BASIC EDUCATION AND GENDER EQUALITY

Thematic Report 2011
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Cover image: ©UNICEF/NYHQ2009-0227/Estey. A six-year-old boy does homework with his cousin and sister in Viet Nam’s remote Lao Cai Province. All three attend a UNICEF-supported primary school, which provides education in a safe, child-friendly environment.
Executive Summary

Equitable access by all children to quality and relevant education – basic education starting with pre-primary, primary and continuing through post-primary education – is an essential condition for social inclusion, equity and sustainable development. Since the launch of the Education for All initiative and the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, and in 2011, the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration at the 2011 Annual Ministerial Review, progress and commitments in education have been substantial, reflecting the equitable expansion of educational opportunities for girls and boys.\(^1\)

However, millions of children remain out of school, enrolment rates are slowing in countries affected by armed conflict and natural hazards, and gender disparities still hamper progress for girls.\(^2\) Many children leave school without acquiring the basic knowledge, competencies and skills necessary to enable them to lead safe and productive lives.\(^3\) In light of the remaining gaps to achieving the MDG 2, 3 and EFA goals, and looking towards the development of the post-2015 agenda, the imperative to deliver equitable results continued to reverberate across UNICEF’s efforts in 2011. Strategic partnerships, forward-looking research and identification of bottlenecks, barriers and interventions helped inform policymakers, donors, staff members and partners on the means to achieving equity in access to and completion of education.

2011 was a year with particular international momentum, despite the lingering impact of the financial crisis. UNICEF’s prominent role within the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) combined with the organization’s leadership agenda for equity enabled the mobilization of political support and resources to reach the most marginalized and to focus efforts beyond access to quality learning outcomes. The recent pledge of over US$2 billion between 2011 and 2014 by the GPE is expected to facilitate the enrolment of an additional 25 million children into classrooms for the first time, train 600,000 new teachers, provide educational supplies and reduce illiteracy for primary school-aged children. In Afghanistan alone, UNICEF’s coordination of local partners and technical support in the development of the GPE proposal resulted in a US$55.7 million grant to the country’s education sector and also strengthened collaboration with the government to monitor and evaluate programme implementation. UNICEF is the coordinating agency in 21 of the 46 GPE countries and the implementing agency in Guinea and Madagascar. In countries where there is no operational GPE, UNICEF still takes an active lead in education sector planning.

With growing evidence that absolute levels of learning are exceptionally low in many developing countries, UNICEF is leading and participating in key initiatives focused on education quality. UNICEF’s collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning has facilitated the integration of the child-friendly schools (CFS) approach into the curricula of teacher training institutions in eight countries. Its advisory role is helping shape the agendas of three global initiatives around access to quality education and assessment of learning outcomes: the United Nations Secretary-General’s Global Initiative on Education, the Brookings Institute’s Global Compact on Learning and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation’s Learning Matters.

UNICEF was increasingly engaged with countries to facilitate the expansion of national policies on universal school readiness. With UNICEF support, China announced its goal to make early education universal by 2020 by constructing 30,000 preschools, using public-private partnerships to help cover the costs of education, and recruiting and training some 18,000 teachers. Major new national Early Childhood Development (ECD) policies and plans were also issued in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Rwanda and
Turkmenistan. In East Asia and the Pacific, UNICEF is engaged in implementing ECD policies in all 14 countries. There is a special focus on influencing national policies to reach underserved populations, particularly poor, remote or minority populations. The impact of these efforts is seen in increased enrolment rates and wider geographic reach of programmes in Macedonia, Panama, and the Philippines and in the development of new national curricula based on the Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) approach in South Africa, Tajikistan and Uganda. Building upon the ELDS implemented in nine countries in East Asia and the Pacific, pioneering work has helped develop East-Asia Pacific ECD Scales – the first of its kind in the region to be normed and referenced to measure children’s holistic developmental progress.

In 2011, UNICEF continued to promote quality basic education, including early and alternative pathways for learning, through the CFS approach. The impact of these efforts is reflected in the number of countries reporting national policies on quality standards based on the CFS standards, which reached 88 countries (up from 43 countries in 2005). Additionally, an estimated 579,000 schools worldwide received CFS financial, technical and material support.

Addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups requires innovative problem-solving strategies. This targeted approach has helped 5.5 million children benefit from improved physical and learning environments and processes. The Schools for Africa initiative has also paid special attention to the most marginalized. In Jordan, 12,000 adolescents (50 per cent girls) were involved in adolescent-led initiatives to improve learning environments in 172 schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees. In Occupied Palestinian Territory, 75 per cent of the 93 adolescent-friendly spaces supported by UNICEF were located in areas strategic to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable adolescents.

While these interventions remain important, UNICEF also assumed an ‘upstream’ advocacy role to promote child-friendly education (CFE) as a comprehensive quality model for countries to adopt. CFE encompasses systems-level interventions built on 20 years of evidence. CFE is moving schools and education systems progressively towards quality standards, addressing all elements that influence the well-being and rights of children as learners while improving other school functions in the process. In 2011, new tools were initiated to assess bottlenecks in the system on the demand side and suitable evidence-based strategies for addressing them.

UNICEF continued to strengthen its humanitarian response and preparedness in 2011, providing an estimated 8.7 million children affected by emergencies with access to formal and non-formal basic education. At least a quarter of a million children affected by emergency circumstances were reached in Afghanistan, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen and Zimbabwe. UNICEF’s co-leadership of the education cluster in 52 countries and its joint collaboration in the steering committee of the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack were pivotal to enhancing the capacity of education sector partners to effectively respond to emergencies. Emergency response included advocacy, preparedness planning, risk assessment, national and sub-national Back-to-School campaigns and the establishment of emergency education coordination and management units. As a result of these efforts, an estimated 39,000 disaster-affected schoolchildren in the Philippines received support through an organized Education in Emergencies (EIE) response. In Kazakhstan, close to 2,000 teachers and 10,000 children from 12 pilot schools and eight pilot kindergartens were trained in mitigating and adapting to natural hazards. UNICEF’s contributions in the area of emergencies and disaster risk reduction have imparted knowledge and access to life-saving services.

UNICEF’s total expenditure in 2011 on Basic Education and Gender Equality programming was US$711.7 million. Thematic contributions provided US$128 million to support these
programming efforts, amounting to 34 per cent of total funding for this area during the year. Special recognition is provided to the Government of Norway for its crucial financial support to thematic funding for education, particularly in light of changes in the global aid architecture and the diminished funding to the education sector. This vital funding mechanism has enabled UNICEF to support severely underfunded regions and provided flexible and innovative support to emerging issues in education such as child-centered adaptation to climate change and disasters and to strengthen its equity-focus to reach the most marginalized children.

**Strategic Context**

Basic Education and Gender Equality is a key Focus Area of UNICEF’s Medium-Term Strategic Plan 2006 - 2013, which outlines UNICEF’s contributions to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Millennium Declaration and Education for All (EFA), UNICEF has worked to ensure the right of all children to education.

Recent reports highlight significant progress in enhancing human development and striving for the attainment of the EFA and MDG 2 and 3 Goals. From 1999 to 2008, an additional 52 million children enrolled in primary school globally, and a 31 per cent increase was noted in pre-primary education enrolment, benefiting 148 million children. Additionally, the number of out-of-school children was halved in South and West Asia. In sub-Saharan Africa, despite a large increase in the primary school-age population, enrolment ratios rose by one-third.

To a large extent, the considerable progress demonstrates greater government investments. Low-income countries have collectively increased the share of national income spent on education from 2.9 per cent to 3.8 per cent since 1999. The recent pledging of over US$2 billion by the GPE to increase bilateral education aid and improve effectiveness of education access and quality between 2011 and 2014 highlights recognition of the need to focus efforts beyond access to quality learning outcomes. However, the commitment of some developing countries still falls short; for example, the Central African Republic, Pakistan and Zambia each allocate less than 2 per cent of gross domestic product to education.

Globally, UNESCO estimates an external financing gap of US$16 billion per year for basic education needs in low-income countries over and above what developing country governments and donors currently resource. Recently released 2011 foreign aid figures by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development show that major donors’ aid to developing countries fell by nearly 3 per cent in 2011. Aid cuts and the effects of the lingering financial crisis present additional challenges, as many developing countries depend on donor support to reach development goals such as EFA. Even greater accountability and commitment are needed in order to improve progress in girls’ education, education in fragile states, learning outcomes and educational access.

The *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011* estimates that nearly 72 million children will remain out of school in 2015 given current trends. School attendance and completion remains a challenge for millions of children and youth and is strongly influenced by such socio-economic factors as age, sex, race, ethnicity, disability, language, poverty and location. At least 67 million primary school-age children remain out of school, 53 per cent of which are girls. Over 45 per cent of all out-of-school children live in sub-Saharan Africa; nearly 25 per cent live in South and West Asia. Globally, 35 million out-of-school children are concentrated in 15 countries. Almost half of all out-of-school children live in conflict-affected countries. Household data from 42 countries show that rural children are twice as likely to be out of school as their urban counterparts.
Many of those attending school leave without acquiring the basic knowledge, competencies and skills, such as reading, writing, mathematics, problem solving and critical thinking, that enable them to continue to learn, grow into healthy adults, and lead safe and productive lives.\textsuperscript{14}

The focus on out-of-school children of primary school age has deflected attention from a wider problem: 73 million children of lower secondary school age are currently out of school, either due to not completing primary school or the inability to make the transition to lower secondary school.\textsuperscript{15} The problem is widespread in sub-Saharan Africa, with 38 per cent of adolescents out of school, and 28 per cent in South and West Asia. Research reveals that fewer girls make the transition to secondary school (accounting in 2007 for 54 per cent of out-of-school adolescents), and those who do are more likely to drop out.\textsuperscript{16} Despite increases in gender parity in school enrolment, more than 54 million girls are not attending primary or lower secondary school, missing out on important learning opportunities in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia.\textsuperscript{17}

The barriers to education at the primary level are often magnified at the secondary level. These obstacles include cost of education, distance to school, labor demands and deeply ingrained social, cultural and economic barriers (particularly impacting girls). Reaching the remaining out-of-school children is not only more difficult but also more expensive as these children face multiple disadvantages and often experience subtle and hidden forms of social exclusion.

According to the Deprivation and Marginalization in Education data, gender, along with poverty, constitutes the strongest barrier to education; when combined with other factors, such as culture and language, it has a particularly negative effect.\textsuperscript{18} Being poor and female carries a double disadvantage in at least 49 countries, where the education of girls from the poorest households is not only below the national average, but also below the average for boys in the poorest households.\textsuperscript{19} In Turkey, for example, 43 per cent of Kurdish-speaking girls from the poorest households have fewer than two years of education, while the national average is 6 per cent.\textsuperscript{20}

Many children are not acquiring the basic literacy, numeracy and life skills needed to survive, develop and thrive. About half of all children in the poorest countries who have completed Grade 2 cannot read anything at all. Of the world’s adults, an estimated 16 per cent — 793 million, of whom two-thirds are women — still lack basic literacy skills.\textsuperscript{21} Absolute levels of learning achievement are exceptionally low in many developing countries. In India, a 2009 survey found that just 38 per cent of rural Grade 4 students could read a text designed for Grade 2. Even after eight years of school, 18 per cent of students were unable to read the Grade 2 text. In 2007, assessments carried out by the Southern African Consortium for Measuring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) highlighted acute deficits in learning achievement in low-income countries, and showed that a significant percentage of students in the region were being taught by teachers with a junior secondary school qualification or lower.\textsuperscript{22} A SACMEQ 2010 regional assessment of 15 countries found that only 57 per cent of students were attaining basic levels in reading and 25 per cent for mathematics.\textsuperscript{23} In Malawi and Zambia over a third of Grade 6 students were unable to read with any fluency.\textsuperscript{24} In some sub-Saharan African countries, children with five years of education had a 40 per cent chance of

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Very often, we forget that schools and teachers have no intrinsic value in and of themselves. They exist to help children learn.

