

Annual Results Report 2015

Education

HEALTH
HIV AND AIDS
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE
NUTRITION
EDUCATION
CHILD PROTECTION
SOCIAL INCLUSION
GENDER
HUMANITARIAN ACTION



UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2014–2017 guides the organization's work in support of the realization of the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged. At the core of the Strategic Plan, UNICEF's equity strategy – emphasizing the most disadvantaged and excluded children, caregivers and families – translates UNICEF's commitment to children's rights into action. What follows is a report summarizing how UNICEF and its partners contributed to education in 2015 and the impact of these accomplishments on the lives of children, caregivers and families.

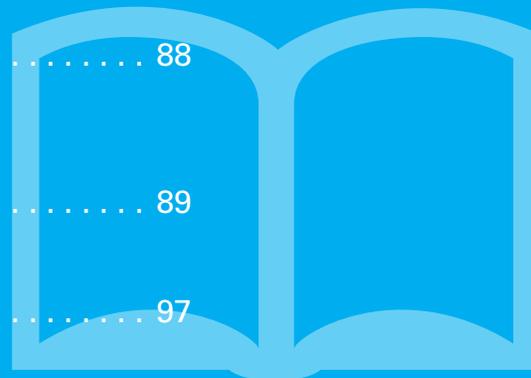
This report is one of nine on the results of UNICEF's efforts this past year, one on each of the seven outcome areas of the Strategic Plan, one on gender and one on humanitarian action. It is an annex to the 'Report on the midterm review of the Strategic Plan, 2014–2017 and annual report of the Executive Director, 2015', UNICEF's official accountability document for the past year. An additional results report on the UNICEF Gender Action Plan 2014–2017 has also been prepared as an official UNICEF Executive Board document.

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On 15 November, Fatima, 12 years old, smiles while sitting in her new classroom in Al-Harith Primary School for internally displaced children in Kirkuk Governorate, Iraq. Fatima and her family fled violence in Falluja and, as a result, she missed more than one year of school. She wants to become a math teacher and hopes to be able to return to her home soon. In November, UNICEF celebrated the opening of three new schools in Kirkuk Governorate, allowing more than 2,000 displaced students to continue their education.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education is a human right. The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognize the essential role education plays in human and social development. As stated in article 26 of the Declaration, “Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.”

Education is also one of the most wide-reaching and beneficial development investments. It provides the opportunity to acquire essential work and life skills, lifts people out of poverty and contributes to empowerment and health. Yet education is facing a crisis: The substantial progress that has led to 100 million more children in school since the year 2000 has struggled to keep pace with population growth over the past decade, leaving 59 million primary-school-aged children and 65 million who are of lower secondary school age out of school. For many of those who are in school, the quality of their education remains so poor that they are learning very little. And those children who face disadvantages due to income or gender disparities, or discrimination due to geography, ethnicity, or language or because of conflict in their societies continue to be disproportionately denied their right to an education.

As the new Sustainable Development Agenda was discussed, formulated and approved in 2015, UNICEF played a central role in advocating for equitable education for all. Along with UNESCO, UNICEF influenced the debates and discussions led by Member States throughout 2013–2014, resulting in a single education framework captured by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 with a strong focus on equity, learning, early childhood development (ECD) and inclusive education. UNICEF helped shape the Incheon Declaration adopted at the World Education Forum, which supported a shared vision of inclusive and equitable quality education across the international community.

Improved data and measurement are crucial to successfully monitoring SDG 4. UNICEF engaged as an observer in the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators and was part of the Technical Advisory Group on SDG 4 Indicators to provide technical advice on the selection of appropriate indicators. SDG indicators now have a strong emphasis on data disaggregation and the focus will shift in the coming years to operationalizing them in terms of methodology, capacity and resources. UNICEF’s recommendations on early grades, ECD Index, disaggregation by disability status and adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities are included in the list of indicators that were endorsed by

the UN Statistical Commission and recommended for the formal adoption by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly. In addition, UNICEF is currently co-leading the process of developing the ECD metrics at global and national level.

UNICEF’S WORK AND RESULTS IN 2015

UNICEF works with national governments, other UN agencies, bilateral and multilateral agencies, philanthropic foundations, civil society, the private sector and academic institutions. UNICEF with its partners promoted, funded and facilitated improved learning outcomes and equitable inclusive education in 156 countries through a wide range of interventions carried out by over 650 staff. Guided by the Strategic Plan 2014–2017, UNICEF continued to combine policy support and systems strengthening work with complementary direct provision of education and creating demand for services that reach the most marginalized children.

In direct service to the most marginalized children in 2015, 14.9 million children were supported through individual learning materials provided by UNICEF, over 348,000 classrooms were supplied with education materials and approximately 49,000 school communities were trained in school management, school planning, school health or inclusive education. This amounts to 31.2 million children provided with learning materials, approximately 586,000 classrooms supplied with education materials and roughly 96,000 school communities trained since the start of the Strategic Plan in 2014. UNICEF’s work in education continued to prioritize equity and learning. This included paying particular attention to early learning, girls’ education, education for children with disabilities and those from the poorest households, as well as education in emergencies. In 2015, 7.5 million children in humanitarian situations targeted by UNICEF were reached with education support.

The critical importance of the **early years** for learning over the long term is increasingly recognized at global and national levels, although there is much progress to be made in improving quality and expanding equitable access to reach all children. In 2015, evaluation findings showed that UNICEF contributed significantly to increased access to early learning and school readiness. One way in which UNICEF strengthens this work is by supporting governments to develop national systems with effective early learning policies and quality early learning

programmes. Thanks to UNICEF support in 2015, 45 per cent of countries now have suitable early learning curricula, safe and protective early learning centres and active parental and community engagement with early learning programmes, compared to 37 per cent in 2014. In addition, one of the biggest achievements globally in relation to early learning in 2015 was the successful advocacy for ECD and early learning/school readiness as a specific target with indicators in the SDGs.

UNICEF's approach to **improving learning outcomes** in an equitable manner is founded on a rights-based vision, articulated through the child-friendly schools (CFS) paradigm, which emphasizes child-centredness, inclusion, democratic participation and protection. To better measure learning outcomes, UNICEF developed a methodology for capturing data on early reading and numeracy skills among children aged 7–14 years as a new module of UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS). This work is significant in supporting efforts to monitor learning in the SDGs, which, following advocacy efforts by UNICEF and others, now include learning outcomes. The enhanced focus on learning in the Strategic Plan 2014–2017 supported the development of well-functioning learning assessment systems, especially in early grades, in 51 per cent of countries compared to 46 per cent in 2014. Progress was also made in ensuring the education rights, and increasing the learning outcomes, of linguistically marginalized children through the development of education sector plans/policies that support mother tongue education in 53 per cent of countries - an increase of 5 percentage points since 2014.

UNICEF also made significant contributions around **equity in education**. In 2015, UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute of Statistics launched the Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) global report *Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All*, which helps identify out-of-school children and analyse the barriers they face. Also launched in 2015, *The Investment Case for Education and Equity* provides a comprehensive analysis of inequality issues in education, as well as their causes and remedies. The report is being used to inform the new International Financing Commission on Education Opportunity launched at the Oslo Summit on Education for Development with the UNICEF Executive Director as a Commissioner.

Equitable access to education has improved, with more children from the poorest households attending primary school and better access to inclusive education for children with disabilities. UNICEF's evidence-based approach to programming for equity extends to supporting governments in developing national Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) that provide disaggregated data on the most marginalized children, crucial to understanding the situation of their children and planning how to address it. As a result, the percentage

of countries that monitor vulnerable children within education reached 58 per cent in 2015, up from 49 per cent in 2014. Data suggest that children with disabilities remain amongst the most excluded from education. Inclusive education has been a key component of UNICEF's programming under the current Strategic Plan. The organization is undertaking extensive policy work in this area, and 43 per cent of countries supported now implement national policies on inclusive education, compared to 37 per cent in 2014.

There has been an increasing focus on innovation as a means of reaching the most marginalized children with quality education. As a result, 35 per cent of UNICEF-supported countries, compared to 29 per cent in 2014, were implementing at scale innovative approaches to improve education access and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children.

UNICEF's work ensuring children still receive quality **education in humanitarian situations** showed significant results in 2015. To create stronger and more reliable response to education in emergencies, UNICEF was among a group of champions developing options to create a fund to better support education in fragile contexts. This fund provides a unique and timely opportunity to reform financing and aid architecture for education in emergencies, mobilize additional resources to close the financing gap of US\$8.5 billion for such work, and strengthen coordination and capacities to deliver education in emergencies and create a link between humanitarian and development responses. In further efforts to strengthen education in emergencies, UNICEF, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) signed a partnership to create a seed fund to support cutting-edge education innovations that are ready to go to scale in emergencies. As a result of this partnership, the first-ever Humanitarian Education Accelerator is being developed and aims improve understanding of how to transform good pilot projects into scalable education initiatives.

In 2015, UNICEF helped 70 per cent of all targeted children in humanitarian situations to access basic education, representing a significant increase from the 64 per cent reached in 2014. While progress on all fronts, from risk management to coordination to children reached, was positive, it did not achieve the projected targets, notably due to resourcing shortfalls and to the increasing complexity and breadth of humanitarian response that is being required. Prioritization of education in humanitarian situations is a constant challenge, at both global and national levels, and there is a particular need to safeguard against crises being overlooked and almost forgotten, in the case of some protracted crises.

In 2015, UNICEF continued to work with countries to **strengthen their education systems**. Strong education systems are essential if all children and youth are to have access to good quality learning opportunities, regardless of their circumstances. A strong education system allocates and manages its funding efficiently and according to need, and there is effective leadership and governance at all levels. Much of UNICEF's work in this area continued to be characterized by support to governments to develop stronger data and sound education sector plans based on solid sector analysis. It also included capacity building through the provision of targeted technical assistance, often at decentralized levels. Highlights of 2015 included support to stronger education information systems, in particular to ensure they provide more disaggregated data on disadvantaged children and are more transparent. Part of this effort was through the implementation of the Data Must Speak project, which supported five countries to enhance the use of data for improving equitable system management – including equity-based resource allocation – and community empowerment.

As part of its action to strengthen governance at decentralized levels, UNICEF increased its support to countries to foster community involvement in effective school management. One result was an increase in the percentage of countries with functional school management committees (SMCs) – which are seen as a gateway to helping communities sustainably assure the quality learning environments of their own children – to 45 per cent in 2015, an increase in 11 percentage points compared to 2014. Support in 2015 also included capacity building on education sector analyses in 12 countries and reviewing the education sector analyses of nine countries. Finally, work to strengthen guidance documents on education sector analysis included volume 3 of the Education Sector Analysis Guidelines that UNICEF is developing with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), UNESCO-International Institute for Education Planning (UNESCO-IIEP), the World Bank and DFID.

In 2015, UNICEF spent US\$1 billion on education. US\$158 million was allocated from regular resources (RR) or 13 per cent of total RR for this year. US\$843 million was composed of contributions dedicated to education at the global and country levels, out of which US\$321 million was dedicated to education in emergencies, while US\$119 million was in the form of non-earmarked thematic funds. The nature of these thematic funds gave UNICEF the flexibility to respond quickly in 2015 to the emerging needs of the education programme globally – crucial to undertaking effective action.

