Education Update

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Girls' Education: An Organisational Priority

By Andre Roberfroid, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) will guide us in our programming for the next four years. UNICEF will have five organisational priorities: girls' education, integrated early childhood development, immunisation "plus", fighting HIV/AIDS, and improved protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination. These priorities represent the areas where we can make the biggest impact on the lives of children, in support of the Millennium Development Goals and *A World Fit for Children.* **One of UNICEF's top priorities will be girls' education.**

Why is girls' education an organisational priority?

Girls' education is a goal and a process to fulfil the right to quality basic education for the largest single group of children who are denied this right — girls. It is also an entry point for providing quality education for girls *and* boys, because girls' education is itself a strategy towards achieving Education for All.

We know that boys and girls have different learning experiences, and therefore we need to analyse the gender factor in every aspect of our work. We must promote gender sensitisation in order to eliminate subordination, discrimination, disrespect and unequal treatment to improve the ways boys and girls relate to each other. In cases of discrimination against children on grounds other than gender — for example, poverty, ethnicity, work, rural-urban residence or disability — the female child is often placed at a double disadvantage. And girls are frequently the most vulnerable group in situations of instability or crisis. They make up the majority of those who are denied the right to quality education.

Analysing the numbers of out-of-school girls and the most pronounced gender gaps reveals that Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa are the most affected regions. However, viewing the issue in terms of access is one-dimensional and extremely misleading. The issues relating to the quality and relevance of education are equally pertinent in all parts of the world, from Central and Eastern Europe to the Middle East to Latin America and the Caribbean. Even in systems with apparent equality in enrolment, attendance and participation, the "hidden" curriculum of discrimination can be taught. When negative attitudes based on gender stereotypes are communicated and reinforced in schools, gender discrimination and violence in society become more widespread.

As efforts are being made worldwide to achieve the goal of Education for All, serious obstacles to girls' education continue to mount. The HIV/AIDS pandemic, conflict, instability and deepening poverty in many parts of the world are adding to existing social, political, cultural and economic barriers. If we are serious about ensuring poverty reduction, making development sustainable and promoting peace, we must also be serious about ensuring that every girl has the right to quality education. Without success in girls' education, other international goals and targets will never be approached, let alone attained.

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Education Section, Programme Division

We all want the best programmes, so what are the challenges UNICEF faces in providing quality programming for Girls' Education? A quality programme...

- responds appropriately to the problems at hand
- is sufficiently focused on the basis of effective data analysis
- has clear objectives, focused activities, measurable indicators, and effective and fair processes

Many factors influence this and are discussed in the following pages. Andre Roberfroid, Deputy Executive Director for UNICEF, outlines the organisational priorities for UNICEF with a focus on the first priority: Girls' Education. Detlef Palm talks about what he has learned about programming from evaluations completed in Namibia. Also included are short pieces of advice from the Internal Audit Section, several programming experiences from UNICEF Nepal, Uganda and Peru and a very practical review of UNICEF's evaluations in Education by David Chapman.

The following are the questions we grappled with as planned for this issue:

Which complementary approaches ensure quality girls' education programmes? Is integrated programming always the best programming plan?

How do you respond to UNICEF's programming priorities in ECD, HIV/AIDS, Child Protection and Immunisation while using Girls' Education as an entry point?

How difficult is it for Education to find its place in the newly integrated programming frameworks?

How difficult is it to be learning new ways of operating? For example, conducting human rights-based programming while at the same time trying to help counterparts to understand it as well?

How can we ensure that frameworks inform our work rather than complicate it unnecessarily?

As you read this issue of Update, consider the questions above in light of what some of your colleagues are doing in this new MTSP, Human Rights-Based Programming climate and using Girls' Education as an entry point. ❖

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to combat child labour and other abuses. Girls are increasingly at risk of HIV/AIDS and carry the burden of care in families affected by HIV, all of which can influence their ability to access quality education. Good quality HIV prevention programmes can also help to address deeply rooted gender issues and affect the way girls and boys relate to each other. Girls' education can also help to ensure more efficient immunisation and is critical to sustaining health initiatives.

In early childhood development, eliminating discrimination can ensure that girls receive equal treatment — from feeding and intellectual stimulation to opportunities to play and discover. This helps in the development of self-esteem and confidence. Differing expectations for girls and boys can lead to differences in performance. Therefore, positive gender socialization and gender-sensitive early childhood education are crucial strategies for UNICEF.

Across the life cycle of the child — from the early years through adolescence — education is instrumental in creating the opportunity for girls to develop to their full potential.

Programming for girls' education: MTSP targets and core interventions

Our overall aim must be to support Governments to ensure that every girl receives an education of quality. We must work towards guaranteeing that all children reach school healthy, are well nourished and ready to participate and learn; that the content of the education they receive is gender sensitive and relevant; that teachers are trained and classrooms are well managed; and that the school environment is inclusive, safe, effective, healthy and protective. All children must successfully acquire literacy, numeracy and life skills.

In the MTSP, we have set three main targets in the area of quality girls' education, which relate to access, retention and learning achievement.

Target 1: Support access

By 2005, all countries with a girls' net enrolment rate of less than 85% in 2000 will have in place and will have implemented policies, procedures and practices that have reduced the number of out-of-school girls by at least 30%.

What can we do to support access?

It will be necessary for us to identify excluded and at-risk girls and introduce or re-introduce them to education. While the nature and scope of interventions supported by UNICEF will depend on the local situation, typical interventions will include:

- Providing policy support and technical assistance to Governments and communities to ensure increased access for those children who are hardest to reach and/or suffer most from any kind of discrimination, during normal times and in situations of instability;
- Developing programmes to eliminate cultural, social and economic barriers to girls' education;
- Supporting countries in the development and implementation of targeted actions to reduce the gender gap, while increasing enrolment and attendance;
- Assisting all countries to prepare for and respond to conflict and other crises so that affected children can fulfil their right to basic education in safe, stable and gender-sensitive environments;
- Mobilising resources for girls' education; and
- Providing quality education as a means to ensure access.

Target 2: Support retention

By 2005, policies, procedures and mechanisms to promote effective quality learning in child-friendly, gender-sensitive schools will be in place and implemented.

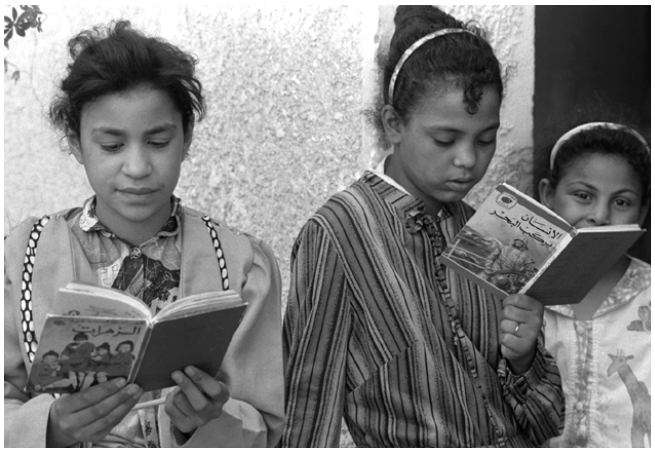
What can we do to support retention?