Inside Primary Schools
being illiterate. In the face of these challenges, there is growing recognition of the need to address issues of quality as well as access and equity.

According to the World Bank, 50 per cent of the world’s out-of-school children live in communities where the language of instruction in school is rarely, if ever, used at home. A 2008 UNESCO study revealed that across 22 developing countries and 160 language groups, children with access to educational instruction in their mother tongue were significantly more likely to be enrolled and attending school. Evaluations of bilingual schools in the Niger in 2007 demonstrated dropout rates as low as 1 per cent, compared with a national average of 33 per cent. Despite increasing evidence that providing mother-tongue instruction in early primary grades can help improve learning outcomes, reduce repetition and dropout rates and increase completion rates, the development and implementation of mother-tongue-based multilingual education is used sparingly in national policies.

Investing in quality early childhood education is “a rare example of a policy which supports human development.” Quality early childhood programmes, designed for the most vulnerable and combined with parenting support, develop the foundational linguistic, cognitive and social skills necessary for lifelong learning; they also present a unique opportunity to mitigate the effects of poverty and disadvantage on the future of many millions of children. Yet evidence gathered through household surveys in 40 countries suggests that far too many young children live in households that are not conducive to optimal ECD. ECD programmes prepare children for school, mitigate the effects of household deprivation, halt the transfer of educational disadvantage from parents to children and strengthen prospects for national economic growth. In Bangladesh, children attending a high-quality rural preschool programme improved their literacy and numeracy skills, and thereby enhanced their school readiness. In Nepal, disadvantaged children attending preschool recorded significant gains in cognitive development, with subsequent increases in enrolment and progression through primary school.

Yet, as suggested by the 2008 global gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 44 per cent, barriers such as the lack of importance and resource allocation given to pre-primary education, lack of annual statistical data, cost of enrolment, limited availability of nearby early childhood facilities and a dearth of skilled educators persist in excluding children from pre-primary education. While an increasing number of countries have developed and ratified national policies on ECD, many of these policies continue to suffer from insufficient funding and fragmented planning; as a result, they ultimately fail to translate into action.

Corporal punishment, gender-based violence, armed conflict and natural hazards impact the educational process for millions of girls and boys. Ninety countries out of 197 monitored by the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children continue to permit teachers to beat students. Approximately 50 million girls and 73 million boys are sexually assaulted each year, with many of these acts occurring on the way to or at school. Gross enrolment ratios in secondary school are nearly 30 per cent lower in conflict-affected countries (48 per cent) than in others (67 per cent) and are far lower for girls. Increasingly worrisome are the trends indicating that many of the world’s poorest countries and communities will face the double threat of climate change and violent conflict. These threats are expected to exacerbate gender inequalities and threaten educational systems. UNICEF’s education response in times of crisis has been strengthened to provide safe and high-quality primary and secondary education.

2011 UNESCO statistics note that an additional 2 million teachers are needed to achieve universal primary education by 2015. More than half of them are needed in sub-Saharan Africa. Well-trained and motivated teachers and teacher deployment systems that distribute
them equitably are key to addressing the learning disadvantages of marginalized children. Too often, the best teachers are concentrated in schools serving children from predominantly higher socio-economic groups. Certain policies attempt to address imbalances in teacher deployment, such as financial incentives for those willing to teach in more remote and disadvantaged regions. Under a pilot project in the Gambia, teachers in the most remote schools were able to increase their basic salary by 40 per cent. A 2009 survey suggested that the incentives were having the intended effect: newly qualified teachers showed a willingness to work in schools offering these allowances. However, incentives are very much contextual, and while one form of incentives may work for one country, they may not be appropriate for another.

The last decade has seen progressive emphasis on gender issues and increasing recognition of gender as a source of disparity. However, the analysis and response to the intersecting nature of disadvantages in education relating to ethnicity, poverty, geographic remoteness, language, and disability still needs to be strengthened. Identifying who is out of school is crucial for public policy formation, as is understanding why children start school late, which of them are pushed out of school and which of them never set foot in one. This requires the development of more robust educational management information systems (EMIS) — systems vital to policymaking as they help identify need, track financial resources and monitor the effects of policy interventions. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNICEF and UNESCO have partnered to develop a regional online information system focusing on children’s well-being and related policies. Ultimately, effective planning depends upon the development of human, technical and administrative capacity, along with the development of EMIS and other systems that facilitate improved flows of information and greater transparency.

As demonstrated by the increasing number of countries incorporating school readiness and child-friendly standards into their educational systems and the growing number of international actors stressing the importance of attaining basic literacy levels, the momentum and tools for improving basic education are available. Because policies aimed at overcoming gender disparities are most likely to succeed as part of an integrated strategy, UNICEF is addressing challenges related to availability of classrooms, teachers and school supplies, quality and relevance of education, direct and indirect costs of education as well as strengthening tools to analyse the barriers and bottlenecks to school access, quality and equity.

## Resources

In 2011, the overall expenditure for Focus Area 2 (Basic Education and Gender Equality) from UNICEF’s core budget (Regular Resources) and Other Resources (Regular and Emergency) amounted to US$711.7 million (see table below).

### Expenditure by funding source for Basic Education and Gender Equality, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Expenditure (in US$ millions)</th>
<th>Expenditure (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Resources</td>
<td>125.8</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Resources – Regular</td>
<td>444.0</td>
<td>62.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Resources – Emergency</td>
<td>141.8</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>711.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Within Other Resources, some donors give flexible funding to thematic pooled funds for the five Focus Areas of UNICEF’s Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) or for Humanitarian Response. In 2011, UNICEF received US$128 million in thematic contributions for Basic Education and Gender Equality, amounting to 34 per cent of the total thematic contributions received in 2011 (US$373 million) for the five Focus Areas and Humanitarian Response.

What is thematic funding?

Thematic funding was created after the adoption of UNICEF’s MTSP (2001-2005) as an opportunity for donors to support the goals and objectives of the MTSP and to allow for longer-term planning and sustainability of programmes. While Regular Resources continue to be UNICEF’s preferred type of funding, thematic contributions are the next best option, as they have fewer restrictions on their use than traditional Other Resources. Donors can allocate thematic funds to the five MTSP Focus Areas and Humanitarian Response as follows:

Focus Area 1: Young Child Survival and Development  
Focus Area 2: Basic Education and Gender Equality  
Focus Area 3: HIV/AIDS and Children  
Focus Area 4: Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse  
Focus Area 5: Policy Advocacy and Partnerships for Children’s Rights  
Humanitarian Response

Contributions can be provided at the global, regional or country level. Thematic contributions from all donors to the same Focus Area are combined into one pooled fund account with the same duration, which simplifies financial management and reporting for UNICEF offices. As funds are pooled, UNICEF cannot track individual donors’ contributions. Thematic donors also agree to accept one annual consolidated narrative and financial report that is the same for all donors. Due to reduced administrative costs, thematic contributions are subject to a lower cost recovery rate of 5 per cent (compared with the standard 7 per cent).
Due to the extraordinary response to the funding appeals for the Horn of Africa, 50 per cent of thematic funding in 2011 went to Humanitarian Response. Total thematic funding for the five MTSP Focus Areas and Humanitarian Response in 2011 was US$373 million, 35 per cent less than the corresponding funding in 2010. This drop is partly the result of decreased contributions from a major donor following the economic downturn. The narrow funding base of thematic funding continues to pose a challenge.

The thematic funding received for Focus Area 2 in 2011 represented a 3 per cent decline relative to the 2010 contribution of US$132 million. In 2011, 84 per cent of the contributions were from governments; UNICEF National Committees accounted for the remaining 16 per cent. In 2011, the largest donor to thematic funding for Focus Area 2 was Norway, followed by Sweden, the Korean Committee for UNICEF, Brazil, and the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF.

The Korean Committee for UNICEF, the United States Fund for UNICEF, the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF, and the Netherlands Committee for UNICEF increased their contributions significantly to Focus Area 2 compared to 2010. Continuing the previous years’ trend, Norway, Sweden, Brazil, Luxembourg and the Danish Committee for UNICEF continued their commitment to Basic Education and Gender Equality.
## Thematic contributions by donor to Thematic Focus Area 2, Basic Education and Gender Equality, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor Type</th>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Amount (in US$)</th>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Government</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>91,695,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>11,721,224</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>3,086,400</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>1,056,338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>75,687</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>50,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Korean Committee for UNICEF</td>
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<td>United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF</td>
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<td>Belgian Committee for UNICEF</td>
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<td>United States Fund for UNICEF</td>
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<td>Finnish Committee for UNICEF</td>
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<td>Polish Committee for UNICEF</td>
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<td><strong>Private Sector Field Office Fundraising</strong></td>
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<td>UNICEF-Croatia</td>
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<td>UNICEF-United Arab Emirates</td>
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<td>UNICEF-India</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
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Top donors to Thematic Focus Area 2, Basic Education and Gender Equality, 2006-2011

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<td>Norway</td>
<td>72,129</td>
<td>83,216</td>
<td>64,340</td>
<td>77,870</td>
<td>80,645</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<td>765</td>
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<td>United States Fund</td>
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<td>881</td>
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<td>215</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,373</td>
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<tr>
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Top donors to Thematic Focus Area 2, Basic Education and Gender Equality, 2006-2011

In US$ thousands

- 50,000  100,000  150,000  200,000  250,000  300,000  350,000  400,000  450,000  500,000

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2006  2007  2008  2009  2010  2011
Results

KEY RESULT AREA 1: Support national capacity to improve children’s developmental readiness to start primary school on time, especially for marginalized children

UNICEF’s interventions under Key Result Area 1 focused on ensuring that children enrol in school at the appropriate age and that those who enter the first grade of primary school come ready to learn. To break the link between poverty and early childhood disadvantages that have an irreversible effect on physical and cognitive growth of children, in 2011 UNICEF worked with governments and civil society to create early learning opportunities for all children.

In Latin America and the Caribbean region alone, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and Paraguay finalized ECD policies and action plans. The Dominican Republic declared 2012 the ‘Year of Universal Early Childhood Education,’ and the remaining countries in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States developed national strategic plans to increase ECD access. UNICEF’s regional office adapted quality ECD capacity-building materials to the needs of country staff, teachers and partners.

Fourteen out of the 20 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa have ECD policies. In one-third of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS), tailored approaches -- including parenting classes, Roma mediators or short service message (SMS) parenting tips -- were used to reach parents of children with disabilities and to promote investment in preschool education as a head start towards quality education and equity. In Georgia, UNICEF advocated for a nationwide policy guaranteeing free kindergarten access to all children with disabilities.

Reaching the most disadvantaged under KRA 1 required: 1) policy dialogue, advocacy and systems strengthening; 2) support for the development and adoption of ECD/school readiness standards; and 3) development and implementation of innovative school readiness approaches.

Policy dialogue, advocacy and systems strengthening
Through involvement in the GPE, UNICEF promoted the inclusion of early learning within country education sector plans, ensuring the recognition of preschool as an integral component of basic education. Seventy-one countries reported the development and implementation of national policies on early learning, compared to 65 countries in 2010.