Looking ahead

UNICEF is currently at a unique juncture with the transition to a more expansive, universal education agenda with adoption of the SDGs, and the reflection brought by the Mid-Term Review process of UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2014–2017. In light of these strategic developments, UNICEF will begin work on a new Education Strategy in 2016, involving extensive consultations within the organization as well as with key programmatic and resource partners.

With our partners, we will work towards achievement of SDG 4 and strengthening education access and quality learning as a key foundation for the realization of the rest of the sustainable development agenda. Crucially, we anticipate strengthening UNICEF's work to reach 100 per cent of targeted 3- to 18-years-olds in humanitarian situations with education services.

Results achieved in 2015 with UNICEF support include:

- **71 countries** have well-functioning learning assessment systems, especially for early grades, up from 65 in 2014;
- **64 countries** have effective early learning policies and programmes, up from 52 in 2014;
- **61 countries** have implemented policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities, up from 52 in 2014;
- **76 countries** have EMIS providing disaggregated data that allow identification of barriers and bottlenecks that inhibit realization of the rights of disadvantaged children, up from 54 in 2014;
- **62 countries** have functional school management committees at primary and secondary level, up from 48 in 2014;
- **51 countries** have innovative approaches at scale to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children, up from 42 in 2014.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Education: The key to sustainable development

The global community has increasingly recognized the foundational role that education plays in realizing the sustainable development agenda. Ensuring equitable and inclusive access to a quality education for all children will accelerate progress on health, gender equality, social stability, civic engagement and environmental sustainability outcomes, among many others.

In addition to these crucial benefits – and supporting them – the economic payoff of investing in education is well established. As shown in the 2015 UNICEF ‘Investment Case for Education and Equity’ report, education contributes to higher incomes, individual empowerment and decreased poverty levels, thereby contributing to economic growth. The report also includes findings from a World Bank study that, on average, an additional year of education results in a 10 per cent increase in an individual’s earnings. If all students in low-income countries left school with basic reading skills, an estimated 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty, which would be equivalent to a 12 per cent reduction in global poverty. At more than 22 per cent, social and economic rates of return are greatest for investments in primary education, but still impressive for secondary (21 per cent) and tertiary (17 per cent) education.

With the new Sustainable Development Goals, a far more expansive goal for education was adopted. The single goal moves beyond primary education to include pre-primary to secondary education, skills development, tertiary education, education for global citizenship and education for sustainable development. And to address the need to improve the quality of education, learning outcomes of students is a central theme at all levels. In addition, the need for quality education in emergencies and the related funding requirements have grown with the increase in scale and complexity of humanitarian crises. The Ebola crisis and the European refugee and migrant crisis have each posed new challenges to traditional humanitarian response and compelled UNICEF to consider new approaches and processes to reach the most marginalized and vulnerable children. Prioritization of education in humanitarian situations increased in 2015.

The Incheon Declaration underscored the centrality of education for sustainable development, and equity for education: “Our vision is to transform lives through education, recognizing the important role of education as a main driver of development and in achieving the other proposed SDGs. We commit with a sense of urgency to a single, renewed education agenda that is holistic, ambitious and aspirational, leaving no one behind. ... No education target should be considered met unless met by all.” (Paragraphs 5 and 7)

Sustainable Development Goal 4 expresses the commitment of the global community to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” (Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)

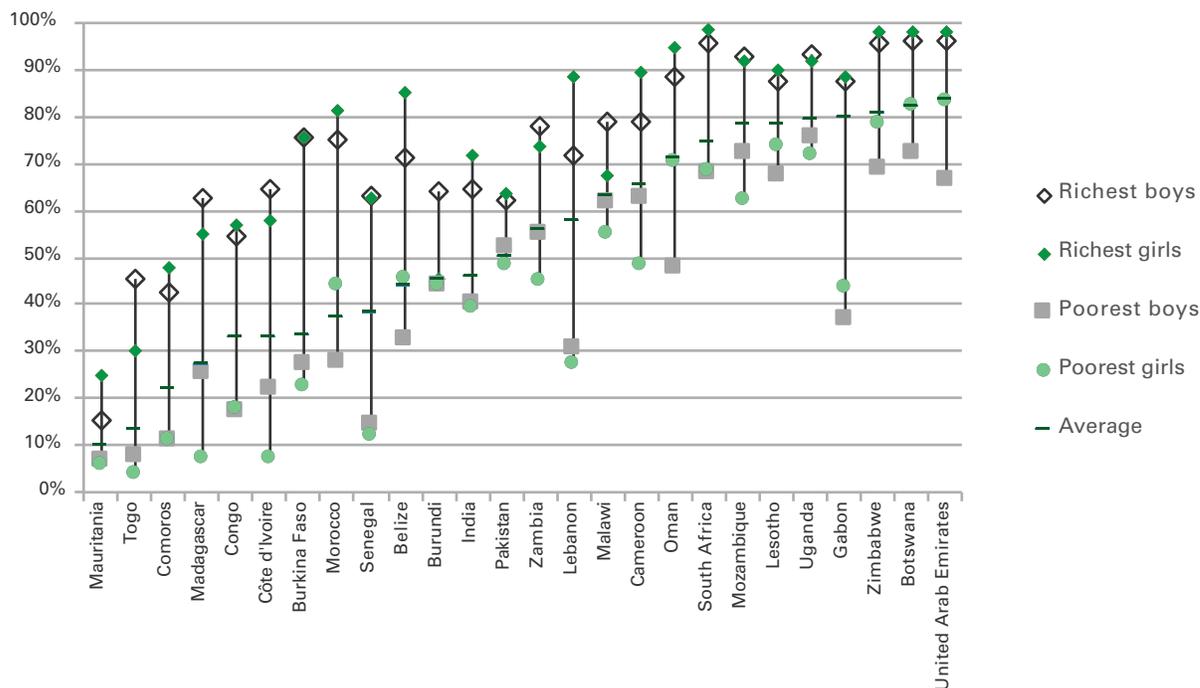
Achieving equity in education: challenges in 2015 and beyond

In order to deliver on the commitment to education for all, six key challenges facing the global education sector must be more fully addressed. These include:

- **The equity challenge:** Substantial disparities exist not only between but also within countries regarding outcomes for children based on their socio-economic status and gender (see *Figure 1*). In addition, many other social factors – such as ethnicity, language, religion and disability – are often bases for exclusion from access to quality education, as is location in rural versus urban settings. In low-income countries, current funding allocations that fail to sufficiently prioritize primary education end up disproportionately favouring wealthier children. Inequity in the allocation of resources across different geographic regions, as well as within schools, perpetuates patterns of

FIGURE 1

Percentage of children who achieved a minimum learning standard in reading



Source: EFA GMR WIDE database, based on standardized international learning assessment surveys

marginalization. Given this, allocation at all levels must adopt a pro-equity approach in order to ensure that the investments made will reach the most disadvantaged children.

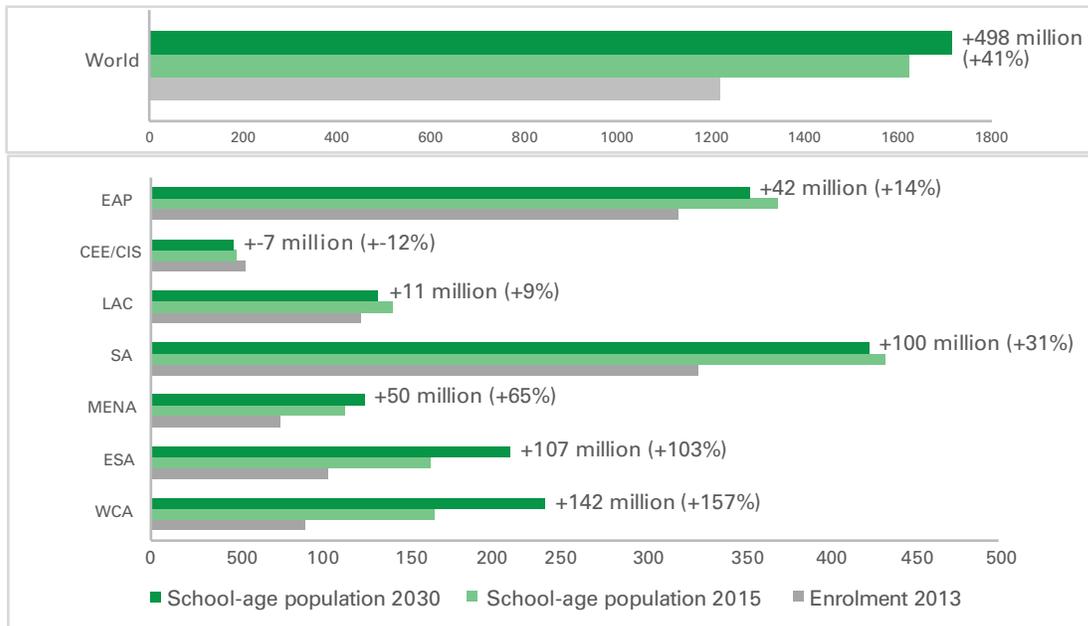
- **The access challenge:** Enrolment has increased considerably in many low- and lower-middle-income countries over the past 15 years, in line with global commitments made as part of the Millennium Development Goals, and it continues to grow, with the latest figures showing 6 million additional children enrolled in primary education every year. If all children are to realize their right to basic education, however, education systems will need to enrol an additional 619 million children 3–15 years old by 2030. This challenge is most severe in Eastern and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa, where the school-age populations in 2030 are projected to be more than double the number of children currently enrolled (see Figure 2).
- **The learning challenge:** Enrolment growth since 2000 has been accompanied by a distressing realization: being in school does not necessarily equate to learning. Education systems across the world are facing a learning challenge. It is estimated that 250

million children worldwide do not learn the basics in reading and mathematics. Of these, more than 130 million have only spent up to four years in school. This is a failed educational investment – not only in terms of finance, but for the families that send their children to school with high hopes for the benefits it will deliver for them. Figure 1 illustrates the low levels of reading among children who are in school. The figure also illustrates the huge equity dimensions to learning and how, even in the poorest countries, some children are achieving minimum reading standards. In East African countries, for example, learning among children from poorer households is at least one year behind that of children of the same age from richer households.²

- **The data challenge:** There are serious data gaps in the education sector. Many countries do not yet monitor learning outcomes or track whether their most marginalized children are being given educational opportunities. Education interventions are not routinely evaluated for impact on learning or cost-effectiveness. Improving data and evidence in the sector is critical to leveraging greater results for children.
- **The crisis challenge:** Humanitarian emergencies and protracted crises disrupted the education of more than

