They recommended that the prevention of early pregnancy should be worked toward intentionally.

“A girl at age 12 became pregnant and could hardly resume studies after giving birth.” Boy, PU Guaira

“Concerning pregnancy, the boy should also have responsibility/guilt.” Boy, PU Guaira

“How nice it would be for women to have a child when they are prepared.” Boy, PU Guaira

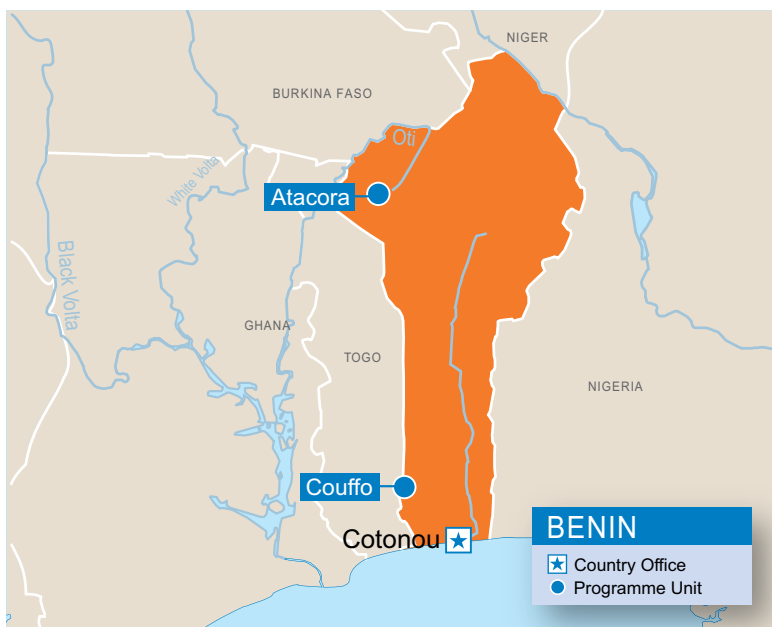
Figure 33: School Equality Scorecard:
Paraguay, PU Caaguazu and PU Guaira average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16



Country Results and Key Findings: West Africa (Benin, Cameroon, Liberia)

BENIN

Benin: Girls Empowerment Star



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Benin**, Plan spoke with 83 adolescent girls in PU Couffo and PU Atacora*, in three communities.

On average, girls in **PU Couffo** felt most empowered around **safety**, and least empowered to decide over **pregnancy**.

**There were no quantitative data available for the Girls Empowerment Star from PU Atacora.*

Highest average rated dimension: Plan Benin's PU Couffo selected communities

In Benin's PU Couffo, 83 girls interviewed rated the **safety** dimension the highest. Of those interviewed, 59% reported either "often" (31%) or "always" (28%) feeling safe in their community. In the focus group discussions, participants commonly attributed an increased sense of safety to a recent decrease in kidnappings in the three communities in the study.

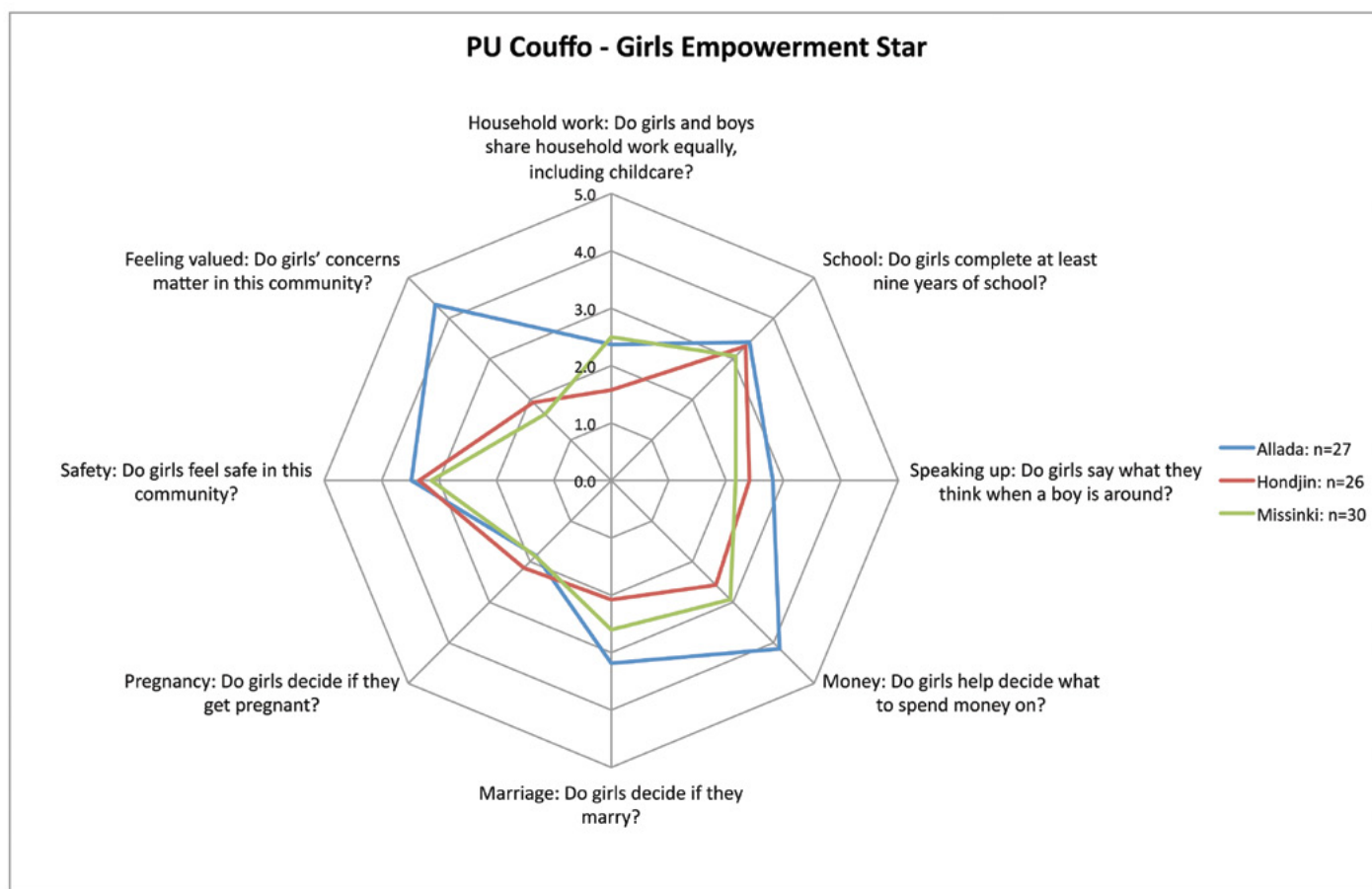
Lowest average rated dimension: Plan Benin's PU Couffo selected communities

The **pregnancy** dimension received the lowest rating in PU Couffo communities. 53% of girls interviewed indicated that they “never” have the chance to decide whether or not to become pregnant, and 18% said that they “seldom” do. Girls interviewed perceive the decision to become pregnant as often made by the male figure, or that pregnancy happens unexpectedly. In some cases, girls attributed this to ‘traditional male dominance’ in who holds the power to decide over pregnancy. Girls interviewed were largely unaware of contraceptive methods, and ill-informed about sexual and reproductive health and responsible parenting. Those who were aware of contraceptive options such as condoms lack financial resources to purchase them. Girls who are more educated, and who have educated partners, sometimes exercise greater decision-making power over pregnancy.

“Often, it is the husband that decides—girls rarely have the option to decide if they want to become pregnant. There are some isolated cases—very often among educated individuals—where a husband supports his wife’s choice.”

Girl, PU Couffo community

Figure 34: Girls Empowerment Star: Benin*, PU Couffo average ratings by community



* For PU Atacora, no data for the Girls Empowerment Star were available at the time of reporting.

Benin: School Equality Scorecard



Findings from the School Equality Scorecard:

In **Benin**, Plan spoke with 131 girls in 5 schools and 297 boys in 10 schools in PU Atacora and PU Couffo.

In **PU Atacora**, boys rated **encouragement** as the highest level of gender equality at school for girls, and they rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest level of gender equality at school for girls (no data was available for girls in this PU).

In **PU Couffo**, both girls and boys rated **encouragement** as the highest level of gender equality at school for girls. Girls said that **latrines** were the lowest level of gender equality at school girls, while boys said **early pregnancy**.

Table 15: School Equality Scorecard: Benin, PU Atacora and PU Couffo dimensions with highest and lowest average scores, girls and boys ages 12-16

Benin	Dimensions with highest average scores		Dimensions with lowest average scores	
	PU Atacora	PU Couffo	PU Atacora	PU Couffo
Girls	No data available	Encouragement 4.5	No data available	Latrines 1.5
Boys	Encouragement 3.9	Encouragement 4.0	Early pregnancy 2.4	Early pregnancy 1.7

Highest average scored dimensions: Plan Benin, PU Atacora and PU Couffo selected schools

No quantitative or qualitative data were available from PU Atacora for girls. From PU Couffo, girls rated the **encouragement** dimension the highest. 72% of girls interviewed in PU Couffo responded “always” to the question of whether girls are encouraged as much as boys to succeed academically. When it comes to school, girls reported that they receive as much social and academic support as boys from their teachers. They are encouraged to participate and work hard to obtain good grades.

“Girls, like boys, are always encouraged to get good marks – the teachers encourage the girls to participate in class by giving them compliments like ‘very good!’ and ‘bravo!’” Girl, PU Couffo

“There is no discrimination in class.” Girl, PU Couffo school

For boys from PU Atacora, 42% responded “always” for to the **encouragement** question. No qualitative data provided further insight into this observation. In PU Couffo, 54% of boys responded “always” and held the opinion that teachers encourage girls equally. Academic encouragement plays a key role in the classroom dynamic.

“Girls also always receive encouragement in the classroom.” Boy, PU Couffo school

“Girls are always encouraged to set the example for the other girls and especially to ensure there is a good ambience in the classroom.” Boy, PU Couffo school

Lowest average scored dimensions: Plan Benin, PU Atacora and PU Couffo selected schools

No data were available for girls from PU Atacora. Girls from PU Couffo scored the latrines question the lowest of all dimensions. 74% of those interviewed responded that they “never” have a latrine at school they feel comfortable using. Comments revealed that girls feel uncomfortable using latrines that are shared with boys and poorly maintained. Girls tend to use the school latrines only in emergencies or when no boys are around. Having well maintained, separate girls’ latrines would be a positive improvement for gender equality at school.

“Girls never feel comfortable using the existing latrines because they are cracked and in poor condition, so they are afraid to use them. They also worry that boys will walk in on them, because the latrines are shared.” Girl, PU Couffo school

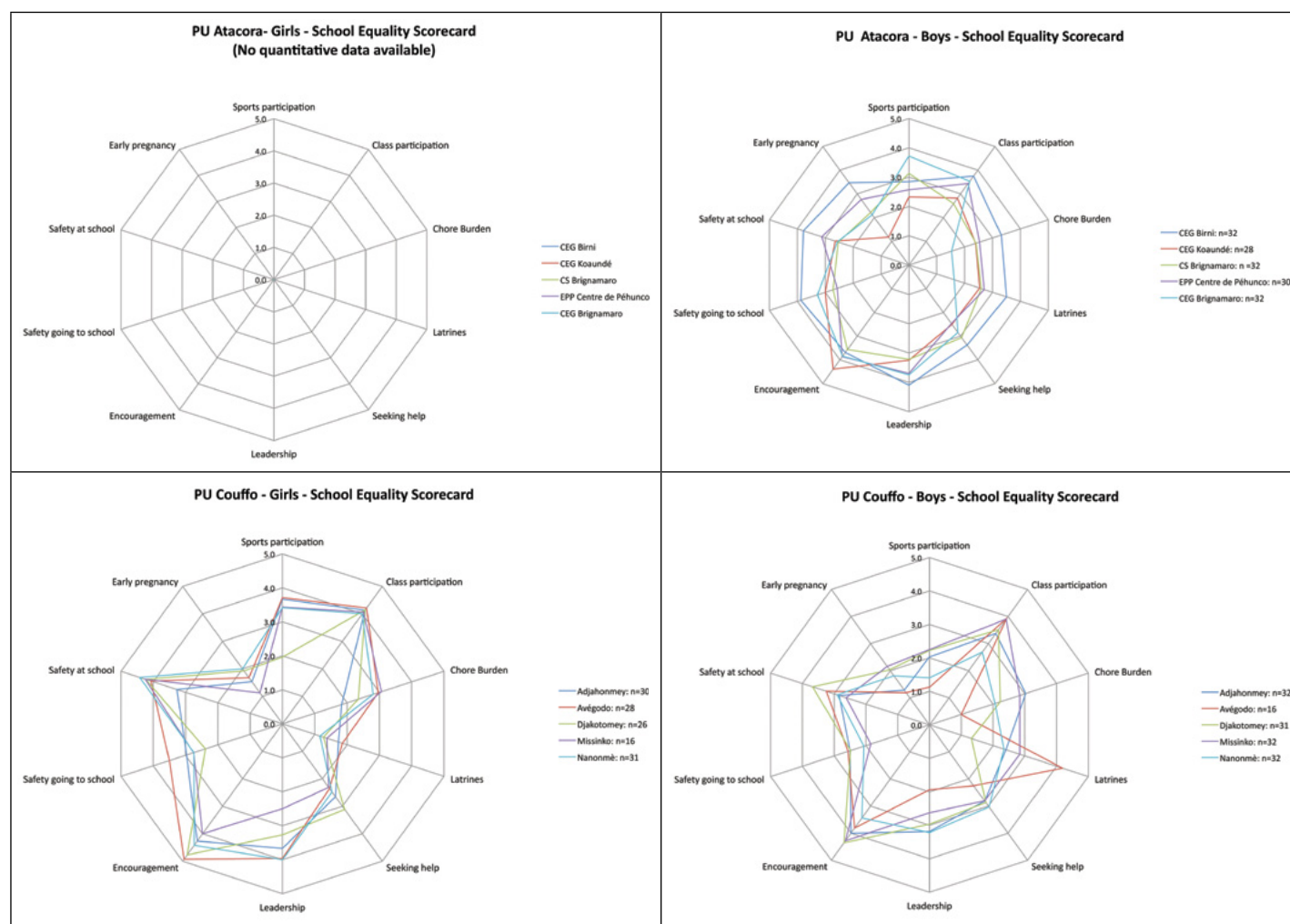
“Girls say that there are five latrines at their school, but they do not have access to them because they are not maintained.” Girl, PU Couffo school

Boys from PU Atacora and PU Couffo scored **early pregnancy** the lowest of all dimensions of the School Equality Scorecard. In PU Atacora, boys responded “never” (44%), “seldom” (17%) or “sometimes” (13%) to the question of whether girls continue school after having a child. No qualitative data provided further insight into this observation from PU Atacora. In PU Couffo, 55% of boys responded “never” for this dimension. Girls who are pregnant and young mothers most often drop out of school and often are not encouraged by peers, teachers or parents to return to their studies. High scores on the **encouragement** dimension may be correlated with boys’, and girls’, low scores on **early pregnancy**. While boys and girls perceive that considerable encouragement may be given to girls in the classroom, notably when set they set a good “example” for their peers, pregnant girls or young mothers are instead socially and academically excluded. Low scores on **early pregnancy** were associated with examples of shaming and mockery of pregnant girls and young mothers. Boys reported that, to improve gender equality in schools, emphasis needs to be placed on sexual and reproductive health training, including early pregnancy prevention, and an encouraging dynamic between all students and teachers.

“After giving birth, girls do not want to return to school because they fear being mocked by their peers. They tell themselves: ‘If I go to school, I will feel humiliated.’ [...] Girls do not go back to school for many reasons, including the fact that they must care for their newborn. They also worry that classmates, teachers and administrators will make fun of them and single them out for setting a bad example.” Girl, PU Couffo school

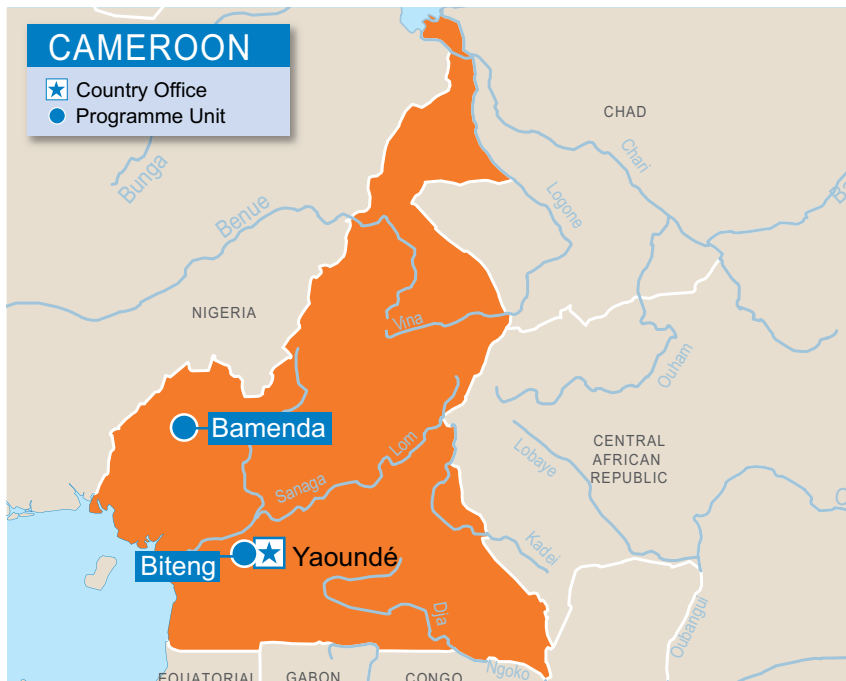
“Girls never come back to school quickly after an early pregnancy. Two years ago at our school, a 16-year-old boy who was a good student started seeing a girl, who then became pregnant. Both were expelled. While the boy was able to attend a different school, the girl stayed home after giving birth: her classmates mocked her and she refused to go back.” Girl, PU Couffo school

Figure 35: School Equality Scorecard: Benin, PU Atacora and PU Couffo average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16



CAMEROON

Cameroon: Girls Empowerment Star



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Cameroon**, Plan spoke with 134 adolescent girls in PU Biteng and PU Bamenda, in five communities.

On average, girls in **PU Biteng** felt most empowered about **feeling valued** in the community, and least empowered around deciding if and when to get **pregnant**.

In **PU Bamenda**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered to access **school** and least empowered around **feeling valued** in the community.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Cameroon's PU Biteng selected communities

In Cameroon's PU Biteng, girls rated **feeling valued** as the highest average rating. Of 69 girls interviewed, 43% reported that they "always" and 29% "sometimes" feel that girls' concerns matter in their community. A further 12% responded that in their views, girls' concerns "never" matter in their community. Comments and examples from the focus group discussions illustrated the lower ratings. Girls explained that parents value them when they clean, cook, or care for other family members as part of traditional gender role expectations. Some expressed the view that parents do not listen to or care about daughters' needs or problems.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Cameroon's PU Bamenda selected communities

In Cameroon's PU Bamenda, girls interviewed rated the **school** dimension most highly, but with considerable variability, and with correlations to the **pregnancy** and **feeling valued** dimensions. From what they have observed, girls reported that in their communities, girls "always" (22%), "often" (20%), "sometimes" (41%), "seldom" (11%), or "never" (6%) complete nine years of school. Asked why girls only "sometimes" or "never" complete nine years of education, girls provided several reasons and examples. Some girls lack financial support from their parents for school fees, which drives girls into transactional sex, from which they become pregnant and then drop out of school. Smart girls even drop out due to pregnancy, they said.

"There was one intelligent girl in my community who is a dropout today due to early pregnancy. Her father refused to provide her school needs requesting her to look for the money like her friends. She tried getting the money her own way and finally ended up with a pregnancy, which has led her to the present predicament."

Girl, PU Bamenda community

“Most parents prefer to send the boys to school when finances are limited, as they believe girls are ‘properties’ of other families, meanwhile boys will take care of the family in the future.”

Girl, PU Bamenda community

“Many parents are scared to send their girls to school for fear that they might contract sexually transmissible diseases and get pregnant.”

Girl, PU Bamenda community

Girls in the PU Bamenda area gave the **marriage** dimension the second highest rating, with a combined 68% reporting that in their communities, girls “often” (20%), “sometimes” (30%) or “seldom” (18%) decide over marriage. Some said that marriage is the sole decision of the girl. Others commented that some parents force girls to go live with men as providers.

“There is a high level of co-habitation in my community since most parents refuse to provide for girls’ needs forcing them to go and live with boys or men who can provide for their needs.”

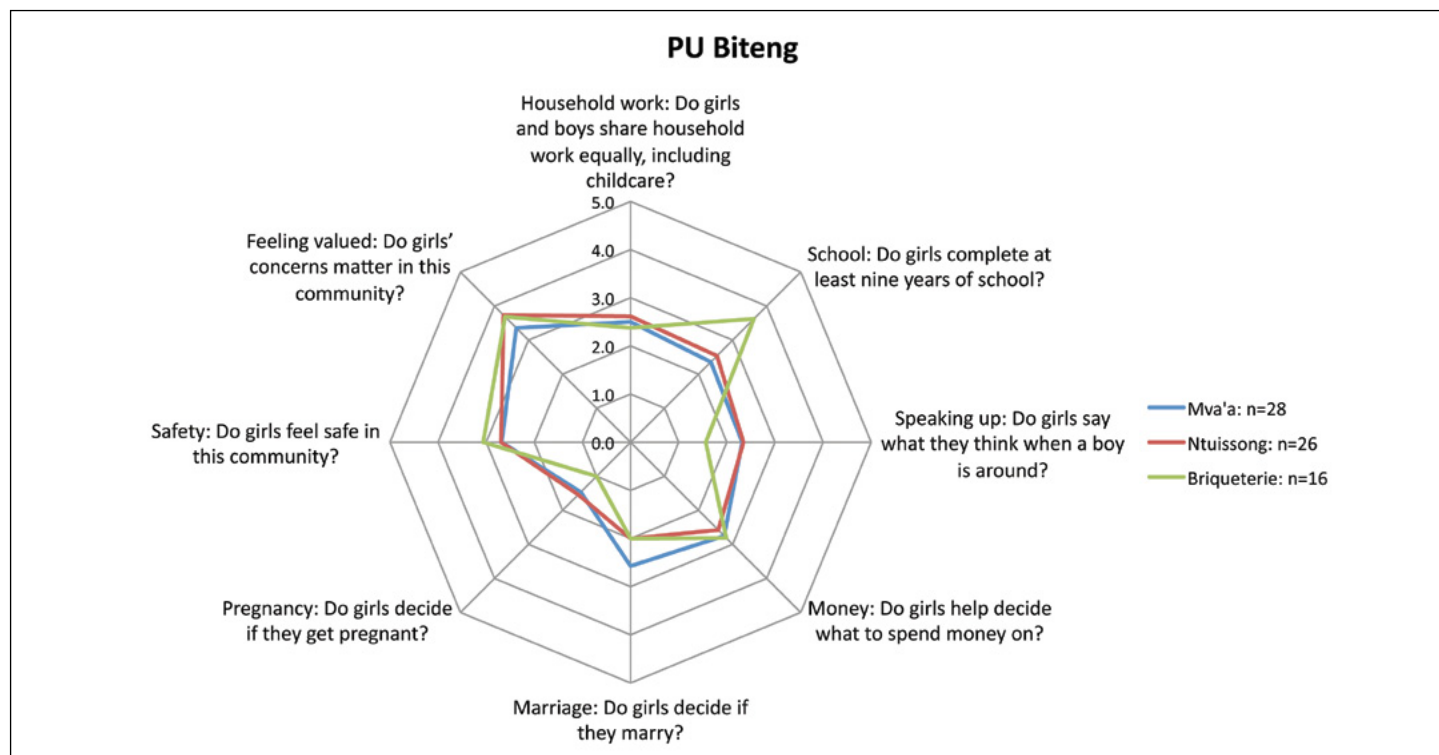
Girl, PU Bamenda community

Others linked girls’ lack of decision-making power over marriage to early pregnancy. They elaborated that it is considered ‘disgraceful’ in their community to get pregnant before marriage, and that some parents force girls to get married early, at ages 13 to 15.

“It is a disgrace for a girl to get pregnant before marriage in my community, therefore to prevent a mature girl from getting pregnant outside marriage, parents prefer to send them in for an early marriage, even if that is not what the girl wants.”

Girl, PU Bamenda community

Figure 36: Girls Empowerment Star: Cameroon, PU Biteng average ratings by community



N= 3 communities in PU Biteng; PU Biteng n=70 girls, ages 12-16

Lowest rated dimensions: Plan Cameroon's PU Biteng selected communities

Related to feeling undervalued, PU Biteng girls rated **pregnancy** as the lowest average rating with 77% of girls claiming that they “never” decide if they get pregnant. Girls also rated the speaking up dimension a low rating. The majority of girls (58%) reported that they “never” (45%) or “seldom” (13%) say what they think when a boy or other male is around. Girls in their communities generally ‘do not speak in the presence of men’. Fear of parents seeing them as “arrogant” for speaking up, or “flogging” them keeps many girls from expressing their views knowing that their opinions will not be considered. Many girls explained that they see their mothers not speaking up to their fathers. Girls do sometimes share their views with their mothers, though, with the sense that mothers better understand girls’ issues.

“My mother does not speak to my father of what she feels and she needs, what more of me.”

Girl, PU Biteng community

Asked whether girls decide over marriage, girls interviewed in PU Biteng gave lower ratings than those for speaking up. A majority of girls, or 60%, responded that girls “never” (51%) or “seldom” (9%) decide over marriage. Parents often send daughters into early marriage to avoid early pregnancies and family shame in their community. Poverty is also a factor in early marriage as parents seek bride price.

“Some parents use their girl children to settle debts thereby forcing them to get married to people they don’t love.”

Girl, PU Biteng community

“Some parents when they no longer have money decide to send their daughters to marriage because they know they will collect high bride prices.”

Girl, PU Biteng community

Related to girls’ low ratings on **marriage**, those in PU Biteng gave the lowest rating to the **pregnancy** dimension. Of 69 girls interviewed, 77% responded that in their communities, girls “never” decide over pregnancy. An additional 12% reported that in their view, girls “seldom” decide if, whether, when or with whom to become pregnant, and that most pregnancies are unplanned.

“Girls seldom decide whether or when to get pregnant because sometimes their parents push them to ask for money from boys and boys never give money for nothing.”

Girl, PU Biteng community

“Some boys refuse to use condoms because they say it reduces pleasure during sex. To convince the girls, they promise them money and gifts from town.”

Girl, PU Biteng community

“Girls do not decide when they get pregnant because most of the time it happens by accident. Also, they do not know how to prevent it.”

Girl, PU Biteng community

Lowest rated dimensions: Plan Cameroon's PU Bamenda selected communities

In PU Bamenda, the dimensions that girls gave the lowest ratings to were **feeling valued** and **pregnancy**. On **feeling valued**, of the 65 girls who responded to the question, “do girls’ concerns matter in this community,” 29% said, “never,” 18% said, “seldom” and 28% marked, “sometimes.” Asked to elaborate, many girls explained that their views don’t matter and they are not given chances to express their views. They feel undervalued by their community of origin, and as “property” of the community of the father of their child(ren). Many explained a dominant view in their communities that devaluing girls and violating their rights are normative and not seen as causes for action.

“Issues affecting girls’ rights are commonly seen as ‘normal’, thus no cause for concern.”

Girl, PU Bamenda community

“The girls are like servants of boys and men. Their issues don’t really matter.” Girl, PU Bamenda community

Related to PU Bamenda girls’ sense of feeling undervalued and their concerns not taken seriously, ratings on the **pregnancy** dimension were similarly low to those given for **feeling valued**. Asked whether girls decide over pregnancy, 31% of the 65 girls interviewed responded, “never,” while a further 8% reported, “seldom,” and 34% said, “sometimes.” Focus group discussions revealed issues common to girls in these communities. Most said girls in their community do not decide over pregnancy typically, and are not educated on safer sex and how to prevent pregnancy. Some girls start having sex early or their parents force them into early marriage. Some girls also look to boys or men with resources for gifts or money, for which the boys or men often expect sex in exchange, and the girls become pregnant. Sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation and abuse are all drivers of early pregnancy for many girls.

“Most boys deceive girls. ‘I will assume responsibility for the pregnancy should you get pregnant’.”

Girl, PU Bamenda community

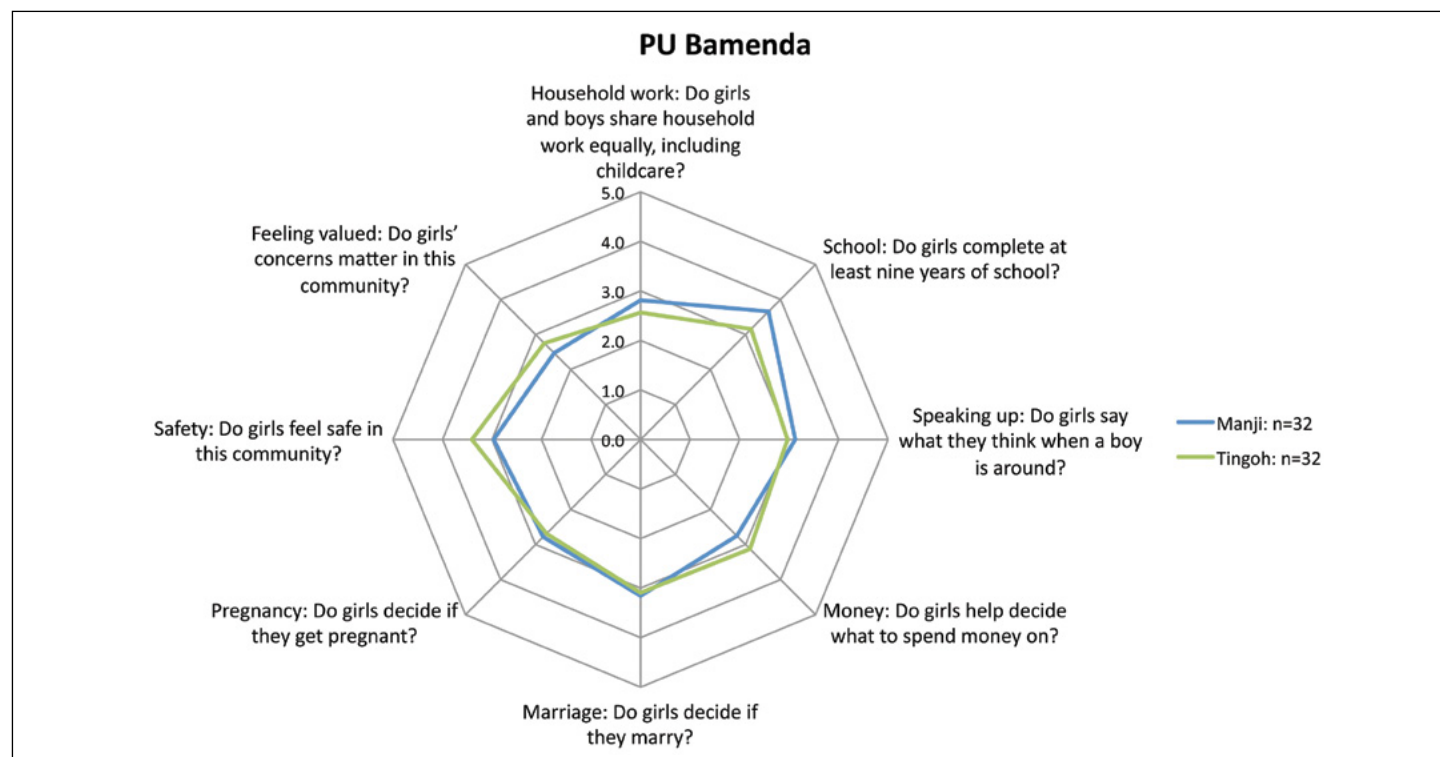
“Many boys refuse to use condoms or remove the condom during sex.” Girl, PU Bamenda community

“Due to poverty, some girls are forced to go after men/boys to have money to meet their basic needs.”

Girl, PU Bamenda community

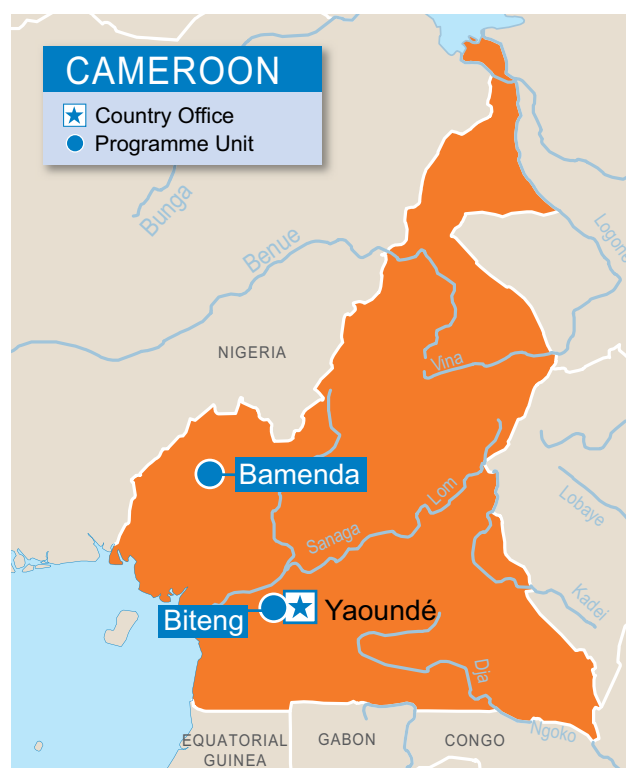
“Some girls are victims of rape.” Girl, PU Bamenda community

Figure 37: Girls Empowerment Star: Cameroon, PU Bamenda average ratings by community



N= 2 communities in PU Bamenda; PU Bamenda n=64 girls, ages 12-16

Cameroon: School Equality Scorecard



Findings from the School Equality Scorecard:

In **Cameroon**, Plan spoke with 256 girls in 10 schools and 299 boys in 10 schools in PU Biteng and PU Bamenda.

In **PU Biteng**, girls felt that **class participation** and **encouragement** were the highest areas of gender equality at school for girls, while boys said that **class participation** and **sports participation** were the highest. Both girls and boys felt that **latrines** and **early pregnancy** were the lowest areas of gender equality at school for girls.

In **PU Bamenda**, girls felt that **class participation** and **leadership** were the highest areas of gender equality at school for girls, while adolescent boys said that **class participation** and **chore burden** are the highest areas. Girls felt that **early pregnancy** was the lowest area of gender equality at school for girls, while adolescent boys said that **sports participation** and **early pregnancy** are the highest areas.

