

## The efforts of school management committees towards Education For All goals and the effect on the quality of education

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## ABSTRACT

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This study looked into the participation of committees in schools which implemented the School Improvement Program (SIP) of Plan International and schools which did not and compared the quality of education in these schools. Furthermore the efforts of the school committees towards the Education For All (EFA) goals are compared. Semi-structured interviews were held with members of the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) and School Improvement Program Committee (SIPC) and with head teachers. In total 90 participants were interviewed in schools which implemented the SIP and 19 in the schools which did not implement the SIP. Furthermore the quality of the education was measured using three indicators of education, including the teacher-pupil ratio, book- pupil ratio and the results on the public examinations of grade seven. It can be concluded that the participation in schools which implemented the SIP and schools which did not differ much. The quality of education in schools selected for the SIP was found to be improved to almost the same level of quality which was found in schools that did not implement the SIP. However the improvement in the quality of education of schools with an active SIPC was not greater than the improvement which was seen in schools with a SIPC that became inactive. The efforts of schools with an active SIPC towards the EFA goals about the quality of education and gender equality were similar to those of schools without a SIPC or with an inactive SIPC. The efforts of schools with an active SIPC to improve the access of education were more diverse than the efforts of schools without a SIPC or with an inactive SIPC.

**Keywords:** *participation, quality of education, Education For All, school improvement program, school committee.*

*~ Our school is named after Royal Highness Chief Chamuka,  
our dream is that our school can be up as the name itself is, Chamuka...~*

## INTRODUCTION

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The real Africa or the heart of Africa is the way Zambian people refer to their country. A country which is surrounded by the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and Angola. Two thirds of the estimated 14 million citizens of Zambia live below the poverty line and the life expectancy at birth is 52 years (World Factbook, 2010). The Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations (2010) which measures development by combining indicators of educational attainment, income and life expectancy, ranked Zambia 150<sup>th</sup> out of the 169 included countries. According to this list Zambia belongs to the twenty countries with the lowest human development. In 2000 the literacy rates for men and women respectively were 77% and 58%. After the government of Zambia restructured the entire education system in 2000 the enrolment of children has been increasing with 9% annually, with a total enrolment of 97% in 2006 (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.). This led to an increased literacy rate of 87% for men and 75% for women in 2010 (World Factbook). In the same year of the restructuring of the education in Zambia the World Education Forum was being held in Dakar (Barry & Brun, 2000). This followed the world conference of 1990 in Jomtien, where delegates of 155 countries and 150 organizations agreed to take steps to

universalize primary education and to massively reduce illiteracy before the end of the decade (World Conference on Education For All, 1990). Participants of the World Education Forum in Dakar (Barry & Brun, 2000) reaffirmed their commitment to Education For All (EFA) and formulated six education goals. One of the strategies to universalize primary education and reduce illiteracy is the use of participation and engagement of the civil society. The Zambian government also recognized the importance of the civil society in their restructuration of the education system. They found that the highly centralized management and administration had negative effects on the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the education system and decentralization became one of the leading principles in the process of restructuring. The management was decentralized and the decision-making power was handed over from the central government to local levels by establishing Educational Management Boards (UNESCO-IBE, 2006). A nongovernmental organization which is also involved in the field of education in Zambia is Plan International. Plan is a humanitarian child focused development organization and has a vision of a world in which children realize their full potential in societies which respect people's rights and dignity. As a non-governmental organization and being a part of the civil society where the World Education Forum called upon (Barry & Brun, 2000), Plan began implementing a more holistic approach to improve primary schools in 2003. Through the comprehensive strategy called the School Improvement Program (SIP) Plan aims to improve the quality, accountability and efficiency of formal and non-formal primary schools. The SIP project encourages children, families and communities to take an active and leading role in their own development. The establishment of School Improvement Committees (SIPC) is one of the key activities in order to create partnerships between the community and the schools (Plan, 2008). The present study looks into the participation of committees in schools which implemented the SIP and schools which did not and compares the quality of education in these schools. Furthermore the efforts of school committees towards Education For All goals are compared. This study attempts to answer the question if a difference can be found between schools which implemented the School Improvement Program (SIP) of Plan International and schools which did not?

## THEORY

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### **PROGRAM THEORY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

The School Improvement Program (SIP) of Plan International started in 2003 in five countries to improve accountability, efficiency and quality of both formal and non-formal primary schools that Plan supports. The overall objectives of the SIP include support to initiatives of governments in achieving the goal of Education For All by the year 2015 and enhancement of the capacity of the school management. Furthermore the program aims to commit the school management to improve the enrolment, attendance and performance, to support school specific plans to improve the accountability and effectiveness and to promote participation of children and parents in the development, implementation and monitoring of school improvement. A requirement for schools to have the SIP is to be committed to achieve agreed quantitative and qualitative improvement (Human Sciences Research

Council [HSRC], 2006). In addition to these overall objectives each of the involved countries formulated specific purposes and objectives at country level. The specific purpose of the SIP in Zambia is to improve the quality of primary education in schools that are assisted by Plan (Plan Zambia, n.d.). The corresponding objectives are to:

1. Increase access to basic education and improve quality and relevance of education in schools Plan Zambia is supporting.
2. Improve the quality of the education management systems in schools
3. Build capacity of Plan staff, teachers and communities to deliver child focused school activities.
4. Promote acquisition of life skills by the upper basic level
5. Build capacity among stakeholders on Early Childhood and Development Centers (ECCD).

The biggest challenges for the schools assisted by Plan Zambia are inadequate facilities, shortage of teachers, inadequate opportunities for in-service training and school management training. The major activities of Plan Zambia in order to achieve the objectives are focused on these challenges, namely the support in construction and provision of school supplies, teacher training and the training of school management committees. The support of Plan in construction is mainly aimed at school initiated projects such as the building of a classroom block or teachers accommodation. Plan also tries to fulfill the critical needs of schools by providing teaching and learning material, desks and other furniture. The teachers training learns participants more about modern teaching methods. The aim is that teachers are going to adopt more child-centered approaches to learning and teaching and that they gradually start to enable children to acquire basic competencies. The training of the school management committees consists of a five day workshop in which a selected group of teachers, parents and children are trained on their roles and functions as a school management committee (Plan, 2004; Plan Zambia, n.d.). During this training they also learn more about the concepts of a child, child rights, child protection, child participation and how to encourage this kind of participation in the school (Mushalika, 2009). The purpose of the training is to increase the genuine cooperation and participation of children, communities, teachers and head teachers and to enable committees to determine priorities and responsibilities that their communities can take upon them in order to create a sense of ownership for the SIP. An important underlying goal of the training is to create such a sense of ownership in the committees themselves that they come to the understanding that they should be and will be the driving force for SIP. During the training the school management committees also make an Action Plan about how to improve the school. This Action Plan contains priorities for improvement and targets for measuring indicators of school improvement, including enrolment, attendance, retention and performance of children and the provision of teaching and learning materials (Plan Zambia, n.d.). On base of the available information about SIP a program impact theory is constructed to provide an overview of the program (figure 1). Schools that have already implemented the SIP were selected in several ways. Schools which were already receiving support in construction and school supplies from Plan were automatically considered for this program in order to ensure continuity. Furthermore the ministry of education, through the office in the district, helped with the selection of schools by recommending schools which were planning or already started construction

projects. All selected schools had one similar feature, their pupil performances, passing rates and completion rates were below the standards of the other schools in the district. The SIP aims at improving those schools which are weak compared to other schools in the area. In the district concerned in this study the SIP schools were selected from a total of 117 schools.

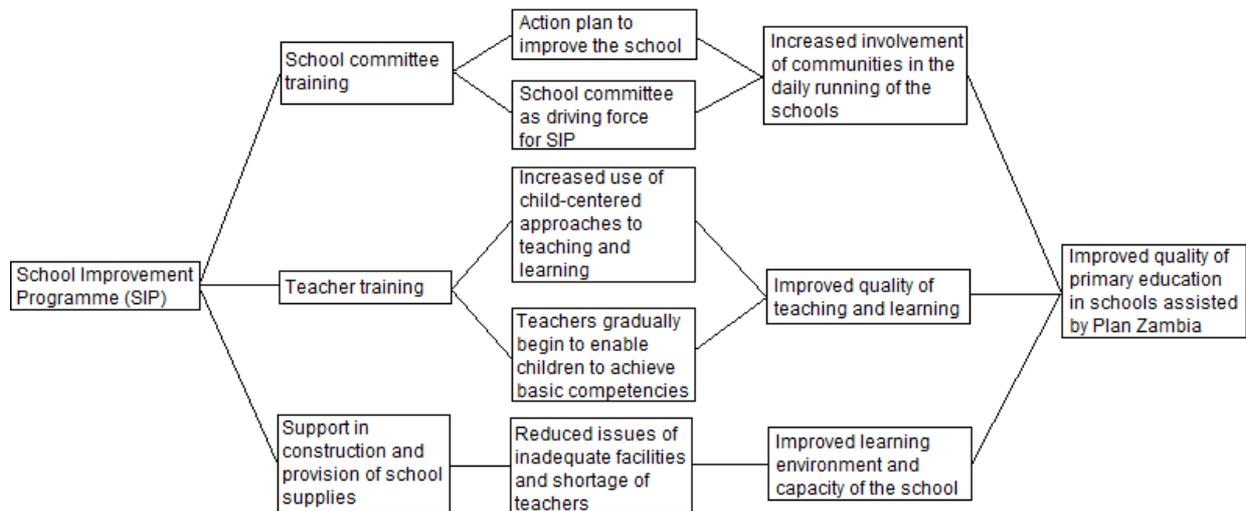


Figure 1. SIP program impact theory.

## EDUCATION FOR ALL GOALS

Education For All (EFA) is a collective commitment of participants of the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000. In total there were 1,100 participants present from different countries, organizations and NGOs all over the world. All these participants committed themselves to achieve the EFA-goals and targets for every citizen and for every society. They formulated the following six EFA-goals:

1. Expansion and improvement of comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children
2. Ensure that by 2015 all children, especially girls, children in difficult circumstances and children from ethnic minorities, have access to and also complete primary education of good quality which is free and compulsory.
3. Ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equal access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs.
4. Achieve a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by the year 2015, especially for women and equal access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015. The focus is on ensuring girl's full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality
6. Improvement of all aspects of the quality of education and ensure excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (Barry & Brun, 2000).

Since this study is about primary schools the most important EFA goals for this study are the ones about universalizing primary education, especially for the vulnerable and disadvantaged children, gender equality and improvement of the quality of education. The World Education Forum in Dakar also formulated some strategies to achieve the EFA-goals. One of them is to ensure the participation and engagement of civil society in formulating, implementing and monitoring of strategies for educational development. The civil society in this is defined as the learners, teachers, parents, communities and non-governmental organizations. This participation is especially important at a local level through partnerships between schools and communities, according to the World Education Forum. The civil society has to be involved because their experiences can play a crucial role in identifying barriers to the six EFA goals and to develop policies and strategies to overcome those barriers (Barry & Brun, 2000).

## **PARTICIPATION**

In order to understand the importance of participation of community members in a school as strategy to achieve the EFA goals and to improve the quality of education, it is important to have an understanding of the different levels of participation. Therefore participation as a concept, the relevance of participation, different models of participation in school committees and school committees as driving force in school improvement are discussed.

### **PARTICIPATION AS A CONCEPT**

A community has been defined in different ways but is usually seen as a group of people which distinguishes itself from other groups in relation to geographical areas, ethnic or racial features, a shared religion, shared family concerns or a shared philanthropy (Bray, 2000; Rose, 2003). The communities in the present study are formed by their geographical location nearby a primary school. The word participation refers to a continuous scale of taking part in something (Bray, 2000), with at the one end 'genuine' participation and on the other end 'pseudo-participation'. 'Genuine' participation means the ability to take part in processes of decision-making and governance. All members are equal in power to determine the outcomes and to share in joint activity. The other extreme, 'pseudo-participation' refers to a merely consultative form of citizen participation. Members are informed about developments and decisions, and are expected to passively accept those. Where 'pseudo-participation' only expects members to contribute in resources, 'genuine' participation expects spontaneous, voluntary and active contributions to the real process of decision-making (Rose, 2003). Arnstein (1969) uses a ladder of participation in order to classify degrees of participation. He made a distinction between 'non-participation' and 'degrees of tokenism' and 'degrees of citizen power'. Non-participation is found at the bottom of the ladder and consists of the types manipulation and therapy. These types are more about educating the 'participant' than enabling people to participate in planning or conducting programs. The following rungs of the ladder are informing, consultation and placation which are classified as degrees of tokenism. The views and opinions of participants are welcome in these types but the power holder makes the decision. The highest rungs of the ladder, degrees of citizen power, are the types partnership, delegated power and citizen control. In these types people

are able to negotiate and engage in the process of decision making and sometimes even have the full managerial power. The participation performed in these types is 'genuine' participation. 'Genuine' participation gives power to communities to determine their own education. A collective way of giving power to communities is the installation of school management committees (Mncube, 2009).

