

Session introduction:

Issues on indicators of gender and education and their implications on gender-language advocacy

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International Conference on Language, Education and MDGs

(Bangkok, 9-11 November 2010)

Parallel Session IV (10 November 2010)

Track 2: Language and gender equality – “Language, gender, communication, advocacy in diverse communities in the Asia-Pacific region”

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS ON EDUCATION AND GENDER EQUALITY

- ❖ **MDG 3**: achieve gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2015.
- ❖ **EFA Goal 4**: achieve 50% reduction in female illiteracy by 2015.
- ❖ **EFA Goal 5**: achieve gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and gender equality in education at all level by 2015.

LIMITATIONS OF EFA/MDG INDICATORS FOR ASSESSING GENDER, LANGUAGE AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

- ❖ Sex disaggregated data are commonly used for education, economic and political participation with Gender Parity Index (GPI): for education, mainly school administrative data and youth/adult literacy
- ❖ General recognition that gender interacts with various key factors determining school attendance and learning achievement:
 - Socio-economic status, geographic location, ethnicity/race, etc.
 - **Language** is also recognized as one of the critical exclusion/discriminatory factors in education, for both girls and boys, but often under-looked or/and impact underestimated.
- ❖ Latest Global Education Digest (2010) focused on gender in education, but no specific reference to language
 - *Recognizes the difficulties in measuring households' ethnic, linguistic or religious affiliations.*

WE HAVE RESEARCH EVIDENCE: LANGUAGE AS A BARRIER TO GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

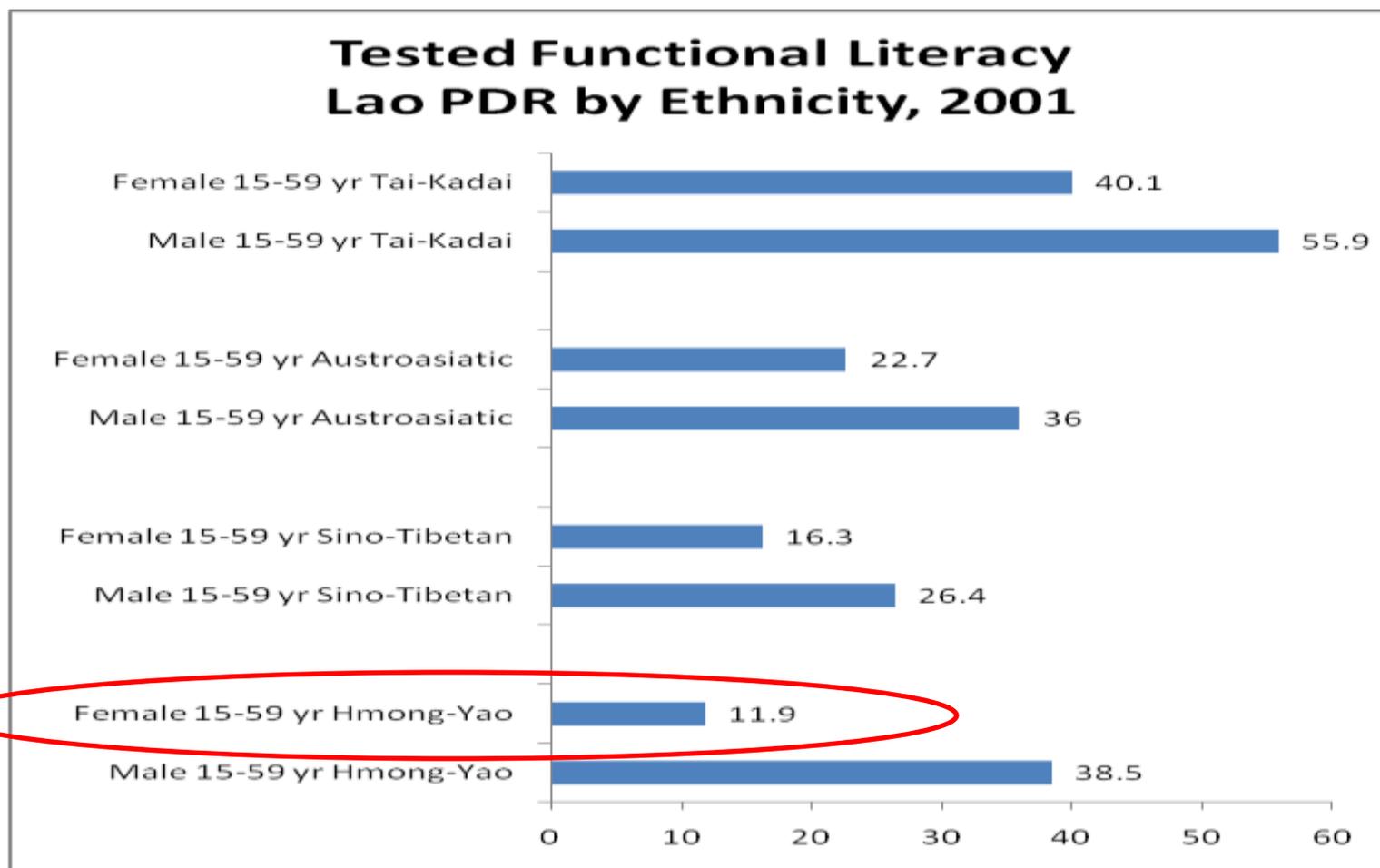
- ❖ Three groups most affected by injustices in language policy and planning in education: **women and girls, the poor, and groups with languages not represented in formal structures.**
- ❖ There are strong links between **language and gender injustice in the schools.**
- ❖ Girls/women are much less likely than boys/men to be exposed to the prestige language, because they are restricted to the home and family where the local language is spoken.
- ❖ Differences in language competence often go unnoticed at school, especially where girls are given fewer opportunities to speak and are expected to perform less well than boys.
- ❖ Girls speaking less may be interpreted as evidence of limited academic ability, rather than lack of exposure to the language of instruction.
- ❖ Girls (in Africa/Latin America) who learn in familiar languages stay in school longer, are more likely to perform better and to repeat grades less often than those who do not get home language instruction.
- ❖ Etc.

