Increasing Access and Equity in Early Childhood Education in CEE/CIS

Management Response and Progress-to-Date Implementing the Recommendations of the Independent Multi-Country Evaluation

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Setting the Context
Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda

- 10 common result areas for Children in CEE/CIS region:
  - Knowledge sharing, and mutual support across the region
  - Strengthening horizontal cooperation amongst our countries.

- 5 Multi-Country Evaluations (MCEs)
  - Impact level results with reduction of equity gaps?
  - Through which system level determinants?
  - What was UNICEF’s contribution?

- 1 MCE focused on Early Childhood Education (ECE)
Dissemination of MCE Findings - 2015

Presented and discussed at:
- National Conferences
- Regional conferences
- UNICEF internal meetings

Translated into Country-specific Briefs

Informed strategic thinking and the development of 11 new Country Programme Documents (CPDs)
The Management Response

- Developed in consultation with the 6 UNICEF Country Offices involved in MCE

- 15 recommendations

- Management fully agreed with 11 partially agreed with 4
Recommendation and UNICEF Response

Develop a long term vision and strategy for early learning, amending the Theory of Change, strengthen cross-sectoral approaches to system level change and align with European policy and practice (R1,2,12,14,15).

Management Response: Fully Agree

- Inclusion of early learning in our work on education → common Theory of Change
- Stronger focus on disadvantaged children
- Strengthen the alignment with SDG target of one year quality pre-primary education
- Greater use of global tools in the region
Deepen approach to teacher training and professional development (R4)

Management Response: Fully Agree

- Improved professional development programmes for teachers
- Promoting use of inspection and local evaluation findings to improve teacher training
- Documenting and sharing best practices
Recommendation and UNICEF Response

Develop a stronger framework for data collection (R10)

Management Response: Fully Agree

- Multi-country review of availability and gaps of ECE data at country level
- Capacity building of national ECE data collection systems
- Promoting national ECE data collection frameworks which capture excluded children e.g. children with disabilities
- Inclusion of ECE indicators in our regional education dashboard
- Building on best practice from other UN Agencies, EU and OECD
Review quality risks arising from rapidly expanding access to ECE (R3); develop standards and guidelines (R7)

Management Response: Fully Agree

- Leverage EU efforts and establish synergies
- Working on common standards making use of global expertise
- Promoting early grade assessment
UNICEF to strengthen its ability to navigate decentralization and to provide sustainable capacity development (R8)

Management Response: Partially Agree
(Cost of working at multiple sub-national locations)

- Capacity building at local level
- Advocacy and policy advice for regulatory frameworks to improve quality control
UNICEF should support and, if necessary, drive a research agenda on ECE (R11)

Management Response: Partially Agree
(Challenge of primary data gathering - cost and complexity)

- Secondary data analyses
- Sharing available international research through online platforms and policy briefs
Recommendation and UNICEF Response

Develop guidance/tools for child participation in early learning as a contribution to strengthening the quality of early learning (R5)

Management Response: Partially Agree

(Guidance and tools already exist)

- Supporting children’s voices through promoting child-centred curricula and play-based learning approaches
Further support the institutionalization of quality children’s educational television (R6)

Management Response: Partially Agree
(Resource intensive)

✨ Limited support to the development and dissemination of quality children’s educational TV
Concluding Observations

- Important learning process
- Stronger focus on disadvantaged children
- Stronger programmes
- Stronger compact with our partners and within UNICEF
Thank you