FIGURE 2

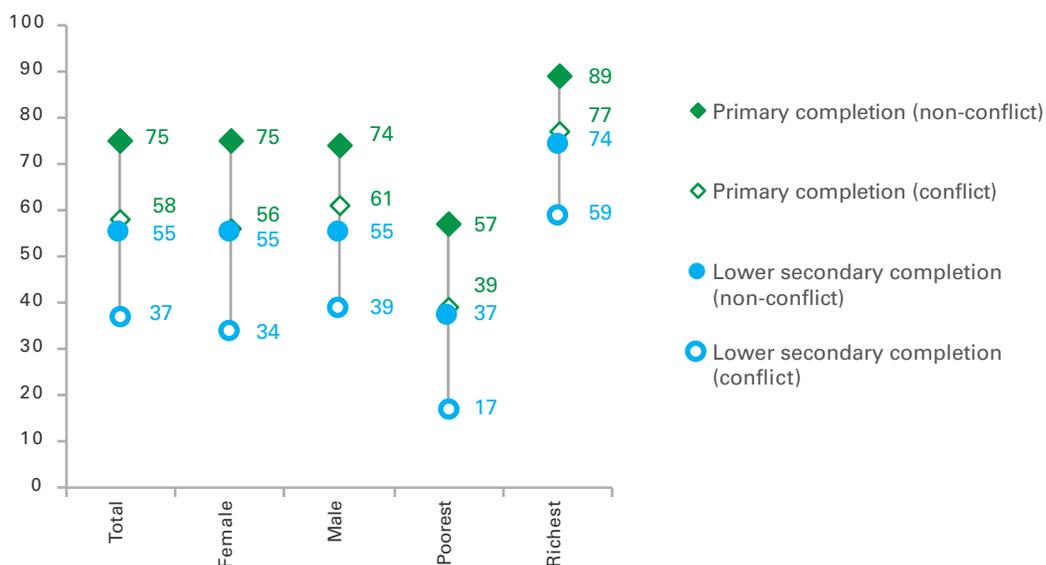
Number of children enrolled in 2013 and projected number of children 3–15 years old in 2015 and 2030 – pre-primary, primary and lower secondary levels



Note¹: EAP = East Asia and the Pacific, CEE/CIS = Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean, SA = South Asia, MENA = Middle East and North Africa, ESA = Eastern and Southern Africa, WCA = West and Central Africa

FIGURE 3

Primary and lower secondary completion rates, by country conflict status



Source: EFA GMR 2015.

75 million children 3–18 years old in 35 countries in 2015.³ This has severely impacted education quality and continuity for many of these children, often for multiple years, placing them at risk of education disruption, dropout and poor quality of learning, alongside other psychosocial and protection concerns. In addition, according to figures from UNHCR, there are at least 17 million refugee and internally displaced children aged 3–18 in conflict-affected countries. Refugee and internally displaced children are extremely vulnerable in these crises, with only half able to attend primary school, a quarter reaching lower secondary school, and very few included in pre-primary education. Even more concerning has been the increase in attacks on schools and children in recent years. Figure 3 illustrates the negative impact of conflict on the likelihood of children completing primary or lower secondary education and how it interacts with other dimensions of equity.

- **The funding challenge:** Funding for education – both domestic budgets and external resources – is insufficient and does not always reach the children who need it most. Education is predominantly financed through domestic resources, but some low-income countries allocate as little as 10 per cent of their budget to education. In some low-income countries, it is estimated that the poorest children receive up to 18 times less public education financing than the wealthiest children. Additionally, due to the repercussions of the global economic crisis and the lack of priority given to education by some donors, much needed external financing has decreased by 10 per cent since 2009, leaving an estimated funding gap of US\$39 billion a year.

2015: a year of opportunity for education

In light of the challenges remaining to achieve access to quality education for all, UNICEF spearheaded global initiatives and catalysed partnerships and momentum around education. In 2015, at the unique juncture at the end of the MDGs, when a new, more expansive development agenda was adopted, UNICEF and partners in the global education community came together to find solutions to address the most pressing challenges facing education.

World Education Forum and Incheon Declaration: A transformative vision for education over the next 15 years was adopted at the World Education Forum in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in May 2015. The Incheon Declaration, which encourages countries to provide inclusive, equitable and quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, was welcomed by the global education community, including government ministers from more than 100 countries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and

youth groups. The Declaration underpins the education targets in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were ratified and adopted at the United Nations in September 2015.



Sustainable Development Goal

4 will be implemented through the Education 2030 Framework for Action, a road map for governments adopted in November 2015 that provides guidance on legal and policy frameworks for education, based

on the principles of accountability, transparency and participatory governance. Implementation will require strong country-level coordination and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the education agenda. It will also require more funding, especially for the countries furthest from providing inclusive, quality education. The Declaration and Framework urge countries to set nationally appropriate spending targets and increase official development assistance to low-income countries.

Unlike the MDG on education, which focused on access to primary education, SDG 4 is far more expansive, covering pre-primary education, secondary education, skills development, tertiary education, education for global citizenship and education for sustainable development. Improving the quality of education – specifically, the learning outcomes of students – is a central theme at all levels, and equity is a key theme as well, reflecting that business as usual will not suffice if the most marginalized children are to be reached.

The SDGs represent the first attempt by the global community to focus on the quality of education – of learning – and the role of education in achieving a more humane world. These shifts are positive, but the expansion of education will remain unattainable for many countries without significant additional funding, both domestic and external. The 2015 Global Monitoring Report recently projected that only 13 per cent of countries will have attained universal enrolment and completion of primary education, let alone secondary, by 2015, according to available data.⁴ Prioritization and sequencing will be required for most countries to achieve the targets set out in SDG 4 and to give every child a fair chance to learn.

The Oslo Summit on Education for Development: Held in July 2015, the Oslo Summit aimed to bring together governments, teacher organizations, civil society and the business community to increase collective efforts to do more and achieve more in education. Partnering for increased financing for education was discussed extensively, as was the need for better use of existing funding, including transparently tracking resources and addressing inequality within countries. The Oslo Declaration to which this summit gave rise included strong statements on all of these issues, as well as a

host of others, such as the need for advances in girls' education and the recruitment and training of teachers, in addition to the financing and humanitarian initiatives described below.

The Commission on Financing Global Education

Opportunity: Announced at the Oslo Summit, the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity was launched as a major new global initiative engaging world leaders, policymakers and researchers, and had its first meeting in September 2015. The Commission brings together the best research and policy analysis on the actions necessary to increase investment in concrete, relevant learning outcomes, paying particular attention to the provision of basic education and its role in improving life chances. The aim is to secure increased, more effective investments and contribute to the mobilization of new partnerships, particularly in middle-income and low-income countries.

The work of the Commission takes place over an initial 12-month period, and its report is to be presented to the co-conveners and the UN Secretary-General, who has agreed to receive and act on the report's recommendations, at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2016. The Commission is chaired by Gordon Brown, United Nations Special Envoy for Global Education, and UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake is one of the Commissioners.

Education Cannot Wait - a Fund for Education in

Emergencies: In 2015 alone, 462 million children from 3 to 18 years of age live in 35 countries affected by humanitarian emergencies and protracted crises, 75 million of whom have had their education disrupted.⁵ It is estimated that by 2018, half the world's poor and the majority of its out-of-school children will live in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.⁶ Building on the lessons learned from the No Lost Generation initiative, UNICEF has been working with a number of partners to champion the cause of education in emergencies and protracted crises and support the development of a fund, to be proposed at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016. Helping to shape discussion at this summit is the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing appointed by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in May 2015, which has highlighted the need for shared responsibility to address root causes, a deeper and broader resource base for

humanitarian action and improvements in timeliness and efficiency of delivery.

The Education Cannot Wait Fund could transform the way the global education sector and the broader humanitarian community respond to children's education needs in crisis, creating a more agile, connected and faster response. The fund will include an 'Acceleration Facility' that will work to increase political will, generate and disburse new funding, expand and improve coordination of planning and response, build capacity and improve accountability; and a 'Breakthrough Fund' to finance immediate and medium-term education and learning needs in humanitarian crises.

RESULTS BY PROGRAMME AREA

Strategic approach

UNICEF focuses its work in education within the Strategic Plan 2014–2017 on five programme areas (PA): early learning; learning; equity; education in humanitarian situations; and education systems strengthening and global partnerships, which supports the other four programme areas. The overall target outcome for education in the Strategic Plan is “improved and equitable access to and completion of quality, inclusive education with a focus on improving learning outcomes.”

Underneath this overall outcome, the results framework of the current Strategic Plan sets specific targets at three results levels:

- Outputs, which reflects UNICEF’s contributions most directly;
- Outcomes, which are the products of shared action; and
- Impact, which reflects collective action of States with the support of development partners.

Each of the output indicators for education maps to one of the five programme areas listed above. Accordingly, this report presents the data on each indicator, along with analysis, in its corresponding programme area chapter. Each indicator is complemented by a discussion of UNICEF’s approaches to achieving progress on the indicator, with examples of how this was done at the country level in 2015, linking activities to results. It should also be noted that while great efforts have been made to develop a results framework that comprehensively measures global progress on key indicators, the sheer scale and range of contexts in which UNICEF works means that not all education activities can be reflected in the Strategic Plan indicators. UNICEF’s country offices develop programmes and activities based on the education needs of the children in their specific countries, using the Strategic Plan indicators where relevant to the country context.

In order to meet the challenge of ensuring that all children experience a quality, inclusive education, UNICEF adapts its strategies to each country context and works across the education system in close collaboration with governments and other partners. In the broadest terms, UNICEF’s education activities occur at two levels: the policy arena (upstream) and direct support to the implementation of services (downstream).

In 2015, UNICEF had approximately 650 education staff in 156 countries.⁷ The majority are deployed at country level, including in fragile and conflict-affected countries,

or in remote locations where the needs are greatest. This strong country presence allows for close relationships with ministries of education at national and sub-regional levels, schools and communities. Staff are supported by expertise located in seven regional offices. At the global level, staff provide access to evidence and global best practices and contribute to shaping global education policies and partnerships. UNICEF uses its extensive global reach to:

Build capacity: UNICEF supports increased national capacity for access to early learning opportunities and quality primary and secondary education through training of teachers, school managers, education officials and communities across various issues (for example, by supporting school improvement plans) and working with governments to establish quality standards that are consistent with child-friendly education and early learning.

Generate and strengthen evidence, evaluation, analysis and data: UNICEF increasingly stresses the use of data, evidence-building and evaluation to improve its programming and programme implementation and to advocate for policy change with an equity and efficiency perspective.

Work in partnership: UNICEF collaborates with national and local governments, civil society, faith-based organizations, other development partners and bodies of the United Nations. Depending on the context, UNICEF works with partners on a range of policy issues, from planning to budgeting, developing policy to monitoring its effectiveness, creating education sector plans to revising curricula and developing standards. Critical partnerships include the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI), which UNICEF hosts, Educate A Child (EAC) and UNHCR. UNICEF also co-led the post-2015 dialogue on education with UNESCO and is co-leader with Save the Children of the Education Cluster.

Support South-South learning: In 2015, UNICEF continued to support expanding South-South cooperation and facilitated the exchange of knowledge and experiences between regions and countries to develop sustainable education policies and programmes. Highlights include developments on education management information systems in Guatemala and best practices in assessment of non-academic skills in several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Nurture innovation: UNICEF is working with its partners to identify promising local solutions through its global networks and providing support to these innovations in order to incubate, test and take to scale those with

the potential to help solve education problems. In 2015, UNICEF expanded its Innovations in Education initiative that identifies promising education approaches, ranging from increasing literacy levels to improving school readiness. (See more details below and on page 41.)

