

Formative Evaluation of the Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI)

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

JANUARY 2019

Summary:

Welcome the findings of this evaluation and the confirmation that the Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) has delivered tangible outputs and has proven its relevance, effectiveness and utility.

Agree with the recommendations for future improvements including:

- Revising the theory of change to include all levels of education, while maintaining a focus on the crucial pre-primary years;
- Engaging technical partners and focusing on strategies that support implementation;
- Expanding the methodology to include adolescents of upper secondary school age and to target key vulnerable groups;
- Further build coalitions and engage with other service providers such as low-cost private schools and Quranic schools;
- Establish indicators and monitoring arrangements to enable OOSCI to provide the data for a summative evaluation in the future.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Revise the theory of change to ensure that the needs of all out-of-school children are met at all levels of education, while maintaining a focus on strategies and policies to eliminate the lack of participation at the pre-primary level.

Agreed

Management agrees to revise the theory of change to incorporate all levels of education from pre-primary to upper secondary as well as the financing implications of interventions for out-of-school children, while still maintaining a special emphasis on the crucial early years of education.

Actions Planned:

1. Development of new tools and guidance (July 2019)
2. Revise the OOSCI theory of change (March 2019)

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Harness the expertise and capabilities of technical partners to seek effective and efficient strategies to implement policies for different profiles of out-of-school children occurs, and attract resources to assure sustainability of implementation.

Agreed

Management agrees that UNICEF will engage partners in developing strategies to support policy implementation and monitoring. The expert group will develop and circulate new operational guidance for conducting OOSCI country studies.

Actions Planned:

1. Develop and circulate new operational guidance (July 2019)
2. Develop and share documents on good practice from OOSCI country reports (July 2019)
3. Develop a technical support system to maintain up-to-date data on out-of-school children from recent household surveys (March 2019)

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Re-orient the methodological framework towards the entire basic education, while also targeting key vulnerable groups and generating explicit strategies that address their learning needs.

Agreed

UNICEF agrees that the methodological framework should be expanded. The expert group will develop tools to create statistical profiles of adolescents who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) and guidance on incorporating non-formal education in the OOSCI analysis.

Actions Planned:

1. Develop and circulate tools to create statistical profiles of NEET adolescents (July 2019)
2. Develop and circulate guidelines on developing strategies for non-formal education and different forms of learning (March 2019)
3. Develop a training course on inclusive education sector planning for children with disabilities (September 2019)

RECOMMENDATION 4:

While maintaining a focus on supporting governments, facilitate processes for assembling partners that have a clear potential to bring new ideas and/or offer new entry points for programming for out-of-school children.

Agreed

UNICEF agrees to build coalitions with civil society, multilateral and bilateral agencies, religious organizations, the private sector and non-traditional donors; and will commission research on engaging with other service providers, including low-cost private schools and Quranic schools.

Actions Planned:

1. Commission research on engaging with other service providers (July 2019)
2. Publish an overall analysis of the data and lessons from OOSCI country studies (March 2019)
3. Circulate guidance to promote the inclusion of civil society and other stakeholders in Local Education Groups (March 2019)

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Set OOSCI up to yield evaluable information on the goal of achieving a reduction in the number of out-of-school children, including the internal and external coherence of the initiative, and the feasibility of achieving the intended results.

Agreed

UNICEF agrees that the expert group should establish indicators and monitoring arrangements to collect data to enable the progress of the initiative to be systematically assessed in both humanitarian and development contexts in the future.

Actions Planned:

1. Develop indicators of achievement for OOSCI and circulate guidance on monitoring to partner countries (March 2019)
2. Revise the OOSC Operational Manual (July 2019)
3. Extend the existing UNICEF database on out-of-school children to cover upper secondary education (March 2019)