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2019

## School re-entry and retention policies in Kenya: Homa Bay County Head Teachers Dialogue

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## School Re-Entry and Retention Policies in Kenya

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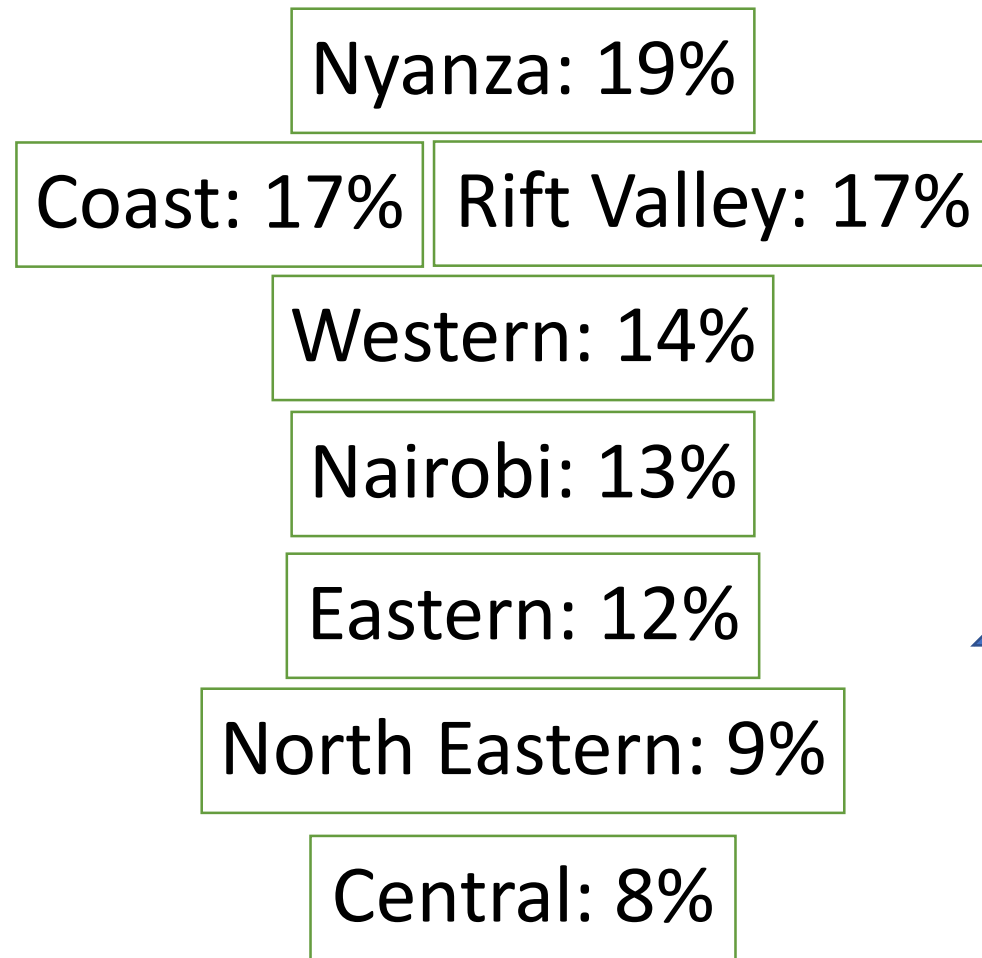
# Homa Bay County Head Teachers Dialogue

Ciala Resort, Kisumu  
September 13, 2019



Photo by Hellen Murugi

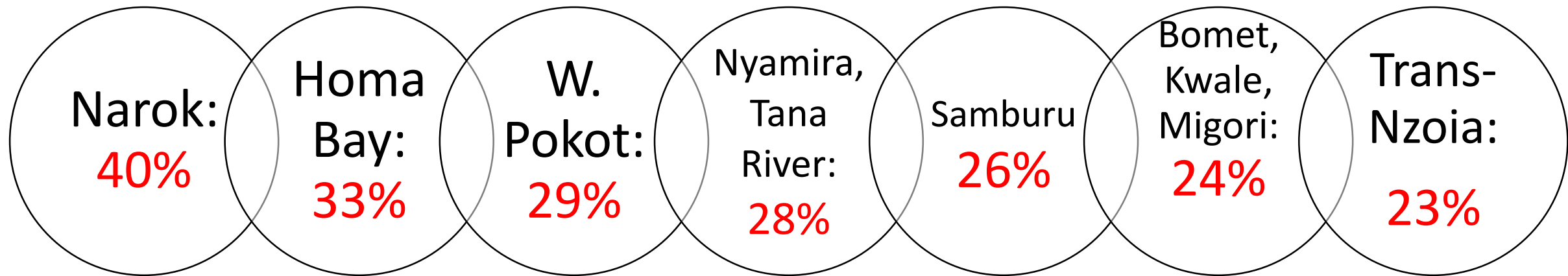
# Early pregnancy & motherhood in Kenya: 'Not yet *uhuru*'



## BY REGION

Percentage of girls aged 15-19 who have begun childbearing in Kenya

# Early pregnancy & motherhood in Kenya: 'Not yet *uhuru*'



**BY COUNTY:**

**Percentage of girls aged 15-19 who have begun childbearing in Kenya**

Source: KNBS et al. (2015). Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2014. Calverton, Maryland: KNBS, MOH, NACC, KEMRI, NCPD and ICF International.

# There is a problem ...

- The proportion of girls (aged 15-19) who get pregnant in Kenya **has not changed** in the last **decade**.
- **75%** of these girls either have **no education** (33%), **incomplete primary education** (19%), or complete primary education with **no secondary education** (36%).