The implementation of the National Education Sector Development Plan provided an opportunity to create structures and processes for sustainable financing of universal school readiness. UNICEF promoted the establishment of clear benchmarks for ECD and preschool education in the recently approved Mid-Term Development Programme in Kyrgyzstan for 2012-2014 and in the 2020 Education Development Strategy. In Bangladesh, UNICEF played an instrumental role in contributing to the government’s approval of the Third Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP3) 2011-2016 and the allocation of US$320 million to add a
preschool class to 37,600 government primary schools. In Nepal, UNICEF’s collaboration with the Parliamentarians’ Caucus on gender and girls and ECD led to the successful increase in equity provisions for early learning in the draft Education Act and the draft Constitution. An ECD policy and Strategic Plan was developed and validated in Rwanda, while in Mali and Mauritania ECD was included as an integral component of the National Education Sector plans.

The “Never too Young to Learn” and “Think They’re Just Playing” community and awareness-raising campaigns launched in Barbados and Montserrat complemented advocacy and policy efforts and increased knowledge among ECD practitioners. Increased demand for additional ECD centres and parenting education programmes in rural areas resulted from an ECD media awareness campaign targeting policymakers and parents. At least 4,000 parents (mostly mothers) in eight districts with a high prevalence of poverty, illiteracy and inadequate childcare acquired positive ECD parenting skills through non-formal education.

UNICEF contributed to improved monitoring and evaluation strategies for early learning as part of a broader effort to strengthen education systems. In Burundi, one of the country’s priorities is to improve all children’s developmental readiness to start primary school on time. As a result, a national monitoring system was implemented to track children who complete preschool and enter primary school in six provinces, and a new data collection system is expected to be functional in 2012.

**School readiness standards**

In 2011, UNICEF pursued its efforts to increase the number of countries adopting early learning development standards (ELDS), or expectations of what children at certain ages should know and be able to do in different development domains. Sixty-three countries, mostly located in the CEE/CIS, East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia regions, have developed standards, enabling the development of monitoring and evaluation indicators, tools and policy development processes. Globally, an additional 39 countries have reported partial development. Malawi’s ELDS led to the review and alignment of various curriculum materials, including training manuals for caregivers and national trainers on the management structures of community-based childcare centers. In Mongolia, the government approved the nationwide introduction of ELDS beginning in the 2011/2012 academic year, and 350 staff from education departments received training on ELDS implementation. Uzbekistan recently created and adopted an ELDS-based curriculum, supported by the Ministry of Primary Education with technical assistance from UNICEF.

**School readiness approaches**

In order to extend school readiness and preschool opportunities to all children, the School Readiness Framework – which addresses the readiness of children, schools, and families – required alternative mechanisms ranging from school-based preschool and community-based child development centres to organized home-based centres, peer-to-peer early learning and media-based early learning programmes.

2011 witnessed a significant expansion of newly organized community-based early learning centres worldwide as UNICEF demonstrated that cost-effective and sustainable school readiness interventions can be rapidly scaled up nationally when political commitment, capacity development and community support work together. In Bhutan, 30 new community-based early learning centres combined with 20 existing centres across all districts provided 1,500 children
(around 50 per cent girls) from remote and poor communities with access to quality early learning and development programmes. In Tajikistan, UNICEF successfully demonstrated a sustainable low-cost model of early learning by opening an additional 50 community-based early learning centres and developing a financing model for scaling up this concept.

UNICEF worked closely with communities and families to ensure local ownership and capacity of early learning programmes. In Guyana and Suriname, 5,000 parents were provided with information on the various developmental stages of children through information in the revised 2011 Baby- and Toddler- book. In Burundi, UNICEF supported training of over 80,000 parents, community animators and educators, resulting in 224,000 children aged 0-6 (28 per cent of the total number of children in this age group) receiving adequate care for early stimulation and learning in the targeted provinces, and further facilitating their transition into primary school.

In Haiti, 12,000 children aged 3-5 benefited from better quality preschools and improved school readiness. A two-fold approach was used, whereby preschool educators received training to improve teaching methods in 350 public schools, and public school directors in two departments were trained to improve management capacities related to preschool needs and school readiness. In Cambodia, 30 inclusive preschools with adequately trained teachers were launched, complemented by a training module for inclusive preschool education that was developed and supported by Handicap International and UNICEF/IKEA and included in teacher training institutions. Preschool education was integrated into the curriculum of six Georgian universities, and developmental paediatrics was institutionalized in Turkey.

An evaluation of the second year of the “Getting Ready for Schools: A Child-to-Child Approach,” assessed the impact of the programme on the first grade in Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tajikistan and Yemen. Results revealed a highly successful and well-received pilot implementation in most countries, and recommendations were made for the continued development and sustainable expansion of the programme. This will further strengthen the Getting Ready for School approach as a cost-effective supplemental resource for countries and communities seeking to increase opportunities for young children to achieve better educational outcomes. Evidence suggests that such a programme flourishes best in communities that naturally rely on older children to look after their younger siblings and neighbours. In Bangladesh, the Child-to-Child approach is expanding to registered non-governmental primary schools, and in Ethiopia, the approach is being implemented in six regions and expanding to cover all other regions.

In countries with low levels of access to pre-primary education, UNICEF’s school readiness interventions had a profound effect on girls and other vulnerable children. In Albania, preschool enrolment of children aged 5-6 increased from 50 per cent to 70 per cent as a result of UNICEF’s support to 400 pre-primary classes. In Bolivia, enhanced child-friendliness and disparity reduction in education increased the preschool Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) in target areas by 28 points, to 62 per cent in 2011 from 34 per cent in 2010. In Cambodia, preschool enrolment rates have almost doubled between 2006 and 2011, from 13.6 per cent to 25.5 per cent. In Chad, 52,623 children aged 3-5 benefited from community-based early childhood interventions that enhanced cognitive development and improved overall school readiness for primary school entry. 94,736 children (44.8 per cent girls) registered for Grade 1 as a result of behaviour-change activities and the implementation of a micro-planning strategy in low enrolment areas.
UNICEF developed innovative ways to support national planning of ECD in specific country contexts. In Albania, where a significant number of ECD institutions are informal, UNICEF supported a nation-wide mapping and inventory of ECD and child protection services and facilities. This step was particularly important for planning the collaboration of state institutions with services run by non-governmental organizations.

UNICEF also developed diverse mechanisms to enhance the sustainability and economic viability of ECD services in rural communities. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNICEF and partners developed an integrated ECD model of community-based services for rural areas with an innovative income-generation component to empower mothers and to increase their participation and development in rural society.

Many countries have recognized the importance of teaching preschool children about disaster preparedness in order to decrease vulnerability to hazards in disaster-prone regions. For example, UNICEF advocated for the inclusion of disaster risk reduction (DRR) in preschool education, which resulted in inclusion of DRR and safety issues in preschool education programmes in Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. In preparation for the construction of 30,000 ECD centres in China, UNICEF provided technical assistance on the development of design standards taking into account environmental variabilities.

To enhance national provision of early learning opportunities for children, a guidance document for country offices on ‘Early Learning Interventions’ was drafted at the global level. This document provides countries with options for early learning as appropriate to context. It also provides standards and theoretical frameworks that can be adapted to each country situation. The guidance document will be finalized and shared with country offices in 2012.

One of the major challenges in 2011 was translating school readiness policies into action on the ground to reach more children with early learning opportunities. Despite the good intention of countries, the continued lack of resources, lack of government-level coordination, lack of alternative cost-effective options for early learning and lack of trained teachers have slowed the development of early education services for young children. More work remains to be done on sectoral coordination to better address the needs of young children, especially the most disadvantaged.
Bhutan has employed a multi-pronged attack on gender disparity through a range of programmes, including assessing bottlenecks and barriers to education, enhancing political commitment, school construction, redeployment of teachers, establishment of community primary schools in remote areas and expansion on non-formal education. As a result, the country has achieved deep cuts in the number of children out of school, and dropout rates have declined more rapidly for girls than boys (95 per cent of girls starting primary school in 2008 were expected to reach the final grade).


Engaging children and improving education through child-friendly preschools in Uzbekistan

In Bukhara, southern Uzbekistan, music and laughter drift across Preschool Number 11. More than just a school, Preschool Number 11 represents a community achievement; local residents were instrumental in renovating and furnishing the once-dilapidated kindergarten with new books, toys and child-sized furniture constructed by parents. With support from UNICEF, the school has adopted a child-friendly approach to teaching – creating a safe, inclusive, engaging environment that operates in the best interest of each child.

Designed to stimulate young minds, this preschool is a world away from the Soviet-style approach to education that used to predominate this region of the world.

Marilyn Hoar, UNICEF Chief of Education, explained further. “We’ve moved from little kids sitting in desks to kids at activity centres, learning through play, enjoying learning, so there’s the social and emotional development as well.”

Since these reforms, attendance at the preschool has shot up from just 18 children to over a hundred.

Improving quality and access of early childhood education throughout Uzbekistan is one of UNICEF’s priorities. In many cases, parents choose not to send their children to preschool facilities because of poor infrastructure and low quality educational services, resulting in an enrolment rate of less than 20 per cent nationwide for children under age 7.


KEY RESULT AREA 2: Support national capacity to reduce gender and other disparities in relation to increased access and completion of quality basic education

The last decade has seen progressive emphasis on gender disparity in education at primary level. However, the analysis and response to the intersecting nature of disadvantage and exclusion in education regarding ethnicity, poverty, language or disability is lagging. In response to the organization’s enhanced focus on equity, UNICEF developed tools to analyse bottlenecks and barriers to equity in access to education and learning outcomes, and to gather evidence on the most effective approaches to addressing and reducing disparities.

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programming strategies for improving equity. UNICEF continued to work towards improving access to school, promoting social inclusion, addressing gender disparities in education, facilitating multiple pathways to learning, and engaging in advocacy and strategic policy partnerships on education sector reforms at national, regional and global levels.

Simulation for equity in education
In collaboration with the World Bank, UNICEF began developing the ‘Simulation for Equity in Education’ model (SEE) to assess the impacts and costs of different sets of education interventions targeted at different risk-groups. As illustrated in the graph below, the model includes a bottleneck analysis, a database of effective interventions for improving both access and learning outcomes as well as a means to project marginal costs of these interventions (addressing both demand and supply) to reach excluded children. The SEE model represents a significant departure from previous models in treating multiple risk population groups independently with outcomes driven by interventions and strategies. Furthermore, it can be applied within different programmes and country contexts and supports the organization’s new Monitoring Results for Equity System, strengthening the organization’s identification of problems and the implementation of responsive cost-effective strategies.

An initial version of the SEE model was developed and piloted in Ghana in 2011, and SEE will be applied in additional country pilots in 2012.46

Simulation for Equity in Education (SEE) Model

- **Supply** – shortage of teachers (5), books, schools (6); absenteeism; teaching methods, etc.
- **Demand** – poverty (7), language, gender, disability, etc.

