

EDUCATION SECTION  
PROGRAMME DIVISION



# CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

## CASE STUDY: THE GAMBIA

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## **UNICEF'S CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS: GAMBIA CASE STUDY**



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Commentaries represent the personal views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect positions of the United Nations Children’s Fund.

## ACRONYMS

CFS	child-friendly school
CFSI	Child-Friendly School Initiative
CRD	Central River Division
DoSE	Department of State for Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
FAWEGAM	Forum for African Women Educationalists the Gambia Chapter
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GFS	girl-friendly school
GFSI	Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative
LRD	Lower River Division
NBD	North Bank Division
PTA	parent-teacher association
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
URD	Upper River Division
URR	Upper River Region

## I. CONTEXT

Since 1998, the Gambia has closed the gap in the primary school gross enrolment ratio between girls and boys, moving from double-digit inequity to parity. Much of the credit for this dramatic turnaround goes to an ambitious Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative (GFSI), led by the Government of Gambia with support from international donors and civil society. A measure of this initiative's success is that girls' enrolment now exceeds boys' in some areas, and partners are considering how to adapt many 'girl-friendly' activities into 'child-friendly' activities that would attract out-of-school boys.

Understanding how Gambia's GFSI came about and what roles UNICEF was able to play in encouraging it is difficult to assess from available documents. Like many of UNICEF's efforts in encouraging child-friendly schools (CFS), the Gambia initiative was run on a shoestring, with just one education officer coordinating more than a dozen partners and keeping more than two dozen activities moving ahead with a modicum of funding.

Among the dozens of documents available for this review, most were proposals or press statements; there were less than a handful of progress reports and only one formative evaluation. Summaries of the education programme in the country office annual reports (2003, 2004, 2005, 2007) provide additional sources. This information, however, does not provide the data necessary to evaluate the individual or overall 'success' or 'effectiveness' of the Gambia Child-Friendly Schools Initiative (CFSI). The case study is nonetheless rich with many examples of activities that can help address various dimensions of child-friendly schools.

The Gambia is one of the smaller countries in Africa, dominated in medieval times by the trans-Saharan trade. From the 16th century, parts of country were colonized by a succession of European countries, including Portugal, Poland-Lithuania, France and, finally, England. The Gambia received its own executive and legislative councils in 1901 and gradually progressed towards self-government. A 1906 ordinance abolished slavery. Following general elections in 1962, full internal self-governance was granted during the following year. The Gambia achieved independence on 18 February 1965 as a constitutional monarchy within the British Commonwealth. On 24 April 1970, it became a republic within the Commonwealth. Since that time, the Gambia has had two Heads of State: Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, elected 1970–1994, and Yahya A. J. J. Jammeh, 1996 to the present.

Missionaries introduced Western education to the Gambia during the 19th century, but it was largely resisted by the mainly Muslim rural population, who perceived schooling as a tool for converting their children to Christianity. Colonial administrators mostly viewed education as a way to foster communication with their subjects. Consequently, schools were concentrated in urban areas; only one school was established in the rural area, primarily to prepare the sons of chiefs for leadership. On attainment of independence, the colony (the urban area), which comprised approximately 13 per cent of the total population of the country, had 44 per cent of the primary schools and 86 per cent of the secondary schools (Commonwealth Education Fund 2005).

During the implementation of the Gambia's first Education Policy, for 1976–1986, primary school enrolments tripled from 24,629 to 73,210. The education system, however, could not keep up with rapid growth in population, around 4.2 per cent annually, with migration from neighbouring, less stable countries accounting for a significant part of that growth. In the mid-1980s, the primary system could accommodate only about 60 per cent of primary-school-age children, and the secondary system accommodated less than 30 per cent of students who successfully completed primary school.

For those who could find a place in primary school, quality was often poor; less than half of primary school teachers had formal qualifications and classrooms were crowded. In addition, programmes to raise the adult literacy rate – which was only about 20 per cent in 1980 – reached only a small portion of adults who couldn't read.

In September 1987, just a few years before Education for All (EFA) was initiated in the Gambia, the Ministry of Education organized the First National Conference on Education with the intention of looking for ways to expand the size and improve the quality of the education system. In December 1987, on the basis of findings and recommendations of the First National Conference, the 1988–2003 Education Policy established ambitious objectives and targets to:

- Increase access to basic education from 60 per cent to 75 per cent of school-age children.
- Increase the transition rate from Grade 6 to Grade 7 from 35 per cent to 60 per cent.
- Lower the school-age entry from 8 years old to 7 years old.
- Evaluate and revise the Grade 1–6 curriculum and introduce a new Grade 7–9 curriculum to complete the continuous basic education curriculum.
- Increase the output of trained teachers and to phase out unqualified teachers.
- Increase functional literacy programmes and offer alternative education opportunities for young people who are outside the formal system (World Education Forum 2000).

In 1993–1994, the Household Education and Health Survey Report (1995) showed that primary school enrolment and retention varied widely across regions and groups. For example, less than 25 per cent of children from “groundnut selling farm households” were in school. Of those children in school, a large proportion left before Grade 6 because “schooling was too expensive”; the children, especially in urban areas, “needed to work”; and marriage was also frequently mentioned by girls (Cole and Bojang 2002).

A 1995 midterm review of progress, culminating in the Second National Conference on Education in September, however, demonstrated that several goals had been met ahead of schedule, so the targets were revised upward to:

- Increase the gross enrolment rate to 79 per cent by 2000 and to 85 or 90.1 per cent\* by 2003.
- Lower the school entry age from 7 years old to 6 to allow more girls to complete the basic cycle by age 15.
- Increase the transition rate from primary to secondary education from 69 per cent to 75 per cent.
- Maintain primary education without any fees.
- Ensure adequate community participation for school parent-teacher associations (PTAs) to identify major local education needs on a regular basis.
- Sponsor a mass literacy campaign to reach adult women, out-of-school girls, and adolescents and adults with disabilities.
- Continue the school feeding programme sponsored by the World Food Programme.

In addition, based on shortcomings to date, the 1988–2003 Education Policy was revised and identified several target groups, in order of priority: girls, illiterate women and persons with disabilities; children of basic education school age (7–15); youth in both rural and urban areas; middle- and senior-level human resources (production and training); and education sector personnel (World Education Forum 2000).

Five years later, the relatively disadvantaged position of girls in society and in basic education, particularly those in rural areas, was still a major concern.

A 2000 survey funded by UNICEF found widespread support for child marriage and adolescent pregnancy in much of the Gambia (Cole et al. 2000). Female genital cutting was widely practised and supported by the general population. According to the survey, the ideal age at marriage for girls was 15–16 years old, when most girls had not yet finished nine years of basic education guaranteed by the Constitution. Girls were not considered safe at school once they reached puberty. Moreover, educating girls was not traditional in much of the country, the curriculum was gender-biased, the quality of education was poor, there were few sanitary facilities for girls, sexual harassment was an issue, and parents could not afford to pay school fees for all their children and boys tended to be sent more often than girls.