#### THE RELEVANCE OF PARTICIPATION

Hart (1992) states that participation is a fundamental right of citizenship. This right has already enshrined in 1966 in article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights: "*every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity (...) to take part in the conduct of public affairs*". The general comments of the Human Rights Committee interpret this article as including "*all aspects of public administration, and the formulation and implementation of policy at international, national, regional and local levels*" (general comment no.25, 1996). Also in the field of education civil society actors have the right to participate in education decisions that affect them (Sullivan, 2003.; Barry & Brun, 2000). Most of the parents who start participating in the educational system do so because they are concerned about their own children (Evans & Shirley, 2008). This seems to change when parents are working together towards a goal. When different individuals come together as civil society participants to mobilize collective resources and act as mediator between stakeholders with different interests, they are more likely to act in the interest of the whole community, or the whole school. Solidarity turns out to prevail over personal interests (Sullivan, 2003). According to Moritsugu, Wong and Duffy (2010) participation is important in processes of change. People are more likely to accept change in a system if they themselves have generated that change. Furthermore involved individuals are likely to know the problems that need attention because they live with the problems (Moritsugu, Wong & Duffy, 2010).

Participation of community members in schools enhances a sense of community, which in turn leads to increased participation in reaching the stated goal. In general participating community members ask nothing more as a reward than reaching their collective goal, but they work with enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility. The desired changes thus are brought out against low costs, which is especially desirable in developing countries. This however, also brings a disadvantage of participation, because participation occurs on a voluntary basis not every community member is able to participate. Consequently there is a chance for school management committees to be unrepresentative for the whole community. In such a case the community might not accept changes or decisions easily and might even reject the small group of participating person (Moritsugu, Wong & Duff, 2010). In order to solve this problem some studies randomly selected people to become a member of participation program. It turned out however that voluntary participation groups were better in their job and made more effective decisions than randomly selected participation groups (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004).

#### SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

A school management committee is a group of representative members of a community who have more or less influence in a school. Teachers, head teachers, parents, children and other community members can be a part of such a committee. The way in which they become a member of a school management committee varies from being selected by the head teacher to being elected by the

community. These committees can vary greatly in their composition and the type and extent of participation. In some committees, the vast majority of the members is made up of parents, while in other committees the majority is formed by teachers. In one school a committee may have only a more advisory function, whereas a committee in another school is responsible for hiring and dismissing the head teacher and setting important school policies (Shatkin & Gershberg, 2007). According to Shatkin and Gershberg (2007) there are three factors which shape the extent of parent and community influence and which determine whether there is parent participation or a more passive involvement of parents. The first factor is the degree of authority decentralized to school level. This factor refers to the extent to which the committee is authorized to make important decisions at the school level, allocate the school budget, and the extent to which a board of education is limiting parents with their rules regarding salaries, school staff and the use of school buildings. The second factor is the degree of authority of committees relative to principals, which refers to the extent of their function and whether they are allowed by the principal to make policies. The last factor is the representation of parents or the community relative to other groups in decision making. The more parents or other community members there are in a committee relative to other groups, like teachers, the more likely they are to have greater influence, which can empower them to take a more active attitude upon them in leading and decision making. Shatkin and Gershberg (2007) distinguished four different models of parent participation in school management committees by using these three factors. When all of these three factors are low the management of the school is largely determined by bureaucratic oversight. If there is a high degree of decentralized authority to the school level but committees have low authority and there is a low representation of community members in those committees, the management is largely principal centered. The third model is called school accountability. This model is found when there is a low representation of parents or other community members but the other two factors are high. The last model is found when all the three factors are high, this one is called parent participation. In this model parents and other community members are well represented, they play an active part and they are authorized to make important decisions and policies (Shatkin & Gershberg, 2007). Shatkin and Gershberg (2007) state that revitalization and improvement of schools is most likely to occur within the parent participation model, because in this model parents, teachers and head teachers are working together towards a common vision of school and community improvement.

#### SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Decision areas that are commonly decentralized to school management committees are school finances, school curriculum, human resources and decisions about the school organization. These areas include decisions about the school budget, fundraising, teaching and learning, parent-teacher meetings, examinations, employment of school personnel, administrative structures, class sizes and learner discipline (Chikoko, 2008). Literature about the effects of the decentralization and school development in the developing world are however still limited (Prew, 2009). Research in the western world concerning parental participation in governance also shows only little positive impact on student learning. There are furthermore some conditions needed to achieve this. Research in California and Chicago suggests an impact on school improvement and the delivery of instruction if the parent

committees and councils are active, have clearly defined tasks, are able to gather necessary information and if the committees function effectively as a group (Braatz & Putnam, 1996). The evidence in Chicago is somewhat stronger than in California. In California educators hold the majority of votes in the school management committees, while in Chicago the local school management committees fit in the 'parent participation model' of Shatkin and Gershberg (2007). These committees are solely comprised of parents and have a broad authority of decision-making, which includes the responsibility to hire and dismiss head teachers. The results found however are still small (Braatz & Putnam, 1996). Prew (2009) argues that in developing countries there should be a greater and deeper role for community involvement than in western countries when it comes to school development. In his research he found that while schools in western countries can develop independently in an individualistic frame, development in schools in South African townships comes with broader community alliances and partnerships which are built on trust and shared interests. In a significant number of schools these community alliances and partnerships improved the relation with the community which in turn benefitted the school in terms of human and monetary resources. In light of these finding he notes that the school development program itself may not be essential for development but instead the involvement of the community is. This is underpinned by the findings that schools without parental and community participation even failed to effectively develop and implement the school development program. He also found that schools with low rates of community involvement indicated lower pass rates on the exit exams, failure to develop comprehensive plans and had challenges with crime against the school. Prew (2009) concludes that deep relationships between communities and schools in developing countries can have huge benefits.

Chikoko (2008) however points out that members of school management committees in rural areas can be limited by having only basic literacy skills, which makes it unable for them to cope with the demands of school governance. Furthermore Pryor (2005) stresses the importance of a basic understanding of committee members about education and the importance of schools as a necessary precondition for participation. In his study Pryor (2005) found that the recognition of the importance of education was not always there. Farah (1997) advises therefore close monitoring and support of school management committees (Fullan & Watson, 2000).

## **THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

In order to compare the quality of education between schools which implemented the SIP and schools which did not it is important to have an understanding of what the quality of education is. Therefore the concept of the quality of education is discussed and indicators to measure the quality are identified.

### **THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AS A CONCEPT**

The concept of the quality of education is somewhat difficult. There has been written a lot about questions as 'what is quality' and 'what does quality mean in the context of education' but there is still no universally accepted definition of the quality of education (Lawton, 1994; Pigozzi, 2008; Tikly, 2011). The discussion about the quality of education has focused on learning achievements, the

conditions of learning, the macro environment like the culture, social and political movements in a country and the relevance of the school curriculum to labor markets (Ngware, Oketch, & Ezeh, 2011). A contributing factor to this debate is according to Tikly and Barret (2011) the different view of people about the purpose of education. Tikly and Barret (2011) have identified three approaches to the purpose of education. The first is the human capital approach which views education as a contributing factor in economic growth. This approach is interested in the influence of education on poverty and social welfare. The quality of education is usually being measured by using standardized assessments of cognitive learning including numeracy, literacy and life skills. The human rights approach to quality education is the second approach and focuses on the role of education in securing rights to education, rights in education and rights through education. The quality of education in this approach is determined by the presence of negative rights as protection from child abuse and positive rights as the use of local languages in the school, pupil participation and teaching methods which are learner-centered. Other important concepts in this approach with respect to the quality of education are moral rights, gender sensitive learning environments and democratic participation of children, parents, teachers and political leaders (Tikly & Barrett, 2011). The last approach is the social justice approach which highly values participation and giving voice to all (Tikly, 2011). In this approach quality of education is supposed to concern the capabilities that learners, parents, communities and governments are valuing and the conceptualization of the quality of education should be a product of public debate. Good quality education in this approach then is education which enables pupils to become economically productive, create sustainable livelihoods, contribute to a peaceful and democratic society and to increase personal well-being (Tikly & Barrett, 2011). The EFA goals focus on the right of children to education and gender equality but also measure quality by looking at the outcomes in literacy, numeracy and life skills. It seems that both the human capital approach and the human rights approach are reflected in the EFA-goals. Nickel and Lowe (2010) tried to clarify the concept of quality education by identifying seven dimensions of quality, including effectiveness, sustainability, reflexivity, relevance, responsiveness, equity and efficiency. Nickel and Lowe (2010) highlight the interaction between these dimensions. They can operate in harmony or in tension with each other. Concerns about one dimension have impact on other dimension. For example the EFA-goals highly value the universalizing education and thus equity in access to education, but the provision of education to disadvantaged children in the rural areas of Zambia is more expensive than the provision of education in the urban areas where facilities, children and teachers are more accessible. In this case the concerns about equity affect the concerns about efficiency.

## MEASURING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Despite there is no universal concept of the quality of education it is still an important concept. The quality of education ensures that children not only attend education but that they also benefit from their attendance by achieving basic educational skills (O' Sullivan, 2006). According to Ngware and colleagues (2011) the quality of education can be measured using indicators on the quality of students entering the school system, the quality of the inputs and instructional processes and the quality of the outcomes, in short the input, process and outcomes of education. The indicators they used in their

research in urban schools in Kenya are school size, average class size, pupil-teacher ratio, pupil- toilet ratio, pupil- textbook ratio, teacher qualifications, quality of class room (roofing, wall and floor material), student classroom space and teaching load. The indicators of quality education used in a cross sectional study of schooling of Lee and Barro (2001) are consistent with this classification of Ngware and colleagues (2011). Lee and Barro (2001) constructed a data-set of input and outcome measures of education and investigated the determinants on quality education. On the input measures they found the strongest results for pupil- teacher ratio. Children in large classes were found to be unruly often and teachers tend to focus more on rote learning instead of problem solving skills (Lee & Barro, 2001). According to Benbow, Mizrachi, Oliver and Said-Moshiro (2007) a class is considered large or overcrowded when it exceeds a pupil-teacher ratio of 40:1. The quality of teaching and learning begins to suffer when this ratio is exceeded. In her study in sub-Saharan Africa Michaelowa (2001) found a threshold number. Up to a class size of 62 increasing the class size was decreasing the quality of learning. This relation stabilizes when a class reaches a size of 62, thereafter the quality of learning was not much effected anymore by additional pupils. With respect to the classroom equipment Michaelowa (2001) found a strongly significant and positive impact on the availability of textbooks. The effect of available chalk, desks, a blackboard and other basic equipment was also significant but less clear than the availability of a textbook for each child. In Zambia the government uses a pupil: textbook ratio of 2:1 as a standard. In such a situation each child has access to a textbook (MoE, 2005). The outcome of education finally is often measured by using the results of examinations in the last grade. The reason for this indicator is the assumption that pupils should have attained a certain level of basic educational skills at the end of primary school (Michaelowa, 2001). Other frequently used indicators on the outcome of education are drop-out and repetition rate (Lee & Barro, 2001). Because the strongest effects of the input indicators were found for the pupil- teacher ratio and the pupil- textbook ratio these indicators were used in the present study. The third indicator of the quality of education used in this study is the results on the public examinations in grade seven. The intention was to use also other indicators such as the drop-out rate, repetition rate and completion rate, but the poor administration in the majority of the schools made it impossible to use these indicators. When looking at the different views of quality education these indicators .

## THE PRESENT STUDY

This study attempts to give an answer on the question if a difference can be found in the quality of schools and the efforts of school management committees towards the *Education For All (EFA)* goals about access and quality of education and gender equality in schools between schools which implemented the *School Improvement Program (SIP)* of Plan International and schools which did not. The sub questions of this research are:

- how is community participation practiced in schools which were selected by Plan to implement the SIP and schools which were not selected?
- how is the quality of education in SIP-schools compared to the quality of non-SIP schools in terms of pupil- teacher ratio, book- pupil ratio and examinations scores of grade seven?
- What difference can be found between SIP- schools and non-SIP- schools in the efforts towards the

access of education, the quality of education and gender equality in schools?

The emphasis in this study is on the experiences and views of committee members. Committee members themselves describe the function and activities of their committee and their efforts to improve gender equality and the access to education for poor children or children who are living far from the school. In order to measure the quality of education three indicators were found, including the teacher- pupil ratio, book- pupil ratio and the results of the examinations in the last grade.