Table 16 School Equality Scorecard: Cameroon, PU Biteng and PU Bamenda dimensions with highest and lowest average scores, girls and boys, ages 12-16

Cameroon	Dimensions with highest average scores		Dimensions with lowest average scores	
	PU Biteng	PU Bamenda	PU Biteng	PU Bamenda
Girls	Class participation 4.0 Encouragement 3.8	Class participation 4.2 Leadership 4.0 Encouragement 4.0	Latrines 2.1 Early pregnancy 2.5	Early pregnancy 2.9
Boys	Sports participation 3.8 Class participation 3.9	Class participation 3.9 Chore burden 3.9	Latrines 2.1 Early pregnancy 2.3	Sports participation 2.9 Early pregnancy 2.8

Highest average scored dimensions: Plan Cameroon, PU Biteng and PU Bamenda selected schools

In both PU Biteng and PU Bamenda, girls scored **class participation** the highest of all tool dimensions. For girls interviewed in PU Biteng participating schools, 50% responded that they “always” participate in class activities as much as boys. A further 17% responded that girls “often” participate equally. The average score for this dimension for girls in PU Biteng was 4.0, corresponding to the “often” response option. In PU Bamenda participating schools, 63% of girls interviewed responded that they “always,” while 13% said girls “often” participate in class activities as much as boys. Qualitative examples from girls in both PUs illustrated a range of opinions. Themes raised across girls’ focus groups included that girls and boys participate equally in theory, but less consistently in practice. Girls’ comments revealed a nuanced picture. Girls see certain girl classmates as “more intelligent” and it is these girls who participate in class activities as much or more than boys. Some girls also work very hard to succeed academically in part to fight negative views of their academic capabilities among peers, teachers or parents. Others fear shaming and mockery by boys if they raise their hand and offer wrong answers in class. Some girls have internalised negative gender stereotypes about their capabilities,

believing that girls generally learn more slowly than boys. Some girls, particularly from poorer families, voiced feeling ashamed to stand up in front of the class because of state of their clothes. Others said that girls who “go out with teachers” behave in a shy, reserved manner in class, and therefore participate less.

“Some girls want to prove their parents wrong, so they tend to work very hard to succeed in their exams.”

Girl, PU Biteng school

“The teacher never asks questions only to boys or girls, but to the whole class so that boys and girls give their answer freely.”

Girl, PU Bamenda school

Boys interviewed in PU Biteng and PU Bamenda also gave **class participation** their highest scores of all dimensions in the tool, however their scores were slightly lower with more variability than those of girls. Boys from PU Biteng reported that in their view, girls and boys “always” (41%), “often” (20%), or “sometimes” (26%) participate in classroom activities equally. Of boys interviewed in PU Bamenda participating schools, 46% reported that girls “always” participate in class activities as much as boys. A further 15% reported that girls “often” participate as much as boys. Qualitative comments and examples boys gave often supported the lower scores in the response range of “always” to “never.” Repeating themes in boys’ comments and quotes echoed those of girls that while some girls are intelligent and bold, others participate less as they are afraid to give wrong answers and risk being mocked in class. Some boys, like some girls, have internalised a negative gender stereotype that boys are more intelligent than girls. Others raised assumptions that girls who participate less in class are preoccupied with concerns over their dating partners, or their children while they are at school.

“Some girls are very intelligent and to show off, they respond to all questions asked.”

Boy, PU Bamenda school

“Most girls do not participate in class because they are day dreaming and thinking of the teachers who they are dating, or their boyfriends whom they will meet at the end of classes or their children left at home.”

Boy, PU Bamenda school

Asked if girls receive as much **encouragement** as boys to succeed in their schoolwork, girls interviewed in PU Biteng responded, “always” (46%), “often” (17%), and “sometimes” (14%). Still, a further 15% responded, “seldom” and 7% responded, “never.” The average score was 3.8, corresponding to “sometimes.” Scores from girls in PU Bamenda were similar to those in PU Biteng. Asked whether girls are encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys, PU Bamenda girls responded “always” (54%) and “often” (15%). The average score for this PU for girls was also 4.0, or “often,” which was the same as for **leadership**. There may be a correlation between the **encouragement** and **leadership** dimensions. Girls commented both on the encouragement of parents and teachers, noting that some parents give equal opportunity to daughters as sons to attend and succeed in school. Some commented that more parents value and prioritise girls’ education than in the past. Still, not all girls are equally encouraged, as education may be considered less important for their future roles as wives and mothers, than it is for boys’ roles as husbands and fathers. Boys are expected to get jobs after school and provide for a wife and children. Gender norms are changing, though, with some parents recognising that girls who complete their studies and work can contribute economically.

“Parents now recognise the credits of an educated girl; many are making efforts for their girls to complete their education.”

Girl, PU Biteng school

“Boys are more encouraged than the girls because in a situation where a girl do not secure a job at the end of her education, she still has the chance of getting married and her husband taking care of her. But for boys, once you cannot have a job, no woman will like to get married to a jobless man.”

Girl, PU Biteng school

“Most of our parents are now recognising the benefits of educating girl children, as it is mostly girls who think of their parents when they pick up a job. [Our] community has greatly developed with beautiful houses built and parents travelling abroad, thanks to girl children who have succeeded in life. Thus most parents tend to place more encouragement on girls in schools.”

Girl, PU Bamenda school

“Some parents still encourage boys more than girls to succeed in schools and will invest limited resources only on boys education as opposed to girls, as they still believe girls are ‘property of other families’, and hope that their boy children’s success will mean success for their families.”

Girl, PU Bamenda school

“Because girls can likely be pregnant at any moment, encouraging and investing in their education may mean ‘wastage of resources for the family’.”

Girl, PU Bamenda

The second highest average score from boys interviewed in PU Biteng was for **sports participation**. Asked if girls participate in sports at school as much as boys, boys in PU Biteng responded, “always” (33%), “often” (33%), and “sometimes” (19%). The average score for this dimension was 3.8, corresponding to “sometimes.” Themes from focus group discussions once again included a gender stereotype of girls being less capable than boys, and boys mocking girls while playing. Comments from boys suggest widespread assumptions that girls play sports less often than boys because they ‘do not like’ sports, they are less capable players, they are less strong, or they are concerned about body odor after playing.

“Boys and girls participate in sport activities, but are not given the same exercises. The girls are not capable of doing as much as boys.”

Boy, PU Biteng school

“Some girls use this as an opportunity to challenge the boys who are weak in sport in their class. Girls are willing to do sports, but boys mock at them when it is not well done.”

Boy, PU Biteng school

“Girls do not like sport activities, they feel obliged to do it to avoid having Zero marks in their examination.”

Boy, PU Biteng school

“Girls are weak, soft, lazy and do not like rough activities.”

Boy, PU Biteng school

“Some girls do not want to smell and have a bad odor in class.”

Boy, PU Biteng school

Finally, the second highest score in PU Bamenda among boys was for **chore burden**. Asked whether they think girls and boys spend as much time on chores at school, boys responded, “always,” (42%), “often,” (17%) or “sometimes,” (29%). These scores are slightly higher than those for **chore burden** among girls interviewed from PU Bamenda schools, suggesting some differences of opinion. Boys’ comments and examples illustrated the “sometimes,” and “seldom” response options, and reiterated inequitable gender norms and attitudes toward the division of labour. Some chores are considered “girls’ work” and therefore boys do not perform them. School authorities, likely including teachers, reinforce the gender division of labour.

“Boys believe that it is the girl’s duty to clean, sweep, mop the class rooms so they don’t participate.”

Boy, PU Biteng school

“The school authorities believe that girls are better cleaners than boys and they turn to assign only the girls.” Boy, PU Bamenda school

Lowest average scored dimensions: Plan Cameroon, PU Biteng and PU Bamenda

Girls and boys in PU Biteng gave their lowest scores to the **latrines** question. A majority, 55%, responded that girls “never” feel comfortable using the latrines at school. A further 12% reported that they “seldom” do. Comments and examples to explain these low scores repeated themes from other countries in the study where girls also gave **latrines** low scores. These included that some school’s latrines are filthy, cause illnesses, are mixed sex, and lack privacy and security. Latrines that are at a distance from school increase risks and incidences of school-related sexual and gender-based violence.

“It’s too dirty. We are not comfortable there at all.” Girl, PU Biteng school

“The toilets are mixed [sex] and do not have walls. The girls prefer not using them at all because of the lack of privacy.” Girl, PU Biteng school

“Teachers and pupils use the same toilets. Girls are uncomfortable sharing their toilets with boys and adults.” Girl, PU Biteng school

“The toilets are messy and usually the cause of illnesses for girls.” Girl, PU Biteng school

“Some boys spy the girls when they are using the toilets.” Girl, PU Biteng school

“The toilets are away from the classrooms and have become a ‘crime area’. This is where girls are brutalised and raped and it is equally where boys and girls have their rendezvous.”

Girl, PU Biteng school

A higher proportion of boys (70%) interviewed in PU Biteng participating schools reported that in their view, girls “never” (49%) or “seldom” (21%) have latrines at school that they feel comfortable using. Their comments corroborated girls’ concerns about latrines being dirty, unisex, and being spied upon there. Boys did not bring up the issues physical and sexual assault that girls raised.

“The toilets are messed up by boys and girls are afraid of contracting infections.” Boy, PU Biteng school

“Girls are never happy to go to the toilet because there is only one toilet for boys and girls.”

Boy, PU Biteng school

“The toilets have some opening where boys peep on girls using the toilet, thereby making girls uncomfortable using them.”

Boy, PU Biteng school

Girls and boys in PU Biteng and PU Bamenda consistently gave low scores to **early pregnancy**, with average responses that in their schools, girls “seldom” continue school after having a baby. Girls in PU Biteng responded, “never” (34%), “seldom” (20%), and “sometimes” (23%). Boy’s scores from PU Biteng similarly responded, “never” (27%), “seldom” (37%) or “sometimes” (21%). In PU Bamenda, girls “never” (18%), “seldom” (13%), or “sometimes” (39%) continue school after having a child. Boys’ scores from PU Bamenda were comparable, with responses of “never” (28%), “seldom” (16%) and “sometimes” (23%). Common themes girls and boys raised across both PUs to explain why most young mothers do not return to school ranged from concerns over catching up academically, to: trepidation over mockery and bullying; parents’ fear of a second pregnancy; marriage and husbands forbidding continued studies; and girls’ lacking time, childcare support and funds for school. Some adolescent mothers do return to school if they have childcare support, but most leave their studies entirely.

“When some have stopped breastfeeding, they are given a second chance to go back to school.”

Girl, PU Biteng school

“Some parents might babysit while their daughters continue with school.”

Girl, PU Biteng school

“When they don’t have baby sitters, they can’t go back to school.”

Girl, PU Biteng school

“Girls who have had babies always feel discouraged when they see their friends ahead of them.”

Girl, PU Bamenda

“Parents do not encourage them to go back to school. Most of them will say ‘that is what she wanted, can’t continue to waste my money on her. Thus they dare not ‘risk’ any additional money on the girl anymore as she may go and become pregnant again.”

Girl, PU Biteng

“Most girls after putting to birth will not like to go back to school because of shame due to jeering by their peers.”

Girl, PU Biteng school

“With a baby as another responsibility, some parents do not have the means to sent back these girls to schools.”

Boy, PU Biteng school

“Some girls usually go and stay with the person responsible for their pregnancy and these men do not sent them to school.”

Boy, PU Biteng school

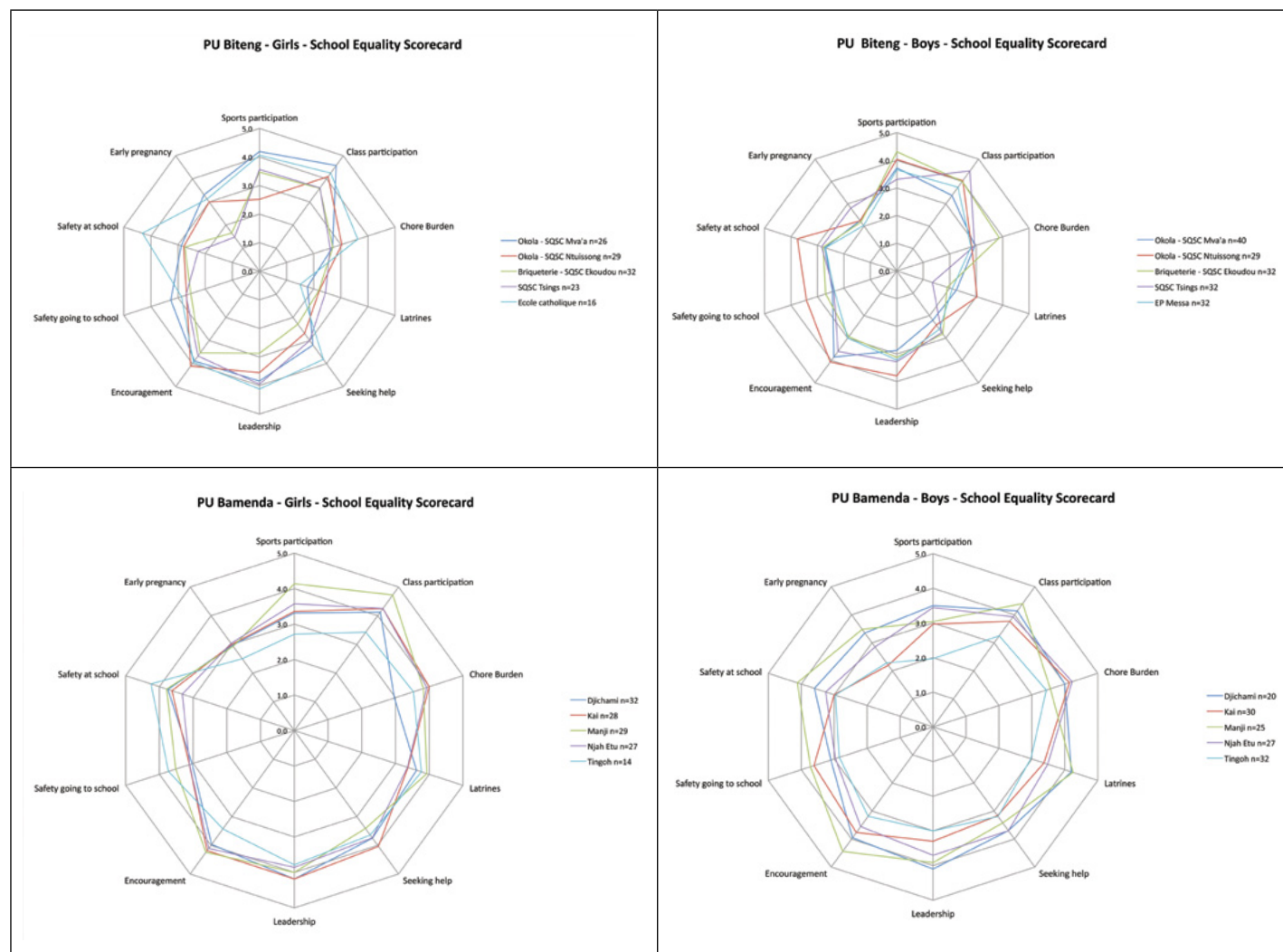
“Their husbands do not allow them to continue going to school.”

Boy, PU Bamenda school

“There was a girl who could not continue school because after putting to birth she was sick, and hadn’t any money to continue schooling, because her father abandoned her with her mother and got married to another woman.”

Boy, PU Bamenda school

Figure 38: School Equality Scorecard:
Cameroon, PU Biteng and PU Bamenda average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16



LIBERIA

Liberia: Girls Empowerment Star



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Liberia**, Plan spoke with 167 adolescent girls in PU Bomi and PU Lofa, in six communities.

On average, girls in **PU Bomi** felt most empowered around **safety**, and least empowered around deciding if and when to get **pregnant**.

In **PU Lofa**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered around **feeling valued** in the community, and least empowered deciding when they get **pregnant**.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Liberia's PU Bomi selected communities

The dimension that Liberian girls rated most highly in PU Bomi was **safety**. Of 87 girls who responded to the question, "do girls feel safe in this community?" 26% reported "always" while 31% responded, "often." A further 20% responded, "sometimes," and 16%, "seldom." Views varied, with an average rating of "sometimes." Of the girls who rated this dimension more highly, many repeated the perspective that, 'we are safe in our community. There is no one chasing after us'. There were no comments to illustrate issues that leave some girls feeling less safe than others. Also in this PU, the dimension of speaking up was given an average rating of "seldom," or that girls seldom say what they think when a male is around. This may be linked to the silence in response to being asked about their perceived level of safety and speaking up about issues of girls' insecurity in their homes, on the roads, in the community or at school.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Liberia's PU Lofa selected communities

In PU Lofa, the **feeling valued** dimension was rated most highly, but with an average rating of "sometimes," only. Of 80 girls interviewed, 44% responded that they "always" feel safe in their community, while 20% said, "often," and 16% reported, "sometimes." In some cases, the sense of feeling valued was attributed to a protective attitude of parents.

"Most of the girls said that they feel valued because their parents speak on their behalf when there are problems."

Girl, PU Lofa community

In other instances, the responsibilities of children to care for their parents, as they get older, motivate parents to value girls.

"Some said that their parents are treating them well because the girls will take care of them in old age."

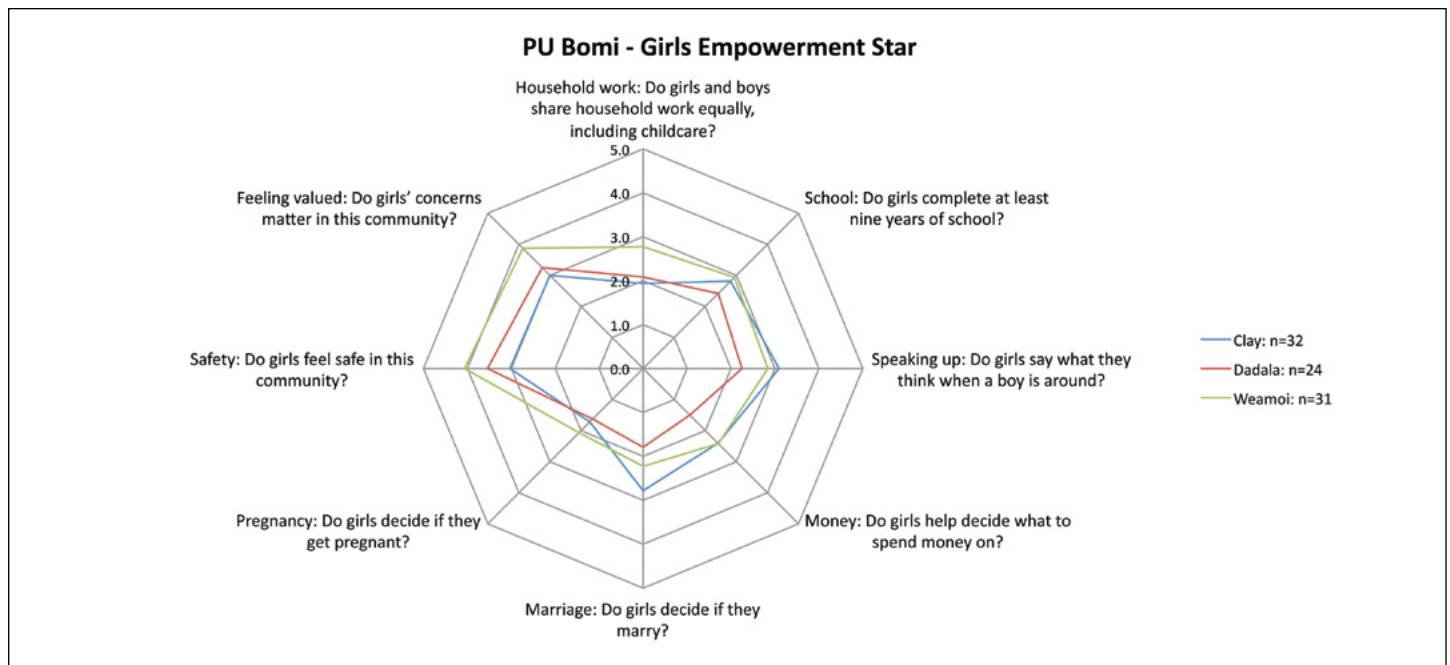
Girl, PU Lofa community

Both examples given suggest that the ways in which girls are being valued do not challenge societal gender norms that girls need someone to speak on their behalf and that a girl's role is as a caregiver.

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Liberia, PU Bomi and PU Lofa selected communities

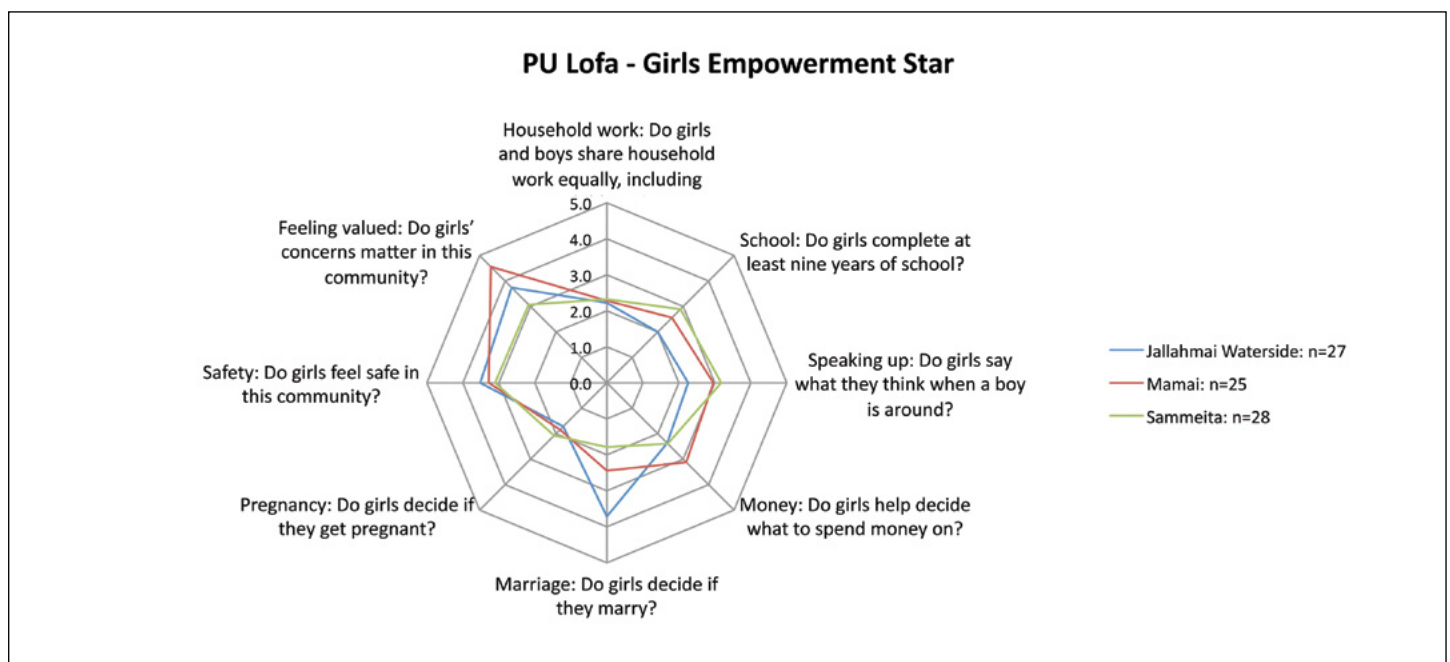
In Liberia, girls rated the **pregnancy** dimension the lowest across participating PU Bomi and PU Lofa communities. In PU Bomi, of 87 girls interviewed, 46% expressed the view that girls “never” decide over pregnancy, while 32% responded, “seldom” and 18% said, “sometimes.” Ratings varied similarly in PU Lofa, where 60 girls responded to the question, “Do girls decide if they get pregnant?” 52% with “never,” 27%, “seldom,” and 10%, “sometimes.” Reasons given were similar, including the perception that it’s not girls who decide over pregnancy, and that they have no say in the matter. Girls’ sexual debut tends to be early, yet they are not trained in contraceptive methods. Many parents force girls into marriage early to avoid stigma of early pregnancy. Some parents reportedly encourage daughters to pursue gifts and money from boys or men, for which girls are expected to provide sex in exchange.

Figure 39: Girls Empowerment Star: Liberia, PU Bomi average ratings by community



N=3 communities per PU; Bomi n=87 girls ages 12-16

Figure 40: Girls Empowerment Star: Liberia, PU Lofa average ratings by community



N=3 communities per PU; Lofa n=80 girls ages 12-16

Liberia: School Equality Scorecard



Findings from the School Equality Scorecard:

In **Liberia**, Plan spoke with 187 girls in 6 schools and 184 boys in 6 schools in PU Bomi and PU Lofa. In **PU Bomi**, girls felt that **safety and school** was the highest area of gender equality at school for girls, while boys said it was **sports participation**. In **PU Lofa**, both girls and boys felt that **safety at school** was the highest area of gender equality at school for girls.

In **Liberia**, Plan spoke with 187 girls in 6 schools and 184 boys in 6 schools in PU Bomi and PU Lofa. In **PU Bomi**, girls felt that **latrines** were the lowest area of gender equality at school for girls, while boys said it was **early pregnancy**. In **PU Lofa**, both girls and boys felt that **early pregnancy** was the lowest area of gender equality at school for girls.

Table 17: School Equality Scorecard: Liberia, PU Bomi and PU Lofa dimensions with highest and lowest average scores, girls and boys, ages 12-16

Liberia	Dimensions with highest average scores		Dimensions with lowest average scores	
	PU Bomi	PU Lofa	PU Bomi	PU Lofa
Girls	Safety at school 3.7	Safety at school 4.1	Latrines 2.3	Early pregnancy 2.4
Boys	Sports participation 3.8	Safety at school 3.8	Early pregnancy 2.7	Early pregnancy 2.9

Highest average scored dimensions: PU Bomi and PU Lofa selected schools

Safety at school was the highest scored dimension by girls interviewed in PU Bomi and PU Lofa. 40% of girls interviewed from PU Bomi, and 50% from PU Lofa responded that they “always” feel safe at school. Average ratings from PU Bomi corresponded to “sometimes,” with some girls feeling less safe in their schools than others. Average ratings for PU Lofa corresponded to, “often.” Girls cited feeling safe at school as a key factor allowing them to concentrate on their studies and achieve good grades. Boys from PU Lofa also rated this dimension the highest, with 46% of those interviewed responding that in their view, they agree that girls are “always” as safe as boys at school. Teachers mostly create a safe learning atmosphere and protect the students.

“We and the boys are friendly and the teachers serve as parents to protect us at school” Girl, PU Bomi school

“When we are at school, we feel free because no one is disturbing us.” Girl, PU Lofa school

“We are always safe at school because our teachers create safe learning environment for everybody”.
Boy, PU Lofa

Boys in PU Bomi scored the sports participation the highest dimension on average out of all others of the School Equality Scorecard. Of boys interviewed, 45% responded that girls at their school “always” participate in sports as much as boys. Some cited the positive role that sports play in social cohesion, and attributed girls’ sports participation to this.

“Boys and girls are participating in sports activities equally.” Boy, PU Bomi school

“Boys and girls are participating in sports activities because sports bring unity and also make us to associate.” Boy, PU Bomi school

Lowest average scored dimensions: PU Bomi and PU Lofa selected schools

Latrines received the lowest scores from girls in PU Bomi, and from girls in PU Lofa in two out of three schools where interviews took place. In Bomi, 71% of Bomi girls responded either never (31%) or seldom (40%) to the question of whether girls have a latrine at school they feel comfortable using. Girls explained that they gave the latrines question low scores for several reasons, which match the reasons girls from other countries in the study also gave low scores to this dimension. Those reasons include, filth and disease risks, lack of privacy, and discomfort in having to use the same latrines as boys and men.

“Others misuse the latrine and when we sit on it, we can suffer from infections. [...] boys and girls use the same toilet.” Girl, PU Bomi school

“We do not have privacy using the latrines. The boys also use our latrines.” Girl, PU Bomi school

“Our school toilet is used by the community members ... it can be nasty and if you sit on it you get sick.” Girl, PU Bomi school

Early pregnancy received the lowest scores for girls and boys from PU Lofa schools, and boys from PU Bomi schools. In PU Lofa, 42% of girls reported that girls “never” continue school after having a baby. This dimension scored considerably lower for girls than any other dimension in PU Lofa schools (apart from **latrines**). Boys from PU Lofa reported that girls in their schools “never” (20%), “seldom” (17%) or “sometimes” (34%) continue their studies after having a child. Boys interviewed from PU Bomi, responded “never” (23%), “seldom” (16%) or “sometimes” (41%). All reported an average score of “seldom.”

When speaking on **early pregnancy**, girls from PU Lofa frequently referenced an increase in household responsibilities and childcare as a factor curtailing their education after having a child. Many drivers noted both a lack of child protection and lack of contraceptive protection during sex. Many cited the absence of sexual and reproductive health and pregnancy prevention training as a key factor. Other girls reported that, poverty, peer pressure and the desire to acquire things that other girls have also factor into early pregnancy. Girls named poverty and sexual exploitation as main drivers behind **early pregnancy**.

“Early pregnancy makes girls responsible soon and they drop out of school.” Girl, PU Lofa school

“We get pregnant because we are not protected.” Girl, PU Lofa school

“[...] we are not taking prevention and we drop out of school when we get pregnant”. Girl, PU Lofa school

“Some girls get pregnant because of material things.” Girl, PU Lofa school

“Because some of us are poor, we look for our daily needs to make it, and in the process get pregnant.” Girl, PU Lofa school

Boys from PU Bomi and PU Lofa boys explained the low scores on **early pregnancy** by focusing on the impacts of child bearing on their own responsibilities and school attendance. Some commented on the fact that they often do continue school after having a child, but that the girl does not. Others explained that boys' responsibilities can include generating money to support a family.

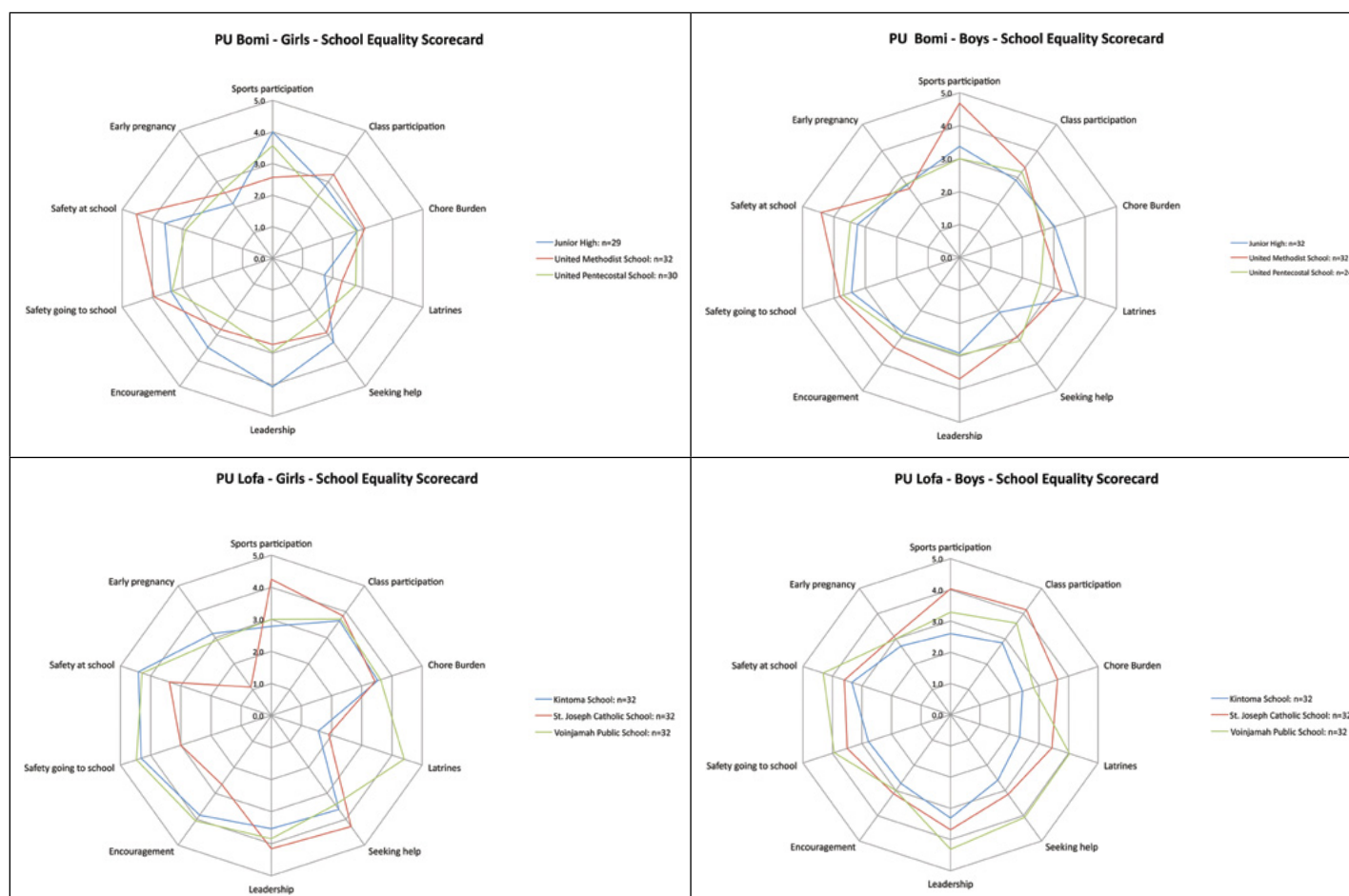
“Sometimes we do not attend school after having babies. Because we have additional responsibility.”

Boy, PU Bomi school

“We have to look for daily means to take care of the baby.” Boy, PU Bomi school

“We have [the] chance to go to school when we have baby, but not girls”. Boy, PU Bomi school

Figure 41:
School Equality Scorecard: Liberia, PU Bomi and PU Lofa average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16



Country Results and Key Findings: East and Southern Africa (Egypt, Uganda, Zimbabwe)

EGYPT

Egypt: Girls Empowerment Star



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Egypt**, Plan spoke with 167 adolescent girls in PU Qalubia and PU Assiut, in four communities.

On average, girls in **PU Qalubia** felt most empowered around dimensions of **marriage** and **pregnancy**, and least empowered about **household work** and **speaking up** in front of men and boys.

In **PU Assiut**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered to access at least nine years of school and to decide when they **marry**, and least empowered around aspects of **household work**.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Egypt's PU Qalubia selected communities

Ratings from Egypt's Qalubia PU were higher on the **marriage** and **pregnancy** dimensions than those for most other countries in the study. Of 95 girls interviewed, 87% responded that in their communities, girls "always" decide over marriage. Most held the view that girls must choose their spouse or the marriage might not work. Most agreed that the age at marriage should not be less than 18. Many respondents' said their mothers had endured forced marriage at a young age. While seeing themselves as having power to decide over marriage, the decision focused mainly on age at marriage and choice of spouse, and did not include the possibility of choosing not to marry. Girls explained that they must marry otherwise they will not be valued in their society.

"It used to be like this. My mother was forced to get married, but now she says, 'don't do what was done to me'."