International donors and development partners, many committed to a rights-based approach with particular emphasis on the girl child, have been active in supporting the Government's efforts to address gender inequities in the school system. As of 2000, more than 85 per cent of capital expenditure on education was provided by external donors through grants and loans. A planning exercise in the late 1990s predicted that this pattern of financing would continue at least through 2007. Among the non-IDA, grant-oriented donors, UNICEF was the largest international agency and became the leader of the local coordination committee comprising local donors and development partners for basic education in 2003 (World Education Forum 2000).

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\* The difference in the figures represents varying assessments in Cole and Bojan 2002 and World Education Forum 2000, respectively.

## II. PROGRAMME EVOLUTION AND DESCRIPTION

By the mid-1990s, UNICEF was incorporating some dimensions of child-friendliness into all of its education activities. In the late 1990s, its work took on a sharper focus on girls as a group systematically left out and pushed out of primary schools, particularly in rural areas. In this sense, although the Government of the Gambia's and UNICEF's efforts to expand access to and improve the quality of schooling in the early part of this decade were called the 'Girl-Friendly' Schools Initiative, they were child-friendly because:

- Many of the girl-friendly activities undertaken were good for boys as well.
- As girls achieved parity with boys in primary school, the terminology switched to 'child-friendly' and activities to both boys and girls.

At the turn of the century, there was an extraordinary amount of support for the girl-friendly approach to expanding and improving schooling at the highest levels of the Government of the Gambia, including the President and the Secretary of State for Education. This support led to the creation of a Girls' Education Unit in the Department of State for Education (DoSE) in 1998. That same year, the Forum for African Women Educators established a chapter in the Gambia (FAWEGAM) and began undertaking a series of programmes to increase girls' participation in quality education. In 1999, the Government created a scholarship trust fund to help girls from poor families cover the costs of schooling.

With funds from the Government of Japan amounting to US\$592,000, UNICEF launched the Gambia Girls' Education Project (1999–2001) in four of the country's six regions. For 2002–2006, UNICEF Gambia secured more US\$528,000 through the African Girls' Education Initiative from Norway and US\$600,000 from UNICEF's girls' education thematic funds to expand the Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative (2002–2006) in three of the original four regions. Since 2006, much of UNICEF's work has been continued under the rubric 'Child-Friendly/Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative' in the most disadvantaged of the three regions where it has worked to date. The activities carried out under these projects and initiatives are described in greater detail below, and their scope is summarized in Tables 1 and 2.

### **The Gambia Girls' Education Project, 1999–2001**

The Gambia Girls' Education Project began in 1999, supported by funding from the Government of Japan and the World Bank, in the four most deprived regions: Central River Division (CRD), Lower River Division (LRD), North Bank Division (NBD) and Upper River Division (URD). Within two years, UNICEF reported that it had reached all girls nationwide, more than 74,000, with one or more of the activities described below. In order to accomplish these many activities, UNICEF had to partner and coordinate with many organizations. The following section provides brief descriptions of each of the key components and partners, excerpted from UNICEF's 2000 Progress Report.

**Scholarship trust fund for girls:** The major reason for most girls dropping out of school is the cost. The Gambian Government has considerably reduced the school fees at the secondary level, but girls from very poor families in the rural areas are still unable to afford these fees. UNICEF has therefore used part of these funds to contribute to the National Scholarship Trust Fund for Girls to enable the Department of State for Education to reach more deserving girls in the rural areas. The fees are used to pay tuition, books and examination fees for the girls. This initiative is picking up momentum, and for the year 2000, 300 girls benefited from the UNICEF assistance. Each of the girls received \$34, which was enough to cover tuition, book rentals and examination fees. UNICEF's assistance was very timely and well received by the Department.

**Mothers' clubs:** To adequately address the cost of schooling and respond to the cultural barriers to girls' education in these deprived regions, voluntary associations of women came together to form mothers' clubs. This initiative is based on the doctrine of self-reliance to fight for a common cause: Extend education opportunities to as many girls as possible who had been denied access to education through no fault of theirs. Through the national chapter of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWEGAM), UNICEF supported the formation of 23 mothers' clubs in the three most deprived regions of the country, beginning in 2000.

The overall aim of the clubs is to promote community participation and create opportunities for women in particular to contribute to the promotion of access, retention and performance of girls in schools. Specifically, the initiative aims to:

- Empower mothers to take full responsibility for the education of their girl children as well as providing them with the opportunities to do so.
- Facilitate mother/child and parent/parent peer counselling, especially on sensitive issues such as child marriage, teenage pregnancy and other reproductive health issues.
- Provide opportunities for mothers to sensitize communities on the importance of girls' education and become strong advocates for girls' education at both the family and community levels.

The results of the sensitization activities and information sharing by FAWEGAM on the importance of girls' education provide opportunities for the mothers' clubs to identify the needs of their daughters in school, both in terms of counselling and materials. The clubs assess their own needs and the problems encountered in educating their daughters in school. After a series of consultations among themselves, they decide on appropriate income-generating activities under the guidance and leadership of their elected executive members. The executive members coordinate the activities of the clubs and work very closely with the school administrations. The funds are invested in local income-generating activities, such as batik, tie and dye, soap making, pomade making and farming. These products are sold in the communities at affordable costs to the members. The soap and the pomade in particular have greatly improved the hygiene and sanitation practices and habits of the women generally. The initial financial inputs from UNICEF, \$245 for each club, are considered as a one-time support from UNICEF, and the clubs are expected to become self-sustaining.

Following the implementation of these mothers' clubs, various trends have been observed during monitoring and supervisory visits:

***Some clubs have realized significant profits from their income-generating activities.*** The profit margin, which varied from 15 per cent to 86 per cent above the initial seed stock received from UNICEF, have been used to meet the cost of basic learning materials in support of the education of their daughters. Specifically, the funds have been used to provide uniforms, shoes, reading and writing materials and in some rare instances supplement the food of some children whose parents cannot provide the basic daily meals for their children.

***Improvement in the retention rate of girls in schools.*** In some schools there has been a marked increase in the number of girls who enrolled following the intervention of the members of the mothers' clubs. Two examples are of an increase of 205 per cent in the net enrolment rate, from 20 to 61 girls, and an increase of 112 per cent, from 91 girls to 193 in 2001 in Boiram CFS in CRD. The main factors that appear to have been responsible for this observed trend include mother-to-mother counselling, focus group discussions, drama activities and extensive social mobilization campaigns on girls' education conducted by the clubs themselves. In addition, the opportunities created by the initiative for discussion and exchange of views greatly enhanced the activities of the primary health care programme, nutrition education activities, and water and waste management.