Depending on the local situation, we can:

- In cooperation with counterparts, review the gender dimensions in education to identify key gender issues and the extent and nature of discrimination;
- Advocate a comprehensive view of quality education, including support to child-friendly school initiatives within gender-sensitive education systems;
- Promote gender-sensitive teaching and learning processes, school environments and educational content; and
- Build capacity, strengthen partnerships and support countries in intersectoral education programmes, for example, the campaign to Focus Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH) around important local issues such as HIV/AIDS or water and sanitation.

Target 3: Support learning achievement

By 2005, countries will have identified learning outcomes in literacy, numeracy and life skills, and will have built capacity to ensure gender parity in achievement in basic education.



Two young girls, absorbed in reading, in the Ein el Helwan suburb of Cairo, Egypt.

UNICEF/HQ96-0248/Nicole Toutounji

What can we do to support learning achievement?

Successful completion of basic education will increase the likelihood that girls will move on to the next stage of education, thereby empowering them to be active participants in society. UNICEF can:

- Develop and promote reforms that support the learning and achievement of girls, with particular attention to the gender dimensions of quality education;
- Build capacity to identify learning outcomes and assess achievement; and
- Increase programmatic attention to the education of adolescent girls by addressing the gender disparity in the transition from primary to the next stage of education and also from school to work.

What do we expect from country programmes?

It is clear that it can no longer be "business as usual". Although we will need to refocus our work, it is important to remember that over 70 country programmes are already implementing projects or programmes focusing on girls' education. Therefore, we have organisation-wide experience that we can draw upon.

As you begin to shift your education programme to focus on quality girls' education, there are many sources of support, both in the regions and at headquarters. Because so much needs to be accomplished during the MTSP period, we will need to share experiences, information and good practices. These strategic shifts will require that country programmes:

- Address the quality and relevance of education for all girls;
- Support the achievement of gender-sensitive education systems which are responsive to learning needs;
- Focus on child-seeking and child-centred programmes with compensatory actions for girls;
- Make sure that education is affordable for all; and
- Report on progress towards reaching the MTSP targets.

We must also mobilise resources and political support for girls' education.

We are committed, as partners in the Education for All movement, to supporting Governments in their efforts to eliminate gender disparity in education by 2005 and provide education to all children by 2015. We are mandated to close the gender gap and to ensure that no girl is denied her right to education. We must assure quality education for all children.

We have much to achieve before the year 2005 in order to assure sustainable and measurable results for children. To the beneficiaries of our programmes, to the Executive Board, to our donors and National Committees, and to the public at large, we are saying that, through the MTSP, a new era in UNICEF programming has begun — one in which girls' education is central to everything we do.

At the country level, this will mean that a key priority of the country programme will be girls' education, and we are asking you to commit your efforts and resources to this area, and to report annually on results achieved. Your reports, and the Executive Director's annual report, will focus not only on the impact on the lives of girls, but also on our performance in using resources most effectively.

I am counting on you — on your professionalism and dedication — to help UNICEF fulfil this commitment. ❖

What Constitutes Good Programming?

By Detlef Palm, Programme Division, UNICEF New York

What constitutes good programming? In the case of girls' right to education, a good programme would obviously get girls into school, close the gender gap and ensure that girls and boys learn something useful to prepare them for adult life. It would also enable them to earn a living and become citizens who participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life.

This article focuses on the role of evaluation and programme design. Programme design, or strategising, is primarily about making choices. A country office cannot be involved in all issues affecting children. We want to be strategic, especially in the Education sector where Government budgets or other donor contributions tend to dwarf UNICEF allocations.

The accepted starting point is the Situation Analysis of children and women in the host country. The better the analysis, especially the analysis of the causalities leading to low girls enrolment or inadequate early childhood development, the better we can target our interventions.

Many programme planners make use of conceptual frameworks that help to point at the immediate, underlying or basic causes. To address a basic or underlying cause is obviously more promising for achieving lasting solutions than trying to doctor an immediate cause. However, given our limited resources, addressing an immediate cause may provide a short to medium term solution to the problem, which in turn will influence the social environment. If we manage, through affirmative action, to get 10 cohorts of girls through the same level of education as boys, this in itself could have a lasting impact on the underlying attitudes that discriminate against girls and women.

Diligent analysis of statistics, social research, and evaluations provide the material for good situation analyses, but they take time. Therefore, it is a good idea to establish a 'research agenda' as early as possible, and fill such research gaps in time for preparation of the next situation analysis update. In fact there should be funds set aside in the budget to ensure continuous updating of the Situation Analysis. For instance, in Namibia a research agenda included a study on the work ethics of teachers, research on collective decision-making in some ethnic groups and an evaluation of ongoing training programmes for school boards, among others. The Comprehensive Education Analysis tool ***(available Peter Buckland, UNICEF New York, pbuckland@unicef.org)*** should be put to use when completing this task.

The next major considerations in programme design are the national goals, policies and trends, as well as UNICEF's (and the wider UN system's) global priorities. How can the country programme plan incorporate the demands of nation and organisation for the good of children, and what training and behaviour change may be needed to ensure that this occurs?

Possibly the most neglected criterion ... is the experience from the past.

Often neglected is the role of other partners active in the same problem area. Judging from a review of Country Notes and Country Programme recommendations, it appears that partnerships are often treated as an afterthought — programme officers try to identify possible allies that can be brought on board to the UNICEF assisted programme after decisions have been made. The existence of 'other actors', such as willing donors, NGOs or other development agencies, including other UN agencies, is a significant criterion in deciding where UNICEF will put its resources. Such decisions can go both ways. If, for instance, SIDA is capably supporting national curriculum reform, the Country Office may not need to be involved — even if the Situation Analysis framework has identified curriculum reform as a pressing need. However, it is important to advocate for those principles agreed upon by UNICEF for curriculum reform … especially those that reinforce UNICEF's priority for gender-sensitive education.

The point here is the importance of separating out financial and policy influence. On the one hand, if a donor is generally interested in a particular programme area, but doesn't know how exactly to go about it, the Country Office may decide to make this a priority, becoming the catalyst for the transfer of possibly large resources. Whatever the decision — to split responsibilities among the donor community or to go for joint interventions, it needs to be a conscious one, taken before finalising programme design.

UNICEF's available financial, organisational and technical resources tend to be grossly overestimated during programme design. Most Mid-Term Reviews reveal that the original programme was overly ambitious — thus many projects fall by the wayside. While there has been a trend over the past years to reduce the multitude of programmes and projects proposed in country notes, reviews still maintain that programmes are trying to do too much. With increased budgetary restrictions on level and number of staff, Country Offices must realistically weigh their technical and managerial capabilities. Given the rather fixed mix of national and international staff in any given office, it is good practice to limit the number of programmes and projects before contemplating specific initiatives or activities.

Possibly the most neglected but most important criterion for making choices during programme design is the experience from the past, or lessons learned. Even seasoned and senior programme officers did not list "past experience" as an important factor in programme design during a recent test run of a PP training workshop. The "lessons learned" sections in the Country Notes and Country Programme Recommendations are the shortest of all, and often get misused for the elaboration of yet another theory or assumption. David Chapman, in another article in this issue, laments that certain strategies or projects are apparently being continued over and over, without their validity being confirmed through evaluation.