## RESEARCH METHOD

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This research was conducted in Chibombo district in the Central Province of Zambia. The district consists of communities, which in turn are formed by several villages. These villages then are composed of several households. In each household lives a family in small houses, with fields for agriculture and some cattle. The most common profession in the district is farming. Zambia is home to 73 different ethnic groups and the seven major spoken languages are Bemba, Tonga, Lunda, Kaonde, Lozi, Luvale and Nyanja. The official language is English but not everyone speaks English. The main language spoken in Chibombo district is Lenje, a dialect of the Tonga, but in some villages another language of the seven major languages is spoken (Mushalika, 2009).

### DESIGN

This research uses a mixed-method design. This means that both qualitative and quantitative information is obtained, though most of research is covered by the qualitative part. The qualitative part exists of interviews in groups with the Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and the School Improvement Committees (SIPC) and individual interviews with the head teachers or deputy head teachers of schools. The quantitative approach was used in obtaining information about the quality of education. The indicators used to measure the quality of education were selected on base of their importance according to the literature and the availability of the necessary information in schools. In this way it was possible to obtain information of the committees themselves about their activities and efforts towards the related EFA goals, but also to gain objective information about the actual quality of education. This created the opportunity to make a comparison of the participation of the PTA and the SIPC, their efforts towards the related EFA goals and the quality of education between the three types of schools.

### SAMPLE SELECTION

Chibombo district, the area where this study took place, was selected by Plan Zambia. Plan is active in eleven communities in this district. All these communities were involved in this research except for one, because of inaccessibility during the rainy season. The schools were selected because they participated in SIP or because they had not participated in the SIP in order to compare these two types of schools. From there schools were selected on base of their location and accessibility because of the bad conditions of the road during the rainy season. In total fifteen schools were selected from which nine schools participated in the SIP and six schools had not participated in the SIP.

## PARTICIPANTS

The participants of this research are PTA members, SIPC members and head or deputy head teachers. In total 109 participants are interviewed, 90 at the SIP schools and 19 at the non- SIP schools. In some SIP schools there was no active SIPC anymore and therefore no SIPC members were interviewed. At three of the non-active SIP schools it was possible to interview former members of the SIPC to gain information about the reason the SIPC was inactive. Furthermore in one school there was no PTA present at the time of interviewing. In some schools deputy head teachers are interviewed instead of head teachers because of absenteeism of the head teacher. In one school there was no head teacher and no deputy head teacher present so in that particular school no interview was held with the school management. To clarify the number and distribution of participants per SIP school an overview is given in table 1.

Table 1. *Overview of participants SIP schools*

	Mututu school	Lombwa basic school	Chankumba basic school	Kampekete basic school	Chamuka basic school	Kaputi basic school	Nachiyaba basic school	Malombe basic school	Mupelekesi basic school
PTA	-	11	3	2	8	4	1	1	3
SIPC	10	11	6	-	6	6	1	7	2
Head teachers	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1
Total	11	23	10	3	14	11	3	9	6

In the non- SIP school it was more difficult to mobilize committee members to participate in the research. Plan Zambia has less contact with these schools than the schools which participated in the SIP. Therefore the number of participants is only 19 spread over six schools. In table 2 there is also an overview of the participants per non- SIP school. The interviews with the head teachers only make up a small part of this research. The aim of these interviews was to check the information that was obtained in the interviews with the PTA and the SIPC. Furthermore the head teachers provided useful information about the school efforts towards the education for all goals.

Table 2. *Overview of participants non-SIP schools*

	Lifwambula basic school	Chikonkomene basic school	Kabanga basic school	Mukalashi upper basic school	Chibombo central upper basic school	Shimbilo upper basic school
PTA	2	3	1	2	1	4
Head teachers	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	3	4	2	3	2	5

## **INSTRUMENTS**

Semi- structured interviews were used to interview the head teachers, PTAs and SIPC. Pre-drafted questions served as guideline and were divided in three sections: the function of the PTA/ SIPC, questions about the quality of the school and the efforts of the committees towards the EFA goals about improving the access and quality of education and gender equality in the schools. PTAs and SIPCs were asked what they thought was the function of their committee. This was further concretized by questions about the recent activities of the committee and activities in the past and the method of decision making. The committees and head teachers were also asked about their view of the quality of the school, their activities to improve the school and their long term vision or dream of the school. The last section entailed questions about the schools and the broader communities. Participants were asked if there are still children in their community who are not attending school and what according to them the reasons are for those children to stay out of school. Information was also asked about gender equality in the school and if there was a difference in drop-out between boys and girls. Thereafter participants were asked about the activities to improve or ensure gender equality and to improve access to their school for poor children who were already enrolled in school and children who are not attending school. To obtain the quantitative information a form was used. Information was asked about the number of pupils per teacher, the number of children sharing one book and the examination results of grade 7 in 2010.

## **PROCEDURE**

Interviewing the participants took one or two days per school, depending on the time lost due to distances to schools and the conditions of the road. The interviews with the SIPC, the PTA and the head teacher took place in the school concerned, in a free office or classroom. During all the interviews there was no other outsider to the group present than the researcher. The language being used was English and in some cases, when not every participant was able to speak English, one of the fellow committee members acted as interpreter. All the interviews were audio taped using a voice recorder. Before every interview permission was asked to record the voices of the participants and the voice recorder was showed to everyone. At the beginning of the interviews the participants were informed about the interest in community participation of committees. During the interviews in groups everyone was encouraged to share his or her view and most of the time everyone was fully participating. To obtain the quantitative data the form was given to the head teacher just after arriving at the school. The researcher explained what information was needed and how the form was to be completed. The teacher- pupil ratio and book- pupil ratio were filled in by the school. The teacher- pupil ratio was calculated by using class registers with the names of the pupils. The number of children in one class was divided by the number of teachers of each class. The book- pupil ratios were obtained from a document called 'school profile'. This is an official document with information about the school as registered by the government e.g. enrolment, number of pregnancies, book-pupil ratio, number of classes et cetera. The examination scores of grade seven finally were obtained from official sheets with the examination results of 2010. The scores were literally copied from these sheets by the researcher herself in all the schools.

## **ANALYSIS**

All the interviews were audio taped and transcribed into text documents. The opinions of the participants were labeled and the frequency was recorded in a table. These tables were made for each group of participants and were organized into different categories according to the research questions. The frequencies were recorded separately for the different school types. In this way an overview was provided of what was said and differences between the school types were visible at a glance. Because the interview were numbered it was possible to switch between the tables and the original text documents when information about the context was desirable. The quantitative data digitalized from the completed forms. The teacher- pupil ratio and book- pupil ratio were listed in a table separated by school type and a comparison was made. The examination results were listed by name and gender and an multivariate ANOVA was used to analyze these results. A Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) test was performed after a significant effect was found.

## **RESULTS**

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The results consist of three parts according to the research questions: 'participation', 'the quality of education', and 'efforts towards Education For All goals'. The first part 'participation' consist of the chapters 'participation in non- SIP schools' and 'participation in SIP schools'. These chapters describe the participation of the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) and the School Improvement Program Committee (SIPC) in non- SIP schools and in SIP-schools. In the last chapter of 'participation' a new category is added: non-active SIP schools. The second part 'the quality of education' describes differences found in quality between non-SIP schools, non-active SIP schools and SIP schools and contains the chapters ' teacher- pupil ratio', 'book- pupil ratio' and 'examination results of grade seven'. The third and last part 'efforts towards Education For All goals' has three chapters: 'access to education', 'the quality of education' and 'gender equality in schools'.

### **PARTICIPATION**

This part describes the participation of the school committees in the different school types. Each chapter gives a description of the committee (s) and exists of the topics: function, decision making and relationships, view on the quality of the committee and the dreams of the concerned committee about their school.

#### **PARTICIPATION IN NON-SIP SCHOOLS**

In most schools there are several committees active. The Project Maintenance Committee (PMC) for example is a committee which mainly focuses on maintaining the school buildings and surroundings and the School, Health and Nutrition (SHN) committee is concerned with the health of school pupils. In some schools there are also other small committees which only become active in certain events. There is one thing all these committees have in common, they are subordinate to the Parent- Teacher Association (PTA). The PTA is the 'mother body' or the main body of all the committees in a school.

## Parent Teacher Association

According to the government of Zambia every school must have a PTA. Most of the PTAs in this study were composed of six parents and four teachers, in total ten members. Only two schools had a different number of members respectively eleven and twenty-two. For parents to become a member of the PTA one has to be elected during the annual general meeting. There are no requirements to become a member of the PTA as long as people are committed to the school. A woman states that *"everyone can do things in the PTA it doesn't matter if he or she is poor, as long as he or she can run programs he or she can become a member (...) it doesn't matter if someone can read or write, as long as the parent has a child at this school"* (PTA member, Chamuka basic school). The four teachers in the PTA are the head teacher, who is the secretary of the PTA, the deputy head teacher, who is the vice-secretary, and to other teachers who are chosen by the head teacher. Three other special roles in the PTA are chairman, vice-chairman and treasurer, these are fulfilled by parents.

### Function

The PTA is the overseer of the school and works together with the school administration. Because parents and teachers are both in the PTA the PTA has become the link between the school and the community. The PTA mobilizes the community whenever help is needed in school projects and comes in when problems arise between pupils, parents and teachers. The PTA is responsible for a conducive working and learning environment for teachers and pupils. To improve these working and learning environments the PTA is mainly active in construction projects. Five of the six non-SIP schools were during the research involved in the construction of classrooms and teachers houses or were planning to start such a project. Providing homes for teachers is a requirement to get teachers and is actually a responsibility of the government but it has become a major concern for PTAs as one man explains *"the government fails most of the time so the PTA comes in, cause what is there in Zambia, a teacher must be given a house"* (PTA member, Chikonkomene upper basic school). These construction activities lead to another responsibility of the PTA, fundraising. The PTA approaches NGOs, special governmental funds and the community in order to raise funds. Through the head men villages are asked to mold bricks, bring building and river sand and come to the school to do the construction work. In most cases parents are willing to participate in school projects but for the PTAs in two schools of the six non-SIP schools it is more difficult: *"there are some who are willing to come but others you have to go dragging their feet"* (PTA member, Mukalashi upper basic school). Three of the six non-SIP schools have an additional method of fundraising. PTAs have started projects such as a maize field, banana plantation, goat house and tuck shop to sell products and *earn a bit of money, which the PTA can use to do other things* (PTA member, Kabanga basic school).

### Decision making and relationships

All PTA members involved in this study were clear: *"when we meet, we meet as parents representatives and teachers representatives with one focus so there is no division, we are looking at one thing and that is the child and how we are going to develop this school"* (PTA member, Mukalashi upper basic school). According to the PTA members there are no differences in power between parents and

teachers. In one school there is a division in tasks between the parents and the teachers but they are not different in their positions. Decisions are most of the time made after discussions which each other and sometimes voting takes place. Since the head teacher and the deputy head teacher are a member of the PTA, decisions are made in conjunction with the school management. In two schools the situation is different in one school decisions are made by the school management and communicated to the PTA in a meeting. In the other school a meeting is organized with all the parents in which the PTA explains their proposal. The community then has to agree with the proposal in order to implement the project. Topics on which decisions are made mainly have to do with the school projects, the school fees for grade eight and nine and on the color of the uniform. Once a year the PTAs of all schools organize a general meeting in which *"we give a financial report, we need to report what we have done, we are the mandaters, the implementers, so every time when we call them we have to tell what we have done"* (PTA member, Chibombo central upper basic school).

#### *View on the quality of the PTA*

PTAs are generally satisfied with the quality of their PTA. Five of the six schools state that they have enough influence in the community because the people are coming to the school to help with the projects. The influence of PTAs on their school is also enough according to four of the six schools. One man explains what he thinks is the value of his PTA *" (...) leaving the school just to the teachers not for the parents is not good. Now the parents and the teachers are all together, leading the school smoothly. So that the teachers are not bad, are not abusing our children. Whatever the school wants to do through the PTA, through the parents, because we are a representative of the parents. I think it is a good thing and it should be promoted"* (PTA member, Chibombo central upper basic school). The PTAs are less satisfied about the number of activities they are carrying out. Three of the six PTAs mention that they are limited in their activities because *"as PTA we are struggle to do certain things because of financial difficulties. It is difficult for us to raise funds"* (PTA member, Kabanga basic school).

#### *Dream of PTAs for their school*

When asked about the dream PTAs have for their school four of the six PTAs answer that they would like their school to be a high school. A woman states: *"it will be a high school, a big big school, now it is up to grade 9"* (PTA member, Shimbilo upper basic school) and a man dreams *" that this school is so big that it will be high school. School enrolment has to increase. Now we have grade 1 up to grade 9"* (PTA member, Chibombo central upper basic school). One school furthermore wants to have more classrooms and teachers houses: *"so that the ratio of teacher to pupil is the same as in town. Unlike the situation like now where one teacher has 90 or 120 pupils"* (PTA member, Chikonkomene upper basic school). This same school also dreams to have access to electricity and once they have electricity they would like to have a computer room. The most important dream for most schools however is to become a high school.

