

ACCELERATING PROGRESS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION ---Towards Robust and Sustainable Outcomes

There can be no significant or sustainable transformation in societies and no significant reduction in poverty until girls receive the quality basic education they need to take their rightful place as equal partners in development. (Carol Bellamy – Executive Director; UNICEF)

Introduction

1. This document outlines a strategy for ***accelerating*** progress in Girls' Education in order to meet the goal of gender equality in primary and secondary education by 2005. This is the first credibility challenge of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) goals. Failure to achieve results in this area will perpetuate entrenched inequities and condemn yet another generation of children (majority girls) to a life of ignorance, poverty and misery. This strategy paper sets out the ways in which UNICEF intends to work in collaboration with governments, civil society and the private sector to ensure a partnership that helps countries achieve gender equality as part of education for all. As one of the convening partners of the EFA movement, UNICEF has resolutely championed girls' education not only as a means of achieving the equity goals set for education, but also as a means of leveraging overall progress in EFA and addressing goals related to poverty alleviation and human development. Hence UNICEF has set girls' education as a top priority in its Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) for the period 2002–2005. This singular focus on girls' education has led to a concern that the gender equity goals set for 2005 may be slipping out of reach, unless special steps are taken now to accelerate progress on girls' education. As the leading agency in girls' education, UNICEF has a responsibility to help countries pursue accelerated progress that will yield credible results in a robust and sustainable manner by 2005.

Purpose and Rationale

2. This acceleration strategy is based on a rights approach, as espoused in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The focus therefore is on the more than 120 million children (majority girls) who are denied access to quality basic education. The strategy takes into account work already being done by development agencies and funding partners as part of the education for all movement (e.g. the Fast Track Initiative led by the World Bank). It is therefore not intended to replace existing initiatives and efforts, but to complement and enhance them in the interest of accelerating progress in girls' education. It is an integral part of EFA efforts. The idea then is that normal work will continue with current programmes such as UNICEF's Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) and similar programmes of other agencies that deal with girls' education. However special efforts and resources will be devoted to the acceleration strategy in order to achieve credible outcomes by 2005, so we can keep our promise to the children of the world.

3. The main purpose of this new strategy document therefore is to provide an agreed platform for **accelerating** and **co-ordinating** work on programmes and activities in girls' education, in a manner that would result in robust and sustainable outcomes. Whilst the central focus is clearly on the EFA goals and the Millennium Development Goals, it should be emphasised that the rationale for this acceleration strategy is to address multiple agendas relating to:

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| (a) | Contributing to the achievement of the MDGs and EFA goals for 2005 and 2015 |
| (b) | Contributing to the achievement of goals outlined in the World Fit For Children |
| (c) | Reaching MTSP targets for girls' education in access, quality and achievement. |
| (d) | Helping countries and regions achieve regional development goals (e.g. NEPAD). |
| (e) | Consolidating UNICEF's role in education and education's place in UNICEF. |

Five Inter-related Strands of Strategy to Accelerate Progress on Girls' Education

Focus Intensive Interventions on Selected Countries

4. The first strand or dimension of the strategy is to focus on a set of countries for intensive interventions. This means that whilst normal country programmes will continue everywhere on girls' education, there will be a concentration of additional resources and intervention measures in selected countries, that will result in accelerated and maximum impact on girls' education by 2005. Criteria being used to create a pool for selection of these UNICEF-Focus countries are as follows:

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| (a) | Countries in which the net enrolment ratio for girls is generally considered to be low (below 70%).....there are 44 such countries and some have less than 40%. |
| (b) | Countries with a gender gap of 10% or more in primary enrolment levels ... there are 30 countries estimated to be in this category. |
| (c) | The 10 countries with the highest numbers of girls (over 1 million) out of school. |
| (d) | The 23 countries on the EFA "fast track" list announced by the World Bank on behalf of EFA partners. UNICEF played a major role in shaping this outcome. |
| (e) | High-risk countries where enrolment and gender parity are under threat. E.g. those heavily impacted by HIV/AIDS, civil conflict, natural disasters and emergencies. |

5. Using these criteria a pool of countries was listed on a grid to show how many of the criteria relate to each country. Using this grid, other characteristics of the countries were explored and some negotiations took place on which countries should be selected for accelerated progress on girls' education. After much discussion a total of 25 countries have been selected as the initial set of countries for acceleration. These selected countries include some of the most challenging in terms of gender parity, girls education and EFA generally. However, there are also some countries in which conditions offer a realistic chance of credible results and demonstrable success by 2005. The grid in Annex 1 shows list of 25 countries selected for acceleration.