Girl, PU Qalubia community

“The education level is high and that’s why parents are open minded. Girls always have an opinion [about marriage].” Girl, PU Qalubia community

“Most participants said that the suitable age of marriage is 18 to ensure that the girl’s body and mind are suitable for marriage. Most girls have also stated that they have the right to choose their husband.” Girl, PU Qalubia community

“My sister is 25 years old and she is beautiful. She doesn’t want to get married and she always says that education and work are more important. My father is never angry with her.”
Girl, PU Qalubia community

Asked if girls decide over **pregnancy**, 67% responded, “always,” while 3% said, “often,” and 19%, “sometimes.” Reasons that girls gave considered pregnancy only within the context of marriage. On decisions over marriage and pregnancy, the majority of girls interviewed voiced the view that both are the girls’ decision over her future, her body and her health—she will marry whom she wants and delay pregnancy if she wants. Most girls voiced the view that educated girls should postpone pregnancy until they complete secondary school. Educated girls are better able to convince husbands to postpone pregnancy, they said. They emphasised the opinion that pregnancy should be the girls’ decision as it’s her body and health, and a large responsibility that she must consider carefully. Many were aware that early pregnancy threatens the health of a young mother and the child. Many had heard stories from their mothers about early pregnancy. Mothers of girls in the group reportedly wished their daughters to marry and bear children later than they did, after age 18.

“Parents don’t want what happened to them to happen with their girls.” Girl, PU Qalubia community

“The decision is concerning us. If an educated girl gets married, she should decide to postpone pregnancy until she completes her education.”
Girl, PU Qalubia community

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Egypt’s PU Assiut selected communities

Girls in PU Assiut’s selected community give the **school** dimension the highest average rating. Similarly to PU Qalubia, in PU Assiut’s selected community, girls also scored the **marriage** dimension highly with an average score of “often.” Of 72 girls interviewed, about 64% responded, “always,” 8%, “often,” and 18%, “sometimes.” Girls commented that they see ages 18-20 as a suitable age of marriage, and that they should finish their education first. Most either choose themselves, or have a say in choosing their husband, and can refuse to marry a boy with a bad reputation. Some girls reported that fathers force girls into marriage with rich men. Some fathers are supportive of girls’ education, but others will block girls from continuing their education in favor of marriage.

In PU Assiut, girls also rated the school dimension highly with an average response that girls “often” complete at least nine years of school in their communities. Of 71 girls who responded to this dimension, 39% responded, “always,” 21% “often,” and 35%, “sometimes.” Comments from the group discussions highlighted the importance of parental support for girls’ education, particularly that of the father. Having an older sister with high educational attainment also can help inspire and motivate younger sisters. Girls report enjoying being at school, as their friends are there and many girls are allowed to go out of the household only to go to school. In some cases, school expenses present a barrier to girls’ education, and some parents pull girls out of school for lack of funds to cover costs.

“My parents like education because they are both uneducated and they want us to be the best to and be highly educated.”
Girl, PU Assiut community

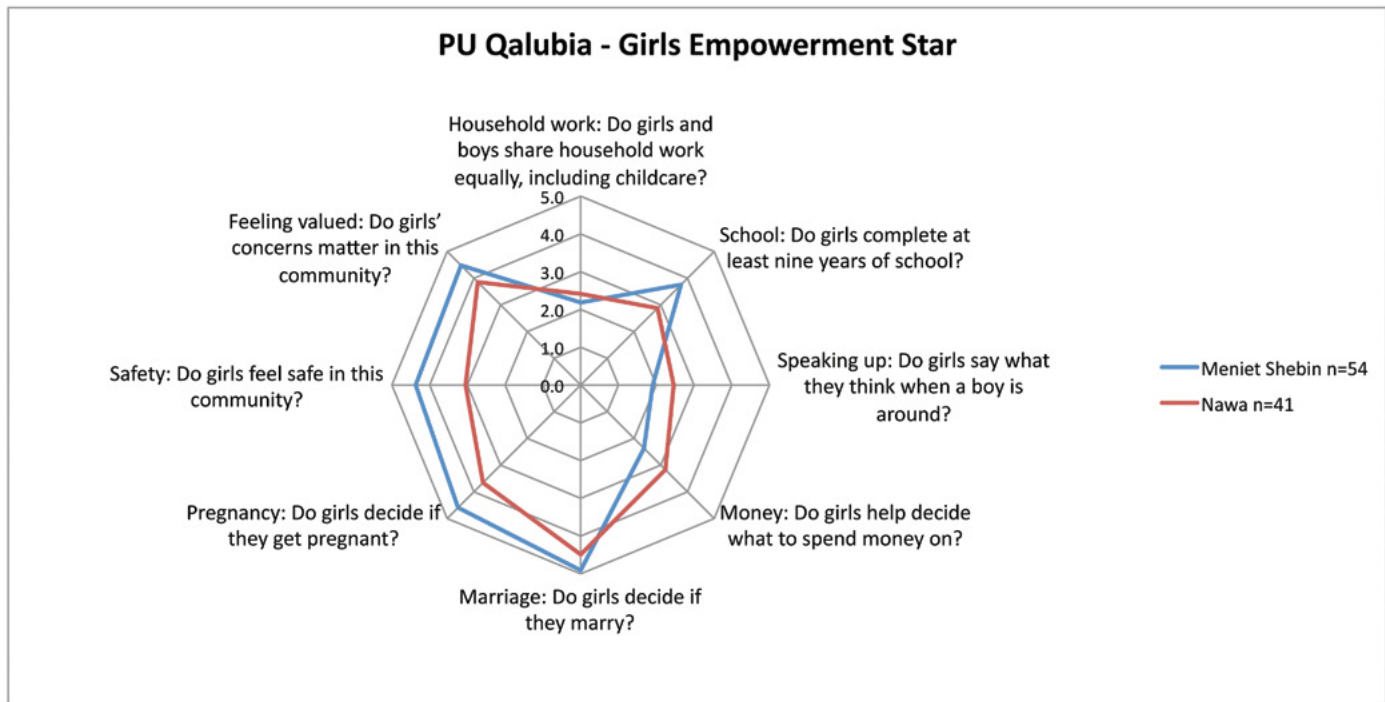
“My sister is in the third year of university. My father is very proud of her and he wants me to succeed in third preparatory and go to secondary and then join university like my sister.”

Girl, PU Assiut community

“I like education, but my father wants to pull me from school because of the expenses.”

Girl, PU Assiut community

Figure 42: Girls Empowerment Star: Egypt, PU Qalubia average ratings by community



N= 2 communities PU Qalubia; PU Qalubia n=95 girls, ages 12-16

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Egypt's PU Qalubia selected communities

The lowest ratings in PU Qalubia went to the **household work** and **speaking up** dimensions. Of 95 girls interviewed, a combined 86% responded that girls and boys “never” (43%), “seldom” (8%) or “sometimes” (35%) share household work equally, including childcare. Girls are burdened with household tasks that increase after marriage. Before and after marriage, household tasks and caregiving often take girls’ time away from their studies. Traditional gender roles and responsibilities constrain girls’ time as an inequitable division of labor segregates “girls’ work” from “boys’ work.” Still, some boys help sometimes if their mother is ill, or their sister has school exams. Boys who tend to help more are those who see their fathers helping their mothers.

“We are burdened with all household tasks. After marriage, we work even more.”

Girl, PU Qalubia community

Of the 95 girls interviewed in PU Qalubia, 33% responded to the **speaking up** dimension with “never,” 8% with “seldom,” and 44% with “sometimes.” Asked whether girls say what they think in front of a boy or other male, PU Qalubia girls’ average response was “sometimes.” Girls’ comments help to illustrate a wide variation in ratings.

“We are embarrassed to speak in the presence of men.” Girl, PU Qalubia community

“I can’t talk in front of men or in front of anyone, even in front of my siblings. I feel that I will be embarrassed by anything I say, so I don’t speak at all.”

Girl, PU Qalubia community

“My father always asks me my opinion and he is not embarrassed to do so because my opinion may be correct.”

Girl, PU Qalubia community

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Egypt’s PU Assiut selected communities

Also similarly to PU Qalubia, girls interviewed from PU Assiut gave the **household work** dimension the lowest average score that girls and boys only “seldom” share household work, including caregiving, equally. Of 72 girls who gave ratings, 58% responded, “never”, and 17% responded, “seldom.” Again, girls raised the issue of traditional gender roles and responsibilities labeling “girls’ work” as all household chores and caregiving. The issue of household work taking up girls’ time and curtailing their studies was also a significant theme among girls interviewed in PU Assiut.

“We do everything at home.” Girl, PU Assiut community

“I work at home first to please my mother and then I do my homework. The boy in our house does his homework and I do the household chores.”

Girl, PU Assiut community

Girls from PU Assiut also gave the **safety** dimension low to moderate ratings. Asked, “do girls feel safe in this community?”, a combined 76% of girls interviewed in PU Assiut responded, “never” (17%), “seldom” (17%), or “sometimes” (39%). Many girls elaborated the theme that ‘there is no security for girls’. Girls face ‘harassment by poor young men who can’t get married’. Many raised issues of rickshaw drivers and boys on motorcycles harassing girls. Most girls are afraid going outside after dark because of the lack of security. Many fear being kidnapped. Strategies to increase girls’ security include fathers and brothers accompanying girls in the streets.

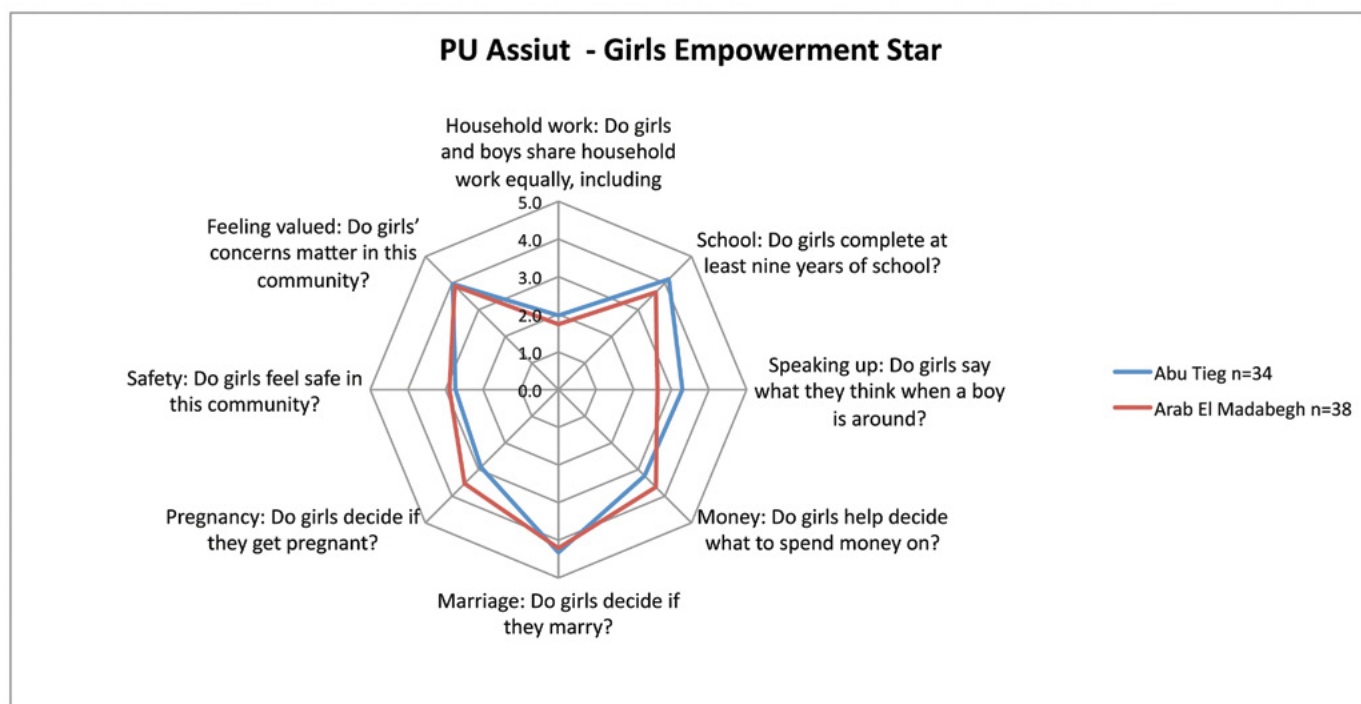
“We don’t feel safe at all. Boys go by on motorcycles and hit girls and steal their bags. My parents don’t let me go out of home alone at all except with my father or brother.”

Girl, PU Assiut community

“I am scared to go outside home after sunset because there is no security now to protect the girl.”

Girl, PU Assiut community

Figure 43: Girls Empowerment Star: Egypt, PU Assiut average ratings by community



N= 1 community PU Assiut. PU Assiut n=34 girls, ages 12-16

UGANDA

Uganda: Girls Empowerment Star



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Uganda**, Plan spoke with 192 adolescent girls in PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North, in six communities.

On average, girls in **PU Kamuli** felt most empowered around **marriage**, and least empowered around aspects of **money**.

In **PU Tororo North**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered around dimensions of **marriage, safety**, and **feeling valued**, and least empowered about **household work**.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Uganda's PU Kamuli North selected communities

In Uganda's PU Kamuli, girls also gave the **marriage** dimension their highest ratings, with an average of "sometimes" to "often" in response to the question, "do girls decide when they marry?" Of 313 girls interviewed, 43% responded that they "always," and 17% are "often" the ones to decide when they marry. A further 20% responded, "sometimes." While no qualitative data were available to provide further insight into this finding for the Jenima High School, data from the other four schools from PU Kamuli suggested that girls do exercise some decision-making power over when and who they marry, generally preferring men from the same religious background and from a higher socioeconomic status. Some girls said that it is parents who often decide if, when and whom a girl marries. The few examples given of girls being able to exercise their own choices over marriage were from those who were 18 years or older, or had completed their education.

"My sister got married when she finished education and became a doctor since she was old enough to decide."

Girl, PU Kamuli community

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Uganda's PU Tororo North selected communities

Similar to those from PU Kamuli, girls interviewed from Uganda's PU Tororo North area rated **marriage** among the higher rated dimensions, with an average response that girls' "sometimes" decide when they marry. Of 256 girls who responded to this question, 26% responded that girls "always" are the ones to decide, while 47% responded, "always" and 15% said, "never." Comments reflected variability in girls' responses. Some girls said that they are still young and therefore have no right yet to choose a husband for marriage. Others mentioned that their parents prefer them to stay in school.

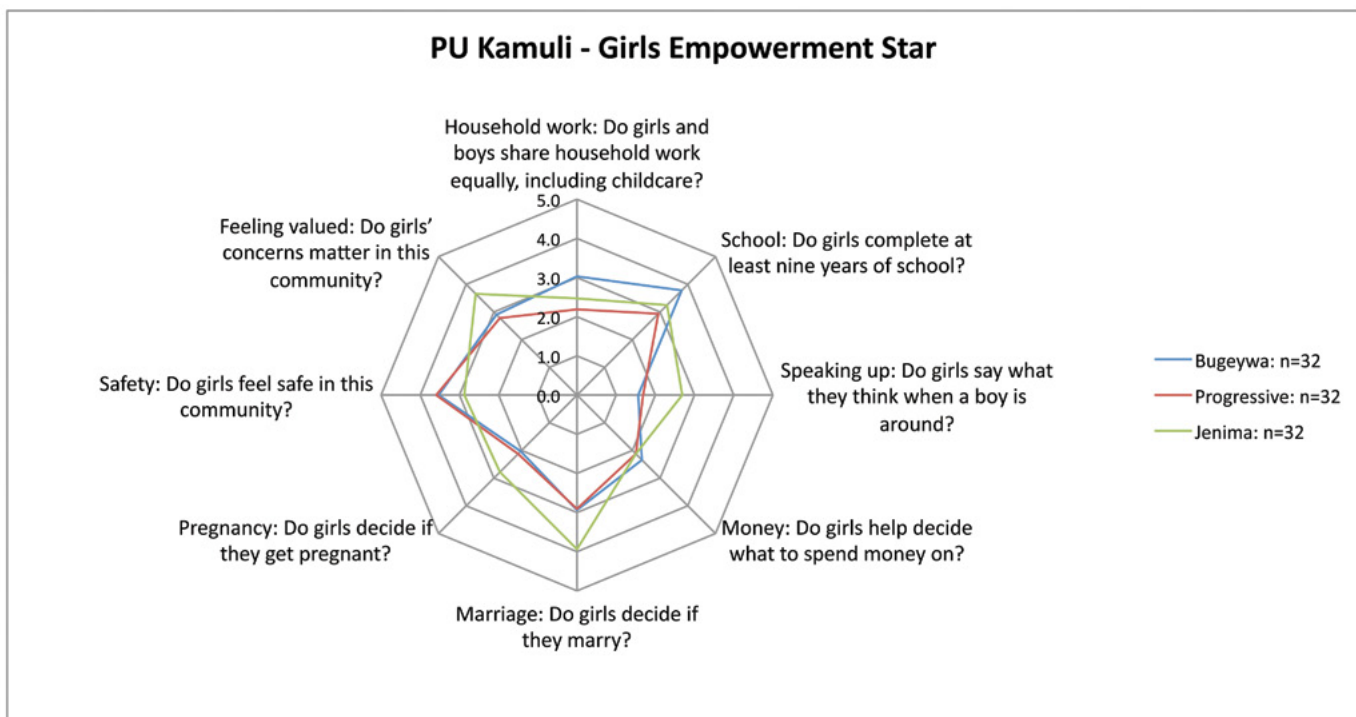
"...[parents] are tough and are not about to hear anything concerning marriage because they spend a lot of money on school fees for girls and besides, the girls are still young and not ready for marriage."

Girl, PU Tororo North community

PU Tororo North girls interviewed rated the **safety** dimension similarly to **marriage**. Of 299 girls who responded to the question, “do girls feel safe in this community?” the average response was “sometimes” (36%), with 24% responding “often,” and 25%, “never.” One focus group reported that community leaders such as the local council chairperson always punish anyone that offends girls. Parents also protect girls in the community against violence. Girls said that they feel safe when their parents provide for their basic needs. Many said that having good water sources and health centers makes them feel safe.³¹ Still, responses varied, with 14% of girls saying that they “seldom” (11%) or “never” (3%) feel safe in their community. Many reported that this is due to the presence of “rapists, thieves and drunkards,” who disturb girls.³²

The **feeling valued** dimension also garnered girls’ higher ratings in PU Tororo North communities, with an average score of “sometimes.” Of the 293 girls who responded to the question, “do girls concerns matter in this community?” 41% responded, “sometimes,” 15% “often,” and 31% “always.” Some said “seldom” because educated girls seem to be more valued and provided for. Many said, “sometimes” because “when you are big, they may consider what you say.”³³ Some said “often,” commenting that “some girls are more intelligent than boys,” and that boys are “undisciplined.”³⁴ Educated, older and ‘more intelligent’ girls may feel more heard and their views more considered by peers and adults.

Figure 44: Girls Empowerment Star: Uganda, PU Kamuli average ratings by community



N=3 communities per PU; Kamuli n=96 girls ages 12-16

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Uganda’s PU Kamuli selected communities

Girls interviewed from PU Kamuli rated the **money** dimension the lowest, with an average of “seldom” in response to the question, “do girls help decide what to spend money on?” Of 211 girls who responded to the question, a reported 19% said that girls “never” help decide what to spend money on. 10% reported, “seldom” and 48%, “sometimes.” Girls elaborated that most have no access to or control over money. Many feel seen as untrustworthy in handling money. Parents often see girls too young and unable to budget well. Related to the **school** and **speaking up** dimensions, many girls feel uncomfortable asking for money to pay their school fees.

³¹ Source: girl, PU Tororo North community

³² Source: girl, PU Tororo North community

³³ Source: girl, PU Tororo North community

³⁴ Source: girl, PU Tororo North community

“You can see your father with money and you request that he gives you some for school fees, he will say, as if you are the one who decides for me.”

Girl, PU Kamuli community

In response to the **speaking up** question, “do girls say what they think when a boy (or other male) is around,” one girl commented that voicing their needs for money for school fees is difficult. Some parents are “tough, unapproachable, and drunks.”³⁵

“...most parents are drunkards who spend most of their time at drinking joints. Even when you ask for something, for example money, he said, ‘I do not have money for a bottle and you talk about books’. As a girl, you lose the ability to address your concerns.”

Girl, PU Kamuli community

In contrast, some adolescent girl household heads do access **money**, but it is unclear how much control they have over that money.

“For children who control themselves, independent, especially at adolescence, have access to money.”

Girl, PU Kamuli community

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Uganda’s PU Tororo North selected communities

The lowest ratings in PU Tororo North went to the **household work** dimension, with an average rating of “seldom.” 51% of 204 girls interviewed responded that girls and boys “sometimes” share household work equally, and a further 30% saying, “seldom,” and 14%, “never.” Girls gave two main reasons to explain this low rating. Responses appear linked to issues of girls feeling that they can say what they think in front of males (speaking up) and that their concerns matter (feeling valued). The first reason girls gave was boys’ behavior in the household:

“Some girls they ‘never’ share work equally because girls do more work than boys because the boys are always moving and are disrespectful. Some say ‘seldom’ because boys are shy and fear being seen doing work (embarrassed). The girls are left alone to do work.”

Girl, PU Tororo North community

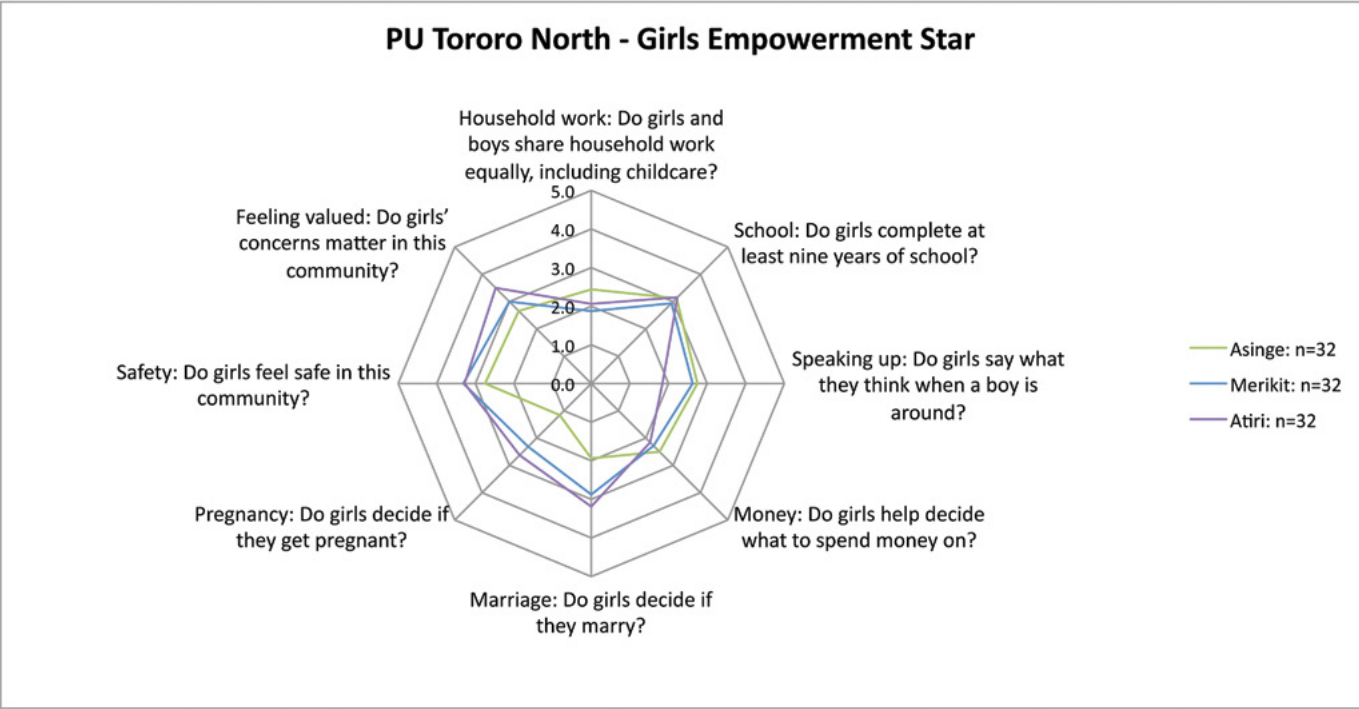
³⁵Source: girl, PU Kamuli community

The second reason given was that mothers, fathers, brothers and other family members systematically reinforce gender norms concerning the household division of labour.

“They never do equal housework with the boys because their parents don’t allow the boys to do things like sweeping the kitchen, cooking, sweeping the house because this is considered girls’ work.”
Girl, PU Tororo North community

“They never share household work equally because the boys say that work is for only girls because it is their responsibility.”
Girl, PU Tororo North community

Figure 45: Girls Empowerment Star: Uganda, PU Tororo North average ratings by community



N=3 communities per PU; Tororo North n=96 girls ages 12-16

Uganda: School Equality Scorecard



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In Uganda, Plan spoke with 320 girls in 10 schools and 310 boys in 10 schools in PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North.

In PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North, both girls and boys rated **encouragement** as the highest levels of gender equality at school and **early pregnancy** as the lowest level of gender equality at school for girls.

Table 18: School Equality Scorecard: Uganda, PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North, dimensions with highest average scores, girls and boys, ages 12-16

Uganda	Dimensions with highest average scores		Dimensions with lowest average scores	
	PU Kamuli	PU Tororo North	PU Kamuli	PU Tororo North
Girls	Encouragement 4.3	Encouragement 4.6	Early pregnancy 2.6	Early pregnancy 2.7
Boys	Encouragement 4.1	Encouragement 4.0	Early pregnancy 2.0	Early pregnancy 2.3

Highest average scored dimensions: Plan Uganda, PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North selected schools

For girls in PU Kamuli, the **encouragement** dimension scored highly, with an average response that girls “often” are encouraged as much as boys to succeed in their schoolwork. While no qualitative data from this PU were available to illustrate girls’ high average scores on this dimension, it should be noted that 66% of PU Kamuli girls interviewed responded “always” for this question. Girls from PU Tororo North scored **encouragement** dimension slightly higher, with 74% of girls responding “always” for this dimension. Girls explain that their parents provide them with school materials, and that encourages them to study. The girls elaborated that their parents tell them that they can only support their families (i.e., parents and siblings) when they study, finish school and get employment. Other girls said that their parents encourage them to study hard so that they get married honorably, as it is only educated women in their view who can marry well. Some girls also said that their teachers encourage them to study hard so that they too can become teachers. Others added that both teachers and parents see education as a key to a successful future.

“Education is a tool for women’s empowerment.” Girl, PU Tororo North

“If you hold onto your education tight you will have love, peace and unity.” Girl, PU Tororo North school

Still, other girls whose scores were lower on this dimension, mentioned that while teachers generally value education and encourage girls to succeed, some parents still see girls' education as a waste of time and do not provide their daughters with the necessary scholastic materials.

Boys in PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North schools corroborated girls' high scores on the **encouragement** dimension. Of those interviewed, 50% of PU Kamuli boys responded that girls in their schools "always" are as encouraged to succeed academically as much as boys. In PU Tororo North, 49% of boys responded "always" for this question. Comments varied across the two PUs, and were positive overall.

Boys from one school in PU Kamuli expressed that Plan International's message of gender equality is making its way through their school, and that teachers are key in motivating girls in their studies. Boys also stated that both boys and girls feel encouraged to pursue their studies, as it is key for future success.

"Girls are sometimes encouraged to succeed in school because Plan has preached about equality and motivated them to go to school since plan had spread the gospel. The teachers at times use key figures of successful women to motivate the students to work and become like them."

Boy, PU Kamuli school

"Girls always are encouraged to succeed in academics due to the availability of textbooks, which motivates students to succeed. Some students fear taking bad reports back home so they read hard to take back good reports irrespective of [gender]."

Boy, PU Kamuli school

"... due to Plan policies like equality ... girls are encouraged to succeed academically for future equality."

Boy, PU Kamuli school

"Girls are always praised by teachers like at the end of every term the best girls are awarded prizes."

Boy, PU Tororo North school

Comments illustrating lower scores in PU Tororo North revealed some disagreement in views, and greater nuance. One participant explained that the incentive to encourage girls stemmed from the teachers' desire to see girls succeed in order to avoid the pitfalls of relationships with older men. Some boys indicated also that there are teachers who have lower expectations of girls than boys, and those from one PU Tororo North school held the view that some girls are praised merely because they have 'affairs with teachers' in secret. Other boys added that some teachers encourage girls academically as they see education as a factor that increases a girl's dowry.

“Girls are encouraged so that they do not go for short cuts like sugar daddies.” Boy, PU Tororo North school

“Educated girls bring in more dowry.” Boy, PU Tororo North school

Lowest average scored dimensions: Plan Uganda, PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North

Early pregnancy was the dimension scored the lowest by girls and boys from both PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North schools. In PU Kamuli, 28% of girls stated that they “never” continue school after having a baby. The early pregnancy dimension has an average score of 2.6 in this PU, corresponding to the response, “seldom.” Boys of PU Kamuli corroborated girls scores with similar scores and comments of their own. Of those interviewed from PU Kamuli schools, 37% responded “never” for this question. From PU Tororo North, girls scored this dimension similarly, with an average score of “seldom,” and 20% of girls responding “never” for this dimension. Boys from PU Tororo North also corroborated girl's average responses of “seldom” with 35% of boys in PU Tororo North responding “never” for this question.

Many girls expressed that the embarrassment, humiliation and shyness they felt as a result of getting pregnant prevented them from going back to school. Some specified that other students were particularly hurtful towards them, call them names such as ‘faded, second hand, scrap.’ Other girls said that instead of spending time on education, young mothers should stay home and look after their children, since they are already mothers. Other girls expressed that some girls' parents are unsupportive and say they cannot look after the girl's child and continue to spend money on educating a girl after she has had a baby. In some cases, parents express concern that girls may disappoint them academically or become pregnant again if they take them back to school. In other cases, girls who become pregnant at an early age never go back to school because of permanent health complications including haemorrhage, fistula and even cervical cancer. Still, some participants stated that there are circumstances that sometimes allow young mothers who have given birth, and feel well enough, to go back to school. For instance, girls with supportive parents or girls who have experienced hardships in early marriage sometimes have gone back to school.

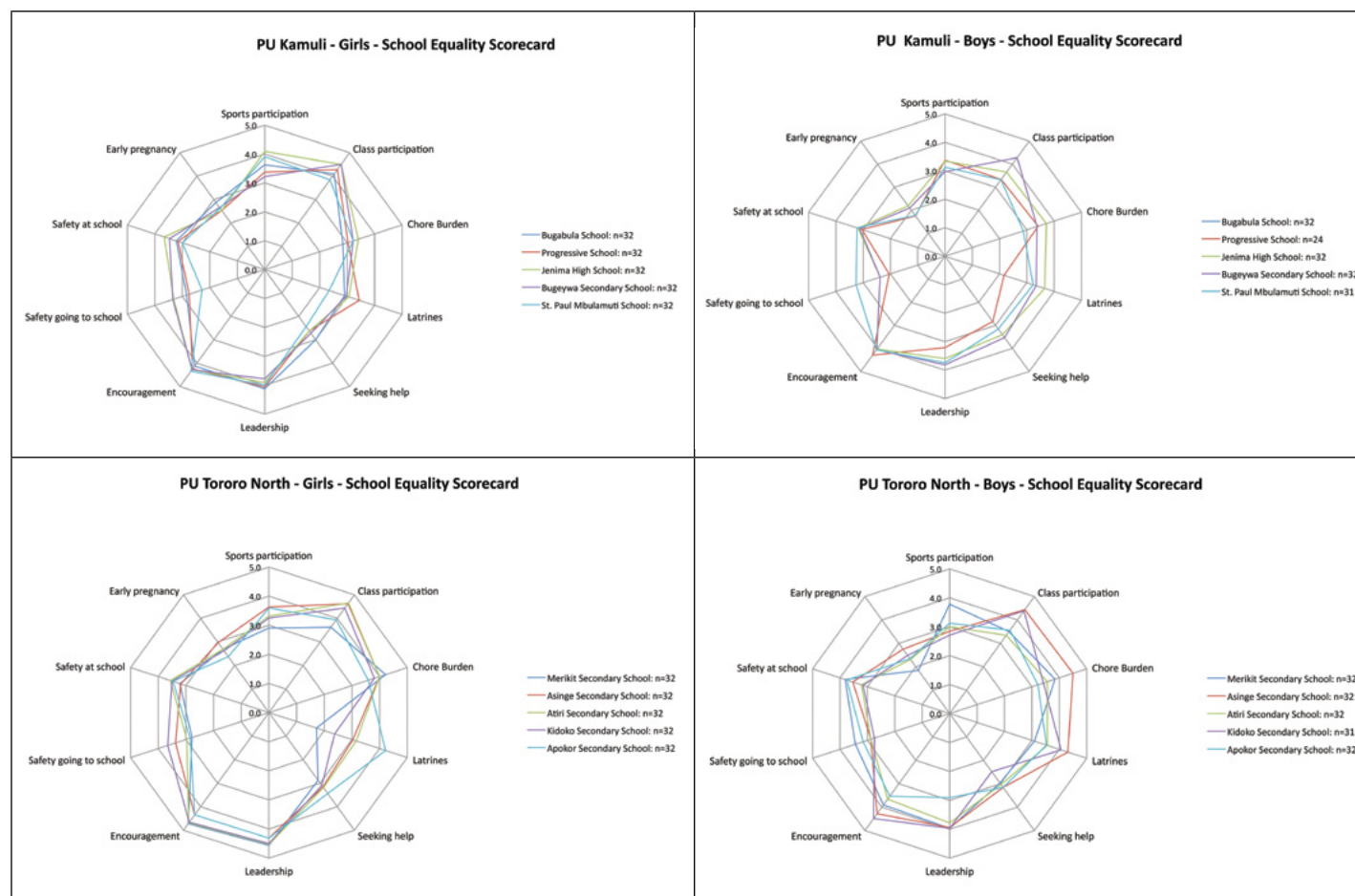
Boys comments and examples indicated that the main factors preventing young mothers' return to school include the insults they receive, responsibilities and concerns regarding their child, marriages forced by their parents, and the withdrawal of parents' financial support. Boys emphasised that some girls never attend school after having a baby because their parents force girls to marry whoever made them pregnant.

“Girls seldom continue with school after having a baby because they are not interested in returning to school. Some fear insults they get by names like “off layer.” Some parents withdraw their financial support from the girl after she gives birth. Mothers naturally will think about their children even when in class, which limits returning to school. Some children return to school though because some parents emphasise the value of education to the children.” Boy, PU Kamuli school

“Some parents take their daughters back to school because they see a brighter future and wish a bright future for their children.” Boy, PU Kamuli school

“My sister was forced to get married because she got pregnant at school.” Boy, PU Tororo North school

Figure 46: School Equality Scorecard: Uganda, PU Kamuli and PU Tororo North average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16



ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe: Girls Empowerment Star



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Zimbabwe**, Plan spoke with 192 adolescent girls in PU Chiredzi and PU Chipinge, in six communities.

On average, girls in **PU Chiredzi** felt most empowered about their **safety** in the community, and least empowered around **pregnancy**.