***Declining drop-out rate.*** An initial assessment of the activities of the mothers' clubs has revealed an overall reduction in the drop-out rate, from 29 per cent to 16 per cent. This confirms that the activity of the mother's clubs, especially in the schools, has helped to improve retention rate for girls.

**All girls' conferences:** This forum provides opportunities for girls to interact freely among themselves and discuss issues affecting their lives in school. Individual girls identify suitable topics and make presentations, and group discussions follow up with recommendations and actions. The topics typically range from sexual harassment and abuse in schools to performance issues. Two such conferences were held in 2000 with an overall attendance of 160 participants representing the four regions.

**Mathematics and science clinic for girls:** Generally, the academic achievement of girls in mathematics and science has been below standard. The clinic affords girls the opportunity to identify themselves with role models in science, partake of practical activities, and visit places of scientific importance. It is a forum designed to increase girls' awareness of the importance of science, and that girls and women do excel in science. It is increasingly becoming popular, especially for rural schoolgirls who do not readily see science in application or women scientists at work.

**Remedial Training Initiative for Female Teachers:** To close the gap between female teachers and their male counterparts in terms of numbers, Gambia College with the support of UNICEF embarked on the Remedial Training Initiative for Female Teachers. This initiative admits female students with lower academic qualifications into the college much earlier than the start of the academic year and provides remedial instruction. This helps teaching candidates improve their credentials and meet the minimum entry requirements for the college course.

The initiative has been very successful in increasing the number of qualified teachers in the primary schools. More than 131 female teachers benefited from this training in 2000. After graduation in 2002, they will all be posted to rural areas, where they will serve multiple roles – as teachers, role models for girls and catalysts for change among women in the community. A progress report in 2001 listed the following outputs:

- 30 communities, including girls themselves, sensitized to importance of girls' education.
- 150 school committee members training needs assessed and provided.
- 300 girls supported by the National Scholarship Trust Fund.
- Female teacher trainees at Gambia College increased from 57 intakes in 1999 to 131 teachers in 2000 through the Remedial Initiative for Female Teachers.
- 1,000 copies of the Gender Training Manual for mainstreaming gender issues in the four core primary school curricular subjects finalized, printed and used to provide pre-service training to 600.
- 1,000 copies of the Monitoring Learning Achievement Report printed and introduced to 100 key stakeholders through a national dissemination seminar.
- 1,000 copies of the Education for All Assessment Report printed and disseminated to 150 key stakeholders at national conference.
- 23 mothers' clubs established in three regions where girls' enrolment rates are low.
- One study on child marriage and teenage pregnancy, with particular attention to school girl pregnancies, conducted and disseminated.
- 20,000 textbooks provided for girls in the rural areas.
- 80 girls participated in all-girls' conferences.
- 95 girls participated in mathematics and science clinics.
- 70 girls and hundreds of community members attended a mathematics and science exhibition.
- Four separate toilet facilities constructed in schools in the rural areas.
- 100 teachers trained in primary mathematics and science.
- 200 teachers trained in guidance and counselling, and 105 teachers in early identification and support for children with special needs education.
- 100 PTA members trained on school management issues relevant to girls' education.

In addition, the FAWEGAM mothers' clubs and the Girls' Education Unit organized several community mobilization events in all three regions, involving discussions, dramatic skits, flyers, songs by local musicians and the participation of religious leaders (UNICEF Gambia 2001).

A review of national policies and laws, in terms of meeting the development and protection rights of the girl child, has been completed. The review recommended compulsory basic education, especially for girls, and the increase of the legal age at marriage to 18. In a seminar to discuss the findings of the review, 80 Parliamentarians and members of the Gambia Bar Association took part.

## **The Girl-Friendly School Initiative, 2002–2006**

By 2001, UNICEF was working closely with the Gambian Government to develop a Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative. Continuing support from the President and the Secretary of State for Education was an important factor in this initiative and was demonstrated in the promulgation of several new 'girl-friendly' policies, including one addressing sexual harassment, which went into force in 2004. UNICEF prepared a proposal for the African Girls' Education Initiative to fund the development of 50 girl-friendly schools in three regions – Central River, Lower River and Upper River – and later secured UNICEF girls' education thematic funds to expand the project.

UNICEF's proposal for the Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative took a 'whole school' approach. More than just effective for learning, the ideal girl-friendly school was also inclusive, health promoting, gender responsive, participatory for both children and their parents, and supported by a series of policies that addressed the most egregious obstacles to girls' participation. The GFSI included all of the activities undertaken as part of the Girls' Education Project, described in the previous section, plus others to address student health, nutrition, the school environment and sanitation. It also added logistics support for DoSE field staff and monitoring activities, including vehicles, which enabled them to conduct a baseline study and undertake routine monitoring.

Many of these activities were focused on the child-friendly schools but had effects beyond the school – or the school provided an entry point into the community for delivering messages and encouraging improved practices with respect to health, water, environment, sanitation, nutrition, personal hygiene, reproductive health and education. In May 2001, the schools were selected to receive a package of assistance in becoming child-friendly based on the following criteria:

- Communities where enrolment rates are extremely low, particularly for girls.
- Communities where educational services are poor in terms of basic school supplies, quality of teachers and teaching, and community participation.
- Communities where drop-out rate for girls are high due to child marriage or teenage pregnancy.
- Schools where safety and security for girls is an issue.

- Schools where quality of learning and participation of girls in the process is extremely weak.
- Communities where Western education formal education in general is of less value and girls' education in particular is not valued at all.
- Areas where teachers are faced with very difficult circumstances in the conduct of their work both in school and in the community.
- Schools that have very low community participation (UNICEF Gambia 2001).

As shown in Table 2, in 2002, the DoSE and UNICEF began working with 25 schools in three districts and by 2006 had assisted 120, or more than 70 per cent, of primary schools in three of the Gambia's most disadvantaged districts. Moreover, by the last year of the project, the Government had taken complete responsibility for supervising 84 girl-friendly schools, and UNICEF was focusing its efforts on 38 schools in the Upper River District, the most disadvantaged of the three districts.