Adopt a Proactive and Intensive Approach

6. The second dimension of the strategy for accelerating progress in girls' education is to adopt a proactive and intensive approach that concentrates expertise, knowledge and other resources on reaching out-of-school girls and helping them overcome the barriers to obtaining quality basic education. This is really about using what we know already, when it comes to reaching out-of-school girls or addressing the barriers that prevent them from accessing and completing basic education. Plenty of examples of such measures can be found in the literature generated by various agencies such as USAID, World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF, as well as from academia and the world of NGOs. The challenge now is to use this bank of experiential knowledge with much more urgency, much more resources and with a greater focus on selected countries. In the process, we also hope to learn more about how to better target these interventions and help countries take them to scale, so they work faster and better for girls' education. The intention is to use each of the initial 25 selected countries to help lift 3 additional countries by sharing experiences and lessons learnt.
7. Putting this dimension into practice has implications for the work pattern of UNICEF and other agencies. Accelerated progress on girls' education cannot be achieved through a "business as usual" approach. It requires new ways of working by most of the agencies involved. Each agency will have to work out the implications for its own way of working, but in general a greater degree of collaboration between agencies will be necessary to assist countries in an effective and efficient manner. For UNICEF, this approach requires greater engagement between HQ, Regional Offices and Country Offices, as well as enhanced advocacy and communications strategies. It also requires strengthened commitment and increased capacity for UNICEF at every level, improved networking within UNICEF and with outside partners, as well as increased flow of resources to help with rapid scaling up of successful interventions. These resources will involve financial inputs as well as advocacy, knowledge, expertise and guidance. As an example the following boxes illustrate what may be required for implementing a strategy that is proactive and intensive:

Box 1: Implementing a Proactive Strategy in Selected Countries

This strategy entails identifying out-of-school girls and providing schooling for them (initially on an emergency basis if necessary), rather than putting measures in place and waiting for enrolment to increase. To do this sensibly requires:- 1. Advocacy at the highest level (HoS/HoG) for accelerating progress in GE. 2. Advocacy with partners and nationals for high priority on accelerating GE in sector plans (SWAPs, PRSPs, SIPs, etc). 3. Mobilising communities / institutions to work on acceleration measures. 4. Safeguards on quality to avoid future setbacks. 5. Strong local participation to promote ownership and sustainability. 6. Anticipating and planning for the key consequences of acceleration (e.g. facilities, staffing, recurrent costs, management, integration into mainstream, etc).

It needs to be emphasised that a proactive strategy on its own will not lead to the type of accelerated progress that is advocated in this document. A proactive strategy will yield

results when it is combined with an intensive strategy. In a sense the five dimensions of the acceleration strategy outlined here are highly inter-related and inter-dependent. There is not much to be gained by trying to use some of them and ignore others.

Box 2: Implementing an *Intensive* Strategy in Selected Countries

This means developing and concentrating a “**total resource package**” of interventions in the selected countries, in a manner that would yield results in a much shorter time-frame than would normally be the case. To do this sensibly requires:- 1. Understanding the local situation well to customise “total resource package” for each country. 2. Strengthening country level capacity to handle the intervention package. 3. Providing backup from Regional and HQ levels in terms of guidance, technical notes, networking and “rapid response mechanisms” to support countries and deal with emerging needs. 4. Winning the community’s support for intervention measures. 5. Building capacity and partnerships to rapidly scale up proven interventions. 6. Strengthening problem-solving capacity and ability to learn lessons from intervention measures that work as well as those that do not. 7. Creating a data bank of resource persons, physical assets and reference materials that can be used to support rapid implementation of the intervention measures. 8. Building action teams of UNICEF go-getters that can pull out all the stops, to accelerate progress on GE in the selected countries. 9. Providing short-term measures and incentives whilst building long-term solutions.

A final point on this dimension of the strategy is to highlight examples of practical intervention measures that may form part of the action plan in the selected countries.

Box 3: Examples of Practical Measures for Selected Countries

This is about applying what we already know and what we think will work best for each country or community: 1. Operate double shifts in existing schools. 2. Expand other forms of provision (non-formal) and work to improve quality, win official recognition and regular funding for them. 3. Make small rural schools viable through multi-grade teaching. 4. Operate tent schools and use school-in-a-box for “emergency” needs. 5. Use incentives for enrolment and attendance (school meals, girls’ scholarships, etc). 6. Use public pronouncements by local leaders to promote enrolment and attendance. 7. Address home/community factors that help to release girls to enrol and attend school (provide water supply, community childcare, labour-saving gadgets and schemes, supplement to household income, etc). 8. Provide mobile schools for remote rural populations and transient/nomadic groups. 9. Advocate for building of new schools and expand / repair existing schools as incentive for increased enrolment. 10. Improve facilities available in schools (e.g. water supply, sanitation, play and recreational facilities, etc.). 11. Provide “Escorts” and measures to improve safety of the journey to school. 12. Use incentives for teachers and administrators (based on Learning achievement) to improve quality.