## PARTICIPATION IN SIP- SCHOOLS

In total nine SIP schools were involved in this research. In four of the nine SIP schools however there was no active School Improvement Program Committee (SIPC) found. It was possible to interview

former SIPC members in three schools about the former activities of the SIPC and the reason of the inactivity. From here a distinction is made between active SIP schools and non-active SIP schools. In one of the non-active SIP schools there was no PTA present at the time of interviewing, therefore this school is not mentioned in the parts about the PTA.

### **Parent- teacher association in active and non- active SIP schools**

The composition of the PTA in active and non- active SIP schools does not differ from the PTAs in non- SIP schools. One SIP school forms an exception because it has 22 members including three teachers, thirteen parents and six pupils, three boys and three girls. The function, decision making process and relationships of PTAs in active, non-active and non- SIP schools are almost the same. The area in which differences are found are in the mobilization of the community. Although all three types of schools stress the importance of community participation they differ in implementation. Two of the three PTAs in non- active SIP schools and one active SIP school mention a policy of the government that requires communities to contribute 25 percent of the project costs in kind or labor, while none of the PTAs in non-SIP schools said something about this policy. Furthermore the use of head men as intermediary in the mobilization of communities is stated more in non-SIP schools. Five out of the six non- SIP schools against two of the five active and none of the non-active SIP schools mentioned the head men as intermediary. The PTAs in active and non-active SIP schools also consider the quality of their PTA as being good, although they are also limited in their activities because of financial constraints.

### **School Improvement Program Committee in active SIP schools**

The School Improvement Program Committee (SIPC) is an initiative of Plan International. In the majority of the schools, six, the SIP started between 2003 and 2006. In the three remaining schools the SIP started in 2008 and 2009. In each SIPC there are between twelve and twenty members. The SIPCs are composed of parents, teachers, school children, a representative of the headmen of the surrounding villages and representatives of church leaders, the local government and Plan Zambia. All these different members have the same responsibilities and position in the SIPC. The school children are in the committee to give their view on proposals and to tell the other members what the school is lacking according to them. One SIPC member explains the value of the presence of school children in the SIPC: *"how can we do what is in their interest if we don't have their views in the committee?"* (SIPC member, Mupelekese upper basic school). Each of the SIPCs got a training of Plan Zambia about working in cooperation with the PTA and the community and *" we learned the things which are related to school improvement program. Under the same, we got something about child rights, and where we need to raise funds to start projects and of course how contribute eh we can create a conducive environment for a child"* (member of inactive SIPC, Chamuka basic school).

### *Function*

The SIPC has an important role in sensitizing parents in the community. Four of the five SIPC tell about their sensitization activities when asked about the function of the SIPC. An important

sensitization topic is the importance of education, according to a SIPC member they “(...) *explain to parents the importance of education, especially the girl child*” (SIPC member, Malombe basic school). The SIPCs sensitize during meetings at the school and two SIPCs also go to meetings in the community to stress the importance of education. In the school it serves the SIPC focuses on the child and identifies potential development aspects in the school. In order to raise funds to carry out school improving projects three of the five SIPC started projects “ *to raise money, if the fish grow we can sell some and we can even be feeding our own pupils, and parents during meetings (...)*. All three schools have more than one project: “*we are constructing a fish point to start having fish, we have a school field, we also have a school orchard, where foods are grown*” (SIPC member, Chankumba basic school) or plan to have more such projects: “*So we have also another two projects what we want to do, we want a pottery and to keep goats. Though we don’t have the structure yet, but the chickens we have already started with*” (SIPC member, Malombe basic school). Another function of the SIPC related to the implementation of projects is to mobilize the parents to participate in construction projects and to mold bricks and bring local materials such as river and building sand to the school.

#### *Decision making and relationships*

The position of the SIPC in relation to the PTA is differs between the schools, in three schools the SIPC works under the PTA, in one school the SIPC and the PTA are equal and in the last school the SIPC is the supervisor of the PTA. In the process of decision making four for of the five SIPCs make decisions together with the PTA, despite their lower position: “ *[The PTA and SIPC] are not equal, in fact the mother body of this school is the PTA, so the SIPC has to help the PTA and this school to come up with quality education. But we do go through PTA then we come out together and if projects have to be done we come out together and we do it together* ” (SIPC member, Malombe basic school). Also the head man is often involved in decisions as one man explains: “*what we do, if we want to do a project we call upon meetings then the next step is to call the headmen. The PTA and the SIPC now meet together with the village headmen to discuss the project before we implement it*” (SIPC member, Kaputi basic school).

#### *View on the quality of the SIPC*

The SIPC committees are generally satisfied with the quality of their committee. They have enough influence in the community and in the school. A challenge for the committees is to maintain the number of SIPC members. Members move out of the SIPC and new members did not attend the training: “*we have challenges, because people are going out of the SIPC because they move to other communities*” (SIPC member, Malombe basic school) and “*[the quality] is ok, although sometimes some people maybe move to other areas and leave us with gaps that affects us* (SIPC member, Kaputi basic school).

#### **School Improvement Program Committee in non- active SIP schools**

In four of the nine SIP schools there was no active SIP committee found. In two schools it was possible to interview the former SIPC and in one school it was possible to interview a former SIPC

member who was a teacher at that school. In the fourth school the head teacher, who works at the school since four years, explained: *“when I came here I found that it was not there. I found the file, but the committee was not there”* (Head teacher, Kampekete basic school). In this fourth school was nobody present who could shed more light on the SIPC and why it became inactive. Because the head teacher found the SIP document and Plan had registered this school as a SIP school it is likely that there has been a SIPC which attended the training and became inactive thereafter. In the other schools however former SIPC members explained what happened after the training of Plan Zambia.

#### *How the SIPC became inactive*

In all three schools the committees had been formed, had attended the workshop and started sensitizing the community when they came back. After a while trained members were voted out the SIPC during elections in one school. In the other two schools teachers who were in the SIPC went on transfer to other schools and community members moved to other villages. A former SIPC member explains: *“ I am chosen as a member for SIP, next elections I am voted out, another person who has not attended the program is elected in. So the school loses out, because the constitution says it is only the chairman the current chairman of PTA who is enabling that committee, and there is no, if he doesn't know what is supposed to do what. Secondly there was the problem that the Area Development Committee (ADC) chairman should be a member of SIP. So when he was elected out the committee loses, because he is not going to continue to serve as a committee member. So he is not longer a member because of that vote”* (PTA member and former SIPC member, Nachiyaba basic school). The result of the voting and moving out of SIPC members is a smaller committee according to a former SIPC member: *“we are with less people now, we need to fill the gaps, we had no new refill when the people moved out so the committee is not intact now, we need to update it”* (former SIPC member, Mututu basic school). Another factor that contributed to the inactivity of the SIPC is related to a lack of Plan involvement in the schools. A head teacher states: *“at the moment we don't have projects. The SIPC was installed in the school by Plan but since Plan is not contributing in the school, even the committee is not making much of performing much of their work in the school”* (head teacher, Mututu basic school) and a former SIPC member explains about the period just after the establishment of the SIPC: *“we were waiting for Plan to bring the building materials, because they promised once there is total participation from the community Plan would contribute, a certain percentage I don't know exactly but they said that they would contribute all the building materials we needed as long as the community would participate we shall come and help, but we never heard of them again. At other schools they did but not here, I don't understand”* (SIPC member, Nachiyaba basic school).

#### *How to activate the SIPC again*

Former SIPC members, PTA members and head teachers of non- active SIP schools were asked what would work for them to put new life into the SIPC. One school did not feel the need to have a new SIPC: *“that is why we didn't vote for a new one, why we are not making a new one. The PTA have gone in the shoes of the SIPC”* (head teacher, Kampekete basic school). The PTA has taken over the responsibilities of the SIPC in this school. The other three non-active SIP schools however showed a

desire for a new SIPC: *"SIPC is supposed to be active"* (head teacher, Mututu basic school) and *"if there was a way of having SIP in this school properly introduced I think it is going to work out miracles"* (PTA member and former SIPC member, Nachiyaba basic school). For SIPCs to become active again a first requirement according to the participants is to elect new members, who have to be oriented and trained again on the role and responsibility of SIPC: *"if we can have a good number again of others being trained. I am sure they will fully understand us and find the same battle with no limitation"* (Former SIPC member, Chamuka basic school). Secondly it is important to reduce the risk of members leaving the committee. A man suggests: *"there should be a way to introduce a permanent SIP committee which has people that are either in the committee or say if they are voted out they should continue their SIP membership, so that the school or the committee is not ruled out"* (PTA member and former SIPC member, Nachiyaba basic school).

### **Dream of PTAs and SIPCs for their school**

Two active SIP schools and one non-active SIP school want to expand to a high school. A library is also a desire of two SIP schools: *"a library so that children can learn and do their homework at school"* (SIPC member, Malombe basic school). Furthermore two non-active SIP schools and one active SIP school dream to have electricity in order to have a night school for illiterate elder people or drop-outs. Committee members of in total two active SIP schools and one non-active SIP school spoke of their dream to have a skills training program for drop-outs. One active SIP school has access to electricity and the committee members of this school dream to have a computer room. This dream is shared by committee members of one non-active SIP school without electricity: *"we also want to have a computer school because most of our children have not been to places like town, so they don't know the difference between a computer and a TV set. So we want them to have at least the knowledge of what a computer is and how it can be operated in a very simple manner"* (PTA member, Nachiyaba basic school). One SIP school finally dreams to improve the access to education for children who live far from school: *"(...) and also we want for those children from far away dormitories"* (SIPC member, Mupelekese upper basic).

### **Differences between the PTA and the SIPC**

The PTA in all schools is the 'mother body' of the school and is involved in the day to day running of the school. A man explains the legal difference between the PTA and the SIPC: *"PTA is an act of parliament, it is an act of the laws of Zambia it is, the PTA is an entity, the law entity in the school. Unlike SIPC, that is just an organization formed by the parents to assist in the school, but the PTA is there whether you like it or not"* (PTA member, Malombe basic school). As a result in three of the five schools the SIPC holds a position under the PTA. In the other two schools the situation is different, in one school the PTA and the SIPC are equal to each other, all decisions are made together and projects are carried out in cooperation. In the other school the *"SIPC is the watchdog over the PTA, we supervise the PTA, if there is a lazy person we invite the head men to talk to that person. We also advise the PTA"* (SIPC member, Lombwa basic school). Apart from that a difference is found in the training of the committees. None of the PTAs in the SIP school had attended a training while the opposite was

true for the SIPC. The training of the SIPC paid attention to child rights and the importance of school improvement and this is seen in the activities of the SIPC. As a consequence sensitizing the community on the importance of education, especially girl child education, plays a key role in the activities of four of the five active SIP schools, while the focus of the PTA is more on construction. Also during the training SIPC formulated a vision and developed a SIPC document with a development plan: *" we also have the vision and a development plan about how the school should be in 10 years. We even have a SIP document here it says how it should be in 10 years or so in 2019. We have a vision about what should be attained by 2019. All the projects, the way of funds by the government, community and well-wishers"* (SIPC member, Kaputi basic school). PTAs have no such long-term vision, they just make each year a plan for the following year. Despite differences between the PTA and the SIPC and between the positions of the both committees in different schools, the PTA and SIPC work together in all five SIP schools. As a man states: *"that's how we manage all those projects because we work together"* (PTA member, Kaputi basic school).

## **THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

This section describes the quality of education in non- SIP schools, non-active SIP schools and active SIP schools according to three indicators of the quality of education: teacher- pupil ratio, book-pupil ratio and examination scores.

### **TEACHER – PUPIL RATIO**

In each school the teacher- pupil ratio is calculated by dividing the number of pupils in one class by the number of teachers in that class. According to the interviewed committee members and head teachers the ideal number of children in one class would be 35 or 40. The number of 40 is also found in a study of Benbow and colleagues (2007). They found that the quality of education begins to suffer when this class size is exceeded. Michaelowa (2001) agrees with this and found an upper boundary, after a teacher- pupil ratio of 1: 62 the quality of education is no longer decreasing when the ratio increases.

In table 3 the number of pupils per teacher in grade one, four and seven are given for each school separated by school type. The classes with less than 40 pupils are circled. Only one school, a non-SIP school, has in all three grades teacher- pupil ratios lower than 1:40. One other non- SIP school and one non- active SIP school have a grade seven class with a smaller size than 40 pupils. There are no active SIP schools with a lower teacher- pupil ratio than 1:40 in grade one, four or seven. Classes with a size larger than 62 are given in bold. All of the active SIP schools have in all three grades a teacher- pupil ratio which exceeds the number of 62 against only one non-active SIP school and one non-SIP school. Three other non- SIP schools and two non-active SIP schools have one class which a teacher-pupil ratio larger than 1:62. When looking at the total number of pupils in the schools there are no clear differences found between the three school types. The large teacher- pupil ratios of active SIP schools therefore cannot be explained by a possible larger total number of pupils in these schools.