Other new activities had effects in communities where there were not yet any girl-friendly schools. For example, in 2003, the Gambian Government agreed to launch *The State of the World's Children 2004*, which focused on girls' education, in Bakadaji, a small conservative community where less than 25 per cent of school-age children, and just 11 per cent of girls, were enrolled in formal schools. The launch coincided with an annual intensive campaign conducted by the DoSE to persuade parents to enrol their children in primary school. Members of a regional task force, under the chairmanship of the divisional commissioner, worked closely with Bakadaji authorities and the Village Development Council to plan several major activities, including:

- a. A statement by the Secretary of State for Education, Mrs. Anne Therese Ndong-Jatta, focusing on the key issues highlighted in the report. She urged the Government of the Gambia, non-governmental, civil society and community-based organizations, and communities themselves to pay particular attention to girls' education.
- b. A statement by the son of a renowned Muslim religious leader who is currently the Attorney General and Secretary of State for Justice. He led the discussion on Islam and education and cited portions of the Koran that argue in favour of education for women and of education in general.
- c. A commitment by the country director of UNICEF to support Bakadaji's school, to the extent it adopted a girl-friendly approach.
- d. Community radio programmes conducted by the task force to sensitize the communities on the importance of girls' education and encourage their participation in the launch of SOWC 2004.
- e. Presentation by local religious leaders on the importance of girls' education and why girls should be allowed to complete their education.
- f. Skits by a peer health club and traditional women animators to sensitize community members and raise awareness on the importance of girls' education.
- g. Performances by local cultural groups and traditional folk dancers depicting the value of education generally and for girls in particular.

The event drew a high level of participation from the Government, including Secretaries of State, Permanent Secretaries, National Assembly Members, and directors of departments and senior civil servants. It also pulled together members of the non-governmental organization community, civil society and community-based organizations, local government authorities and community leaders. Nearly 1,300 people – including women, men and children from Bakadaji and the nearby communities – attended the ceremony.

### ***The 2003 evaluation***

By 2003, the Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative had been in operation for two years in three regions in about 50 schools, or a little less than one third of the schools in the three intervention zones or about 10 per cent of the national school system. Already there were dramatic increases in girls' enrolment in the intervention zones. Could these changes be attributed to the Child-Friendly Schools Initiative? Should it be scaled up? A formative evaluation in April 2003 attempted to address these issues (Mitchell and Sowe 2003). Given the short time frame of the initiative, however, the evaluation was unable to validate the positive feedback from the partners with analyses of the relative cost-effectiveness of various components. The evaluation recommended that individual activities begin to collect the data necessary to demonstrate this in the future.

The work of the evaluators was made more difficult by the transfer of many teachers who had been trained to work in child-friendly schools. In these cases, it was impossible to assess the impact of their CFS training, and many of the activities they might have led or participated in – such as girls' focal points – were cancelled. This highlighted the importance of the training and support for the head teacher, who was often a school's only 'qualified' teacher, in the sense of being formally educated.

The evaluation also noted that although many girl-friendly initiatives were working at the primary level, similar work should be started at the lower secondary level as soon as possible. During ad hoc visits to lower- and upper-secondary schools, school staff perceptions of girls' limited capacities and future contributions have led to low expectations and poor performance for girls. For example, in one school the majority of girls in Grade 10 and 11 don't have high enough grades to participate in the mainstream classes and so are placed in 'special needs' classes where they often do not improve. One school head expressed his sense that many girls in secondary school were just biding their time until they got husbands to take care of them \*\* .

### ***Activities in 2004–2006***

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\*\* It should be noted that the situation is not much different from that of boys; both genders appear to have low enrolment in secondary schools in the country. According to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2008) the breakdown of the national enrolment ratio for male and female students in 2007 was: 70 per cent for boys and 74 per cent for girls in primary school; 44 per cent for boys and 41 per cent for girls in secondary schools.

Between 2001 and 2003, enrolment rates for girls had increased dramatically in UNICEF's zones of intervention, from 47 per cent to 90 per cent in LRD, from 45 per cent to 80 per cent in CRD, and from 43 per cent in to 75 per cent in URD over the period 2001–2003. In addition to continuing most of the activities described as part of the Girls' Education Project, additional activities undertaken during the 2004–2006 period included the establishment of 25 early childhood development (ECD) centres in the Upper River District in support of the national government policy that encouraged primary schools to annex new or existing ECD centres. Other activities included the review and revision of curricula for training ECD facilitators to incorporate more school readiness in their activities, as well as training for facilitators and education programmes for parents in focus regions.

In 2004, UNICEF supported a high-profile advocacy and sensitization campaign in three target divisions where pockets of resistance to Western formal education persisted. The Minister of State for Education launched this 'big bang' campaign, which mobilized all government departments and civil society groups to go door-to-door to encourage parents to send all their children to school. The campaign led to the introduction of a flexible school calendar in 2004 for all primary schools. Along with other activities to promote inclusion described above, support for the Girls' Education Trust Fund was continued.

Activities to improve the effectiveness of learning and teaching included procurement and distribution of teaching and learning materials, and training for teachers and community members on the GFSI approach. New gender-sensitive initiatives included support for several policy initiatives, such as the Government's new education policy (2004–2015), which explicitly addressed gender parity and the importance of girls' education, and the promulgation of a sexual harassment policy and enforcement bill.

In addition, UNICEF, as the lead agency in the in-country donor and development partners coordinating committee, helped the Government of the Gambia to secure US\$4 million in funding from the EFA-Fast Track Initiative (FTI) Catalytic Fund in both 2005 and 2006 for its primary education programme, Enhancing Quality Education and Retainment of Girls in the Gambia. The process of developing the proposal for the Catalytic Fund was participatory in that the local donor group and development partners, with leadership from UNICEF, worked closely with the Government within the framework of a sector-wide approach to planning for education.

### ***A goal reached: Gender parity by 2005***

Gender parity in the primary gross enrolment rate was achieved in 2004, with the Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative given much of the credit. At the same time, boys' gross enrolment rate had not yet reached 100 per cent and in some areas had actually declined during recent years. As a result, the Girls' Education Unit in the DoSE was renamed the Gender in Education Unit, and its mandate was substantially broadened.

In 2004, UNICEF partnered with the World Food Programme to promote an Essential Learning Package that represented the minimum infrastructure and support a school needed to be considered child-friendly in the Gambian context. Components of the package included basic water, environment and sanitation infrastructure; skills-based education; food for education; malaria prevention (insecticide-treated mosquito nets); micronutrient supplements; deworming; and school gardening. The Essential Learning Package was introduced into six convergent zones that year.

## **Child-Friendly Schools Initiative, 2007–2011**

In recognition of having met the gender parity goal in most of the country, UNICEF began referring to its rights-based approach to basic education as ‘child-friendly/girl-friendly’. Its new five-year education programme was organized under three work plans: the Child-Friendly/Girl-Friendly School Initiative and ECD School Readiness; Education Policy Support; and Life Skills.

In 2007, with assistance from the donor coordinating committee with UNICEF as head, the Gambian Government received US\$5.7 million from the EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund, part of which it used to monitor and support 122 child-friendly schools previously launched by UNICEF in the CRD, LRD and URD. Since that time, UNICEF has focused on 48 schools in URD and 2 in the Kanifing urban area, where enrolment for both boys and girls continued to fall short of the national average.

Although a national ECD policy had been declared, there were large gaps in the implementation of early childhood education and school-readiness programmes. In its 2007 country office annual report, UNICEF Gambia wrote: “The education sector faced some serious capacity gaps in the adoption and implementation of the ECD policy for school readiness. The inadequate supply of qualified teachers, their uneven distribution and timely availability in schools, coupled with weak monitoring and supervision at the school level, has weakened the efforts to improve the overall quality of education” (UNICEF Gambia 2008).