Intensify Advocacy at National and International Levels

8. The third dimension of the strategy for accelerating progress in girls' education is to intensify advocacy at the national, regional and international levels in order to:
 - (a) Create a groundswell of local demand for open budgets, transparency and accountability.
 - (b) Transform political will into Government action to fulfil their obligations on girls' education and ensure this is reflected in national plans and budgets.
 - (c) Mobilise financial resources and donor commitment to girls' education as the main leverage on national education systems for achieving EFA.

At the national and regional levels, the challenge is to get a unified voice and support from high level political leaders. Urgent work needs to be done on enhanced strategies for advocacy and communication in favour of girls' education. The Communication Division in Headquarters will be central in supporting the articulation and dissemination of a clear vision. The Executive Director and her Deputies, as well as Regional Directors will need to make country visits and deliver convincing messages to national partners at the highest levels.

9. We will build on the success of existing programmes and initiatives in order to prioritise the co-ordination of efforts by partner agencies, donors, civil society and the private sector. Mechanisms that will be explored in this regard include the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and the African Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI). Through these and other mechanisms, UNICEF will seek to ensure mainstreaming of girls' education as well as effective co-ordination. The challenge will be to broaden participation in UNGEI, AGEI and other available mechanisms, to include all key donors, civil society and the private sector. This will be done in all the 25 selected countries by assessing the major interventions on girls' education and identifying champions to lead on girls' education at all forums, including the PRSP donor coordination group. In addition, UNICEF will help to create the space, build the capacity and provide entry points for civil society to participate in key decision-making forums. In this regard, UNICEF will build on its experience of creating bridges between civil society and policy-makers, as well as in organising children's participation. These efforts will require close collaboration with local NGOs and regional advocacy groups (e.g. FAWA in Africa). Strong popular demand in each country for accelerating progress in girls' education will further help ensure Government accountability.
10. Internationally, we will use this strategy to ensure that girls' education is a priority in the design, implementation and monitoring of the EFA Fast Tacking Initiative. We will also build on the commitment of partner agencies to help countries achieve the MDGs and EFA goals and mobilise substantial resources for girls' education. We will work to have a strong presence at policy forums and ensure sufficient co-ordination to make a unified contribution where key decisions are taken on investments and

strategies for achieving these goals. We will also work to achieve greater visibility of girls' education issues within the international education agenda and a clear message of our engagement with it. We will convey clear messages about UNICEF's leadership in the area of girls' right to education, its areas of comparative advantage and its ability to work in partnership with others to help countries deliver on these goals. Again, this requires advocacy visits by the Executive Director, and other senior figures to donor countries. Two of the most important roles we need to emphasise in our messages are: **“accompanying”** countries as they strive to achieve the goals to which they have committed themselves, and operating an **inter-sectoral approach** to the achievement of education goals. These are powerful and relatively new concepts that will need to be well honed as part of our advocacy and communication strategies. A brief outline is given in the boxes below:

Box 4: “Accompanying” countries on the road to education goals

This is a new concept that seeks to go beyond the basic requirements of partnership. It is based on the notion of countries taking the lead, but also acknowledges that countries often need help beyond provision of funds and monitoring or evaluating their progress. The idea of “accompanying” a country therefore emphasises continuous and long-term support with a total resource package (not just funds) throughout the difficult journey that will lead to achievement of the MDGs, WFFC goals, EFA goals and other national or regional goals (e.g. NEPAD). Accompanying a country means being there through thick and thin, without being unduly obtrusive or trying to dictate matters. It means sharing and empathising with the vision and objectives of the country, yet being constructive with both support and advocacy for change where needed. It is about being involved in the day-to-day decisions and problem-solving difficulties that national officials and local communities will invariably face throughout this journey. It is about being there for a country and walking the distance as well as the extra mile if necessary. UNICEF should boldly stake its claim to being uniquely able to accompany countries because of its track record, its organisational structure and mode of operation in over 160 countries.

