

## **Unicef**

### **Community Schools Project in Hodeidah, Ibb and Abyan**

#### **Supervision evaluation**

- \* To review and evaluate the existing governorate and district supervision system and the Unicef supported system in the 3 project locations: Hodeidah, Ibb and Abyan.
- \* To make recommendations for improvement

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# **1 Evidence base**

## 1.1 Interviews with the following

UNICEF Officers in Sanaa  
Ministry of Education, Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Education, Director General, Supervision  
UNICEF Field Officers in the 3 project locations  
Governorate and District Directors of Education  
Governorate and District Chief Inspectors  
Groups of Governorate and District Supervisors  
During school visits – headteacher, supervisor, teachers

## 1.2 Scrutiny of documentation

Ministry of Education guidance on – supervisor appointments, examinations, school resources

Governorate and District annual plans  
Supervisors' record keeping  
Governorate and District reports  
Headteacher registers recording visits to the school  
Teachers' curriculum planning

## 1.3 Observations

23 classroom observations, each one lasting at least 35 mins.  
Supervisors' training session for female teachers  
School environment including storage of resources

## **2 Introduction**

- 2.1 Unicef has been supporting Community Schools in selected districts of Hodeidah over the past six to seven years, and since the current school year, has expanded to some districts in Ibb and Abyan governorates. The Community Schools Project was developed to encourage more girls to enroll in schools close to their home, and at the same time ensure that education of adequate quality is provided to all children.
- 2.2 The concept of school supervision is an integral part of the project, to provide schoolteachers with guidance and the support they require in teaching, and in enabling children to learn. Support to the supervisors is given through training and transport allowance for their supervisory visits.
- 2.3 Each supervisor is responsible for 8 – 15 schools, depending on distance, and they are expected to conduct monthly visits to each school. In Hodeidah, until recently, it was 2 visits per month to each school. Teachers' quarterly meetings are also held in clusters, with supervisors. These meetings provide a forum for exchanging experiences and innovations, for building on strengths and providing remedial measures for weaknesses in classroom teaching and learning.
- 2.4 It was felt that this was a good time to evaluate the model of supervision. It is planned that the supervisors' work will become embedded in the system and be able to be sustained when Unicef support is withdrawn. It was therefore important to include the work of supervisors not supported by Unicef in this evaluation.
- 2.5 The aim of the evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of this model of support in improving the quality of education and establish what is realistic in the future, in terms of the resources available within each governorate. What improvements can be made to give schools the best support to raise standards of achievement?
- 2.6 This evaluation was carried out during March and April 2001. The success is due to the help provided by Education Departments, the schools that were visited and Unicef Regional Officers. Everyone gave generously of their time and expressed a commitment to work to improve the quality of education in Yemen. All the education professionals interviewed spoke frankly about their concerns. They are keen to be given a clear direction for development and hope to be able to participate in training that will meet their needs.

### **3 Supervision structure and management**

- 3.1 There are 3 levels of school supervision in Yemen, Ministry, governorate and district levels. This report deals with supervision at governorate and district levels. Clear and similar line management structures are in place at both levels. The Chief Supervisor is responsible for leading a team of supervisors and reports to the Director of Education. The number of supervisors does not reflect the number of schools in an area. Some areas are much better resourced than others are.
- 3.2 The Ministry of Education has produced documentation setting out how new inspectors should be appointed. The final decision is taken after an interview at the Ministry of Education in Sanaa. For the first 6 months the new supervisor will shadow an experienced supervisor. This is the only training given.
- 3.3 Many supervisors have been in the same job for around 10 years and are well qualified. They are becoming demotivated, as they do not believe their work is valued and due to the lack of resources they are unable to give schools the support they need. Supervisors would welcome an update to the current system, which has been in place since it was established, by foreign supervisors from Egypt and Syria, in the early 1980's
- 3.4 There are no guidelines on the number of schools/teachers each supervisor is expected to support. Very often allocation is based on the schools near where the supervisor lives. In the rural areas it is important that the supervisor lives in the same areas as the schools he/she supports as transport time can greatly reduce the time the supervisor is able to spend in the school. Even if a supervisor lives in the same area, it can take up to one or two hours to travel from one school to another. Supervisors have given a great deal of thought to the practicalities of doing their job and would welcome the opportunity to be involved in any developments. They recognise that the current system is not effective when working with schools to improve teaching and learning.
- 3.5 The governorate supervisors are mainly subject specialists coming from a secondary school background. There are a few general supervisors specialising in the primary sector. The district supervisors are mainly general supervisors working in classes 1 – 4. The Ministry recognises that the district supervisors are less qualified for the job and the education development plan for 2001 – 2002 includes training for these supervisors, to improve their professional qualifications. There is some confusion over the different responsibilities of governorate and district supervisors with much duplication in the early years of schooling. Roles and responsibilities need to be rationalised to make best use of scarce resources as governorate and district supervisors can end up visiting the same school without knowing of the others visit.

