Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in the medium-term strategic plan focus area 2

Basic education and gender equality

United Nations Children’s Fund
Executive Board
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Presentation overview

1. Acknowledging gains and challenges

2. Analysis of UNICEF’s contribution and performance

3. Moving forward – keeping the promise
1. Acknowledging gains and challenges
Significant progress in universal primary education (UPE), but more needs to be done

Significant progress: 1999-2008

- The number of primary-school-age children out of school fell by 37 million
- Enrolment in primary education continued to rise, reaching 89 per cent in the developing world
- Gender gap has narrowed: the percentage of girls in the out-of-school population decreased from 57% to 54%

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2010
Many children still out of school

- 68 million children of primary-school age are still out of school. More than 50% (some 34.9 million) are in 15 countries
- 71 million more secondary-school-age children are denied the right to education
- 54% of primary-school-age children out of school are girls
2. Analysis of UNICEF’s contribution and performance
Key result areas in education

KRA 1: Early learning and transition to primary education

KRA 2: Equity in access and universal primary education

KRA 3: Improve educational quality and increase school retention, completion and achievement rates

KRA 4: Ensuring education is restored in emergency and post-conflict
KRA 1: Early learning and transition to primary education

- National policies for universal school readiness expanded – from 50 countries in 2008 to 61 in 2009 – tracking of school readiness initiated after MTR

- Use of early learning and development standards increased – from 43 in 2006 to 69 countries in 2009 – 86% of the updated MTSP goal

- “Getting Ready for School: A Child-to-Child Approach” – innovation began in 2008 – improvement in on-time entry and readiness, leading to expansion of programme in pilot countries
Governments, supported by UNICEF and other partners, have made progress in access to education

- Translating universal and free primary education into reality through support from School Fee Abolition Initiative in 30+ countries

- Improving quality through inputs in WASH (4.2 million children benefitting in 20,000 schools), learning materials, HIV/AIDS support

- Improving statistical information and analysis and policies on exclusion through Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children in 23 countries

- Girls’ education, including UNGEI partnerships, in 40+ countries
Education inequality: even countries with good averages have disparities
KRA 3: Improve educational quality and increase school retention, completion and achievement rates

Defining and achieving quality education is an ongoing challenge with continuing debate on what it means and how to assess it.

UNICEF has contributed to efforts to improve quality of education through a more holistic comprehensive view of quality education based on child-friendly schooling. The CFS approach includes:

- Development and adoption of quality standards – 69 countries have adopted CFS quality standards
- Capacity development for teachers on quality learning and teaching based on CFS approach
- Promoting an enabling safe school environment
  - 79 countries have developed national policies on corporal punishment
  - 50 out of 142 countries have national education sector plans that address issues of children affected by HIV and AIDS
  - 88 countries are implementing ‘WASH in Schools’ activities, benefitting 4.2 million children in over 20,000 schools
Climate change, disaster risk reduction and environmental education

UNICEF is piloting new technologies for eco-friendly, cost-effective schools and temporary learning spaces.

Environmental and climate change education incorporated in primary school curricula in 47 countries and in 51 countries at secondary level.
KRA 4: Ensuring education is restored in emergency and post-conflict

- Response to emergencies to restore learning – in 2010 more than 200 small- and large-scale emergencies – child-friendly spaces and psychosocial support; ‘school-in-a-box’ kits; leading back-to-school efforts, rebuilding schools, providing safe water, emergency education training

- Targeted 41 countries in post-crisis and transition situations since 2007

- Co-lead of IASC Education Cluster with Save the Children – 41 Education Clusters established at country level

- Large-scale and pilot innovations to restore services and enable system reconstruction, including transition funding mechanisms
3. Moving Forward
Key adjustments and actions based on reviews

- Development of approaches and tools for equity analysis to improve programming for the disadvantaged, including gender discrimination, in international partnerships and with governments and partners at country level
- Support process and countries to determine where (and who) out-of-school children are and address barriers to access, including better prediction and planning for effects on education of impending social and economic crises
- Dialogue at all levels around quality – more to do on learning achievement and teachers
- Concept of child-friendly schooling – which focuses on the normative aspect of education, including non-violence and non discrimination – to include climate change and environmental education, expanded to focus on teaching and learning methods and teacher preparation
- Strengthening emergency preparedness and response on the ground, including back-to-school campaigns, child-friendly learning spaces and innovative financing mechanisms, and developing disaster risk reduction
- Improving knowledge gathering and sharing across agencies, governments and levels of education, in both emergencies and development contexts
- Using UNICEF’s comparative advantage globally and regionally with extensive inter-sectoral, on-the-ground presence in 157 countries to approach education
- Emerging areas that need more systematic attention in education are urbanization, migration, climate change, and learning and development needs of adolescents
Maintaining investment in education

Progress in education over past decade due to growth in domestic education budgets and aid
UNICEF expenditure for basic education and gender equality (FA2), 2006–2010

Expenditure for FA2, 2006–2010

From 2007 to 2010, out of a total of $2,329,940,719 spent in education, $1,235,259,724 was spent on education in emergencies.
Conclusion – education cannot wait!

- Education is a human right, increases earnings, boosts the economy, lifts people out of poverty, fosters access to treatment, helps combat stigma and discrimination, combats malnutrition, improves maternal health and decreases child mortality.

- To achieve the goals for 2015, there needs to be more emphasis on equity.

- Renewed and sustained political commitment to education, gender equality and the needs of every child required.

- Sustained and increased domestic resources to education, as education is the best investment for health, the economy, and the well-being of a population.

- Increased international commitment to education, including resources, needed.

- It is critical to strengthen investments in children, with a focus on girls and women, utilizing available resources more effectively and efficiently and devoting more resources to education.