11. The concept of accompanying countries does not imply that UNICEF intends to adopt a policy of acting alone in helping countries. On the contrary it means that UNICEF will coordinate and collaborate with various partner agencies as they proceed with doing what they are best at. For instance UNICEF will contribute to the monitoring and evaluation process and help the designated agency (UNESCO) to obtain the best possible data (especially data that is dis-aggregated by gender). It will also help to enrich and garnish the monitoring and evaluation reports by providing illustrative data on supplementary indicators that help to embellish the inter-sectoral achievements surrounding educational goals. In the same way, UNICEF will work with governments and partner agencies to scale up those interventions that have been shown to produce positive results for girls' education and education for all. We will work to maximise the visibility of girls' education as a lever to help countries meet the MDGs. The leadership of other partners will also need to play a role in advocacy, communication and publicity on behalf of girls' education.

Box 5: Adopting an Inter-Sectoral Approach to Education Goals

This approach recognises that addressing many of the obstacles relating to education for all and the MDGs (especially those affecting girls' education) require thinking and acting outside of the education sector mode. UNICEF has a unique capacity to operate in many sectors through its programmes on behalf of children and vulnerable groups. We need to convey this comparative advantage through appropriate messages. This approach is one of the dimensions of the overall strategy for accelerating progress in girls' education. It is outlined in detail, as the fifth dimension, for several sectors and MTSP priority areas.

Intensify Partnerships for Planning, Co-ordination and Service Delivery

12. The fourth dimension of this acceleration strategy is to intensify partnerships at all stages of the process leading to achievement of the education goals. There is far too much fragmentation in planning and implementing programmes, projects and activities related to girls' education. We will work to intensify co-ordination of country-level interventions, at least in terms of outcomes and results reported, so we know who is doing what and to what effect. Beyond this, co-ordination is required to avoid wasted resources and duplication as well as to help build synergy through blending appropriate interventions in the field of girls' education. One way of doing this is to take mechanisms like UNGEI to the country level. This requires us to invite multi-laterals, bi-laterals, NGOs, communities, private sector and children to join in and create a true partnership at country level. This will help to ensure that activities on girls' education by the various partners are co-ordinated for greater impact and improved outcomes. It is important to assess and build on all these existing mechanisms and networks, particularly those that function well, and are familiar to all those working in the country.

13. Based on the experience already gained with AGEI and UNGEI, we will co-ordinate efforts to support girls' education at the national, regional and international levels. In terms of planning and co-ordination of EFA efforts generally, there are already promising partnerships at the international level through the Fast Track Initiative led by the World Bank and the EFA Working Group led by UNESCO. UNICEF will use its involvement in these partnerships to provide much needed co-ordination for girls' education. These efforts will need to be translated to partnership at the country level, to cover planning, co-ordination and service delivery. It is in the area of service delivery that partnerships for practical action are needed most at the country level. UNICEF will seek to build on the achievement of AGEI in 34 African countries and to use UNGEI as a mechanism for strengthening partnerships and co-ordinating efforts in girls' education. UNGEI must therefore be moved to the country level and broadened to include multi-laterals, bi-laterals civil society and the private sector, in order to create a true partnership. The experience with AGEI in Africa also needs to be replicated in Asia, as part of a viable co-ordinating mechanism for girls' education.

Focus on Inter-sectoral Approach

14. The fifth dimension of the strategy for accelerating progress in girls' education is to focus on working across sectors in order to establish a framework for delivering quality education that is robust and sustainable. This involves developing maximum synergy with other sectors that impact on girls' education, in order to promote a new and more integrated approach to service delivery. The common denominator underlying this new approach will be the use of **gender as a lens for accelerating progress in girls' education**. Some of the elements of this inter-sectoral approach are outlined in the following paragraphs, for key sectors that affect girls' education:

HIV/AIDS IN EDUCATION

15. An innovative approach is proposed: **use the HIV/AIDS threat as an imperative for accelerating change in schools and education systems**. Prevention and mitigation measures can drive educational change, as well as combat the pandemic. To date it has proved difficult to implement effective and imaginative interventions on a large scale to combat the threat posed by HIV/AIDS. This is mainly due to a prevailing disconnection between intentions and actions. There is now growing awareness of the threat that HIV/AIDS poses to education systems, as well as the need for urgent measures to combat this threat. Prevention and mitigation measures are increasing, but with little evaluation of their impact. If we continue to treat HIV/AIDS as an additional agenda item for embattled education systems to deal with (rather than as part of the main education menu), then progress will still be patchy at best.
16. Given this reality, the proposed approach seeks to yield education dividends as well as helping to combat the HIV/AIDS threat. This implies strengthening prevention and mitigation measures that also contribute to school improvement. The school can then become the locus for changes that relate to HIV/AIDS, as well as contributing to improvements in the quality of education. This holistic approach does not treat the measures in question as purely to do with HIV/AIDS, but rather as part of a general school improvement drive. We need to identify and use the most promising interventions (through better evaluation) to address HIV/AIDS in education. Meanwhile, we should use our best judgement to select from measures currently used in most education systems:

Examples of Measures to combat HIV/AIDS, that also Yield Education Dividends

(1) Flexible school times and catch-up programmes for orphans and working children. (2) Professional discipline and codes (teachers' unions) to stamp out improper contacts of male teachers with girl pupils. (3) More authority and resources for school heads to meet needs of teachers affected by HIV/AIDS (employment rights, counselling, freedom from discrimination, access to treatment and other benefits). (4) Empower pupils (especially girls) to improve on management of risk behaviour. (5) Empower parents and local communities to hold schools responsible and accountable for safeguarding children from sexual harassment, rape and sexual exploitation. (6) Promote a culture of school as a place in which teachers have rights as well as obligations that are to be monitored and managed by school heads. (7) Stress peer counselling, out-of-school clubs, child-to-child activities, positive living ambassadors and other such measures, to help children combat the threat of HIV/AIDS. (8) Provide resources to safeguard the rights of children affected by HIV/AIDS, to continue with their education in an environment free of stigma and prejudice. (9) Build stronger links between formal schools and non-formal alternatives to provide a safety net for children at risk of missing access to or dropping out of education.

17. These and many such measures have been advocated often in the past to help make schools more responsive to the challenges posed by obstacles to girls education and universal basic education. However, it has been difficult to implement them in a meaningful way without some major driving force or imperative for change. This is what HIV/AIDS now offers us! It is this opportunistic use of the threat posed by the pandemic that is innovative about the approach outlined here. By harnessing the overwhelming desire for action to combat the threat posed by HIV/AIDS, pressure can be put on schools and education systems from all angles, to implement much needed reforms. The focus therefore is not simply to have HIV/AIDS in the curriculum or address it through peer counselling and school clubs. It is rather to transform schools into bastions against HIV/AIDS by implementing a raft of change measures that will fundamentally alter the culture of schooling. This in turn will result in considerable quality improvement that can benefit teachers as well as pupils and the communities served by the school. This is the education dividend that should inspire Ministers/ministries of education, teachers and school heads to see action on HIV/AIDS as more than just an add-on to a full education agenda. For this approach to work, it is critical to have a strong advocacy campaign at all levels (especially at Heads-of-State and Heads of Agencies levels).

I/ECD IN EDUCATION

18. The importance of ECD for education has already been well documented in the literature, in terms of early learning that offers a head start with positive behaviour and school readiness, as well as early socialisation for gender sensitisation in children. An additional linkage that appears to have been overlooked relates to the battle for rhythm in the everyday life of a child. Winning a place for the rhythm of

schooling at an early stage in a child's everyday life can determine whether or not the child starts school at the right age and continues without frequent lateness and absenteeism. This in turn can help to make gains in girls' enrolment and completion more sustainable, by ensuring that all children (especially girls) start school at the right age and stay on to complete, once they have enrolled.

Box 6. Using I/ECD for Sustainable Progress – “The Rhythm of Schooling”

In most rural communities and deprived regions, children are taken care of completely for the first 2 or 3 years and then they are slowly introduced to simple household chores and minor income-generating tasks (this is especially true for girls). These gradually build up into a routine or everyday rhythm in the child's life. Once these are established and take up most of the child's day (by 5 to 7 years of age), it becomes very difficult to introduce schooling into a child's life. This is a major reason for children not being sent to school at the right age or not at all. Provision of community-based EC care helps deal with this problem in two ways. First, because the child spends a few hours each day in some form of EC care we are in effect booking a place for schooling in the child's daily routine. Starting school becomes easier as it does not have to crowd out other established daily activities. Secondly, EC care helps to introduce the rhythm of schooling (regular attendance at designated times, etc.) into the child's life at an early stage. This makes it likely that once the child starts school he/she will attend punctually and regularly. Through these effects, ECD can lead to sustainable achievements by ensuring that as more and more children have access to EC care, more and more children will start school at the right age, attend punctually and regularly, and complete their education.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION IN EDUCATION

19. The practice of using nutrition (school meals) as an incentive for enrolment as well as a means of promoting learning for children who would otherwise be too hungry and malnourished to learn, has been well established. Other benefits such as routine health checks, growth monitoring, micro-nutrients and de-worming programmes are also well known in the area of education interventions. Apart from these complementary benefits there are also direct educational benefits to be gained through health and nutrition interventions. The knowledge and skills components of nutrition and health in the curriculum can be used to improve the quality of learning achievements. They help to ensure that both boys and girls can acquire competencies that enable them to provide better care for their families in the area of health and nutrition. Moreover these components can provide boys and girls with a platform for career development in fields related to nutrition and health. Firstly then, health and nutrition interventions can be used as incentives for participation, learning readiness of pupils and improvement of learning environment. Secondly, these health and nutrition interventions can also provide valuable knowledge and skills in the curriculum to improve quality of learning achievements that relate to life skills. Thirdly, these interventions offer a vocational platform for school leavers in the areas of health and nutrition. In general health and nutrition interventions can contribute not only to improved access, retention and completion, but also to better learning achievement and outcome of schooling.