In contrast, during the last country programme exercise, the Botswana country office found a facilitated, participatory session on "lessons learned" most useful. There was also general agreement that the new Namibia Country Programme Design was primarily influenced by past experience — primarily what worked and what did not, new (or newly retrieved) insights from social research and, of course, reviews and evaluations. It makes sense that after going through several programme cycles tackling the same

Girl students at the Nyungwe District Education Centre in Malawi.

UNICEF/HQ93-1220/Cindy Andrew

or similar problems, Country Offices should first take stock, build on what works and shelve or change the strategy of the rest.

The systematic use of evaluations is indispensable. Well-prepared annual reviews are indispensable too, but cannot substitute for well planned and executed evaluations. There appears to be an irrational fear that an evaluation might be overly critical, and perhaps reflect negatively on the concerned programme staff. Imagine the positive reflection on the same staff, who took the findings to heart, changed the programme and got all the girls into school! The issue is not so much whether an evaluation is critical or generally positive, but whether it was done well or not.

As seen in the recent evaluation of Early Childhood Development programmes in Namibia, the findings and recommendations of a well timed evaluation can directly shape the UNICEF assisted programme, remove ambiguities and management worries, and attract and secure donor funding all at the same time. Well-executed evaluations can 'clean the air' in difficult programme areas, and can help convince programme partners to reconsider their position on 'sticky' issues. An authoritative statement from an external evaluator can substitute for weeks or months of advocacy[1].

[1] Because of this, partners may reject evaluations. In Namibia, three agencies, one of them UNICEF, were supporting school board training programmes. A comparative evaluation of the three approaches, proposed by UNICEF and supported by Government, was opposed by the other two agencies. A finding in itself!

Moreover, in the UNICEF programming environment prone to high staff turnover, evaluations might be the only way to preserve and institutionalise lessons learned.

It is possible that distilling lessons or engineering a good evaluation is an art in itself, but which can nevertheless be learned. Detailed guidelines for preparing TORs are available on the UNICEF Intranet under: ***Learning&Knowledge => infonet => hot topics => Monitoring&Evaluation => M&E TrainingMaterials.*** There is generally a gross underestimation of what it takes to commission a good evaluation and to negotiate it among key partners. Good Terms of Reference can easily span five or more pages. The identification and preparation of all documents for desk review (prior to the start of the consultancy) may appear monumental but time invested in the preparation of TORs for evaluators pays off. Good, elaborate TORs can ensure a good evaluation.

I have never thought of programme evaluations as anything exciting, until I eventually managed to pull up good TORs and found the evaluator providing answers to my nagging questions! These evaluation questions should obviously be as specific as possible, and next to the usual 'programme performance' or 'implementation' issues also query the continued relevance of programme design, or programme strategies. Needless to say that any programme or project built on a logic approach (i.e. using a logframe) is somewhat easier to monitor and evaluate ... and implement. If a logframe has been used, we may want to include a check of the planning assumptions into the Terms of Reference of the evaluations.

In summary, to design a good UNICEF Girls' Education programme we need an education expert who is also a good programmer! Essential programming steps need to be taken in accordance with UNICEF 'generic' programme policies and procedures. Luckily, there is the PPP Manual (available on the intranet, as a pdf file in the document depository under PRO/2000-01 or online under 'manuals') as well as guidance from the Education Section. The PPP Manual constitutes essential reading for any aspiring — and seasoned — programme officer, and is periodically updated. Feedback on the manual is welcome, and can be directed to Detlef Palm, Programme Division. **(dpalm@unicef.org)** ❖

Evaluations of UNICEF Education Projects: Lessons in What Works

By David Chapman, Professor of Education, University of Minnesota, UNICEF consultant

Over the last year, a study co-sponsored by the Evaluation Office and the Education Section was undertaken to analyse 185 evaluations of education projects supported by UNICEF from 1994-2000. The objectives of this review were, among others, to identify the range of strategies used by UNICEF Country Offices; to extend access and strengthen the quality of education; and to suggest what interventions were successful, and not so successful, in achieving their intended ends. This article offers a glimpse of some of the findings from this study.

The study found ***widespread positive regard for UNICEF work.*** One of the most consistent findings across activities was that the individuals and governments involved in delivering, receiving, and otherwise supporting UNICEF field work believed that UNICEF projects were doing good things for their country and for them. Participants, counterparts, and other stakeholders express widespread ***positive regard*** for projects. They like what UNICEF does, believe it is important, and support the effort. Interestingly, that positive regard is not always supported by evidence that the activities are meeting their intended objectives.

Little agreement about the most effective interventions

UNICEF's education activities, designed in the early and mid-90s, did not reflect a strong consensus about what interventions were most likely to promote wider education access or improve quality. This could reflect either confusion among UNICEF and country counterparts over what works or, the willingness of UNICEF to experiment with a wide variety of ideas. It is unsettling, however, when strategies that have little history of success continue to be used without an attempt to draw lessons learned from the previous experience. It should be noted that a broader consensus about effective practice is now developing which is discussed in more depth in the full report.

What were some of the more effective strategies?

Stipend programs were generally effective in getting more children in school. One program that was quite successful provided stipends to families to offset their lost income due to a child attending school instead of working. Subsidies given directly to individual children in another country did not seem to improve school participation rates, but did appear to reduce absenteeism and lower the dropout rate of students once they were in school.

Interestingly ... positive regard is not always supported by evidence ...

Activities aimed at reaching ***out-of-school youth*** were generally regarded as successful. Sometimes, however, results were either mixed or hard to determine. In some countries, these activities encountered resistance from the community. Several of the projects were successful in raising ***community awareness*** about the value of enroling children in school, the problems children face in gaining access to school, and the risks associated with child labor. However, increasing community awareness did not always translate into increased community action and, even when communities did participate more actively, initial increases in participation did not necessarily endure.

While raising community awareness was an important component of many UNICEF-supported activities, changing attitudes and behavior was not easy and not always successful. The impact of some activities was limited by the failure of the project designers to adequately anticipate and address the complexity of incentive systems that operate. For example, in one country, efforts to increase the proportion of female teachers encountered unexpected difficulty when women, once trained, did not want to be separated from their families or be assigned to rural areas. In another country, community participation activities in support of girls' education encountered resistance when parents did not want to pay for children of other families.

What strategies were more problematic?

Teacher training had a more mixed history of success. It often had a positive impact on changing teachers' pedagogical practices, raising student achievement, and improving enrolment, though those impacts were not automatic or assured. The success of teacher training depended not only on the design of the activity, but on how well the new program was implemented and the extent of follow-through available to teachers, once the training ended. In some countries, teacher training was successful in promoting initial changes, but sustaining those changes was more elusive.

Similarly, evaluations of community participation, continuous assessment, and restoration of education in emergencies all observed that positive outcomes, once achieved, were difficult to sustain. This lack of sustainability often seemed to stem from inattention to incentives. Activities were generally designed to promote the best interest of the child without sufficient attention to the best interest of those who were expected to implement the activities.