In 2007, as it had for several years, UNICEF trained many early childhood development facilitators, school authorities and parents. But for the first time it also established 10 model ECD centres and 15 ECD support centres in the URD. The idea is to develop a model of early childhood education that is comprehensive and holistic, including play and recreation, and recognizing the role of children’s physical well-being in their cognitive development, emotional maturity and social skills. With UNICEF support, the ECD Unit of the Ministry has developed a standard curriculum in collaboration with the Curriculum Unit, and works to supply learning and teaching materials for the centres as well as in-service training for the facilitators.

### III. PROCESS

The 2003 evaluation highlighted the number and diversity of partners who worked with the Government of the Gambia and UNICEF to implement an array of activities in support of the Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative. Some of the activities, as indicated below, are products of the programme or its predecessors. The national and local partners include:

Female Teachers' Association (since 2001)

Forum for African Women Educationalists the Gambia Chapter (FAWEGAM);  
and mothers' clubs (established in the course of project activities, 1999 to the present)

Gambia College

Gambia Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health  
of Women and Children (GAMCOTRAP)

Gambian Department of State for Education's Girls' Education Unit (since 1998);  
DoSE Guidance and Counselling Units; and the DoSE National Scholarship  
Trust Fund (since 1999)

Nova Scotia Peer Health Programme

Peace Corps (United States of America)

World Food Programme

In addition, international donors include the UK Department for International Development, the Japanese Embassy, the section of the Norwegian Embassy involved with the African Girls' Education Initiative, the Education and Democracy Initiative of the United States Embassy and the World Bank. The broad division of labour among the lead partners in the Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative is provided in Table 4.

By the middle of this decade, as head of donor coordination for basic education in the Gambia, UNICEF was in a good position to call these groups together. Moreover, the head of UNICEF's education section in Banjul had long tenure and much experience. Nonetheless, the task of motivating the partners increased the demand for high levels of conceptualization, planning and implementation of the CFS strategy in the remote rural regions of the country (Salamanca 2003).

## IV. OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

There is a significant number of Girl-Friendly School Initiative outputs related to the six broad dimensions of a child-friendly approach to schooling, as illustrated in Table 3 and listed here:

### **Inclusive**

- National Education Policy 2004–2015
- Scholarship Trust Fund for Girls (soon to be open to boys)
- Advocacy and sensitization through special events, such as the 2004 ‘big bang’ campaign

### **Effective for learning**

- Provides teaching and learning materials such as textbooks and supplementary readers
- Supports teacher training (Remedial Training Initiative for Female Teachers)
- Recruits girls in secondary school to join teacher pool, and establish an adequate supply of qualified teachers, both women and men
- Supports follow-up to the Early Grades Reading Assessment funded by the World Bank

### **Healthy and safe**

- Comprehensive life skills curriculum integrated into the formal curriculum, which:
  - Incorporates more age-appropriate information about sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and AIDS
  - Shows greater attention to caring for people living with AIDS as well as orphans and other children who are vulnerable due to AIDS
  - Has a stronger focus on the vulnerability of girls and young women
- Schools provide hygiene and environmental health services, including:
  - School feeding and micronutrient supplements
  - Construction of toilets and wells for safe water
  - Deworming and insecticide-treated mosquito nets
  - School gardening and Environmental Youth Brigades to keep school grounds clean and safe
- Essential Learning Package includes most of these healthy activities as the minimum support provided to all schools

### **Responsive to gender**

- Gender Training Manuals for Primary Education (1999) to be used in pre-service teacher education
- Support to the preparation of two Master Plans for Education (1997–2006 and 2007–2015) that recognizes gender as a core issue
- Training for DoSE Guidance and Counselling Unit staff on girl-friendly issues
- Identifying subjects in which girls are performing badly, and provide gender-

targeted, subject-specific clinics to strengthen girls, e.g., math, science and technology clinics for girl students

- Conducting all-girls' conferences
- Strengthening exchange of strategies through a girls' education newsletter
- Training peer counsellors and teachers in guidance and counselling
- Support for female teachers' association to conduct recruitment drive
- In-service training of trainers to introduce girl-focused teaching methodologies and awareness of other gender-related factors
- Dissemination of information about sexual harassment, girls' return to school following pregnancy, and other relevant policies at the school and cluster level

### **Supported by the community**

- Provide parents opportunities to help their children with schooling, e.g. mothers' clubs: training in gender issues, literacy, income generation, fuel conservation
- Provide labour-saving devices to enable women and girls find time to participate in mothers' clubs and schooling
- Training for parent-teacher associations
- Community leaders trained about holistic child development
- Develop a mothers' club training manual and participatory performance management and student achievement monitoring tools for community members

### **Supported by national policies**

- Education Sector Strategic Plan (2006–2015) addresses gender issues in schooling.
- Support to the preparation of two Master Plans for Education (1997–2006 and 2007–2015) that put emphasis on mainstreaming gender issues
- Development and implementation of a national policy on sexual harassment and on allowing girls to return to school after dropped out due to pregnancy
- Training of FAWEGAM members and DoSE Gender Education and Guidance and Counselling Units to develop and implement monitoring tools for girls' education
- Girl-friendly/child-friendly focal point in each of the six Regional Education Directorates
- Flexible school calendar
- Gaining DoSE support for an Essential Learning Package
- Supporting the development of ECD policy
- Supporting DoSE efforts to develop a National Quality Assurance system and to strengthen the Education Management Information System.

As shown in Table 2, the Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative exceeded its objective of increasing the girls' gross enrolment rate in primary schools in three particularly disadvantaged districts to 81 per cent, exceeding the national average. UNICEF achieved this goal by 2004.

Other outcome measures used to demonstrate results included the survival rate for girls, which increased in all three districts over the course of the project, and a reduction in gender disparity in gross enrolment and persistence. Although country office reports suggest significant progress has been made in both these areas, it has proved difficult to find consistent statistics over time to demonstrate this, as described in Table 2.

## **V. ANALYSIS**

The Girl-Friendly School Initiative launched seven years ago has not yet had a comprehensive evaluation. Programme achievements have been reported mainly in terms of increases in the gross enrolment rate at the national and regional levels. The initiative has not undertaken to measure the effects of teacher training and of school improvements in learning.

A recent pilot effort by the Department of State for Education to assess Grade 1–3 reading skills revealed very low levels of learning in general. This should not be so surprising, given that learning is often one of the last things to improve in whole-school reform. Efforts to get all children into school will increase the proportion of harder-to-reach, less school-ready children, and will tend to reduce average achievement, at least temporarily. Improved materials for classroom instruction, teacher training and education, early-childhood education and other interventions targeted to address the learning needs of disadvantaged children can help raise average achievement over time.