CHILD PROTECTION IN EDUCATION

20. Issues relating to child protection are critical for education in two related senses. Firstly, children who are not in school are most at risk of being subjected to exploitation and therefore most in need of child protection. Secondly, those children already in a situation of exploitation can find refuge and a new sense of hope for a new life, through education. For these reasons, those working in the field of child protection see education as a means of preventing various forms of child exploitation as well as ameliorating the impact of exploitation on affected children. The question for this strategy paper is what does child protection have to offer education that can be used to accelerate progress towards robust and sustainable achievements in girls' education? In brief, the concerns of child protection reflect the misguided (sometimes ill-motivated) reasons for keeping girls out of school, and also mirror the main consequences of girls being denied the right to basic education. Taking a rights-based approach to education requires us to address these injustices through which girls and boys are denied access to quality basic education. It highlights the need to re-awaken the moral force in education so we can deal with issues of fairness, social justice and unethical practices. Education is not an industry for passive reception and processing of cohorts of children. It is a force for good in society and represents the ultimate tool for distributing social goods and engineering social justice.
21. Besides this general concern, there are issues that need to be addressed urgently within an acceleration strategy if gains are to be consolidated. The rapid increase in the number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS in some parts of the world raises new challenges for equity issues in education. Similarly increased child trafficking poses a major threat to girls' education efforts and the general EFA goals. Then there are new challenges when old problems like drought impact on communities that are already being decimated by HIV/AIDS. In most of these situations children are at risk and need to be safeguarded as part of the efforts to provide quality basic education to all. We therefore need not only to reawaken the moral force of education, but also to take practical measures that can make schools a "safe haven" against these dangers.

Box 8. Re-Awakening the Moral Force in Education

Girls are much more susceptible to the evils of child exploitation in most situations that require children to be protected. Some examples of what needs to be addressed include:

1. Unfair distribution of public resources by providing schooling for some children but denying to others (especially girls as manifested by gender gap in enrolment)
2. Unfair distribution of household resources through preference for sending boys to school where parents have to make a choice.
3. Unfair burden of household chores and income-generating activities that keep more girls out of school than boys.
4. Denial of opportunities for schooling through traditional practices like early marriage
5. Exposure to sexual exploitation affecting girls more than boys in categories such as street children, child soldiers, child workers, child prostitution, etc.
6. Providing shelter and home care for HIV/AIDS orphans. (New versions of boarding school and care centers, and helping families use schools as a temporary shelter.

Deliverables, Outputs and Outcomes (DOOs)

22. There is a range of deliverables, outputs and outcomes that UNICEF has set itself for the period 2002 to 2005. In addition to this the acceleration strategy is about showing credible results in the selected countries towards achieving the MDGs and EFA goals set for 2005. It has also been argued that the acceleration strategy should provide us with an opportunity to understand better what works for girls' education and how these solutions can be scaled up to national level. Against this background the following deliverables, outputs and outcomes are envisaged over the acceleration period:

DELIVERABLES

- (a) Contributions to the annual EFA monitoring report prepared by the team based in UNESCO, through UNICEF data on gender and girls education as well as analytical work on progress with girls' education in the acceleration countries.
- (b) Country case studies on impact of girls education interventions on EFA and broader goals such as poverty eradication, socio-economic development, good governance, gender balance and community empowerment.
- (c) A "legacy" publication that reviews, analyses and synthesises all available studies and reports on girls' education since Jomtien in 1990, to mark 2005 as a watershed year for the achievement of gender equality in basic education.
- (d) Compilation and production of "greatest hits" advocacy messages on girls' education over the past twenty years.
- (e) "Lets hear it for the girls" – collection in words and pictures of messages and remarks by girls who have made it in basic education through the acceleration strategy.
- (f) Technical Papers based on experience with the acceleration strategy. " Inter-sectoral Approaches to Service Delivery in Girls' Education" and "Accompanying Countries on the Road to Gender Equity in EFA".