Table 3. Number of children per teacher in one class

	Grade 1	Grade 4	Grade 7	Total number of pupils in school
<i>Non- SIP schools</i>				
Chibombo central upper basic school	58	<b>92</b>	(38)	1150
Shimbilo upper basic school	<b>70</b>	51	56	449
Chikonkomene upper basic school	(30)	(35)	(32)	974
Kabanga basic school	50	<b>67</b>	56	861
Lifwambula upper basic school	46	56	44	706
Mukalashi upper basic school	<b>71</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>63</b>	891
<i>Non-active SIP schools</i>				
Nachiyaba basic school	57	56	(35)	684
Kampekete basic school	60	<b>70</b>	57	869
Chamuka basic school	<b>97</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>91</b>	797
Mututu school	<b>65</b>	49	54	532
<i>Active SIP schools</i>				
Kaputi basic school	<b>93</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>116</b>	812
Chankumba basic school	<b>90</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>84</b>	644
Mupelekese upper basic school	<b>65</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>67</b>	472
Lombwa basic school	<b>67</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>72</b>	504
Malombe basic school	<b>78</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>63</b>	953

#### BOOK – PUPIL RATIO

According to the Zambian government the book- pupil ratio should be 1:2 (Ministry of Education, 2005). A study of Michaelowa (2011) showed the importance of textbook in the process of learning. In her study she found a significant positive impact of the availability of a textbook for each child. None of the schools

Table 4. Book: pupil ratio

	Grade 1	Grade 4	Grade 7
<i>Non- SIP schools</i>			
Chibombo central upper basic school	1:3	1: 3	1: 3
Shimbilo upper basic school	1:3	1:3	1:3
Chikonkomene upper basic school	1:18	1:22	1:20
Kabanga basic school	1:4	1:4	1:4
Lifwambula upper basic school	1:5	1:3	1:3
Mukalashi upper basic school	1:6	1:3	1:10
<i>Non-active SIP schools</i>			
Nachiyaba basic school	1:15	1:4	1:4
Kampekete basic school	1:2	*	1:2
Chamuka basic school	1:3	1:8	1:3
Mututu school	1:3	1:3	1:3
<i>Active SIP schools</i>			
Kaputi basic school	1:4	1:5	1:6
Chankumba basic school	1:8	1:5	1:10
Mupelekese upper basic school	1:2	1:2	1:2
Lombwa basic school	1:3	1:3	1:3
Malombe basic school	1:5	1:5	1:5

\* only one textbook available for the teacher, children copy from the blackboard.

has a book- pupil ratio that meets the standard of Michaelowa (2011), a textbook for each child (table 4). Only one school meets the governmental standards of a book-pupil ratio of 1:2. This school is an active SIP school. None of the non-SIP schools meet this standard and in one of the non-active SIP schools two classes meet this standard. Three non- SIP schools, one non-active SIP school and one active SIP school have in two or more grades a book- pupil ratio that almost meets the standards of the government, in these schools the book- pupil ratio is: 1:3. In most schools the book: pupil ratio varies between a book- pupil ratio of 1:3 and 1:5. One non- SIP school has extraordinary high book: pupil ratios varying between 1:18 and 1:20.

#### EXAMINATION RESULTS OF GRADE SEVEN

Because children are expected to have attained basic education skills at the end of primary school the results of the public examinations in grade seven are compared between the three school types. The gender of children was given at the governmental sheets with the examination results which makes it possible to test whether there is a difference in performance between boys and girls. In addition it is interesting if a difference can be found in performance of girls between the different school types.

To test for these effects a two way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was chosen. An ANOVA is used to test for a statistically significant difference between groups in the presence of two or more factors. In order to test the grade seven examination results of 2010 a two way ANOVA is used to compare means between the different school types (non- SIP school, non-active SIP school and active SIP school) and gender. Three separate null hypotheses were formulated to test the examination scores of 2010. The null hypothesis is that there are no differences in the population means of the levels of school type:  $H_0 = \mu_{\text{non-SIP}} = \mu_{\text{non-activeSIP}} = \mu_{\text{activeSIP}}$  and the corresponding  $H_1: H_0$  is false. The second null hypothesis is that there are no differences in the population means of the levels of gender:  $H_0 = \mu_{\text{boy}} = \mu_{\text{girl}}$  and the  $H_1: H_0$  is false. The null hypothesis for the interaction is that there is no interaction. This means that the effect of school type is independent of the effect of gender. The main effect of school type was significant,  $F(2,1167) = 7.74$ ,  $MSE = 7416.18$ ,  $p < .05$ . The main effect of gender was not significant,  $F(1,1167) = 18.41$ ,  $MSE = 7416.18$ , n.s. The interaction of school type and gender was also not significant,  $F(2,1167) = .052$ ,  $MSE = 7416.18$ , n.s. A summary of the ANOVA is given in table 5.

Table 5. ANOVA summary of the examinations scores of 2010

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
School type	176492.40	2	88246.20	18.41	<.05
Gender	237.80	1	237.80	.05	n.s.
School type x Gender (interaction)	14832.36	2	7416.18	1.55	n.s.
Within- groups	5593168.98	1167	4792.78		
Total	5778610.23	1172			

Post hoc comparisons using Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) test revealed that non-SIP schools had significant lower examination scores than both non-active SIP schools ( $d = .46$ ) and active SIP schools ( $d = .17$ ). The examination scores of the non-active SIP schools and active SIP schools did also differ significantly. Non-active SIP schools had higher scores on the examinations of 2010 than active SIP schools ( $d = .29$ ). The effect sizes of .46 and .29 indicate a small effect, the effect size of .17 indicates that the significant effect between active SIP schools and non-SIP schools as found in the Fisher's LSD test is not relevant. In short the differences between the non-SIP schools and non-active SIP schools and between the non-active SIP schools and the active SIP schools have a small relevance, but the difference between non-SIP schools and active SIP schools is not relevant.

## **EFFORTS TOWARDS EDUCATION FOR ALL GOALS**

This part consists of the chapters 'access to education', 'the quality of education' and 'gender equality in the school'. In the chapter 'access to education' reasons are given for absenteeism and for not going to school at all. Subsequently the efforts of schools and committees are described to improve the access to education. In the chapter 'the quality of education' committees give their view about the quality of their own school and they explain their efforts to improve the quality of education. The last chapter is 'gender equality in education'. In this chapter a division is made between gender equality and efforts to improve gender equality in grade one to seven and in grade eight and nine. Grade eight and nine are the upper grades and do not belong to the primary school itself but almost all schools involved in this research had upgraded their school and incorporated a grade eight and nine. Because of differences in gender equality between grade one to seven and grade eight and nine, these latter grades are also covered in this chapter. The last part of the chapter about gender equality consists of criticism of committee members on the emphasis on girls.

### **ACCESS TO EDUCATION**

PTAs, SIPCAs and head teachers were asked about reasons for children to stay out of school temporarily, to never enroll in school at all and about the activities of their schools to get these children to school.

#### **Absenteeism**

The most given answer on the question why children stay absent from school is child labor. It is common that children are temporarily absent from school to work in the fields or herd cattle. A man explains why parents decide to keep their children at home: *"some say I rather see my child will be home doing some other things, maybe herding cattle. Why going to school, the same reasons. They rather see their children in agriculture than going to school"* (PTA member, Chikonkomene upper basic school). A second reason for children to stay absent from school is hunger: *"children cannot learn on an empty stomach then they decide to stay out from school"* (PTA member, Mukalashi basic school). Instead of going to school *"the child thinks why shall I go to school when I am hungry they end up going into the bush to look for food"* (PTA member, Chikonkomene upper basic school). The distance to school also is an important contributing factor to absenteeism. Some children have to walk up to ten kilometers from school to

home and back again. Absenteeism is particularly common during the rainy season when streams flood and the schools become inaccessible. Also in this time a lot of children become sick due to malaria.

### **Why some children do not go to school**

In four schools participants stated that *“these days those cases [children not going to school at all] are very few, if you see now you see that parents now value education”* (PTA member, Lifwambula upper basic school). The other eleven schools however mentioned that there are still children in the villages who are not going to school. Some of the reasons the participants mentioned are the same as for absenteeism, like the distance to school and doing work at home in the fields or herding cattle. A new reason is a negative attitude of parents towards education. A man explains: *“naturally it is difficult for those parents who have not attained formal education, because they did not have access, they have a negative attitude towards education”* (PTA member, Mukalashi upper basic school). Parents who did not attend school themselves do not completely understand the value of education according to the participants: *“some parents who have never been to school say: I don’t need education, look I am able to do farming I am able to survive, why should my child go to school?”* (PTA member, Chamuka basic school). Another reason for the negative attitude of parents towards education is a lack of job opportunities and children end up doing the same thing as their parents do without attending education, that is farming: *“the other one is unemployment rates are so high that most of the pupil that complete school are not employed so they don’t see the purpose. If there are no jobs there is no use in going to school”* (SIPC member, Mupelkese upper basic school). Religious beliefs also could have fed this negative attitude in the past, a man explains: *“one of the reasons that maybe makes one of the parents to not send their children to school, is based on religions, there are some churches which looked at Plan Zambia for example when it came here as a satanic organization (...) such activities were common in the past, but now there is a positive change (...) these days they have seen the activities Plan has been doing and the good things they are still doing so now they have a positive feeling towards Plan, those thoughts of the past are no longer the case (...) these days those cases are very few, if you see now you see that parents now value education”* (PTA member, Lifwambula upper basic school). The final reason for children to stay out of school is financial. In Zambia grade one to seven is free education, but children in the upper grades have to pay a school fee. In theory poor children are not limited to attend and complete primary school because of financial constraints. In reality however, children are sometimes limited to go to school. Although the government has a policy that children can go to school without an uniform, the importance of an uniform is still stressed by a lot of schools. Therefore the uniform is still an obstacle to some parents to send their children to school: *“some parents don’t send their children to school because of lacking funds for an uniform”* (SIPC member, Chankumba basic school). Furthermore three non- SIP schools mentioned that children stay out of school because their parents are not able to buy pencils, books and shoes. It is noticeable that shoes were mentioned as reason to stay out of school because during the visits at the school most children seemed to attend classes barefooted. Children from broken families, single or double orphans also struggle to go to school. They can go to school barefooted and without an uniform but someone has to earn money to buy food: *“others they*

*are orphans and there is no one who take care of them, it is just a child-headed house, and then they have no support in any way so they will tend not to come to school, they just be in the village” (head teacher, Kaputi basic school).*

## **Efforts to improve access to education**

### *User fees*

Children in grade one to seven do not have to pay user fees. Children in the upper grades, grade eight and nine however do have to pay user fees. The amount of money children have to pay varies between schools from “30 000 Kwacha per child per term” (PTA member, Malombe basic school) and “80 000 Kwacha per term” (PTA member, Mupekelese upper basic school) up to “100 000 Kwacha per term (...) Each term they give also 32 pockets of cement which are going to use to mold blocks” (PTA member, Chamuka basic). Converted into euro’s these amounts are respectively: €6,25, € 16,70 and € 20,90 (exchange rate of June 11, 2011) per term. For parents who are not able to pay these amounts some schools have other options. In six schools, of which two non-SIP, two non-active SIP and two SIP schools, parents are allowed to come to the school and do labor instead of paying the user fees. Four other schools, three non- SIP school and one non-active SIP school, excuse parents from paying fees at all if they prove to be unable to pay the user fees. Active SIP schools are less helping when it comes to the payment of school fees. Two of the five active SIP schools put pressure on parents to pay user fees against one non-active SIP school and none of the non-SIP schools. One of the SIP schools and the non-active SIP school do not give examination results to children whose parents did not pay the user fee: “if the parents cannot pay for them we allow them to continue learning, but we don’t give them the results at the end of the day. It will be that thing that their results are being withheld that will cause them to look for money” (PTA member, Nachiyaba basic school) and “they have to pay to get their exam results if they don’t pay then we don’t give them, it is the end of their career” (SIPC member, Mupekelese upper basic school). The other active SIP school does not allow children to continue learning without paying user fees: “that child is send away from the school, it is not the interest of the school administration, but of the parent. So if a child stops coming to school we blame the parent and not ourselves” (SIPC member, Chankumba basic school).