Photo by Nircle

# The reality ...

- **98%** of girls aged 15-19 who have ever been pregnant in Kenya are **out of school**.



Photo by Standard Media

# Kenya's policy responses

**1994**

- **Adoption of school re-entry policy** for girls at MOE's National Symposium on girls' education

**1996**

- **Formulation of basic guidelines** for school re-entry by MOE (issued through a circular to schools)

**2009**

- Publication of **National School Health Policy**, including guidance on handling **in-school pregnancy**

**2019**

- Ongoing finalization of **revised school re-entry policy guidelines**



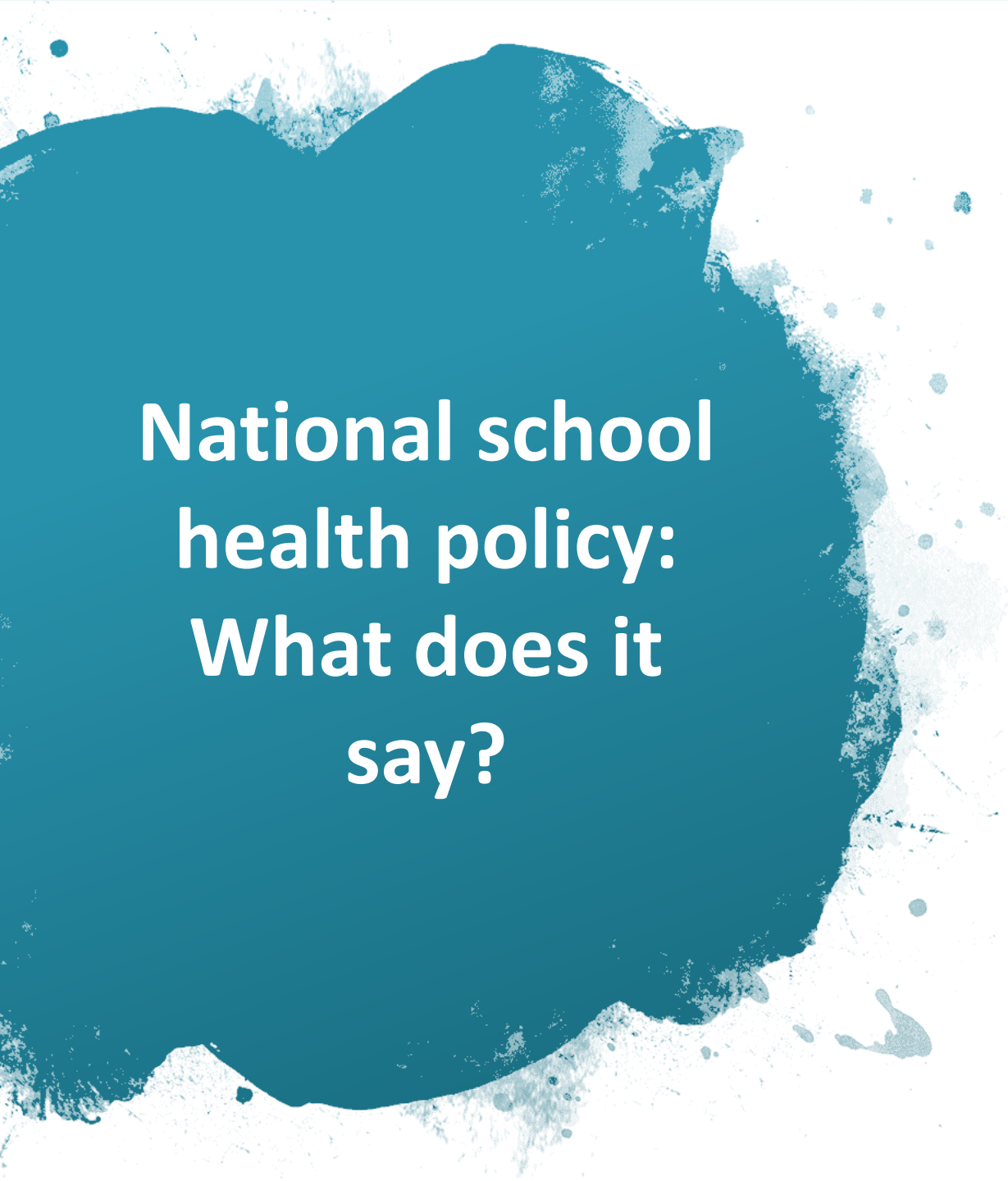
# School re-entry policy guidelines: What do they say?

Guidance + counseling  
for pregnant learners,  
other students,  
parents, teachers

Unconditional re-  
admission for  
pregnant girls after  
delivery

Schools, MOE to  
provide support in the  
admission process  
(into other schools)





## National school health policy: What does it say?

- ✓ Pregnant learners allowed to remain in school for as long as possible
- ✓ To be advised of option to return to school after delivery
- ✓ Life skills counseling to be provided after delivery to help prevent repeat pregnancy
- ✓ Supportive environment, free of discrimination, to be provided by school administration

# Why we're here today

- **Meeting objectives**
    - Provide a forum for:
      - **Stock-taking** around school re-entry policy implementation
        - Sharing of best practices around re-entry policy implementation
        - Sharing of experiences with (and solutions to) any barriers to school re-entry policy implementation
      - **Reflection** and **opinion-sharing** on re-entry and retention policies for girls
- Revitalize implementation of re-entry policy

# Thank you

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIV97ja5U0A&feature=youtu.be>



Photo by The Star

# **Baseline Survey Results**

## *2018-2019*

Chi-Chi Undie, Harriet Birungi, George Odwe,  
Francis Obare





Photo by BBC

## WHY we conducted 'baseline' surveys

- To gain knowledge of our **starting point** with regard to promoting girls' school re-entry ('Where did we start?') so that we can later on understand **how far we have come** ('Where did we end? What progress did we make?')