OUTPUTS

- (g) Girls' Education adequately addressed as a priority in the national education plans (SIPs/PRSPs) of the 25 countries selected under this acceleration strategy.
- (h) Participation of civil society achieved in planning, budgeting, implementing and monitoring for girls' education.

- (i) Political commitment to girls' education and gender equity in education demonstrated by national leaders.
- (j) Strong advocacy campaign accomplished by UNICEF leadership and partners.
- (k) Increased provision of learning spaces for out of school girls in the 25 countries
- (l) Increased inter-sectoral inputs to improve the quality of the learner and the learning environment in the 25 selected countries. (water, sanitation, health, school meals, etc)
- (m) Increase in number and quality of teachers as well as teaching/learning resources in the 25 countries.
- (n) Schools as safe havens and centres of community empowerment in difficult countries.

OUTCOMES

- (o) Reduced % of out of school girls in all 25 countries by at least 30% (2005)
- (p) Improved retention and completion rates for girls in all 25 countries (???)
- (q) Improved performance of girls in learning achievement (Primary Leaving)
- (r) Evaluation demonstrates robust and sustainable results for the education system in the 25 selected countries.

Implications for Staffing and Capacity Strengthening

23. UNICEF needs to strengthen its capacity in various ways to meet the challenges of implementing an acceleration strategy that involves major co-ordination efforts. In particular, staffing will need to be strengthened in country offices, regional offices and headquarters. This does not necessarily imply major increase in staff numbers. What it implies is the need for a careful review of critical tasks to ensure that the range and profiles of education staff at each level can adequately cover existing tasks relating to UNICEF's MTSP, as well as extend to address the new demands posed by the acceleration strategy. This might well require changes in some of the present job descriptions, but more importantly it will require additional funding and partnership support. The precise nature of what is required in each of the selected countries and the regions concerned will be determined on the basis of the reality in each case. For headquarters, it is proposed that capacity in the Education Section be strengthened within the framework set out by the matrix below.

24. Areas of expertise at headquarters should conform to two major categories. Firstly, to deal with issues of access, completion and quality (ACQ) in girls' education. Secondly, to tackle issues of quality, achievement and sustainability (QAS) in girls' education. These inter-related categories of expertise allow a meaningful delineation of roles and responsibilities within a complex team situation, to deal with current tasks and help support the acceleration strategy. In terms of deployment of expertise in support of the acceleration strategy, there should be two main thrusts. The first thrust provides back-up and rapid response to Regions and Countries in line with the need for greater engagement for normal programmes as well as for the acceleration strategy. The second thrust concerns reviewing progress with girls' education, in order to build and strengthen a global knowledge bank in this area.

Key Tasks and Work Plan Implications

	Back-up And Rapid Response	Review And Knowledge Bank
<u>ACQ</u> Access Completion and Quality	Outreach help with getting girls into school by all possible means (school-in-a-box; tent schools, safe learning spaces in conflict, the use of mobile schools for nomadic groups). Help with measures to make schools more conducive to learning and to keep girls in school to completion (persistence). Work on provision of adequate learning resources.	Document lessons learned with strategies for getting girls into school under different and difficult conditions.
<u>QAS</u> Quality Achievement and Sustainability	Outreach help with teacher training and the curriculum in different circumstances. Work on development of teaching and learning resources. Help with learning assessment in different school settings and systems.	Help with research and documentation of a range of measures to improve the quality of education.

At HQ, work on staffing requirements relating to the MTSP was started but not completed, and there has been substantial depletion in staff numbers due to departures from the organisation. This situation provides an ideal opportunity to carry out a thorough review of staffing requirements in the Education Section, taking account of the MTSP generally and the new strategy for accelerating progress in girls' education. There is also a need to pursue a rapid recruitment process, to meet the challenges posed by the MTSP and the acceleration strategy.

Implications for Regional Offices and Country Offices:

26. Details of the resources required at regional and country levels have to be elaborated in consultation with the offices at these levels. However there will generally be a need for increased capacity in terms of staffing, back up and networking. In this regard partners may wish to support this process through increased funding as well as by secondment of qualified and experienced personnel (particularly in countries and regions where a partner agency does not have a presence). The need for co-ordination at these levels also has key implications for additional resources over and above normal funding requirements that are in the MTSP for UNICEF.

Monitoring and Evaluation Implications (supplementary indicators, etc.)