In **PU Chipinge**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered deciding when to **marry**, and least empowered around deciding if and when to get **pregnant**.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Zimbabwe's PU Chiredzi selected communities

In Zimbabwe's PU Chiredzi, the **safety** dimension was rated the highest, with an average response of "often" to the question, "do girls feel safe in this community?" Of 96 girls interviewed, 44% responded, "always," 10%, "often," and 18%, "sometimes." Ratings varied, however, with a further 13% responding "seldom" and 18%, "never." Many girls explained that they feel safe in their community because there are child protection (safety) mechanisms in place both at school and at home. Some said they feel safe on the way to and from school, and at home, as parents protect girls. However, variability in ratings, and the range of comments and examples girls gave to explain their ratings, suggest that there are differences between dominant discourses on girls' rights to safety and girls' actual experiences. Although the quantitative data showed this dimension as rated the highest, focus group discussions with girls revealed some opposing results. Girls are not safe in their community as they reported frequent exposure to kidnapping, sexual assaults, rapes, and/or physical, psychological and emotional abuses. Girls' perceptions of safety also differ between school and home. Girls reported feeling safe at school, but not at home, due to kidnappers, boys who bully, and parents who force them to marry when they are still young. Girls reported feeling safer at school where they are protected from sexual abuses and have fewer chores. Also at school, they are free from guardians' verbal and physical abuses.

"We are only safe when at school because we are abused and overburdened with chores whilst at home."

Girl, PU Chiredzi community

"At home we are forced to marry and our step-parents apply all forms of abuse on us. We see that we are only safe at school where we will be protected by our teachers."

Girl, PU Chiredzi community

"At home, we are sometimes sexually harassed by our relatives whom we can never report as they will be our guardians."

Girl, PU Chiredzi community

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Zimbabwe's PU Chipinge selected communities

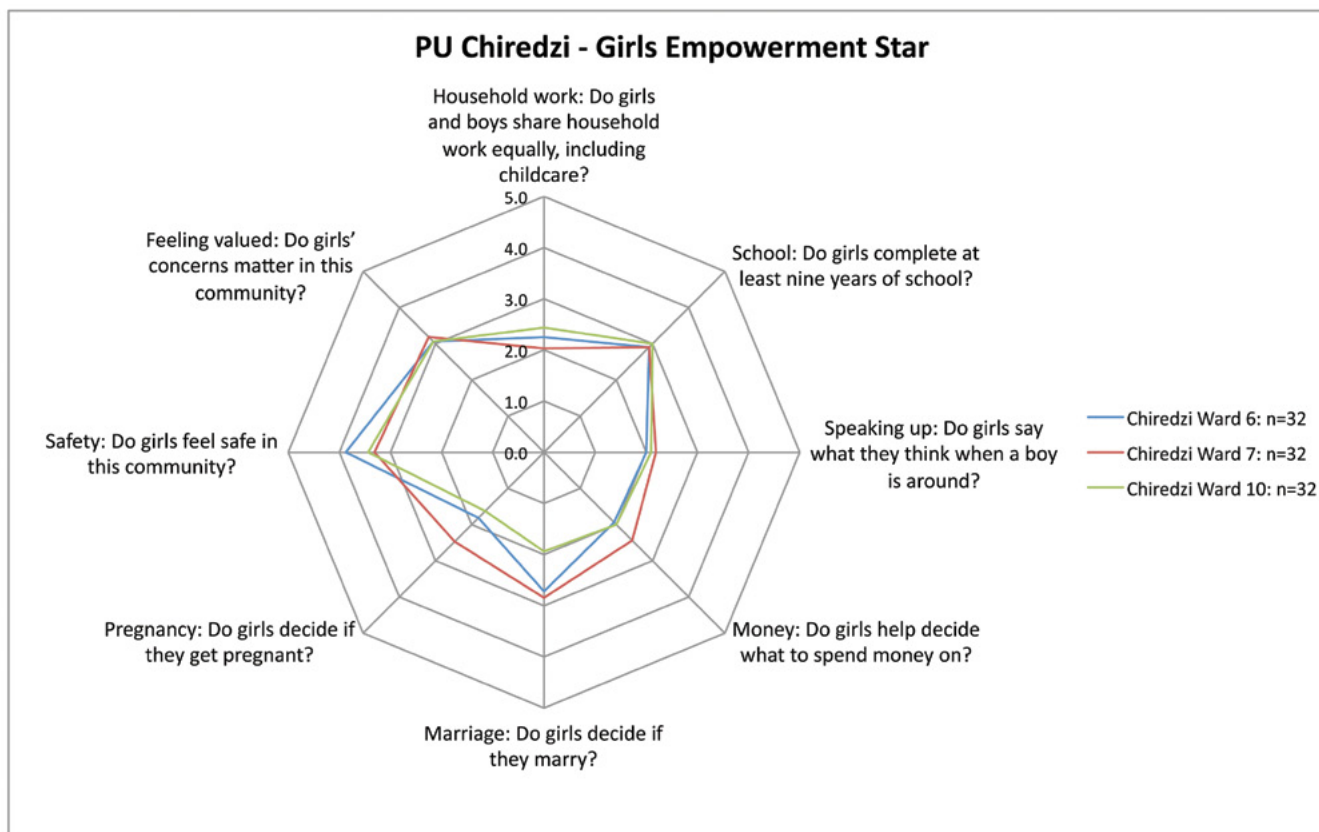
In PU Chipinge, of 96 girls interviewed, ratings on **marriage** were on average moderate to high, with 35% of girls saying that girls “always” decide if they get married. Still, 18% of those interviewed said girls “sometimes” decide, and 25% said they “never” decide. Qualitative comments and examples suggest that girls decide who and when to marry in most cases. However, the wide variability in responses present a nuanced picture with a range of experiences in practice. Some girls do not decide over their own marriages due to religious practices or poverty, which girls said leads poor parents to marry off daughters to rich men, and to abuses from their guardians. Girls indicated that a significant number from their communities had unplanned or unwanted pregnancies. Those who become pregnant sometimes are forced to stay with and marry the man responsible for the pregnancy. Interlinked with issues of early marriage and pregnancy are girls’ ability to complete at least nine years of **school** and their **safety**.

Although the **school** dimension also received a high rating in PU Chipinge, where 21% of girls reported that in their community “always” complete at least nine years of school, responses varied considerably. 46% of the 96 interviewed responded that girls only “sometimes” complete at least nine years of schooling, whereas 28% said they “seldom” do. Comments and examples explaining these ratings from the focus group discussions suggest that education is seen as crucial for girls in PU Chipinge, despite the fact that many cannot go to school as much as they would like to.

“Education is important as it empowers a girl to become economically independent and break the circle of poverty. It also improves women’s status in the community as they will be having control over economic resources.”
 Girl, PU Chipinge community

Some girls drop out of school due to forced marriage and early pregnancy, a negative attitude toward school among some parents, as well as lack of funds for school fees, and negative religious beliefs and practices. Girls who are most affected include those with poor parents, orphaned girls, and young mothers who drop out of school. A significant number of girls in one community were affected by a religious practice forbidding girls’ education after primary level.

Figure 47: Girls Empowerment Star: Zimbabwe, PU Chiredzi average ratings by community



N=3 communities per PU: Chiredzi n=96 girls ages 12-16

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Zimbabwe's PU Chipinge selected communities

The lowest rated dimension in PU Chipinge communities was **household work**, with an average rating of "seldom." Of 96 girls interviewed, 21% said that boys "never" share household work and caregiving equally, while a further 28% said that they "seldom" do. Again, the theme of a rigid gendered division of labour emerged. "Girls' work" includes cooking, fetching firewood, sweeping and caregiving. "Boys' work" includes herding cattle and sometimes watering the garden.

"Boys do not do some of their work and they say it's girls' work." Girl, PU Chipinge community

PU Chipinge girls interviewed also gave low average ratings to the **speaking up** dimension. 38% said that they "never" say what they think when around a boy. A further 25% said they "seldom" speak up around a male. Girl's comments linked the concept of speaking up in front of a boy to a social norm against young girls not being allowed to talk about their issues directly with an adult male. If a daughter needs to inform her father of an issue, the adult woman, usually the mother is expected to be the one to inform the man. Girls said that if they raised issues of needs for underwear or sanitary napkins in the presence of an adult male, they risked being beaten, as it is a taboo topic. Girls explained that they also feel they cannot raise their needs for school fees directly with their father.

"It is culturally unacceptable for me as a girl child to discuss school fees directly with my father. I have to tell my mother who will in turn tell him." Girl, PU Chipinge community

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Zimbabwe's PU Chiredzi selected communities

Girls from PU Chiredzi communities also rated **pregnancy** with low average responses of "seldom." Of 96 girls interviewed in PU Chiredzi, 55% said that they "never" decide if they get pregnant, while 15% said they "seldom" are the ones to decide over pregnancy. Comments and examples from girls help illustrate their ratings.

"A lot of girls here are marrying at their tender age, some as early as 13, hence the issues of reproductive health are key for the protection of the girls. Also, issues of family planning are key as the girls just engage in unprotected and unsafe sex without even knowing they may get pregnant." Girl, PU Chiredzi community

Girls' perception of their own power to negotiate sex or decide over pregnancy appeared quite low, along with their knowledge of sexual and reproductive health and contraceptive practices. Comments included that girls are not allowed to talk about sexual and reproductive health in school.

"Most of the girls do not decide when and if to get pregnant as sex is always initiated by boys and as boys refuse to use condoms when having sex." Girl, PU Chiredzi community

"Girls do not plan to be pregnant, the pregnancy just comes as a result of unprotected sex, therefore we cannot say that they decide when to get pregnant." Girl, PU Chiredzi community

Girls named 'abstinence' before marriage as a primary pregnancy prevention method, but did not comment on how widely practiced this method may be. Early pregnancy was also linked to early marriage and to sexual violence. Although average quantitative ratings on **safety** were high in PU Chiredzi, many girls' described accounts in focus group discussions of sexual and gender-based violence against girls in their communities.

"Apart from the capacity to decide, girls are often victims of sexual assaults, rapes and early marriage in their communities. Girls are raped and are forced to marry at a very young age and get pregnant." Girl, PU Chiredzi community

Most girls explained they have limited time for their schoolwork because of too much household work during the school week and on weekends.

“As girls, we do not have time to read during the day as our mothers tell us that we should finish all the household work before reading. Sometimes we will be too tired to read. As girls we always sleep very late and wake up very early. We have very little time to read.” Girl, PU Chiredzi community

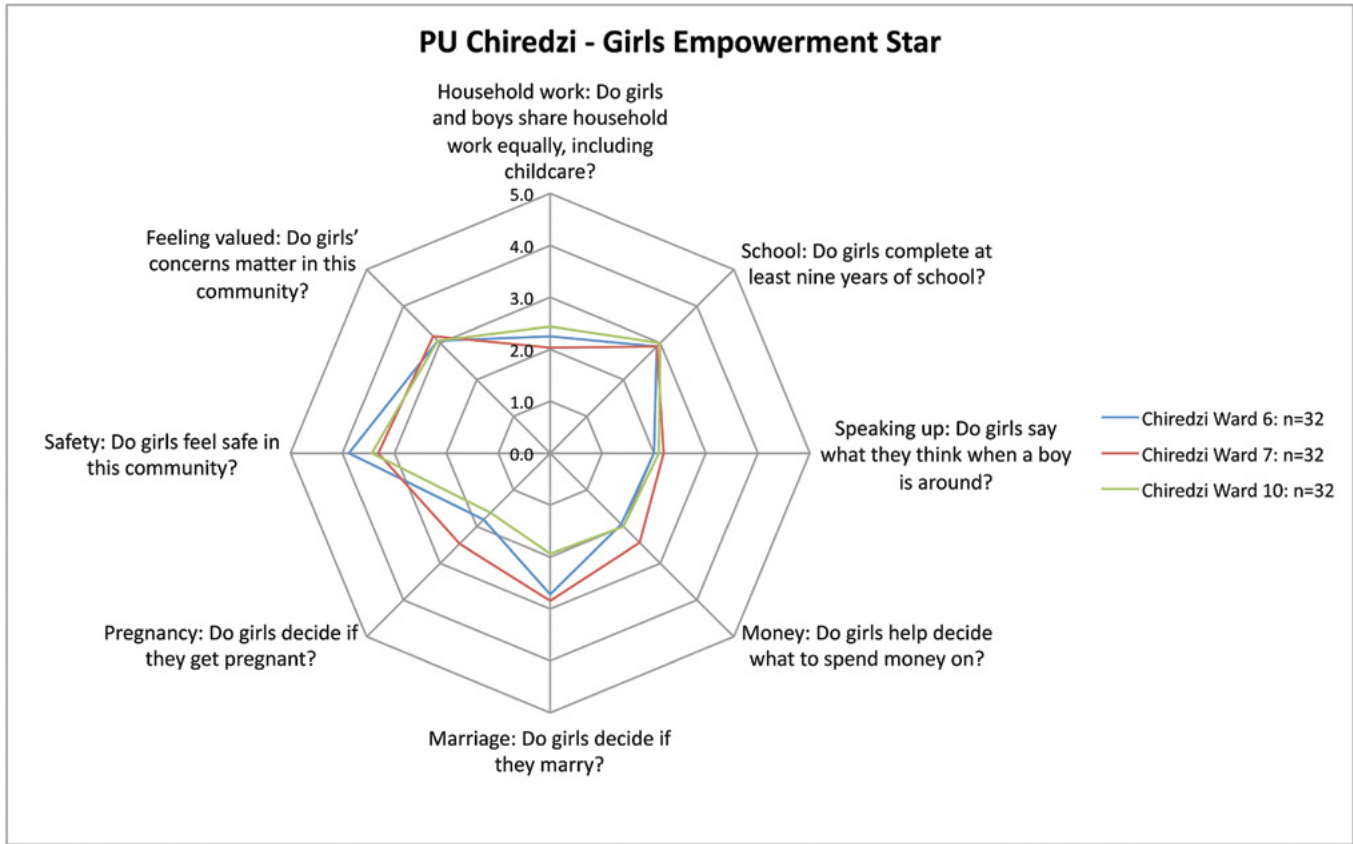
“It is not a rule, but a cultural belief that girls should do household chores.” Girl, PU Chiredzi community

“Household chores like bathing children, washing plates, cooking, sweeping the house, and childcare, are done by girls while boys look after domestic animals like goats, donkeys, sheep and cattle.”
Girl, PU Chiredzi community

Many also do not have time for leisure activities, and report being punished if they, ‘sneak out to play’.

“We are not given time to play, even if we sneak out to play parents beat us up when we return.”
Girl, PU Chiredzi community

Figure 47: Girls Empowerment Star: Zimbabwe, PU Chiredzi average ratings by community



N=3 communities per PU: Chiredzi n=96 girls ages 12-16

Zimbabwe: School Equality Scorecard



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Zimbabwe**, Plan spoke with 303 girls in 10 schools and 302 boys in 10 schools in PU Chipinge and PU Chiredzi.

In **PU Chipinge**, both girls and boys rated **encouragement** as the highest levels of gender equality at school, and they rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest level of gender equality at school for girls.

In **PU Chiredzi**, girls rated **encouragement** as the highest, while boys rated **encouragement, class participation, and leadership** as the highest levels of gender equality at school for girls. Both girls and boys rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest level of gender equality at school for girls.

Table 19: School Equality Scorecard: Zimbabwe, PU Chipinge and PU Chiredzi, highest and lowest average scored dimensions, girls and boys, ages 12-16

Zimbabwe	Dimensions with highest average scores		Dimensions with lowest average scores	
	PU Chipinge	PU Chiredzi	PU Chipinge	PU Chiredzi
Girls	Encouragement 4.3	Encouragement 4.5	Early pregnancy 2.8	Early pregnancy 2.4
Boys	Encouragement 4.8	Class participation 4.5	Early pregnancy 2.7	Early pregnancy 2.5
		Encouragement 4.5		
		Leadership 4.5		

Highest average scored dimensions: Plan Zimbabwe, PU Chipinge and PU Chiredzi selected schools

Girls in PU Chipinge scored **encouragement** the highest of all dimensions of the School Equality Scorecard, with 64% of girls responding that in their schools, girls “always” are encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys. Also in PU Chipinge participating schools, 87% of boys interviewed responded “always” for this dimension. Similarly, in PU Chiredzi, 73% of girls responded “always” for this dimension as well, while 72% of boys responded “always.” It is worth noting that boys’ scores from PU Chiredzi on **class participation** (69% always) and **leadership** (70% always) were similarly high, suggesting a correlation between these dimensions.

“Always. Our teachers tell us both boys and girls to be serious with our school work.”

Girl, PU Chipinge school

“Girls are even encouraged more than boys and the teachers highlight the risks they are bound to face if they are not educated.”

Girl, PU Chipinge school

“The boys indicated that girls are encouraged to succeed in their school work as boys by the teachers. They are always told to work hard in their school work so that they increase their life chances.”

Boy, PU Chipinge school

Lowest average scored dimensions: Plan Zimbabwe, PU Chipinge and PU Chiredzi

In PU Chipinge, 30% of girls responded to the **early pregnancy** question that girls “never,” and, and 14% said they “seldom” continue school after having a child. Most boys in PU Chipinge similarly responded never (22%) and seldom (27%) for this dimension. In PU Chiredzi, 37% of girls and 35% of boys responded, “never” to this dimension. Girls and boys explained that while some schools do allow adolescent girls to continue their studies while pregnant or after childbirth, other schools do not. Some also explained that once a mother, a girl is considered an adult whether or not she has completed her studies.

“... girls do not continue with school after having a baby due to lack of money and unwillingness by the husband or parents-in-law.”

Girl, PU Chipinge school

“I do not think a girl can come to this school when she is pregnant. Girls never come to school when pregnant because they are regarded as adults.”

Boy, PU Chipinge school

“If the school authority discovers that one is pregnant, she is expelled from school.”

Girl, PU Chiredzi school

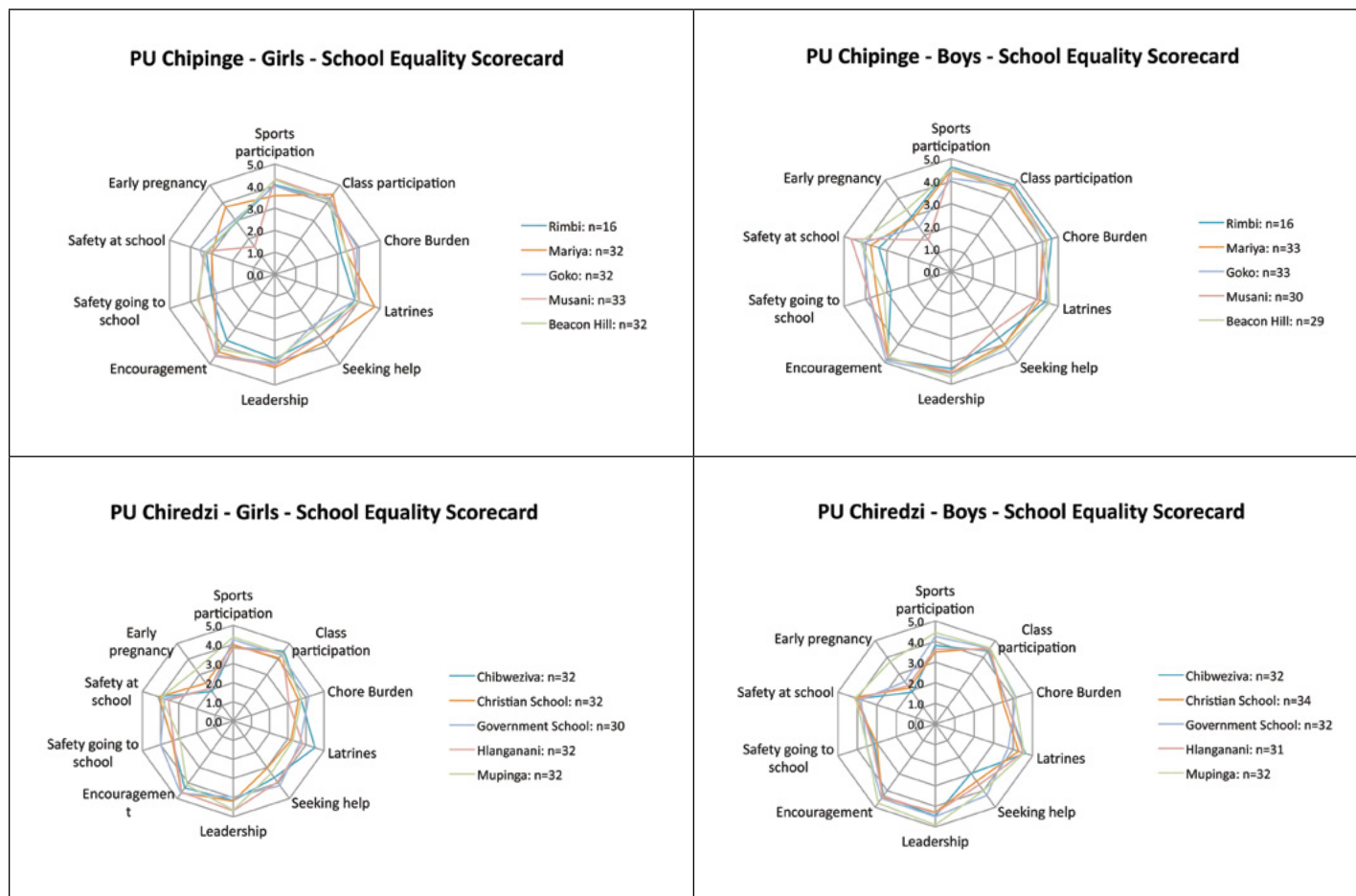
“Girls are usually chased away from home to go to the home of the person that impregnated the, and the parents of the boy do not allow them to go back to school. The girl will have no resources to take care of her baby as well as have money to pay school fees; hence they never come back to school.”

Girl, PU Chiredzi school

“At this school I have never heard of anyone who has been chased away because of pregnancy, but girls dropout on their own because they are shy”.

Boy, PU Chiredzi school

Figure 49: School Equality Scorecard: Zimbabwe, PU Chipinge and PU Chiredzi average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16



Country Results and Key Findings: Asia (Bangladesh, Pakistan)

BANGLADESH

Bangladesh: Girls Empowerment Star



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Bangladesh**, Plan spoke with 165 adolescent girls in PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari, in six communities.

On average, girls in **PU Barguna** felt most empowered in accessing nine-years of school, and least empowered in feeling safe in their community.

In **PU Nilphamari**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered around school and *feeling valued*, and least empowered around **household work** and deciding when to **marry**.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Bangladesh's PU Barguna selected communities

In Bangladesh, girls interviewed in PU Barguna selected communities gave **school** the highest ratings with significant variability and an average response of "sometimes." Of 71 responses to the question, "Do girls complete at least nine years of school?" 28% responded, "always," while 27% said, "often," and 25% said, "seldom." Girls explained that many more are now going to school because of a studentship from the government, and that there are more girls than boys in school. More parents are aware of the value of girl's education as a result. Still, girls' education is less valued in poorer households. Girls from poorer households are sometimes married off by their parents at early ages and unable to continue their schooling.

"Not all girls go to school. What is the benefit of high education for poor people? Parents marry them off at an early age." "Education is important as it empowers a girl to become economically independent and break the circle of poverty. It also improves women's status in the community as they will be having control over economic resources." Girl, PU Barguna community

"Parents want to educate their child and establish them in society. If girls are educated, society people respect them."

Girl, PU Barguna community

"The government is now giving free books and scholarships, so girls want to be educated. No girls want to be unemployed and stay at home."

Girl, PU Barguna community

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Bangladesh's PU Nilphamari selected communities

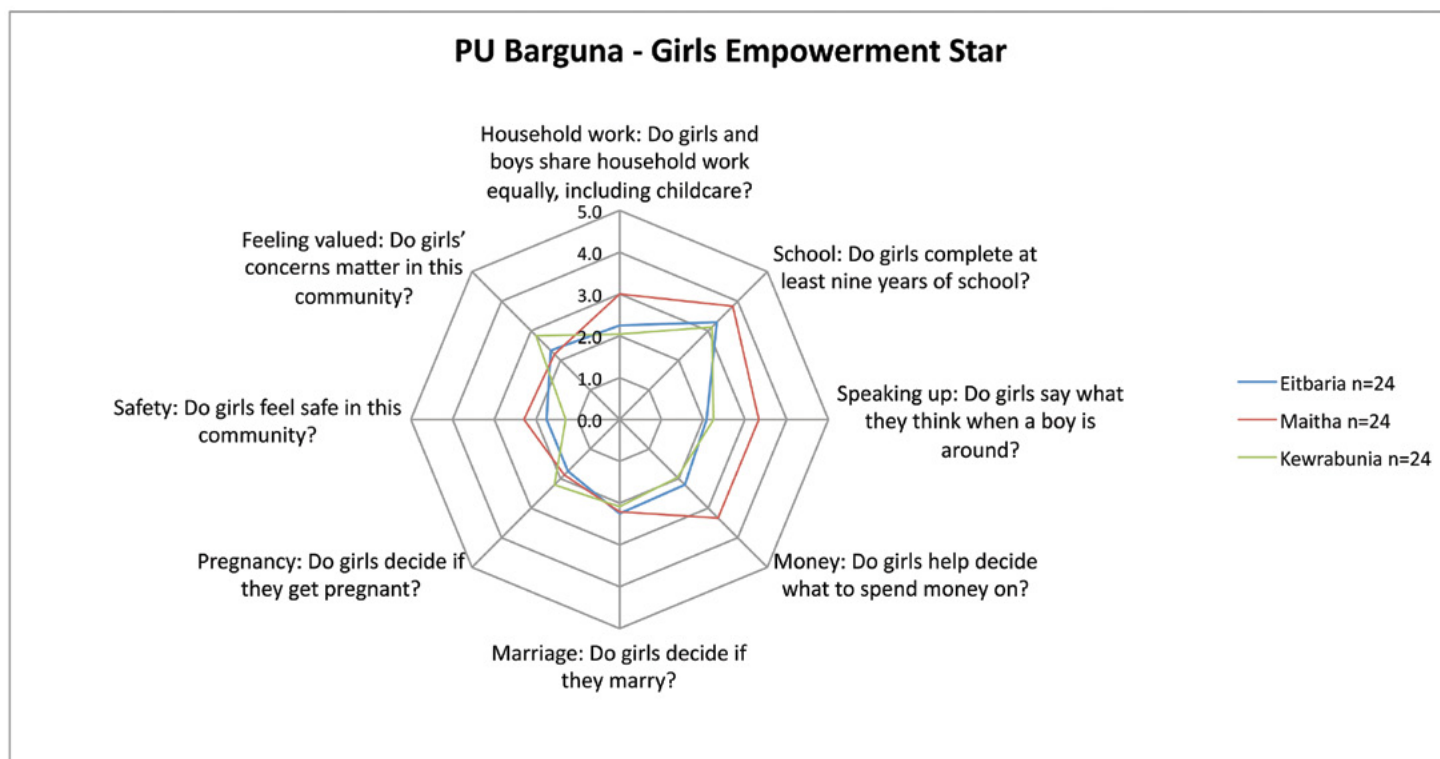
In PU Nilphamari selected communities, girls gave the **school** and **feeling valued** dimensions their highest ratings, with average responses corresponding to "sometimes." Of 93 responses to the question, "do girls complete at least nine years of school?" ratings varied, with 18% reporting "always," 27%, "often," and 29%, "sometimes." However, a further 12% responded, "seldom" and 14%, "never." Differences in girls' comments and examples illustrated the range of quantitative ratings. On the higher end of the response scale, girls are often or always completing nine years in some schools because the government is giving free books and scholarships. Parents see girls' education as a path to status in society, and one through which girls will be respected. Girls want to be educated, and do not want to be unemployed and stay at home in later adolescence and adulthood. Girls who do not study and do not earn money are often respected and valued less than those who do. Some girls end up stopping their education when parents are ill. Some parents are 'irresponsible' about girls' education, according to girls interviewed. Poor families sometimes stop girls' education for early marriage. Households with many children sometimes take girls out of school as parents struggle to bear costs of their studies.

The **feeling valued** dimension was given the same average rating of "sometimes" as the highest of all dimensions apart from school in PU Nilphamari communities. Of 91 responses to the question, "do girls' concerns matter in this community?" 16% were "always," 25%, "often," and 32% "sometimes." Girls again raised the issue that those who study and earn money receive more respect and are valued more in society than those who do not. Some stereotypes persist that girls are unintelligent and 'good for nothing'. Feeling valued was related to **school** and to **marriage**.

"Girls who study and will earn money do receive respect. Girls who are working for less money, it will be [necessary] to marry them off and they [will] receive respect." Girl, PU Nilphamari community

"Do women have intelligence? What is the use of showing them respect; they are good for nothing." Girl, PU Nilphamari community

Figure 50: Girls Empowerment Star: Bangladesh, PU Barguna average ratings by community



N= 3 communities per PU; Barguna n=72 girls, ages 12-16

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Bangladesh's PU Barguna selected communities

The lowest ratings from PU Barguna went to the **marriage**, **pregnancy** and **safety** dimensions. A combined 61 % of the 72 girls interviewed said that in their communities, girls “never” (32%) or “seldom” (29%) decide if they marry. Girls’ marriages are arranged and parents see girls as having no ability to make the right decisions over marriage. Girls feel they cannot express their opinions about marriage without adults commenting negatively. They feel parents do not listen to their wishes or concerns. Girls further raised the issue that a law against early marriage is not implemented properly. Still, they noted that some parents are aware of the ill effects of early marriage. Some commented that there are some girls who decide over marriage, and attributed this to different NGOs raising awareness of the negative impacts of early marriage.

“Girls cannot talk to their parents about their liking or disliking regarding marriage. Otherwise, the parents get angry and say, ‘you have to accept our decision; we are not going to listen to whatever you say’.”

Girl, PU Barguna community

“Some families value a girl’s choice or opinion thinking that girls also have rights to take decisions. Some families give their girls to early marriage. Because of early marriage, the girls can’t understand when [or at what age is best] to marry and what problems can arise from early marriage. Some people are aware of bad effects of early marriage. Some are not aware or they do not have any concept about this.”

Girl, PU Barguna community

“Most of the girls said girls can take decisions on their own marriage because, ‘now they are aware from different TV programs on negative impact of early marriage.’”

Girl, PU Barguna community

On the question of whether girls in their community decide if they get **pregnant**, a combined 65% of those interviewed in PU Barguna, said “never” (46%) or “seldom” (19%). Girls explained that they do not decide over pregnancy. It is the husband, mother-in-law and other relatives who decide over pregnancy. Girls are expected to bear children in marriage. They are often unaware of how pregnancy happens exactly, or how to prevent it. Girls said that their society is male-led and females cannot take important decisions. Still, some girls noted the desire to conceive after finishing secondary school exams. Some expressed the view that if the husband and his family is educated, then the girl can decide over pregnancy. Girls also who know that it is better to have a child later, after age 20, it was noted, can also sometimes decide over whether they get pregnant early or not. NGO trainings have raised awareness of the complications of early pregnancy, along with early marriage.

“In our society, girls have not the position to decide on her pregnancy. It is her husband, mother-in-law and other relatives who decide on her pregnancy.”

Girl, PU Barguna community

“Husbands oppress females into compulsory conception, and sometimes mother and father-in-laws also. Girls do not know which age is perfect for conception. Mainly, males take decisions about pregnancy.”

Girl, PU Barguna community

“...by the grace of different trainings of NGOs, people have become more aware now. So, they understand that [young] mothers can have different complications resulting from early pregnancy, for example, premature death, or anemia.”

Girl, PU Barguna community

For **safety**, adolescent girls had an average response of “seldom” to the question, “do girls feel safe in this community?” 58% of girls interviewed said, “never” and 19% reported, “seldom.” Significant security issues emerged from the focus group discussions. Girls are teased, abused and blackmailed by boys. They discussed being verbally and physically (corporal punishment) abused by teachers, as well as in some cases, sexually harassed. Arriving early to school or leaving school late increases girls’ risks and fears of abuse. Some girls reported issues of girls being trafficked. Those girls who have some measure of safety were named as those girls whose fathers or brothers are a powerful person, such as a political leader or criminal. These girls are not harassed, or harassed less by boys and men. Other girls expressed that many never feel secure, even at home.

“Teachers of our school still punish us using their hands.” Girl, PU Barguna community

“Teachers sometime keep hand on the back of girls and it seems they have forgotten to remove their hands.” Girl, PU Barguna community

“They are also disturbed at their home by the relatives in different ways.” Girl, PU Barguna community

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Bangladesh’s PU Nilphamari selected communities

The lowest ratings in PU Nilphamari were **household work** and **marriage** dimension. A large majority (80%) of girls interviewed responding that they “never” (35%), “seldom” (19%) or “sometimes” (26%) are the ones to decide if, whom or when they marry. Ratings may be seen as correlated with issues of **speaking up** and **feeling valued**. Girls expressed the view that early marriages are arranged because they are seen as burdens in the household. Elders often decide for girls, and girls have no say over their own marriage. The earlier a girl is married, the less money her family will need to pay for her dowry. Some parents think that if a girl does not want to marry, then she must be having an affair. Girls raised the issue that there is now a law against marriage before age 18, and hope that early marriage will end as a practice.

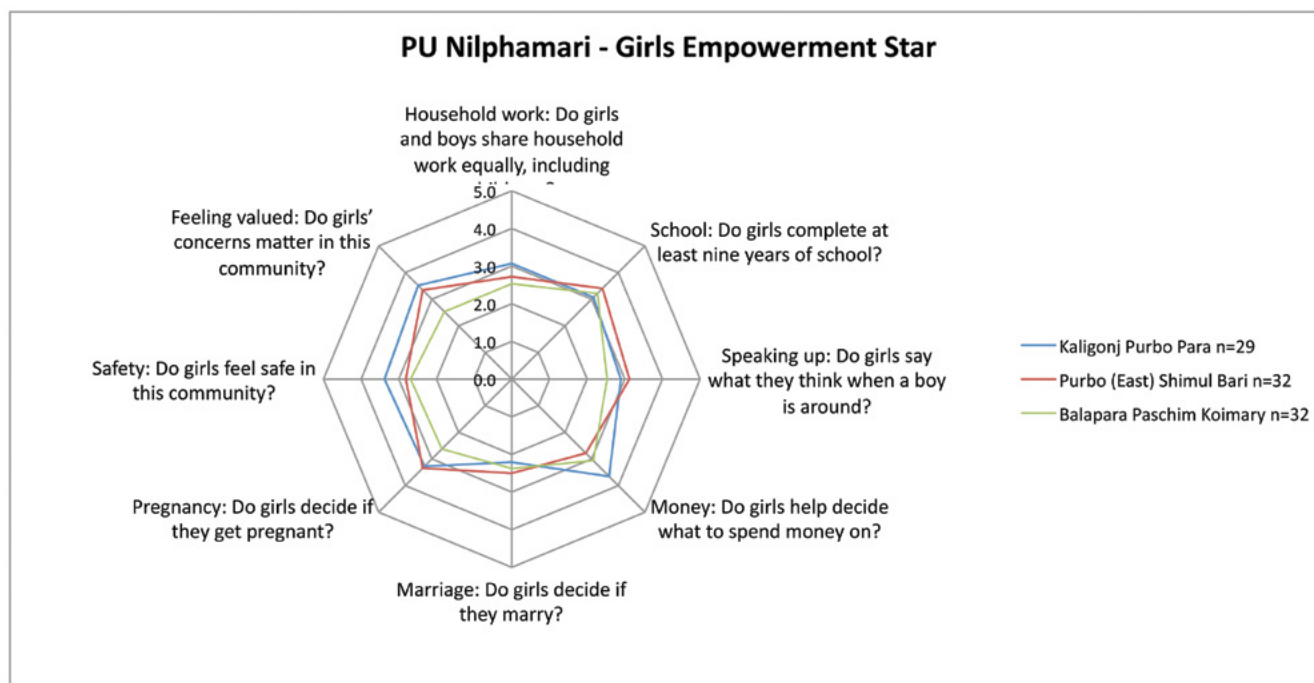
“Girls need to marry off early otherwise more money will be needed (as young girls are preferred by men as bride; if girls get older then more money will have to be paid as dowry).”