**Ghana**: lack of books, trained teachers, schools
Non-entry, late entry, dropout, repetition, failure to learn

**Exclusion points** by sub-groups

**Outcomes** by sub-groups

Barriers by sub-groups

Interventions to reduce barriers

Barriers inform list of possible interventions.
Evidence from literature on effectiveness for which barriers informs possible impacts.*

**Costs** of interventions and outcomes

Examples: enrolment rates, OOSC, completion (9), exam pass rates, assessment scores (10)

Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI)
Launched in 2010, the UNICEF/UNESCO Institute of Statistics’s Global Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) is now mainstreamed across regions and is expanding beyond the initial 25 countries. In the East Asia and Pacific region, OOSCI expanded from four to seven countries, with early draft reports noting that approximately 3.3 million primary and 4.3 million lower secondary school-age children are currently out of school. In CEE/CIS, the initial participation of four countries has evolved into a Regional ‘Out of School Children and Adolescents’ Initiative, with 14 country offices supporting the development of national plans to reduce the number of early school dropouts. In the Americas and Caribbean region, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia – and more recently Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Paraguay – adopted the OOSCI framework.
To strengthen the OOSCI Conceptual and Methodological Framework, five regional workshops were undertaken with regional offices in South Asia, West and Central Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, Middle East and North Africa and CEE/CIS. These workshops facilitated the development of country and regional methodological capacities to undertake detailed country and regional profiles of out-of-school children, analyze bottlenecks to school access and retention as well as develop policies and strategies for increased and strengthened school participation for the marginalized children. The 25 country studies and seven regional studies will be launched in March 2012, and plans are underway for implementing the recommendations.

Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Viet Nam have completed studies on the magnitude, gaps, barriers, bottlenecks and relevant policies and programmes on out-of-school children. The findings are being disseminated to inform evidence-based education policies that will feed into national strategies. In Sri Lanka, over 2,300 out-of-school children were reintegrated through school-based attendance committees and additional support, such as basic literacy classes. UNICEF supported a capacity development programme for education officials on basic education indicators and data analysis, enabling them to analyse absentee data and identify appropriate responses. Mechanisms to monitor and follow-up irregular attendance and dropouts are now available in almost all UNICEF-supported schools.

In Turkey, the OOSCI informed the development of a ‘Multi-Stage Non-Attendance Management Model’ for early identification and evaluation of non-attendance. Its application in 32,797 primary schools to monitor their performance contributed to continued enrolment and attendance for 535,522 girls and 580,296 boys. In Namibia, UNICEF provided technical support to the Ministry of Education to undertake a gap analysis assessing progress toward achieving equitable educational outcomes. The gap analysis showed major disparities in access and achievement based on poverty profiles of poorly-funded rural and well-funded urban schools. UNICEF presented the gap analysis at the National Conference on Education, resulting in recommendations that were approved by the cabinet and systematically integrated into the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme.

**Multiple pathways to achieve universal basic education**

Recognizing that a “one size fits all” approach to education provision is insufficient to address the varied learning needs of marginalized children, UNICEF continues to extend technical and institutional support to promote multiple pathways to learning to ensure children remain in or return to school. Strategies include targeted inclusion measures, such as expansion of non-formal learning spaces, “catch-up” and “second-chance” programmes to address the diverse learning needs of children belonging to different groups (including children attending Quranic schools, working children, children from nomadic communities or those affected by conflict).

In Eritrea, 14,175 children in the Nomadic and Complementary Elementary Education (45 per cent of whom are girls from hard-to-reach areas) benefited from the implementation of the nomadic education policy. Approximately 1,000 girls were provided with incentives to remain in secondary schools. In Somalia, 9,054 children (3,983 girls) participated in alternative basic education/non-formal education initiatives targeting pastoralist communities. UNICEF continued to expand these initiatives through local education authorities. Some 24,650 students (7,746 girls) took Grade 8 and Form 4 exams, a 9 per cent increase from the previous year. In Sudan, 45,287 nomadic children (39.8 per cent girls) accessed basic education, while 5,036 nomadic children (32 per cent girls) transitioned from primary to secondary schools.
Several countries have intensified their efforts to strengthen school-community linkages and to build community capacity to engage in children’s education. In Indonesia, successful advocacy resulted in government commitment to expand school-based management (SBM). Four district governments issued local regulations on SBM benefiting over 80,000 children in 520 schools to improve the quality of learning and school management. In Afghanistan, targeting children from marginalized groups and girls through Community-Based Schools (CBS) provided access for children in hard-to-reach areas and for those excluded on account of physical or social barriers. Despite hardships and conservatism fuelled by the insurgency movement, more girls than boys are now in CBS classes. In Egypt, a total of 20,304 children (60 per cent girls) attended a growing number of UNICEF-supported community schools (752). In Botswana, advocacy and support to local partners resulted in the re-enrolment of 195 children (58 per cent girls).

In Kenya, 27,000 children in ECD and primary schools benefited from continued education as a result of capacity development of 120 teachers in mobile schools on multi-grade teaching, capacity development of district education officers and the provision of 89 mobile school kits. In Myanmar, over 11,000 out-of-school children from poor communities were reached through the Extended and Continuous Education and Learning programme, representing about 67 per cent of the total out-of-school children in 24 disadvantaged townships, 28 per cent of whom transitioned to the secondary level.

A strengthened focus on equity has also meant that a growing number of UNICEF country programmes are focusing on the educational needs of marginalized children in urban areas. In Bangladesh, UNICEF helped 150,000 urban working children complete the 40-month long non-formal education course on basic literacy and numeracy. In India, through partnership with the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai and private partners, the “School Excellence Programme” was initiated to reach over 50,000 children in urban slums.

Refugee and undocumented children are also receiving greater attention as a result of the equity agenda. In Malaysia, UNICEF, together with government and NGO partners, has developed a more comprehensive alternative education policy for non-Malaysian and refugee children. Results include the establishment of alternative education centres in Sabah state for 1,300 undocumented children unable to access the public school system and the formulation of a national policy on alternative education for undocumented children.

**Reducing gender disparities in primary and secondary education**

UNICEF continues to take the lead in promoting girls’ education across all regions. Despite progress in gender parity in enrolment and in gender empowerment, primary completion and transition to secondary and higher education for girls remain elusive, particularly impacted by gender and poverty, ethnicity, geographical location, health status and other factors. UNICEF’s 2011 work sought to create enabling environments within which girls could access, learn and complete their education through a combination of alternative learning opportunities, teacher and community development, curricula reform and financing initiatives.

In Ethiopia, UNICEF’s holistic strategy addressed demand and supply side issues that constrain or enhance girls’ participation in primary and secondary education. The 2010/11 national statistics indicated a net enrolment rate at the primary level of 85.3 per cent, an increase of 3.2 per cent over the previous year, with girls’ enrolment growing faster than boys and contributing to near gender parity. Nearly 158,700 children (45.5 per cent girls) benefited from 529 newly constructed and equipped alternative basic education centres and the training of 674 facilitators, nearly 30 per cent of whom are female. Capacity-building of 2,724 education personnel (35 per cent female) and 3,537 community representatives and parent-teacher association members
(46 per cent female) on nutrition in emergencies, gender-based violence and girls’ education also contributed to reduced gender gaps at the primary level.

On the supply side, UNICEF supported capacity development of teachers, curriculum development and gender mainstreaming. In Malawi, 4,464 learners in rural schools were taught by qualified and knowledgeable teachers as a result of pre-service training of female teachers and the deployment of 48 graduates. In Nigeria, the UNICEF-supported National Certificate of Education Teachers’ Scholarship Scheme increased the pool of female teachers by over 2,300 in three northern states, addressing the dire shortage of female teachers in the north. The recruitment of young women from rural communities to a three-year teacher training programme included a stipend to offset opportunity costs and encourage deployment back to their communities.

In Eritrea, a workshop focusing on the girls’ education communication strategy involved key decision-makers from the Ministry of Education and contributed to increased girls’ participation and academic performance. The Rural Girls’ Education Model piloted by UNICEF in Iran in 130 schools resulted in an 11 per cent increase in the enrolment and retention rates of girls and was subsequently adopted by the Ministry of Education in 10 provinces. In Tajikistan, UNICEF’s financial and technical support to seven district education authorities improved girls’ attendance and reduced the risk of drop out.

Demand-side financing initiatives in Eastern and Southern Africa focused on scholarships for girls to complete secondary education. In Kenya, the Northern Kenya Education Trust successfully administered scholarships for 240 nomadic high school girls. Similarly, scholarships at the secondary level and for vocational training benefited 839 girls in Uganda and 450 disadvantaged girls in Somalia. In Malawi, through a UN joint programme, UNICEF-supported scholarships for 210 adolescent girls improved their access, retention, academic achievement and progression.

Promoting inclusive education
Inclusive education is becoming more visible as UNICEF applies the equity lens in analysis and programming – resulting in a strategic approach to enhance access to education and to address disparities. The Governments of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, the Republic of Moldova and Vanuatu approved national policies on inclusive education that resulted in the mainstreaming of children with disabilities. In Mongolia, a series of activities based on the development of sign-language standards for more than 5,000 words were conducted, including an assessment of the sign-language dictionary and subsequent modification; the development of comprehensive sign-language standards for 35 letters of the alphabet; and the development of comprehensive standards for 1,018 commonly used words. In Montenegro, a country where public opinion is against including disabled children in schools, UNICEF launched the ‘It’s About Ability’ campaign in coalition with over 100 national, European and international partners. Adapted from an earlier campaign in Croatia, this three-month national campaign included billboards, media spots, testimonials and a documentary depicting Montenegro’s disabled children as active members of society. Special events and local initiatives with young people, schoolchildren, parliamentarians and celebrities sparked grassroots activities and led to greater acceptance of children with disabilities. In addition to receiving Montenegro’s annual award for Best Humanitarian Action, the campaign reported an initial evaluation demonstrating a change in public opinion: the number of people who believe that children with disabilities should only live in special institutions was nearly halved.
Advocacy, policy engagement, and strategic partnerships
In 2011, UNICEF collaborated in partnerships such as United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) and GPE and with partners in the School Fee Abolition Initiative to stimulate dialogue around macro-level policies that guide national frameworks, legislative reform and budgetary allocations affecting children and women.

UNICEF continues to provide a leadership role in UNGEI, a multi-stakeholder partnership to advocate and accelerate girls’ education and gender equality at the global and country level. Globally, key achievements for 2011 include: a) leveraging the GPE and UNESCO’s International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) Gender Policy Forum to mainstream principles of gender responsive planning in education; b) continuous engagement and influencing of the EFA agenda, in particular the gender review of the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011 as well as the development of a background paper on gender, skills and development; and c) increase in the use of social media and development of innovative web features to promote awareness of girls’ education. In a review of key EFA flagship initiatives in 2011, UNGEI was assessed as one of the most effective.

At the country level, UNGEI partnerships are active in 34 countries and have evolved differently in each country. Policy dialogue and advocacy together with technical and knowledge support remain the core strengths of the partnerships. While at times it is not possible to link these activities to material change on the ground, UNGEI continues to provide additional momentum for girls’ education.

In South Asia, UNGEI has impacted education on a number of levels. UNGEI contributed to an increased education budget in Punjab (Pakistan) from approximately US$95 million to US$155 million. Additionally, UNGEI actively participated in the development of the GPE in Afghanistan and promoted sports forums for girls, challenging norms around gender and sports in order to enhance girls’ access to education in conflict-torn western Afghanistan. In India, UNGEI promoted alliances with government and civil society on girls’ education to develop a National Vision for Girls’ Education. In Nepal, results included increasing budget allocation for the provision of girls’ toilets in schools, doubling the number of girls receiving scholarships and developing a counselling package to keep girls in school.

Through the Back-to-School campaign in Côte d’Ivoire, UNGEI helped reach 1 million pre- and primary school-aged children affected by the recent crisis, as well as 20,000 teachers across 3,334 schools and communities around the country. In Zambia, partner organizations enabled over 7,000 girls to continue their education by providing bursary support for girls in lower secondary and high schools. In Nigeria, the partnership facilitated the establishment of mothers’ associations in 12 states to provide community support to girls’ education.

