



Education: Moving from Access to Quality

ISSUE

Although the Philippines is progressing towards universal primary education, the system faces constraints in access to secondary schools and serious retention and quality problems overall. Approximately 34 per cent of children who enroll cannot complete primary school, while over 50 per cent cannot finish high school. The majority of primary school children drop out before third grade. Further, only about 35 per cent of pre-school children have benefited from some kind of early childhood education, making the adjustment to the school setting more difficult. Sharp disparities exist throughout the system with the worst impact felt in overcrowded urban schools (from 70 to 100 children in a classroom) and in the most remote villages typically where religious and ethnic minority groups reside.

ACTION

1. **Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD):** UNICEF will continue to help expand the delivery of ECCD in formal settings. However, added emphasis will be placed on organizing alternative home- and community-based ECCD. Working with community groups, support will be provided in the form of training, materials and guidance for parents and volunteers to organize their own ECCD classes. To ensure quality, the use of the newly completed ECCD checklist will be supported. The checklist helps rural health midwives, child development workers, day care workers and mothers to determine if a child is developing along seven critical domains.

2. **The Child-Friendly School System (CFSS) in Primary Schools:** The UNICEF sponsored CFSS-approach will be taken to scale in all primary schools in the 24 focus areas. Five basic modules on such aspects as effective teaching and learning, health promotion, gender sensitivity, protective and inclusive practices and student tracking will be reproduced and disseminated. Teacher and administrator training will continue and parent/student council organization orientations will be extended. In addition, tested models of combined face-to-face and independent or distance learning schemes will be supported. Special attention will be given *Madrassah* schools and indigenous communities.

3. **The Child-Friendly High Schools:** The CFSS approach will be piloted in about 225 high schools in the UNICEF-supported focus areas. The aim will be to enhance the relevance and quality of education and consequently to improve student retention and achievement. An essential feature of the programme is the enhancement of life skills education, including HIV/AIDS prevention education and entrepreneurial skills of adolescents.

4. **Education Quality Assurance:** UNICEF will address quality assurance by expanding the use of the ECCD Checklist; improving the CFSS self-assessment mechanisms; training school supervisors and multi-sectoral ECCD service providers in results based monitoring and evaluation; raising the quality of school supervision; and enhancing competence in the use and analysis of the Education MIS/ChildInfo by the school system and community to jointly address problems which affect children's schooling. NGOs, Local School Boards and Parents-Teacher-Community Associations will be mobilized to support the child-friendly ECCD/school approach.

IMPACT

In UNICEF-assisted areas CFSS has led to public primary school retention rates that are significantly better than the national average (by 13 per cent). CFSS coverage in UNICEF- assisted areas will be expanded from 41per cent to 100 per cent of primary schools. At least 225 or roughly 25 per cent of high schools in UNICEF areas will be reached. ECCD access will be expanded from 35 per cent to at least 50 per cent of children aged 3 to 5 years.

ESTIMATED BUDGET (US\$)

Item/Description	2004	2005	2006	Total
Early Childhood Care and Development40%	477,000	477,000	477,000	1,431,000
Child Friendly School System	417,000	417,000	417,000	1,251,000
Child Friendly High School	180,000	180,000	180,000	540,000
Education Quality Assurance	119,140	119,140	119,140	357,420
TOTAL	1,193,140	1,193,140	1,193,140	3,579,420