- 3.6 Unicef is supporting groups of district supervisors in Hodeidah, Ibb and Abyan governorates. This support is aimed to give opportunities for increased numbers of school visits and teacher training sessions. Apart from this the supervisors continue to work within the district management structure. Within the Unicef project locations there is also a difference in the number of schools a supervisor is expected to support. Further consideration needs to be given to the supervisors' workload based on quality of the outcomes rather than the number of visits.
- 3.7 The management of supervisors, in all situations, is lax. There is no appraisal system in place. A professional working in the field needs to be given flexibility but supervisors would benefit from specific direction. For example "work with the teachers of class 1 in school A to improve the teaching of reading". Supervisors are told to make a set number of visits to a set number of schools but what they do in the school is an open situation. Some supervisors find it very difficult to find a realistic focus for development. There are also no expectations as to what they should aim to achieve each year. It is very easy for the supervisor not to challenge the school.

## **4 Supervisors' roles and responsibilities**

- 4.1 Supervisors can undertake 2 important functions to ensure improvement in the quality of education. (A) To monitor the quality of education and provide feedback to managers. The information can be used to target resources effectively, to support school improvement and ensure the accountability of headteachers. (B) To provide the school with an outside view on the quality of education they provide, to identify strengths and weaknesses and work with the headteacher and teachers to support development. Both roles are important. At governorate and district level the supervisors in Yemen aim to undertake both roles but priority is given to monitoring although senior managers believe that supervisors' work is important to improve the quality of education.
- 4.2 The Ministry sets out a requirement for supervisors to make 4 visits to each school per year. This is an unrealistic target for the resources available. The focus of each visit is set out and is structured in such a way that it does not provide opportunities for the supervisors to work in a developmental way with schools. The main thrust is on monitoring. The first visit in September is to check that the school has textbooks, enough teachers etc. The second and third visits are used to carry out classroom observations, to evaluate the quality of teaching, and make suggestions for improvement. The time does to allow supervisors to support the teachers to make the improvements. The fourth visit is to monitor the end of year examinations. This programme does not recognise that schools will have different needs. There are some effective schools where the headteacher and head of subjects are very active in monitoring the quality of teaching. They may not need developmental visits from the supervisors.
- 4.3 There are possibilities for the monitoring to be streamlined if the role of the headteacher and supervisor could be considered together, as some of the work of the supervisor is overlapping with that of the headteacher. For example the supervisor is expected to report on the availability of textbooks. This could easily be reported by the headteacher. The supervisor could pick up issues on the use of textbooks throughout the year as he/ she is working with teachers. It does not need a special visit when resources are scarce.
- 4.4 Senior managers see supervisors' time as flexible and as they are intelligent professionals, they are often diverted into other projects. Supervisors usually enjoy this as it can be interesting but on occasions the work is not contributing to raising the standard of education. This situation also contributes to lowering the status of supervisors as schools begin to think that it is not important if a supervisor does or does not turn up.
- 4.5 The main role of the Unicef supported supervisors is to work developmentally with schools to improve the quality of education. The funding for extra visits to schools allows the supervisor to take time to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses and can then work in an incremental way to improve the situation. In Hodeidah where the project has been running for some

years there is evidence that the supervisors have been able to make a difference. This is still not the case in Ibb and Abyan where the project started in September 2000. During this evaluation it was not possible to produce evidence that the reduced number of visits is making a difference. School improvement can not be achieved over a short period therefore it is necessary for supervisors to be able to set out a long-term development plan in collaboration with the headteacher. This is not happening systematically within the Ministry or Unicef models.