27. The main tasks on monitoring and evaluation for EFA have been assigned to the Monitoring Team based in UNESCO. In this area, UNICEF will seek to provide data and analysis through its normal programme as well as through this acceleration strategy. The main type of data and analysis will pertain to gender dis-aggregation and analysis of key issues affecting progress with girls' education. As a minimum, UNICEF will seek to provide data on indicators that are outlined in its own MTSP for girls' education, as summarised here:

Focus Areas	Examples of Monitoring Indicators
Access	% of Out of school girls; Completion Rates;
Quality	Learning Environment; Readiness of Learner;
Learning Achievement	Transition Rates;

Costs and Financing

28. The strategy for accelerating progress in girls' education implies additional costs and the need for financing sources to be identified. Indeed the viability of the acceleration strategy and the number of countries to be targeted depend very much on the ability of UNICEF to identify and/or attract additional funding from partners in support of this strategy. There are three basic options in this regard, and it is likely that some combination of these will be required to support the strategy:

- (a) Seek new resources from donors for the strategy and for the acceleration countries that UNICEF decides to focus on. (General partnership for the 2005 goals)
- (b) Allocate an increased percentage of UNICEF's Regular Resources to girls' education.
- (c) Develop partnerships with agencies and countries willing to commit "tied" funds for implementing the acceleration strategy in some or all the selected countries.

29. The recommendation is to pursue a combination of these three options in order to finance the acceleration strategy in as many countries as possible. In this regard there is

already the existing commitment of funds by UNICEF under the MTSP to be taken into account. This envisages resources as shown below:

Projected Resource Flow to Girls' Education for MTSP Target of \$193m/yr by 2005

YEAR	Regular Resources	Other Resources	Total Expenditure
2002 (Actual)	\$58 million	\$73 million	\$131 million
2003 (Projected)	\$59 million	\$93 million	\$152 million
2004 (Projected)	\$60 million	\$112 million	\$172 million
2005 (Projected)	\$63 million	\$130 million	\$193 million

30. There is still a major funding gap to be filled as regards UNICEF's own projected resource requirements for its normal girls' education programme (MTSP). Also the resources presently anticipated by UNICEF are skewed heavily towards Other Resources that need to be raised as distinct from the more reliable Regular Resources that have been committed. Some consideration should be given to changing this imbalance by increasing the flow of regular resources to the organisation. Against this background, additional resource requirements relating to the strategy for accelerating progress in Girls' education are many and varied. They will firstly involve resources to the selected 25 countries for implementation of programmes, projects and activities relating to girls' education. This is one of the key reasons for selecting at least 10 of the fast track countries, since the hope is that they will benefit from major new funding. Work needs to be done by all partners to ensure that a reasonable fast track funds are allocated to dealing with barriers affecting girls' access to and completion of basic education. Secondly resources are required at the country level to facilitate support by UNICEF and partners (agencies, civil society and private sector) to ensure effective and efficient implementation. Increased staffing and improved back up as well as networking will be the key to accelerated implementation and co-ordination of efforts. Thirdly, resources are required for regional level work to provide back up, increased capacity and improved networking services to the acceleration countries. Finally resources are required at the international or headquarters level for strategic planning, operational guidance, back-up, networking and global knowledge building.

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ANNEX 1

LIST OF INITIAL 25 COUNTRIES SELECTED FOR ACCELERATION*

COUNTRY (Girls NER < 70%)	Girl NER (< 40%)	FastTrk Country	Gender Gap> 10%	> 1 Million Out ' school	At Risk HIV/Etc
1. Bangladesh**	83%	Yes	-3%	Yes	
2. Bolivia**	97%	Yes	0%		
3. Burkina Faso	28%	Yes	13%		
4. Congo Dem. Rep.	32%	Yes	1%	Yes	
5. Ethiopia	28%	Yes	6%	Yes	
6. Guinea	41%	Yes	15%		
7. India	64%	Yes	14%	Yes	
8. Nigeria	33%	Yes	5%	Yes	
9. Pakistan	60%	Yes	24%	Yes	
10. Tanzania	48%	Yes	-2%	Yes	
11. Yemen	45%	Yes	31%	Yes	
12. Zambia	66%	Yes	1%		Yes
13. Afghanistan	15%	No	27%	Yes	
14. Benin	57%	No	25%		
15. Bhutan	47%	No	11%		
16. Central Af. Rep.	42%	No	21%		Yes
17. Chad	45%	No	24%		
18. Djibouti	26%	No	9%		
19. Eritrea	37%	No	6%		
20. Malawi	71%	No	-5%		Yes
21. Mali	36%	No	15%		
22. Nepal	60%	No	19%		
23. P. N. G.**	80%	No	8%		
24. Sudan	41%	No	8%	Yes	
25. Turkey**	82%	No	11%		

* Subject to confirmation

** Girls NER is greater than 70% but selected for other reason

Source: forthcoming The State of the World's Children 2003