WHAT WE KNOW FROM THE EXISTING DATA SETS ON GENDER AND EDUCATION

- ❖ A lot has been achieved in access in primary education since 1990.
- ❖ Still, latest global data show that **63%** of countries have not yet reached gender parity in primary and secondary education though the target was set for 2005.
- ❖ Women still represent **2/3 (63-64%)** of the world's 796 million illiterates (2008) – this has not changed over the past 20 years.
- ❖ Current education and literacy initiatives are not responding to the complex needs of women and girls (men and boys) affected by compounded forms of discrimination.
- ❖ Gender discrimination and exclusion based on gender-bias in participation and learning processes continue to affect unequal educational attainment of girls and boys, women and men.
 - ***Language is one exclusion factor but no specific indicator for this.***

WHAT WE CAN READ FROM AVAILABLE/EXISTING DATA AND INDICATORS IN GENDER AND EDUCATION

Gender disparities in adult literacy observed by ethnicity and linguistic affiliations in Lao PDR (2001)



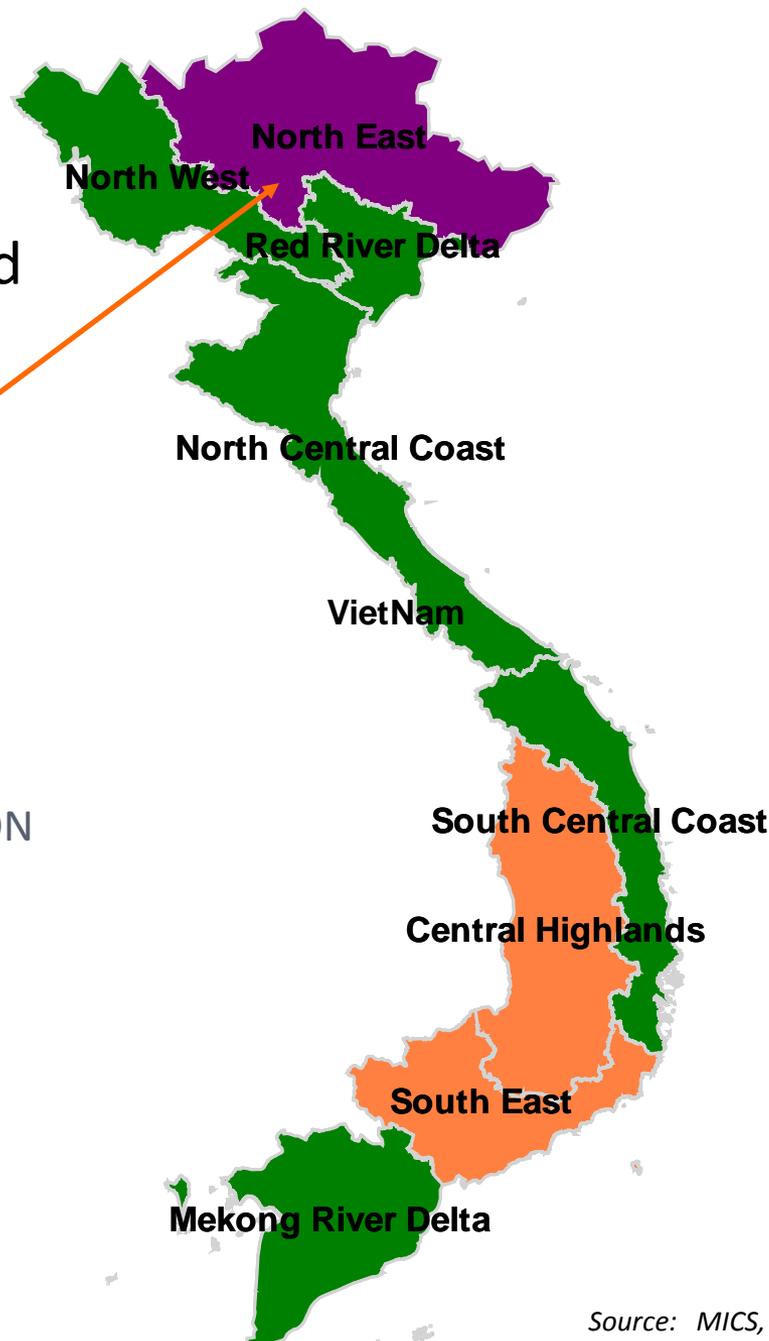
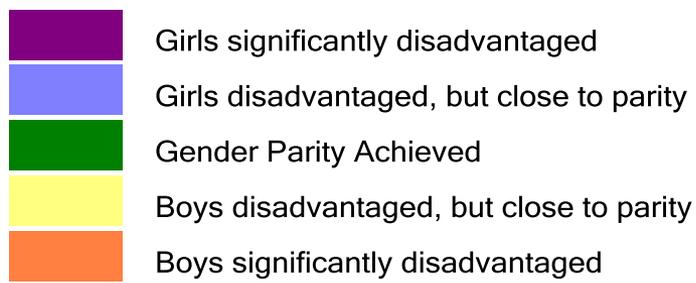
Source: Lao PDR Literacy Survey, 2001

Viet Nam: 107 languages listed

Literacy rates are lowest for ethnic minority girls and women in the north, where GPI shows girls are significantly disadvantaged in secondary education.

GPI OF NAR, SECONDARY EDUCATION

Gender Parity Index



USING OTHER DATA SOURCES TO COMPLEMENT EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS

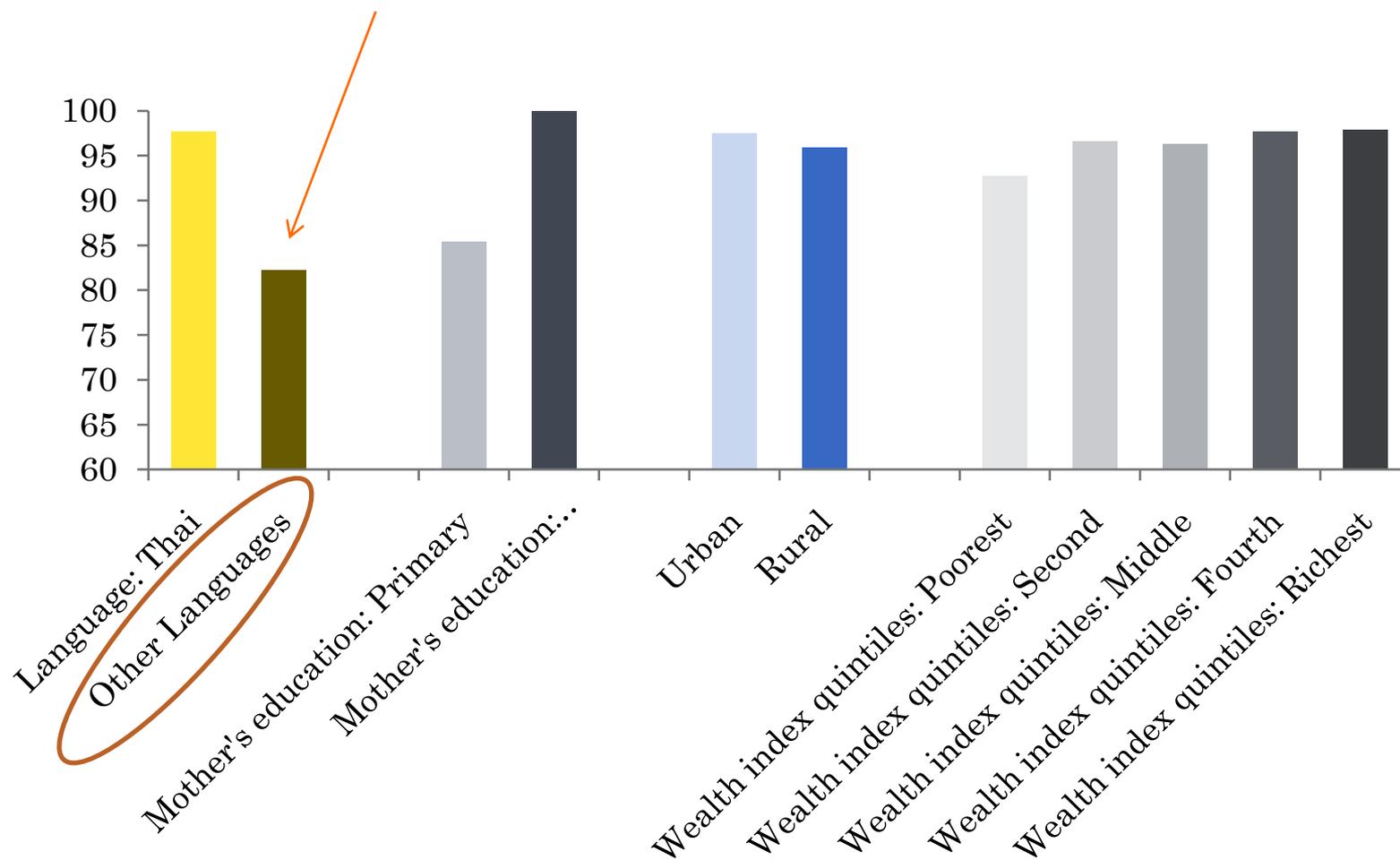
- ❖ Household surveys – e.g. MICS – have found possible links between educational status to ethnicity or language of the head of the household , and that girls and women from minority groups face considerable educational disparities.
- ❖ For example, Lao PDR, 2006 survey, found that Lao speaking households had significantly higher primary and secondary school attendance rates than speakers of other languages, with girls from other languages being most disadvantaged.

