In recent decades, all African countries have achieved expanded access to basic education, but only some have achieved reductions in the educational gender gap. When the educational composition of a population changes, longstanding systems of social stratification—between men and women, between educated and uneducated—are transformed as well. Using DHS data spanning 32 sub-Saharan African countries and five decades of birth cohorts, we examine the relationship between educational expansion and intramarital status inequality, measured as the difference (or similarity) in educational attainment between husbands and wives. Our chosen measure of educational context—the percent of individuals in a birth cohort with any formal education (Frye and Lopus, forthcoming)—shows dramatic variability across space and time, with values as low as 4.0% (Niger’s 1942-1950 birth cohort) and as high as 99.3% (Zimbabwe’s 1985-1990 birth cohort). We demonstrate that as educational access expands within a country, gender gaps in the percent ever educated often increase because boys are typically the first to benefit from newly available educational opportunities. Whereas scholars have documented declining rates of educational hypergamy (in which women marry “up” educationally) in most other world regions (Esteve et al. 2012, Esteve et al. 2016), we identify increases in educational hypergamy in most African countries. Across the full spectrum of educational access, hypergamy exhibits an inverse u-shaped curve, whereby it is most common in cohorts with intermediate levels of access. However, the contextual effect of educational composition on intramarital educational differentials differs dramatically according to a woman’s own educational attainment: for example, uneducated women are particularly likely to marry up in contexts with greater educational access, whereas women with secondary education are much less likely to marry up in those same high-access contexts. As education continues to expand across Africa, status inequality within marriages is likely to endure, particularly for uneducated women and for women living in West African countries where educational access lags behind that of the rest of the continent. These findings have implications for the degree to which gender norms and modes of household decision-making will become more egalitarian over time.