- 4.6 The majority of headteachers are pleased to have support from supervisors. However, some do not feel able to work in partnership with the supervisor to plan a programme of support for teachers. The sample of school visits in this evaluation is very small to make sound judgements but concern was expressed that in Ibb and Abyan the support for supervisors had declined over the last few years. This is leading some conscientious headteachers to look for support outside the supervision system.

## **5 Reports and reporting systems**

- 5.1 The Ministry of Education has set out clear requirements regarding what they expect supervisors to report on. This is clearly understood by all supervisors and is an important focus of their work
- 5.2 The supervisors write individual reports based on information gathered during the school visits. The senior inspector for each subject or curriculum area makes a summary of the reports from his/her area and passes this to the chief supervisor. He will then compile a governorate report which is passed first to the Director of Education for amendments before being sent to the Ministry. There is a mid year and end of year report. Undoubtedly the supervisors hold a great deal of information about schools.
- 5.3 Supervisors would welcome more feedback on the reports, as they are not aware of action taken based on their findings. The Ministry feels that the reports give them a good overview of the education system.
- 5.4 The supervisors' individual reports are scrutinised by the head of training to identify teachers' training needs. The Unicef supported supervisors use this information to inform the programme for the monthly teachers' meetings. This evaluation did not produce sufficient evidence to make sound judgements on the effectiveness of this system.
- 5.5 Supervisors also write a short report in the school register before leaving the school. This gives the headteacher a record of supervisors' visits and what recommendations they have made for improvement. The reports scrutinised did not give advice on how the improvements might be made nor show sequential development within the school. Supervisors also write down their recommendations in the teacher's planning notebook. More use could be made of this process to help schools take small developmental steps down the road of improvement.
- 5.6 The reporting system can also be used, by senior managers, to monitor the work of the supervisors. This is carried out in an ad hoc manner

## **6 Supervisors' transport to schools**

- 6.1 The supervisors consider that the lack of funding for transport, to and from schools, is the major problem preventing them doing from working effectively. Overall this is a major problem, it does reduce the number of visits supervisors make to schools, but should not be seen as the only problem and that if funding is found for this purpose that supervision will automatically improve.
  
- 6.2 Attempts have been made in the past to fund transport. One Minister of Education instructed a percentage of school fees, paid by the parents, to be used to create a budget for supervisors. This has not been activated. Cars were donated to governorate supervisors so that teams of supervisors could reach the rural areas. In some areas this resource has been directed to other priorities. In some governorates funding has been found to finance a limited number of school visits during the year. It is important to prioritise and fund supervisors' development work so that they are able to support schools, over time, in order to improve teaching and learning.
  
- 6.3 Some supervisors pay for their own transport if the school is near to their home. It is unacceptable that supervisors are expected to pay for their own transport. Any developments to supervision must include funding for transport.
  
- 6.4 Unicef pays a travel allowance to supported supervisors in Hodeidah. Ibb and Abyan, for an agreed number of school visits. The supervisors have received this very positively and are very motivated to carry out the work to the best of their ability. However, it must be recognised that travel in the rural areas is never going to be easy, especially for female supervisors. Travelling on non-asphalt roads, even when taxis can be found, is physically demanding, as well as taking up many hours of the school day. A well thought out plan is needed when allocating supervisors to support schools. Each visit needs to have a specific focus and be part of a long- term development plan.