Ethnicity	Primary GPI	Secondary GPI
Lao-speaking households	1.02	0.91
Hmong households	0.75	0.39
Khmou households	--	0.44

Source: Global Education Digest 2010, UNESCO-UIS 2010

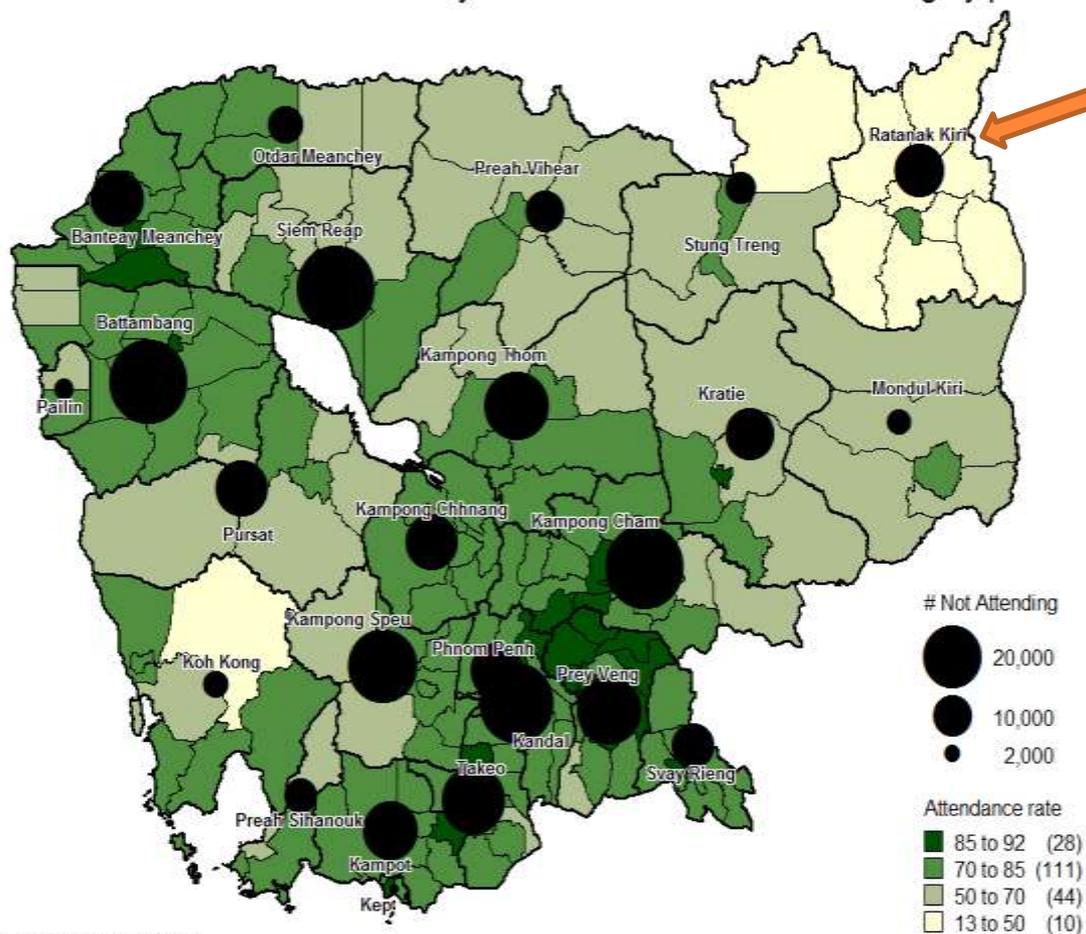
WHO AND WHERE THE FEMALE ADULT ILLITERATES IN THAILAND ARE...

Largest gap found in the language group difference...



GENDER GAPS IN ETHNICITY, LITERACY AND SCHOOL ENROLMENT OVERLAP...

6-11 Year Olds: School Attendance Rate by district and Number Not Attending by province, 2008