Student-centered teaching was a relatively popular intervention but the impacts on teaching practice and on student learning were mixed. It was frequently too complicated for teachers to implement effectively. Similarly, ***multi-grade teaching,*** in which one teacher teaches several grade levels in the same classroom, was frequently effective in raising student achievement but many teachers found it difficult.

Designing Education Projects

In several countries UNICEF activities had clear goals but lacked well-defined objectives or criteria for success. The evaluations of these activities reflected the lack of clarity about what was supposed to be accomplished. For example, in one case, the Mid-Term Review concluded that the success of programs could not be determined because of lack of clear criteria for success, lack of initial baseline data, inadequate indicators, and poor measurement. In another country, ambitious project goals were not well aligned with the limited resources available to the project. The goals were not translated into realistic objectives that might have been more easily addressed.

One of the threats to the success of UNICEF-supported education projects was confusion among project partners and key personnel about roles, relationships, lines of authority, and locus of responsibility. Projects failed when people in leadership positions did not do what they were supposed to do or did not do things other people thought they had agreed to do. In particular, confusion between UNICEF and Government partners about roles and responsibilities was frequently cited as a limitation on the overall effectiveness of UNICEF work. This was not necessarily due to personalities. More often it was attributed to incompatibilities between personnel systems, accounting regulations, procurement procedures, and information flow.

For the full story, see: Chapman, David, W. (2001). ***A Review of Evaluations of UNICEF Education Activities (1994-2000),*** Evaluation Office and Education Section, New York: UNICEF. ❖

Good Programming Practices and Common Pitfalls

Office of Internal Audit, UNICEF New York

There is no big secret to good programming practices, and UNICEF programming guidelines provide adequate direction to ensure that the building blocks are in place. But the frequent lapses in the application of UNICEF policies and guidelines demonstrate a clear need for all offices to carefully review their own practices. This is not to advocate the application of policies for their own sake but simply because they were developed to strengthen the likelihood that programmes would be successful.

The Office of Internal Audit has reviewed programme management practices in a number of country offices in recent years. A summary of key issues and lessons learned from those audits is available on the intranet at *Document Repository ➤ Audit Best Practices.*

The following suggestions can't guarantee that UNICEF's programme support will be successful, but lapses in these areas will significantly reduce the potential for success.

Good Practices

- Be realistic about what UNICEF can honestly accomplish during the programme cycle, within the context of clear knowledge of the actions and contributions of government and others.
- Translate realistic objectives into clear and achievable annual plans.
- Ensure that the complex combination of programme inputs (technical assistance, supply and cash assistance) is carefully co-ordinated to be available in order to implement activities as planned.
- Ensure there is clarity on the principles and good programming practices for capacity building activities (contact the Office of Evaluation in NYHQ for recently developed guidance).
- Ensure that pilot activities are carefully monitored and evaluated—not just to track programme effectiveness, but also to assess implementation strengths and weaknesses, so we are prepared to present the implementation issues to those whom we hope will expand and replicate our pilot activities.
- Monitor the field. There is no substitute for first hand staff knowledge of the effectiveness of UNICEF-supported activities.
- Monitor in the Office. Effective Representatives are aware of the status of programme implementation, spot shortcomings early on, and ensure that the office works together to provide effective and efficient support to advance UNICEF's role in the programme of cooperation.

A self-assessment guide for the review of Country Programme management is available within the Programme Process manual, and a tool for the review of project level management is available in the self-assessment CD issued by OIA to all offices in September 2000. ❖

A Human Rights Based Approach to Education in Peru

By Rebeca Rios-Kohn , Consultant, Human Rights, UNICEF Peru

Working closely with the Ministry of Education and other partners, including civil society, UNICEF Peru is promoting the right to education by confronting the persistent geographic, economic, gender and cultural barriers that keep many children out of school. It is also supporting efforts to improve the quality of education. This paper focuses on primary education.

Using the slogan "NO CHILD OUT OF SCHOOL", UNICEF Peru is vigorously promoting the right to education. The country programme concentrates on identifying multi-sectoral strategies and inclusive mechanisms, and encouraging the development of social policies that address the various geographic environments and characteristics of social exclusion. Studies on causes of educational exclusion and factors for inclusion were developed. Local participatory research engaged women's organisations in selected urban and rural areas. Those studies have identified excluded children, barriers that exclude and the family needs to be addressed.

The aim is to ensure that all children, regardless of their ethnic or cultural background, can exercise their right to education. Other goals are the inclusion of all children, especially girls, in culturally and linguistically relevant schools, and the improvement of the quality of education through community monitoring.

UNICEF Peru and its partners are working together in a number of ways to "change the culture of schools and communities for justice and inclusion", to promote the rights of all children and to make schools and society child-friendly, child-centered, and sensitive to ethnic and language diversity. These goals are achieved in a number of ways. For example, by ensuring that poor children are not left behind because their parents can not pay the costs involved in sending them to school; by mobilising communities to monitor school completion and quality of education; and by sensitising authorities about children's rights and ensuring that no child is excluded from the education system.

Another way is through the mobilisation of community-based organisations such as the **Vaso de Leche** (Glass of Milk Programme), or the **Comedores Populares** (Kitchen Group) whose members are enlisted to speak-out on the rights of women and children and to identify children in their community not attending school. Through community involvement, parents become engaged in the education of their child but also in the progress of their community and in the importance for all children to go to school. The aim is to develop social norms that do not accept that there are children who do not go to school.

The **Rural Education Networks** have been created to support teachers as a way to improve the quality of education through capacity building and the provision of opportunities for coordination and planning. In addition, to build alliances with other institutions. Due to the shortage of teachers in the rural and poorest regions, where 31% of the schools have only one teacher for all the grades and 46% are multi-grade, the networks serve many purposes. They were created from the start as a vehicle for the promotion of human rights principles, such as universality and equality, in the area of education. Emphasis was also placed on the participation of community actors to ensure that decisions are taken locally.

Each network develops a situation analysis on educational vulnerability and exclusion, working with teachers, local leaders and community-based organisations. The networks provide an opportunity to encourage teachers to develop respect for the child's own cultural identity and language, as called for in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In this regard, UNICEF Peru is further working with its partners to promote the development of linguistically and culturally relevant curricula.

In addition, the **National Network on Girls Education,** with 23 member organisations representing all sectors in society, provides the political framework nationwide to emphasise links between human rights and education.

In Peru, the private sector is also part of the mobilisation for good quality primary education for all children. The result of their annual meeting, CADE, was a commitment to double the budget for education and to monitor the quality. All candidates for presidency included this in their campaigns.

The national movement for universal and timely school registration known as **Universalización de la Matricula Oportuna** (UMO) has become a public policy in the country. It focuses on finding children

who are not registered in school. UMO receives the support of the national government and local municipalities and calls for mobilisation of numerous actors, including educational and health authorities, police, church leaders, women's and adolescents' groups — all working towards increasing school enrolment. UMO is achieved via widespread social mobilisation through street theater, parades, and public messages broadcast over the radio.

Limitation in the ability to communicate is a main characteristic among the excluded.