## **7 Training for supervisors and teachers supported by Unicef**

- 7.1 Before the district supervisors embarked on the work of providing advice and support to schools, Unicef organised two, week long, courses which gave a comprehensive overview of the different aspects of the supervisor's role. Many useful handouts were made available including a proforma and criteria for making judgements when undertaking classroom observation. All supervisors enjoyed taking part in the training but expressed a need for further professional development. At this stage they were not able to be specific about their needs. Supervisors also need on going professional feedback on the quality of their work in order to improve. They would welcome this.
- 7.2 From discussions with most of the supervisors who took part in the training, there was a unanimous view that the session on creating positive relationships with teachers had the most impact. Prior to this the supervisors had felt themselves in a " police' type role, focussing on finding out what the teacher was not doing. They claimed that they had developed a much more positive relationship with the teachers who were now willing to discuss their problems and ready to accept advice.
- 7.3 The training also covered the different aspects of teaching including planning, teaching strategies and making visual aids. Supervisors were confident when talking about these issues theoretically, but less able to apply the principles to the implementation of the new curriculum. The teacher's guide provides planning for the lesson. Supervisors were not always using the teacher's guide when giving advice.
- 7.4 Generally all supervisors need further training on making specific professional judgements on the standards children are achieving and the quality of teaching and learning. They need to be able to give constructive, practical and specific advice on how standards can be improved. Currently the advice given is too vague. Teachers are looking for practical inspiration from the supervisors.
- 7.5 Before supervisors can provide high quality advice and support that will raise standards, they need to be excellent practitioners themselves. They need to have wide experience in working with young children. They need the higher level skills of evaluation and analysis. They need to be creative people. Some people will not achieve this level of expertise by attending courses. It is important that supervisors who have the potential are selected for this work.
- 7.6 Future training would benefit from practical observations in classrooms. The first step would be structured discussions after viewing a video of a teaching situation, followed by visits to schools to carry out classroom observations alongside the trainer. From this practical experience, the trainer could assess the supervisor's skills of evaluation, analysis and setting incremental targets for improvement. Supervisors could be examined in these areas at the end of the course, prior to working on the project. This would ensure that good quality of advice and support was given to the schools. The question we must ask is "is no advice better than confusing advice?"

7.7           There is not sufficient evidence to make detailed judgements on the quality of training provided by the Unicef supported supervisors. Teachers do welcome the opportunity to meet, share ideas and receive some input from the supervisors. The supervisors in Hodeidah are fortunate to have a centre to organise these meetings. The meetings are well attended. It is important to provide new ideas for teachers and the center's display does contribute to this but the part of the meeting observed would have benefited from more supervisor involvement. When teachers are asked to undertake a task it is the supervisors role to raise the level of discussion. If teachers are asked to discuss problems envisaged for teaching the next few lesson in the new curriculum and all they come up with is related to resources, then it is the job of the supervisor to pose the question about the concepts to be taught.

**7.8**           In another situation a teacher had attended a course on preparing visual aids. After several months she still had no teaching aids. Supervisors need to consider how they can follow up the implementation of the issues covered during training. Perhaps some contract needs to be entered into. Teachers receive the training on condition that they implement the ideas.

## **8**      **Supervision in the field**

### **8.1**      **Relationships**

There is evidence that supervisors have good relationships with the schools they support. In some instances they had been working with the school for many years and are considered an important part of the school. In the best situations the headteacher and the supervisor work in partnership, setting targets for teachers. The headteacher follows these up on a regular basis to ensure progress. A supervisor provided an excellent example where she had been supporting 3 very weak teachers in a school for a long time and no progress was made. This year the 3 teachers were transferred to a new school but had the same supervisor. In this school the headteacher is rigorous in following up the work that the supervisor sets for the teachers. In this situation the 3 weak teachers improved dramatically in one term.

8.2      Establishing a good relationship with a school is not an easy one, especially if the supervisor is expected to be the friendly and supportive advisor and at the same time be monitoring the quality of education to feedback to senior managers, and thus ensuring the accountability of the headteacher. It may be worth considering that a different supervisor carries out the monitoring functions.

8.3      Unicef supported supervisors claimed that after the training they are working more effectively to build good relationships with teachers. They recognised that when they have the teachers' confidence it is easier to raise standards, as the teacher is open to suggestions. During the evaluation visits for this report, the supervisors were welcome in schools and the headteachers did everything possible to meet their demands, however in some instances the supervisors need to be more sensitive when carrying out classroom observations. This should be done with the least disruption to the lesson

### **8.4**      **Classroom observation**

Evaluation of teaching through classroom observation is an important method of working with teachers to raise standards. Only through observation over a period of time is the supervisor able to feedback to the teacher their strengths and weakness and be able to work with them to counteract the weaknesses. This process of observation, evaluation, analysis and the ability to feedback in a very positive and constructive way requires a great deal of knowledge about education and highly developed interpersonal skills. The act of observation in itself does not raise standards. Evidence shows that there is a great deal of observation taking in place in some Yemen schools by supervisors, headteachers and heads of departments. The evidence did not show the same emphasis being placed on development.