**WHERE we  
conducted  
baseline surveys**

- **Homa Bay County**
  - Homa Bay
  - Ndhiwa
  - Rangwe

## WITH WHOM we conducted baseline surveys



Photo by kenyaselfhelp.org

- **Head Teachers**  
(n=251)
- **Girls** aged 12-16 in  
their homes (n=620)
- **Girls' household  
heads** (n=644)





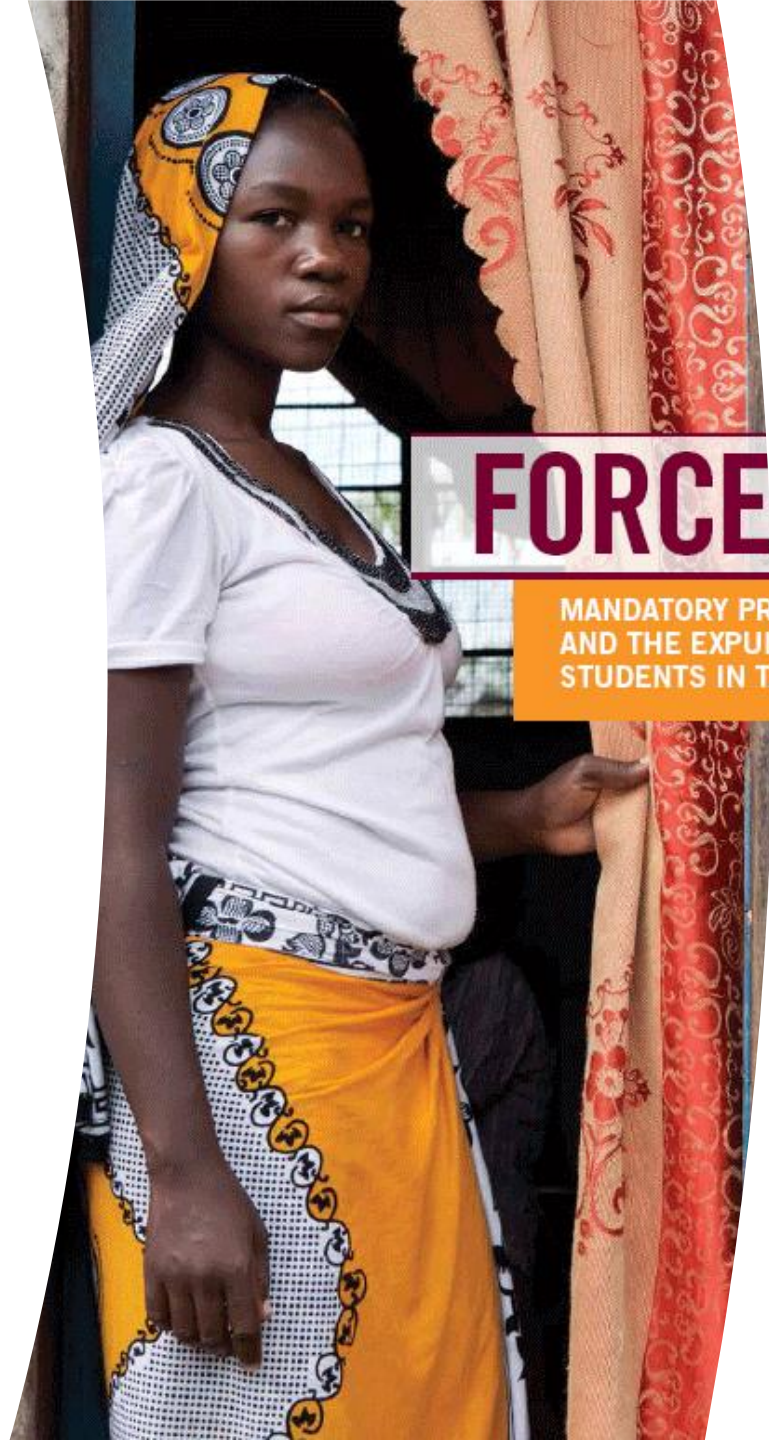


# What we're learning from Head Teachers





**Pregnancy  
is an issue  
that  
primary  
schools in  
Homa Bay  
cannot  
ignore**



- ***'In the last one year [March 2018-March 2019], how many pregnancies have occurred in your school?'***

Over **230**  
pregnancies

# Pregnancy is an issue that primary schools in Homa Bay cannot ignore

- **61%** of Head Teachers have had girls get pregnant in their school and return to the same school in the last year.
- **35%** have had had girls get pregnant elsewhere, then seek admission in their school after delivery
- **20%** don't know/aren't sure, so it could be much higher.