The Defence Centres for Children's Rights **(Defensorias del Niño y el Adolescente)** also play an important role in ensuring that all children in their community start school as soon as they reach school age. They help children and their families to register and to overcome other problems they might have. This is also an effective way of preventing child labour. Through the **2x1 Programme,** adolescents support these children until they start to get good results in school.

Birth registration is another important human rights issue that is being addressed by the country programme and is directly related to exercising the right to education. In some cases, Peruvian children have been denied schooling because they lacked a birth certificate. This may be due to the fee that authorities require when it is not obtained immediately after the birth, in which case it is free. The Defence Centres also help out in those cases.

The right to education means much more than being enroled at a school. The right to education means the right to learn in a protective, participatory and effective learning environment. Through the **Transition to Primary** and the **Basic Education Projects,** UNICEF has promoted a shift from a traditional, authoritarian approach to teaching to a participatory way to learn, and from a thematic curriculum to one centered in communication skills and values. Limitation in the ability to communicate is a main characteristic among the excluded populations. Major efforts are required in this area for an effective inclusion of the new generation.

In this way, UNICEF has: a) supported an approach to empower teachers through the teachers' own understanding about active learning and participation, b) promoted that children are subjects of rights, and c) helped teachers and local educational administration to build education clusters and promote changes in teaching and learning practices.

The **Opening Doors Project** was conceived to develop the modalities for an inclusive good quality education in remote rural areas taking into consideration the existing limitations. It focuses on empowering multi-grade teachers and on the educational inclusion of rural girls. It is composed of a series of activities that foster community participation and social monitoring and specifically target girls' participation. The project underscores the need to: develop a map of exclusion; monitor the number of hours of significant learning per week; collect information in order to identify the location of excluded girls; and encourage families and adolescent girls to produce their own written texts thereby promoting a culture of literacy in the community.

Lessons learned on exclusion also prompted UNICEF to launch a campaign for inclusion of children with disabilities. Mistreatment due to handicaps often causes dropout and affects mainly the poorest children. A deep reflection on human rights referred to handicaps and special practices in teaching were introduced.

UNICEF Peru views these efforts in the area of education as a way to include the excluded and strengthen citizenship participation. It is also a way to promote a culture of peace and respect for human rights which will ultimately contribute to improving the lives of all children living in Peru.

Lessons Learned

UNICEF's experience in Peru during the last decade provides us with some lessons learned in the application of a rights approach to programming.

1. Any action to integrate human rights should take into account the national context in order to maintain a constructive dialogue with government counterparts and form alliances for the promotion and protection of the rights of children, adolescents, and women.

2. Ideally, the Cooperation Agreement between UNICEF and its national counterparts should be explicit in its terms by stating that the promotion and protection of rights is its central purpose.

3. Supporting national processes that lead to, for example, legislative reform, formulation of social policies, and the establishment of national institutions that promote and protect human rights is an essential catalytic role for UNICEF to play, to build an enabling environment in which rights are respected, protected and promoted.

4. Internalising the rights approach is a long-term process in which staff may gradually take steps to apply it to their own area of expertise, although the work must be carried out in an integrated and inter-sectoral manner.

5. Focusing on the excluded and marginalised is at the heart of the rights approach and is an effective way for UNICEF, through its cooperation programme, to use its comparative advantage and obtain concrete results.

6. A rights approach requires fostering community participation as a strategic and effective way to build a culture of human rights, to empower the poor to claim their rights, and to encourage public scrutiny and social vigilance of human rights, particularly in remote areas.

7. Promoting respect for cultural rights requires striking a balance with other rights through the application of the best interests of the child.

8. Children's rights cannot be exercised without effective institutions both at the national and local level, and most importantly in the marginalised and remote areas.

9. Initiatives that aim for the participation of youth and adolescents in the promotion of human rights can be effective, particularly in those countries with a significant percentage of adolescent population.

10. In countries with great cultural diversity and where one culture predominates and discriminates against another, it is essential to promote respect for all cultures as a matter of priority. Accordingly, customary laws and practices must be taken into account from the start in designing all phases of the programme.

11. Although the concept of active and meaningful participation of children was initially difficult to guarantee in a development programme, it has been recognised as an important strategy and identified as a legitimate objective of the country programme.

Conclusion

UNICEF Peru offers many insights into the implications of applying a human rights approach. First, a rights-based approach is a long-term process that may take years to evolve before it can penetrate the programme effectively. Second, this approach is more demanding on staff-members for they must now analyse the situation of children and adolescents holistically, identify the underlying causes in society that lead to structural inequalities and discriminatory practices and, ideally, strive to work in synergy. At the same time, the rights approach strongly reinforces human development efforts by focusing on the duties and accountability of all state and non-state actors to ensure the realisation of all human rights. Third, the work carried out in Peru underscores, once again, the importance of partnership building, and of forming new alliances with a wide range of actors, including human rights groups. Fourth, although there is no blueprint for the application of this approach and no easy answers or quick solutions are provided, some common elements and effective strategies have been identified in Peru's country programme that can be replicated in different national contexts. Finally, it should be kept in mind that the rights approach cannot be a stagnating process and should therefore be regarded as a continuous work in progress. ❖

UNICEF Reviews Its Human Resource Capacity in Education

By Peter Buckland and Aster Haregot, UNICEF New York

"Does UNICEF have the people to do the job?"

This was the question asked by senior management last year during discussions on UNICEF's role in education in the coming decade. The commitments to EFA and girls' education made in Dakar are echoed in various international development goals, and are reflected in the UNICEF Medium-Term Strategic Plan and the World Fit for Children targets, which will be launched when the UN Special Session on Children convenes.

To help answer this question, the Education Section, Programme Division, undertook with DHR a survey of all UNICEF staff working on education. The goal was to establish the existing qualifications, skills and experience in national, regional and headquarters education staff, and to identify the areas where additional capacity would be required. The survey was conducted in the second half of 2000 and achieved a very acceptable return rate — 89% of the 165 education officers (including regional and HQ advisers) responded, and an additional 23 other staff, not currently directly involved in education work, also submitted returns.

What is the profile of this group?

Almost 45% of the education staff are international officers, and there is a slight gender imbalance in favour of men, which becomes quite marked at the senior levels. The distribution of education staff across regions is uneven, with a greater concentration in Africa and South Asia. Almost one third of education posts are funded from Other Resources, and this is a trend that has been growing lately.

The education officers are a well-qualified and quite specialised group, with more than 75% having either Masters or Doctoral level qualifications, 90% of which are in education or education-related areas. A significant proportion of the education staff have advanced qualifications in fields such as International and Comparative Education and constitute a core of broad-based educators to complement the specialists in key areas.

In terms of experience, almost half of the education staff have a background working in a ministry of education, many in a management capacity, while almost a third have a background in universities. On average, staff members have worked in UNICEF for about ten years, and almost 30% have worked in sectors other than education. The focus on quality, early childhood development and adolescent participation call for a greater range of multi-sectoral skills, which are already reflected in many post structures. About a quarter of education posts are shared with Child Protection and/or Gender while another 16 posts are shared with WES, Health or Nutrition.

Quality girls' education programming requires that UNICEF staff have the resources they need.