8.5 During the Unicef supported training the supervisors were given an observation pro forma that they have adapted for use during school visits. This is not proving to be a useful tool, either to gather data about the quality of teaching or as a basis for feedback to teachers. The number of different points and their complexity, combined with the requirement to judge each point on a scale of 1 - 4, leads to superficial judgements that are not being supported by evidence. From scrutiny of reports some supervisors are judging a mark of 35 good and others considering this poor. Supervisors need further support in this area.

#### 8.6 **Advice and support**

This evaluation did not provide sufficient evidence to make a firm judgement on the quality of advice and support the supervisors are giving to teachers. From a few examples, supervisors need to be more specific and provide evidence to support their recommendations. In one school the supervisor advised the teacher to write more specific aims when she was not able to carry out basic classroom management procedures in order to ensure each child was able to participate in the lesson.

8.7 From the supervisors' reports it was seen that teachers were given two or three areas for development such as "write clearer aims", "use more visual aids". To help teachers and headteachers, this advice needs to be more specific. Teachers themselves felt that the most effective means of improving their teaching had been when they had the opportunity to observe a good teacher or sharing ideas. Supervisors could play an important part here to make sure that the teacher being observed is very good. The supervisors need to be able to explain why the teacher is good in terms of the children's' learning. To remind everyone, that a flamboyant performance by the teacher, does not always mean that the children are learning.

8.8 Supervisors' time available to each school is limited; therefore it is essential to prioritise support to schools where the supervisor will be able to make a difference. It is the headteacher's responsibility to create a well-organised learning environment. A school where the children and teachers come on time and remain until the end of the school day. Where the resources, no matter how limited are checked and store properly. Where the accommodation is kept clean and litter free as possible. In a school where this not happening, it is unlikely that the supervisor will be able to make a difference.

## **9 Quality of teaching and learning using OFSTED criteria to make judgements**

- 9.1 During this evaluation, observations took place in 23 classrooms. Each observation lasted at least 35 minutes. The criteria used to make judgements, on the teaching and learning, are set out by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) England and Wales, UK.
- 9.2 Grade descriptors      Very good = many good features some outstanding
- Good = good features and no shortcomings
- Satisfactory = sound but unremarkable
- Unsatisfactory = some shortcomings in important areas
- Poor = many shortcomings
- 9.3 23 observations is a very small sample to make firm judgements on the quality of teaching and learning across the 3 governorates but it does give some general indications.
- 9.4 52% of lessons were judged to be satisfactory or good. No lessons were judged as very good. 30% were unsatisfactory and 18% poor
- 9.5 All teachers observed were using the new textbooks and making every effort to cover the content, in spite of late delivery in some schools. One headteacher explained how he was prioritising which chapters to cover in the time available. This was being done in a sensible and systematic way. Teachers were confident to talk about the subject content.
- 9.6 The range of teaching strategies and their effectiveness is a concern in all but the good lessons. The emphasis is place on whole class teaching, with teacher presentation usually taking up more than half of teaching time. When the teaching was judged as poor, the exposition lacked coherence and did not take the children through planned stages that built towards understanding of the concepts being taught. In this situation the teacher did not follow the teacher's guide or make systematic reference to the student's book.
- 9.7 In the worst situations the teacher copied pages of text from the student's book onto the blackboard. The children were expected to sit in

silence then asked to copy everything from the blackboard into their notebooks, even although each child had a copy of the book.