Girl, PU Nilphamari community

“When a girl gets married at an early age, she may be in ill health and may suffer from malnutrition.”

Girl, PU Nilphamari community

Figure 51: Girls Empowerment Star: Bangladesh, PU Nilphamari average ratings by community



N= 3 communities per PU; Nilphamari n=93 girls, ages 12-16

Bangladesh: School Equality Scorecard



Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Bangladesh**, Plan spoke with 271 girls in 10 schools and 266 boys in 10 schools in PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari.

In **PU Barguna**, both girls and boys rated class participation and **encouragement** the highest levels of gender equality at school for girls. Both girls and boys rated **safety going to school** and **early pregnancy** as the lowest levels of gender equality at school for girls.

In **PU Nilphamari**, girls rated **class participation** and **seeking help** as the highest, and boys rated **class participation** as the highest level of gender equality at school. Girls and boys rated **early pregnancy** as the lowest level of gender equality at school for, and boys also rated **sports participation** as low.

Table 20: School Equality Scorecard: Bangladesh, PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16

Bangladesh	Dimensions with highest average scores		Dimensions with lowest average scores	
	PU Barguna	PU Nilphamari	PU Barguna	PU Nilphamari
Girls	Class participation 4.6	Class participation 4.5	Safety going to school 2.7	Early pregnancy 2.6
	Encouragement 4.7	Seeking help 4.5	Early pregnancy 1.4	
Boys	Class participation 4.5	Class participation 4.6	Safety going to school 2.3	Sports participation 2.9
	Encouragement 4.4		Early pregnancy 1.6	Early pregnancy 1.3

Highest average scored dimensions: Plan Bangladesh, PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari

In PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari, girls and boys scored **class participation** the highest of all dimensions in the tool. Asked if girls participate in class as much as boys, girls from participating PU Barguna schools responded, “always” (76%) or “often” (11%). Boys from PU Barguna scored this dimension similarly, responding “always” (69%) and “often” (22%). Girls from PU Nilphamari schools responded with scores similar to girls in PU Barguna, reporting, “always” (73%) and “often” (12%), as did boys from PU Nilphamari schools: “always” (70%) and “often” (20%) respectively. Reasons that girls and boys in both PUs gave to explain their answers echoed those from girls and boys across many countries in the study. Examples included a positive classroom dynamic in which teachers encourage girls and boys; girls who are intelligent and participate the most; girls’ education benefitting from parental, particularly fathers’ support; and classrooms where girls participate more than boys. Still, issues of unsupportive teachers who do not value girls’ education, and girls feeling shy about their classroom participation as a result, also emerged as recurring themes. Having a female teacher with whom girls feel comfortable sharing their needs and concerns at school also is important for girls. On this point, high scores on class participation may correlate with high scores on the seeking help dimension from schools where girls have female teachers. In PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari, girls and boys scored the **seeking help** and also **encouragement** dimensions similarly to **class participation**, with the exception that girls’ responses from PU Barguna schools showed greater variability on seeking help.

“Girls are treated equally by the teachers and the teachers are very open hearted. They encourage the girls like clapping hands mentioning their name. Girls are also interested to know any matter. They don’t feel shy.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“Those who are brilliant and have enough money from their father don’t fear anything, and so they participate in the class.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“When girls are asked to participate about their classes they said no. One girl argued that they could not because they feel ashamed. They are also laughed at and sometimes they cannot get advantage. Teachers do not emphasise the female education.”

Girl, PU Nilphamari school

“There is no discrimination between boys and girls in classroom. Teachers give equal importance to both boys and girls.”

Boy, PU Barguna school

“Girls are quite frank with teachers.”

Boy, PU Barguna school

“Everyone was of the opinion that girls and boys can equally participate in class as it is their right and freedom. The teachers are open-minded and treat girls and boys equally. Girls and boys in the class behave like brothers and sisters.”

Boy, PU Nilphamari school

“Girls are as intelligent as boys.”

Boy, PU Nilphamari school

Indeed, girls and boys from PU Barguna also gave high scores to the **encouragement** dimension. Asked if they are encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys, girls from participating PU Barguna schools responded, “always” (86%) or “often” (8%). Boys responded with similar, slightly lower scores of “always” (67%) and “often” (21%). Reasons girls and boys gave echoed those voiced in the discussion about class participation. These included teachers that praise both girls and boys for academic success.

“Always teachers praise the girls who do well in class.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“If girls cut good figures in exams, teachers inspire them to continue it. Even if they cut a sorry figure in exams, still they get encouragement to do better in the future.”

Boy, PU Barguna school

“A girl showed the best result in the final examination and she got a book as a prize from the school.”

Boy, PU Barguna school

Also related to high scores on **class participation** PU Nilphamari girls gave high scores to the **seeking help** dimension. Asked whether girls talk to teachers about their concerns as much as boys, girls from PU Nilphamari responded, “always” (75%) or “often” (10%). Reasons given mentioned that a friendly and approachable manner of the teacher, and helpfulness of the headmaster on payment arrangements for poor students to manage their school fees.

“Our sir is very kind. He helps us in every work.” Girl, PU Nilphamari school

“Sir remains very amiable with the girls. That’s why we share a lot of things with him.”

Girl, PU Nilphamari school

“Most of the participants made their opinion that they can seek help as like boys because if someone fails to pay her tuition fees then they made an application to headmaster. Headmaster co-operates with them. If poor students fail to buy their books then teachers co-operate them. If we organise study tour then teachers guide and help us. If girls find any difficulties in studies then made an approach to teacher to make it solve. Teacher helps them.” Girl, PU Nilphamari school

Lowest average scored dimensions: Plan Bangladesh, PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari

Girls and boys from PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari also agreed considerably on the question of whether girls in their schools continue attending class after having a baby. Girls in PU Barguna responded “never” (79%), “seldom” (9%) or “sometimes” (8%), while boys in PU Barguna responded similarly, with “never” (69%), “seldom” (10%) or “sometimes” (13%). Equally in PU Nilphamari, girls interviewed responded, “never” (68%), “seldom” (11%) or “sometimes” (12%), and boys with “never” (81%), “seldom” (10%), and “sometimes” (5%). Comments and examples again echoed key themes raised across other contexts and regions in the 11-country study.

Pregnant adolescent girls and new young mothers in PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari schools fear bullying and stigma if they try to continue their studies. Adolescent mothers’ increased caregiving and household work responsibilities reduce their time, energy and resources for returning to school. Married girls are considered “adults” no longer appropriate for the school setting. Husbands, in-laws, and girls’ original family often expect her to turn her energies toward traditional gender role tasks of being a wife and mother. Social norms based on religious beliefs about gender roles and responsibilities also curtail young mothers’ return to school. Married girls are sometimes scolded if they try to return to school. Some girls themselves have internalised normative gender role expectations, as their self-image turns from that of “schoolgirl” to “married woman.” In contrast, girls who come from educated families tend to have more support for returning to their studies after having a child. Girls also who have healthy pregnancies and safe childbirth experiences sometimes continue their studies, but this is rarer than girls leaving school, and rarer still the younger the girl may be given early pregnancy health risks. Taken together, a majority of girls and boys in the PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari shared the view that in their schools, most pregnant girls, adolescent new mothers and married girls do not return to school. Some young mothers do not return because of health problems from early pregnancy and childbirth, or because of maternal mortality.

“[Girls do not continue school after childbearing because they are] doing household chores, looking after husbands and grandparents, and nourishing children. If they go to school after marriage, men in the community scold them.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“Girls who come from an educated family are not same in this case. They come to school and don’t stop their studies when they are pregnant. They continue to study to help their husband and secure the future of their children.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“If the girls are healthy while they are pregnant, they often come to attend classes.”

Girl, PU Nilphamari school

“The ones who are aware about education always attend school no matter what happens.”

Girl, PU Nilphamari school

“The in-laws do not allow them to come to school as they mean there is no use of education after getting married.”

Girl, PU Nilphamari school

“Due to illness during pregnancy, they stop coming to school.”

Girl, PU Nilphamari school

“They also stop coming to school as they meet their death while giving birth.”

Girl, PU Nilphamari school

“Because of religious reasons, many girls are not allowed to come school after their marriage.”

Boy, PU Barguna school

“Because after marriage, the husband and mother in law don’t like the girl to continue school. Sometimes classmates laugh at the girl and make jokes. It is very difficult to take care of a baby properly with school.”

Boy, PU Barguna school

“After giving birth, still girls have wished to go to school. So, if their family supports them, then they can come to the school.”

Boy, PU Barguna school

“The husband does not permit his wife to come to school.”

Boy, PU Nilphamari school

Girls and boys from PU Barguna also gave their lowest scores to the **safety going to school** dimension. Asked whether they thought girls are as safe as boys on the way to and from school, girls from participating schools responded, “never” (29%), “seldom” (8%) or “sometimes” (30%), for an average score of “seldom.” Boys’ scores in PU Barguna schools were even lower than those of girls in the same schools. Boys responded that girls “never” (32%), “seldom” (27%), or only “sometimes” (24%) are as safe as boys on their way to and from school. Girls and boys cited similar reasons for girls being less safe than boys as they try to access schooling. These included bullying and verbal abuse, and sexual harassment by boys and men on the streets; unsafe transportation due to abuse and attack by drivers; being blackmailed with photos on mobile phones and the internet, and threatened; early and forced marriage as a result of being blackmailed; acid attacks; and rape. Girls raised examples of girls committing suicide following an attack. Poorer girls are targeted more for attacks than girls from wealthier families, and girls who live closer to the school report being safer on the way to and from school than girls who live farther away and must walk long distances.

“The street to school goes through local bazaar (market). People in the bazaar say pass bad comments to the girls, so many lose interest to come to school.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“Three years back a guy took photo of a girl without her consent on the way to school. Then he attached his photo to hers and started threatening her by saying that, if she didn’t agree to have an affair with him then he would show that photo to her family and tell false story of their relationship. Although not willing, still she had to get involved with him. Some days after [the start of] their love affair he got physically close to her and then left her. Out of shame the girl committed suicide.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“One morning a guy forcefully hugged a girl of class six and took a photo while she was coming to school. He started blackmailing her and said that, if she doesn’t marry him he would publicise the photo. The girl had no other choice than to run away with the guy. The girl’s family rescued her later and has stopped her schooling and education.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“Nowadays what happens more frequently is, the guys take photo of the girls on the way to and from the school with their mobile phone. Then they threaten the girls that they will edit those to vulgar forms and spread those through the Internet, so that the girls agree to get romantically involved with the guys. If the girl refuses, then her edited photos are made available on the Internet.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“Girls are not safe like boys, because of eve teasing. For this reason, they become a victim of early marriage.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“Those are rich people; they ensure safety for their girls. And those who live near to school, they are also safe when going to school.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“Girls cannot come to school safely like boys, because some roadside boys intimidate girls on the way to school. Girls have to endure bad language.”

Boy, PU Barguna school

“Girls face various problems at the time of coming to school. Quite often boys give them love proposals. If girls avoid them, then the boys pull their dresses. If girls try to raise their voice, boys scare them saying, ‘I will see you’. For these reasons they stop coming school. Few members said that those girls whose home is near the school is safe from that.”

Girl, PU Barguna school

“When girls come to school, some impudent boys blow whistles at them and take their photos without their permission. Quite often they grab their hand. For these unwanted incidents, girls feel hesitate coming to school.”

Boy, PU Barguna school

In PU Nilphamari, boys also gave **sports participation** low scores. Asked whether girls participate in sports activities at school as much as boys, boys in PU Nilphamari schools responded, “never” (16%), “often,” (19%) or “sometimes” (37%). Boys emphasised a range of reasons. These included girls not having time due to household work; girls not knowing their right to play sports; gender norms against girls playing sports; or simply a lack of a field at school for any students to play sports. One example raised included a government initiative on football, in which some girls do participate.

“Girls are busy in household work so they can’t participate in sports activities equally as boys.”

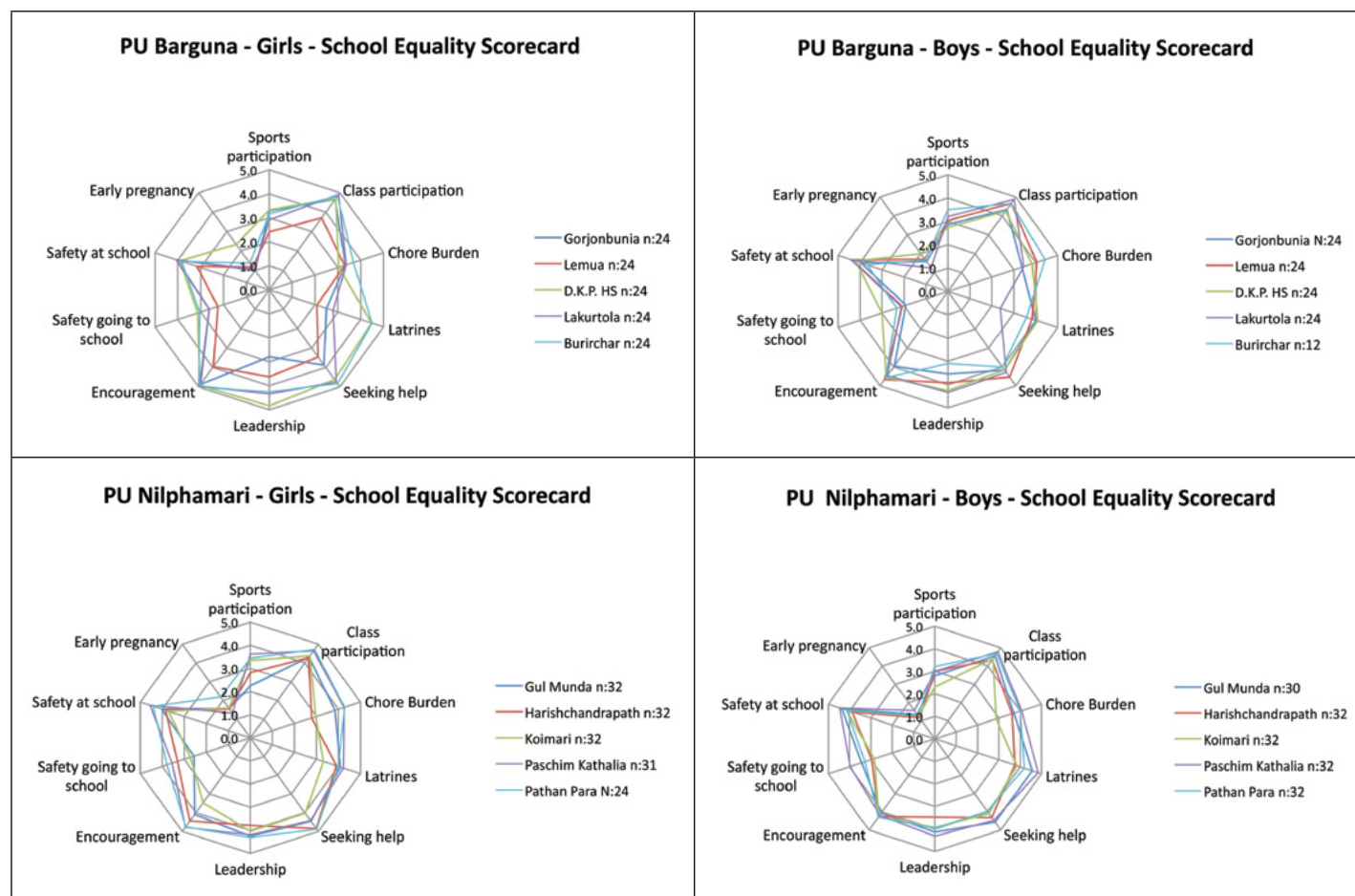
Boy, PU Nilphamari school

“Girls are not conscious about their rights.” Boy, PU Nilphamari school

“Cricket, football, long jump, etc., are not sports for girls so they can’t play them.”

Boy, PU Nilphamari school

Figure 52: School Equality Scorecard: Bangladesh, PU Barguna and PU Nilphamari average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16



PAKISTAN

Pakistan: Girls Empowerment Star



The boundaries of Jammu and Kashmir shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by Plan International. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not been agreed upon by the parties.

Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Pakistan**, Plan spoke with 176 adolescent girls in PU Thatta and PU Vehari, in six communities.

On average, girls in **PU Thatta** felt most empowered around the dimensions of **school**, **safety**, and **feeling valued**, and least empowered around aspects of **marriage**, **pregnancy**, and **speaking up**.

In **PU Vehari**, girls claimed that they felt most empowered completing **school**, and least empowered deciding if and when to **marry**.

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Pakistan's PU Thatta selected communities

Across three PU Thatta communities, girls gave their highest average ratings of "often" to **school**, **safety**, and **feeling valued**. Of 90 interviewed, girls said that in their community, girls "always" (37%), "often" (13%) or "sometimes" (14%) complete at least nine years of **school**. Many shared the view that literacy and education for girls are expected to make an entire family more literate. Girls of educated parents more easily can complete nine years of school, particularly those with an educated father. After completing studies, parents and elders expect girls to get married. Girls who gave this dimension lower ratings noted that some are unable to continue through at least nine years due to unavailability of a secondary school in their area. Where there are secondary schools, some parents do not prioritise girls' education, or cannot bear the associated costs. Some parents and girls themselves do not see the school environment as suitable or safe. Related dimensions are **marriage**, **safety** and **feeling valued**.

"After completing studies, we have to marry." Girl, PU Thatta community

"In some cases, where parents are educated, then their children easily get educated."

Girl, PU Thatta community

On the **safety** dimension for PU Thatta, asked whether girls feel safe in their community, 34% of girls interviewed said, "always," and 18% said, "often." Responses varied, however, with 13% responding "seldom" and 14%, "never." Many girls reported feeling safe in their village, and felt there is low risk as the houses are near to each other. Girls often walk in groups for protection. Boys sometimes try to bother girls while walking to school. At night, many girls feel unsafe and that there is danger in the village after dark.

"We never hear about any incident of protection happen in [this] village. We are too much safe in the village."

Girl, PU Thatta community

“Once when I was on the way to school, a boy [tried to bother] me, but I did not feel fear. We walk in a group of girls so we don’t feel fear.”
 Girl, PU Thatta community

On **feeling valued**, girls from PU Thatta said that they feel their concerns matter in their community “often” (13%) or “always” (34%). The concept of feeling valued became closely tied to a dominant view of girls as signs of ‘family honor’. Differences between the quantitative ratings and qualitative comments suggest differences in concept and practice in valuing girls. Girls may not be valued if perceived to ‘dishonor’ her family.

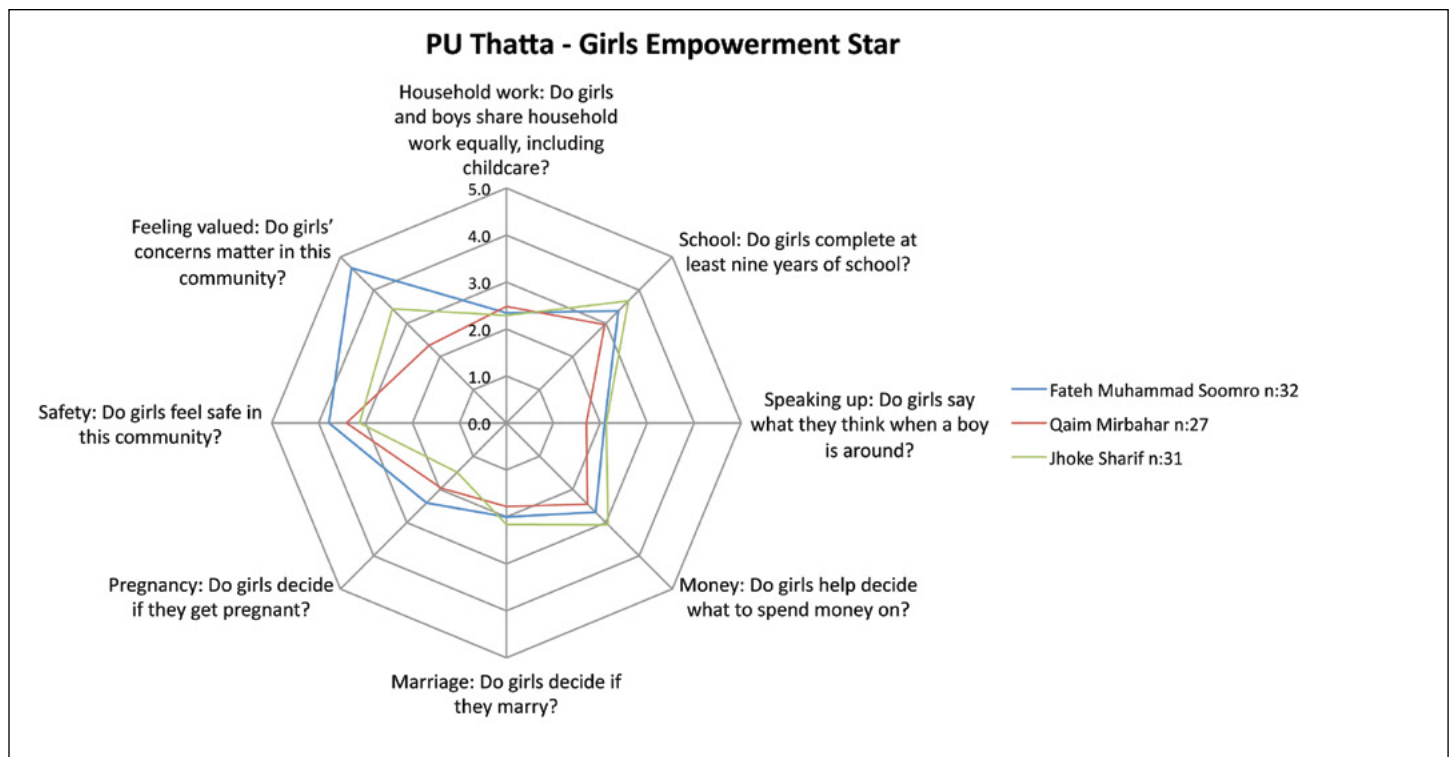
“Our parents give respect to us, they honor us, because in our communities, girls are signs of honor.”
 Girl, PU Thatta community

Highest average rated dimensions: Plan Pakistan’s PU Vehari selected communities

In PU Vehari, the **school** dimension also received highest average ratings from girls interviewed. Of 86 responses to the question, “do girls complete at least nine years of school?” 29% said, “sometimes” and 15% said often. A further 17% reported, “seldom” and 30% said, “never.” Girls’ ratings reflected variability in their comments and examples. Some girls have opportunities to complete nine years of education, however, many face challenges in accessing post-primary education. There is only a primary school in many villages. Parents are hesitant to send girls out of their village due to **safety** issues. Girls said that some parents are unaware of the importance of girls’ education and therefore do not prioritise it.

“The middle schools are situated far from the village for the most part and can never accommodate more than 100-200 students at a time. So, according to girls, this is not that their parents prohibit them, but the state education provision system is very weak.”
 Girl, PU Vehari community

Figure 53: Girls Empowerment Star: Pakistan, PU Thatta average ratings by community



N= 3 communities per PU; Thatta n=90 girls, ages 12-16

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Pakistan's PU Thatta selected communities

Girls from PU Thatta communities rated **speaking up, marriage** and **pregnancy** the lowest. A combined 84% of girls interviewed said that girls “never” (43%), “seldom” (27%) or “sometimes” (14%) say what they think when a male is around. Social, religious and gender norms persist that girls do not talk in front of males, and share with their mothers or other girls only. Girls feel shy speaking in front of males as a result. Many mentioned that ‘illiterate parents’ reinforce norms against girls speaking up in front of a male. Still, some girls said that they do speak with their fathers and brothers at home.

“...we do not talk or share in front of males, but sometimes if we are alone at home with our fathers or brothers we share our views with them.” Girl, PU Thatta community

Concerning **marriage**, 87% of girls interviewed in PU Thatta communities responded that they “never” (50%), “seldom” (21%) or “sometimes” (16%) decide if they marry. Parents arrange girls’ marriages, and girls have no say in the matter. Many girls’ mothers and sisters experienced early and forced marriage. Some parents do ‘confirm’ the choice of spouse with their daughter first. Early marriage is being practiced less often since NGO activities have been raising awareness on the issue in the area.

“They confirm it by us about our life partners and one never asks the husband when you want a baby. It is natural, fixed.” Girl, PU Thatta community

“Our marriages are arranged with the choice of our parents.” Girl, PU Thatta community

On **pregnancy**, ratings from PU Thatta were similar to those for the **marriage** dimension. A combined 89% of girls responded that in their communities, girls “never” (28%), “seldom” (26%) or “sometimes” (13%) decide if they become pregnant. Many voiced the view that pregnancy is considered the husband’s decision. Girls who make requests not to become pregnant or try to refuse pregnancy fear a negative reaction from the husband as it is considered to be against Islam. Dominant views expressed were that conception should not be stopped as a ‘gift from God’. Some girls though do have a say in the timing of pregnancy, and there are some husbands that agree to have only two children.

“Some of the girls said that a few girls have the choice of time of pregnancy in their village, otherwise it usually depends on the choice of the husband.”

Girl, PU Thatta community

“Girls do not have decision-making power over pregnancy. The male says to them ‘you are machines to birth children’.”

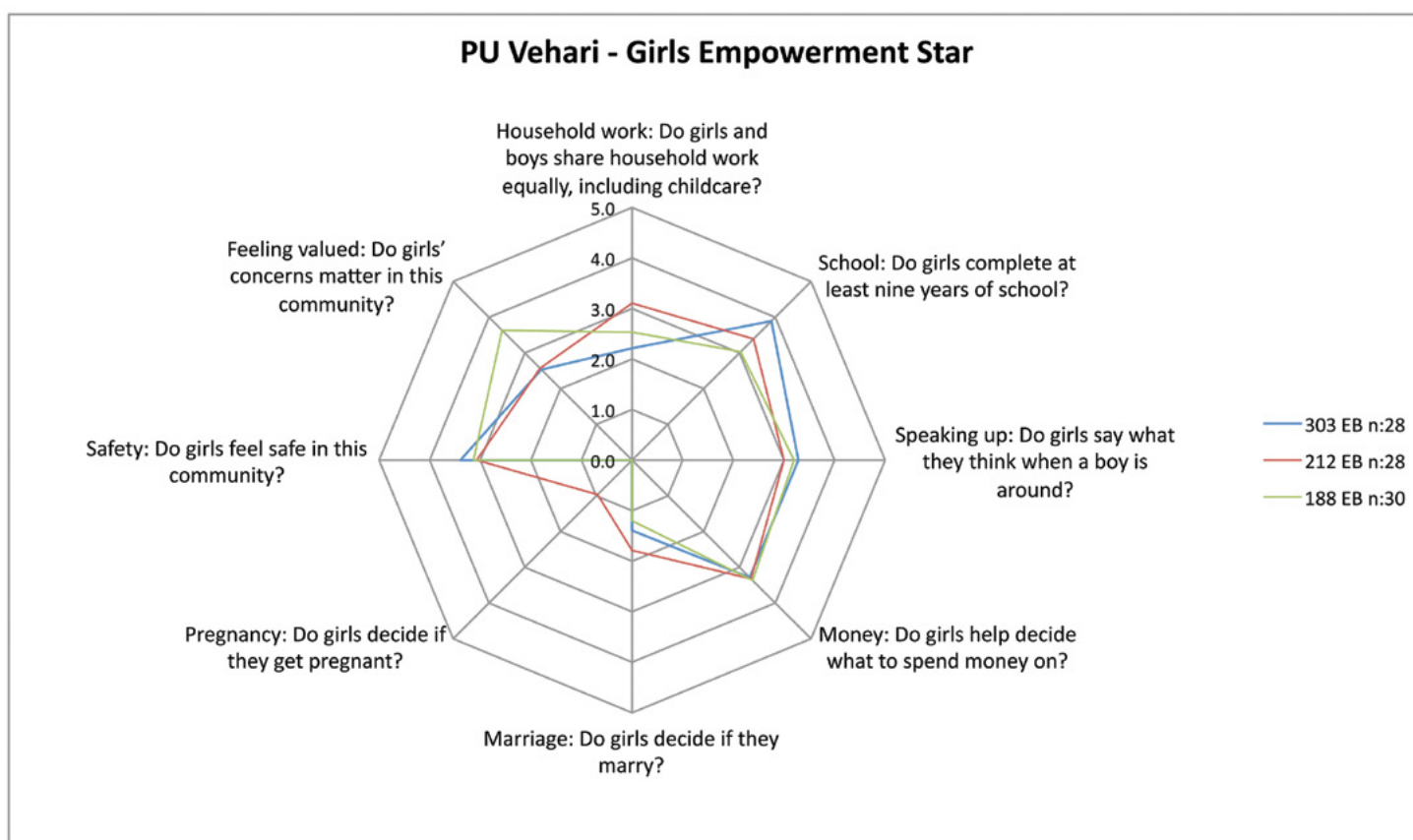
Girl, PU Thatta community

Lowest average rated dimensions: Plan Pakistan's PU Vehari selected communities

In PU Vehari, girls also gave the marriage dimension the lowest average rating. Of 87 responses to the key question, “do girls decide if they get married?” 76% responded, “never.” A further 10% said, “sometimes.” Similar to views voiced by girls in PU Thatta, girls in PU Vehari communities said that parents do not ask when they decide over a girl’s marriage. Girls said parents see themselves as more experienced and as better decision-makers, and that among them, fathers know better as men know better than women or girls. It is not a “woman’s task” to choose the spouse. Early marriage is a norm, usually occurring between the ages of 14 and 18. Girls knew of examples of marriage younger than 14.

“Parents think it is a very important decision of life. Girls can’t make right decisions regarding marriage.”
Girl, PU Vehari community

Figure 54: Girls Empowerment Star: Pakistan, PU Vehari average ratings by community



N= 3 communities per PU; Vehari n=86 girls, ages 12-16

Pakistan: School Equality Scorecard



The boundaries of Jammu and Kashmir shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by Plan International. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not been agreed upon by the parties.

Findings from the Girls Empowerment Star:

In **Pakistan**, Plan spoke with 263 girls in 9 schools and 252 boys in 9 schools in PU Thatta and PU Vehari.

In **PU Thatta**, both girls and boys rated class **participation** and **encouragement** as the highest levels of gender equality at school for girls.

In **PU Vehari**, girls rated **chore burden** and **latrines** as the highest, while boys rated **chore burden** and **encouragement** as the highest levels of gender equality at school for girls.

Table 21: School Equality Scorecard: Pakistan, PU Thatta and PU Vehari dimensions with highest and lowest average scores, girls and boys, ages 12-16

Pakistan	Dimensions with highest average scores		Dimensions with lowest average scores	
	PU Thatta	PU Vehari	PU Thatta	PU Vehari
Girls	Class participation 3.5 Encouragement 3.8	Chore burden 4.4 Latrines 4.4	Safety at school 2.4 Early pregnancy 1.9	Sports participation 2.7 Early pregnancy 1.2
Boys	Class participation 4.0 Encouragement 4.4	Chore burden 4.5 Encouragement 4.4	Safety at school 1.9 Early pregnancy 1.8	Early pregnancy 1.6

Highest average scored dimensions: PU Thatta and PU Vehari selected schools

Girls interviewed from PU Thatta schools scored **class participation** the highest of all dimensions. Over half (53%) reported that girls “always” (33%) or “often” (20%) participate in class as much as boys in their schools. A higher portion of boys—a combined 75%—responded “always” (45%) or “often” (20%) to this dimension. Boys’ views on gender equality in class participation appeared to be more favourable than girls’. Comments and examples from girls and boys present mixed views.

“We are all equal in the classroom.” Girl, PU Thatta school

“Opportunities of participation are mostly given to the selected active girls who could lead and manage the things. Most of the girls are always being rejected for all the activities.” Girl, PU Thatta school

“There are a few girls who are not interested in class participation, but the teacher prefers to ask questions from back sitters.” Girl, PU Thatta school

“Teachers prefer male students to organise or lead any activity because girls feel shy in front of boys.”

Boy, PU Thatta school

“We always lead the program with our teachers. When there is something to organise, sometimes we have to sit or meet each other till late hours. Girls can’t do this. So teachers prefer male students.”

Boy, PU Thatta school

Girls from participating PU Thatta schools also reported that girls in their school “always” (50%) or “often” (12%) receive the same **encouragement** as boys to succeed in their schoolwork. When boys in PU Thatta schools were asked whether girls are encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as they are, 69% interviewed reported “always,” and 15% responded “often.” While girls in PU Vehari did not score **encouragement** among their two highest-scored, they did give an average response of “often,” with 56% responding “always” and 19%, “often.” Similarly, of boys interviewed in PU Vehari, 64% reported “always,” and 16% said, “often.” Views discussed among girls and boys revealed varied situations in their classrooms. Discussions linked with the **leadership** dimension, and gender differences in norms and stereotypes on girls’ versus boys’ leadership capabilities. Some girls have a father who is supportive of their education. Encouraging fathers can help buffer girls’ negative experiences at school and reinforce their academic engagement, even when a teacher may be less than encouraging.

“Teachers create opportunity equally for all. Teachers mostly do not prefer to ask questions from intelligent girls, but give preference to girls who appeared slow learners.”

Girl, PU Thatta school

“Mostly students said as a girl they are not encouraged by teachers or parents to take leadership responsibilities, because they think only boys can be leaders.”

Girl, PU Thatta school

“My father loves me a lot, so he encourages me. Teachers don’t do this.”

Girl, PU Thatta school

“Appreciation is equal for both, even if good marks are achieved by any girl, the teacher appreciates her a lot.”

Boy, PU Thatta school

“When a boy is insulted by a teacher, it is a normal matter for him, but when a girl is insulted, she starts weeping and becomes absent for the next few days. Teachers prefer not to ask so many questions from girls for this reason.”

Boy, PU Thatta school

“Teachers do not encourage girls who belong to poor families of the village.”