### *The uniform, books and shoes*

All schools are legally required to allow children in the school without an uniform. All the schools involved in this study indeed allowed this. The schools however, are not supporting this and encourage parents to find money to buy an uniform. The reason for this is a negative psychological effect on children who come to school without an uniform, a head teacher explains: “very most of them they don’t feel good, once they come without the uniform the performance goes down, because all the friends have the uniform so the child will tend not being very happy in the class. Once you give that child an uniform you even see a change even in attendance that child will become better” (head teacher, Kaputi basic school). In order to help children acquiring an uniform, shoes and school books teachers in nine schools, of which three active SIP schools, all non-active SIP schools and two non-SIP schools, identify poor children and give their names to nongovernmental organizations, such as the Churches

Health Association of Zambia (CHAZ) and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). These organizations in turn choose each year a certain number of children to support. Identifying poor children is however *"a major challenge, it comes to identification of those parents and the children it might be very difficult to identify. Sometimes these people are very poor but in the family there is someone to support them, but this time people are running away from extended families, so it is difficult to know which family is more vulnerable, those are unable to come to school"* (Head teacher, Mukalashi upper basic school). The organizations are not able to assist all the poor children because there are too many of them. Three non-SIP schools and one active SIP school are therefore using their fundraise projects to earn a bit of money and *"buy them a uniform and a few books now and then"* (head teacher, Lifwambula upper basic school).

#### *Other efforts to improve access to education*

In order to improve access to education for children living on a far distance from schools, three active SIP schools provide shelters near the school. In one school the PTA talked to *"parents near by the school or even teachers, we ask them why don't you keep this child from Monday to Friday and Saturday and Sunday it goes back to where it belongs"* (PTA member, Lombwa basic school) and one other school *"turned two houses which were meant for teachers and then we gave them to pupils so that at least they can stay here and at least we provide for studying in the evenings (...) we said now since the pupils are moving long distances coming to school and we need to give them at least quality education if we had to do that and the parents are willing to support their children while they are staying here, let them be staying here"* (SIPC member, Kaputi basic school). Children who make use of these facilities provide food for themselves and they do not have to pay rent *"because we have looked at the inability in this area. That means that we are not going to achieve what we want to do"* (SIPC member, Kaputi basic school). One non-SIP school tries to improve access to education for the youngest children by establishing a community school for children up to grade three or four when they are able to walk the distance to the non-SIP school itself. The head teacher of this non-SIP school explains the involvement of his school in community schools: *"(...) we come along to them with books and we give them guidelines on how to teach and sometimes when we have time we monitor their activities"* (head teacher, Chikonkomene upper basic school). Another initiative to improve access for disadvantaged children comes from an active SIP school. The school is *"trying to make even the disabled children have access to the school. I think you have seen there are steps and there someone can push a wheelchair, we are also trying our best to put up toilets which are accessible for disabled children. We also advise parents to see to it that a disabled child also has the right to education. If there is a bit of a distance the child can be brought to school by parents or relatives"* (PTA member, Malombe basic school).

## THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

### **View of committees on the quality of education in their school**

The view on school quality differs between the school types. Non- SIP schools are most divided in their opinion about the school quality: the PTAs of two schools believe their quality is low, the PTAs of three schools feel that their quality is ok or feel that they are making progress, the PTA of the last non-

SIP school regards its quality as excellent. According to the PTA the quality of their school is excellent because the performances of the children are good and there are children able to go to grade ten after completing grade nine at their school. The PTAs and SIPC of non-active SIP schools and active SIP schools all regard the quality of their school as very low, low or ok. The causes of low quality education mentioned by the committees of all three types of schools are similar. The most important reason, mentioned by eleven of the fifteen schools, is a shortage of teachers which results in a teacher- pupil ratio which the committees feel is too high: *“you find the classrooms are quite crowded instead of 40 children in one classroom you find 55 to 70 children in one classroom, we don’t have enough room, the other thing is teacher accommodation, one teacher is teaching 70 children that is not healthy according to the school system, there should be no more than 35 or 40 children in one class ”* (PTA member, Malombe basic school). The reason for this shortage of accommodation is explained by a man: *“(…) why don’t we have enough teachers, because we don’t have enough teachers accommodation. Those are the most challenges we are facing at this school”* (PTA member, Malombe basic school). Other reasons that contribute to a poor quality of education are a shortage of desks: *“(…) so that is 15 desks or so for each room and in a class we have 50 and above number of pupils so meaning not all of them can sit on a desk, so many pupils are still sitting on the floor”* (SIPC member, Mupekelese upper basic school), a shortage of learning and teaching materials, poor conditions of buildings: *“and some of the buildings are old...old, old, old buildings”* (PTA member, Chamuka basic school) and *“(…) it is 5 years since the rehabilitation but it is not done well, you find cracks, the ceiling is not well anymore, so we have to re-do it, the doors are almost gone”* (PTA member, Kabanga basic school). In two schools the government is criticized because they encourage children to go to school in the light of the millennium development goals for 2015, while in meantime the government is not doing enough to increase the capacity of schools to teach all those children: *“to add on that question the quality is compromised by the shortage of teachers, then our government has certain policies like the go back to school so you find that some classes are so huge, some classes maybe have about 60 pupils, so you are compromising like that you know. It is big, it is overcrowded. The government is saying go back to school but in terms of the infrastructure the government is doing very little. Also in terms of teaching and learning materials, they are not enough here”* (PTA member, Lifwambula upper basic school).

### **Efforts to improve the quality of education**

Since a shortage of teachers was in most schools impacting the quality of education according to the committees, the most often mentioned activity of schools to improve the quality of education is the construction of teachers houses: *“the activities that improved the quality of the education is the building of teachers houses, the putting up of more staff houses, so the number of teachers could go up. Because that is the biggest problem we have, and then the lack of accommodation for teachers. There is a major role for the community to build those teaches houses”* (PTA member, Mupekelese upper basic school). All active SIP schools, two non-active SIP schools and all non-SIP schools are involved in the construction of teachers houses. So in total thirteen of the fifteen schools are building teacher’s accommodation. A second and related effort of committees is the construction of classrooms. Eleven of the fifteen schools, four of the five active SIP schools, two of the four non-active SIP schools and

five of the six non-SIP schools are just completed, are building or are planning to build a new classroom block. One man explains the efforts of his committee to collect the necessary materials: *"we molded bricks the number 180 000 bricks, pan bricks, we managed to transport cement from Munema, because of the bad roads we had to collect them from Munema and bring them here, some 600 pockets of cement and other materials"* (SIPC member, Lombwa basic school). Despite there is still a lot of work to be done, participants do believe in a positive future, like a head teacher states: *" (...) then I can go to the government: we have enough classrooms we have enough houses, give us more teachers. We can make it! Like what Obama said, YES WE CAN!, we can!"* (head teacher, Kampekete basic school). Another construction project which is mentioned by four schools is the construction of toilets for teachers and pupils. The efforts of committees apart from construction projects are the provision of learning and teaching materials, monitoring teachers: *"we have the right to go in the back of the classroom to make sure that the teacher is teaching what he or she should teach"* (PTA member, Nachiyaba basic school) and the establishment of an Early Childhood Care and Development center (ECCD center). The ECCD center is only mentioned by two active SIP schools: *"the SIPC was involved in the set up of the Early Childhood and Development Centers. Because when children have gone to an ECCD-center it is easier for the teachers in grade 1 to teach"* (SIPC member, Mupekelese upper basic school). One SIPC in an active SIP school mentioned a very specific result of their sensitization activities which has impact on the quality of education: *"because of sensitization the children come now with bicycles from far away, so that they are not exhausted when they arrive, so that they participate fully in the class"* (SIPC member, Malombe basic school).

## GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

### **Gender equality in grade one to seven**

In all schools participants stated that the situation in their school related to gender equality is very different from the past. After sensitization campaigns of the government and nongovernmental organizations on the importance of education for girls a change has occurred in the community: *"sometime back parents didn't know to say that even a girl can get education. Now after some civic education through the NGOs like Plan Zambia, YMCA and others they have now brought the knowledge in the parents that even a girl can be educated, and once a girl is educated even the whole nation gets education or development will come in that way"* (PTA member, Lombwa basic school). Not only the composition of the pupils in classes changed also the content of the education changed: *"in the past we had certain subjects which were for boys and other for girls, but now they learn the same. Economics was for boys and agricultural sciences, but now it is mixed. Both sexes do both"* (SIPC member, Malombe basic school). Thirteen of the fifteen schools assured that boys and girls are doing the same learning and sports activities and after school chores. In one non- SIP school boys and girls are doing different sports activities, soccer for the boys and netball for girls, and one non-active SIP school strives to have separated classes for boys and girls. According to this school it is in the interest of girls to separate them from boys because girls would feel more free to participate in the class. The head teacher of this school sheds light on this: *"especially when they come to grade 7 level that is when the girls are maybe reaching maturity level, so in class they don't feel that free anymore, as a result also*

*the performance reduces. That's why at one time, me I very much favor that idea of single sex classes. If you have single sex classes the performances will be very high, there is no sex completion (...) in fact you find that a girl have been doing very well from grade one, up to grade 6 there she reaches 6 or 7 she calms down a bit (...) it could be culturally because girls are not allowed to be so vocal. So they calm down"* (head teacher, Nachiyaba basic school).

### **Efforts to achieve or ensure gender equality in grade one to seven**

In twelve of the fifteen schools the committees are actively involved in the selection of children in grade one. The first answer of these schools on the question how they ensure gender equality in their school was that they balance the enrolment of boys and girls in grade one. Most schools however, said when asked that they do not refuse children if one sex is overrepresented in the applicants. Five schools did acknowledge that they do refuse children: *"the policy of the government about gender equality we have to balance, yeah if the number of boys we acquire is full we say we cut here, try another school (...) we strive to have the number for girls a bit higher than boy "* (PTA member, Kabanga basic school) and *"yes, we have to look at numbers we try by all means to have an equal number of boys and girls "*(PTA member, Mukalashi upper basic school). Most of the time the reason is the limited accommodation of the school, but while selecting the schools make sure that the gender of the selected pupils is equal. Six schools, of which three active SIP schools, one non-active SIP school and two non- SIP schools, state that they encourage parents and teachers during meetings and in the villages to send girls to school and to treat them equal at home and in the class: *" the PTA has come in strongly to tell the parents that all the children are the same. Traditionally a girl was send home after school and was told you have to do this and that why the boy was left to school free, maybe to attend to school activities. Now they are told that they have to attain equal education. It doesn't matter if they are a boy or a girl, they are the same and they can do certain things equally"* (PTA member, Mukalashi basic school).

### **Gender equality in grade and nine**

In grade eight and nine it is more difficult to maintain gender equality than in the lower grades. In more than half of the schools the drop-out for girls is higher than for boys in the upper grades. In seven schools, active SIP schools, non-active SIP schools and non SIP schools, the reasons for this are early marriages and pregnancies: *"drop-outs are here, especially because of pregnancies. The PTA tries to help because we have a lot of pregnancies here and early marriages. That has become a challenge to the community and the PTA"* (PTA member, Chikonkomene upper basic school).

#### *Early marriages and pregnancies*

The early marriages are especially affecting young girls: *"unfortunately especially a girl child is always married off at an early age"* (PTA member, Shimbilo basic school). When asked what age is meant by 'an early age' the answer is *" 14, 15, 16 years"* (PTA member, Shimbilo basic school). The age at which the pregnancies start to occur is thirteen: *"we have situations of early pregnancies, you find a child of 13 years and you find pregnant, you see, that is quite unfortunate"* (PTA member, Nachiyaba basic school).

There are several reasons for girls to become pregnant. A first reason are the initiation ceremonies: *“the initiation ceremony the way they teach these children in this initiation ceremony they don’t teach them well. They teach them everything that a child cannot even is not even supposed to get. At every stage a child should be taught certain things that are supposed to be on that age. But the pitfall in the initiation ceremony, they are over teaching the pupils. And once they move out of there they like to experiment on what they have been taught”* (Head teacher, Kaputi basic school). In this ceremonies children get sexual education from older women in the community. In most communities it is not practiced any more in an official setting but there are still parents who expose their children to these ceremonies. Five schools blame the parents and the communities because of their cultural believes and lack of guidance. One head teacher gives an example of the lack of guidance, according to him a *‘problem was the way they construct houses. They will construct a house in such a way that parents will have their own house and the a girl child also has her own, somewhere without being in the same building. So that also has created a big problem. It is making them from be free from the support from the parents at night because everyone can enter that house and do whatever they want to do with that child ’* (Head teacher, Kaputi basic school). Another reason for girls to get involved in sexual activities is the reward they get: *“a girl maybe doesn’t have necessity of school. So what does she do, she goes maybe talking with boys or men who give her money to buy books or even stockings. The parents cannot pay for it and the girl goes out to get it”* (PTA member, Chikonkomene upper basic school). The government has a ‘go back to school’ policy which encourages girls to go back to school after giving birth to their child. Most schools however report that it is difficult to get such girls back to school: *“ at this school it is rare for me, I haven’t seen any come back. Last year I talked to a girl, she even didn’t know how she became pregnant, she said madam it was just once, the boy is from another school. I told her to come back to school, but I haven’t seen her since”* (PTA member, Mukalashi basic school) at another school only half of the pregnant girls came back to school: *“last time in 2007 the number was quite high about 13 or something and last year we had about 6 who dropped out because of pregnancies. And some of them, I think 3 of the 6 have come back, they are attending class now, the other 3 I don’t know where they are”* (head teacher, Chibombo central upper basic school). Furthermore not every school has a positive feeling about this ‘go back to school’ policy. According to a head teacher of a non-active SIP school it encourages other girls to get pregnant because they do not have to quite school but are allowed to come back after delivering the child. In this way attending school and having a child can be combined.