Romania 92-034/Photo by J. Hartley

Given this highly educated and widely experienced team, what capacity gaps and learning needs were identified by the study?

The study revealed a clear need for additional capacity in some of the key priority areas for UNICEF. In order of priority, the areas were:

- sector policy development
- education in emergencies
- early child development
- HIV/AIDS and education
- quality in education
- gender mainstreaming
- youth and adolescent participation in education

This list demonstrates a clear awareness among staff that they need to be brought up-to-date in the areas critical to UNICEF's priority activities for the next decade. It is noteworthy that some of these areas are the same as those in which many staff have specialised qualifications.

What's to be done?

The report suggests that there is a need for strengthening the human resource capacity in education, especially at the regional level. The areas that require substantive expertise that cannot be achieved through training programmes of existing staff should be prioritised for recruitment — examples are early child development (not ECD programming, in which all must be proficient), sector and policy analysis, and gender analysis. Urgent training should be made available to all education staff in key organisational priorities, such as education in emergencies, quality issues in education, HIV/AIDS and education, and gender mainstreaming.

The report also suggests that the capacity-building strategy should involve a wide range of modes of learning to ensure flexibility. These may include self-learning packages, distance learning, web-based and CDROM, workshops and seminars that draw on the expertise in the existing staff, regular consultative meetings and support for participation in short institution-based courses.

A clear conclusion of the report is that UNICEF does have a strong, well qualified and experienced staff to tackle the challenges of the next decade. However, they will need to be supplemented with additional capacity as well as provided learning opportunities to keep their skills up to date, especially in the UNICEF priority areas. ❖

The Whole School Approach in Nepal

By Charulata Prasada, consultant UNICEF Nepal

The following case study is based on analysis by the Eastern Regional Field Office undertaken at the operationalising rights-based programming workshops.

UNICEF Nepal's rights-based approach is realized by strategies of decentralisation, sectoral convergence and community action. The Whole School Approach was recently initiated in one district of the Eastern region as a model for promoting rights-based schooling and community development.[1] This attempt to promote systemic application of the whole school approach represents a departure from past experiences in Nepal that were restricted primarily to teacher training.

Ideally, the Whole School Approach represents a model for development and management of a school system with maximum participation from a wide-range of stakeholders. It promotes schooling that is inclusive of disadvantaged marginalised populations, and an enabling, equitable, quality learning environment within classrooms to ensure that schooling is responsive to and representative of local communities and protective of vulnerable populations.

Through participation, communities become progressively school-centred and in turn, schools become more family and community friendly. School management committees (SMCs) comprising diverse community members, local government officials, teachers and students are influential in steering curriculum development, recruitment and capacity building of teachers, financial management, and construction and maintenance of schools. This participatory process develops schooling for children while promoting a sense of ownership, acceptance and value for education amongst communities.

The type and quality of education within schools is a central element of this approach. The capacity building of classroom teachers in methods emphasising joyful,

[1] Nepal comprises 75 districts, UNICEF has four sub-national Field Offices in Nepal: in Nepalgunj, covering the Mid and Far Western Regions (focusing particularly on Dadeldhura, Achham, Humla and Dang districts); in Pokhara, covering the Western Region (focusing on Kaski, Tanahun, Kapilbastu and Nawalparasi districts); in Lalitpur covering the Central Region (focusing on Chitwan, Parsa and Kavre districts); and in Biratnagar, covering the Eastern Region (focusing on Saptari, Udayapur, Sunsari and Panchthar districts.)

experiential learning over traditional forms of passive rote instruction is one critical component. Another key element is the development of cross-curriculum educational programming including life skills, which harmonisies school education with community development.

The current process of decentralisation in Nepal presents both opportunities and challenges to the school system. In the case of education, financial and human resources have not been decentralised consistently with the responsibilities for implementation. The appointment and placement of teachers, for example, remain centre-driven and do not correspond to needs of districts. The student-teacher ratio remains very high, with official figures indicating 1:34[1], although it is known to be as high as 1:53[2]. Only 37% of students entering grade six pass the school leaving certificate exam[3]. Low learning achievement is concentrated amongst discriminated and disadvantaged children. For example, in 1998, 89% of girl students taking the school leaving certificates exam failed. Moreover, rigid instructional methods prevail in schools alongside harsh discipline.

This new experience with the Whole School Approach, as grounded in UNICEF cooperation in Nepal, emphasises community action processes (CAPs) involving community organisations and local government. The aim is to facilitate communities to assess, analyse and act on their own situation. Presently, growth monitoring is the entry point for addressing the multiple determinants of child survival, growth and development. The convergence of the whole school approach with ongoing CAPs in community organisations is meant to promote holistic action towards strengthening community systems and family capacity to promote children's well being and support the development of healthy learners. Gender-based discrimination and the rights of the girl child are focal areas of ongoing programming. This process also addresses knowledge, attitudes and practices surrounding schooling amongst communities.

This application of the Whole School Approach is consistent with the thrust towards local self-governance. It represents a practical strategy and an opportunity to effectively establish community-based coalitions with local government for schooling. Communities, (defined

... biases based on political and social cleavages remain a significant challenge to effectively implementing the whole school approach.

according to geographical catchments) have initiated planning of school systems in cooperation with local government bodies: Village Development Committees (VDCs) and District Development Committees (DDCs).

School Management Committees (SMCs) made up of community members have been established, and special measures have been taken to ensure representation of disadvantaged castes and women as members. These SMCs coordinate community level activity and participate in planning with the VDCs and DDCs. Supported by UNICEF district field officers and village facilitators, community partnerships amongst SMCs, community organisations and children's groups work towards the development of the school system. Participatory social mapping has been undertaken to assess issues of accessibility of different populations and the location of future education initiatives. Although, this initiative is still in its infancy, already there are moves to undertake participatory assessment and analysis of schooling issues on a monthly basis. Special attention will be given to developing indicators to reflect the participation and outcomes of this schooling process on disadvantaged communities. This is to ensure that emergent school processes are responsive to the needs of girls, the "low"/disadvantaged caste, ethnic minority and vulnerable groups.

In order to decrease the student-teacher ratio and promote the quality of teaching, plans have been made to establish a revolving fund to hire extra teachers. Deliberate affirmative action to recruit teachers from disadvantaged communities is also being undertaken. This is a pivotal strategy for reducing discrimination

[1] Human Development in South Asia (1998:61)

[2] Dang district figures from an interview with the District Education Officer (2000)

[3] Human Development in South Asia (1998:77)

within the classroom and broader community. Capacity building to ensure that qualified teachers from disadvantaged communities are available has been initiated. Although the exact mechanism and strategy remain to be worked out, there are plans to recognise and reward the performance of teachers by the DDC.

... in 1998, 89% of girl students taking the school leaving certificates exam failed..

Recent initiatives to develop a joyful learning environment through teacher training have already been employed amongst many Eastern Region's ongoing non-formal education programmes. These include the use of active and participatory learning methods and nontraditional teaching aids. Adapting these to the formal school environment is a central priority for future UNICEF support. Curriculum review and development are planned and will be inclusive of community members (parents) and children.

Children's participation is essential and facilitated throughout. Linkages between already existing child clubs are being established with the school. Experiences from other UNICEF supported programmes in the region suggest that linking child clubs to schools encourages children's participation in both.