Build integration and cross-sectoral linkages: UNICEF seeks and builds cross-sectoral linkages that contribute to improved results for children, such as in early childhood development, adolescent programming, child protection, inclusive education, advancing gender equality and behaviour and social change. Gender equality remains one of the strongest areas of cross-cutting interventions in education – both as a targeted priority to advance girls’ education as part of the equity agenda (see PA 3 for results) and as a mainstreaming approach to integrate gender concerns into everything from early childhood education to learning and education in emergencies.

Deliver education services: Contributing to improved quality and expanded coverage, UNICEF supports service delivery through its supply-side efforts, such as providing school supplies, books, school construction, desks and chairs. UNICEF works with local partners to deliver education services in disadvantaged areas and humanitarian situations, including reaching approximately 7.5 million children in emergencies in 2015. These services often include psychosocial support for children suffering loss or trauma. Simultaneously, demand-side efforts include supporting the establishment of functional school management committees and strengthening them by feeding information back through Education Information Management Systems, communicating performance data on schools to their communities, back-to-school mobilization through community awareness and more.

UNICEF uses its experience in programme implementation to inform and strengthen its policy work and identify areas where government capacities need to be fortified. Working upstream and downstream helps UNICEF to identify crucial knowledge gaps in the sector that, if addressed, could considerably advance education outcomes.

Spotlight on innovation

Identifying, testing and scaling up innovations is a critical part of supporting countries to address the challenge of bringing quality education to the most disadvantaged children. UNICEF is uniquely positioned as a driving force in innovations in education. It can leverage the resources and reach of its education programmes in 156 countries and, with the right assessment methodology in place, it can draw lessons and share good practices from programmes and initiatives around the world, in urban and rural environments, during emergencies and in post-crisis contexts. With its global reach, it is able to promote the adaptation and scaling up of innovative interventions and approaches that improve equity and learning outcomes for all children.

In 2015, to spur innovation in protracted crises and bridge the gap between humanitarian and development interventions, UNICEF, UNHCR and DFID launched the Humanitarian Education Accelerator.⁸ Through the Accelerator, UNICEF and its partners aim to take to scale successful innovative pilots in protracted crises, by providing: i) monitoring and evaluation resources to collect evidence and assess impact; ii) tailored mentoring, according to the needs and organizational gaps of implementing teams; and iii) technical assistance. The Accelerator intends to provide stronger evidence of impact of innovations in protracted crises and test if an accelerator model – similar to the one used in the technology industry to take start-ups to market – can be adapted to take promising education pilots to scale. The idea is to support interventions that are designed to provide an answer to long-term disruption in protracted crises, by rebuilding functioning education systems. Thus far, 72 organizations submitted applications to be part of the Accelerator’s first cohort. This cohort will be selected in 2016 and supported for a period of up to two years.

From 2014–2015, UNICEF supported the testing of 12 innovative interventions at the global level: 5 in 2014, in partnership with the Results for Development Institute (R4D), and 7 early-stage interventions in 2015, through Amplify, the first phase of a three-year partnership with DFID and UNHCR. Emerging evidence from the 2015 tests of the five programmes supported in 2014, in Brazil, Ethiopia, Ghana, Peru and the Sudan, shows that a systematic approach to innovation brings about significant results. Brazil and Ethiopia have shown that accelerated school readiness interventions, clear age targets for literacy, learning assessments and tools to support teachers to undergo pedagogical change can spark the interest of policy makers and be quickly mainstreamed through education systems. Peru has shown that engagement of the most marginalized communities through mobile technology is possible, as long as it supports more traditional participatory spaces, such as council and community meetings. Peru has also shown that technology-enabled education innovations for the most marginalized and remote communities in middle-income countries are neither straightforward nor cheap, as mobile network operators tend to extend their coverage following market demand, and these communities are not dense enough to be considered a market opportunity.

The results in Ghana and the Sudan have been quantified and are promising. In Ghana, children who were exposed to the innovative community-run play-based education programme supported by UNICEF improved 31 per cent in performance on cognitive assessments after only three months, while children in communities with no play schemes improved by only 13 per cent. In addition, teacher absenteeism in these play schemes was 2.6 per cent, remarkably low compared with a national average of 23 per cent.⁹

In the Sudan, the programme 'Can't Wait to Learn'¹⁰ (also known as eLearning Sudan) has been able to teach math to children with no school access, using an electronic game tailored to their culture and context. The math scores of out-of-school children who have access to the game in community-run spaces have been almost as high as the ones obtained by their peers in school. Children who knew the least prior to the intervention showed the biggest learning gains.¹¹ In addition, focus groups conducted in 2015 found positive impacts on self-esteem for children who were in the e-learning group, with an increase from 1.9 to 2.5 points on a 4-point Likert scale, and no significant differences in the impact between boys and girls.¹² In 2015, this programme leveraged, in the form of awards and grants, 60 times what UNICEF invested in it in 2014. The programme currently plans to provide learning opportunities for 170,000 children in the Sudan by 2017 and expand to Chad, Jordan and Lebanon by 2020.

UNICEF will continue identifying, testing and scaling up innovative, effective, demand-driven and sustainable interventions. For that, the organization is committed to its innovation principles: design with the user; understand the ecosystem; design for scale; build for sustainability; be data driven; use open data, open standards, open source, open innovation; reuse and improve; address privacy and security; and be collaborative.

Looking more broadly at the Sustainable Development Agenda, there are two areas of innovation with particularly strong potential to contribute to SDG 4:

- 1. Real-time information:** For the first time in history, we have tools that allow real-time communication between governments and community members on a massive scale. These tools enable very diverse uses: real-time monitoring; crowdsourced mapping; participatory budgeting exercises; and communication via chat, phone, text and social media. Tools are also available to visualize information, making it more accessible. Real-time communication and access to information are enabling conditions for accountability, empowerment and agency. In this area, UNICEF is supporting innovations like Edutrac and U-Report, leveraging SMS and social media to support real-time monitoring and dialogue on teacher attendance, student attendance, sanitation and school violence. In 2015, Edutrac expanded from Uganda to Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Peru and Zimbabwe.
- 2. Digital learning:** There is an opportunity to improve the evidence base around e-learning. Even though many people hail technology as the untapped key to universal high-quality education, the truth is that evidence is very thin thus far on the effectiveness and consequences of education gamification, computer-based teaching

and use of video lessons. As we improve the evidence base, smarter and equitable technology investments will become possible. Without evidence, there is a tendency towards an over-reliance on technology per se, rather than the quality of its use by education systems, learners and especially teachers, to generate improved outcomes for education. In this area, UNICEF supports innovations that embed evidence generation as an essential component of the process of innovating.

Learning from evidence and evaluations

The 2015 Norway evaluation of Basic Education and Gender Equality looked into UNICEF education programming during the 2009–2013 period. It highlighted the need to further improve results-based management (RBM) within education, and it aligned with the results of other, UNICEF-wide, evaluations.¹³ In light of this, important corporate efforts are being made to strengthen RBM, with education at the forefront. The education section has provided a key contribution to the development of e-learning and face-to-face trainings on RBM. The e-learning training should be rolled out to all UNICEF staff in 2016 and the face-to-face training delivered to close to 2,000 staff in an initial phase. UNICEF's headquarters and regional offices are also contributing to joint sessions on RBM at regional meetings with country office education staff.

Corporate efforts towards more rigorous and accountable UNICEF programming include the development, by all country offices, of Strategy Notes detailing how UNICEF intends to achieve country programme outcomes. These include a theory of change, refined results structure, indicators and means of verification. Education staff in regional offices and headquarters are cooperating to systematically review and quality assure these Strategy Notes.

Contribution to these major corporate-wide efforts is complemented by education-specific work to strengthen education staff capacity through targeted training (e.g., on education sector analyses), and revised recruitment processes to ensure incoming staff at all levels possess the right skills mix (*see PA 5*). In addition, education is developing an evaluation strategy emphasizing the importance of analytical rigour and the need to embed robust evaluation within programmes/projects, based on findings of a 2014 independent assessment of UNICEF's education evaluations.

Results: 2015 highlights

PA 1: Improving early learning

More countries have effective policies and quality programmes for early learning.

UNICEF's focus on early learning and its approach to supporting governments to develop national systems has led to a significant increase in the percentage of countries with effective early learning policies and quality early learning programmes, from 37 per cent in 2014 to 45 per cent in 2015. This means that more countries have suitable early learning curricula, safe and protective early learning centres and active parental and community engagement with early learning programmes.

More children from the poorest households are getting access to early childhood education.

The percentage of countries with more than 25 per cent of the poorest children between 36–59 months of age attending an early childhood education programme grew to 29 per cent in 2015, from 20 per cent in 2014. Often, this includes children who are not reached by the usual delivery mechanisms, for example, those in more remote rural areas, or those who speak minority languages. For this reason, UNICEF supports different modalities of early childhood development (ECD) and early childhood education (ECE) programmes.

Early learning has been established as a specific target of SDG 4. In 2015, one of the biggest achievements globally in relation to early learning was the successful advocacy for ECD and early learning/school readiness as a specific target (Target 4.2) with indicators in the SDGs. To help bring this about, UNICEF targeted its effective evidence-based advocacy through four main channels, including: decision-makers at the UN General Assembly side event, 'Meeting of the Minds'; 14 national government leaders at the South Asia ECD Summit; donors; and the general public, through blogs and media articles.



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PA 2: Improving learning outcomes and environments

Improvement in learning outcomes is on track.

Learning outcomes in the majority of countries are improving, while access continues to increase. UNICEF's approach to improving learning outcomes in an equitable manner is founded on a rights-based vision, articulated through the child-friendly schools (CFS) paradigm that emphasizes child-centredness, inclusion, democratic participation and protection.

More countries have strong student learning assessment systems. Some 51 per cent of reporting countries have well-functioning national learning assessment systems, especially for the early grades, up from 46 per cent in 2014. This means that more children are being assessed in the classroom by their teachers and in stable, standardized national examinations. These systems are critical to allow countries to monitor learning outcomes and to improve them by analysing the learning data to shape policy.

More children are now able to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades. In 2015, 53 per cent of reporting countries had an education policy or sector plan that includes multilingual education to allow children to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades, up from 48 per cent in 2014. This means that children are not unfairly marginalized due to language and are more likely to achieve their learning potential.

UNICEF provided education materials to 14.9 million individual children and 348,801 classrooms in 2015. This amounts to 31.2 million children and approximately 586,000 classrooms supplied with education materials since 2014. These materials range from books and school kits to technologies for children and classrooms. The distribution of these materials resulted in increased access, particularly for children disadvantaged by remote or conflict-affected settings. In Burundi, the annual Back to School campaign provided school kits to more than 250,000 vulnerable and excluded children in six provinces, complementing the distribution of kits by the Ministry of Education. In Lebanon, a total of 239,588 children, both Lebanese and refugees, received school supplies for the 2015–2016 academic year, including stationery and learning materials, which alleviated the cost of schooling for vulnerable families and facilitated access to education for many children.