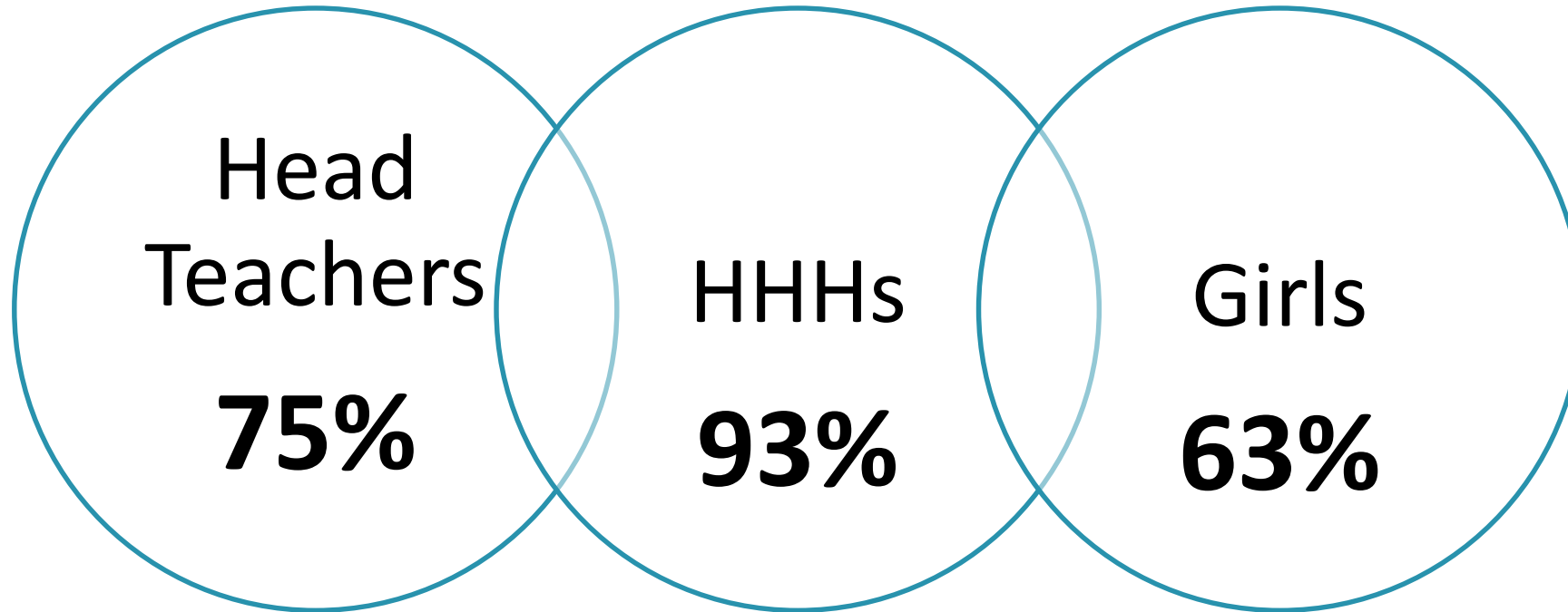


## Missed opportunity

- Most primary schools (**96%**) offer life skills education (LSE)
- But nearly half (**48%**) **do not** have an actual curriculum for LSE
- And in **27%** of primary schools, LSE is taught as part of another subject



‘Girls who get pregnant should be allowed to remain in school’