Training community members in Participatory Performance Management, as the initiative did in 2007, will raise the profile of achievement and increase the likelihood that concrete actions are taken to address gaps in learning. Similarly, if consistently used and analysed, the monitoring tools for girls' education developed for FAWEGAM and the Gender in Education, Guidance and Counselling Units in the DoSE (2005) – as well as regular, classroom-level application of the World Bank-funded Early Grades Reading Assessment (2007) – should also help.

The 2003 evaluation highlighted the need for more activity-specific monitoring data to analyse the relative outcomes of each of these activities. None of the new monitoring systems is sufficiently discrete to pinpoint the impact of specific activities. As the 2003 evaluation pointed out, qualitative, process-oriented studies are needed to better understand, improve and compare the cost-effectiveness of activities and focus limited resources on the most effective minimum package.

The integrated health and nutrition activities – Peer Health Groups, school gardens, immunizations, deworming, insecticide-treated mosquito nets, eye testing, vitamins, clean drinking water, hand-washing facilities, first aid kits and school feeding – are an exception to this approach. Outcomes for these activities, many already in place for several years, should be measurable now in terms of reduced absences due to sickness and increased average height and/or weight of the children involved.

## VI. THE FUTURE

UNICEF has now supported efforts to improve child-friendliness in almost 75 per cent of schools in the Gambia's three most disadvantaged regions; the DoSE has taken over support and monitoring of CFS activities in two thirds of these schools. All of these schools do not yet incorporate the Essential Learning Package, which needs to be expanded to both existing child-friendly schools and those that have not yet received direct support for CFS activities. Because UNICEF's funds have remained static over the past few years, this additional work must be funded through partnerships with other international agencies, and with international and local non-governmental organizations.

Specifically, the Basic Education Support for Poverty Reduction project funded by the UK Department for International Development has undertaken a whole-school development initiative that shares many features of the CFS approach. The two initiatives complement each other in several areas: in-service training for teachers, improved school management and community participation in schools, timely provision of school supplies, and capacity building for the DoSE and its agencies. Partnerships with other Asian Development Bank and World Bank projects could also help target classroom construction and school furnishings to remote regions and some of the most disadvantaged urban slums.

UNICEF will continue to support a rights-based approach and gender parity in education, which translates in some areas into intensive advocacy and communication to get more boys in school, and in other areas continued emphasis on girls' education and to improving the quality of and support to the school-readiness components of ECD. During its midterm review in 2009, UNICEF will explore possible expansion to other regions where enrolment and quality are issues.

Most CFS work to date has focused on the early childhood and lower-basic levels. Although gender parity in enrolments has been achieved at these levels in many areas, gender parity in persistence and achievement remains to be addressed at these levels, and all three school performance measures remain to be addressed in the upper basic and senior secondary levels. Anecdotes from the 2003 evaluation – which found significant discrimination against and low expectations for girl students – suggest that much advocacy and sensitization, as well as financial support, will be necessary to help more girls succeed at more advanced levels of the education system. Understanding what works and the best ways to support it should improve if donors continue to support all the monitoring activities and instruments developed over the past few years, including:

- The Participatory Performance Management approach for parent-teacher associations.
- Monitoring tools for girls' education developed for FAWEGAM and the Gender in Education Unit as well as the Guidance and Counselling Units in the DoSE.
- The Early Grades Reading Assessment funded by the World Bank.

In addition, donors might support the collection of health monitoring data and qualitative studies of several components of the current CFS approach.

**Table 1: CFS initiatives in the Gambia, 2000–2008**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
<b>Government of the Gambia</b>	<b>Revised Education Policy (1988–2003)</b>			<b>Education Policy (2004–2015)</b>						
	<b>Education Master Plan (1997–2006)</b>							<b>Education Sector Strategic Plan 2006–2015</b>		
	<b>Primary Education Programme 1998–2003</b>		<b>Primary Education: Enhancing Quality Education and Retainment of Girls in the Gambia (2002–2006)</b> Total: US\$838,000 <i>Government of the Gambia: US\$100,000</i> <i>World Bank: US\$450,000</i>  <i>EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund</i> 2005: part of US\$4 million; 2006: part of US\$4 million					<b>Basic Education Programme 2006–2015</b> <i>EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund</i> 2007: part of US\$5.4 million; 2008: no funding yet; proposal being submitted		
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
<b>UNICEF</b>	<b>Gambia Girls' Education Project</b>  <i>Japan</i> <i>US\$492,000</i>  <i>World Bank</i> <i>US\$100,000</i>		<b>Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative</b>  <i>UNICEF African Girls Education Initiative</i> <i>Norwegian funds US\$529,000 (2004)</i>  <i>UNICEF Girls' Education thematic funds</i> <i>US\$300,000 per year, 2004–2006</i>					<b>Child-Friendly/ Girl-Friendly School Initiative</b> UNICEF <i>Basic Education funds (thematic funding)</i> 2007: part of US\$300,000; 2008: part of US\$500,000		

**Table 2: Scope of UNICEF GFS/CFS activities in the Gambia, 2002–2008**

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Focus districts/regions</b>	Lower River, Central River and Upper River Divisions					Upper River Region (URR)*	
<b># of schools</b>	LRD, CRD, URD ≈ 168					URR ≈ 60	
<b>Girls' gross primary school enrolment rate (target areas)</b>	69%	81%	82%	85%	91.4	74%	
<b>Girls' primary school drop-out rate (target areas)</b>	19%	16%	15%	15			
<b># of girl-friendly/child friendly schools</b>	40	60	80	100	120	48 (URR)	48 (URR)
<b># of ECD centres</b>	39			68		10 model 15 support	10 model 15 support
<b># of mothers' clubs</b>	65	65	85	105	110	125 (LRR, CRR, URR)	

\* **NOTE:** In 2007, the jurisdictions previously known as 'districts' were designated as 'regions'.

**Source:** UNICEF Country office annual reports (2003-2007) and J. B. Sagnia, Education Specialist, personal communication.