PA 3: Strengthening equity in education

Progress was made on inclusive education covering children with disabilities. In 2015, 43 per cent of countries reported having policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities, up from 37 per cent in 2014. UNICEF contributed to capacity building in this area for countries by publishing 14 technical booklets on how to make an education system more inclusive for children with disabilities, as well as children from ethnic and linguistic minorities, from policies and laws to teacher training.

More children from the poorest households are attending primary school. Some 55 per cent of countries with available data reported that at least 80 per cent of children of primary school age in the poorest households were attending school, up from 53 per cent in 2014. In 2015, of the 37 country studies that have so far been completed by UNICEF's Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI), 8 were published, a further 20 studies were launched, and 3 studies are being updated using more recent data. The impact of these studies on national education sector plans varies widely, from system-wide changes, such as second-chance education programmes, to targeted interventions, such as the introduction of mobile schools for pastoralist communities.

Innovation to reach the most marginalized children is increasing. In 2015, 35 per cent of reporting countries had innovative approaches at scale to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children, up from 29 per cent in 2014. UNICEF partnered with DFID and UNHCR to support the testing of seven additional scalable interventions in 2015. Teams from UNICEF and the Results for Development Institute (R4D) visited implementing teams to collect evidence for a global report on innovation in education and lessons learned in terms of scaling up, the role of technology, and emerging evidence of impact from these interventions.

UNICEF focused its efforts throughout the year to increase gender equality in education on many fronts. In 12 countries, UNICEF continued to work to link education, communication for development, and protection to keep girls in school and reduce the incidence of child marriage. In Bangladesh, for example, UNICEF supported the training of more than 27,000 primary and secondary schoolteachers, mobilizing students to advocate against child marriage. Through the Learning for Peace programme, UNICEF worked with government partners in 14 countries to address gender inequities in education faced by girls and boys in different humanitarian settings. In addition, the Addressing School-Related Gender-Based Violence to Promote Safe and Supportive Learning Environments for Girls Initiative was expanded to Ethiopia, promoting a systematic approach to addressing school-related gender-based violence as part of education sector plans based on evidence in terms of 'what works' in particular country contexts.

PA 4: Sustaining education in humanitarian situations

More children in humanitarian situations have access to education. In 2015, 70 per cent – or 7,537,375 – of all children in humanitarian situations served by UNICEF had access to formal or non-formal basic education, up from 64 per cent in 2014. UNICEF responded to 310 humanitarian situations in 102 countries, the latter a record and comprising 65 per cent of UNICEF offices. UNICEF emergency response focused on providing children and adolescents with safe, inclusive and quality educational opportunities in camps and hosting communities. For example, UNICEF provided services such as setting up camp schools, including gender-sensitive latrines, and teachers' training on education in emergencies, psychosocial support and mobilizing Parent-Teacher Councils; supported school monitoring and supervision; and helped enable access to quality education through community mobilization and Back to School and media campaigns for enrolment of children, particularly girls.

Countries are better equipped to assess and manage risk. The number of reporting countries with an education sector plan/policy that includes risk assessment and risk management rose to 32 per cent in 2015, up from 28 per cent the previous year, with strong progress on risk assessments and risk reduction strategies. This means that more countries and their education systems are better prepared to respond to future emergencies and crises. Six countries that suffered huge humanitarian crises – Iraq, Kenya, Myanmar, Pakistan, South Sudan and Sudan – consumed substantial spending (more than US\$1 million per country) as a result of better plans and systems in 2015.

Valuable research on education for peacebuilding has been completed. In 2015, UNICEF concluded a two-year research partnership with the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) comprising case studies on 22 countries affected by violence. The research generated lessons learned on ways in which governments and communities can each play a role in employing education to address recent histories of violence and build peaceful societies. UNICEF also funded an FHI360-led statistical study across 111 countries, which concluded that the likelihood of violent conflict doubles for countries with high levels of intergroup inequality in education.

PA 5: Global partnerships and system strengthening

More education management information systems are being used to promote equity in education. The percentage of reporting countries with EMIS providing disaggregated data that allow identification of barriers and bottlenecks that inhibit realization of the rights of disadvantaged children rose from 49 per cent in 2014 to 58 per cent in 2015. This enhanced level of disaggregation includes attention to gender, socioeconomic status, urban/rural location and disabilities, as well as how well-equipped a school's facilities are to serve children with disabilities.

Stronger school management committees (SMCs) are present at primary and secondary levels. Some 45 per cent of countries reported the existence of functional SMCs in 2015, compared with 34 per cent in 2014. This means that school committees involve community participation in planning, monitoring and holding schools accountable. UNICEF funded trainings for 48,971 SMCs, Parent Teacher Associations and school communities in 2015, on topics such as school management, school planning, school health/hygiene, financial management and inclusive education. This amounts to roughly 96,000 school communities trained since the start of the Strategic Plan in 2014.

UNICEF is guiding and supporting the work of the GPE. Throughout 2015, UNICEF contributed significantly to shaping the GPE's new Strategic Plan for 2016–2020, including through surveys with country and regional offices; hosting and taking part in a variety of thematic consultations; and participating in a reference group charged with recommending changes to the GPE's operational model. UNICEF also worked closely with the GPE Secretariat and partners to ensure that the new results framework is able to chart the GPE's contribution to equity, efficiency and learning objectives, and is co-leading work to develop an Equity Index that will track progress in all GPE countries on overall equity in outcomes.

UNICEF continues to support and collaborate with UNGEI. In 2015, UNGEI advanced its policy advocacy agenda through strengthened partnerships and new and innovative collaborative ventures. In particular, UNGEI played a key role as advocate for equitable and inclusive SDGs that emphasize gender equality in the education vision, goals and accompanying targets and indicators. UNGEI also collaborated on a number of influential projects, such as the 2015 Gender Summary and a policy brief on school-related gender-based violence with the Education for All Global Monitoring Report (EFA-GMR).



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PROGRAMME AREA 1 – IMPROVING EARLY LEARNING

On the eve of the Sustainable Development Summit, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon articulated the highest level of commitment to early childhood development (ECD), saying, “Our shared conviction is clear: children should be at the centre of all dimensions of sustainable development. Early childhood development is fundamental to reaching our vision.” The critical importance of the early years for learning over the long term is increasingly recognized at global and national levels, although there is much progress to be made in expanding equitable access and quality to reach all children. Improving learning outcomes, especially among children from the most disadvantaged families, requires investing in quality early learning, school readiness¹⁴ and pre-primary education. Support for early learning is grounded in the evidence and remains a key priority for education at UNICEF.

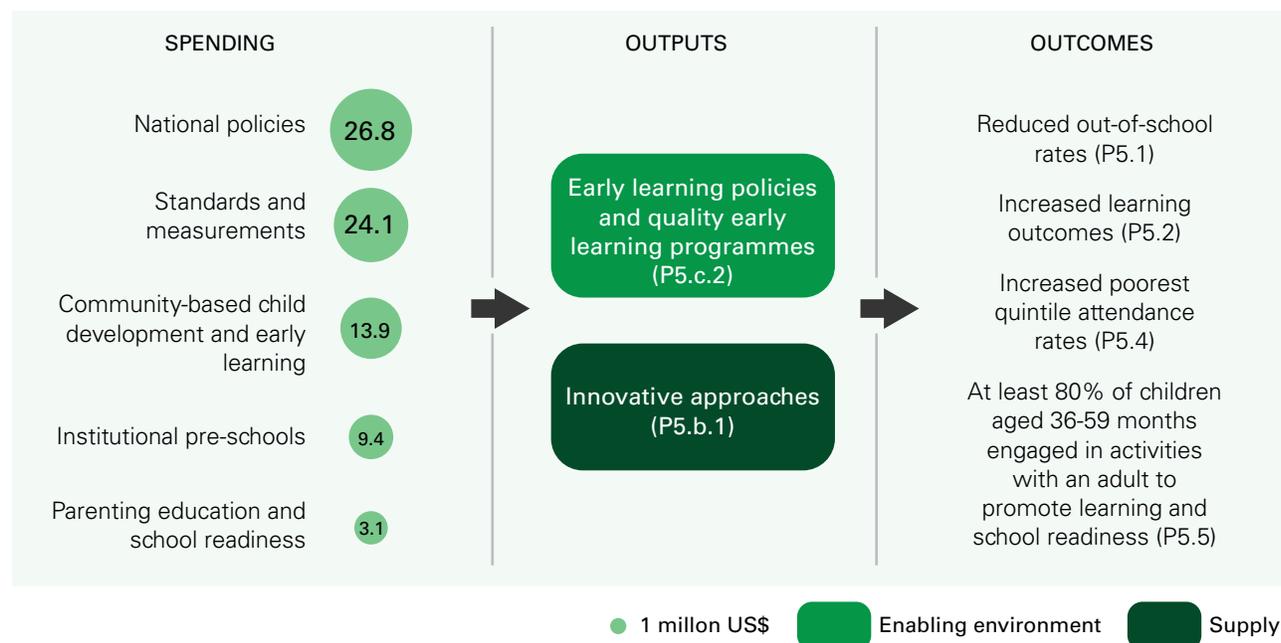
In starting out, it is helpful to delineate the distinction – and synergy – between early learning and the broader cross-sectoral ECD programmes framework. ECD supports the full continuum of human development in young children, from before birth to 8 years of age. Early learning focuses on the aspects of this development that most closely relate to education, preparing children for primary school entry, continuation and school success, in the years directly prior to primary school – typically around ages 3 to 5. The early learning agenda at UNICEF complements, supports and is strengthened by the broader cross-sectoral global work on ECD.

School readiness refers to three inter-connected questions:

- Ready children: Is the (individual) child ready for school?
- Ready schools: Is the school ready for the child?
- Ready families: Are parents or is the community ready to help the child enter school ready to learn?

Key inputs and results in 2015

FIGURE 4
Results chain for early learning



Results chain for early learning: The results chain applies Theory of Change principles and presents the expected linkages between spending, interventions and progress on UNICEF’s Strategic Plan output and outcome indicators for each programme area. For example, in early learning, by helping governments apply the latest evidence, supporting the development of national standards and providing assistance to partners to implement various early learning approaches, UNICEF is improving the development and implementation of national policies and early learning programmes that in turn will have a positive effect on children’s ability to progress through and learn in school. Early learning programmes have been shown to have wide-reaching effects on a child’s success, hence the outcomes outnumber the outputs in this instance. Full data on the indicators are presented in the pages that follow and in Annex A.

Overall expenditure to support early learning: Throughout the past few years, UNICEF’s focus on early learning has been steadily increasing, which is also reflected in the spending on early learning recorded globally. For example, in 2015, US\$77.3 million, approximately 8 per cent of the overall education global budget, was spent on early learning, compared with

US\$67.3 million in 2014 – almost a 15 per cent increase. Of this, more than 50 per cent was spent on UNICEF’s work in helping governments develop and implement national policies on early learning, and supporting early learning standards and measurement. Increasing access to and improving the quality of school-based or other formal early learning programmes took up just over 10 per cent of the budget, while a strong push on community-based, home-based and alternative approaches to early learning provision accounted for 18 per cent of the expenditure, demonstrating the critical need for significant investment and efforts in reaching the most marginalized and disadvantaged children through non-formal, alternative models and service provision. Particularly in light of the high returns on investment demonstrated in early learning for improved outcomes down the road, it is crucial that the global community increase support for early learning in the coming years.