# Head Teachers' reasons

- Rights
- Pregnancy is not a disability
- Well-being



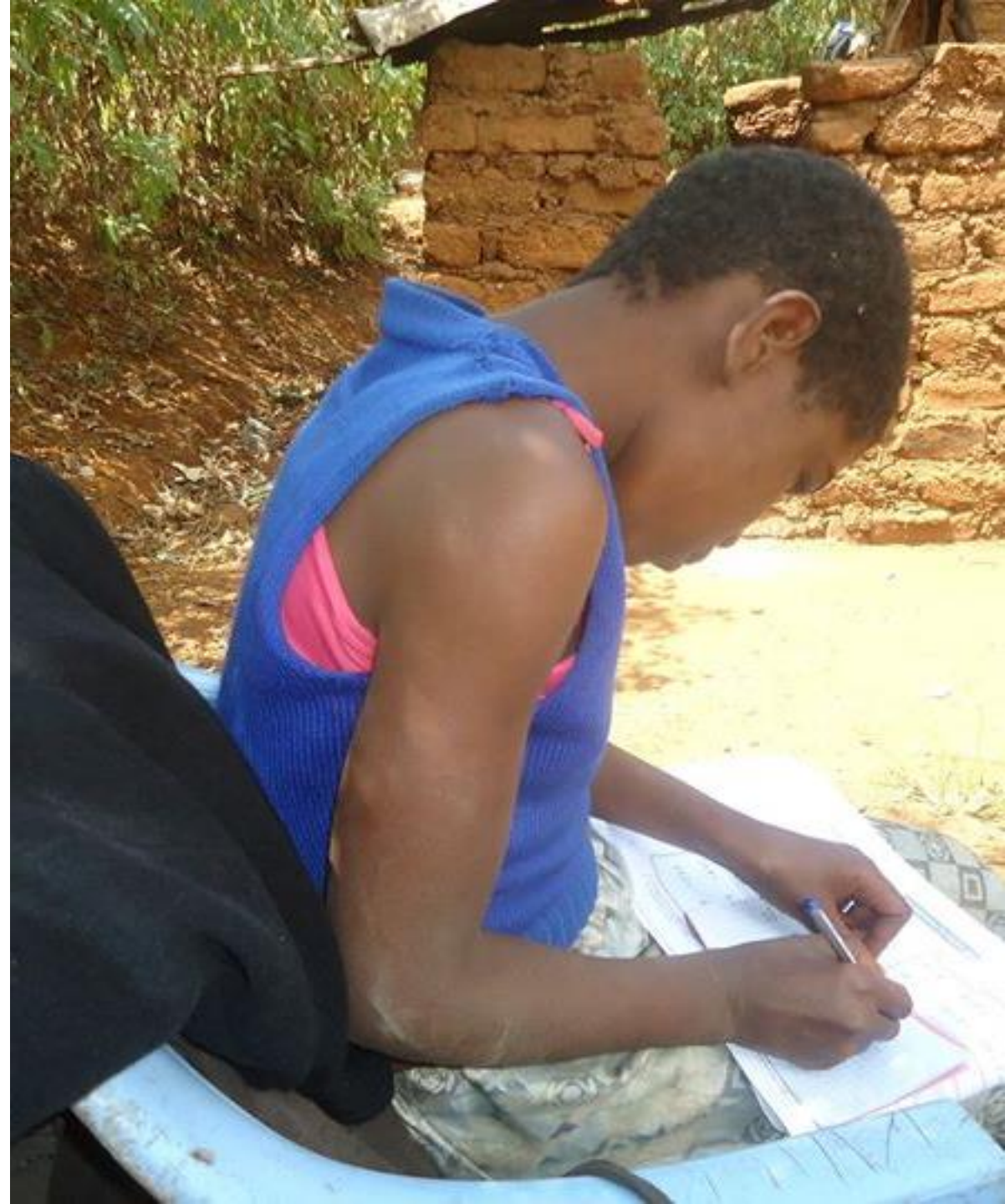
Photo by Niracle



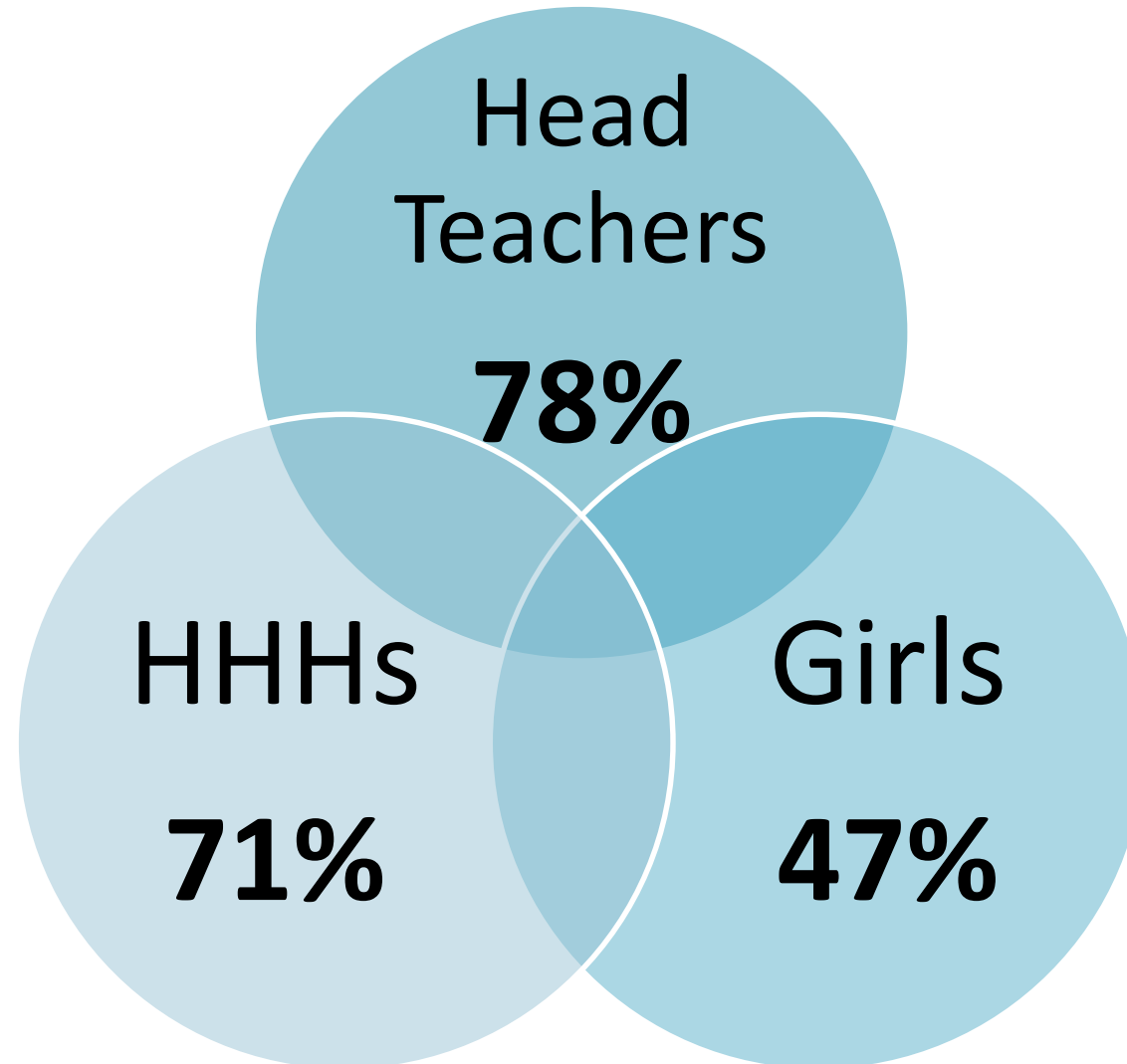
# Girls' and HHHs' reasons

- **Gender equity**