**Table 3: Illustrative activities for Girl-Friendly Schools in the Gambia, 2003–2007**

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative</b>				<b>Girl- and/or Child-Friendly School Initiative</b>
<p><b><u>Early childhood development</u></b> Review and revise curriculum for training ECD facilitators. Trained 300 ECD facilitators.</p> <p><b><u>Inclusive</u></b> 1.1 Support Girls' Scholarship Trust Fund.</p> <p><b><u>Effective for learning</u></b> 2.1 Procure teaching and learning materials, and environmental education materials and tools. 2.2 Mathematics and science clinic for girls.</p> <p><b><u>Gender sensitive</u></b> 3.1 Train teachers on girl-focused teaching methodologies and gender issues. 3.2 Train peer counsellors and teachers. 3.3 All girls' conferences. 3.4 Girl-friendly focal points in schools and district.</p> <p><b><u>Healthy</u></b> 4.1 Construct 10 toilet</p>	<p><b><u>Early Childhood Development</u></b> Review and revise curriculum for training ECD facilitators. Train additional 120 ECD facilitators. <i>Workshop to increase culturally sensitive local toy production.</i></p> <p><b><u>Inclusive</u></b> <i>Advocacy and sensitization campaign ('big bang' increase enrolment rates in regions still considered as 'pockets of resistance' to Western formal education system education.</i> 1.1 Support Girls' Scholarship Trust Fund.</p> <p><b><u>Effective for learning</u></b> Orient and train teachers and community members on the GFSI strategy. Procure and distribute teaching and learning materials for girl-friendly school communities. 2.2 Mathematics and science clinic for girls.</p> <p><b><u>Gender sensitive</u></b> <i>Strengthen information</i></p>	<p><b><u>Early Childhood Development</u></b> Education programme for an estimated 4,500 parents.</p> <p><b><u>Inclusive</u></b> Support Girls' Scholarship Trust Fund</p> <p><b><u>Effective for learning</u></b> Train teachers on low-cost teaching and learning materials. Procure and distribute school supplies, e.g., textbooks, writing materials, teaching materials.</p> <p><b><u>Gender sensitive</u></b> Train community members, multidisciplinary facilitation teams and teachers on gender issues. Orient teachers and head teachers on the GFSI strategy. Train girl peer counsellors and teachers in GFS. Disseminate the sexual harassment policy, the re-entry policy and the Education Policy 2004–</p>	<p><b><u>Inclusive</u></b> <i>Disseminate re-entry policy to head teachers for girls who may have dropped out due to pregnancy.</i></p> <p><b><u>Effective for learning</u></b> Conduct cluster-based workshops for teachers in GFS. Train PTAs on school management and performance monitoring. Procure and distribute literacy teaching and learning materials for 20 new girl-friendly schools.</p> <p><b><u>Gender sensitive</u></b> Use Gender Training Manual to train pre-service and in-service teachers.</p> <p><b><u>Participatory</u></b> Train literacy facilitators in 20 GFS communities.</p> <p><b><u>Healthy</u></b> Train 50 peer counsellors and teachers on guidance and counselling.</p> <p><b><u>Participatory</u></b> Training PTAs on school</p>	<p><b>PROJECT 1A: ECD SCHOOL-READINESS</b> Establish 10 model and 38 support centres in URR. Train ECD facilitators, school authorities and parents.</p> <p><b>PROJECT 1B: CHILD-FRIENDLY/GIRL-FRIENDLY SCHOOL INITIATIVE</b></p> <p><b><u>Inclusive</u></b> Increase existing enrolment rates in lower basic schools in Kanifing Municipal Council and URR by 15 per cent. Rehabilitate 10 existing classroom blocks in lower basic schools and make them fully equipped ECD centres in the URR. Construct three classroom blocks in one lower basic school in the URR.</p> <p><b><u>Effective for learning</u></b> Train teachers on gender, child-centred teaching and English language. Train community leaders in holistic child development.</p>

<p>facilities and 6 wells on school grounds.</p> <p>4.2 Train teachers about HIV and AIDS, and other sexually transmitted infections.</p> <p>4.3 Environmental education clubs.</p> <p><b><u>Participatory</u></b></p> <p>5.1 Expand mothers' clubs.</p> <p>5.2 Procure labour-saving milling machines for mothers' clubs.</p> <p>5.2 Train functional literacy facilitators for mothers' clubs.</p> <p>Train PTA in school management.</p> <p>Train mothers' clubs executive members in income-generating activities and financial management.</p> <p><b><u>Supportive policy environment</u></b></p> <p>6.1 Support development of new Education Policy, emphasizing girls' education.</p> <p>6.2 Advocate and sensitize general public on importance of girls' education.</p> <p>6.3 Launch UNICEF's <i>State of World's Children Report 2004</i> at the community level.</p> <p>Help secure first EFA-FTI</p>	<p><i>exchange in girls' education through a Girls' Education Newsletter.</i></p> <p>Training peer counsellors and teachers in GFS communities in guidance and counselling.</p> <p>All-girls' conferences.</p> <p><i>Support female teachers' association (female teachers' recruitment drive) and cluster in-service training of trainers.</i></p> <p><b><u>Healthy</u></b></p> <p>Expand environmental youth brigades in girl-friendly schools.</p> <p>Provide potable water and sanitary toilets in schools.</p> <p>Train head teachers, youths and community members on HIV and AIDS, and other sexually transmitted infections.</p> <p><i>Introduce Essential Learning Package in six convergent zones.</i></p> <p><b><u>Participatory</u></b></p> <p>Functional literacy training for new GFS communities and expansion of mothers' clubs.</p> <p><b><u>Supportive policy environment</u></b></p> <p><i>Introduction of Essential Learning Package in partnership with World</i></p>	<p>2015.</p> <p>Train the Girls' Education Unit, FAWEGAM, and the Guidance and Counselling Units on development of monitoring tools for girls' education.</p> <p>Support to female teachers' association for recruitment drive in secondary schools and cluster in-service training for teachers in GFS.</p> <p>Support to the girls education newsletter.</p> <p>Support to functional literacy for mothers' clubs.</p> <p><b><u>Healthy</u></b></p> <p>Provision of toilets for six girl-friendly schools.</p> <p>Provision of gardening tools and seeds.</p> <p>Supporting Essential Learning Package.</p> <p><b><u>Participatory</u></b></p> <p>Train mothers' clubs executive officers in entrepreneurial skills and construction of fuel-saving devices.</p> <p>Provide milling machines to mothers' clubs.</p> <p>Support functional literacy for mothers' clubs.</p> <p><b><u>Supportive policy environment</u></b></p>	<p>management and performance monitoring.</p> <p>Train mothers' clubs on entrepreneurship.</p> <p><b><u>Supportive policy environment</u></b></p> <p><i>With other donors, formulate education sector-wide approach and strategic sector plan formulated.</i></p> <p><b><u>Monitoring, studies and evaluation</u></b></p> <p>Develop and disseminate monitoring tools for girls' education activities.</p> <p><b><u>Funding level:</u></b></p> <p>US\$300,000 estimated</p> <p>US\$260,000 allocated</p> <p>US\$234,000 used</p>	<p><b><u>Gender sensitive</u></b></p> <p>Train PTA members and mothers' clubs on gender and its impact on learning.</p> <p><b><u>Participatory</u></b></p> <p>Strengthen mothers' clubs strategy.</p> <p>Train community leaders in holistic child development.</p> <p>Establish new mothers' clubs.</p> <p>Provide adult literacy activities.</p> <p>Disseminate mothers' club training manual.</p> <p>Train community members in participatory performance management.</p> <p><b>PROJECT 3: LIFE SKILLS</b></p> <p><b><u>Healthy</u></b></p> <p>Integrate comprehensive life-skills programme with focus on HIV and AIDS into curriculum.</p> <p><b>PROJECT 2: EDUCATION POLICY SUPPORT</b></p> <p><b><u>Supportive policy environment</u></b></p> <p>Support ECD policy for cabinet approval.</p> <p>Review and support curriculum development for ECD model centres.</p>
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<p>funding. Support ECD policy development. Draft sexual harassment policy.</p> <p><b><u>Monitoring, studies and evaluation</u></b> <i>If not now, then when? If not the Gambia, then where? An Evaluation of the African Girls Initiative in The Gambia</i> Draft Education Policy (2004–2015)</p> <p><b><u>Funding level</u></b> NA</p>	<p><i>Food Programme.</i> Help develop a sexual harassment policy and an enforcement bill. Help formulate new education policy and the Education Master Plan (2004–2015). Support introduction of flexible school calendar. Gender assessment of Integrated Early Childhood Development service delivery approach at the community level.</p> <p><b><u>Monitoring, studies and evaluation</u></b> Disseminate major findings and recommendations of the 2003 Girls' Education evaluation. Continue development of sexual harassment policy and enforcement measures. Help release new education policy (2004–2015) and master plan.</p> <p><b><u>Funding level</u></b> NA</p>	<p><i>With other international donors, formulate education sector-wide approach and strategic sector plan.</i></p> <p><b><u>Monitoring, studies and evaluation</u></b> Develop and introduce monitoring tools for girls' education activities.</p> <p><b><u>Funding level</u></b> US\$200,000 estimated US\$125,000 allocated US\$112,500 used</p>		<p><b><u>Monitoring, studies and evaluation</u></b> Strengthen the Education Management and Information System and pilot in the Upper River Region. <i>National Quality Assurance system in place.</i> <i>World Bank-funded Early Grades Reading Assessment.</i></p> <p><b><u>Funding level</u></b> US\$635,000 estimated US\$505,000 allocated US\$455,000 used</p> <p>US\$600,000 required for 2008</p>
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Source: UNICEF Country Office Annual Reports (2003, 2004, 2005, 2007) and J. Sagnia, Education Specialist, personal communication, 29 October 2008