In Rwanda, UNGEI contributed to the drafting of the School Health Policy, ensuring the inclusion of key issues for girls, including menstruation management, and other barriers to attendance and learning. In Kenya, 47,000 primary school teachers were trained with newly developed gender-sensitive materials. UNGEI’s support for ‘Tus’ clubs across Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania played a key role in addressing issues of importance to girls’ education as well as barriers to learning for all. In Malawi, the Girls & Boys Education Movement clubs established in six districts developed strategies for addressing barriers to girls’ education.
UNGEI’s global evaluation, including detailed evaluation of the East Asia-Pacific partnership and country level partnerships in Egypt, Nepal and Uganda, is currently being finalized and findings will be shared in 2012. The results of this evaluation will also aid ongoing efforts to revitalize UNGEI and to ensure its emphasis focuses on results, monitoring, policy advocacy and knowledge management.

Through the School Fee Abolition Initiative (SFAI), UNICEF provided technical support to several countries, among them the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which received sector planning support. In Namibia, at the request of the Ministry of Education, UNICEF developed a policy briefing on the status of free primary education in relation to the Constitution, the Education Act and other national, regional and international commitments. Triggering significant public debate, the briefing resulted in a thorough analysis of all education costs borne by parents and caregivers within subsequent cabinet directives. In Swaziland, UNICEF continued to advocate the roll-out of Free Primary Education (FPE), benefiting children in Grades 1-3. To support this initiative, the ministry created the FPE Unit under the Primary Inspectorate.

Since 2003, 19 million children have enrolled in school globally, and funding dedicated to the GPE will enrol an additional 25 million children and train 600,000 new teachers. UNICEF has strengthened its role as the coordinating agency in 23 out of 46 GPE-endorsed countries; it is the implementing agency in two countries (Guinea and Madagascar) and the supervising entity in Afghanistan. Promotion of a more strategic engagement in the GPE is being systematized and the equity agenda is increasingly promoted at the country level as well as the global level through UNICEF’s active participation in the GPE Board, the Financial Advisory Committee and diverse working groups. In Mozambique, active engagement in the education sector-wide approach and technical assistance to several working groups resulted in the incorporation of an equity focus in the new draft Sector Strategic Plan (2012-2016), with a commitment to piloting social protection interventions for out-of-school children and the inclusion of quality standards. Four million children in Madagascar remained in school as a result of UNICEF’s role as implementing entity and support from finance mechanisms, such as initial salary payments for over 39,000 community-recruited teachers and coverage of primary schools’ operational costs.

**KEY RESULT AREA 3: Support national capacity to improve educational quality and increase school retention, completion and achievement rates**

The renewed focus on equity saw a strategic shift in the CFS approach, with a greater emphasis on strengthening national capacities for policy development and planning guided by the CFS principles. Recognizing the importance of standards to scale up and mainstream quality education nationally, the number of countries that have adopted CFS or similar standards has more than doubled, from 44 in 2005 to 88 in 2011. An additional 42 countries reported the partial development of quality standards, indicating that a large number of country programmes have supported the mainstreaming of CFS into national policies and plans. This is the result of strong UNICEF regional and national leadership and extensive partnership and advocacy efforts complemented by the completion of Global Capacity Development programme on CFS. Countries like the Gambia have integrated CFS in its programme for Improved Quality in Schools, while Mauritania has requested UNICEF’s support towards implementing the CFS package in all public and primary schools.
In 99 countries, an estimated 579,000 schools received support through the CFS initiative. In the Americas and Caribbean region a total of 12,626 schools (a 26 per cent increase from 2010) received CFS support, while in East Asia and the Pacific region, Schools for Asia (based on the design of the Schools for Africa model) was launched.

South Africa’s outreach to an estimated 9,200 schools and 6 million girls and boys illustrates the impact of the services and strategies encompassed by the CFS approach. In a country where 27 per cent of high school learners feel unsafe at school, where learning achievements are poor and grade retention rates are low among children from the poorest households, the reformation of the education landscape required a holistic strategy. UNICEF directly influenced the development of national CFS implementation guidelines, which included policies on student/teacher attendance, child-friendly classrooms, sport and play fields, school toilets and bathrooms and school security.

In Mozambique, where 400,000 children from seven provinces have benefited from a CFS multi-sectorial approach, UNICEF partnered with key ministries, teacher training institutions and civil society to promote the quality of educational services. In Bolivia, 146,800 children (22,329 from seven indigenous nations) and over 6,650 teachers in 1,968 schools benefited from the implementation of improved child-friendly teaching. CFS standards and policies were implemented at departmental, municipal and community levels, while multi-grade teaching, good practices in IIPE and social participation were improved. In Azerbaijan, the CFS approach impacted system-wide reforms such as raising standards, providing training and expertise, modernizing programmes and methods, including disadvantaged populations and establishing appropriate monitoring mechanisms. In China, the institutionalization of the CFS initiative marks a major shift in conventional supervision practices - moving toward a more supportive and whole child development approach.

“Learners who were involved in gang wars and disrupting the school learning are now working and positively changing the school. Educators are more committed. Schools are linking better with the community and community structures. There are infrastructural developments. The school is having campaigns and awareness programmes with the six pillars of CFS.”

Testimonies on CFS from the field
South Africa¹
Learning outcomes

Literacy and numeracy are essential components of learning, the basic building blocks without which desired schooling outcomes, however defined, cannot take place. Despite massive investments in primary education, many children are not acquiring basic reading and numeracy skills. In several countries, research has been undertaken to understand what occurs in the teaching-learning process, in the school environment or in the home that hinders children from learning.

In 2010, India enacted the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education for all children in India aged 6-14. In 2011, India released its landmark Inside Primary Schools, a year-long longitudinal study tracking the learning outcomes of nearly 30,000 children from five different rural states. The design of the study enabled the assessment of individual progress while, simultaneously, collecting data on a wide range of domains thought to be associated with learning outcomes: schools, classrooms, teachers’ backgrounds, teaching capabilities, languages spoken at home versus school, parents’ education and other detailed information about home life. 53 Major findings from this study highlight that: children need to be in school to learn, the school’s resources (people, time and space) need to be organized to best facilitate children’s learning, curriculum and appropriate textbooks and other teaching-learning materials

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Reaching millions with Schools for Africa

All children have a fundamental right to education, irrespective of their circumstances. Yet in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, every third child does not get the chance to attend school, and an estimated 10 million children are pushed out of primary school every year.

Aiming to reach these and other marginalized children, Schools for Africa (SfA) was launched in 2004 in partnership with the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Peter Krämer Stiftung Foundation, with donations amounting to about US$5 million and extensive contributions from corporate, state and individual donors.

Present in Angola, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, the Niger, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe, SfA provides a unique array of services to schools that operate in the best interest of every child and uses measurements to improve children’s learning environment in a gender-sensitive way. These interventions strive to attract children to school and to keep them there. The Child-Friendly Schools approach has been shown to lower dropout rates, increase attendance and improve academic success among vulnerable children. By December 2010, SfA had reached over 115,000 teachers with training to provide children with quality education, psychosocial support and basic life skills, including HIV prevention. In addition, 1,169 schools had been improved with newly constructed or renovated classrooms.

Today, girls’ attendance continues to improve due to the provision of sex-separated sanitation facilities in schools. The provision of safe drinking water in thousands of schools and surrounding communities has improved student health and helped children spend more time in classrooms and less time collecting water. Through the provision of classroom furniture, textbooks and other teaching and learning materials, children are learning in better school environments.

Extracted from: Dolan, Sabine. ‘Thanks to supporters, the Schools for Africa programme is reaching millions’, Webstory, UNICEF, January 2012.

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need to be well determined, teachers must have content knowledge, the ability to explain content and the ability to make children in their classroom feel welcome, understood in their mother tongue and valued.

Consultations were held to synthesize the results of the study. These consultations informed India’s Right to Education Act and advocated for the integration of policy recommendations, including more appropriate curriculum and teaching-learning materials, more qualified teachers, better organization of school resources, enhanced schooling infrastructure and greater provision of services, such as access to clean water and separate sanitation facilities.

**Teacher development and deployment**

Teachers play an essential role in securing successful outcomes in the learning, development and empowerment of children. However, as detailed below, quality and equity in education require an equitable deployment of adequately qualified, supported and motivated teachers.

Education systems in CEE/CIS are characterized by poor learning achievements. Seeking to understand these outcomes, UNICEF CEE/CIS undertook a study on teacher recruitment, development and salaries in six countries (Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Uzbekistan). Although national statistical offices in the region typically report minimal teacher shortages, there is a serious dearth of highly qualified teachers in some subject areas compounded with poor teacher preparation, recruitment and a remaining ‘stavka’ system which pays teachers by the hour and enables them to earn extra money by doing extra tasks. At the root of the problem, however, is low teacher salaries, which are insufficient to support a household. This pushes teachers to develop numerous compensation strategies to offset the salary shortfall, such as teaching longer hours, collecting fees from parents at school, and taking on additional work outside of school. The school-level analysis of the regional study has helped to introduce a new notion of teacher qualification that matters a great deal for quality education: the notion of underqualified teachers. Teachers may be formally qualified but nevertheless end up working in a position for which they are underqualified. The report recommends improving the qualifications of teachers, ensuring effective teacher recruitment, implementing pre-service teacher education reforms and raising teachers’ salaries.

While rooted in CEE/CIS, the above findings of inequities in teacher management and qualifications as well as teacher shortages are applicable across regions and require a strategic global response. In collaboration with the International Task Force on ‘Teachers for Education for All’ (EFA) and Education International, UNICEF has prioritized research on ‘teachers for the marginalized.’ Outcomes of the research will provide policy advice to governments through country-level education sector groups.

In responding to inequities in teacher development, UNICEF’s partnership with the Commonwealth of Learning on integrating the CFS approach into curricula of the teacher training institutions (TTI) has continued to demonstrate impressive results. Ten country agreements with TTIs in eight countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Swaziland and Zambia) were finalized; 1,931 participants actively participated in 68 CFS workshops for standards and curricula review, sensitization and advocacy, and materials development. Evidence from the partnership indicates that teachers deployed in remote
locations are using open and distance learning. For example, the University of Limpopo in South Africa introduced a certificate course on CFS for students in their first year of the pre-service teacher training programme.

While many countries in ESAR are on track for meeting the EFA targets, there is recognition of the need to improve the quality of basic education and that a focus on pedagogy and its training implications needs to be at the heart of this commitment. The UNICEF ESAR office undertook an initial survey in 2011 of approaches in teacher management, teacher education and learning materials within and across countries. Seven countries in the region are engaged in teacher education policy development, while nearly half of the region’s country offices are engaged in the development or improvement of teacher education systems. Yet greater UNICEF involvement is needed at the front-end of teacher education – during initial and pre-service teacher trainings – to ensure the implementation of quality education. Cognizant that trained professionals are of little value if not deployed equitably and if not regularly available in the classroom, the ESAR office is mobilizing partners and advocating for a shift away from highly inequitable systems of teacher management to more effective and equitable ones.

