



# Promoting Gender-Inclusive Education

Gender discrimination can affect any child, boy or girl, regardless of ability or background. According to Shule Bora’s 2022 Gender Equality and Disability Inclusion (GEDI) Needs Assessment, discrimination leads to unequal gendered educational outcomes. However, inclusive interventions can help reduce barriers and ensure that all learners feel safe, supported, and able to complete their education.

This brief outlines how Shule Bora supports government ministries and institutions to implement system-wide strategies and policies that promote gender-inclusive learning in Tanzania’s primary schools.

## Contextual information

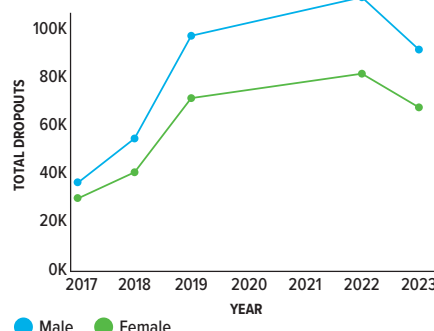
In Tanzania, both girls and boys face challenges to staying in school:

- Boys are enrolling in smaller numbers and dropping out more frequently, often due to pressure to earn money for their families.
- Girls are more likely to drop out due to early marriage, domestic responsibilities, gender-based violence (GBV), and female genital mutilation (FGM).

Gender norms, shaped by cultural, social, and economic factors, vary significantly across different regions. In Mara and Pwani, GBV and harmful traditional practices like FGM remain prevalent (World Bank, 2022). In Rukwa, many families still prioritise boys’ education (Save the Children, 2019). Despite significant local variation, there are some common issues to highlight.

High dropout rates for boys during primary school. Though dropout rates are high for both boys and girls, nationally, they are now significantly higher for boys, particularly in areas where social norms encourage them to leave school and work to support their families.

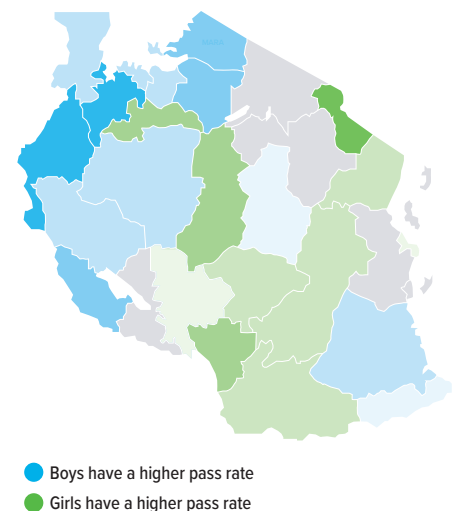
## Student dropout by Gender



## Low transition rates for girls to secondary school

Gender and Sexual-Related Violence mean girls are subjected to FGM or are likely to get pregnant, while boys face circumcision. Both genders can be forced into early marriage, often causing them to drop out of school before they begin secondary education, resulting in lower secondary transition rates for girls (75.8% Girls and 73.8% Boys for 2023/2024).

## Pass rates gender parity



### National averages disguise regional differences in gender parity in examination results.

In recent years, national PSLE rates have approached gender parity; however, this national data disguises significant regional differences. Figure shows that in many Shule Bora regions, girls perform worse than boys. This includes regions like Dodoma, Katavi, Kigoma, Mara, Rukwa, and Simiyu. On the other hand, in regions like Pwani, Singida, and Tanga, girls perform better than boys. In some regions, the difference is slight, but in areas like Kigoma, Rukwa, and Simiyu, it is more pronounced.<sup>1</sup>

The gender-related reasons for these differences can involve multiple factors, from social norms, economic pressures or even lack of access to sanitary products and ineffective menstrual health management, affecting attendance, the ability to concentrate in class, which impacts retention and learning outcomes.

The gender of teachers, who act as role models and bring insights into

the barriers that affect both boys' and girls' education, is also a known factor contributing to gender differences. In general, there is an underrepresentation of women in the secondary education workforce, with fewer men working at the primary level and fewer women in education leadership positions, both within schools and in senior local and regional education roles.

### Shule Bora's response

Supporting the National Framework for Enabling Schools to become more inclusive:

As part of the support under the EP4R mechanism, Shule Bora is supporting the government in developing and implementing. This Framework is designed to help LGAs identify schools with the most significant inclusion and dropout challenges, including those related to gender, and work with them to address the most significant factors in their context.

### Using data to inform policy and planning:

Shule Bora supports the government in utilising data to better understand national and local gender-related barriers and develop appropriate responses. This work underpins national planning on teacher recruitment and deployment, as well as informing education managers on gender differences and performance on dropout and pass rates.

### Developing gender and inclusive pedagogy:

Shule Bora is supporting the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) in their work to develop and deliver Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for teachers in gender-responsive and inclusive teaching methods, encouraging balanced participation in classroom activities.

### Strengthening the role of Parent-Teacher Partnerships (PTPs):

Shule Bora is working with schools and local governments in its nine target regions to develop the capacity of PTPs to support children at high risk of dropping out due to gender-related barriers. Using community radio and other Social and Behaviour Change Communication products to facilitate awareness, understanding and reduce stigma and discrimination, promoting dialogue in schools and communities.

### Conclusion

National statistics may suggest gender parity in education, but local challenges tell a different story. Cultural norms, social practices, and systemic barriers can limit children's educational opportunities, especially for girls. Shule Bora addresses these challenges at multiple levels, supporting national systems while also tackling local issues to promote lasting, inclusive change.



<sup>1</sup> However, statistical analysis suggests these differences are not significant at national level.

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Shule Bora is a six-year programme (2021 – 2027) funded by UK International Development with technical assistance provided by Cambridge Education. The programme is led by the government of Tanzania, and its aim is to improve the quality of pre-primary and primary level government schools by enhancing teaching, inclusiveness, and safety. Shule Bora works in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST), the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government Tanzania (PO-RALG) and its agencies.