Constraints and challenges: Lack of prioritization and support for quality early learning at the national level remains a major constraint despite the abundance of evidence regarding the payoffs of investing in it. Related to that is the constrained funding available at national as well as the global levels for early learning programmes

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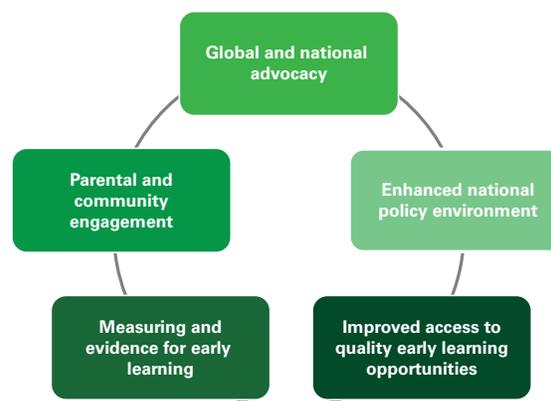
and policy implementation. In addition to the notably low access rates in most regions of the world, ensuring quality programmes and the inclusion of the most marginalized communities both pose major challenges, even in cases where national scale-up is progressing. Availability and utilization of data on school readiness is also very limited and system-level tracking of child outcomes is nearly impossible in many countries.

Key strategies: UNICEF uses multiple strategic entry points globally, regionally and at country level to engage in and strengthen early learning provision, as shown in the figure on the right.

GLOBAL AND NATIONAL ADVOCACY

One of the biggest achievements globally in relation to ECD in 2015 was the successful advocacy for ECD as a specific target (Target 4.2) with two strong indicators in the SDG framework. To achieve this, UNICEF successfully advocated with: (i) decision makers, through the UN General Assembly side event, ‘Meeting of the Minds’; (ii) national government decision makers at the South Asia ECD Summit in Beijing, with participation from 14 governments; (iii) donors; and (iv) the general public, through blogs and media articles. The final list of indicators looks at both the school readiness and developmental status of children younger than 5 years old, and the access to early learning services. The indicators were endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in early March and recommended for formal adoption by ECOSOC and the General Assembly in July 2016.

In addition to global advocacy around early learning, numerous country teams engaged in and supported national-level advocacy efforts. In Kenya, national training and sensitization workshops were held for nine county ministers responsible for ECD from nine counties and 204 administrators, teachers and caregivers, and ECD Education Days were held for community-level advocacy in three counties. In Nepal, 10 districts and more than 100 village development committees in the Mid and Far West participated in two festivals with local leaders, ECD



facilitators, parents and relevant stakeholders to advocate for ECD, including increasing local budgets. In Morocco, advocacy for early learning and school readiness headed by UNICEF, including a national mapping exercise and a high-level conference of international experts, resulted in the adoption of the development of preschool education as a main priority of the Moroccan Government’s new education strategy for 2015–2020.

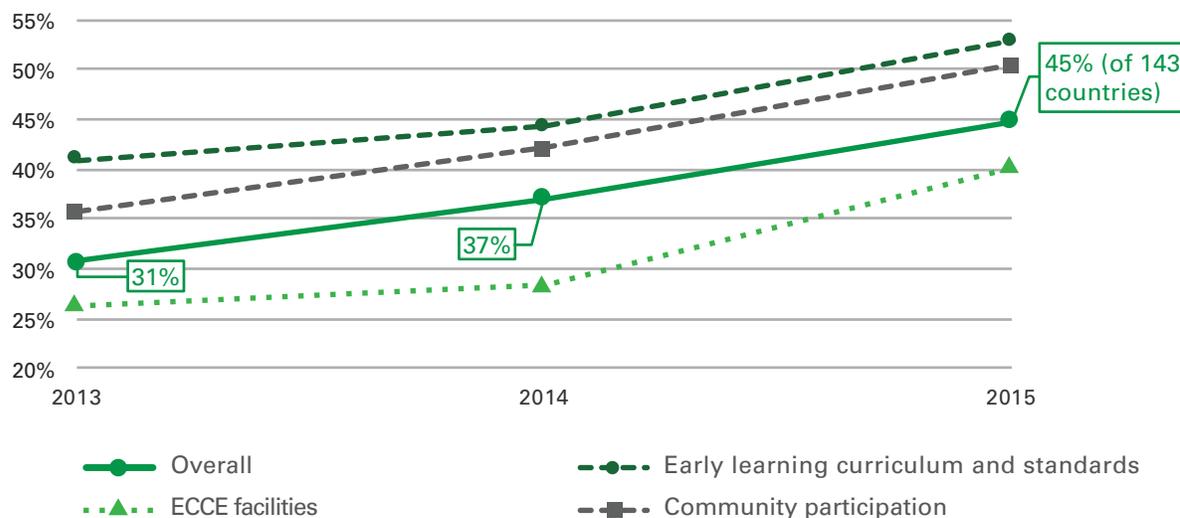
National policies, standards and schools

UNICEF’s focus on early learning and its approach to supporting governments to develop national systems has led to a significant increase in the percentage of countries with effective early learning policies and quality early learning programmes, from 31 per cent in 2013 to 45 per cent in 2015. For each qualitative indicator, country offices must assess the in-country situation using a 1–4 scale on 2 to 6 indicator subdomains. The average of these scores is then used to determine whether a country satisfies that particular indicator: an average less than 2.5 is considered a ‘No’, and an average 2.5 or more is a ‘Yes’.

The overall progress on this indicator and on each of its three subdomains (early learning curriculum and standards, early childhood care and education (ECCE) facilities, and community participation) is presented in Figure 5. The progress in curriculum and standards means that more young learners are experiencing an education that is designed for their developmental level and which meets culturally relevant criteria. The progress in community participation means that in more countries parents and communities are actively involved in the planning and monitoring of early learning centres. Despite the progress on all three subdomains, the provision of quality ECCE facilities lags behind the development of curriculum and standards and the integration of

FIGURE 5

Output indicator P5.c.2: Countries with effective early learning policies and quality early learning programmes



community participation, most likely related to the availability of resources and the limited proportion of education budgets that are allocated to early learning. However, the percentage of countries where ECCE facilities are safe and supportive has increased from 28 per cent in 2014 to 40 per cent in 2015. This progress will need to be accelerated if the overall indicator target of 70 per cent is to be met by 2017.

In Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, UNICEF’s support to governments has been particularly effective, as the percentage of countries with effective early learning policies and quality early learning programmes has increased from 50 per cent in 2013 to 86 per cent in 2015. At the other extreme, there has also been significant progress in regions starting from a very low baseline. For example, in South Asia, 38 per cent of countries in 2015 are reporting effective early learning policies and quality early learning programmes, compared with only 14 per cent in 2013.

ENHANCED POLICY ENVIRONMENT FOR EARLY LEARNING



Effective early childhood policies are crucial in guiding national early learning provision and plans for scale-up of services. UNICEF supported early learning policy work in 72 countries in 2015 with a number of regional- and country-level breakthroughs.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, one of the biggest achievements in 2015 was the number of countries that focused on enhancing their early childhood policies. In Belize, Costa Rica and Honduras, among others, UNICEF support was crucial in fostering policy dialogue and finalizing key action plans. In Belize, this led to the adoption of the ECD policy, and the integrated ECD strategic plan, which should increase access to ECD services for children in 2016. In Costa Rica, it resulted in the political commitment of the Minister of Public Education in early childhood education. The Ministry took action to achieve universal preschool education from 4.3 years on and regained a stewardship role in the education of children between 3 and 4 years old.¹⁵ In Honduras, the ECD work plan for 2015–2016, signed by the Government and UNICEF, was formalized, and the First Lady, who has

been a strong advocate for ECD, was designated as the Special Commissioner for ECD.

Highlights of progress from other regions include the development of an early learning policy in Sri Lanka, approval of guidelines on preschool education in Afghanistan, and a new ECD policy and strategic plan (2015–2020) with a monitoring and evaluation framework and increased budgetary support in Malawi.

UNICEF also provided strategic facilitation, advocacy and technical support to a number of governments that go beyond the policy frameworks and support planning and costed action plans that better facilitate implementation of the policies. Progress in this area included a five-year costed action plan for the Preschool Policy Framework and a preschool accreditation system in Timor-Leste; a first-phase budget allocation of US\$4.5 million for a progressive expansion of preschool services and better equity targeting in Morocco; and the development of new standards for ECD centres and workers, and the alignment of kindergarten and Grade 1 curricula in the Philippines.

MEASUREMENT AND EVIDENCE BUILDING FOR EARLY LEARNING



Measurement is key not only to tracking access to critical early learning opportunities, but also to making sure they are effective in preparing children for school. In many countries, however,

data on school readiness are lacking. In early learning, UNICEF continues to engage in global advocacy and work with its partners to strengthen evidence, measurement and assessment that can benefit programmes and policy decision-making. Availability of early learning data nationally and globally is scant and yet sorely needed to fuel advocacy and investment, as well as to feed into improved policies and classroom practices.

Building on past efforts, the Measuring Early Learning Quality and Outcomes (MELQO) initiative, convened by UNICEF, UNESCO, the World Bank and the Brookings Institution, continued its work in 2015 to synthesize and integrate existing global and regional measures for school readiness. The initiative's goal is to produce feasible, efficient, accurate and technically sound approaches to the measurement of child development and learning, and of the quality of children's learning environments that can be adapted for use in low- and middle-income countries and produce data that can be compared at a global level. UNICEF is deeply engaged in this global effort and began the validation of the prototype tools in the United Republic of Tanzania, with plans for a large-scale national study to be completed in 2016.

In 2015, UNICEF also placed emphasis across regions and countries in the development of national and

regional-level measures of school readiness as well as strengthening the availability of early learning data for policy and programme decision-making. A notable example includes the West and Central Africa Regional Office's continued support to countries in measuring early learning outcomes as part of the ECD prototype tools roll-out initiative. This included the roll-out of an early learning assessment in Cameroon, Côte D'Ivoire and Niger, and the use of assessment reports released in policy discussions in Senegal and Sao Tome and Principe. In addition, in Sri Lanka, UNICEF provided technical inputs in the development and pilot-testing of a rapid assessment school readiness toolkit for children entering Grade 1, and a quality-standard document and related monitoring tools for preschools that focus on infrastructure, teaching quality and child development. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, monitoring and supervision tools for a pre-primary and community-based school readiness project were revised and training on them completed.

UNICEF also supported many countries with critical evaluation studies that are paving the way for expansion of ECE provision or improvement in policies, including a longitudinal study in India, quality assessment guidelines in China, and a monitoring project across 140 pre-primary schools in Rwanda.

ENSURING QUALITY LEARNING PROGRAMMES DURING SCALE-UP

It is not only participation in early learning and preschool programmes that matters, but the quality of the interventions provided. Common problems with quality as governments start or scale up early learning include very high ratios of children to teacher or supervising adult; lack of quality standards; poor curricula that may not be culturally relevant, gender-inclusive or play-based; and unsafe or inappropriate physical setup. Two of the main strategies used by UNICEF to improve the quality of early learning are strengthening systems in terms of quality standards and quality assurance mechanisms, and upgrading and expanding the capacities and abilities of the workforce.