Along with research, a number of activities were carried out in 2011 to strengthen teacher capacity and improve teacher training. To better prepare first-time teachers and to enhance the capacities of education personnel, Comoros introduced the Competency Based Approach in teacher training institutions. In Sri Lanka, over 3,500 principals and teachers received training on child-friendly approaches, resulting in some 1,500 schools promoting inclusive education and gender responsiveness as well as integrating effective teaching methodologies. In Iraq, quality standards for teachers and head-teachers were developed and adopted by the Ministry of Education, Kurdistan Regional Government, with 30 lead trainers, head teachers and assistant head teachers from 473 schools trained on improved management and leadership skills. In Rwanda and the Maldives, Teacher Resource Centres have enabled teachers to acquire additional skills, attend refresher training, interact with other teachers and prepare their lessons.

**Promoting multi-lingual and inter-cultural education**

To reduce barriers to access and improve learning outcomes, UNICEF is advocating and assisting multilingual education in countries with a diversity of languages. In Myanmar, as part of the essential learning package, 1,700 lower primary school teachers received training in implementing the language enrichment programme in the Northern Rakhine State’s townships, where Burmese is not the first language for the majority of children. In Thailand, the mother tongue as a medium of instruction is encouraged in the national language policy as a result of a UNICEF-supported bilingual education pilot project. In Viet Nam, evidence of mother tongue-based bilingual education and knowledge of language barriers was generated and disseminated to policy-makers and relevant education stakeholders. The 515 children of three ethnic minority groups who were enrolled in such education outperformed those who weren’t in each of the three years of implementation.

In Latin America, multilingual education and indigenous issues tend to intersect in programming. In Argentina, efforts focused on improving the infrastructure in 500 indigenous schools as well as capacity building of directors and teachers of rural indigenous schools in the areas of management and bilingual teaching and learning skills. In Bolivia, 22,329 children of seven indigenous nations benefited from regional curricula that reflect local language and knowledge. In Costa Rica, the teaching of indigenous languages was strengthened in primary and secondary education through an inventory of didactic materials and publications in Bri-Bri and Cabécar languages.
UNICEF is advocating that governments highlight issues of equity and social discrimination in the CEE/CIS region. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNICEF focused on inclusive intercultural education in divided and mono-ethnic schools, reaching around 15 per cent of all primary schools and benefiting 70,000 children. In Georgia, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education and Science, in coordination with local education resource centres, held regional consultations bringing together 140 school directors to address issues of social integration and quality education for ethnic students. Approximately 1,455 teachers and 45,000 students in 485 schools for ethnic minorities gained skills to address violence and gender-based discrimination. In Romania, efforts were made to ensure the regular attendance of 400,000 children living in poverty, the majority of whom were from the Roma community. In Serbia, UNICEF’s work with Roma Health Mediators identified out-of-school children, facilitated school enrolment and provided assistance to families to access personal documentation and social welfare benefits.

Child-friendly schools and quality standards
The CFS approach continued to make a global impact on improving education quality for children in developing countries. This is reflected in the increased participation of girls, boys and entire communities in school systems, the improved delivery of services such as WASH, the demand for greater support in CFS school design and construction, and in safety and security provisions (particularly for girls).

UNICEF Headquarters continued to help country offices strengthen their capacity for CFS planning and implementation as well as scaling up and mainstreaming CFS approaches into national policies and plans. The final roll-out workshop of the global Capacity Development programme on CFS was completed in Mozambique in April, bringing the total number of countries reached over the past three years to 107. The regional workshops have generated great enthusiasm for CFS in many countries, placing a demand on UNICEF to ensure that work scaling up and mainstreaming CFS receives strong technical and financial support.

Minimum quality CFS standards were adopted by Angola, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Kiribati, Swaziland and Tunisia, and partially adopted by Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Guinea-Bissau, Moldova, the Niger, Uruguay and Yemen. In Sri Lanka the CFS approach was accepted by the Ministry of Education as the key strategy for promoting primary education. In Afghanistan, Burundi, Eritrea, Liberia, Nepal, Panama and Senegal, the CFS approach was introduced or expanded in schools. In Tunisia, the capacity building of education staff around CFS criteria helped improve students’ achievement. This resulted in the promotion of a child-friendly environment in all Tunisian primary schools. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, more than 2,000 national and provincial government professionals were trained on the CFS approach and 10 core standards for quality were developed. Building upon the 2010 pilot phase of CFS in two provinces in Burundi, the CFS approach was extended to 437 new schools in five additional provinces. In Nepal, the roll-out of CFS in 1,200 schools in 30 districts was scaled up from Grade 1 to include Grades 2 and 3. It was noted that Grade 1 promotion rates in these districts increased from 62.8 per cent in 2009/2010 to 68.2 per cent in 2010/2011. Additionally, the CFS approach was rolled out in 132 community schools in Liberia and in 135 schools in Senegal.

Life skills, HIV and violence prevention
In 2011, UNICEF continued to promote important curricula development and programming focused on issues such as life skills, HIV and violence prevention in order to improve the quality of learning environments and promote better livelihoods for students.
Following a review of gender-based violence in schools conducted in 20 countries, UNICEF developed a database and various tools to provide country-level guidance. In Indonesia, provincial policies were adopted to mainstream the HIV/AIDS curricula into the education sector, rendering it compulsory across all educational levels. In Malawi, curricula were implemented, including those on life-skills development with a focus on HIV/AIDS and education for violence. A total of 1.4 million children aged 10-14 in 11 provinces received instruction through school clubs.

In Burundi, life-skills education was integrated into the pre-service teacher training curriculum, with a component on female genital mutilation/cutting. In Morocco, the development of a national strategy to end violence in schools provided guidance for school-level actions to prevent violence and protect victims. In the Central African Republic, the implementation of a Code of Conduct for Zero Violence by school principals led to improved physical and protective environments in schools as well as greater retention and improved academic performance. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNICEF collaborated with Plan International to publish a widely distributed regional study on violence in schools.

**Child-centered adaptation to climate change and disasters**

Promotion of child-centred disaster risk reduction (DRR) programming in Education Sector Development, Policy and Planning has gained momentum. DRR has moved forward in all regions, especially in CEE/CIS, Latin America and the Caribbean, and East Asia and the Pacific. This has helped bridge a gap between development and humanitarian programmatic interventions by improving the provision of quality education and retention rates. By addressing disaster risks and vulnerabilities at an early stage, the impact of natural hazards and conflict-related emergencies can be reduced. UNICEF co-organized the Regional Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction in the education sector in Latin America and the Caribbean, which culminated in the Panama Declaration signed by 18 countries. Twenty-four countries in the region successfully integrated environmental education into primary school curricula, while 22 countries integrated it into secondary education.

The Children’s Charter for DRR was approved in Mozambique, which called for the construction of safe learning facilities to reduce the risk of disasters among children and enhance the long-term sustainability of community infrastructure. In cyclone-prone Madagascar, school safety and disaster management was strengthened through the production of media messages on cyclones and response. The video, complemented by a DRR guide for teachers, was used for training in at-risk schools. Through the Pacific Island Multi-Country programme, UNICEF established the Live and Learn Environmental Education partnership, supporting the use of a Research of Aspirations and Perceptions tool for 40 primary schools of Fiji within a broader WASH in Schools rehabilitation programme. Greater coordination was undertaken with UNICEF’s Office of Emergency Programmes and UNESCO to finalize the DRR and Education Technical Note, engage in multi-agency research into disaster risk and impacts for children, and map country-level best practices on the inclusion of DRR/climate change adaptation in the school curricula.

**Infrastructure, sanitation and WASH**

In order to enhance the quality of the schooling environment and thereby improve learning, school infrastructure, sanitation, water and health issues are of utmost importance. The WASH in Schools initiative (WinS) continued expanding its activities, with a noticeable two-fold increase in WASH in Schools Partnerships (to 80 organizations) and the inclusion of WinS indicators in national EMIS in 94 countries, including China and Tajikistan. Field research on WinS and equity in six countries provided information on the use of technology and design for
ensuring that girls, children with disabilities, and those children living in remote locations learn in healthy environments. WinS programming based on the WinS Monitoring package has been developed and disseminated globally, reaching all UNICEF countries with WASH programmes and over 50 international organizations. As a result of advocacy and support by UNICEF, programme countries in all regions (Belize, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi and Papua New Guinea) conducted comprehensive WASH surveys to obtain a more complete picture of the situation of WASH in schools in 2011. This has provided a better understanding of WinS coverage and remaining gaps, enhanced the visibility of the initiative and leveraged funding opportunities such as in Tanzania, where donors provided an additional US$15 million for WinS.

Key 2011 activities included the distribution of sanitary kits, access to clean water and sanitation and improvement of facilities. The distribution of close to 15,000 sanitary kits to schools and learning centres in Somalia resulted in decreased dropout rates, improved learning outcomes and increased confidence for girls in upper primary classes. In Uganda, nearly 8,000 pupils benefited from the construction of handwashing facilities in 15 primary schools. In Zambia, 52,500 students in 105 schools gained access to a safe water supply, and 41,000 pupils benefited from the completion of 82 school latrines with separate facilities for boys, girls and teachers. In Togo, 16,450 students in 47 primary schools benefited from new WASH infrastructure with boreholes or gender-appropriate latrines with handwashing facilities. In Madagascar, 30,000 children in eight regions were provided with access to safe and protective school environments with appropriate water as a result of the work on school construction and rehabilitation at over 150 sites.

Addressing disparities and discrimination in school
With the Australian Agency for Aid Development (AusAID), UNICEF is strengthening the inclusion of children with disabilities in education systems through the development of tools, resources and teacher training. In Cuba, 818 boys and 372 girls with disabilities attending nine special education centres in urban municipalities received better educational care at the school and family levels. In Tunisia, a UNICEF-supported inclusive education pilot project with 25 schools in two regions included training on organizational change and institutional development, communication, the production of appropriate tools and personal development for 100 regional education staff. In Bhutan, 42 visually impaired and 63 deaf and hearing-impaired children received specialized education services, enabling them to continue learning to use Braille and sign language. In Burundi, a study was conducted on discriminatory practices in the classroom. In Mozambique, a multimedia campaign produced in partnership with key ministries promoted Zero Tolerance for Violence and Sexual Abuse against children. In the Gambia, the capacity of 100 mothers’ club executives was strengthened to support girls’ education.

KEY RESULT AREA 4: Restore education after emergencies and post-crisis situations

In 2011, UNICEF worked with a variety of education actors and partners to strengthen its response to humanitarian emergencies by enabling affected children to go back to school, implementing safe temporary learning spaces, rehabilitating and constructing safe schools, contributing to reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts, supporting DRR, facilitating sector coordination and developing overall institutional capacity in Education in Emergencies (EiE). The West and Central Africa regional office finalized its ‘Guidance Notes to Integrate Conflict/Disaster Risk Reduction (C/DRR) in the education sector planning processes.’ As a result, vulnerability analyses were conducted in Burkina Faso and Chad, where C/DRR was
integrated into education sector policies. In over 42 countries, the Education in Emergencies and Post Conflict Transition Programme (EEPCT) provided flexible funding and environments in which innovative and needs-based preparedness and response activities took place at all levels.

**Planning for and restoring learning in emergencies and post-crisis contexts**

Concerned with the increasing trend of attacks on education that have resulted in the partial or total destruction of schools and other education facilities and the threatened or actual targeting of education personnel, UNICEF works with the steering committee of the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack. UNICEF provided funding for programmatic initiatives in 2011 as well as a global network of programme officers involved in working groups and information sharing. This provides a unique partnership and advocacy opportunity to research and highlight the incidence and impacts of attacks on schools, strengthen monitoring and reporting systems, promote evidence-based programmatic measures and encourage government accountability. In 2011, recognition of the importance of this work was emphasized when the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1998 in 2011, acknowledging the growing number of attacks against schools, hospitals and health-care facilities, as well as teachers and medical personnel, and calling on all parties to immediately cease these violations.