Boy, PU Vehari school

In PU Vehari participating schools, girls interviewed scored the **chore burden** dimension highly. A combined 84% reported that girls “always” (75%) or “often” (9%) spend the same amount of time doing chores at school as boys. Boys from PU Vehari schools also rated this dimension highly, with 81% reporting that they “always” (75%) or “often” (6%) spend as much time as girls on chores at school. Comments reported suggested mixed views, suggesting that having a rotating schedule of chores involving boys equally as girls fosters greater equality in chore burden in the classroom. This is a rare finding in the 11-country study, and suggests a model practice to consider replicating in other schools and countries. Still, in practice, some variability emerged with girls in some schools expressing that they are the ones to spend the most time doing chores at school.

“Children do participate in the cleanliness of the room regularly. There is a turn for every two students per day and almost all the students take their turn. Those who have the turn to clean the classroom environment would come earlier than the school time and would do their task.”

Boy, PU Vehari school

“Mostly girls do chores because they are interested in this activity.” Girl, PU Vehari school

“The girls participate in cleanliness and tidiness more than boys.” Boy, PU Vehari school

Also an infrequent finding in the 11-country study—girls of PU Vehari schools mostly scored the latrines dimension highly. Of those interviewed, 87% reported that they “always” (77%) or “often” (10%) have toilets at school that they feel comfortable using.

“[Girls] feel comfortable using them when they need to.” Girl, PU Vehari school

“[Girls] can easily use them during school hours.” Girl, PU Vehari school

Lowest average scored dimensions: PU Thatta and PU Vehari

As frequently found across the 11-country study, girls and boys of PU Thatta and PU Vehari scored **early pregnancy** the lowest of all dimensions of the tool. Of girls interviewed in PU Thatta schools, 89% reported that girls “never” (44%), “seldom” (32%) or only “sometimes” (13%) return to school after having a child. A combined 86% of boys interviewed in PU Thatta reported that in their schools, girls “never” (58%), “seldom” (16%) or “sometimes” (12%) return to school to continue their studies after having a child. In PU Vehari, girls also scored this dimension the lowest, with 95% responding that girls “never” (94%) or “seldom” (1%) attend school after having a child. Boys from PU Vehari again mostly corroborated girls’ scores, with a combined 88% having responded “never” (68%), “seldom” (16%) and “sometimes” (4%) to this dimension. Reasons that girls and boys from PU Thatta and PU Vehari gave echoed recurring themes from other countries where Plan implemented School Equality Scorecard. Their comments and examples also raised some new, context-specific themes. As found in other contexts, some girls noted that their schools will not allow a pregnant or married girl to attend school, and that child marriage is common where they live. In contrast, girls from educated families tend more often return to their studies after childbirth or early marriage, particularly when their fathers or husbands value girls’ education and support them in doing so. New concepts included a suggestion that creating all-girls’ schools could increase the likelihood of pregnant girls, young mothers and married girls continuing their education. The issue of divorced girls returning to school also arose in PU Thatta. In PU Vehari, Plan facilitators found some resistance and “shyness” in discussing pregnancy in the focus groups, with girls saying that they did not have an example of an adolescent mother returning to school.

“After pregnancy due to shyness, girls do not attend the classes, because this is a mixed school. If it was a girls’ school, then they might come.”

Girl, PU Thatta school

“Pregnant girls hardly come to school. It happens rarely, at the time of exams. There are some who came once in a month to ask about the course or subject, but there is no one who came regularly after being pregnant.”

Girl, PU Thatta school

“Some of the pregnant girls are not allowed to appear even in the exam.”

Girl, PU Thatta school

“Most of them are from the Baloch tribe (Brohi) so they are not allowed to attend classes after marriage. Child marriages are common. Due to marriage, girls leave their education.”

Girl, PU Thatta school

“For pregnancy, they said mostly girls are being stopped to attend classes after marriage, but they are allowed to go for only exams. But there were a few examples in few families who are attending their schools in Sijawal city because they are either from educated families or their husbands are aware about importance of education.”

Girl, PU Thatta school

“They never saw any pregnant girl coming to school after marriage. The reason they said was that in-laws don’t allow girls to continue their education, and also that some girls shift villages after marriage.”

Girl, PU Vehari school

“Girls come to school regularly only if they are engaged. But after marriage or getting pregnant, no girl comes regularly.”

Boy, PU Thatta school

“Parents and husband would not allow her to sit in the class being pregnant.”

Boy, PU Thatta school

“Interestingly, one of the boys said that after being pregnant his sister goes to an army public college regularly to attend classes.” Boy, PU Thatta school

In PU Thatta schools, boys and girls also raised the issue of a lack of gender equality in **safety at school**, giving this dimension low scores. Of girls interviewed, 83% reported that girls are “never” (33%), “seldom” (18%) or “sometimes” (32%) as safe as boys at school. A combined 86% of boys interviewed in the five participating PU Thatta schools reported that girls are “never” (54%), “seldom” (19%) or “sometimes” (13%) as safe as boys at school. The lower distribution of boys’ scores compared to girls’ suggest a perception that boys perceive girls as even less safe than girls perceive themselves to be at school. Themes raised in groups discussions about **safety at school**, and risks to girls, touched upon diverse types of psychological, emotional, and physical safety. Girls’ heavy household work burden also reduces their time for homework, leaving girls afraid of a teacher’s reaction to incomplete work. Girls’ safety was specifically linked to a lack of secure **latrines** at school, as was found in numerous other contexts in the multi-country study. Girls’ safe transfer to and from school also can leave a girl feeling unsafe at school if she arrives too early or leaves too late waiting for a caregiver to accompany her. Fears that some raised in focus group discussions also included concerns over lizards or evil spirits in the schoolyard, and girls with non-Muslim religious identities feeling less safe than Muslim girls because of discrimination. Boys noted being afraid of verbal abuse by teachers and headmasters, and of snakes on school grounds.

“Sometimes [girls] feel fear in school due to non-completion of homework given by teachers and it happens because of domestic work.”

Girl, PU Thatta

“Washroom door lock is out of order. When the door is locked, it’s very difficult to open. The lower side of the door has a big hole. One mad man is always standing behind the washroom.”

Girl, PU Thatta

“If the parent/caretaker is not coming to pick [her up], if there is no one to accompany, if there are boys present on the street, the girls feel uncomfortable, hesitant and afraid. If the house of any girl is far and there is no parent/caretaker or classmate to accompany, the girl becomes very afraid and starts to weep. Fear is also felt in the school especially when any girl comes too early or goes back too late.”

Girl, PU Thatta

“Male teachers are a threat to girls.” Boy, PU Thatta school

“Earthquake, floods and teachers, because when any of the students makes a mistake, the teacher verbally abuses them in front of everyone, including insulting girls in front of all boys.”

Boy, PU Thatta school

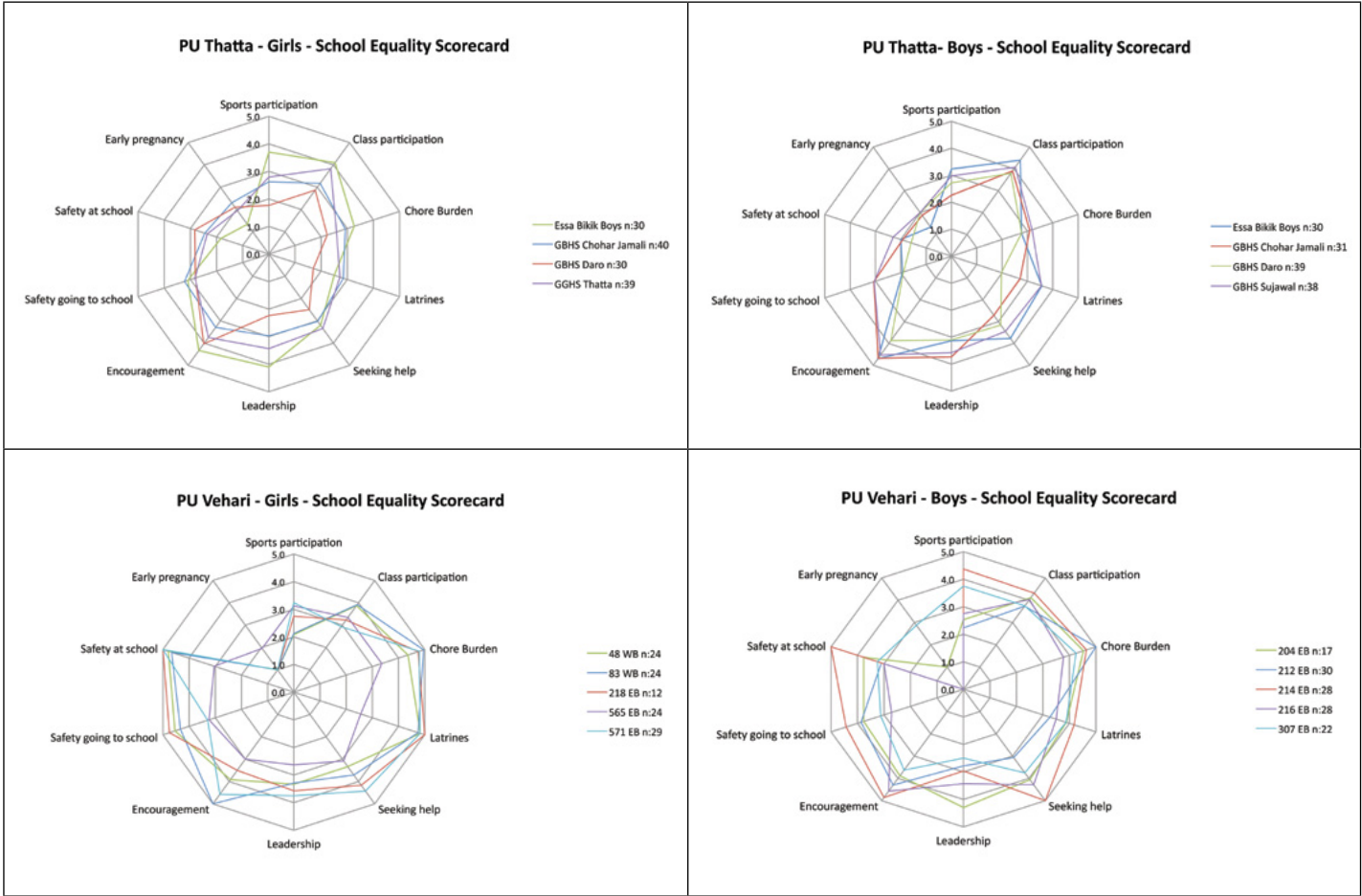
“We are afraid of snakes in school.” Boy, PU Thatta school

Girls in PU Vehari also gave low average scores to the **sport participation** dimension. Over half (53%) reported that girls “never” (20%) or “seldom” (33%) participate in sports activities at school as much as boys at school. Girls linked the issue of **class participation** to **sports participation**, with the observation that girls who participate more in class are the same girls who participate in sports.

“We cannot participate in games/sports due to unsupportive environment (feel shy when teachers and other girls watch and girls make fun of those who play) at school, but the girls who play games are equally good in class participation.”

Girl, PU Vehari school

Figure 55: School Equality Scorecard: Pakistan, PU Thatta and PU Vehari average scores by school, girls and boys, ages 12-16



Appendix 2: Girls Empowerment Star: 11-country distribution tables of weighted average percentages and rating by selected dimension

Table 22: Girls Empowerment Star “School” dimension: 11-country distribution of weighted average percentages and rating

Girls Empowerment Star: 2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always	Average rating
Ecuador: PU 1	93	0%	10%	22%	42%	27%	3.9
Ecuador: PU 2	96	1%	30%	51%	17%	1%	2.9
Nicaragua: PU 1	89	2%	11%	46%	11%	29%	3.6
Nicaragua: PU 2	87	2%	29%	34%	22%	13%	3.1
Paraguay: PU 1	81	0%	7%	49%	30%	14%	3.5
Paraguay: PU 2	81	1%	7%	36%	27%	28%	3.7
Benin: PU 1	81	1%	22%	33%	29%	15%	3.3
Cameroon: PU 1	69	17%	32%	17%	25%	9%	2.7
Cameroon: PU 2	64	6%	11%	41%	20%	22%	3.4
Liberia: PU 1	87	9%	24%	52%	13%	2%	2.7
Liberia: PU 2	80	13%	41%	35%	8%	4%	2.5
Egypt: PU 1	95	15%	14%	26%	9%	36%	3.4
Egypt: PU 2	71	1%	3%	35%	21%	39%	3.9
Uganda: PU 1	96	5%	13%	46%	18%	19%	3.3
Uganda: PU 2	96	9%	18%	44%	15%	15%	3.1
Zimbabwe: PU 1	96	1%	18%	46%	15%	21%	2.9
Zimbabwe: PU 2	96	8%	19%	51%	15%	7%	3.4
Bangladesh: PU 1	71	6%	25%	14%	27%	28%	3.4
Bangladesh: PU 2	93	14%	12%	29%	27%	18%	3.2
Pakistan: PU 1	90	16%	20%	14%	13%	37%	3.4
Pakistan: PU 2	86	3%	17%	29%	33%	17%	3.4
Weighted averages:		6%	18%	35%	21%	20%	3.3

Table 23: Girls Empowerment Star “Marriage” dimension: 11-country distribution of weighted average percentages and rating

Girls Empowerment Star: 5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always	Average rating
Ecuador: PU 1	93	6%	14%	17%	40%	23%	3.6
Ecuador: PU 2	96	9%	5%	44%	30%	11%	3.3
Nicaragua: PU 1	88	0%	18%	28%	10%	43%	3.8
Nicaragua: PU 2	88	16%	11%	41%	10%	22%	3.1
Paraguay: PU 1	81	10%	9%	27%	15%	40%	3.7
Paraguay: PU 2	81	15%	6%	9%	19%	52%	3.9
Benin: PU 1	83	34%	16%	24%	7%	19%	2.6
Cameroon: PU 1	69	51%	9%	19%	7%	14%	2.2
Cameroon: PU 2	61	10%	18%	30%	20%	23%	3.1
Liberia: PU 1	87	24%	34%	31%	7%	3%	2.3
Liberia: PU 2	60	37%	27%	18%	8%	10%	2.3
Egypt: PU 1	95	1%	4%	3%	4%	87%	4.7
Egypt: PU 2	72	7%	3%	18%	8%	64%	4.3
Uganda: PU 1	96	18%	8%	32%	14%	28%	3.3
Uganda: PU 2	96	40%	8%	23%	4%	25%	2.7
Zimbabwe: PU 1	96	25%	9%	18%	13%	35%	2.5
Zimbabwe: PU 2	96	35%	15%	18%	8%	24%	3.2
Bangladesh: PU 1	72	32%	29%	28%	11%	0%	2.4
Bangladesh: PU 2	93	35%	19%	26%	12%	8%	2.2
Pakistan: PU 1	91	48%	26%	13%	8%	4%	2.0
Pakistan: PU 2	87	76%	10%	10%	1%	2%	1.5
Weighted averages:		25%	14%	23%	12%	26%	3.0

Table 24: Girls Empowerment Star “Household work” dimension: 11-country distribution of weighted average percentages and rating

Girls Empowerment Star: 1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always	Average rating
Ecuador: PU 1	92	0%	4%	52%	25%	18%	3.5
Ecuador: PU 2	96	6%	41%	31%	17%	5%	2.7
Nicaragua: PU 1	88	24%	19%	45%	2%	9%	2.5
Nicaragua: PU 2	87	11%	31%	47%	7%	3%	2.6
Paraguay: PU 1	81	20%	15%	44%	11%	10%	2.8
Paraguay: PU 2	81	16%	22%	48%	7%	6%	2.7
Benin: PU 1	83	36%	30%	20%	7%	6%	2.2
Cameroon: PU 1	70	23%	24%	39%	7%	7%	2.5
Cameroon: PU 2	58	7%	26%	47%	5%	16%	2.7
Liberia: PU 1	87	24%	33%	33%	9%	0%	2.3
Liberia: PU 2	80	38%	16%	34%	6%	6%	2.3
Egypt: PU 1	95	43%	8%	35%	4%	9%	2.3
Egypt: PU 2	72	58%	17%	13%	7%	6%	1.8
Uganda: PU 1	96	24%	22%	35%	11%	7%	2.6
Uganda: PU 2	96	29%	32%	36%	1%	1%	2.1
Zimbabwe: PU 1	96	21%	28%	43%	6%	2%	2.2
Zimbabwe: PU 2	96	30%	27%	36%	1%	5%	2.4
Bangladesh: PU 1	72	15%	39%	33%	13%	0%	2.4
Bangladesh: PU 2	93	11%	16%	60%	12%	1%	2.8
Pakistan: PU 1	90	31%	28%	23%	9%	9%	2.4
Pakistan: PU 2	87	30%	17%	28%	15%	10%	2.6
Weighted Averages:		24%	24%	37%	9%	6%	2.5

Table 25: Girls Empowerment Star “Speaking up” dimension: 11-country distribution of weighted average percentages and rating

Girls Empowerment Star: 3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always	Average rating
Ecuador: PU 1	93	25%	9%	35%	15%	16%	2.9
Ecuador: PU 2	96	80%	13%	7%	0%	0%	1.3
Nicaragua: PU 1	87	29%	7%	26%	1%	37%	3.1
Nicaragua: PU 2	88	33%	38%	19%	6%	5%	2.1
Paraguay: PU 1	81	28%	9%	32%	27%	4%	2.7
Paraguay: PU 2	80	34%	16%	16%	19%	15%	2.6
Benin: PU 1	83	28%	23%	30%	12%	7%	2.5
Cameroon: PU 1	69	45%	13%	22%	19%	1%	2.2
Cameroon: PU 2	64	25%	5%	31%	19%	20%	3.0
Liberia: PU 1	86	12%	29%	37%	12%	10%	2.8
Liberia: PU 2	79	10%	38%	25%	11%	15%	2.8
Egypt: PU 1	91	33%	8%	44%	10%	5%	2.4
Egypt: PU 2	72	28%	11%	17%	28%	17%	2.9
Uganda: PU 1	96	57%	15%	9%	10%	8%	2.0
Uganda: PU 2	96	41%	18%	18%	8%	16%	2.4
Zimbabwe: PU 1	96	38%	25%	24%	5%	8%	2.2
Zimbabwe: PU 2	96	44%	26%	17%	4%	9%	2.2
Bangladesh: PU 1	72	21%	35%	24%	10%	11%	2.9
Bangladesh: PU 2	88	10%	18%	34%	30%	8%	2.6
Pakistan: PU 1	90	43%	27%	14%	4%	11%	2.1
Pakistan: PU 2	86	14%	10%	38%	20%	17%	3.2
Weighted averages:		32%	19%	25%	13%	11%	2.5

Table 26: Girls Empowerment Star “Pregnancy” dimension: 11-country distribution of weighted average percentages and rating

Girls Empowerment Star: 6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always	Average rating
Ecuador: PU 1	93	13%	38%	32%	12%	5%	2.6
Ecuador: PU 2	96	19%	22%	41%	19%	0%	2.6
Nicaragua: PU 1	88	26%	16%	47%	2%	9%	2.5
Nicaragua: PU 2	87	9%	26%	40%	11%	13%	2.9
Paraguay: PU 1	79	24%	30%	13%	15%	18%	2.7
Paraguay: PU 2	79	16%	10%	14%	10%	49%	4.3
Benin: PU 1	83	53%	18%	16%	7%	6%	2.0
Cameroon: PU 1	69	77%	12%	7%	3%	1%	1.4
Cameroon: PU 2	65	31%	8%	34%	17%	11%	2.7
Liberia: PU 1	87	46%	32%	18%	1%	2%	1.8
Liberia: PU 2	60	52%	27%	10%	0%	12%	1.9
Egypt: PU 1	95	8%	2%	19%	3%	67%	4.2
Egypt: PU 2	72	11%	13%	33%	28%	15%	3.2
Uganda: PU 1	96	50%	6%	22%	6%	16%	2.3
Uganda: PU 2	96	69%	2%	6%	3%	20%	2.0
Zimbabwe: PU 1	96	38%	16%	25%	8%	14%	2.0
Zimbabwe: PU 2	96	55%	15%	17%	5%	8%	2.4
Bangladesh: PU 1	72	46%	19%	31%	3%	1%	1.9
Bangladesh: PU 2	92	15%	14%	29%	27%	14%	3.1
Pakistan: PU 1	91	48%	26%	13%	8%	4%	2.0
Pakistan: PU 2	10	10%	40%	20%	30%	0%	2.7
Weighted averages:		34%	20%	25%	11%	14%	2.5

Central and South America: Girls Empowerment Star distribution tables of percentages and average ratings

ECUADOR

Table 27: Girls Empowerment Star: Ecuador, PU Cotopaxi average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	92	0%	4%	52%	25%	18%	3.5
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	93	0%	10%	22%	42%	27%	3.9
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	93	25%	9%	35%	15%	16%	2.9
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	93	13%	6%	32%	13%	35%	3.5
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	93	6%	14%	17%	40%	23%	3.6
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	93	13%	38%	32%	12%	5%	2.6
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	93	8%	6%	28%	28%	30%	3.7
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	93	31%	11%	17%	28%	13%	2.8

* Average ratings across three selected communities

**Table 28: Girls Empowerment Star: Ecuador, PU Ventanas average ratings* and percentages
– girls, ages 12-16**

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	96	6%	41%	31%	17%	5%	2.7
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	96	1%	30%	51%	17%	1%	2.9
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	96	80%	13%	7%	0%	0%	1.3
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	96	30%	15%	41%	11%	3%	2.4
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	96	9%	5%	44%	30%	11%	3.3
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	96	19%	22%	41%	19%	0%	2.6
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	96	50%	30%	17%	3%	0%	1.7
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	96	43%	21%	18%	18%	1%	2.1

* Average ratings across three selected communities

NICARAGUA

Table 29: Girls Empowerment Star: Nicaragua, PU Chontales average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	88	24%	19%	45%	2%	9%	2.5
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	89	2%	11%	46%	11%	29%	3.6
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	87	29%	7%	26%	1%	37%	3.1
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	88	6%	11%	48%	1%	34%	3.5
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	88	0%	18%	28%	10%	43%	3.8
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	88	26%	16%	47%	2%	9%	2.5
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	86	7%	7%	48%	7%	31%	3.4
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	88	18%	18%	38%	5%	22%	2.9

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 30: Girls Empowerment Star: Nicaragua, PU VEC average ratings* and percentages
– girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	87	11%	31%	47%	7%	3%	2.6
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	87	2%	29%	34%	22%	13%	3.1
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	88	33%	38%	19%	6%	5%	2.1
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	86	8%	13%	45%	19%	15%	3.2
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	88	16%	11%	41%	10%	22%	3.1
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	87	9%	26%	40%	11%	13%	2.9
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	86	7%	12%	42%	21%	19%	3.3
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	87	28%	22%	36%	10%	5%	2.4

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 31: Girls Empowerment Star: Paraguay, PU Caaguazu average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	81	20%	15%	44%	11%	10%	2.8
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	81	0%	7%	49%	30%	14%	3.5
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	81	28%	9%	32%	27%	4%	2.7
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	81	7%	17%	28%	30%	17%	3.3
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	81	10%	9%	27%	15%	40%	3.7
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	79	24%	30%	13%	15%	18%	2.7
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	81	26%	10%	30%	26%	9%	2.8
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	81	10%	11%	36%	21%	22%	3.3

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 32: Girls Empowerment Star: Paraguay, PU Guaira average ratings* and percentages
– girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	81	16%	22%	48%	7%	6%	2.7
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	81	1%	7%	36%	27%	28%	3.7
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	80	34%	16%	16%	19%	15%	2.6
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	80	36%	9%	25%	21%	9%	2.5
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	81	15%	6%	9%	19%	52%	3.9
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	79	16%	10%	14%	10%	49%	4.3
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	81	5%	5%	15%	15%	60%	4.2
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	80	18%	6%	31%	21%	24%	3.2

* Average ratings across three selected communities

West Africa: Girls Empowerment Star distribution tables of percentages and average ratings

BENIN

Table 33: Girls Empowerment Star: Benin, PU Couffo average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	83	36%	30%	20%	7%	6%	2.2
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	81	1%	22%	33%	28%	15%	3.3
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	83	28%	23%	30%	12%	7%	2.5
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	83	13%	20%	22%	20%	24%	3.2
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	83	34%	16%	24%	7%	19%	2.6
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	83	53%	18%	16%	7%	6%	2.0
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	83	22%	12%	7%	31%	16%	3.3
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	83	37%	18%	13%	10%	22%	2.6

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 34: Girls Empowerment Star: Benin, PU Atacora average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0

* No data reported

CAMEROON

Table 35: Girls Empowerment Star: Cameroon, PU Biteng average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	70	23%	24%	39%	7%	7%	2.5
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	69	17%	32%	17%	25%	9%	2.7
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	69	45%	13%	22%	19%	1%	2.2
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	69	33%	17%	12%	17%	20%	2.7
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	69	51%	9%	19%	7%	14%	2.2
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	69	77%	12%	7%	3%	1%	1.4
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	69	29%	12%	29%	10%	20%	2.8
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	69	12%	9%	29%	7%	43%	3.6

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 36: Girls Empowerment Star: Cameroon, PU Bamenda average ratings* and percentages
– girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	58	7%	26%	47%	5%	16%	2.7
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	64	6%	11%	41%	20%	22%	3.4
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	64	25%	5%	31%	19%	20%	3.0
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	64	20%	16%	31%	16%	17%	2.9
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	61	10%	18%	30%	20%	23%	3.1
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	65	31%	8%	34%	17%	11%	2.7
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	65	12%	15%	42%	8%	23%	3.2
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	65	29%	18%	28%	15%	9%	2.6

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 37: Girls Empowerment Star: Liberia, PU Bomi average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	87	24%	33%	33%	9%	0%	2.3
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	87	9%	24%	52%	13%	2%	2.7
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	86	12%	29%	37%	12%	10%	2.8
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	87	36%	25%	30%	6%	3%	2.2
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	87	24%	34%	31%	7%	3%	2.3
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	87	46%	32%	18%	1%	2%	1.8
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	87	7%	16%	20%	31%	26%	3.5
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	87	5%	23%	16%	43%	14%	3.4

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 38: Girls Empowerment Star: Liberia, PU Lofa average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	80	38%	16%	34%	6%	6%	2.3
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	80	13%	41%	35%	8%	4%	2.5
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	79	10%	38%	25%	11%	15%	2.8
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	80	28%	28%	16%	14%	15%	2.6
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	60	37%	27%	18%	8%	10%	2.3
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	60	52%	27%	10%	0%	12%	1.9
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	80	14%	15%	24%	23%	25%	3.3
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	80	11%	9%	16%	20%	44%	3.8

* Average ratings across three selected communities

East and Southern Africa: Girls Empowerment Star distribution tables of percentages and average ratings

EGYPT

Table 39: Girls Empowerment Star: Egypt, PU Qalubia average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	95	43%	8%	35%	4%	9%	2.3
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	95	15%	14%	26%	9%	36%	3.4
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	91	33%	8%	44%	10%	5%	2.4
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	95	20%	11%	19%	15%	36%	3.4
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	95	1%	4%	3%	4%	87%	4.7
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	95	8%	2%	19%	3%	67%	4.2
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	96	9%	2%	30%	20%	39%	3.8
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	96	1%	2%	28%	17%	52%	4.2

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 40: Girls Empowerment Star: Egypt, PU Assiut average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Mean Score
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	72	58%	17%	13%	7%	6%	1.8
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	71	1%	3%	35%	21%	39%	3.9
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	72	28%	11%	17%	28%	17%	2.9
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	72	15%	11%	24%	13%	38%	3.5
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	73	7%	3%	18%	8%	64%	4.3
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	72	11%	13%	33%	28%	15%	3.2
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	72	17%	17%	39%	24%	4%	2.8
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	74	0%	12%	32%	16%	39%	3.9

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 41: Girls Empowerment Star: Uganda, PU Kamuli average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	96	24%	22%	35%	11%	7%	2.6
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	96	5%	13%	46%	18%	19%	3.3
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	96	57%	15%	9%	10%	8%	2.0
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	96	42%	11%	35%	8%	3%	2.2
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	96	18%	8%	32%	14%	28%	3.3
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	96	50%	6%	22%	6%	16%	2.3
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	96	10%	9%	41%	16%	24%	3.3
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	96	21%	8%	35%	9%	26%	3.1

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 42: Girls Empowerment Star: Uganda, PU Tororo North average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	96	29%	32%	36%	1%	1%	2.1
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	96	9%	18%	44%	15%	15%	3.1
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	96	41%	18%	18%	8%	16%	2.4
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	96	42%	17%	23%	6%	13%	2.3
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	96	40%	8%	23%	4%	25%	2.7
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	96	69%	2%	6%	3%	20%	2.0
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	96	10%	18%	38%	19%	16%	3.1
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	96	16%	13%	42%	11%	19%	3.1

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 43: Girls Empowerment Star: Zimbabwe, PU Chiredzi average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	96	30%	27%	36%	1%	5%	2.2
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	96	8%	19%	51%	15%	7%	2.9
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	96	44%	26%	17%	4%	9%	2.1
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	96	36%	17%	29%	11%	6%	2.1
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	96	35%	15%	18%	8%	24%	2.5
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	96	55%	15%	17%	5%	8%	2.0
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	96	16%	13%	18%	10%	44%	3.5
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	96	18%	23%	20%	10%	29%	3.1

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 44: Girls Empowerment Star: Zimbabwe, PU Chipinge average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Rating
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	96	21%	28%	43%	6%	2%	2.4
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	96	1%	18%	46%	15%	21%	3.4
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	96	38%	25%	24%	5%	8%	2.2
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	96	26%	21%	23%	14%	17%	2.7
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	96	25%	9%	18%	13%	35%	3.2
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	96	38%	16%	25%	8%	14%	2.4
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	96	18%	19%	19%	17%	28%	3.2
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	96	27%	19%	22%	9%	23%	2.8

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Asia: Girls Empowerment Star distribution tables of percentages and average ratings

BANGLADESH

Table 45: Girls Empowerment Star: Bangladesh, PU Barguna average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	72	15%	39%	33%	13%	0%	2.4
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	71	6%	25%	14%	27%	28%	3.4
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	72	21%	35%	24%	10%	11%	2.6
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	72	28%	29%	15%	21%	7%	2.5
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	72	32%	29%	28%	11%	0%	2.2
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	72	46%	19%	31%	3%	1%	1.9
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	72	58%	19%	8%	14%	0%	1.8
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	72	21%	38%	18%	22%	1%	2.5

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 46: Girls Empowerment Star: Bangladesh, PU Nilphamari average ratings* and percentages
– girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	93	11%	16%	60%	12%	1%	2.4
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	93	14%	12%	29%	27%	18%	3.4
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	88	10%	18%	34%	30%	8%	2.6
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	92	11%	22%	38%	18%	11%	2.5
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	93	35%	19%	26%	12%	8%	2.2
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	92	15%	14%	29%	27%	14%	1.9
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	93	19%	14%	32%	22%	13%	1.8
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	91	13%	13%	32%	25%	16%	2.5

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 47: Girls Empowerment Star: Pakistan, PU Thatta average ratings* and percentages – girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	90	31%	28%	23%	9%	9%	2.4
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	90	16%	20%	14%	13%	37%	3.4
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	90	43%	27%	14%	4%	11%	2.1
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	90	22%	21%	20%	14%	22%	2.9
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	90	50%	21%	16%	7%	7%	2.0
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	91	48%	26%	13%	8%	4%	2.0
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	90	14%	13%	20%	18%	34%	3.4
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	90	11%	28%	13%	13%	34%	3.3

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Table 48: Girls Empowerment Star: Pakistan, PU Vehari average ratings* and percentages
– girls, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	87	30%	17%	28%	15%	10%	2.6
2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	86	3%	17%	29%	33%	17%	3.4
3. Speaking up: Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?	86	14%	10%	38%	20%	17%	3.2
4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	88	7%	23%	27%	25%	18%	3.3
5. Marriage: Do girls decide if they marry?	87	76%	10%	10%	1%	2%	1.5
6. Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	10	10%	40%	20%	30%	0%	2.7
7. Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?	87	11%	16%	31%	28%	14%	3.2
8. Feeling valued: Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	87	9%	29%	26%	34%	1%	2.9

* Average ratings across three selected communities

Appendix 3: Girls Empowerment Star: Selected communities' highest and lowest average rated dimensions, and variability by country and by PU

Table 49: Central and South America: Girls Empowerment Star selected communities' highest and lowest average rated dimensions, and variability by PU and by country

Country	Dimension(s) with highest average ratings		Dimension(s) with lowest average ratings		Dimension(s) with greatest variability in responses		Dimension(s) with least variability in responses	
	PU 1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2
Ecuador	School 3.9	Marriage 3.3	Pregnancy 2.6	Speaking up 1.3	Pregnancy	Money Feeling valued	Safety	Safety
Nicaragua	Marriage 3.8	Safety 3.3 Marriage 3.1	Household work 2.5 Pregnancy 2.5	Household work 2.6 Speaking up 2.1	Speaking up Feeling valued Safety	School Safety	Household work Pregnancy	Household work
Paraguay	Marriage 3.7	Marriage 3.9 Pregnancy 4.3 Safety 4.2	Household work 2.8 Speaking up 2.7	Household work 2.7 Money 2.5	Pregnancy Safety	Speaking up	School	Safety

Table 50: West Africa: Girls Empowerment Star selected communities' highest and lowest average rated dimensions, and variability by PU and by country

Country	Dimension(s) with highest average ratings		Dimension(s) with lowest average ratings		Dimension(s) with greatest variability in responses		Dimension(s) with least variability in responses	
	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU1	PU1	PU2
Benin	School 3.3 Money 3.2 Safety 3.3	No data available	Preg-nancy 2.0	No data available	Feeling valued	No data available	Safety	No data available
Cameroon	Feeling valued 3.6	School 3.4	Preg-nancy 1.4 Speaking up 2.2 Marriage 2.2	Feeling valued 2.6 Pregnancy 2.7	Money Safety	Speaking up Money Safety	Preg-nancy	Household work
Liberia	Safety 3.5	Feeling valued 3.8	Preg-nancy 1.8	Pregnancy 1.9	Speaking up Money	Money Safety	Preg-nancy	Pregnancy

Table 51: East and Southern Africa: Girls Empowerment Star selected communities' highest and lowest average rated dimensions, and variability by PU and by country

Country	Dimension(s) with highest average ratings		Dimension(s) with lowest average ratings		Dimension(s) with greatest variability in responses		Dimension(s) with least variability in responses	
	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU1	PU1	PU2
Egypt	Marriage 4.7 Preg-nancy 4.2	School 3.9 Marriage 4.3	Household work 2.3 Speaking up 2.4	Household work 1.8 Safety 2.8	School Money	Speaking up Money Preg-nancy Safety	Marriage Pregnancy	Household work Marriage Feeling valued
Uganda	Marriage 3.3	Marriage 2.7 Safety 3.1 Feeling valued 3.1	Money 2.2	Household work 2.1	Speaking up	Preg-nancy	Money	Household work
Zimbabwe	Safety 3.5 Feeling valued 3.1	Marriage 3.2 School 3.4	Household work 2.2 Speaking up 2.1 Preg-nancy 2.0	Household work 2.4 Speaking up 2.2	Marriage	Feeling valued	Household work Speaking up Pregnancy	Pregnancy