Through the implementation of these strategies, many countries are bridging support for access and quality. For example, in Ghana, 12,000 copies of a training module that includes minimum standards and student assessment tools were disseminated and are currently in use, and 1,743 teachers were trained on early reading skills development, to the benefit of 150,276 kindergarteners (76,239 boys and 74,037 girls). In Rwanda, UNICEF financed the construction of model pre-primary facilities and provided technical assistance for a play-based pre-primary curriculum, the associated teacher's guide and learning and assessment standards. The system of pre-

service training for preschool teachers in all 13 teacher training colleges was strengthened, and quality teaching and learning materials were developed in support of the implementation of an early childhood education pre-service curriculum aligned to the new competency-based pre-primary curriculum. In the Republic of Moldova, UNICEF assisted in the development of curriculum resources and building capacity of 150 preschool teachers from across the country who produced prototype teaching-learning materials that foster age-appropriate, child-friendly learning experiences. The learning materials are already in use in classrooms.

At the global level, UNICEF has supported numerous countries with the development of early learning and development standards (ELDS) with an aim to facilitate the establishment and national ownership of quality national frameworks that are reflective of context, culture and expectations for children. The comprehensive evaluation conducted in 2015 of this long-term initiative ascertained that ELDS have played a key role in influencing systems through bringing together cross-sectoral stakeholders at the country level, changes to curricula and improvements in the professional preparation of teachers. Further work is needed on linking ELDS to measuring children's development and providing tangible progress data – a recommendation very much aligned with the key focus on data and measurement that UNICEF is emphasizing.

ACCELERATING ACCESS, EQUITY AND INCLUSION



Many children enter their first-grade classroom without ever having had exposure to preschool or any other early learning programme. In many regions, the rate of enrolment in preschool education has made tremendous progress – for example, in West and Central Africa, enrolment has improved from 14 per cent in 1999 to 25 per cent in 2015. Still, progress is slow and uneven among and within regions and even within countries. Some 57 per cent of young children in developing countries still have no access to formal preschool – 83 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa and 78 per cent in the Arab region. There are still considerable differences between urban and rural areas, rich and poor families and communities.

The percentage of countries with more than 25 per cent of the poorest children attending an early childhood education programme has gone up since 2013, from 17 per cent to 29 per cent. Progress has been influenced by the emphasis of the equity agenda supported by UNICEF. Additional factors such as the work of the GPE and the decrease in overall poverty levels worldwide have also been at play.

This indicator is important because it underscores the equity issues in early childhood education, which is generally the hardest indicator on which to move the

needle. In many cases, when access to early childhood education increases in general within a country, the access rates for its poorest children remain stagnant. Often, this group includes children who are not reached by the usual delivery mechanisms – for example, those in remote rural areas, or those who speak minority languages. Children with disabilities who are from the poorest families are even less likely to have access to ECD. This is why UNICEF supports different modalities of ECD/ECE programmes.

The overall trajectory of progress is exciting, but must not mask the need for further investment in countries that are struggling. For example, the percentage of the poorest Serbian children attending ECE dropped in the most recent MICS to 9 per cent from 22 per cent four years prior. Factors causing this include the prolonged economic crisis and decreasing standard of living, which put even the largely subsidized costs of preschool out of the reach of many families in the poorest quintile. For other countries as well, attendance by the poorest children can drop due to factors such as economic downturns, instability, changes in government and migration, in addition to conflict, humanitarian emergencies and protracted crises (*see below in this PA*).¹⁶ To better ensure that all children have the chance to attend early childhood education and reap its many proven benefits, more investment and more targeted interventions are needed.

In 2015, UNICEF continued to use a two-pronged approach to address upstream and downstream work simultaneously by collaborating with governments to extend and deliver early learning services. Significant strides in access were achieved. For example, in Bangladesh, UNICEF supported the provision of quality pre-primary education to 3,088,000 eligible children in all 37,672 government primary schools and 26,000 newly nationalized primary schools. This also included mainstreaming one year of pre-primary education by the Government in all primary schools. Further, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNICEF provided direct financial and technical assistance in implementing a pre-primary pilot programme in 100 targeted classes in order to generate evidence and lessons that will guide scaling-up.

When both financial and human resources are limited and the development of new infrastructure is not feasible, one possible solution is to offer 'school readiness' opportunities during the two-month primary school break for children who did not benefit from preschool services, or are identified as at-risk for first grade repetition or dropout. In Ethiopia, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education have initiated an Accelerated School Readiness Programme in Benishangul-Gumuz Region, and scaled up the Child-to-Child and 0 Class initiatives to cover 784 additional schools between them, benefiting 64,900 children (48 per cent girls) across five regions.



Equity-focused programming has been a key area of investment for UNICEF. Through systematic and sustainable capacity-building

New preschool programme piloting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Preschool provision levels have been low in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with 4 per cent coverage in 2014 compared with an average of 20 per cent in other sub-Saharan African countries. In this context, the Government identified pre-primary education as a key approach in the 2015–2025 Education and Training Strategy for promoting school enrolment at the right age – as 43 per cent of their children currently enter school late – and reducing the number of 6- to 8-year-old children who are out of school.

In 2015, with support from UNICEF, the Government prepared an innovative preschool programme to be implemented in public primary schools for 5-year-old children, the pilot of which was then launched in January 2016. A cost-effective initiative, at US\$86 per child per year, the intervention is proposed as a one-year preparatory class for the primary cycle designed to support children's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, and thus increase their readiness for school. Incorporating the programme into existing services and systems, such as primary schools, makes the approach easily scalable and efficient in its use of existing facilities and administrative support.

The launch of the pre-primary programme was facilitated by the preparatory work accomplished by UNICEF and government partners and consisting of (i) elaboration of pedagogical, organizational and monitoring tools and documents required for proper implementation and reporting by the Ministry of Education; (ii) identification and capacity building of key human resources; (iii) purchase and provision of essential class equipment and teaching materials; and (iv) information campaigns targeting various education stakeholders, starting with parents in rural areas. The emphasis put on the preparatory phase and the collaborative work between all stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, UNICEF and civil society, has been key in facilitating the launch of the initiative. An investment of approximately US\$550,000 was required for the preparatory phase and launch, and follow-up of the three-year pilot phase is currently underway, with most of the funds going towards technical support to the Government and for teacher training and stakeholders' mobilization and capacity building. The Government has committed to covering teachers' salaries.

The pilot phase is built to allow strengthening of the model while collecting evidence on effectiveness. A mid-term review is planned to make eventual adjustments required to improve the model.

This kind of programme is in line with the SDGs on ECD and the recommendations of the latest replenishment meeting of the Global Partnership for Education in 2014, insisting on the need to invest in at least one year of a free and compulsory school readiness programme, especially for the most marginalized children. It is expected that this scalable and cost-effective intervention will help increase gross preschool enrolment rates in the country to 14.5 per cent by 2024.

efforts, UNICEF encouraged strong alliances among academia, centres of excellence and core line ministries across many countries. These efforts seek to enhance the commitment, skills and competencies of service providers and to support caregivers and young children, especially the most disadvantaged and vulnerable through numerous equity lenses, including poverty, ethnicity, gender and disabilities. For example, in Cambodia, both inclusive early learning programmes for children with disabilities and multilingual early learning programmes for ethnic minority children expanded to 75 and 34 preschools, respectively, in 2015. Assessments of the education needs of children with disabilities were completed in Bangladesh, Bhutan and the Maldives with support of the UNICEF regional office for South Asia, and action plans were developed to address the findings. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, UNICEF supported an intercultural and plurilingual early learning initiative in response to the needs of indigenous populations, reflecting

the Government's priority of revitalizing native Bolivian languages. In Myanmar, work began on a national early childhood intervention system to identify children with developmental delays, disabilities and chronic illnesses early in their lives and to provide family-based support.

EARLY LEARNING AND EMERGENCIES

To ensure the delivery of essential services for the children affected by emergencies and crises, UNICEF supported efforts to provide ECD programmes and services for young children in emergencies and humanitarian situations, including through the provision of ECD kits. The aim was to equip under-resourced ECD centres with play and learning materials and promote a return to normalcy through consistent early learning activities. Between 2013 and 2015, a total of 44,218 ECD kits were procured by 54 country offices, benefiting an

estimated 2.2 million children globally. A broad range of ECD services were also provided. For example, in Lebanon, UNICEF funded preschool classes, ECD kits and training of kindergarten teachers for Palestinian refugees.

Engaging parents and communities



Strongly linked to equity-focused programming are alternative delivery models in places where it is not feasible to expect universal pre-primary access at this point. Rather, the question becomes how best to support countries in promoting quality early learning opportunities through different pathways, including formal and non-formal education systems. Home- and community-based programmes offer an alternative model to the centre-based preschool. Strides can be made, for example, when adults engage children in activities that promote learning and school readiness, such as playing, singing, reading or telling stories.

Given the importance of parental involvement in child development, UNICEF monitors the number of countries with at least 80 per cent of children engaging in activities with an adult to promote learning and school readiness. Progress has been made on the percentage of countries meeting this target from 31 per cent in 2013 to 34 per cent in 2015 but the slow pace of change illustrates the scale of the challenges involved. The 2015 data showed equivalent numbers for girls and boys;¹⁷ children from the wealthiest families were far better off than those from the poorest families, with engagement at 79 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively. Despite their crucial roles, the engagement of parents and other adult caregivers is not included in most early learning policies, and funding on this front is out of the question in many countries. As a result, most parents and caregivers come in contact with the education system too late to be reached by it.

UNICEF country offices are working to expand adult engagement and education. For example, in Liberia, caregiver guidance and parenting skills components were included in emergency educational radio programmes as part of the Education Sector Ebola Response Plan. In the Pacific, UNICEF continued its initiative on parenting support with the development of seven children's books for use by parents and children at home in targeted areas in Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. In Zambia, community-level workers were trained in implementation of the Parenting Programme in three target districts, and the 'Superbaby' programme mobilized parental and local support for the improvement of ECCE provision in their communities. Going forward, there is much room for growth in the area of parent engagement for school readiness.



Innovation is required for the rapid scale-up and sustainability of community-based early learning solutions as well as adult-engagement programming, especially given the inequity in opportunity of those at greatest risk of missing out, such as children with disabilities, ethnic minorities and poor and/or rural children. In Timor-Leste, the Ministry of Education, UNICEF and the Government of New Zealand established a two-year partnership for a pilot initiative to establish alternative, community-based preschools in 80 communities. This innovative pilot builds on strong community engagement and commitment and reached a total of 6,178 children (50 per cent girls) 3–5 years old in 130 remote and least-served communities. The three models were adapted in line with the Ministry of Education's curriculum and were made to fit local contexts, including promotion of mother-tongue usage. Other countries, such as China, Viet Nam and Zambia, also explored options for non-formal ECD provision and alternative models for strengthening school readiness skills. Programmes like these are innovative in that they cultivate school readiness at home in areas where traditional school-based provision is not feasible.