In a majority of countries, UNICEF efforts led to the integration of enhanced emergency preparedness and response capacities at all levels (national, provincial/state and school). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, EiE was included in education sector plans. In Nepal 36 master trainers (20 per cent female) and 720 teachers were trained, and 72,000 children in 360 schools gained knowledge and awareness on earthquake preparedness. Furthermore, the Government of Nepal declared all schools as “zones of peace,” which now involves 744 schools in nine affected districts committed to remaining open despite political conflict.

In Sudan, 277,862 children from eight states received education support (45 per cent more than the original target). UNICEF developed emergency strategies and attracted EiE funding for the construction of durable systems while strengthening reintegration and community ownership. Accordingly, preparedness plans were updated and Emergency Preparedness and Early Response supplies pre-positioned. This led to the development of an Interagency Referendum Contingency Plan designed to benefit 340,000 school-age children in various locations. At least 200,000 children in seven drought-prone regions benefited from the provision of education supplies and teacher training. About 30,000 refugee children from Somalia and Sudan were supported with EiE interventions. UNICEF was pivotal in revitalizing the education cluster and regional EiE task forces, as well as in pre-positioning essential learning and teaching materials, including tents and education kits for approximately 404,000 children. Enhanced emergency preparedness allowed for higher quality, more organized and more cost-effective responses.

In Indonesia, UNICEF accelerated the capacity building of key stakeholders to ensure the inclusion of emergency preparedness and contingency plans in overall education sector plans at national and sub-national levels. In Laos, in collaboration with Save the Children International, 112 provincial and district officials in three provinces participated in EiE Frontline Responders Training and increased their knowledge and skills on emergency response. In Panama, School-Based Emergency Preparedness Planning became part of the Child Friendly and Healthy Schools pilot, and 86 per cent of schools developed risk management plans cross-referenced with satellite maps of schools. In Botswana, 455,832 primary school students in 556 schools (including orphans, minority children and children with disabilities) received learning materials through the Back-to-School campaign. This facilitated the return to school of 19,135 previously out-of-school children.
Jean’s story: An adolescent girl’s belief in education provides hope in Haiti

When UNICEF met Jean Bernite just six weeks after the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, she was living in a tent with four family members. Her situation mirrored that of more than a million earthquake-affected Haitians, including some 380,000 children and adolescents, living in crowded camps. Jean was volunteering to help earthquake survivors and was no longer attending school but was eager to return to the classroom.

A year later, her situation had stabilized. “I went back to school, and now I’m in my last year of high school… If there were two great things that I would love to change in my life, one is to go to college, and not only for me but all Haitian children who have finished high school and have no chance of going to college,” she said. “And after college, I would like to find a good job.”

In Haiti, UNICEF and its partners have helped 720,000 young people like Jean return to school. By establishing new schools, procuring tents and educational materials, humanitarian agencies are working around the clock to ensure that every Haitian child has equal access to a quality education. Though progress has been great, more than half of Haiti’s children do not attend school and the pace of school construction has been slowed by the need to clear rubble and enduring issues related to land tenure.

“The change that I expected, I don’t see it yet,” Jean said of Haiti’s rebuilding process. “But what is good in my life is that I always wanted to graduate from high school, and now I’m in my last year, and I’m about to achieve that dream.”


Improving the quality of education in emergencies

To improve access and quality of education during emergencies, UNICEF and partners continued to invest in capacity development for key education stakeholders by supplementing curricula to include life skills, promote reconciliation and peacebuilding, address the psychosocial needs of children affected by conflict and natural disasters and ensure the availability of safe and adequate learning spaces. All regions conducted capacity development workshops on EiE. These incorporated content and methodologies from previously developed EiE training and integrated tools from the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) as well as from the global education cluster.

Some training sessions resulted in draft country action plans that included: (i) rolling out EiE training packages at the national or sub-national levels; (ii) strengthening DRR preparedness and contingency planning; and (iii) mainstreaming EiE and DRR into national policies. EiE focal points were trained on national legislation and international principles for emergency preparedness.
In Morocco, pedagogical tools to prevent risks and promote security at school were finalized based on UNICEF’s past emergency interventions and were adapted at the national level to complement the manual on school security, thus contributing to the enhancement of safer and more child-friendly school environments. UNICEF helped the Ministry of Education in Panama develop school-based disaster reduction plans using the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) as a basis. Twenty Panamanian civil servants from a variety of professional backgrounds were trained in the CCCs.

In 2011, UNICEF also continued to address the psychosocial needs of children and provide life-saving skills and messages. In Afghanistan, UNICEF EiE programming focused on psychosocial support and school protection. Training was provided to 2,126 school teachers in Kandahar, and 674 teachers remain active in ongoing training. Three hundred schools were re-opened as a result of the mobilization of 4,000 community shuras (including religious leaders and influential community members) to improve school security and protection against attacks. Monthly school incident reports were compiled for tracking purposes and response, and a nationwide workshop for influential leaders from the 17 most insecure provinces was held in Kabul.

In South Sudan, 1,900 teachers and PTA members (1,160 men and 740 women) were trained on psychosocial support and emergency life skills. In Somalia, CFS offered essential services and life-saving messages in a protective environment for 11,133 out-of-school children, including 4,915 girls, while also facilitating their transition to formal education. In Haiti, 14,937 children in relocation camps, host communities and returning areas (out of the planned 20,200) accessed education after the earthquake either by reintegrating into schools or by attending temporary learning spaces and life-skills sessions. The distribution of cholera prevention materials combined with training of local partners provided 1 million children in 5,000 schools with life-saving information.

During Kyrgyzstan’s post-conflict phase, UNICEF supported the transformation of CFS into sustainable community-based daycare centres providing psychosocial support, rehabilitation and referral services for the most vulnerable children and their families. A peace education programme to promote safe and tolerant schools was also implemented in schools and communities through small grants.

UNICEF promoted the rehabilitation and construction of many schools destroyed or damaged by natural hazards or conflict. In some locations, UNICEF assisted escort groups to ensure children’s safe travel to and from affected schools. In Occupied Palestinian Territory, the rehabilitation and construction of child-friendly WASH facilities in 78 schools benefited around 57,000 students and 1,800 teachers. Hygiene promotion activities reached 5,200 students (50 per cent girls) and World Water Day and Global Handwashing Day reached 80,400 students (50 per cent girls). Tankered water to 216 schools in Gaza benefited 124,529 children (50 per cent girls). In Sri Lanka, UNICEF in collaboration with national authorities implemented education programmes enabling approximately 100,000 internally displaced children to continue attending school in internally displaced person camps and resettlement locations. More than 37,000 children benefited from improved schooling facilities through the repair and rehabilitation of 85 schools. More than 500 teachers were trained in the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) and started classroom programmes for over 12,000 children.
UNICEF worked with partners to deliver school supplies (textbooks and learning kits) to students living in emergency-affected areas. In Eritrea, essential education supplies were pre-positioned for approximately 6,000 students and in Madagascar for 35,000 children. In South Sudan, thousands of children and teachers were provided with emergency education supplies (132 School-in-a-Box and 180 recreation kits, 12,500 textbooks and 700 blackboards). In Ethiopia, UNICEF delivered 200 School-in-a-Box packages to serve 8,000 children. Additionally, the delivery of 35,000 learners’ kits ensured quality education in emergencies for 30,000 Somali refugees and 5,000 Ethiopian children in host communities as well as 100 early childhood development kits for 4,000 children.

**Education cluster coordination**

Several countries reported on the education cluster coordination progress co-led by UNICEF and Save the Children. In Haiti, the Education Cluster (EC) played an important role in coordinating the humanitarian actors, in addressing the urgent needs for assistance in schools affected by the earthquake and cholera epidemic, particularly in rural communities outside the earthquake-affected areas, and in strengthening emergency preparedness for the hurricane season. In Sudan, UNICEF managed the EC, which coordinated EiE interventions in consultation with 30 national and international education partners. Globally, in earthquake-prone locations, the EC promoted building awareness and the capacity of students and staff to prepare for and respond to earthquakes. UNICEF also advocated for the enforcement of earthquake infrastructure standards and child-friendly WASH standards for all schools.

In Afghanistan, UNICEF promoted strategic and action-oriented cluster coordination through effective leadership and facilitated the development of a strategic vision and operational response plan. This led to the roll-out of the EC at the national level and in three regions (north, east and west), paving the way for more strategic and coordinated programme planning and implementation at the sub-national level. Consequently, 876 out of 921 EC members received training on the INEE Minimum Standards and the cluster approach. In Uganda, a key achievement was supporting the handover of the EC and EiE/DRR to the Forum for Education NGOs in Uganda and its handover in November to the Ministry of Emergency Situations.

Under the emergencies framework, UNICEF has continued to push for the institutionalization of DRR within government frameworks. The Solomon Islands and Vanuatu have EiE/DRR policies and strategic implementation plans. In Burundi, the institutionalization of EiE/DRR at the central level was strengthened with the appointment of an EiE/DRR focal point in the ministerial cabinet. The ‘Building Solid Foundations’ initiative in the Americas and Caribbean region enabled the development of a set of practical guidelines to protect the rights of children during emergencies. UNICEF provided leadership and support to the ECD in Emergency Working Group (EEWG) and acted as a focal point for thematic groups in other global networks, such as the EC and Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies.

Globally, UNICEF has continued to encourage mainstreaming DRR into regular development programmes. UNICEF has gathered 13 case studies from nine countries where access to education was severely affected by natural hazards. These have been organized into a compendium on transitional learning spaces – a centralized collection of designs, pictures, technical drawings, bill of quantities and cost-effective recommendations that aim to facilitate the job of implementing quality and healthy learning spaces after an emergency with sound and clear technical information.
**Innovation**

For many, innovation is equivalent to the use of technology, which can be a powerful tool to promote access to learning opportunities. However, the current state of education for many of the world’s children requires a broader perspective that incorporates innovative approaches, such as: providing financing alternatives for girls, partnering with youth peer educators, adapting the education system to suit nomadic calendars, recruiting teachers (particularly females) from disadvantaged areas through affirmative action, defining new partnerships or making use of geographic information systems to establish schools in areas where they are most needed.

Keeping children and youth at the centre of its work, a joint partnership between UNICEF and the Uganda Scouts Association has encouraged Ugandan youth to become integral participants in development through the uReport Social monitoring system – a free SMS system used to report on community issues and mobilize actions around issues such as handwashing or education quality. In Georgia, Kosovo and Tajikistan, UNICEF launched the first-ever youth-driven multi-country study based on nationally representative surveys of young people’s perspectives on education quality. Approximately 2,500 youth contributed to the study, providing unique insights into the challenges and priorities facing them regarding economic and employment prospects. In Timor-Leste, more than 5,000 youth received the ‘Voice of Youth’ bulletin, a source of information for adolescents developed by the Dili-based youth media centre. An additional 130 adolescents participated in the ‘Youth Parliament,’ a leadership development initiative and platform for facilitating the participation of adolescent girls in community initiatives.

In striving for equity and a better understanding of children’s experiences in learning environments, UNICEF headquarters, in cooperation with Children’s Environments Research Group and Childwatch International, developed the Children’s Participatory Assessment Toolkit for Transitional Learning Spaces in Emergency Context. The toolkit is entirely image-based, giving all children the ability to evaluate and report on the conditions of their educational environment, such as the physical design and safety of learning spaces, water quality and sanitation, security and health.

