

ALIGN THE EDUCATION SECTOR PLAN WITH THE GIRLS' EDUCATION

Written by Aisha Cooper Bruce, Gender and Advocacy Consultant

For a copy of the FULL Policy Brief please click the link below:

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Summary Overview

The **National Policy on Girls' Education (NPGE 2021 – 2026)** aims to provide adequate access to affordable and quality education and promote gender equity and equality through the educational system. However, low budgetary allocation, gaps in technical capacity, and inadequate coordination, among other issues, have hindered national efforts in prioritizing girls' education in Liberia.

The **Education Sector Plan (ESP, 2023-2026)** provides a sector-wide strategy for implementing the National Education Act of 2011, corresponding policies, frameworks, and programs, streamlined using a system-based approach. The ESP referenced the NPGE as the national policy for addressing girls' education in Liberia.

This Policy Brief provides a comparison analysis of the provisions for girls' education as per the ESP and the linkages to the NPGE. The rollout of Education Sector Plan (ESP) can prioritize improving girl-learning outcomes, retention, and completion by supporting of the effective implementation of the National Policy on Girls Education. Our advocacy focus is to ensure that the indicators and outcomes within the National Policy on Girls Education (2021-2026) are aligned with and supported by the Education Sector Plan (2023-2026), to provide clear gender transformative targets and strategies for policy actors, funders, and practitioners.

Challenges in Ensuring Gender Equity and Equality in Education (Details in Full Policy Brief)

OUR AIM is to ensure that the indicators and outcomes within the National Policy on Girls Education (2021-2026) are aligned with and supported by the Education Sector Plan (2023-2026), to provide clear gender transformative targets and strategies for policy actors, funders, and practitioners.

POLICY POINTS

Policy Focus: Align the Education Sector Plan to the National Policy on Girls Education to ensure a Gender Transformative Education Sector

- 1. CONSOLIDATE:** Map out corresponding strategies to develop a comprehensive gender transformative implementation plan
- 2. COORDINATE:** Set up a multi-sectoral taskforce of national and international partners to guide the execution of a gender-transformative interventions in a holistic and coordinated manner.
- 3. EVALUATE:** Support the Planning, Research and Development at MoE to set a comprehensive MEL e-platform and tools for tracking girls' education indicators in Liberia.

See page full brief for more details.

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Comparative Analysis of the Education Sector Plan and the National Policy on Girls' Education

The full analysis, including sections on: Framing, Vision, Policy Goal, Gender strategy, Initiatives to address Social and Cultural Barriers, Monitoring, Evaluation, & Measurement, Education Financing are detailed in the FULL Policy Brief

Alignment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ESP references the NPGE as the national policy for addressing girls' education in Liberia. 2. Both policy documents reference the Education Reform Act 2011 and the following goals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Goal 2: promoting equal access to education opportunities for all, without discrimination; — Goal 5) promoting and protecting human rights with respect to access and opportunities for quality education; — Goal (7) promoting gender equity and equality throughout the educational system) 3. Both policy documents contribute to the achievement of SDG 4: Quality Education and SDG5: Gender Equality by ensuring implementations of national policy frameworks that are supportive of the rights of all children by increasing access to quality education and promoting gender equity and equality in Liberia's education system. 4. Both documents highlight the Ministry's commitment to the fundamental principles of equity, gender equality and inclusion, and the social justice goals of reducing disparities wrought by gender, disability, and geographical location. 5. There are many similarities and overlapping in documents in addressing cultural barriers and gender-sensitive programming. 6. Both documents call for the development of a MEL system to track indicators for promoting girls' education 7. The timeframes for the implementation the ESP and the NPGE are well-aligned for joint actions (ESP:2023-2026), (NPGE: 2021 – 2026)
Gaps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ESP strategies to address social-cultural demand-side barriers to girls' education are considered cross-cutting interventions. Therefore, they are broad and may not attract the needed attention and support. 2. The NPEG (16 indicators) are not clearly highlighted in the ESP as mandated by the National Girls Education Strategy. Hence, the plan only provides surface-level data through M&E reporting documents like the Annual School Census Report. 3. There is no mention of the Girls Education Report Card in the ESP's monitoring framework and how this dataset will inform changes and intervention designs within the ESP. 4. The NPGE does not have an implementation plan or a set budget, therefore the strategies have not been translated into measurable actions. 5. There are many areas in the ESP where gender outcomes are implied but are not clearly spelled out or adequately accounted for in the planned activities. (i.e. gender indicators like the number of males vs. the number of females were captured, but no intentional interventions to affect those indicators)

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6. The ESP doesn't capture clearly whether the total investment in Girls' Education over multi-years will reach the 5% MoE annual budget minimum threshold as mandated by the NPGE.
7. As per the ESP, the projected funding gap without external funding is large, totaling USD 325.5 million over the plan period and representing 34 per cent of the total plan cost.

CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATIONS

Gender disparities and imbalances in girls' education are common throughout Liberia. With:

1. the availability of legal frameworks and structures to promote gender equality, gender mainstreaming, and other related efforts,
2. Improved collaboration and partnership among state and non-state actors in promoting gender equality and mainstreaming in Liberia and
3. Increased national dialogues and strategic planning for gender mainstreaming and integration efforts,

the government and its partners can effectively work towards a gender transformative Education Sector Plan in (Liberia) that will adequately support the effective implementation of the NGPE, through the following recommendations:

1. **CONSOLIDATE:** Map out corresponding strategies to develop a comprehensive gender transformative implementation plan. The plan will identify the key strategies for promoting girls' education as outlined in both documents and develop gender transformative outcomes that will produce joint results for the ESP and NPGE. This plan will help to consolidate the financial and technical resources to meet joint targets. The implementation will focus on consolidating the finaical resources available in reaching the girls education financing target of least 5% of the Ministry of Education budget. The strategies will consider the perspective of diverse education stakeholders.
2. **COORDINATE:** Set up a multi-sectoral taskforce of national and international partners to guide the execution of gender-transformative interventions in a holistic and coordinated manner. There is a strategy in the ESP to develop an inter-sectoral task team to research the gendered root causes for the lack of access and early dropout, such as poverty, lack of parental guidance, cultural practices, SRGBV, school distances or location, and the quality of the learning environment and develop strategies to address these challenges. This taskforce should also be mandated to review and advise on policies and programming, to ensure the collective efforts of education officials and stakeholders are more gender transformative.
3. **EVALUATE:** Support the Planning, Research and Development department at MoE to set a comprehensive MEL e-platform and tools for tracking girls' education in Liberia. The government can ensure its commitment to research and develop in education by approving the National Education Sector Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Policy. Education partners can lend their technical and financial support in developing and managing a comprehensive M&E Tool and system for Girls Education. Tracking of the 16 indicators listed in the NPGE can be supported by the development of a database framework for girls' education. This database will translate into tools like the Girls' Education Report Card which will inform decision-making and adequate financing for Girls' Education. This will also be crucial in increasing targeted and cross-sector investments for inclusive and sustainable gender mainstreaming and integration efforts.

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EDUCATE HER'S CURRENT COMMITMENT

Since 2022, Educate HER has worked closely with the Department of Planning, Research, and Development to conduct quarterly data collection and analysis on girls' education. We are committed to expanding that partnership to provide tangible supports that are in line with section 3.1 of the ESP and section 7 of the NPGE. With financial support from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) Education Out Loud, through Oxfam IBIS, we will partner with MoE to develop, and manage the National Girls Education Dashboard. This dashboard is for stakeholders to access (gender-) disaggregated data needed to inform school policies and gender-specific programming and accelerate the National Policy on Girls' Education implementation. Educate HER intends to make sure data related to girls' education in Liberia is collected in line with the Girls' Education Policy, up to date, and publicly available for education stakeholders to review for program planning, education financing, and policy review.

ABOUT THE EDUCATE HER COALITION

The Educate HER Coalition strives to maintain already established relationships with the key stakeholders and build new relationships, where necessary. This coalition consists of approximately 30 civil society organizations, women's rights groups, media institutions, and allies committed to gender programming and advocacy in the education sector. To join the Educate HER coalition, please contact us at: info@educateherlib.com

Visit our website: <https://educateherlib.com/documentresource> to download the electronic copy of this document and the publications listed below:

- EDUCATE HER: Increasing Financial Investment for Gender Equality and Equity in Education Budget Policy
- National Budget Cycles & Decision-Making Processes for The National Policy on Girls' Education
- Promoting Gender Equality and Equity in Education Taking Collective Action to Ensure Girls' Attendance, Retention, and Completion (GARC) In Schools in Liberia
- Mapping of National Education Policy and Decision-Making Forums & Platforms
- County Action Plans to Promote Girls Education

Educate HER

c/o Helping Our People Excel (HOPE), Inc.
Tubman Boulevard/Sophie's Junction, Congo
Town, Monrovia, Liberia
Email: info@educateherlib.com
Website: www.educateherlib.com
Facebook: [Educate HER Liberia](https://www.facebook.com/EducateHERLiberia)
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