### **Preventing early marriages and pregnancies**

In twelve schools, four active SIP schools, three non-active SIP schools and five non-SIP schools, sex education is given to the children in order to prevent pregnancies: *“yes we do, we talk with them about how to prevent pregnancies, it is a part of the curriculum”* (PTA member, Mupelkese upper basic school). During these sex education lessons children are told how they are supposed to behave, attention is given to HIV/ aids and they are learn how to prevent themselves from getting a disease or becoming pregnant. Committees of four of these schools explicitly mentioned the education about condoms: *“ they tell them to abstain, but they also tell them about the condom use. You cannot know if they will*

*follow to abstain so you also have to give them an alternative, how the condom works, how to use a condom. So they come here to talk and the pupils are aware” (PTA member, Chibombo central upper basic school).* A lot of the marriages are coming forth out of the cultural practices. To stop the early marriages the government has developed a policy. Committees educate parents about this policy and try to discourage the early marriages: *“we are educating our fellow parents. At this time even the early marriages are not encouraged. It is a government policy that states that a child should not be forced into early marriage, so if that is done by the parent then the parent is probably taken to court ” (PTA member, Malombe basic school).* In another active SIP school the SIPC is actually involved in preventing early marriages: *“if they take a secret marriage down the road there, they call the SIPC so we are just gathered with the teachers. If they do it again we take them to the police” (SIPC member, Kaputi basic school).* However, the prevention of early marriages and pregnancies is in most schools limited to the provision of sex education.

### **Criticism on the emphasis on girls**

In one school the participants ventilated their negative feelings about the emphasis on gender equality. They stress that gender equality is important but they feel that there is too much emphasis on girls: *“well there might be too much emphasis on the girl and the boys are almost now a bit neglected. Like we have a high school here but it is only for girls, there is no one for boys. So now everyone talks about the girl child but no one talks about the boy child. The boy child now starts to feel unimportant” (PTA member, Mupekelese upper basic school).* One member believes that child rights in Zambia are only there to protect the girl child and not the boy child. Another member explains his feelings about the campaigns on gender equality: *“what I mean gender equality is a good concept when both the boys and the girls are regarded equal and both a boy and a girl should have access to education equal. Now there is more emphasis on the girl but it should be equal. Especially the NGOs and the government only talk about the girl child, if a boy child drops- out of school, no one talks about it but if a girl child drops-out it is a problem, they will talk. They should be promoted equally. The efforts on girls is much more” (SIPC member, Mupekelese upper basic school).*

## **CONCLUSIONS/DISCUSSION**

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This research attempted to answer the question if a difference can be found in the quality of schools and the efforts of school management committees towards the Education For All (EFA) goals about access and quality of education and gender equality in schools between schools which implemented the School Improvement Program (SIP) of Plan International and schools which did not. The sub research questions were:

- How is community participation practiced in schools which were selected by Plan to implement the SIP and schools which were not selected?
- How is the quality of education in SIP-schools compared to the quality of non-SIP schools in terms of pupil- teacher ratio, book- pupil ratio and examinations scores of grade seven?

- What difference can be found between SIP- schools and non-SIP- schools in the efforts towards the access of education, the quality of education and gender equality in schools?

The results of this study will now be discussed and concluded per topic. At the end of this section the main conclusion will be given in short.

## **PARTICIPATION**

The participation of the three types of schools and the differences between the PTA and the SIPC are discussed. Furthermore the results are compared with the literature about the different levels of participation.

### **FUNCTION OF THE PTA AND SIPC**

The function of the PTAs in non-SIP schools, non-active SIP schools and active SIP schools were found to be similar. The PTAs call themselves the overseers or 'mother body' of the school. The main functions of the PTA are to plan and carry out construction projects, act as an intermediary between schools and the community, mobilize the community to participate in projects and fundraising. The majority of non- SIP schools mentioned to ask head men to mobilize and organize the community, whereas only very few non-active and active SIP schools mentioned this. Furthermore a difference between the school types is found in the method of fundraising. Special projects to raise funds are more present in non- SIP schools and active SIP schools than in non-active SIP schools. In non- SIP schools these projects were initiated by the PTA and in active SIP schools both the PTA and the SIPC were involved in these projects. The main function of the SIPC in active SIP schools is to sensitize parents on the importance of education. During meetings in the community and in the school parents are encouraged to send their children to school. Other SIPC functions are identifying developmental aspects in the school and mobilizing the community.

### **DECISION MAKING AND RELATIONSHIPS OF THE PTA AND SIPC**

In all active SIP schools the PTA and the SIPC work closely together. The relationship between the PTA and the SIPC is however characterized by a higher position of the PTA. The reasons for this according to PTA and SIPC members is the fact that the presence and involvement of the PTA is obligated by the government while the SIPC is an initiative of a NGO and not recognized by the government. In all three school types the relations between the different members within the committees are equal according to the members. The PTA makes in most schools decisions in cooperation with the school management after a discussion or voting. Members of the SIPC committee stated to make their decisions together with the PTA despite their lower position in most schools. According to the criteria of Rose (2003) the participation of the PTAs and SIPCs in all three types of schools can generally be regarded as 'genuine' participation, because the required contribution of committee members in the process of decision making is present. Because of the same reason the participation of these schools fits in the highest rungs of the ladder of Arnstein (1969), the degrees of citizen power. When looking at the four models of parent participation in school management committees of Shatkin and Gershberg (2007) it can be concluded that the fourth model,

called parent participation, is applicable to the majority of schools. According to Shatkin and Gershberg school improvement is most expected in this model because parents, teachers and head teachers are working together towards a common goal.

#### THE QUALITY OF THE PTAs AND SIPCs

The members of PTAs of non- SIP schools, non- active SIP schools and active SIP schools generally consider the quality of their committee as good. According to them they have enough influence in as well the community as the school. All PTAs however were less satisfied with the number of activities they carry out. The majority of the PTAs complained to be limited in their activities as a consequence of financial constraints. There was no difference found in this between non- SIP schools on the one hand and non-active and active SIP schools on the other hand, while support in construction and school supplies is part of the SIP. A major challenge for the SIPC to maintain a good quality is the decreasing number of trained members. Members are voted out or move out of the area and leave gaps in the committees. The SIPC themselves do not train new members to maintain the same number of members. In three of the nine schools which were selected by Plan to implement the SIP this process led to the end of the SIPC. In total four of the nine initial SIP schools had no active SIPC anymore. Pryor (2005) stressed the importance of a basic understanding of committee members about education. Since a lot of parents in the rural areas of Zambia have not been to school they have no personal experience with education. The SIP tries to overcome this by training the new SIPC before the program starts at a school. The problem however starts when trained people leave the SIPC and the gaps are not filled because there is no training for new members. According to Farah (1997) this situation can be prevented by supporting and close monitoring of the school management committees (Fullan & Watson, 2000). A second reason for the inactivity of SIPC according to former members is too little involvement of Plan in these schools. Plan promised these schools to support them in construction projects but they did not fulfill this promise or did not maintain contact after supporting the schools. Committee members in these schools were disappointed and because of a lack of money the SIPC was not able to implement projects, as a consequence the SIPC became inactive. To activate the SIPC again it is important according to the former SIPC members to elect and train new members and to reduce the risk of members leaving the community without receiving new trained members.

#### DREAMS FOR THE SCHOOL

In schools where the SIPC is active the extra value of the SIPC is their role in sensitization and also the long term vision they developed for the school. The PTA makes a new plan every year but the SIPC has a vision and made an Action Plan to achieve improvement in the school. A difference was seen between the school types in the dreams they hold for their school. The most important and most frequently mentioned dream of non- SIP schools is to upgrade the school to a high school. The dreams of the active and non- active SIP schools are more divers. The dream to upgrade the school to a high school is mentioned by only two active and one non-active SIP school. Other dreams of both active and non- active SIP schools are access to electricity in order to educate elderly and drop-outs,

a skills training program for drop-outs and a computer room. Two dreams are only mentioned by active SIP schools these are having a library and a dormitory for children who live far from the school. When comparing the dreams of the three school types it can be concluded that non- SIP schools are mostly focused on a vertical dream, this means a focus on a specific improvement. The active and non-active SIP schools on the other hand are more focused on horizontal dreams or broad- based improvements. The dreams of the active and non-active SIP schools are more looking into the school environment and the broader environment of the community. The SIPC is however limited in achieving the desired improvement because of financial constraints. It can be concluded that there is no much difference in community participation between the different school types.

It can be concluded that the only differences found in participation between schools which implemented the SIP and schools which did not, are the presence of a long term vision in active and non-active SIP schools, the different character of the dreams for the school of active and non-active SIP schools on the one hand and non-SIP schools on the other hand and because sensitization is the key role of most SIPC's, active SIP schools seem to give more attention to educating the community on the importance of education.

### **THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The results on the indicators of the quality of education are discussed and compared with the scientifically standards. The quality of education in the three types of schools is compared with each other.

#### **TEACHER – PUPIL RATIO**

According to the studies of Benbow and colleagues (2007) and Michaelowa (2001) the quality of education begins to decrease when the teacher- pupil ratio exceeds 1:40 and stabilizes again at a ratio of 1:62. When a class has 62 pupil the quality of education does no longer decrease when more pupils are added. The class sizes of grade one, four and seven were given to make a comparison between the different school types. Only one school, a non- SIP school, was found to have in all three classes a teacher- pupil ratio lower than 1:40, all the other schools exceeded this ratio in two or more grades. This means that in all but one school the quality of education is affected by the number of pupils in one class. Furthermore it was found that all active SIP schools had in all classes a teacher- pupil ratio which is larger than 1:62. This implicates that in all active SIP schools the quality of education is maximally affected by the high number of pupils. This was also the case for one non- SIP school, one non-active SIP school, three individual non-SIP classes and two individual non-active SIP classes.

#### **BOOK – PUPIL RATIO**

None of the schools meet the book- pupil ratio of 1:1 which was found to have a significant positive impact on the learning of pupils by a study of Michaelowa (2001). Only one school, an active SIP school, meets the standards of the government of a book- pupil ratio of 1:2 (Ministry of Education, 2005). In one non-active SIP school two classes had a book- pupil ratio of 1:2. In most other schools

the book- pupil ratios vary between 1:3 and 1:5. In some individual classes of a school the book- pupil ratios are somewhat larger, in these classes up to eight, ten or fifteen pupils share one book. There were no clear differences found between the different school types. This is noticeable because one part of the SIP is to support schools in the provision of school supplies. A possible reason for this could be the selection criterion used by Plan to select potential school for the SIP. All SIP schools were selected because they were performing below the standards of other schools in the area. The support of school supplies in active SIP schools and non-active SIP schools could have been only enough to reach a book- pupil ratio which is equal to the ratios in non- SIP schools.

#### EXAMINATION RESULTS OF GRADE SEVEN

The statistic test performed on the results of the public examinations of grade seven revealed a significant difference between all three types of schools. However only the difference between non-active SIP schools and non- SIP schools and the difference between non- active SIP schools and active SIP schools proved to be relevant. Pupils of non-active SIP schools had better examination results than pupils of both non-SIP schools and active SIP schools. It is however necessary to notice that also the relevance found for these differences is only small. This results therefore should be interpreted with caution.

These results suggest that the quality of education in active SIP schools has improved to an almost equal level of quality as in non- SIP schools. This improvement however is not greater than the improvement in the quality of education in non- active SIP schools. In fact non- active SIP schools were found to have better teacher-pupil ratios, book- pupil ratios and better results on the examinations in grade seven. The non-active SIP schools were selected by Plan to implement the SIP on the same criterion as the active SIP schools. The quality of education in non-active SIP school was thus also below the standards of other schools in the area a couple of years ago. It can be concluded that the presence of an active SIPC did not lead to more improvements in the quality of education than in the schools where the SIPC became inactive.

#### **EFFORTS TOWARDS EDUCATION FOR ALL GOALS**

The activities of committees to improve the access and quality of education and gender equality in schools is discussed below. Furthermore the information about the situation in and around the schools in relation to the EFA goals is concluded.