Table 52: Asia: Girls Empowerment Star selected communities' highest and lowest average rated dimensions, and variability by PU and by country

Country	Dimension(s) with highest average ratings		Dimension(s) with lowest average ratings		Dimension(s) with greatest variability in responses		Dimension(s) with least variability in responses	
	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU1	PU1	PU2
Bangladesh	School 3.4	School 3.2 Feeling valued 3.1	Safety 1.8 Marriage 2.2 Pre-gnancy 1.9	Marriage 2.4	Speaking up	School Money Preg-nancy Safety Feeling valued	Safety	Marriage
Pakistan	School 3.4 Safety 3.4 Feeling valued 3.3	School 3.4 Money 3.3	Speaking up 2.1 Preg-nancy 2.0 Marriage 2.0	Marriage 1.5 Pregnancy 2.7 (with low response rate, n=10)	School	Speaking up Safety	Marriage Preg-nancy	Marriage

Appendix 4:

School Equality Scorecard:

10-country distribution tables of weighted average percentages and scores by selected dimension

Table 53: School Equality Scorecard “Class participation” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and scores - GIRLS

School Equality Scorecard: Class Participation - GIRLS							
Country	# GIRLS	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	3%	8%	18%	32%	41%	4.0
Ecuador: PU 2	153	3%	10%	18%	42%	26%	3.8
Nicaragua: PU 1	130	2%	7%	13%	30%	48%	4.2
Nicaragua: PU 2	138	2%	2%	9%	55%	32%	4.1
Paraguay: PU 1	126	1%	2%	16%	12%	69%	4.5
Paraguay: PU 2	139	0%	2%	19%	22%	57%	4.3
Benin: PU 2	131	2%	10%	16%	18%	54%	4.1
Cameroon: PU 1	127	6%	6%	22%	17%	50%	4.0
Cameroon: PU 2	131	3%	8%	13%	13%	63%	4.2
Liberia: PU 1	90	14%	27%	33%	9%	17%	2.9
Liberia: PU 2	96	4%	5%	39%	17%	35%	3.7
Uganda: PU 1	160	2%	4%	19%	16%	58%	4.2
Uganda: PU 2	160	2%	4%	19%	15%	59%	4.3
Zimbabwe: PU 1	145	1%	5%	20%	18%	57%	4.2
Zimbabwe: PU 2	158	1%	6%	14%	21%	59%	4.3
Bangladesh: PU 1	120	3%	1%	10%	11%	76%	4.6
Bangladesh: PU 2	159	4%	3%	8%	12%	73%	4.5
Pakistan: PU 1	141	7%	23%	17%	20%	33%	3.5
Pakistan: PU 2	116	9%	18%	22%	21%	30%	3.5
Weighted averages:		4%	8%	18%	21%	49%	4.0

Table 54: School Equality Scorecard “Class participation” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and scores - BOYS

School Equality Scorecard: Class Participation - BOYS							
Country	# BOYS	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average rating
Ecuador: PU 1	160	1%	3%	11%	31%	54%	4.3
Ecuador: PU 2	165	2%	7%	25%	30%	36%	3.9
Nicaragua: PU 1	144	0%	3%	15%	38%	44%	4.2
Nicaragua: PU 2	142	1%	4%	25%	27%	43%	4.1
Paraguay: PU 1	134	1%	3%	16%	23%	56%	4.3
Paraguay: PU 2	143	0%	3%	13%	35%	49%	4.3
Benin: PU 1	154	12%	18%	24%	27%	19%	3.2
Benin: PU 2	143	4%	25%	26%	13%	32%	3.4
Cameroon: PU 1	164	1%	12%	26%	20%	41%	3.9
Cameroon: PU 2	136	7%	8%	24%	15%	46%	3.9
Liberia: PU 1	87	9%	21%	38%	9%	23%	3.2
Liberia: PU 2	96	16%	13%	15%	17%	41%	3.5
Uganda: PU 1	151	3%	15%	21%	23%	39%	3.8
Uganda: PU 2	159	3%	10%	28%	20%	40%	3.8
Zimbabwe: PU 1	141	0%	1%	11%	16%	72%	4.6
Zimbabwe: PU 2	159	1%	3%	13%	15%	69%	4.5
Bangladesh: PU 1	108	1%	3%	6%	22%	69%	4.5
Bangladesh: PU 2	158	1%	2%	8%	20%	70%	4.6
Pakistan: PU 1	138	2%	13%	9%	30%	45%	4.0
Pakistan: PU 2	111	1%	7%	18%	37%	37%	4.0
Weighted averages:		3%	9%	19%	23%	46%	4.0

Table 55: School Equality Scorecard “Latrines” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and scores - GIRLS

School Equality Scorecard: Latrines - GIRLS							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	11%	16%	21%	14%	38%	3.5
Ecuador: PU 2	152	40%	27%	19%	11%	3%	2.1
Nicaragua: PU 1	138	51%	14%	8%	1%	25%	2.3
Nicaragua: PU 2	135	2%	4%	22%	19%	53%	4.2
Paraguay: PU 1	127	1%	3%	14%	9%	73%	4.5
Paraguay: PU 2	139	2%	10%	22%	21%	45%	4.0
Benin: PU 2	131	74%	12%	8%	2%	4%	1.5
Cameroon: PU 1	126	55%	12%	16%	7%	10%	2.1
Cameroon: PU 2	129	12%	12%	16%	21%	38%	3.6
Liberia: PU 1	91	31%	40%	13%	4%	12%	2.3
Liberia: PU 2	96	38%	22%	6%	9%	25%	2.6
Uganda: PU 1	160	29%	14%	20%	9%	28%	2.9
Uganda: PU 2	160	39%	5%	16%	9%	32%	2.9
Zimbabwe: PU 1	145	6%	10%	12%	12%	61%	4.1
Zimbabwe: PU 2	158	12%	9%	19%	16%	43%	3.7
Bangladesh: PU 1	119	21%	12%	22%	11%	34%	3.3
Bangladesh: PU 2	158	10%	8%	11%	21%	49%	3.9
Pakistan: PU 1	139	31%	18%	34%	6%	12%	2.5
Pakistan: PU 2	107	8%	2%	3%	10%	77%	4.4
Weighted averages:		25%	13%	16%	11%	35%	3.2

Table 56: School Equality Scorecard “Latrines” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - BOYS

School Equality Scorecard: Latrines - BOYS							
Country	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	8%	13%	22%	11%	46%	3.8
Ecuador: PU 2	164	13%	12%	35%	20%	20%	3.2
Nicaragua: PU 1	144	42%	23%	10%	13%	13%	2.3
Nicaragua: PU 2	142	16%	19%	25%	11%	30%	3.2
Paraguay: PU 1	135	2%	4%	22%	19%	53%	4.2
Paraguay: PU 2	143	1%	12%	24%	27%	35%	3.8
Benin: PU 1	154	39%	16%	13%	10%	21%	2.6
Benin: PU 2	143	56%	6%	4%	3%	30%	2.5
Cameroon: PU 1	164	49%	21%	10%	9%	10%	2.1
Cameroon: PU 2	133	18%	8%	16%	16%	43%	3.6
Liberia: PU 1	88	22%	11%	20%	13%	34%	3.3
Liberia: PU 2	96	19%	18%	15%	16%	33%	3.3
Uganda: PU 1	150	23%	14%	11%	23%	29%	3.2
Uganda: PU 2	159	14%	9%	14%	16%	47%	3.7
Zimbabwe: PU 1	140	6%	2%	9%	17%	65%	4.3
Zimbabwe: PU 2	159	4%	3%	14%	12%	67%	4.3
Bangladesh: PU 1	108	15%	15%	10%	19%	42%	3.6
Bangladesh: PU 2	156	8%	1%	10%	21%	60%	4.2
Pakistan: PU 1	138	25%	19%	22%	7%	28%	2.9
Pakistan: PU 2	111	3%	14%	31%	18%	35%	3.7
Weighted averages:		19%	12%	17%	15%	37%	3.4

Table 57: School Equality Scorecard “Class participation” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - GIRLS

School Equality Scorecard: Class participation - GIRLS							
Country	# GIRLS	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	3%	8%	18%	32%	41%	4.0
Ecuador: PU 2	153	3%	10%	18%	42%	26%	3.8
Nicaragua: PU 1	130	2%	7%	13%	30%	48%	4.2
Nicaragua: PU 2	138	2%	2%	9%	55%	32%	4.1
Paraguay: PU 1	126	1%	2%	16%	12%	69%	4.5
Paraguay: PU 2	139	0%	2%	19%	22%	57%	4.3
Benin: PU 2	131	2%	10%	16%	18%	54%	4.1
Cameroon: PU 1	127	6%	6%	22%	17%	50%	4.0
Cameroon: PU 2	131	3%	8%	13%	13%	63%	4.2
Liberia: PU 1	90	14%	27%	33%	9%	17%	2.9
Liberia: PU 2	96	4%	5%	39%	17%	35%	3.7
Uganda: PU 1	160	2%	4%	19%	16%	58%	4.2
Uganda: PU 2	160	2%	4%	19%	15%	59%	4.3
Zimbabwe: PU 1	145	1%	5%	20%	18%	57%	4.2
Zimbabwe: PU 2	158	1%	6%	14%	21%	59%	4.3
Bangladesh: PU 1	120	3%	1%	10%	11%	76%	4.6
Bangladesh: PU 2	159	4%	3%	8%	12%	73%	4.5
Pakistan: PU 1	141	7%	23%	17%	20%	33%	3.5
Pakistan: PU 2	116	9%	18%	22%	21%	30%	3.5
Weighted averages:		4%	8%	18%	21%	49%	4.0

Table 58: School Equality Scorecard “Class participation” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - BOYS

School Equality Scorecard: Class participation - BOYS							
Country	# BOYS	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	1%	3%	11%	31%	54%	4.3
Ecuador: PU 2	165	2%	7%	25%	30%	36%	3.9
Nicaragua: PU 1	144	0%	3%	15%	38%	44%	4.2
Nicaragua: PU 2	142	1%	4%	25%	27%	43%	4.1
Paraguay: PU 1	134	1%	3%	16%	23%	56%	4.3
Paraguay: PU 2	143	0%	3%	13%	35%	49%	4.3
Benin: PU 1	154	12%	18%	24%	27%	19%	3.2
Benin: PU 2	143	4%	25%	26%	13%	32%	3.4
Cameroon: PU 1	164	1%	12%	26%	20%	41%	3.9
Cameroon: PU 2	136	7%	8%	24%	15%	46%	3.9
Liberia: PU 1	87	9%	21%	38%	9%	23%	3.2
Liberia: PU 2	96	16%	13%	15%	17%	41%	3.5
Uganda: PU 1	151	3%	15%	21%	23%	39%	3.8
Uganda: PU 2	159	3%	10%	28%	20%	40%	3.8
Zimbabwe: PU 1	141	0%	1%	11%	16%	72%	4.6
Zimbabwe: PU 2	159	1%	3%	13%	15%	69%	4.5
Bangladesh: PU 1	108	1%	3%	6%	22%	69%	4.5
Bangladesh: PU 2	158	1%	2%	8%	20%	70%	4.6
Pakistan: PU 1	138	2%	13%	9%	30%	45%	4.0
Pakistan: PU 2	111	1%	7%	18%	37%	37%	4.0
Weighted averages:		3%	9%	19%	23%	46%	4.0

Table 59: School Equality Scorecard “Chore Burden” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - GIRLS

School Equality Scorecard: Chore burden - GIRLS							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	3%	13%	21%	33%	30%	3.7
Ecuador: PU 2	153	12%	15%	25%	16%	32%	3.4
Nicaragua: PU 1	138	7%	33%	27%	20%	13%	3.0
Nicaragua: PU 2	135	1%	5%	26%	28%	39%	4.0
Paraguay: PU 1	126	10%	16%	37%	13%	25%	3.3
Paraguay: PU 2	138	4%	12%	24%	21%	39%	3.8
Benin: PU 2	131	2%	10%	16%	18%	54%	4.1
Cameroon: PU 1	128	23%	23%	20%	8%	25%	2.9
Cameroon: PU 2	131	3%	8%	13%	13%	63%	4.2
Liberia: PU 1	90	14%	19%	42%	11%	13%	2.9
Liberia: PU 2	96	17%	5%	19%	27%	32%	3.5
Uganda: PU 1	160	17%	19%	23%	17%	25%	3.1
Uganda: PU 2	160	6%	9%	23%	10%	52%	3.9
Zimbabwe: PU 1	145	6%	17%	26%	19%	32%	3.6
Zimbabwe: PU 2	158	9%	10%	23%	20%	36%	3.7
Bangladesh: PU 1	116	5%	7%	43%	39%	6%	3.3
Bangladesh: PU 2	159	10%	9%	26%	19%	36%	3.6
Pakistan: PU 1	139	35%	15%	15%	11%	24%	2.8
Pakistan: PU 2	115	7%	3%	7%	9%	75%	4.4
Weighted averages:		10%	13%	24%	19%	34%	3.5

Table 60: School Equality Scorecard “Chore burden” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - BOYS

School Equality Scorecard: Chore burden - BOYS							
Country	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	4%	11%	27%	29%	28%	3.7
Ecuador: PU 2	165	4%	16%	25%	31%	23%	3.5
Nicaragua: PU 1	144	1%	3%	15%	25%	56%	4.3
Nicaragua: PU 2	142	2%	3%	13%	25%	58%	4.3
Paraguay: PU 1	135	1%	5%	26%	28%	39%	4.0
Paraguay: PU 2	143	0%	13%	13%	27%	48%	4.1
Benin: PU 1	154	44%	10%	21%	10%	16%	2.4
Benin: PU 2	143	45%	13%	17%	11%	14%	2.4
Cameroon: PU 1	164	16%	20%	23%	21%	20%	3.1
Cameroon: PU 2	133	4%	8%	29%	17%	42%	3.9
Liberia: PU 1	88	20%	19%	35%	10%	15%	2.8
Liberia: PU 2	96	30%	8%	17%	25%	20%	3.0
Uganda: PU 1	151	7%	21%	25%	22%	25%	3.4
Uganda: PU 2	159	13%	12%	13%	14%	48%	3.7
Zimbabwe: PU 1	141	1%	4%	16%	13%	66%	4.4
Zimbabwe: PU 2	159	5%	9%	29%	16%	42%	3.8
Bangladesh: PU 1	108	6%	7%	20%	39%	28%	3.8
Bangladesh: PU 2	158	6%	13%	27%	16%	37%	3.7
Pakistan: PU 1	140	26%	18%	14%	18%	24%	3.0
Pakistan: PU 2	110	4%	2%	13%	6%	75%	4.5
Weighted averages:		12%	11%	21%	20%	36%	3.6

Table 61: School Equality Scorecard “Leadership” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - GIRLS

School Equality Scorecard: Leadership - GIRLS							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	159	14%	11%	33%	22%	19%	3.2
Ecuador: PU 2	152	11%	13%	28%	27%	22%	3.4
Nicaragua: PU 1	131	2%	0%	18%	32%	49%	4.3
Nicaragua: PU 2	137	2%	1%	26%	36%	34%	4
Paraguay: PU 1	126	1%	9%	7%	22%	61%	4.3
Paraguay: PU 2	139	1%	3%	12%	26%	58%	4.4
Benin: PU 2	131	7%	16%	21%	23%	33%	3.6
Cameroon: PU 1	126	8%	12%	25%	25%	31%	3.6
Cameroon: PU 2	130	5%	8%	15%	22%	50%	4
Liberia: PU 1	91	11%	11%	40%	21%	18%	3.2
Liberia: PU 2	96	38%	22%	6%	9%	25%	2.6
Uganda: PU 1	160	4%	11%	18%	19%	49%	4
Uganda: PU 2	160	1%	3%	14%	14%	68%	4.4
Zimbabwe: PU 1	145	3%	7%	22%	17%	50%	4
Zimbabwe: PU 2	158	1%	2%	18%	22%	58%	4.3
Bangladesh: PU 1	120	1%	18%	18%	8%	54%	4
Bangladesh: PU 2	159	6%	2%	21%	19%	53%	4.1
Pakistan: PU 1	139	15%	22%	20%	16%	27%	3.2
Pakistan: PU 2	109	13%	15%	28%	14%	30%	3.3
Weighted averages:		8%	10%	21%	21%	42%	3.8

Table 62: School Equality Scorecard “Leadership” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - BOYS

School Equality Scorecard: Leadership - BOYS							
Country	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	4%	14%	24%	26%	32%	3.7
Ecuador: PU 2	165	1%	12%	27%	19%	41%	3.9
Nicaragua: PU 1	144	4%	3%	19%	25%	49%	4.1
Nicaragua: PU 2	142	3%	4%	23%	34%	37%	4
Paraguay: PU 1	135	1%	1%	12%	28%	57%	4.4
Paraguay: PU 2	143	1%	4%	20%	37%	38%	4.1
Benin: PU 1	154	8%	13%	22%	25%	32%	3.6
Benin: PU 2	143	15%	31%	23%	10%	20%	2.9
Cameroon: PU 1	165	7%	20%	34%	20%	19%	3.2
Cameroon: PU 2	125	11%	9%	24%	23%	33%	3.6
Liberia: PU 1	88	9%	16%	35%	25%	15%	3.2
Liberia: PU 2	96	7%	7%	23%	26%	36%	3.8
Uganda: PU 1	151	3%	11%	33%	24%	29%	3.7
Uganda: PU 2	159	4%	15%	23%	21%	37%	3.7
Zimbabwe: PU 1	141	2%	2%	11%	12%	73%	4.5
Zimbabwe: PU 2	159	0%	4%	11%	14%	70%	4.5
Bangladesh: PU 1	107	2%	7%	27%	28%	36%	3.9
Bangladesh: PU 2	158	6%	6%	22%	19%	47%	4
Pakistan: PU 1	136	13%	18%	20%	17%	32%	3.4
Pakistan: PU 2	113	12%	19%	28%	22%	19%	3.2
Weighted averages:		6%	11%	23%	23%	38%	3.8

Table 63: School Equality Scorecard “Encouragement” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - GIRLS

School Equality Scorecard: Encouragement - GIRLS							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	159	2%	6%	17%	22%	53%	4.2
Ecuador: PU 2	153	4%	8%	35%	16%	37%	3.8
Nicaragua: PU 1	131	5%	2%	10%	19%	63%	4.3
Nicaragua: PU 2	138	4%	4%	22%	38%	33%	3.9
Paraguay: PU 1	126	0%	3%	13%	10%	73%	4.5
Paraguay: PU 2	137	0%	1%	9%	16%	74%	4.6
Benin: PU 2	131	0%	7%	7%	15%	72%	4.5
Cameroon: PU 1	127	7%	15%	14%	17%	46%	3.8
Cameroon: PU 2	130	5%	8%	18%	15%	54%	4.0
Liberia: PU 1	91	16%	24%	29%	15%	15%	2.9
Liberia: PU 2	96	7%	11%	28%	28%	25%	3.5
Uganda: PU 1	160	4%	7%	15%	9%	66%	4.3
Uganda: PU 2	160	2%	2%	9%	13%	74%	4.6
Zimbabwe: PU 1	143	2%	6%	14%	14%	64%	4.3
Zimbabwe: PU 2	158	1%	5%	13%	8%	73%	4.5
Bangladesh: PU 1	120	0%	5%	2%	8%	86%	4.7
Bangladesh: PU 2	159	2%	4%	16%	18%	60%	4.3
Pakistan: PU 1	141	9%	14%	16%	12%	50%	3.8
Pakistan: PU 2	113	10%	4%	12%	19%	56%	4.1
Weighted averages:		4%	7%	16%	16%	57%	4.1

Table 64: School Equality Scorecard “Encouragement” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - BOYS

School Equality Scorecard: Encouragement - BOYS							
Country	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	1%	3%	18%	26%	53%	4.3
Ecuador: PU 2	165	2%	8%	16%	24%	49%	4.1
Nicaragua: PU 1	144	1%	3%	17%	21%	58%	4.3
Nicaragua: PU 2	142	1%	1%	22%	25%	51%	4.2
Paraguay: PU 1	135	2%	2%	7%	31%	57%	4.4
Paraguay: PU 2	144	1%	7%	13%	16%	64%	4.4
Benin: PU 1	154	6%	9%	18%	25%	42%	3.9
Benin: PU 2	143	4%	17%	8%	17%	54%	4.0
Cameroon: PU 1	165	5%	22%	21%	21%	31%	3.5
Cameroon: PU 2	136	10%	7%	25%	15%	43%	3.7
Liberia: PU 1	88	11%	22%	33%	17%	17%	3.1
Liberia: PU 2	96	19%	16%	32%	19%	15%	2.9
Uganda: PU 1	151	1%	6%	25%	19%	50%	4.1
Uganda: PU 2	159	4%	7%	25%	14%	49%	4.0
Zimbabwe: PU 1	141	0%	1%	7%	6%	87%	4.8
Zimbabwe: PU 2	159	3%	4%	8%	13%	72%	4.5
Bangladesh: PU 1	108	3%	6%	3%	21%	67%	4.4
Bangladesh: PU 2	160	1%	6%	17%	21%	54%	4.2
Pakistan: PU 1	137	4%	5%	7%	15%	69%	4.4
Pakistan: PU 2	111	1%	3%	16%	16%	64%	4.4
Weighted averages:		4%	8%	17%	19%	52%	4.1

Table 65: School Equality Scorecard “Safety going to school” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - GIRLS

School Equality Scorecard: Safety going to school - GIRLS							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	159	13%	15%	33%	19%	19%	3.2
Ecuador: PU 2	153	20%	18%	19%	20%	23%	3.1
Nicaragua: PU 1	131	7%	15%	24%	24%	30%	3.5
Nicaragua: PU 2	138	20%	22%	24%	14%	21%	2.9
Paraguay: PU 1	127	12%	12%	20%	26%	31%	3.5
Paraguay: PU 2	137	4%	6%	22%	23%	45%	4.0
Benin: PU 2	131	27%	12%	25%	15%	21%	2.9
Cameroon: PU 1	127	26%	20%	18%	21%	15%	2.8
Cameroon: PU 2	130	15%	10%	37%	12%	26%	3.3
Liberia: PU 1	91	7%	15%	23%	25%	30%	3.6
Liberia: PU 2	96	1%	20%	9%	25%	45%	3.9
Uganda: PU 1	160	18%	13%	43%	14%	13%	2.9
Uganda: PU 2	160	13%	16%	39%	8%	24%	3.1
Zimbabwe: PU 1	145	10%	16%	33%	15%	26%	3.3
Zimbabwe: PU 2	158	1%	11%	27%	18%	42%	3.9
Bangladesh: PU 1	120	29%	8%	30%	28%	6%	2.7
Bangladesh: PU 2	159	20%	13%	25%	14%	28%	3.2
Pakistan: PU 1	140	16%	21%	29%	12%	21%	3.0
Pakistan: PU 2	109	16%	3%	6%	22%	53%	3.9
Weighted averages:		14%	14%	26%	19%	27%	3.3

Table 66: School Equality Scorecard “Safety going to school” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - BOYS

School Equality Scorecard: Safety going to school - BOYS							
Country	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	12%	13%	31%	29%	16%	3.2
Ecuador: PU 2	165	11%	17%	32%	22%	19%	3.2
Nicaragua: PU 1	144	5%	7%	17%	27%	44%	4.0
Nicaragua: PU 2	142	20%	30%	27%	13%	10%	2.6
Paraguay: PU 1	135	7%	17%	39%	20%	17%	3.2
Paraguay: PU 2	143	17%	17%	27%	24%	14%	3.0
Benin: PU 1	154	24%	14%	18%	17%	27%	3.1
Benin: PU 2	143	48%	13%	17%	9%	13%	2.3
Cameroon: PU 1	164	30%	17%	23%	18%	12%	2.6
Cameroon: PU 2	135	15%	13%	30%	17%	25%	3.2
Liberia: PU 1	88	6%	14%	32%	8%	41%	3.6
Liberia: PU 2	96	13%	15%	24%	18%	31%	3.4
Uganda: PU 1	151	30%	22%	26%	9%	12%	2.5
Uganda: PU 2	159	19%	10%	37%	18%	16%	3.0
Zimbabwe: PU 1	141	9%	12%	26%	29%	24%	3.5
Zimbabwe: PU 2	158	11%	13%	37%	15%	24%	3.3
Bangladesh: PU 1	108	2%	6%	17%	22%	53%	4.2
Bangladesh: PU 2	158	16%	11%	23%	25%	25%	3.3
Pakistan: PU 1	138	42%	10%	18%	17%	13%	2.5
Pakistan: PU 2	111	9%	11%	18%	31%	32%	3.6
Weighted averages:		17%	14%	26%	19%	23%	3.2

Table 67: School Equality Scorecard “Early pregnancy” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - GIRLS

School Equality Scorecard: Early pregnancy - GIRLS							
Country	# Girls	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	46%	19%	20%	11%	4%	2.1
Ecuador: PU 2	151	32%	7%	20%	12%	29%	3.0
Nicaragua: PU 1	130	22%	28%	36%	8%	5%	2.5
Nicaragua: PU 2	137	11%	49%	36%	3%	1%	2.4
Paraguay: PU 1	127	21%	12%	36%	17%	14%	2.9
Paraguay: PU 2	137	29%	24%	30%	12%	4%	2.4
Benin: PU 2	131	44%	44%	9%	2%	1%	1.7
Cameroon: PU 1	126	34%	20%	23%	12%	11%	2.5
Cameroon: PU 2	131	18%	13%	39%	17%	13%	2.9
Liberia: PU 1	91	22%	33%	31%	5%	9%	2.5
Liberia: PU 2	96	42%	11%	27%	6%	14%	2.4
Uganda: PU 1	160	28%	16%	34%	11%	12%	2.6
Uganda: PU 2	160	20%	18%	46%	8%	8%	2.7
Zimbabwe: PU 1	145	30%	14%	23%	4%	28%	2.8
Zimbabwe: PU 2	158	37%	20%	25%	6%	12%	2.4
Bangladesh: PU 1	120	79%	9%	8%	1%	3%	1.4
Bangladesh: PU 2	159	68%	11%	12%	6%	3%	1.6
Pakistan: PU 1	138	44%	32%	13%	7%	4%	1.9
Pakistan: PU 2	114	94%	1%	0%	1%	4%	1.2
Weighted averages:		38%	20%	25%	8%	9%	2.3

Table 68: School Equality Scorecard “Early pregnancy” dimension: 10-country distribution of weighted average percentages and score - BOYS

School Equality Scorecard: Early pregnancy - BOYS							
Country	# Boys	Never	Seldom	Some-times	Often	Always	Average score
Ecuador: PU 1	160	51%	20%	14%	10%	4%	2.0
Ecuador: PU 2	164	29%	16%	26%	10%	19%	2.7
Nicaragua: PU 1	144	19%	27%	46%	6%	2%	2.4
Nicaragua: PU 2	141	38%	29%	26%	4%	2%	2.0
Paraguay: PU 1	135	31%	22%	35%	1%	10%	2.4
Paraguay: PU 2	136	31%	22%	35%	7%	6%	2.3
Benin: PU 1	154	44%	17%	13%	12%	15%	2.4
Benin: PU 2	143	55%	31%	6%	2%	6%	1.7
Cameroon: PU 1	165	27%	37%	21%	10%	5%	2.3
Cameroon: PU 2	134	28%	16%	23%	20%	13%	2.8
Liberia: PU 1	87	23%	16%	41%	9%	10%	2.7
Liberia: PU 2	96	20%	17%	34%	8%	21%	2.9
Uganda: PU 1	150	37%	34%	23%	3%	3%	2.0
Uganda: PU 2	159	35%	25%	24%	6%	11%	2.3
Zimbabwe: PU 1	140	21%	27%	28%	12%	11%	2.7
Zimbabwe: PU 2	159	35%	18%	26%	3%	18%	2.5
Bangladesh: PU 1	108	69%	10%	13%	6%	3%	1.6
Bangladesh: PU 2	158	81%	10%	5%	4%	0%	1.3
Pakistan: PU 1	130	58%	16%	12%	12%	2%	1.8
Pakistan: PU 2	25	68%	16%	4%	12%	0%	1.6
Weighted averages:		40%	21%	23%	8%	8%	2.2

Appendix 5: School Equality Scorecard distribution tables of average scores and percentages by PU

Central and South America: School Equality Scorecard distribution tables of average scores and percentages

ECUADOR

Table 69: School Equality Scorecard: Ecuador, PU Chimborazo selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	160	2%	6%	50%	33%	10%	3.4
2. Class participation	160	1%	3%	11%	31%	54%	4.3
3. Chore Burden	160	4%	11%	27%	29%	28%	3.7
4. Latrines	160	8%	13%	22%	11%	46%	3.8
5. Seeking help	160	4%	6%	37%	38%	16%	3.5
6. Leadership	160	4%	14%	24%	26%	32%	3.7
7. Encouragement	160	1%	3%	18%	26%	53%	4.3
8. Safety going to school	160	12%	13%	31%	29%	16%	3.2
9. Safety at school	160	14%	22%	26%	19%	19%	3.1
10. Early pregnancy	160	51%	20%	14%	10%	4%	2.0

Table 70: School Equality Scorecard: Ecuador, PU Quito selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	164	2%	10%	44%	33%	11%	3.4
2. Class participation	165	2%	7%	25%	30%	36%	3.9
3. Chore Burden	165	4%	16%	25%	31%	23%	3.5
4. Latrines	164	13%	12%	35%	20%	20%	3.2
5. Seeking help	165	8%	16%	24%	23%	30%	3.5
6. Leadership	165	1%	12%	27%	19%	41%	3.9
7. Encouragement	165	2%	8%	16%	24%	49%	4.1
8. Safety going to school	165	11%	17%	32%	22%	19%	3.2
9. Safety at school	165	9%	8%	32%	28%	23%	3.5
10. Early pregnancy	164	29%	16%	26%	10%	19%	2.7

Table 71: School Equality Scorecard: Ecuador, PU Chimborazo selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	160	4%	3%	62%	21%	11%	3.3
2. Class participation	160	3%	8%	18%	32%	41%	4.0
3. Chore Burden	160	3%	13%	21%	33%	30%	3.7
4. Latrines	160	11%	16%	21%	14%	38%	3.5
5. Seeking help	159	19%	17%	37%	17%	9%	2.8
6. Leadership	159	14%	11%	33%	22%	19%	3.2
7. Encouragement	159	2%	6%	17%	22%	53%	4.2
8. Safety going to school	159	13%	15%	33%	19%	19%	3.2
9. Safety at school	160	10%	13%	27%	26%	24%	3.4
10. Early pregnancy	160	46%	19%	20%	11%	4%	2.1

Table 72: School Equality Scorecard: Ecuador, PU Quito selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	153	3%	8%	59%	14%	16%	3.3
2. Class participation	153	3%	10%	18%	42%	26%	3.8
3. Chore Burden	153	12%	15%	25%	16%	32%	3.4
4. Latrines	152	40%	27%	19%	11%	3%	2.1
5. Seeking help	153	22%	14%	32%	14%	18%	2.9
6. Leadership	152	11%	13%	28%	27%	22%	3.4
7. Encouragement	153	4%	8%	35%	16%	37%	3.8
8. Safety going to school	153	20%	18%	19%	20%	23%	3.1
9. Safety at school	151	14%	20%	32%	19%	15%	3.0
10. Early pregnancy	151	32%	7%	20%	12%	29%	3.0

NICARAGUA

Table 73: School Equality Scorecard: Nicaragua, PU Chontales selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	144	1%	16%	46%	28%	9%	3.3
2. Class participation	144	0%	3%	15%	38%	44%	4.2
3. Chore Burden	144	1%	3%	15%	25%	56%	4.3
4. Latrines	144	42%	23%	10%	13%	13%	2.3
5. Seeking help	144	2%	11%	47%	24%	17%	3.4
6. Leadership	144	4%	3%	19%	25%	49%	4.1
7. Encouragement	144	1%	3%	17%	21%	58%	4.3
8. Safety going to school	144	18%	13%	26%	25%	19%	3.1
9. Safety at school	144	5%	7%	17%	27%	44%	4.0
10. Early pregnancy	144	19%	27%	46%	6%	2%	2.4

Table 74: School Equality Scorecard: Nicaragua, PU VEC selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	142	1%	3%	62%	23%	11%	3.4
2. Class participation	142	1%	4%	25%	27%	43%	4.1
3. Chore Burden	142	2%	3%	13%	25%	58%	4.3
4. Latrines	142	16%	19%	25%	11%	30%	3.2
5. Seeking help	142	8%	7%	43%	25%	17%	3.4
6. Leadership	142	3%	4%	23%	34%	37%	4.0
7. Encouragement	142	1%	1%	22%	25%	51%	4.2
8. Safety going to school	142	20%	30%	27%	13%	10%	2.6
9. Safety at school	142	15%	16%	32%	27%	10%	3.0
10. Early pregnancy	141	38%	29%	26%	4%	2%	2.0

Table 75: School Equality Scorecard: Nicaragua, PU Chontales selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	131	15%	5%	37%	17%	26%	3.3
2. Class participation	130	2%	7%	13%	30%	48%	4.2
3. Chore Burden	131	5%	11%	28%	25%	31%	3.7
4. Latrines	131	55%	18%	12%	3%	11%	2.0
5. Seeking help	131	13%	16%	34%	12%	25%	3.2
6. Leadership	131	2%	0%	18%	32%	49%	4.3
7. Encouragement	131	5%	2%	10%	19%	63%	4.3
8. Safety going to school	131	7%	15%	24%	24%	30%	3.5
9. Safety at school	131	7%	10%	31%	18%	34%	3.6
10. Early pregnancy	130	22%	28%	36%	8%	5%	2.5

Table 76: School Equality Scorecard: Nicaragua, PU VEC selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	137	3%	7%	49%	27%	14%	3.4
2. Class participation	138	2%	2%	9%	55%	32%	4.1
3. Chore Burden	138	7%	33%	27%	20%	13%	3.0
4. Latrines	138	51%	14%	8%	1%	25%	2.3
5. Seeking help	137	13%	24%	32%	19%	12%	2.9
6. Leadership	137	2%	1%	26%	36%	34%	4.0
7. Encouragement	138	4%	4%	22%	38%	33%	3.9
8. Safety going to school	138	20%	22%	24%	14%	21%	2.9
9. Safety at school	138	28%	13%	26%	21%	12%	2.8
10. Early pregnancy	137	11%	49%	36%	3%	1%	2.4

PARAGUAY

Table 77: School Equality Scorecard: Paraguay, PU Caaguazu selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	135	1%	2%	67%	12%	17%	3.4
2. Class participation	134	1%	3%	16%	23%	56%	4.3
3. Chore Burden	135	1%	5%	26%	28%	39%	4.0
4. Latrines	135	2%	4%	22%	19%	53%	4.2
5. Seeking help	135	3%	13%	29%	39%	16%	3.5
6. Leadership	135	1%	1%	12%	28%	57%	4.4
7. Encouragement	135	2%	2%	7%	31%	57%	4.4
8. Safety going to school	135	7%	17%	39%	20%	17%	3.2
9. Safety at school	135	3%	7%	41%	19%	29%	3.6
10. Early pregnancy	135	31%	22%	35%	1%	10%	2.4