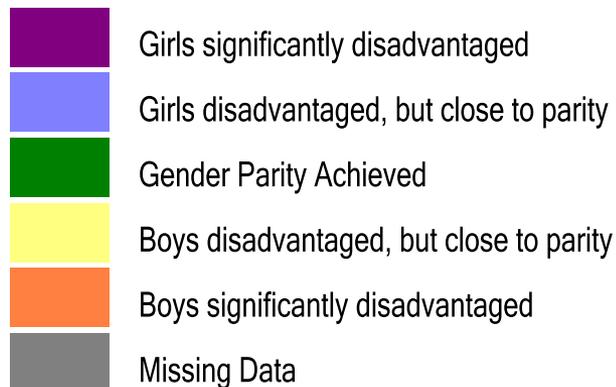
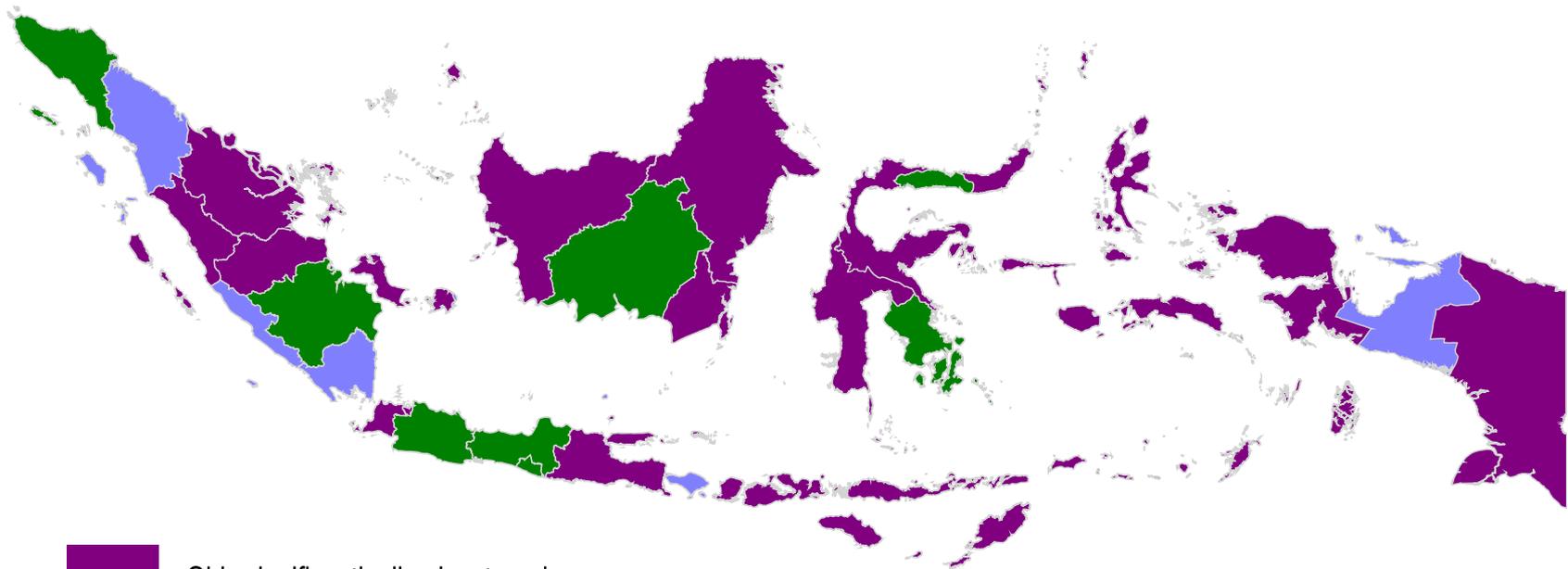


In Cambodia, the literacy rate among indigenous groups in Ratanakiri and Mondulkiri provinces is only 2% for women (but 20% for men) where school attendance rate for children is also one of the lowest in the country.