- Rights
- Well-being
- Pregnancy is  
not a disability

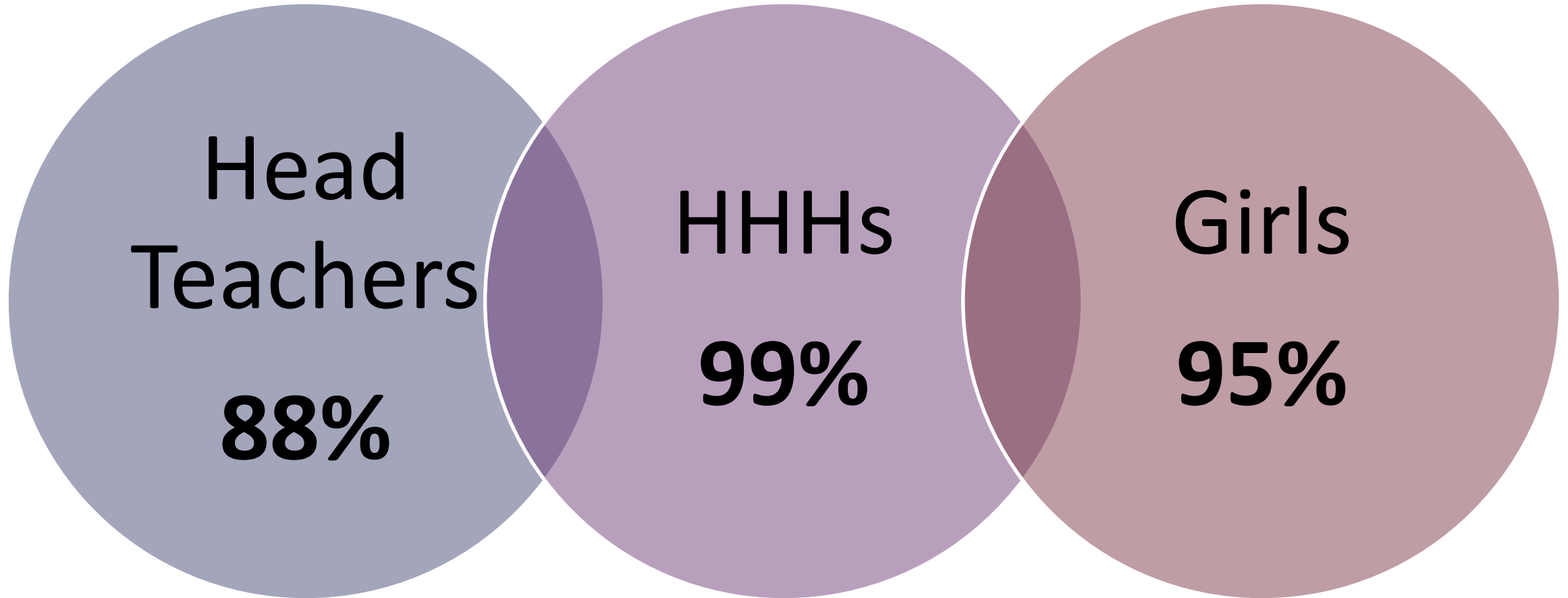
Photo by Uwezo Kenya



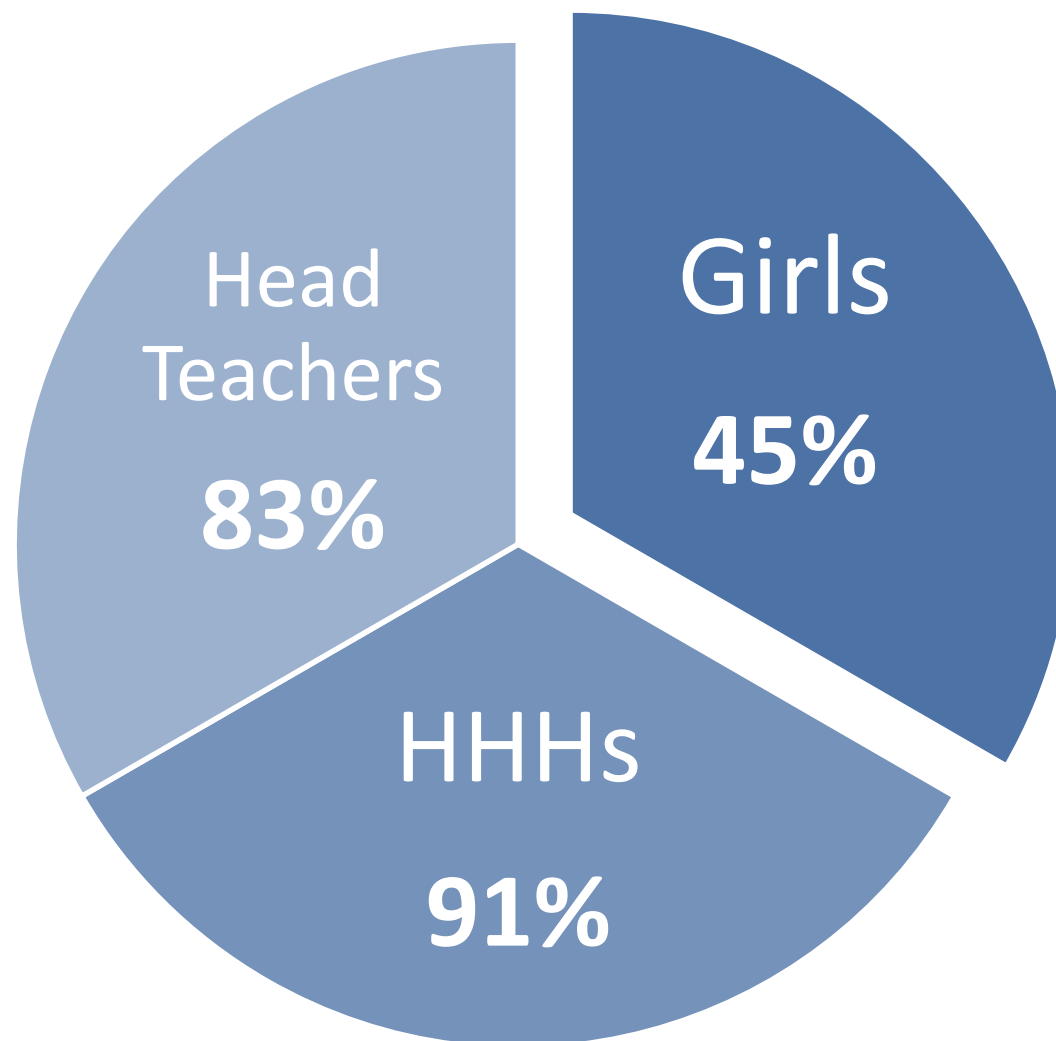
# Awareness of National School Health Policy