#### ACCESS TO EDUCATION

##### **Absenteeism and not going to school at all**

Several reasons were found which explain why children stay temporarily out of school or never attend school at all. The main reasons for absenteeism are child labor, hunger, the distance to school, inaccessibility of the school during the rainy season and the high prevalence of malaria during the rainy season. Reasons such as child labor, hunger and the distance do also apply to children who never attend school. There are however also specific reasons why children never enroll in school. A

negative attitude of parents was mentioned frequently by participants. Some parents who have not been to school themselves seem to have difficulties in understanding the value of education. A contributing factor in this are the unemployment rates. Participants explained that most children who completed school do not find a job and end up farming, just like their parents did all those years without attending education. This process makes it difficult for parents to understand why children should go to school. A possible way to convince parents is to connect to their world. Parents could be explained that school experience can also be beneficial for farmers, literacy skills for example are useful in reading labels on agricultural products such as insecticides or fertilizers. Apart from this there is also a financial reason for parents to not send their children to school. Despite children are allowed by the government to go to school without an uniform, schools still tend to attach importance to it and consequently the uniform keeps an obstacle to some parents. Other obstacles are school requisites parents have to buy such as pencils, books and even shoes. One specific group of children was mentioned to have struggles in going to school, these are the single and double orphans. Children in child- headed homes have the responsibility to take care of their brothers and sisters and to earn money to buy food. Especially these children are the ones who do not attend school.

### **Efforts to improve the access to education**

Schools were found to assist poor children in several ways. The first and most mentioned activity of non- SIP schools and non-active SIP schools is assisting parents in paying the user fees by allowing parents to pay in labor or kind. It is remarkable that precisely active SIP schools tend to be less helping, while these schools are being supported by an NGO which especially aims to help disadvantaged and vulnerable children. Only two of the five active SIP schools allow parents to pay in kind or labor. The other three active SIP schools do not tell the examination results before parents have paid the school fees or force children to drop- out of school. Another way in which schools try to improve the access to education is to reduce the obstacle of the uniform. All non- active SIP schools, the majority of active SIP schools and one third of the non- SIP schools try to this recommending poor children to nongovernmental organizations, which support a number of children each year by providing an uniform, school requisites and paying user fees. Furthermore half of the non- SIP schools and one active SIP school use their fundraising projects to help children buying an uniform. Apart from these efforts some active SIP schools have other methods of improving access to their school which are not found in non-SIP school and non-active SIP schools . Three active SIP schools provide shelters or dormitories near the school for children who live far away from the school. During the week selected children of grade eight and nine are allowed to live there without paying rent. In the construction projects one active SIP school considered the accessibility of the school for wheelchairs. The school had a special wheelchair entrance next to the small stairs. Finally one non-SIP schools is establishing a community led school in one of the surrounding communities because the distance to the school is too far for the youngest children.

### **THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND EFFORTS TO IMPROVE IT**

The majority of the committee members of non- SIP schools found the quality of their school to be ok,

committee members of only two non- SIP schools thought that the quality of the education in their school was low. The committee members of the non-active SIP schools and active SIP schools were less optimistic. All committees of these schools look at their schools as low quality schools. During this research there were however no big differences found between non-active SIP schools and non- SIP schools in their teacher- pupil ratios and book- pupil ratios. The examination results of pupils in non-active SIP schools were even somewhat higher than the results of pupils in non- SIP schools. The active SIP schools and non- SIP schools only differed in their teacher- pupil ratios. A reason for this could be that SIP schools were selected for the SIP because they were performing worse than non-SIP schools. Although the number of teachers in a school was a big concern for committee members there could have been more factors influencing the view on the quality of education than the three indicators used in this study. Committee members mentioned the poor state of buildings, a shortage of desks for children and a lack of teachers houses as contributing factor to their view on the quality of education. In order to improve the quality of education almost all schools are involved in construction projects such as the building of teachers houses, classroom blocks and toilets. The government of Zambia employs teachers for a particular school if the school has enough accommodation for teachers (Ministry of Education, 2005). In building teachers houses and classrooms the committees try to respond to the negative impact of the high teacher- pupil ratio on the quality of education. Two active SIP schools mentioned their involvement in the establishment of an Early Childhood and Development (ECCD) center. According to them children more ready for school when they have been to an ECCD-center which makes it easier for a teacher in grade one to teach them. This improves the education which is given in grade one, committee members reasoned. Furthermore committees mentioned to attend classes to see how the teacher is teaching and to provide teaching and learning materials, but it can be concluded that the main activities to improve the education are construction projects.

## GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

### **Gender equality and the efforts of committees in grade one to seven**

All committees and head teachers claim to have gender equality in their schools. In most schools this is reflected by the activities children have to do. In thirteen of the fifteen schools boys and girls are doing the same activities, including learning activities and sports. In two schools the situation is different in order to optimize the condition for girls in the school, one of the schools, a non- SIP school, separates boys and girls only during sport activities, but the other school, a non-active SIP school strives to separated classes of boys and girls. According to them this is better for the girl child because culturally she has to be calm and shy in the presence of boys and if the girls are in a separate class they would feel more free. The main activity of committee members to ensure the gender equality in their school is their involvement in the selection of pupils in grade one. Only one third of the schools however does actually refuse children of one sex if they are dominating the applications. A difference between active and non- active SIP schools on the one hand and non- SIP schools on the other hand is that the first school types stated more often to encourage parents to send their girl child to school.

### **Gender equality and the efforts of committees in grade eight and nine**

The committee member of half of the involved schools in this study found it more difficult to maintain gender equality in grade eight and nine as a consequence of early marriages and pregnancies. All three types of schools were struggling with this phenomenon. The reasons for young girls to get involved in sexual activities are the initiation ceremonies, a lack of guidance of the parents and the reward girls get in terms of school requisites. The 'go back to school' policy of the government to reduce the numbers of girls dropping-out is not in all schools positively received. The reason for this is that the possibility to come back to school after delivering the child enhances the attractiveness of the getting pregnant. According to the participant the 'go back to school' policy seems to send the message that it is fine to attend school and have a child. Most schools however are still encouraging girls to come back, but this seems to be difficult. In order to prevent girls from getting pregnant the majority of active, non- active and non- SIP schools gives sex education to their pupils. Only four schools, active and non- SIP schools, explicitly mentioned to educate their pupils on the use of condoms. The early marriages are used to be common in the culture of the participants. The government however has a policy which prohibits early marriages. Most schools educate parents on this policy and discourage early marriages. Committee members of one active SIP school even actually go to early marriages of their pupils in order to stop the marriage.

### **MAIN CONCLUSIONS**

The participation in all schools which initially started the SIP fits in the 'parent participation model' of Shatkin and Gershberg (2007) in which school improvement was most expected. The quality of education found in these schools was comparable to the quality of education in non- SIP schools, except for the teacher- pupil ratio which was larger in particularly active SIP schools. Since the SIP started, in most schools between 2003 and 2006, the quality of education in active SIP schools became almost equal to the quality of education in non- SIP schools. The same trend however was seen in schools where the SIPC became inactive. Therefore it can be concluded that the presence of an active SIPC cannot be associated with an improvement in the quality of education that is greater than the improvement which took place in non-active SIP schools. In relation to the efforts of committees towards the education for all goals about the access and quality of education and gender equality, it can be concluded that active SIP schools have more diverse projects to improve the access of education. The efforts of active SIP schools to improve the quality of education and gender equality were similar to the efforts of non-active and non- SIP schools.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The participation of the SIPCs fits in the participation model which is most likely to cause school improvement. A few recommendations are made in order to improve the impact of the SIPC on the quality of education. Firstly to prevent inactivity of the SIPCs as a consequence of leaving SIPC members the participants suggested new workshops of Plan to train the new members. A more

sustainable method however could be to train SIPC trainers. Like the old saying says: 'Give a man a fish and you have fed him for today. Teach a man to fish and you have fed him for a lifetime' the training of individual SIPCs through workshops of Plan led in half of the SIP schools to a SIPC which was only active for a short time. If Plans in contrast trains one or two persons per area who train the SIPCs and its new members when it is needed, the activity of the SIPC becomes independent of Plan. Close monitoring and support of the SIPCs by the trained person or Plan itself is advised in order to help the SIPC in translating the plans in actual results and improvements. Furthermore this study showed that in all SIP schools the quality of education was affected by the large teacher- pupil ratios and book- pupil ratios. More investments in the construction projects of schools and in the provision of textbooks could reduce these ratios and lead to improvements in the quality of education. This costs however a lot of money, therefore another option could be that Plan invests in a smaller number of schools. In such a case there would be more money available per school and the SIPCs would be able to carry out the plans they made in the Action Plan. The desired teachers houses and classroom blocks could be build which could lead to reduced teacher-pupil ratios. When the education of selected schools has reached a certain level of quality Plan could start the program in a new group of schools. In this way the participation of the SIPCs in combination with the investments leads to better conditions in the school, the smaller classes then enable teachers to practice the more child-centered way of teaching they learned in the teachers training. The synergy between the three pillars of the School Improvement Program becomes in this way more effective.

## LIMITATIONS

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A few limitations have to taken in account when considering the results of this study. The first limitation concerns the results of the public examinations in grade seven. The ink which is used by the government to print the sheets with the examination scores fades easily. In most schools the results of one or more pupils were because of this unreadable and had to be left out. The second limitation of this research is that there was no information available in the schools about the quality of education before the SIP started. In this study it is assumed that the quality of education in non-active SIP schools was comparable to the quality of education in active SIP schools before the SIP was implemented, because these nine schools were selected out of 117 primary schools in the district. It is however possible that non-active SIP schools already had a better quality of education than the active SIP schools before SIP started. A third limitation is selection bias. The non- SIP schools which were involved in this study were selected because Plan already had contact with these schools. It is possible that the situation in other non-SIP schools which do not have contact with a NGO is different from the selected non- SIP schools in this study. For further research it is recommended to visit the district office of education and ask for a list with contact information about all the schools in the area. In this way it is possible to select at random schools which did not implement the program. The final limitation of this study is the social desirability which could have played a role during the group interviews. This effect was reduced as much as possible by getting acquainted with the participants before the interview started.

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### APPENDIX A – TOPICLIST PTA AND SIPC

#### INTRODUCTION

- since when a member of the committee
- what is according to you the purpose of education

#### COMMITTEE

- general information (number of members, attended a training, relationships between members)
- what are the functions and activities of the committee?
- how are decisions made in this school/ in the committee?
- what do you think about the quality of this committee
- in SIP schools: what are the differences between the PTA and the SIPC

#### THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

- what do you think about the quality of education in this school
- how is this committee improving the quality of education in this school
- what are effects of this committee so far on the quality of education

#### ACCESS TO EDUCATION

- what are reasons for absenteeism
- what are reasons for children to not go to school at all
- what is this school doing to improve the access to this school

#### GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

- what is the situation in this school related to gender equality
- what is this committee doing to ensure gender equality in the school

## **APPENDIX B – TOPICLIST HEAD TEACHERS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- Since when are you working at this school as a head teacher

### **COMMITTEE (S)**

- general information PTA and/ or SIPC (number of members, attended a training, relationships between members)
- what are the functions and activities of the committee (s)?
- how are decisions made in the committee/ both committees?
- what do you think about the quality of the committee (s)?
- in SIP schools: what are the differences between the PTA and the SIPC?
- in SIP schools: how are the committees complementary to each other

### **THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

- how is this committee/ are the committees improving the quality of education in this school
- what are effects of the committee (s) so far on the quality of education

### **ACCESS TO EDUCATION**

- what are reasons for absenteeism
- what are reasons for children to not go to school at all
- what is this school doing to improve the access to this school

### **GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION**

- what is the situation in this school related to gender equality
- what is the committee/ are the committees doing to ensure gender equality in the school

**APPENDIX C – PART OF A SCHEMA USED TO ANALYSE THE RESULTS**

Analyzing SIPC			
		Schools with an active SIPC (interview number)	Schools with an inactive SIPC (interview number)
SIPC: General	There should be 20 members but we have 18	12	
	17 members at the beginning		18
	12 members	20	13(6P, 2T,4C),
	Elected at the beginning	20 (still)	18
	We have 15 members (teacher, pupils, pta, church leaders, head man, X officials from Plan and district)	15	
	There are 3 teachers, someone from the church, traditional leaders (representative of headman), parents and 2 school children	12,14, 20 (only dh, only first all those sectors)	18
	There are also women in the SIPC	12 ,20	13
	Each village is represented	14	
	Got a training, a 5 day workshop	11, 12,15	16,18
	Training was about working together with PTA/ community	20	
	Training was about child rights, fundraising and how to create a conducive learning environment for child and about SIPC itself		13
	The training should continue for new members and new pupil members	15	
	Parents and teachers have the same responsibilities/ powers	12,14,15	13,18
	DH= committee manager, parent = secretary. Divisions in work		
	The pupils give their view	12,14,15	13
	How can we work in their interest if we don't know the view of the pupils	12	
	Importance of pupils: pupils are able to realize their potential and know their rights	15	
	Pupils can enlighten then their fellow pupils	14,15	
	Pupils are the future leaders they have to be in the SIPC		