Barriers to Success

This is challenging, and significant barriers exist in the operationalisation of the approach. Thus far, the inclusion of VDCs in CAP serves as a strong basis for promoting responsive planning. Particular attention has been given to establishing information systems that flow smoothly between the community, the VDC and the district level to enable informed participation and accountability. Weakness in information flow has been identified as a significant challenge.

Advocacy to reduce patronage and elite domination, and to proactively include disadvantaged communities, is ongoing at both the VDC and DDC levels. However, biases based on political and social cleavages remain a significant challenge to effectively implementing the whole school approach.

Sectoral convergence and holistic development are envisaged as an outcome of the decentralisation process. However, coordination on decentralisation amongst line agencies from the national and district levels imposes significant barriers to the success of the whole school approach. 'Single-window policies' which channel funds from different sectors towards one programme remain rare. Moreover, the lack of flexibility of line agencies and administrative structures to respond to community-based holistic programme interventions has proven to be functionally problematic.

In spite of these challenges, this new initiative demonstrates that:

- Facilitating equitable community participation in decision making and management of schooling systems is a priority over community participation in traditional manual tasks, such as school construction.
- A strong CAP is the foundation to developing community demand and internalisation of the value of schooling and the establishment (supply) of functional schooling systems through local partnerships.
- Breaking patterns of discrimination requires a comprehensive approach to inclusion in all parts of schooling and community participation. This is a resource-intensive process requiring UNICEF support to facilitate a process that counteracts existing elite domination within community groups and local government.
- Community action must be complemented by advocacy with government and implementing partners in order to enable the systemic development of inclusive, quality schooling.
- National and District level advocacy, promoting an enabling environment for the decentralisation of resources that are congruent with implementation responsibility, is essential to the success of community-based action. ❖

Questions/responses

By Erma Manoncourt, SPO, UNICEF India

An SPO responds to the questions posed in this issue's Editorial

Q: Which factors enhance or confuse your programming possibilities?

A: Conflicting corporate priorities plus state/ Government of India differing expectations ... translating the "vision" of quality girls education into practice!!

Q: How do you make links between planning frameworks and expected outcomes in Girls' Education?

A: By developing clear objectives and a solid monitoring strategy that ranges from programme design to implementation. The Section has developed a programme-monitoring tool — now it is just a question of getting field colleagues to use it!

Q: What complementary approaches ensure quality Girls' Education programmes?

A: The focus on teacher quality and the learning environment itself ... with an accent on retention not just access.

Q: Is integrated programming always the best programming plan?

A: I think it depends upon the situation or contextual realities, including staff competency. I think there are times when one must be "vertical" to get focus/direction but with a clear approach and strategy for integrating. In my mind, integration does not mean "everything" all the time...there may some components that are more feasible than others.

Q: How do you respond to UNICEF's programming priorities in ECD, HIV/AIDS, Child Protection and Immunisation while using Girls' Education as an entry point?

A: Our next country programme (CP) will emphasise linking interventions in these areas (especially HIV/AIDS and Child Protection — more adolescent years) to ECD (under 3 focus). We haven't worked out details and are just in the process of trying to articulate these linkages for the next CP.

Q: How difficult is it to be learning new ways of programming while at the same time trying to help counterparts to understand them as well?

A: It's tough. There is a tendency to hold on to what is "known" versus the unknown. Much of the battle is convincing colleagues internally of how things can be different and as managers, trying to show the way. A clear commitment from the Representative sets the tone; but section chiefs and state representatives must also carry it along or everything becomes just 'for show'.

Q: What kinds of frameworks inform our work rather than unnecessarily complicating it?

A: I would suggest a life cycle approach and behaviour development/social change frameworks. Another promising approach that helps people think outside the box is "appreciative inquiry."

Professional Development Package for EPOs

By Barbara Reynolds, Education Programme Officer, UNICEF New York

If you work with UNICEF long enough, sooner or later you hear something like 'UNICEF doesn't train personnel; we recruit qualified people'. I have!! All of us have been frustrated with the futility of preparing annual training plans, particularly if they include an ***individual*** training course of some sort. Yet, despite the high qualifications of UNICEF's Education Officers[1], all of us have identified gaps in our knowledge and skills that require attention if we are to contribute to the achievement of UNICEF's goals. The professional development package for Education Officers is intended to help address this challenge.

UNICEF is a learning organization, committed to knowledge development and dissemination, and therefore committed to the professional development of staff. Three assumptions are made:

1. EPOs will assume the responsibility to initiate and manage their own professional development in the context of organisational priorities.
2. Supervisors will support and accommodate the needs of Education Officers in terms of time, scheduling and budgetary considerations.
3. UNICEF will put in place what is necessary to support the process. The professional development package moves forward on this third assumption.

While the primary users of the professional development package are EPOs, the package would also be useful for staff working in related areas such as community-based programmes and child protection, ECD and adolescent development. Consultants, SPOs and Communications Officers, in fact anyone interested in the Organisation's priorities would also find it useful.

This overall approach/methodology assumes that users are professionals who will use the package to **enhance** their capacity. The content of the package is organised around the five areas representing MTSP priorities.

The bulk of the content is information on policy and technical issues that lend themselves to ***reading***, and this material will be available on the ***Intranet/CD ROM/UNICEF list-serve.*** There is a smaller set of information or skills that require a more ***interactive process***, which might be addressed through ***workshops, seminars or short courses.*** In some instances, ***sustained support/guidance*** could be provided through ***mentoring or networks.*** And finally, when ***expert input*** is necessary, EPOs should seek ***consultancy support*** including the input of REAs/HQAs.

The professional development package is currently being developed with the input of several consultants. It will require consistent upkeep to remain a useful tool for Education Officers. That's the good news. The bad news is that we are not sure when it will become operational, and how it will be integrated into current plans at the divisional level. But, we'll keep you posted through **Education Update.** ❖

[1] More than half (57%) of the respondents hold Masters degrees or the equivalent and 21% hold doctoral degrees; about 70% hold degrees in education. Source: *Skills Assessment and Learning Needs: A World-Wide Analysis of UNICEF Human Resources in Education* (Programme Division, Education Section – 2000).

The Education Officer Competency Model

By Barbara Reynolds, Education Programme Officer, UNICEF New York

A competency model describes the attributes of a ***person*** (knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and traits) essential for success ***on the job.*** One could say that a competency model, metaphorically speaking, puts all (or most) of the cards on the table since it explicitly states which attributes the Education Officer is expected to bring to a position, and which attributes should be avoided. As such, it can and will be used in conjunction with post descriptions, PERs and other relevant documents for recruitment and appointment processes, in setting performance expectations and standards, and seeking and providing feedback. Perhaps the most important use of the competency model is to help the Education Officer in setting his/her own standards and monitoring his/her performance.

Education Officers are all the individuals in UNICEF who, in collabouration with colleagues and counterparts, are charged with promoting and supporting UNICEF's key messages in education, implementing organisational strategies and managing its programmes of assistance.