- 9.8 In the best situations the teacher set out clearly, on the blackboard, what was going to be covered and took the whole class through a staged process of information presentation, followed by open-ended questioning. When the class included less than 60 children this approach managed to maintain the attention of all the children and actively involve the majority.
- 9.9 Group work where children worked together collaboratively to solve problem was not seen. Where children were involved in an activity, this was one child doing something while the others watched. In most situations it was the teacher who demonstrated while the children watched.
- 9.10 Smaller class sizes, especially in the Unicef supported schools in the Hodeidah area, gives the teachers the opportunity to use a wide range of teaching strategies. This is not happening as much as it should considering the support given by supervisors.
- 9.11 The curriculum is set out and teachers are required to follow the student books and teacher guides. The children are grouped according to ability decide by end of year examinations. Even in this situation the teacher needs to interpret the teaching material to meet the children's learning needs. This is not being considered. Some children will make quick progress while others will need extra support. In many classrooms there is little communication between the teacher and individual children. Children, especially young children need lots of praise to give them motivation to learn. Due to the teaching in class 1 many children have not understood basic concepts and will quickly experience failure as the teacher progresses through the book. Teachers are not monitoring individual children's progress in a systematic way and planning to meet their needs.
- 9.12 Teachers are not evaluating the success of each lesson and making notes on changes they will make the following year. Teachers need to understand that the work carried out regarding lesson planning should be built upon year on year.
- 9.13 In all classrooms the children were passive learners but most were quick to volunteer to answer questions. Sometimes this was very badly managed by the teacher but there were also good examples. In one Unicef supported school in Hodeidah the children were asked to raise a little flag when they wanted to answer a question. This gave the teacher time to monitor the children's responses.

- 9.14 In most situations the lesson progressed at a good pace. The 35-minute lesson does not give the teacher enough time to develop some ideas in depth.
- 9.15 The best learning environments were seen in the Unicef supported schools in Hodeidah. Small schools with small class sizes give the headteacher and the teachers the opportunity to create a welcoming and interesting environment, through display of children's work and learning aids. Some teachers took time to bring flowers into the classroom and put fabric across otherwise dismal metal furniture. The supervisors in Ibb and Abyan are beginning to make efforts to get teachers to make learning aids but progress is slow.
- 9.16 In all governorates there were examples of severely neglected schools where litter was not picked up and broken furniture was left lying around the school
- 9.17 There is also a lack of recognition that children's behaviour is important inside and outside the classroom. In many schools behaviour outside the classroom at break was chaotic. In some cases teachers tried to control children by threatening them with sticks. This became a great game for the young children and as they got older the boys thought of retaliation. Potentially this situation could lead to major problems in the classroom. Headteachers and supervisors need to consider the management of children outside the classroom as this affects attitudes to learning inside the classroom.

## **10 Issues encountered**

### **10.1 Teaching very young children**

In all the classes observed neither the teachers nor the supervisors had a good understanding about the learning needs of very young children (classes 1 and 2). Teachers did not take account of - the children's concentration span - the need for concrete and practical experiences so that the children gain a real understanding of basic concepts - the need for the teacher to simplify his or her language to a level that the children will understand - the need to provide lots of praise to build children's confidence and motivation to learn.

10.2 The current method of teaching is based on memorising rather than learning. This is a major problem when children are learning to read and write. It could lead to continued literacy problems throughout school.

10.3 Current research has found that children will learn more from 0 to 8 years than they will through out the rest of their lives. If basic concepts are not mastered in the first years of schooling and if a positive approach to learning is not developed then it is less likely to happen at a later stage.

10.4 The teaching methods used in class one need urgent attention

### **10.5 The new curriculum years 1 - 6**

The students' books and teachers' guides for the new curriculum 1 – 6 have been very positively received. Teachers are motivated to make new efforts to improve their teaching and headteachers are looking for support. This gives the supervisors a clear purpose for their work.

10.6 The teachers' guide sets out clear aims and strategies for each lesson. This has implications for the teachers' planning. At present teachers are wasting time copying this information from the guide to the planning notebook. Teachers need help in assessing what will be the important aims to focus on, depending on the learning needs of their students.

10.7 The teachers are also unsure how to manage the use of the student's book within the structure of the lesson. Very basic classroom management strategies need to be emphasised as part of good practice. Many lessons continued with some children unsure what page they were supposed to be looking at.

10.8 At all times the teachers were working with the new materials and seemed confident in talking about the content.

## **10.9 Emphasis on whole class teaching**

All lessons observed were based on whole class teaching. In many cases the teacher talked for more than half of the lesson time. The children were in a passive learning situation and many lost their concentration after the first 5 minutes. It is agreed that whole class teaching is an essential teaching strategy when planned effectively but needs to be combined with other active strategies such as group work and problem solving. During the classroom observations, on only a few occasions, was the whole class teaching considered to be very good. There was a tendency for supervisors to consider a flamboyant teacher presentation as very good teaching and not focus on what the children were learning.