**‘Girls who get pregnant should be allowed  
to return after delivering’**

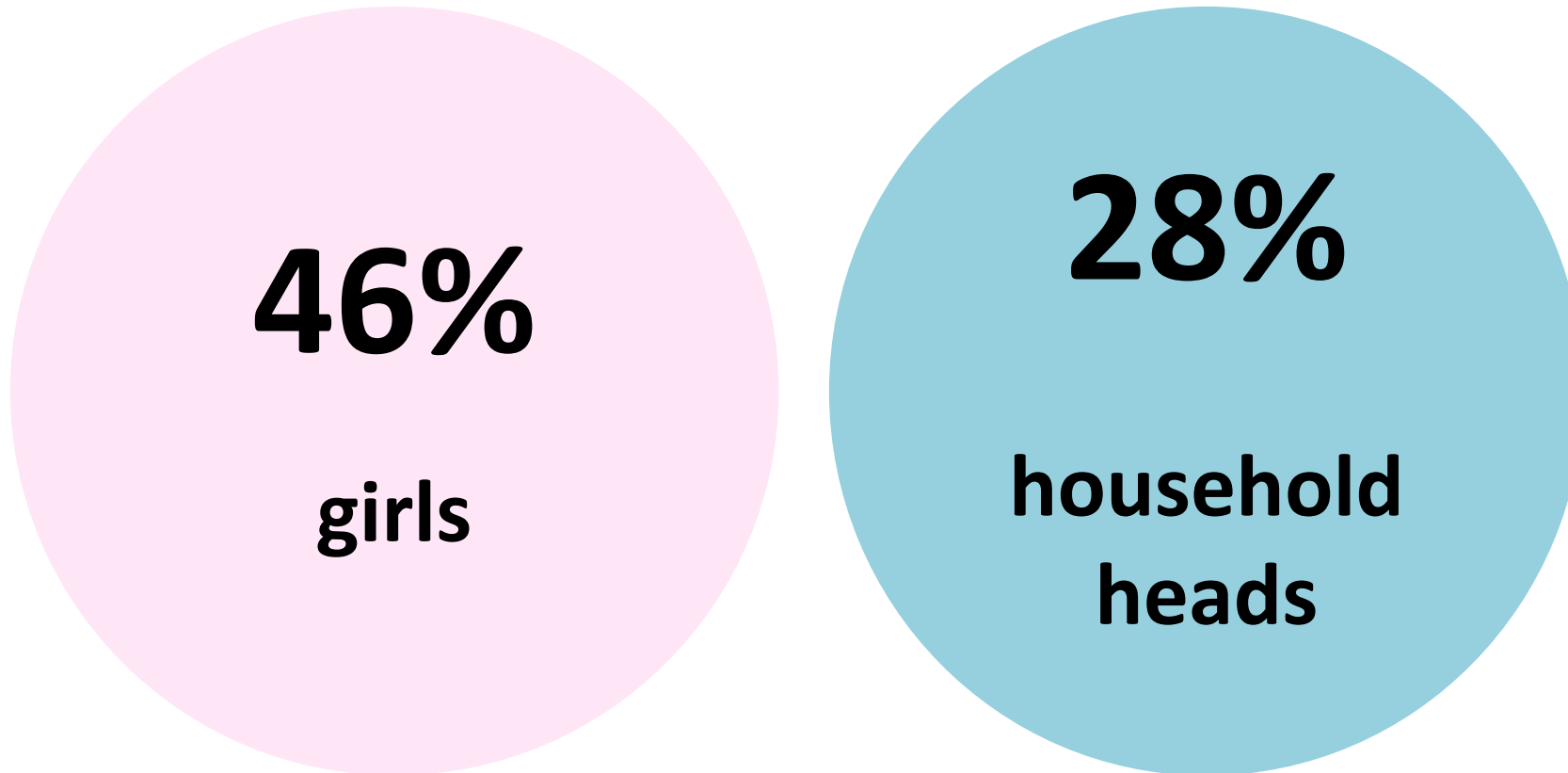


# Awareness of school re-entry policy







# **Head Teachers are instrumental in informing girls and HHHs about the school re-entry policy**

**Heard about it from a Head Teacher/Teacher**



# Head teachers' knowledge of school re-entry policy content

Pregnant girls should ...	% of head teachers in agreement
Be dismissed from school for health reasons 	18%
Receive guidance and counseling 	88%
Be re-admitted to other schools <u>with conditions</u> 	52%
Be assisted by head teachers to get admission to other schools 	32%



# **What we're learning from Girls in Homa Bay County**

(aged 12-16)