To better meet the needs of students and labour markets, UNICEF expanded the use of innovative learning tools, such as information and communication technology. In Iraq, 32 Computers on Wheels (COW) were procured and distributed to 20 ALP classes and 12 youth centres, along with other basic Internet technology equipment. Training was provided to 160 teachers, and each school or centre received one COW set and a trolley carrying 16 laptop computers. In Uganda, support for primary teachers’ colleges and schools was enhanced through the use of information and communication technology and the Digital Drums, which are rugged solar-powered kiosks developed to increase access to information. These efforts will be scaled up to reach the most isolated and vulnerable children and youth.

To realize the right to education for all and facilitate key transition points, UNICEF bolstered strategic partnerships involving a wide range of actors. In 2011, Somalia focused on situation assessments of pastoralists and pastoralist education, the provision of primary school textbooks, and primary and secondary school examinations. A total of 2,122,800 textbooks for Grades 1-8 were delivered and 24,650 students (7,746 girls) took Grade 8 and Form 4 exams, a 9 per cent increase from 2010. A pilot project providing block grants to schools strengthened local school management capacity with communities donating in-kind payment (e.g., ‘one goat for one child’) in lieu of school fees, resulting in a 69 per cent enrolment increase since 2007.
In Madagascar, peer support was provided through the ‘Girl-to-Girl’ strategy, involving the identification of first-grade girls (“little sisters”) at risk of dropping out and pairing them up with “big sisters” to support academic progress. In Tanzania, 57,494 girls and 57,494 boys in 220 primary schools across 11 districts were reached through the TUSEME (‘let’s speak out’) programme, empowering them to overcome and voice the problems that hinder their social and academic development. Within the Out-of-school Children Initiative (OOSCI) UNICEF uncovered disparities in sector performance using maps by province, district and commune, focusing attention on out-of-school children, children from ethnic minorities and, in partnership with GPE, children with disabilities. These types of initiatives have shown considerable success in increasing access to and retention in school by addressing gender discrimination and challenging social norms.

**Future Workplan**

UNICEF will work towards the MDG goals of access, particularly concentrating on marginalized groups and the equity agenda. Additional countries will undertake more robust analyses of marginalized children in the education system through expansion of the OOSCI (for access) together with new tools (primarily the ‘Simulation for Equity in Education’ model, which can be used for access and learning). They will make use of proven strategies, assisted by a database documenting the impact of interventions being developed at UNICEF in collaboration with the World Bank. At the country level, UNICEF will rely on its analytical products to inform the barriers and bottlenecks which need to be reduced or eliminated. Global as well as country-level work on social norms and teachers will be completed.

Mindful of the issues not addressed by the MDGs, primarily learning outcomes, UNICEF will work to develop innovative platforms for action at the global level with the Global Learning Compact and the Initiative of the Secretary General on Education. These platforms for action will highlight the need to devote resources and expertise towards improving learning outcomes. UNICEF’s specific contribution will be highlighting learning assessment and processes for marginalized children in partnership with the Brookings Institution, UNESCO’s Institute for Statistics and others. UNICEF will also contribute to the global learning agenda by supporting an enabling environment and early learning, as well as emphasizing the need to go beyond reading for meaningful learning. Connected to this, a UNICEF study on violence against children in schools will be completed and inform national and school standards and processes that will be further incorporated into the CFS approach.

Child-Friendly Education will be the overarching strategic approach for UNICEF. UNICEF will work to ensure that children and their learning needs remain at the centre of education planning and implementation. The use of multiple approaches will meet children’s diverse social, economic and educational needs.

Universal access to quality learning and relevant education is an essential prerequisite to advancing sustainable development, social inclusion and equity. At the global level, UNICEF will play a key role in the upcoming Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development through influencing the transition from MDGs to Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring that access to basic quality education and learning is a featured goal.
In its work with the GPE, UNICEF will, at the country level, influence sector plans and proposals to include efforts on behalf of marginalized populations and assist partner communities in leveraging resources for country plans. Guidance for UNICEF’s role in the 44 pipeline countries will be developed. Globally, UNICEF will continue to play its part in the governance of the partnership.

Fourteen countries will participate in the Government of the Netherlands-supported Programme for Education, Peacebuilding and Advocacy, which will improve conflict analysis tools for the education sector and support strategies for education as an approach to peacebuilding. Five countries will be part of the School as Zones of Peace initiative supported by the Governments of Norway and Nepal, which complements UNICEF involvement in the Global Coalition on Preventing Education from Attack.

Building on the success of Schools for Africa, Schools for Asia is now being established and includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

The Basic Education and Equity Demonstration Initiative will work in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Liberia, Madagascar and Nepal to reduce gender and other disparities that hamper access to participation in and completion of quality basic education. Work around the School Fee Abolition Initiative will be expanded and will develop a knowledge base on school fee abolition and other alternative strategies that reduce cost barriers to education. To promote universal school readiness, early learning and equity, country-level policy guidance will be provided on developing appropriate strategies that suit the country context. This will also be supplemented by a position paper on early learning that moves towards providing early learning services to all children, especially the most marginalized.

UNGEI’s Global Evaluation will provide a strategic restructuring of the initiative’s strategy with an emphasis on results, monitoring, policy advocacy and knowledge management. UNICEF will also strengthen its work on education and disabilities, both by the roll-out of the Australian supported education and child protection initiative, REAP, as well as more strategic programme guidance. Work is in progress to define an education strategy for adolescents, within UNICEF’s overall strategy for adolescents, particularly girls, and is a key pillar of our work in several regions.

UNICEF will continue co-leading the Global Education Cluster, further enhancing cluster management and overall system strengthening for EiE, school rehabilitation and construction with child-friendly standards. In fragile and conflict-affected contexts, UNICEF will implement equity-focused emergency strategies, including access to quality education, capacity development on emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction as well as development of education sector contingency plans at national and sub-national levels. UNICEF will partner with Save the Children to monitor resources for education in emergencies and to provide a platform to keep this on the agenda.

While UNICEF’s “upstream” shift is important to adjust national policies, strategies, programmes, budgets and legal frameworks towards the equity approach, plans for future work will take into account the critical role of sub-national community-centered efforts where most disparities are found and where scaled-up interventions can have durable impacts for all children.
UNICEF’s expenditure for Focus Area 2 (Basic Education and Gender Equality) was US$ 711.7 million in 2011, representing 20.5 per cent of UNICEF’s total programme expenditures.

### Total Expenditure by Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) Focus Area, 2011, (all funding sources)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MTSP Focus Area</th>
<th>Total Expenditure (in USD million)</th>
<th>% of total MTSP expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young Child Survival and Development</td>
<td>1,821.9</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Education and Gender Equality</td>
<td>711.7</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS and Children</td>
<td>151.4</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection: Preventing and Responding to Violence, Exploitation and Abuse</td>
<td>339.6</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Advocacy and Partnerships for Children's Rights</td>
<td>358.9</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,475.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total Expenditure by MTSP Focus Area, 2011 (in USD, million)

- **Basic Education and Gender Equality** $711.7 (21%)
- **HIV/AIDS and Children** $151.4 (4%)
- **Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse** $339.6 (10%)
- **Policy Advocacy and Partnerships for Children’s Rights** $358.9 (10%)
- **Other** $91.6 (2.6%)

**Total Expenditure: $3,475**
In 2011, UNICEF’s largest expenditure for Basic Education and Gender Equality was in the Eastern and Southern African region, following by the Western and Central Africa Region. Together, these two regions accounted for 52 per cent of total expenditure for Focus Area 2.

### Expenditure by region and funding source for Basic Education and Gender Equality, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Regular Resources</th>
<th>Other Resources - Regular</th>
<th>Other Resources - Emergency</th>
<th>Total Expenditure (in USD, million)</th>
<th>Total Expenditure (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESARO</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>149.3</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>218.3</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCARO</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>150.8</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROSA</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>135.3</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TACRO</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAPRO</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENA</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEE/CIS</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Regions</strong></td>
<td><strong>125.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>444.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>141.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>711.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expenditure by funding source for Basic Education and Gender Equality, 2011

- Regular Resources
- Other Resources - Regular
- Other Resources - Emergency
### Expression of Thanks

UNICEF expresses its sincere appreciation to all the donors that have supported our work in the thematic area of Basic Education and Gender Equality and have made possible the results described in this report. In particular, we are grateful to the governments of Norway, Sweden, Brazil and Luxembourg. Special thanks also go to the UNICEF National Committees of Korea, the United Kingdom, Belgium, the United States, the Netherlands and Spain, which have contributed generously. Thematic funding is important because it provides greater flexibility and longer-term planning and sustainability of programmes in order to achieve our MTSP results.

The Government of Norway is a crucial partner to UNICEF in achieving results in Focus Area 2, providing very large and predictable thematic funding over several years, which is particularly important in the area of education.

### ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Accelerated Learning Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Climate Change Adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>Community-Based Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C/DRR</td>
<td>Conflict/Disaster Risk Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFS</td>
<td>Child-friendly schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEE/CIS</td>
<td>Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COW Computers on Wheels
E4 Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equality Conference
EAPRO East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
ECD Early Childhood Development
EFA Education for All
ELDS Early Learning Development Standards
EiE Education in Emergencies
EMIS Education Management Information System
ESARO Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
DRR Disaster Risk Reduction
GCPEA Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack
KRA Key Result Area
MENA Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
MoE Ministry of Education
MTBBE Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education
MTSP Medium-Term Strategic Plan
HQ New York Headquarters
OOSCI Out-of-School Children Initiative
RO Regional Office
ROSA Regional Office for South Asia
SBE School-based Management
SEE Simulation for Equity in Education
SFAI School Fee Abolition Initiative
TACRO The Americas and Caribbean Regional Office
TTI Teacher Training Institutions
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGEI United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative
WASH Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WCARO West and Central Africa Regional Office
WinS Wash in Schools Initiative

ENDNOTES

6 Ibid.
9 OECD, Development: Aid to developing countries falls because of global recession. See <http://www.oecd.org/document/30/0,3746,en_2649504_3723852_33769658_1_1_1_1,00.html>
The reduced number of 34 mentioned in this report is an outcome of an objective identification carried out by the evaluation team.

Education for All (EFA) and the education-specific Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Angela W. Little, April 2011, Prepared

Poland. For more information: UNICEF, World Food Program, World Bank and World Vision International. 


Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Round 3(MICS3)


This model was developed in a consultancy for UNICEF by Babette Wils in 2011.

Undocumented children are children who lack legal identity and are therefore not recognized by the state or country in which they reside.

See <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/montenegro_57694.html>


The Fast-Track Initiative was identified as the other “effective” partnership. Source: A review of major global initiatives related to Education for All (EFA) and the education-specific Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Angela W. Little, April 2011, Prepared for the EFA Global Partnerships Team, UNESCO HQ.

The 2010 thematic report mentions that UNGEI is active in 44 countries and the number was based on countries self-assessment. The reduced number of 34 mentioned in this report is an outcome of an objective identification carried out by the evaluation team.

‘Tusme’ means ‘speak out’ in Swahili

Banerji, Rukmini, Bhattacharjea, Sunam and Wilima Wadhwa, Inside Primary School- A study of teaching and learning in rural India, Pratham Mumbai Education Initiative, 2011.

UNICEF, Teachers: a regional study on recruitment, development and salaries of teachers in the CEECIS Region. UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS, Geneva, 2011

For additional information on UNICEF Uganda’s Digital Drums see <http://www.unicefusa.org/news/releases/unicefs-digital-drum-chosen.html>

2011 expenditure data is provisional.