## **10.10 School accommodation**

All teachers and children are highly motivated when they have the opportunity to work in a new school building that is clean and well resourced. Many Unicef supported schools in Hodeidah have successfully involved the community in the life of the school and this has led to improved attendance and children being well prepared for school, regarding their uniform, paper and pencils etc. The key to success is the community, headteacher and supervisor all working in partnership to raise standards. The importance of the learning environment does not receive sufficient attention by headteachers or supervisors. The Unicef supported supervisors in Ibb and Abyan are beginning to make efforts in this area but a great deal of work is still needed.

- 10.11 It must be noted that not all children and teachers are in the happy position of working in a new school and every day many have to face the prospect of sitting in overcrowded conditions, 5 children to a desk, designed for 2, often in extreme temperatures. Sometimes, teachers do not have a desk, chair or even a blackboard. Supervisors need to take this into account when making judgements on the quality of education provided. The Ministry of Education needs to make it clear what are the reasonable expectations in these situations. It is not helpful to tell teachers that they need to be creative and that the most important thing is the teacher. Teachers are in great need of practical examples and realistic expectations when working in these very difficult circumstances.

## **11 Suggestions for improvement**

- 11.1 School supervision in Yemen has been in place for over 20 years and would benefit from review and development to meet changing educational needs. Clear line management, planning and reporting systems are in place, providing a good foundation for future developments. .
- 11.2 Currently the supervisors aim to monitor the quality of education to provide feedback to senior managers at governorate and Ministry levels, as well as giving advice and support to schools. These two tasks are integrated into a programme of 4 visits to schools each year. The main focus is on monitoring and the number of visits does not give many opportunities to work with schools in a developmental way. Unicef supported supervisors are able to make more visits to schools and organise additional teacher meetings. In Hodeidah where the project has been operating for over 6 years there is evidence that supervisors have been able to play an important part in improving the educational provision. A model for supervision needs to be developed that is effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning and is sustainable within resources available.
- 11.3 The Ministry of Education needs to decide what is the role of governorate and district supervisors regarding monitoring the quality of education and supporting schools to improve the quality of education.
- 11.4 Questions to be asked. 1 - Will the work of supervisors at governorate and district level be the same or different? 2 – What essential information do senior managers require from monitoring schools? 3 - Are supervisors the right people to collect this information and is it best collected through visits to schools? 4 - What model of support would be suitable to improve the quality of education considering the resources available? 5 - How will supervisors' visits to schools be prioritised?. 6 - How will supervisors' visits to schools be financed? 7 how will senior managers implement the new changes and what training will be required?
- 11.5 Supervisors are inconsistent when making judgements about the quality of education. The main reason for this is that they do not have nationally agreed criteria to use when making these judgements. It is

important that criteria are set out in a practical way and are jargon free. Both supervisors and headteachers need to be trained in using the criteria, to be confident in working with teachers to raise standards. In this way a common understanding about the standards expected of good practice will be developed.

- 11.6 Future advice and support given by the Unicef supported supervisors should be linked to the introduction of the new curriculum 1 – 6. Supervisors need to spend time in classrooms trialling materials to support lessons that teachers are finding difficult. They should aim to show how “found” resources could be used as learning aids. Supervisors will then be equipped with teaching packages that can be disseminated, providing practical and realistic help for teachers. This should not be individual supervisors doing their own “thing” but organised and coordinated across teams. Methods of teaching reading and writing in class 1 should be a priority
  
- 11.7 Supervisors’ time is limited and the demands for improvement in the education system are great. It is important to find a way of prioritising support to schools where improvement is possible and needed. The district supervisors are in an excellent position to focus their work on school improvement, working in partnership with the headteacher.

## **Appendix 1**

## **Appendix 2**

Classroom observation pro forma used by Unicef supported supervisors

## **Appendix 3**

Example of Chief Supervisor's annual plan

## **Appendix 4**

Example of supervisor's report on a visit to a school