## Schooling

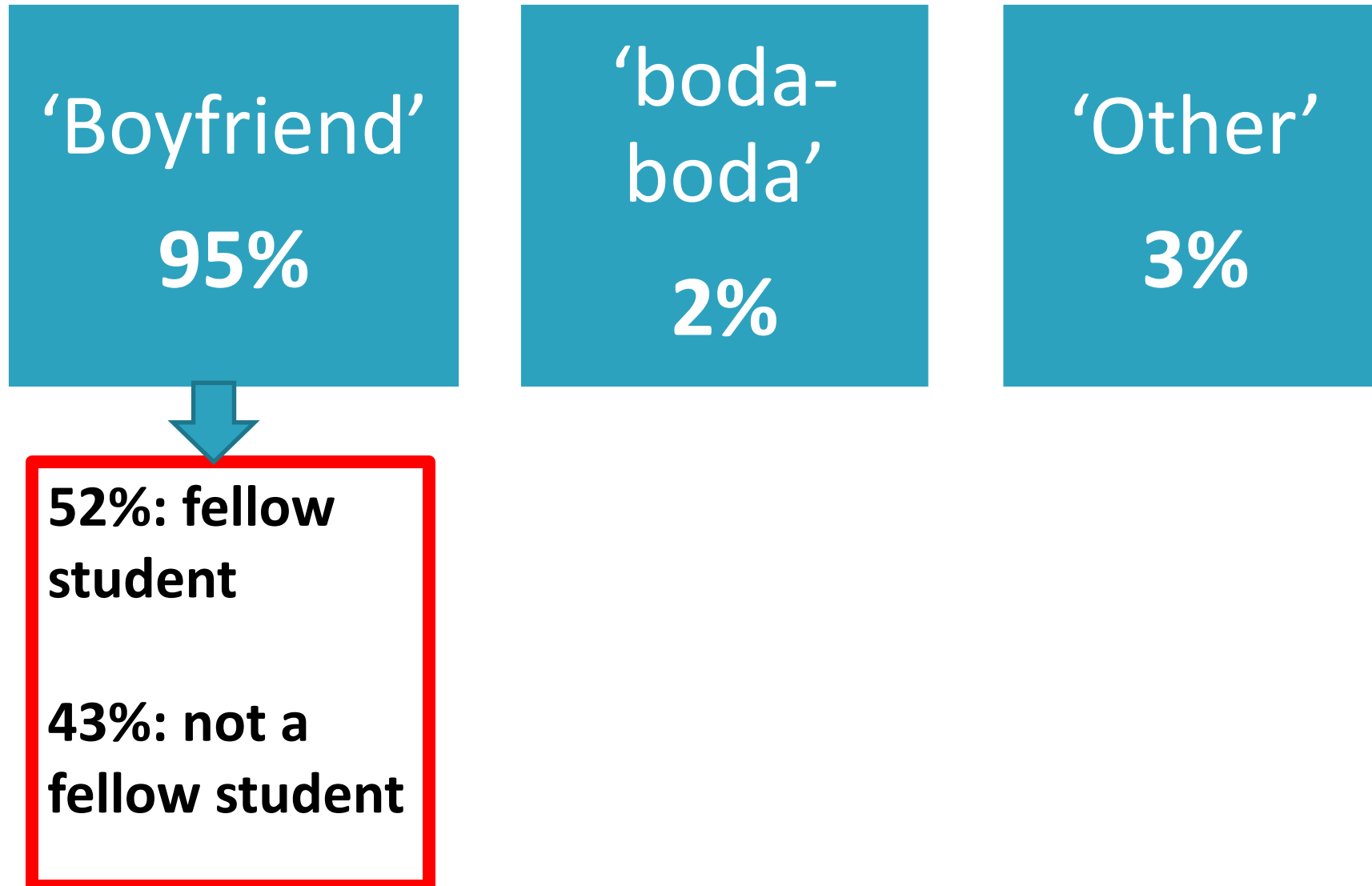
- Most are in school: **96%**
- Most are in primary school, specifically: **88%**
- Among those in school, some have ever had to interrupt their schooling: **12%**
  - **Reasons**
    - Illness: 32%
    - **Pregnancy: 30%**
    - Lack of school fees: 28%



# Pregnancy

Among all girls interviewed  
(regardless of schooling status),  
**9-11%** have ever been pregnant

# Pregnancy: Who is responsible?



# Pregnancy: The role of coercive sex

- About **30%** of those who got pregnant (and ever had to leave school as a result) were either **physically forced or pressured** into having sex.



Photo by Citizen TV

## Dreams and determination

**100%**

Of girls currently out-of-school would like to re-enter

**96%**

Of their HHHs intend to support them in doing so

**7%**


Of these same girls re-entered school, and then dropped out again



# Interventions



# Interactive media campaign

- Aug to Sept/Oct 2019
  - ‘Real-life’ radio series
  - Expert interviews (MOE, head teachers, community leaders, etc.) on policies
  - Call-ins
  - Complementary IEC materials on policies
  - Road shows





# Policy dialogue

- **Two dialogues**
  - With over 300 primary school heads in the 3 sub-counties
- **Advocacy with education stakeholders**



# In summary ...

- Homa Bay County presents an enabling environment for the promotion of school re-entry for parenting girls, based on the attitudes and knowledge of school personnel and community members, and on the persistent dreams and desires of parenting girls.



Photo by Capital FM

# Thank you for your attention







The

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# Discussion



# **Group Discussion I:**

## **School Re-entry policy**

- What updates/personal best practices can you share on how your school has been implementing the school re-entry policy for parenting girls since the March 2019 Head Teachers Dialogue? How well are these best practices working? Please elaborate.
- *Note: There are many ways to implement the school re-entry policy, even when one currently has no pregnant girls in his/her school.*

## **Group Discussion II: School re-entry policy**

- What barriers have you faced in implementing the school re-entry policy in your school since the March 2019 Head Teachers Dialogue? In what ways are you addressing these barriers? Please elaborate.

*Note: There are many ways to implement the school re-entry policy, even when one currently has no pregnant girls in his/her school.*

# Next Steps

- **In 3 Homa Bay County sub-counties:**
  - ✓ 2<sup>nd</sup> round of data collection from girls aged 12-16 and their household heads
  - ✓ Continue media campaign (radio)
  - ✓ Sustain 'school re-entry' school trophies
  - ✓ Continue working closely with the Homa Bay County Department of Education
  - ✓ Data analysis and report-writing
  - ✓ Dissemination of project findings