The Education Officer functions at three main levels: Advisors (senior level) focus mainly on global and regional policies and strategies, Section Chiefs (mid-level) have responsibility for localised policy, strategy, implementation and evaluation and Education Programme Officers (junior level) for day-to-day implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

In this model, the competencies have been clustered into major groups, and are explained by typical descriptive examples of performance at the "Successful" and "Needs Improvement" levels. The four clusters are programme knowledge and decision-making, co-ordination and collabouration, strategic leadership, and interpersonal relations. To varying degrees, all Education Officers will have all competencies, but it is assumed that the competencies accumulate, and that at the senior and mid-levels, incumbents will already have mastered the competencies required at the junior level.

Here are some examples from the model (the competency is in capitals, and the attributes, positive and negative below):

SCANNING THE ENVIRONMENT

✔ Monitors the evolving political, physical and social environments in a country and their impact on children's access to and participation in quality education, and anticipates the demands that will be placed on UNICEF.

✔ Develops preparedness plans, formulated with partners, to guide UNICEF's response to emergencies, that are consistent with internal and external procedures.

✔ Ensures constant updating and review of crisis readiness. Anticipates the need to mainstream emergency responses into sustainable development.

✘ Designs, develops and/or initiates interventions which are ill timed and/or inappropriate in scope and magnitude.

DECISIVENESS

✔ Advises the Representative about the need for flexibility in and adaptation of programme implementation processes and is able to document the steps that will need to be taken and why.

✘ Misses opportunities to make critical interventions to protect children's right to education.

INFLUENCE FOR CHANGE

✔ Effectively communicates UNICEF's vision and strategies in education to partners and counterparts.

✔ Establishes and maintains contacts with key individuals and organisations that will work towards the fulfilment of the right to quality education.

✔ Assumes, in accordance with UNICEF's comparative advantage and mandate, a personal and organisational leadership role in all activities for promoting children's right to quality education, including those with other partners.

✘ Fails to influence partners to develop programmes which respond to global priority areas.

The draft competency model for Education Officers was developed with the assistance and guidance of DHR. It will shortly be shared with selected EPOs, REAs, SPOs, Representatives and Regional Directors for validation. ❖

RESOURCES

Household Demand, basic education & exclusion: Focusing on out-of-school children in Morocco
by Sobhi Tawil.

[L.E. Malmberg: S-E Hansen & K. Heino (Eds) (2000) Basic Education for All: A global concern for quality. Faculty of Education, Abo Akademi University. Vasa, Finland.]

Consistent with the goal of Education for All as a basic right of children, Sobhi Tawil presents findings on the impact of gender, household residence and income levels on the learning and occupational profiles of out of school children in the 7-12 age group in Morocco. Based on the Moroccan case study, the article suggests new issues that need to be explored in Morocco and ultimately, new questions and challenges for UNICEF.

The majority of working children in Morocco do not go to school. Working children do not usually attend school because their families cannot afford to lose their labour input. Therefore there is a gap between the objectives of free-school programmes and the children's ability to take advantage of those resources.

Despite the growing numbers of child labourers in Morocco, it is interesting to note that working children are not necessarily those from the poorest families. In rural areas, it is actually girls from better off families who are more likely to drop out of school. These issues point to a reconsideration of conventional factors assumed to affect drop out rates — poverty, child health, geographical conditions, community norms and values, etc. Child labour can be viewed as a means of attaining social well being and economic sustainability, but it is also the result of the low perceived benefits of schooling. What are we doing to change this?

The author remarks on the deficiency of data at the international level and the need to improve the knowledge base on basic education. He also comments on the need to further exploit and analyse existing complementary resources [i.e. demographic health surveys, Living Standard Measurement Surveys (LSMS), etc.] to better understand the demand for education and the way it is determined by characteristics of the child, the parents, and the household as a whole.

This study calls for a more comprehensive understanding of determinant factors, and for the development of qualitative field research at the level of each community in order to really understand the choices that children and families make about schooling. The new questions and situations raised in this study are significant, and provide a good guide for UNICEF officers from which to review ongoing programmes.

Geraldine Alexandra Arias, UNICEF New York, intern

The gender dimension in the planning and implementation of the AGEI in Senegal.
By Fatou Sarr, Gender Consultant (African Girls Education Initiative – UNICEF)

The AGEI was initiated in 1997 to contribute to EFA by ensuring that all children have access to good quality education, and by contributing to the implementation of a gender- sensitive education system. After four years the programme has benefitted both girls and boys. Therefore, there is the need to focus specifically on activities to benefit girls for the 2001-2003 cycle.

To do this, the study focused on assessing all stages of the programme from a gender perspective to see how this translated into specific activities. The following questions were posed:

1. How were gender concerns taken into account in the formulation of every step of the project?
2. How do we determine the amount of resources that directly benefited girls?
3. Were equity issues taken into account in the political, economic, and social contexts of the country? Is this reflected in the attitudes of the government, the constitution, and policies on gender issues? Are the school curricula and teaching practices gender-sensitive?
4. Have we made sure that throughout the implementation stage, the programme had the institutional capacities to support girls during the process of change? This can be accomplished by frequently gathering data that measure the effects of the programme.

Girls and boys do recreational activities together during a summer program in Asyut, Egypt.

UNICEF/HQ96-0257/Nicole Toutounji

Despite satisfactory outcomes in terms of increased enrolment rates, there was still need for further success. Specifically, this included the need to:

- Gain better understanding of girls' incentives for attending school and create awareness of the need to ease girls' domestic chores.
- Become attuned to the opportunity costs and help parents cope with their 'losses' when keeping girls in school.
- Support girls in obtaining school materials, since parents favour providing supplies to boys.

Specific actions like these can improve the efficiency of programmes and their affects on girls by fine-tuning and directly targetting the gender dimensions.

Geraldine Alexandra Arias, UNICEF New York, intern

Coordinators' Notebook: Early Childhood Indicators

No. 25, 2001

The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development **(www.ecdgroup.com)**

This issue of the Coordinators' Notebook addresses Early Childhood indicators, an issue that has long been a challenge to Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programmers. The examples cited show the varied approaches some countries have taken to develop and use ECCD indicators. The case studies also highlight the need to build capacities within countries to enable them to carry out the development of appropriate indicators.

Niki Abrishamian, P.O. UNICEF New York

Early Childhood Matters: The Convention on the Rights of the Child and Young Children

June 2001 No. 98

Bernard van Leer Foundation **(www.bernardvanleer.org)**

The latest issue of the Early Childhood Matters looks at the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and examines its focus on young children. It provides examples of work at all levels, and shares points of view and discussions that are needed to elevate CRC to its rightful place in ECD programming — and to justify ECD programming as a key strategy in realising the aspiration of CRC.

Niki Abrishamian, P.O. UNICEF New York

What's Happening?

Ruschlikon, Switzerland July 8-11, 2002

Second International Symposium on **Early Childhood Education and Care for the 21st Century**

Co-sponsored by the World Organisation for Early Childhood Education (OMEP) and Association for Childhood International (ACEI)

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For information about Education Update:
Elaine Furniss, Editor
Senior Advisor, Education Section
Programme Division

UNICEF H-7A
3 UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017 USA

efurniss@unicef.org
Fax: (1.212) 824.6481

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