**Table 4: Gambia girls' education activities – Roles and implementation responsibilities ca. 2003 (J.B.Sagnia)**

AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	REMARKS
<p>Overall vision and guidance of the Girls' Education Project in the Gambia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of clear goals and strategies as enshrined in the Education Policy and Master Plan.</li> <li>- Planning and coordination of all activities in the area of Girls' Education at the central level.</li> <li>- Preparation of overall guidelines and work plans for Girls' Education activities at the national level for the timely implementation.</li> <li>- Coordination of all interventions by various donor agencies and development partners and other stakeholders in Girls' Education.</li> <li>- Providing leadership, coaching and guidance for the micro-planning processes at the divisional level.</li> <li>- Monitoring the implementation of Girls' Education activities and gathering suitable relevant data through the existing data-collection mechanisms and from the Regional Education Offices.</li> <li>- Overall supervision, documentation, sharing of information and evaluation of the activities in Girls' Education.</li> <li>- Provide leadership in the Girl's Education Technical Committee, jointly identifying the goals for the committee and formulating work plans and direction for the implementation of the project.</li> <li>- Oversee and supervise the Scholarship Trust Fund management and administration for girls nationwide.</li> </ul>	<p>Head Girls Education Unit</p>	<p>Other staff will assist the Head of the Girls Education Unit and UNICEF and other development partners would provide technical support .</p>

**Table 4 (continued): Gambia Girls' Education activities – Roles and implementation responsibilities ca. 2003**

AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	REMARKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Assist central-level in planning and expansion of the Girl-Friendly School Initiative at the divisional level.</li> <li>❑ Take lead and jointly plan Girls' Education activities with members of the sub-committees within the DCCs and request funding to implement the activities.</li> <li>❑ Monitor, supervise and jointly implement Girls' Education activities at the divisional level with members of the DCC.</li> <li>❑ Maintain oversight on the activities of the mothers' clubs in particular divisions.</li> <li>❑ Collect and maintain data on Girls' Education at divisional levels.</li> <li>❑ Plan and provide support for all training activities for teachers in the girl-friendly schools under the auspices of the DCCs.</li> <li>❑ Coach Girls' Education Focal Points and FAWEGAM focal points.</li> </ul>	<p>The Divisional Principal Education Officers (PEO)</p>	<p>Each PEO will work with the Divisional Coordinating Committee (DCC) and take the lead in planning for the implementation of the activities agreed upon on the Program of Plan Action (PPA).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Coach and provide technical support for the mothers' clubs in terms of proper book-keeping of their financial activities.</li> <li>❑ Monitor activities of the mothers' clubs and liaison between the clubs and the Regional Education Office and FAWE.</li> <li>❑ Assist the PEO in planning and implementing Girls' Education activities at the divisional level.</li> <li>❑ Participate in the micro-planning meetings of the education sub-groups within the DCCs.</li> <li>❑ Maintain data on Girls' Education activities and activities of the mothers' clubs, and assist clubs in maintaining proper records of their activities.</li> <li>❑ Develop plans for the distribution of inputs at the divisional level.</li> </ul>	<p>Girls' Education Focal Points</p>	<p>In each of the 6 regional offices, one regional training officer has been identified as the Girls' Education Focal Point. FAWE has also identified female teachers as focal points in the respective divisions.</p>

**Table 4 (continued): Gambia girls' education activities: Roles and implementation responsibilities ca. 2003**

AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	REMARKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Maintaining programmatic oversight on implementation of the Girls' Education activities at the decentralized levels.</li> <li>❑ Coordinate Girls' Education activities with the context of the Integrated Basic Services Project.</li> </ul>	Department of Community Development (DCD)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Work closely with the Girls' Education Unit, Planning Unit, DCD and the Regional PEOs in planning, coordinating and implementing the Girls' Education activities.</li> <li>❑ Provide technical support for Girls' Education nationally.</li> <li>❑ Participate in technical coordinating meetings on Girls' Education and provide the necessary guidance and direction towards the achievement of the set objectives.</li> <li>❑ Support and facilitate resource mobilization initiatives for Girls' Education from the international donor community.</li> <li>❑ Support and facilitate innovative approaches to Girls' Education such as the Girl-Friendly School Initiative under the auspices of the UNICEF programme of cooperation.</li> <li>❑ Participate and facilitate the development of short- and medium-term work plans for the Girls' Education Project in the Gambia.</li> <li>❑ Facilitate the implementation of Girls' Education activities at both national and divisional levels.</li> </ul>	UNICEF Education Project Officer (EPO)	

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