Table 78: School Equality Scorecard: Paraguay, PU Guaira selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	143	3%	9%	74%	8%	6%	3.1
2. Class participation	143	0%	3%	13%	35%	49%	4.3
3. Chore Burden	143	0%	13%	13%	27%	48%	4.1
4. Latrines	143	1%	12%	24%	27%	35%	3.8
5. Seeking help	146	2%	12%	27%	25%	34%	3.8
6. Leadership	143	1%	4%	20%	37%	38%	4.1
7. Encouragement	144	1%	7%	13%	16%	64%	4.4
8. Safety going to school	143	17%	17%	27%	24%	14%	3.0
9. Safety at school	142	5%	15%	24%	19%	37%	3.7
10. Early pregnancy	136	31%	22%	35%	7%	6%	2.3

Table 79: School Equality Scorecard: Paraguay, PU Caaguazu selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	127	1%	2%	40%	24%	33%	3.9
2. Class participation	126	1%	2%	16%	12%	69%	4.5
3. Chore Burden	126	10%	16%	37%	13%	25%	3.3
4. Latrines	127	1%	3%	14%	9%	73%	4.5
5. Seeking help	128	2%	7%	30%	26%	35%	3.8
6. Leadership	126	1%	9%	7%	22%	61%	4.3
7. Encouragement	126	0%	3%	13%	10%	73%	4.5
8. Safety going to school	127	12%	12%	20%	26%	31%	3.5
9. Safety at school	127	9%	13%	29%	6%	43%	3.6
10. Early pregnancy	127	21%	12%	36%	17%	14%	2.9

Table 80: School Equality Scorecard: Paraguay, PU Guaira selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	139	2%	4%	53%	21%	21%	3.5
2. Class participation	139	0%	2%	19%	22%	57%	4.3
3. Chore Burden	138	4%	12%	24%	21%	39%	3.8
4. Latrines	139	2%	10%	22%	21%	45%	4.0
5. Seeking help	139	3%	8%	37%	15%	37%	3.8
6. Leadership	139	1%	3%	12%	26%	58%	4.4
7. Encouragement	137	0%	1%	9%	16%	74%	4.6
8. Safety going to school	137	4%	6%	22%	23%	45%	4.0
9. Safety at school	137	1%	7%	10%	13%	69%	4.4
10. Early pregnancy	137	29%	24%	30%	12%	4%	2.4

West Africa: School Equality Scorecard distribution tables of average scores and percentages

BENIN

Table 81: School Equality Scorecard: Benin, PU Atacora selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	154	21%	16%	26%	20%	16%	2.9
2. Class participation	154	12%	18%	24%	27%	19%	3.2
3. Chore Burden	154	44%	10%	21%	10%	16%	2.4
4. Latrines	154	39%	16%	13%	10%	21%	2.6
5. Seeking help	154	21%	21%	25%	15%	18%	2.9
6. Leadership	154	8%	13%	22%	25%	32%	3.6
7. Encouragement	154	6%	9%	18%	25%	42%	3.9
8. Safety going to school	154	24%	14%	18%	17%	27%	3.1
9. Safety at school	148	23%	18%	20%	24%	16%	2.9
10. Early pregnancy	154	44%	17%	13%	12%	15%	2.4

Table 82: School Equality Scorecard: Benin, PU Couffo selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	143	52%	24%	14%	6%	5%	1.9
2. Class participation	143	4%	25%	26%	13%	32%	3.4
3. Chore Burden	143	45%	13%	17%	11%	14%	2.4
4. Latrines	143	56%	6%	4%	3%	30%	2.5
5. Seeking help	142	16%	35%	19%	13%	18%	2.8
6. Leadership	143	15%	31%	23%	10%	20%	2.9
7. Encouragement	143	4%	17%	8%	17%	54%	4.0
8. Safety going to school	143	48%	13%	17%	9%	13%	2.3
9. Safety at school	143	27%	16%	12%	15%	29%	3.0
10. Early pregnancy	143	55%	31%	6%	2%	6%	1.7

Table 83: School Equality Scorecard: Benin, PU Atacora selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16 [No data reported]

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2. Class participation	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
3. Chore Burden	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
4. Latrines	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
5. Seeking help	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6. Leadership	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
7. Encouragement	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
8. Safety going to school	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
9. Safety at school	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
10. Early pregnancy	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 84: School Equality Scorecard: Benin, PU Couffo selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	131	14%	27%	16%	5%	37%	3.3
2. Class participation	131	2%	10%	16%	18%	54%	4.1
3. Chore Burden	131	31%	21%	18%	18%	11%	2.6
4. Latrines	131	74%	12%	8%	2%	4%	1.5
5. Seeking help	130	21%	32%	23%	16%	8%	2.6
6. Leadership	131	7%	16%	21%	23%	33%	3.6
7. Encouragement	131	0%	7%	7%	15%	72%	4.5
8. Safety going to school	131	27%	12%	25%	15%	21%	2.9
9. Safety at school	131	5%	10%	11%	24%	50%	4.0
10. Early pregnancy	131	44%	44%	9%	2%	1%	1.7

CAMEROON

Table 85: School Equality Scorecard: Cameroon, PU Biteng selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	165	4%	10%	19%	33%	33%	3.8
2. Class participation	164	1%	12%	26%	20%	41%	3.9
3. Chore Burden	164	16%	20%	23%	21%	20%	3.1
4. Latrines	164	49%	21%	10%	9%	10%	2.1
5. Seeking help	166	23%	34%	19%	14%	10%	2.5
6. Leadership	165	7%	20%	34%	20%	19%	3.2
7. Encouragement	165	5%	22%	21%	21%	31%	3.5
8. Safety going to school	164	30%	17%	23%	18%	12%	2.6
9. Safety at school	164	19%	21%	23%	22%	15%	2.9
10. Early pregnancy	165	27%	37%	21%	10%	5%	2.3

Table 86: School Equality Scorecard: Cameroon, PU Bamenda selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	134	16%	18%	40%	8%	17%	2.9
2. Class participation	136	7%	8%	24%	15%	46%	3.9
3. Chore Burden	133	4%	8%	29%	17%	42%	3.9
4. Latrines	133	18%	8%	16%	16%	43%	3.6
5. Seeking help	134	16%	10%	22%	22%	31%	3.4
6. Leadership	125	11%	9%	24%	23%	33%	3.6
7. Encouragement	136	10%	7%	25%	15%	43%	3.7
8. Safety going to school	135	15%	13%	30%	17%	25%	3.2
9. Safety at school	134	15%	11%	29%	14%	31%	3.3
10. Early pregnancy	134	28%	16%	23%	20%	13%	2.8

Table 87: School Equality Scorecard: Cameroon, PU Biteng selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	126	13%	6%	29%	26%	27%	3.5
2. Class participation	127	6%	6%	22%	17%	50%	4.0
3. Chore Burden	128	23%	23%	20%	8%	25%	2.9
4. Latrines	126	55%	12%	16%	7%	10%	2.1
5. Seeking help	118	17%	23%	29%	13%	19%	2.9
6. Leadership	126	8%	12%	25%	25%	31%	3.6
7. Encouragement	127	7%	15%	14%	17%	46%	3.8
8. Safety going to school	127	26%	20%	18%	21%	15%	2.8
9. Safety at school	126	27%	15%	20%	17%	21%	2.9
10. Early pregnancy	126	34%	20%	23%	12%	11%	2.5

Table 88: School Equality Scorecard: Cameroon, PU Bamenda selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	131	8%	7%	40%	20%	26%	3.5
2. Class participation	131	3%	8%	13%	13%	63%	4.2
3. Chore Burden	131	9%	11%	27%	12%	40%	3.6
4. Latrines	129	12%	12%	16%	21%	38%	3.6
5. Seeking help	129	4%	17%	23%	15%	41%	3.7
6. Leadership	130	5%	8%	15%	22%	50%	4.0
7. Encouragement	130	5%	8%	18%	15%	54%	4.0
8. Safety going to school	130	15%	10%	37%	12%	26%	3.3
9. Safety at school	119	8%	8%	24%	31%	29%	3.6
10. Early pregnancy	131	18%	13%	39%	17%	13%	2.9

LIBERIA

Table 89: School Equality Scorecard: Liberia, PU Bomi selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	88	13%	3%	26%	13%	45%	3.8
2. Class participation	87	9%	21%	38%	9%	23%	3.2
3. Chore Burden	88	20%	19%	35%	10%	15%	2.8
4. Latrines	88	22%	11%	20%	13%	34%	3.3
5. Seeking help	88	31%	16%	27%	7%	19%	2.7
6. Leadership	88	9%	16%	35%	25%	15%	3.2
7. Encouragement	88	11%	22%	33%	17%	17%	3.1
8. Safety going to school	88	6%	14%	32%	8%	41%	3.6
9. Safety at school	87	14%	8%	16%	15%	47%	3.7
10. Early pregnancy	87	23%	16%	41%	9%	10%	2.7

Table 90: School Equality Scorecard: Liberia, PU Lofa selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	96	17%	11%	27%	15%	30%	3.3
2. Class participation	96	16%	13%	15%	17%	41%	3.5
3. Chore Burden	96	30%	8%	17%	25%	20%	3.0
4. Latrines	96	19%	18%	15%	16%	33%	3.3
5. Seeking help	96	15%	16%	27%	14%	29%	3.3
6. Leadership	96	7%	7%	23%	26%	36%	3.8
7. Encouragement	96	19%	16%	32%	19%	15%	2.9
8. Safety going to school	96	13%	15%	24%	18%	31%	3.4
9. Safety at school	96	11%	4%	28%	10%	46%	3.8
10. Early pregnancy	96	20%	17%	34%	8%	21%	2.9

Table 91: School Equality Scorecard: Liberia, PU Lofa selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	96	17%	11%	27%	15%	30%	3.3
2. Class participation	96	16%	13%	15%	17%	41%	3.5
3. Chore Burden	96	30%	8%	17%	25%	20%	3.0
4. Latrines	96	19%	18%	15%	16%	33%	3.3
5. Seeking help	96	15%	16%	27%	14%	29%	3.3
6. Leadership	96	7%	7%	23%	26%	36%	3.8
7. Encouragement	96	19%	16%	32%	19%	15%	2.9
8. Safety going to school	96	13%	15%	24%	18%	31%	3.4
9. Safety at school	96	11%	4%	28%	10%	46%	3.8
10. Early pregnancy	96	20%	17%	34%	8%	21%	2.9

Table 92: School Equality Scorecard: Liberia, PU Bomi selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	96	16%	13%	26%	14%	32%	3.3
2. Class participation	96	4%	5%	39%	17%	35%	3.7
3. Chore Burden	96	17%	5%	19%	27%	32%	3.5
4. Latrines	96	38%	22%	6%	9%	25%	2.6
5. Seeking help	96	8%	13%	18%	16%	46%	3.8
6. Leadership	96	4%	9%	24%	23%	40%	3.8
7. Encouragement	96	7%	11%	28%	28%	25%	3.5
8. Safety going to school	96	1%	20%	9%	25%	45%	3.9
9. Safety at school	88	5%	2%	24%	19%	50%	4.1
10. Early pregnancy	96	42%	11%	27%	6%	14%	2.4

East and Southern Africa: School Equality Scorecard distribution tables of average scores and percentages

UGANDA

Table 93: School Equality Scorecard: Uganda, PU Kamuli selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	151	5%	13%	56%	15%	11%	3.1
2. Class participation	151	3%	15%	21%	23%	39%	3.8
3. Chore Burden	151	7%	21%	25%	22%	25%	3.4
4. Latrines	150	23%	14%	11%	23%	29%	3.2
5. Seeking help	151	7%	15%	38%	18%	22%	3.3
6. Leadership	151	3%	11%	33%	24%	29%	3.7
7. Encouragement	151	1%	6%	25%	19%	50%	4.1
8. Safety going to school	151	30%	22%	26%	9%	12%	2.5
9. Safety at school	151	13%	26%	17%	23%	22%	3.1
10. Early pregnancy	150	37%	34%	23%	3%	3%	2.0

Table 94: School Equality Scorecard: Uganda, PU Tororo North selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	159	8%	21%	42%	11%	18%	3.1
2. Class participation	159	3%	10%	28%	20%	40%	3.8
3. Chore Burden	159	13%	12%	13%	14%	48%	3.7
4. Latrines	159	14%	9%	14%	16%	47%	3.7
5. Seeking help	159	19%	15%	36%	10%	19%	3.0
6. Leadership	159	4%	15%	23%	21%	37%	3.7
7. Encouragement	159	4%	7%	25%	14%	49%	4.0
8. Safety going to school	159	19%	10%	37%	18%	16%	3.0
9. Safety at school	159	10%	15%	23%	19%	33%	3.5
10. Early pregnancy	159	35%	25%	24%	6%	11%	2.3

Table 95: School Equality Scorecard: Uganda, PU Kamuli selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	160	4%	11%	41%	8%	38%	3.6
2. Class participation	160	2%	4%	19%	16%	58%	4.2
3. Chore Burden	160	17%	19%	23%	17%	25%	3.1
4. Latrines	160	29%	14%	20%	9%	28%	2.9
5. Seeking help	160	25%	23%	26%	13%	14%	2.7
6. Leadership	160	4%	11%	18%	19%	49%	4.0
7. Encouragement	160	4%	7%	15%	9%	66%	4.3
8. Safety going to school	160	18%	13%	43%	14%	13%	2.9
9. Safety at school	160	10%	15%	35%	15%	25%	3.3
10. Early pregnancy	160	28%	16%	34%	11%	12%	2.6

Table 96: School Equality Scorecard: Uganda, PU Tororo North selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	160	4%	11%	54%	8%	23%	3.3
2. Class participation	160	2%	4%	19%	15%	59%	4.3
3. Chore Burden	160	6%	9%	23%	10%	52%	3.9
4. Latrines	160	39%	5%	16%	9%	32%	2.9
5. Seeking help	160	11%	20%	38%	6%	25%	3.2
6. Leadership	160	1%	3%	14%	14%	68%	4.4
7. Encouragement	160	2%	2%	9%	13%	74%	4.6
8. Safety going to school	160	13%	16%	39%	8%	24%	3.1
9. Safety at school	160	15%	8%	34%	10%	33%	3.4
10. Early pregnancy	160	20%	18%	46%	8%	8%	2.7

ZIMBABWE

Table 97: School Equality Scorecard: Zimbabwe, PU Chipinge selecte schools averaged scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	141	2%	3%	12%	16%	67%	4.4
2. Class participation	141	0%	1%	11%	16%	72%	4.6
3. Chore Burden	141	1%	4%	16%	13%	66%	4.4
4. Latrines	140	6%	2%	9%	17%	65%	4.3
5. Seeking help	141	8%	9%	21%	15%	48%	3.9
6. Leadership	141	2%	2%	11%	12%	73%	4.5
7. Encouragement	141	0%	1%	7%	6%	87%	4.8
8. Safety going to school	141	9%	12%	26%	29%	24%	3.5
9. Safety at school	141	3%	12%	11%	22%	52%	4.1
10. Early pregnancy	140	21%	27%	28%	12%	11%	2.7

Table 98: School Equality Scorecard: Zimbabwe, PU Chiredzi selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	159	3%	10%	25%	15%	47%	3.9
2. Class participation	159	1%	3%	13%	15%	69%	4.5
3. Chore Burden	159	5%	9%	29%	16%	42%	3.8
4. Latrines	159	4%	3%	14%	12%	67%	4.3
5. Seeking help	159	8%	11%	27%	15%	39%	3.7
6. Leadership	159	0%	4%	11%	14%	70%	4.5
7. Encouragement	159	3%	4%	8%	13%	72%	4.5
8. Safety going to school	158	11%	13%	37%	15%	24%	3.3
9. Safety at school	159	4%	8%	21%	15%	51%	4.0
10. Early pregnancy	159	35%	18%	26%	3%	18%	2.5

Table 99: School Equality Scorecard: Zimbabwe, PU Chipinge selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	144	3%	3%	31%	10%	53%	4.0
2. Class participation	145	1%	5%	20%	18%	57%	4.2
3. Chore Burden	145	6%	17%	26%	19%	32%	3.6
4. Latrines	145	6%	10%	12%	12%	61%	4.1
5. Seeking help	145	12%	12%	36%	13%	27%	3.3
6. Leadership	145	3%	7%	22%	17%	50%	4.0
7. Encouragement	143	2%	6%	14%	14%	64%	4.3
8. Safety going to school	144	11%	19%	32%	11%	26%	3.2
9. Safety at school	145	10%	16%	33%	15%	26%	3.3
10. Early pregnancy	145	30%	14%	23%	4%	28%	2.8

Table 100: School Equality Scorecard: Zimbabwe, PU Chiredzi selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	157	4%	6%	20%	22%	50%	4.1
2. Class participation	158	1%	6%	14%	21%	59%	4.3
3. Chore Burden	158	9%	10%	23%	20%	36%	3.7
4. Latrines	158	12%	9%	19%	16%	43%	3.7
5. Seeking help	158	5%	11%	34%	16%	34%	3.6
6. Leadership	158	1%	2%	18%	22%	58%	4.3
7. Encouragement	158	1%	5%	13%	8%	73%	4.5
8. Safety going to school	158	13%	10%	31%	17%	28%	3.4
9. Safety at school	158	1%	11%	27%	18%	42%	3.9
10. Early pregnancy	158	37%	20%	25%	6%	12%	2.4

Asia: School Equality Scorecard distribution tables of average scores and percentages

BANGLADESH

Table 101: School Equality Scorecard: Bangladesh, PU Barguna selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	108	9%	8%	62%	11%	9%	3.0
2. Class participation	108	1%	3%	6%	22%	69%	4.5
3. Chore Burden	108	6%	7%	20%	39%	28%	3.8
4. Latrines	108	15%	15%	10%	19%	42%	3.6
5. Seeking help	108	1%	4%	17%	26%	53%	4.3
6. Leadership	107	2%	7%	27%	28%	36%	3.9
7. Encouragement	108	3%	6%	3%	21%	67%	4.4
8. Safety going to school	108	32%	27%	24%	13%	4%	2.3
9. Safety at school	108	2%	6%	17%	22%	53%	4.2
10. Early pregnancy	108	69%	10%	13%	6%	3%	1.6

Table 102: School Equality Scorecard: Bangladesh, PU Nilphamari selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	159	16%	19%	37%	17%	11%	2.9
2. Class participation	158	1%	2%	8%	20%	70%	4.6
3. Chore Burden	158	6%	13%	27%	16%	37%	3.7
4. Latrines	156	8%	1%	10%	21%	60%	4.2
5. Seeking help	158	3%	3%	16%	20%	58%	4.3
6. Leadership	158	6%	6%	22%	19%	47%	4.0
7. Encouragement	160	1%	6%	17%	21%	54%	4.2
8. Safety going to school	158	16%	11%	23%	25%	25%	3.3
9. Safety at school	159	8%	2%	11%	22%	57%	4.2
10. Early pregnancy	158	81%	10%	5%	4%	0%	1.3

Table 103: School Equality Scorecard: Bangladesh, PU Barguna selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	120	3%	27%	43%	18%	9%	3.0
2. Class participation	120	3%	1%	10%	11%	76%	4.6
3. Chore Burden	116	5%	7%	43%	39%	6%	3.3
4. Latrines	119	21%	12%	22%	11%	34%	3.3
5. Seeking help	120	1%	3%	17%	23%	57%	4.3
6. Leadership	120	1%	18%	18%	8%	54%	4.0
7. Encouragement	120	0%	5%	2%	8%	86%	4.7
8. Safety going to school	120	29%	8%	30%	28%	6%	2.7
9. Safety at school	120	4%	5%	21%	46%	24%	3.8
10. Early pregnancy	120	79%	9%	8%	1%	3%	1.4

Table 104: School Equality Scorecard: Bangladesh, PU Nilphamari selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	159	19%	2%	43%	21%	14%	3.1
2. Class participation	159	4%	3%	8%	12%	73%	4.5
3. Chore Burden	159	10%	9%	26%	19%	36%	3.6
4. Latrines	158	10%	8%	11%	21%	49%	3.9
5. Seeking help	155	2%	5%	8%	10%	75%	4.5
6. Leadership	159	6%	2%	21%	19%	53%	4.1
7. Encouragement	159	2%	4%	16%	18%	60%	4.3
8. Safety going to school	159	20%	13%	25%	14%	28%	3.2
9. Safety at school	158	8%	6%	13%	16%	58%	4.1
10. Early pregnancy	159	68%	11%	12%	6%	3%	1.6

PAKISTAN

Table 105: School Equality Scorecard: Pakistan, PU Thatta selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	138	15%	28%	34%	9%	14%	2.8
2. Class participation	138	2%	13%	9%	30%	45%	4.0
3. Chore Burden	140	26%	18%	14%	18%	24%	3.0
4. Latrines	138	25%	19%	22%	7%	28%	2.9
5. Seeking help	138	17%	15%	23%	12%	33%	3.3
6. Leadership	136	13%	18%	20%	17%	32%	3.4
7. Encouragement	137	4%	5%	7%	15%	69%	4.4
8. Safety going to school	138	42%	10%	18%	17%	13%	2.5
9. Safety at school	137	54%	19%	13%	6%	8%	1.9
10. Early pregnancy	130	58%	16%	12%	12%	2%	1.8

Table 106: School Equality Scorecard: Pakistan, PU Vehari selected schools average scores and percentages - BOYS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	110	4%	43%	21%	11%	22%	3.0
2. Class participation	111	1%	7%	18%	37%	37%	4.0
3. Chore Burden	110	4%	2%	13%	6%	75%	4.5
4. Latrines	111	3%	14%	31%	18%	35%	3.7
5. Seeking help	111	5%	7%	16%	22%	50%	4.1
6. Leadership	113	12%	19%	28%	22%	19%	3.2
7. Encouragement	111	1%	3%	16%	16%	64%	4.4
8. Safety going to school	111	9%	11%	18%	31%	32%	3.6
9. Safety at school	111	8%	11%	23%	23%	35%	3.7
10. Early pregnancy	25	68%	16%	4%	12%	0%	1.6

Table 107: School Equality Scorecard: Pakistan, PU Thatta selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	139	18%	31%	27%	9%	15%	2.7
2. Class participation	141	7%	23%	17%	20%	33%	3.5
3. Chore Burden	139	35%	15%	15%	11%	24%	2.8
4. Latrines	139	31%	18%	34%	6%	12%	2.5
5. Seeking help	139	14%	22%	29%	17%	18%	3.0
6. Leadership	139	15%	22%	20%	16%	27%	3.2
7. Encouragement	141	9%	14%	16%	12%	50%	3.8
8. Safety going to school	140	16%	21%	29%	12%	21%	3.0
9. Safety at school	139	33%	18%	32%	12%	5%	2.4
10. Early pregnancy	138	44%	32%	13%	7%	4%	1.9

Table 108: School Equality Scorecard: Pakistan, PU Vehari selected schools average scores and percentages - GIRLS, ages 12-16

Dimension	N=	Never (%)	Seldom (%)	Some-times (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	112	20%	23%	31%	21%	5%	2.7
2. Class participation	116	9%	18%	22%	21%	30%	3.5
3. Chore Burden	115	7%	3%	7%	9%	75%	4.4
4. Latrines	107	8%	2%	3%	10%	77%	4.4
5. Seeking help	107	7%	7%	33%	13%	39%	3.7
6. Leadership	109	13%	15%	28%	14%	30%	3.3
7. Encouragement	113	10%	4%	12%	19%	56%	4.1
8. Safety going to school	109	16%	3%	6%	22%	53%	3.9
9. Safety at school	114	12%	0%	1%	4%	83%	4.5
10. Early pregnancy	114	94%	1%	0%	1%	4%	1.2

Appendix 6: School Equality Scorecard:

Selected schools' highest and lowest average scored dimensions, and variability by PU and by country

Table 109: School Equality Scorecard: selected schools' highest and lowest averaged scored dimensions, and dimensions with greatest and least variability – BOYS, ages 12-16

Country	Highest average scored dimensions		Lowest average scored dimensions		Greatest variability		Least variability	
	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2
Ecuador	Class participation 4.3 Encouragement 4.3	Encouragement 4.1	Early pregnancy 2	Early pregnancy 2.7	Early pregnancy	Leadership Safety going to school Early pregnancy	Class participation	Class participation
Nicaragua	Chore burden 4.3 Encouragement 4.3	Chore burden 4.3 Encouragement 4.2	Latrines 2.3 Early pregnancy 2.4	Early pregnancy 2 Safety going to school 2.6	Early pregnancy Safety going to school	Early pregnancy Safety going to school	Encouragement	Class participation
Paraguay	Encouragement 4.1	Encouragement 4	Early pregnancy 2	Early pregnancy 2.3	Latrines	Safety going to school Seeking help	Safety at school	Encouragement
Benin	Encouragement 3.9	Encouragement 4.0	Early pregnancy 2.4	Early pregnancy 1.7	Early pregnancy	Latrines Encouragement	Encouragement	Early pregnancy
Cameroon	Sports participation 3.8 Class participation 3.9	Class participation 3.9 Chore burden 3.9	Latrines 2.1 Early pregnancy 2.3	Sports participation 2.9 Early pregnancy 2.8	Chore burden Safety at school	Sports participation Safety going to school	Class participation	Class participation
Liberia	Sports participation 3.8	Leadership 3.8 Safety at school 3.8	Seeking help 2.7 Early pregnancy 2.7	Encouragement 2.9 Early pregnancy 2.9	Sports participation	Sports participation	Safety going to school	Encouragement
Uganda	Encouragement 4.1	Encouragement 4	Early pregnancy 2	Early pregnancy 2.3	Latrines	Safety going to school	Safety at school	Encouragement
Zimbabwe	Encouragement 4.8	Class participation 4.5 Encouragement 4.5 Leadership 4.5	Early pregnancy 2.7	Early pregnancy 2.5	Safety at school Early pregnancy	Early pregnancy Safety at school	Encouragement	Class participation

Country	Highest average scored dimensions		Lowest average scored dimensions		Greatest variability		Least variability	
	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2
Bangladesh	Class participation 4.5 Encouragement 4.4	Class participation 4.6	Safety going to school 2.3 Early pregnancy 1.6	Sports participation 2.9 Early pregnancy 1.3	Latrines	Sports participation Safety going to school	Early pregnancy	Early pregnancy
Pakistan	Class participation 4.0 Encouragement 4.4	Chore burden 4.5 Encouragement 4.4	Safety at school 1.9 Early pregnancy 1.8	Early pregnancy 1.6	Latrines	Leadership	Encouragement	Early pregnancy

Table 110: School Equality Scorecard: highest and lowest average scored dimensions, and dimensions with greatest and least variability – GIRLS, ages 12-16

Country	Highest average scored dimensions		Lowest average scored dimensions		Greatest variability		Least variability	
	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2
Ecuador	Encouragement 4.2	Class participation 3.8 Encouragement 3.8	Early pregnancy 2.1	Latrines 2.1	Latrines Early pregnancy	Chore burden Early pregnancy	Class participation	Encouragement
Nicaragua	Leadership 4.3 Encouragement 4.3	Class participation 4.1 Leadership 4.0	Latrines 2.0 Early pregnancy 2.5	Latrines 2.3 Early pregnancy 2.4	Latrines Safety going to school Safety at school Early pregnancy	Latrines Safety going to school Safety at school	Class participation Encouragement Leadership	Class participation
Paraguay	Class participation 4.5 Latrines 4.5 Encouragement 4.5	Leadership 4.4 Encouragement 4.6 Safety at school 4.4	Chore burden 3.3 Early pregnancy 2.9	Early pregnancy 2.4	Latrines Safety going to school Early pregnancy	Chore burden Early pregnancy	Class participation	Encouragement
Benin	Encouragement 4.5	No data available	Latrines 1.5	No data available	Sports participation Leadership	No data available	Class participation Encouragement	No data available
Cameroon	Class participation 4.0 Encouragement 3.8	Class participation 4.2 Leadership 4.0 Encouragement 4.0	Latrines 2.1 Early pregnancy 2.5	Early pregnancy 2.9	Seeking help	Early pregnancy	Class participation	Encouragement
Liberia	Safety at school 3.7	Safety at school 4.1	Latrines 2.3	Early pregnancy 2.4	Sports participation	Latrines	Chore burden	Chore burden
Uganda	Encouragement 4.3	Encouragement 4.6	Early pregnancy 2.6	Early pregnancy 2.7	Latrines Safety going to school	Latrines	Encouragement	-
Zimbabwe	Encouragement 4.3	Encouragement 4.5	Early pregnancy 2.8	Early pregnancy 2.4	Seeking help Early pregnancy	Seeking help Early pregnancy	All dimensions except for Seeking help and Early pregnancy	All dimensions except for Seeking help and Early pregnancy

Country	Highest average scored dimensions		Lowest average scored dimensions		Greatest variability		Least variability	
	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2	PU1	PU2
Bangladesh	Class participation 4.6 Encouragement 4.7	Class participation 4.5 Seeking help 4.5	Safety going to school 2.7 Early pregnancy 1.4	Early pregnancy 2.6	Latrines	Sports participation	Early pregnancy	Class participation Seeking help Early pregnancy
Pakistan	Class participation 3.5 Encouragement 3.8	Chore burden 4.4 Latrines 4.4	Safety at school 2.4 Early pregnancy 1.9	Sports participation 2.7 Early pregnancy 1.2	Sports participation	Class participation Leadership	Early pregnancy	Early pregnancy

Appendix 7: Toolfaces

Please note that these are the toolfaces of the Girls Empowerment Star and School Equality Scorecard. For implementation guidance notes, focus group discussion prompts and report forms, please refer to the Practitioners' Toolkit at plan-international.org/girls.

Figure 56: Girls Empowerment StarToolface

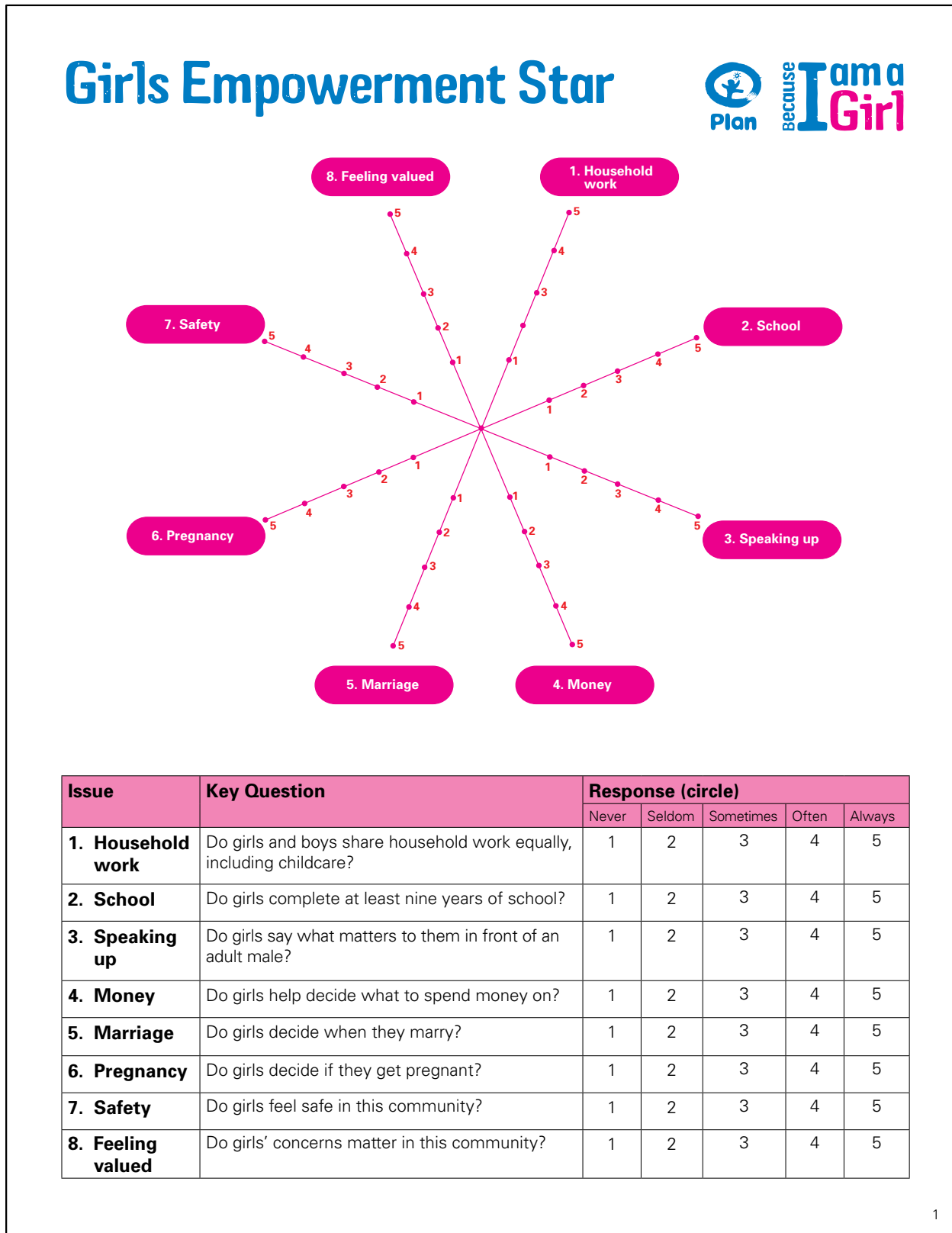


Figure 57: School Equality Scorecard Toolface

School Equality Scorecard



SCHOOL EQUALITY SCORECARD Girl _____ Boy _____ Age: _____	Please circle one response per question.				
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. Sports participation: Do girls participate in sports activities as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Class participation: Do girls participate in class as often as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Chore burden: Do girls spend the same amount of time doing chores (tidying, sweeping, cleaning) at school as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Latrines: Are there toilets at school that girls feel comfortable to use?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Seeking help: Do girls talk to teachers about their concerns as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Leadership: Do girls participate as leaders of student groups as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Encouragement: Are girls encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Safety going to school: Are girls as safe as boys on their way to and from school?	1	2	3	4	5
9. Safety at school: Are girls as safe as boys when they are at school?	1	2	3	4	5
10. Early pregnancy: Do girls continue to attend school after having a baby?	1	2	3	4	5

11 October 2012 marked the very first United Nations International Day of the Girl Child. This key moment reflected the increasing focus and momentum on girls' rights by governments, private sector companies and NGOs across the globe. At the same moment, Plan International officially launched a global initiative on girls' rights, the Because I am a Girl campaign.



Because I am a Girl was founded on the basis that discrimination against girls and women is one of the main causes and consequences of child poverty, globally. Plan believes that girls and boys have the same entitlements to human rights, but face very different challenges in accessing them. Plan has committed to better understand girls' daily realities, and to amplify the voices of girls themselves as a core part of this campaign.

Join the campaign

Inspired, worried, concerned by what you read here? Make a difference, join the girls in creating the future they want and *have a right to*.



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plan-international.org/girls

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