Source: Census 2008

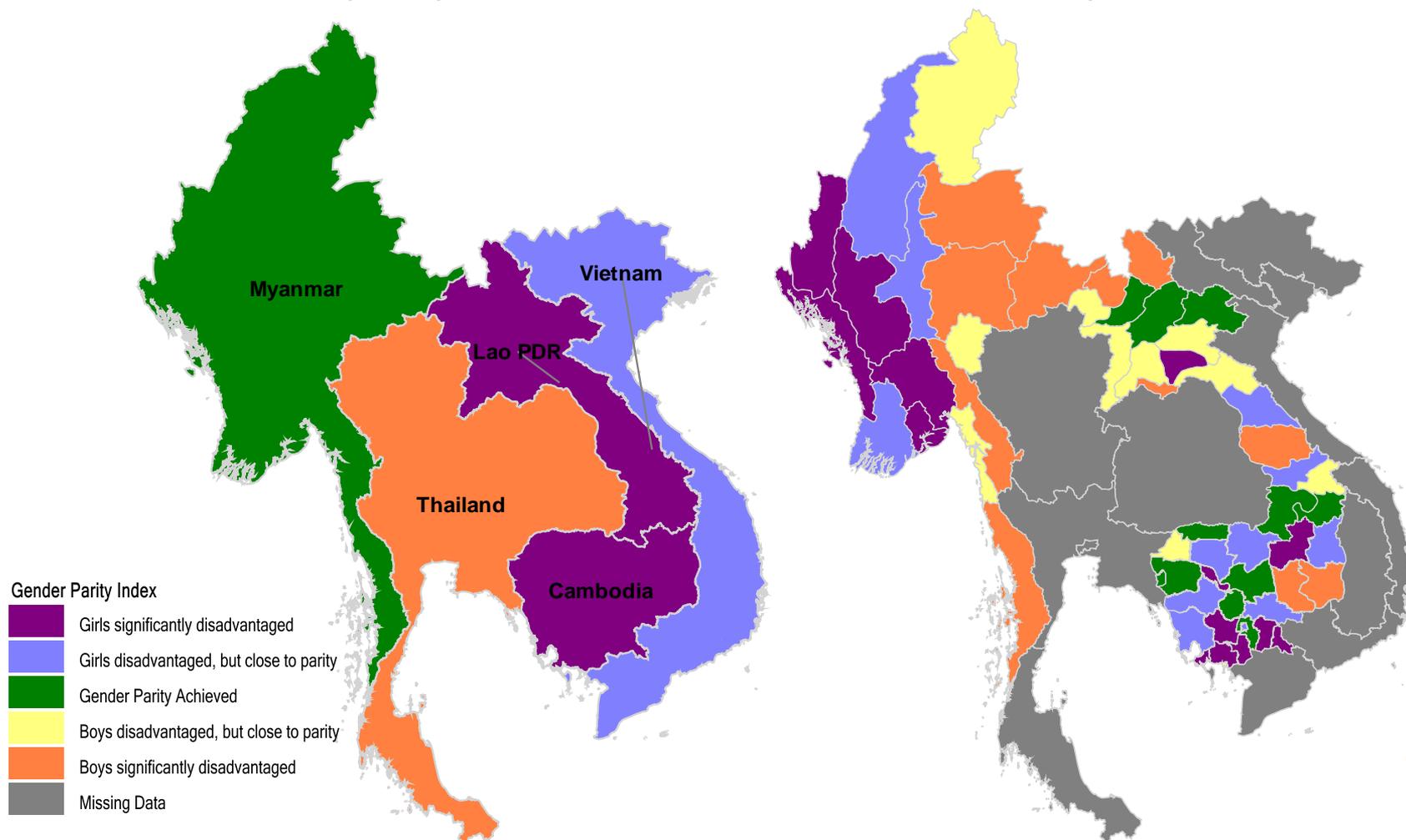
CAN LANGUAGE BE A FACTOR IN EXPLAINING THE SUB-NATIONAL DISPARITIES IN GPI FOR NER IN PRIMARY EDUCATION?

Indonesia: over 700 living languages spoken



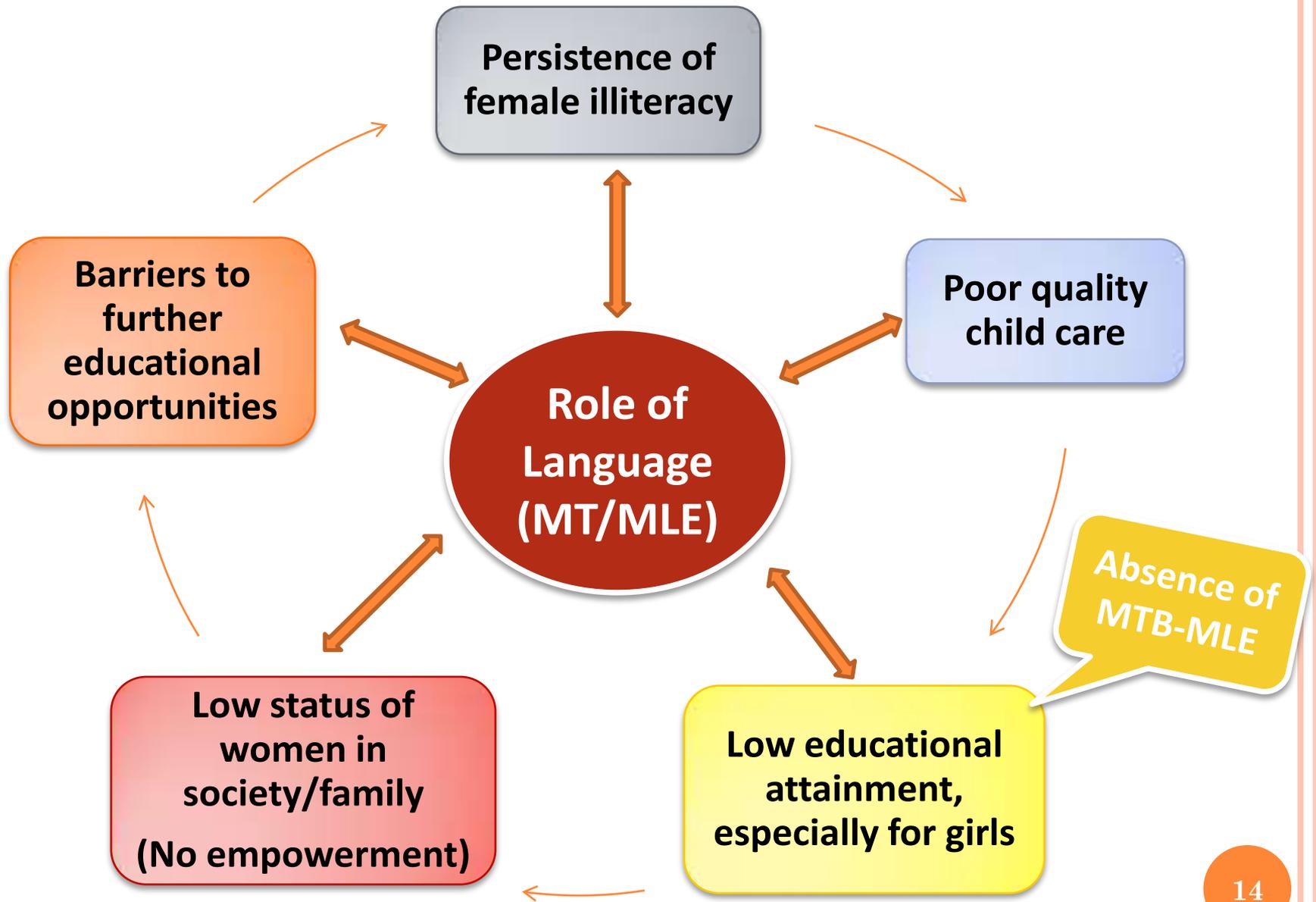
NATIONAL DATA HIDE SUB-NATIONAL REALITIES IN THE MEKONG SUB-REGION: CAN LANGUAGE BE A FACTOR?

Gender parity in net enrolment ratio in secondary education



ADVOCATING FOR LANGUAGE, GENDER EQUALITY AND EDUCATION: THE NEED FOR RELEVANT INDICATORS

- ❖ Language can play both a critical role in promoting gender equality in education and society, while, efforts to address gender inequality can also help reveal exclusion and discriminatory practices based on language.
- ❖ Research shows that there are clear linkages between language, girls/women empowerment, gender equality in education. However, evidence-base is still weak due to lack of relevant data and indicators that allows systematic cross-tabulation of data on gender, language and educational attainment.
- ❖ Thus, disaggregated data on language in general, and on languages of instruction in education in particular, must be systematically collected to move forward the agenda for language and gender equality.
- ❖ Sound indicators are needed to form a strong basis for mainstreaming gender in the promotion of mother-tongue and multilingual education and to ensure gender sensitive and responsive language policies are in place and implemented.



THANK YOU