Summary and going forward

In an increasing number of countries, the poorest children are attending early childhood education, and parents and caregivers are actively engaging with their children to promote early learning. Significant progress has been made in the implementation of effective early learning policies and quality programmes. In 2015, UNICEF's advocacy work to advance early learning was particularly successful, while returns on quality and equity were more mixed. Greater global investment and national commitments to equitable and inclusive early learning are needed, as half of the countries supported by UNICEF with available data spend less than 5 per cent of their education budgets on early learning, while OECD countries spend between 15 per cent and 20 per cent. Alternative pathways and other innovations to reach the most marginalized children are needed also in these contexts.

Overall, UNICEF's key priorities moving forward include a specific focus on measurement and quality, in addition to filling the investment gap for early learning. Measurement and metrics for early learning are critical to achieving equitable goals, and to instilling accountability. UNICEF needs a strong voice on quality, as scale-up on access doesn't always translate to quality on the ground. Lessons learned on the importance of quality, in addition to access, can be applied from the context of primary education. Support to measurement, as well as stronger financial and technical support to countries, will help to enable countries to scale up systematically and thoughtfully.



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PROGRAMME AREA 2 – IMPROVING LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ENVIRONMENTS

While more children are going to school, millions of students do not learn the basics. It has been estimated that as many as 250 million children of the 650 million children of primary school age either do not reach Grade 4, or reach it without learning how to read or do simple mathematics.¹⁸ UNICEF's approach to improving learning outcomes in an equitable manner is founded on a rights-based vision, articulated through the child-friendly schools paradigm that emphasizes child-centredness, inclusion, democratic participation and protection. Thus, attention to the quality of the learning environment, in combination with better data on learning outcomes and the factors that affect them, through strengthened learning assessment systems, are central to UNICEF's strategy to deliver equitable and inclusive learning for all children.

Key inputs and results in 2015

Results chain for improving learning outcomes and environments: As with early learning, the results chain applies Theory of Change principles and presents the expected linkages between spending, interventions and progress on UNICEF's Strategic Plan output and outcome indicators for learning. For example, by supporting learning assessment, UNICEF is helping countries enhance their

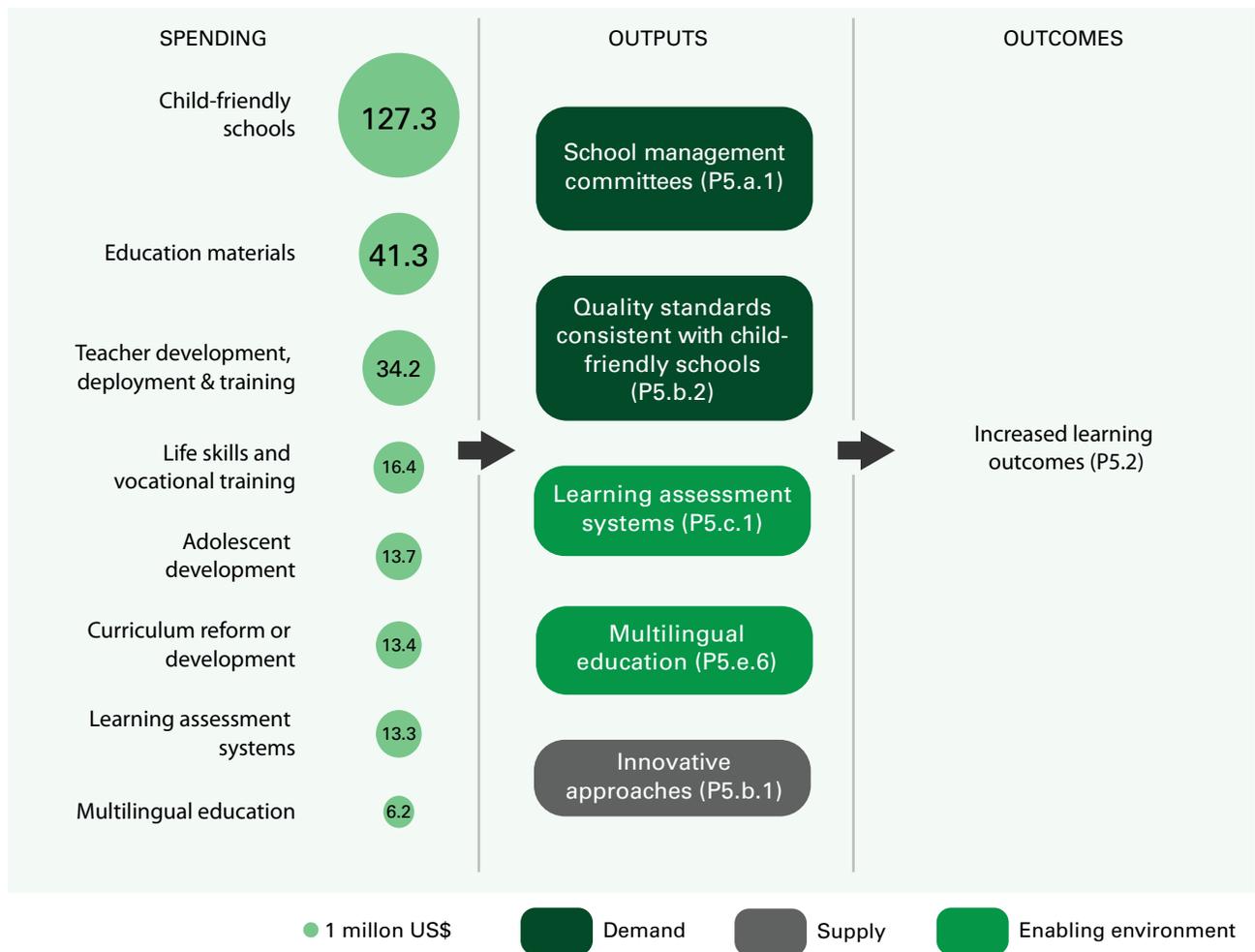
capacity to assess outcomes at all levels of the system, especially in the classroom, and to improve learning processes and their results, which is one way in which learning assessment helps to increase learning outcomes.

Overall expenditure to support improved learning outcomes and environments: In 2015, UNICEF spent US\$266 million on improving learning outcomes and environments, of which US\$127 million (approximately 50 per cent) was spent through the child-friendly school approach, which covers school infrastructure, teaching practices, community involvement and learning outcomes. In addition, US\$13 million was spent exclusively on strengthening learning assessment systems. A further US\$41 million was spent on education materials for learning and teaching, including classroom technology, while the crucial role played by teachers is emphasized by the investment of US\$34 million in teacher development, deployment and training. The growing need to provide adolescents, both in and out of formal education, with skills that are relevant for their entire lives and which aid their transitions into fruitful employment is evident from the investment of US\$30 million in life skills, vocational training and adolescent development.

Constraints and challenges: The improvement of equitable learning outcomes is a central goal of the education sector, but it is complex and depends on many factors, both within and outside of the scope of UNICEF's influence. It is estimated that 250 million children worldwide do not learn the basics in reading and mathematics. Of these, more than 130 million have spent

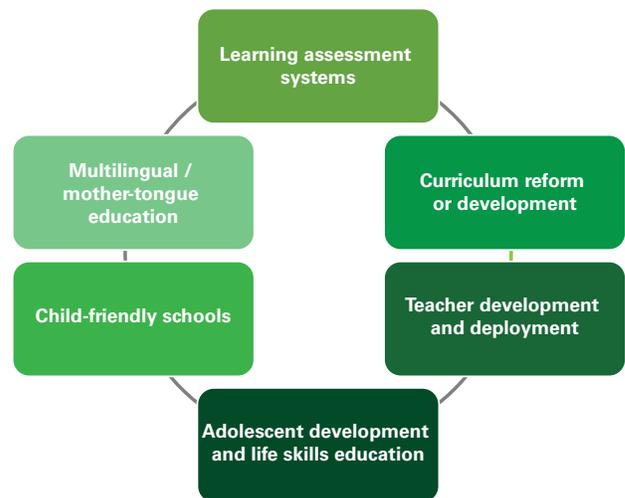
FIGURE 6

Results chain for improving learning outcomes and environments



up to four years in school. These numbers demonstrate that the enrolment growth since 2000 has not been matched in terms of quality. The chronic underfunding of the sector is a key constraint, and is demonstrated in indicators to be discussed below that show progress on policies and standards accompanied by resourcing gaps that hinder their translation to improved outcomes for children. There are also huge equity dimensions to learning, where some of the poorest children are less likely to reach the minimum learning standards in reading. In East African countries, learning of children from poorer households is at least one year behind that of children of the same age from richer households.

Key strategies: UNICEF uses multiple strategic entry points globally, regionally, and at the country level to improve learning outcomes and environments for all children, represented in the figure on the right. UNICEF also provides education materials directly to students and classrooms.



Quality teaching and learning

Ensuring that all children not only have access to education but also gain valuable knowledge and skills that will empower them to succeed depends on quality teaching and learning. This is made possible through strong learning assessment systems that gather data on student achievement and the factors that affect disparities and feed this information back to translate to the classroom. It is likewise dependent on strong curricula that are well aligned to promote learning and complemented by adequate education materials, and of course on the development and deployment of quality teachers equipped with the tools they need to reach their students most effectively. Multilingual education that allows children to learn in their mother tongues, especially in early primary school, is critical for quality teaching and learning. And life skills education and adolescent development are both important to ensuring that learning outcomes are maximally relevant and effective.

LEARNING ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

UNICEF has been actively supporting countries in enhancing their learning assessment systems through classroom assessments, national examinations and large-scale assessment surveys, and progress is being made on the percentage of countries with well-functioning student learning assessment systems, especially for early grades,¹⁹ with an increase from 42 per cent in 2013 to 51 per cent in 2015.

Figure 7 illustrates the progress that has been made on all three subdomains between 2013 and 2015, particularly examinations where 73 per cent of countries had stable, standardized national examinations in 2015, compared with 58 per cent in 2013. This progress means that in more countries children's learning is being monitored

Transparency when reporting on learning outcomes: Although the percentage of countries with increasing learning outcomes has shown some progress since 2013, it is worth pointing out that the majority of countries are still not included in its computation because adequate data are not available for them. The changes seen in this outcome indicator above must be taken with extreme caution. The numbers showed substantial progress in 2014, and then remained at essentially the same level in 2015. These numbers cover an eight-year range, as they are based on global and regional assessments that are not on an annual cycle. As a result, small fluctuations in averages in this indicator's value could be an artifact of the sample shifting with the irregular assessment schedules and stem from different groups of countries being included in the calculation, or the result from the loss of currency of a given assessment, as opposed to a reflection of solid trends in learning outcomes.

by their teachers and by the responsible ministry, and that their learning is assessed in a national, fair and standardized examination. Despite progress in enhancing the levels of classroom assessment, it remains the most challenging area. This is understandable given that it requires enhancing the capacities and changing the behaviours of the entire teaching force.

The largest degree of progress on the overall indicator occurred in the Latin America and Caribbean region, where 51 per cent of countries in 2015 had well-functioning student learning assessment systems, compared with 31 per cent in 2013. There was also notable progress in Eastern and Southern Africa, where

Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metric initiative

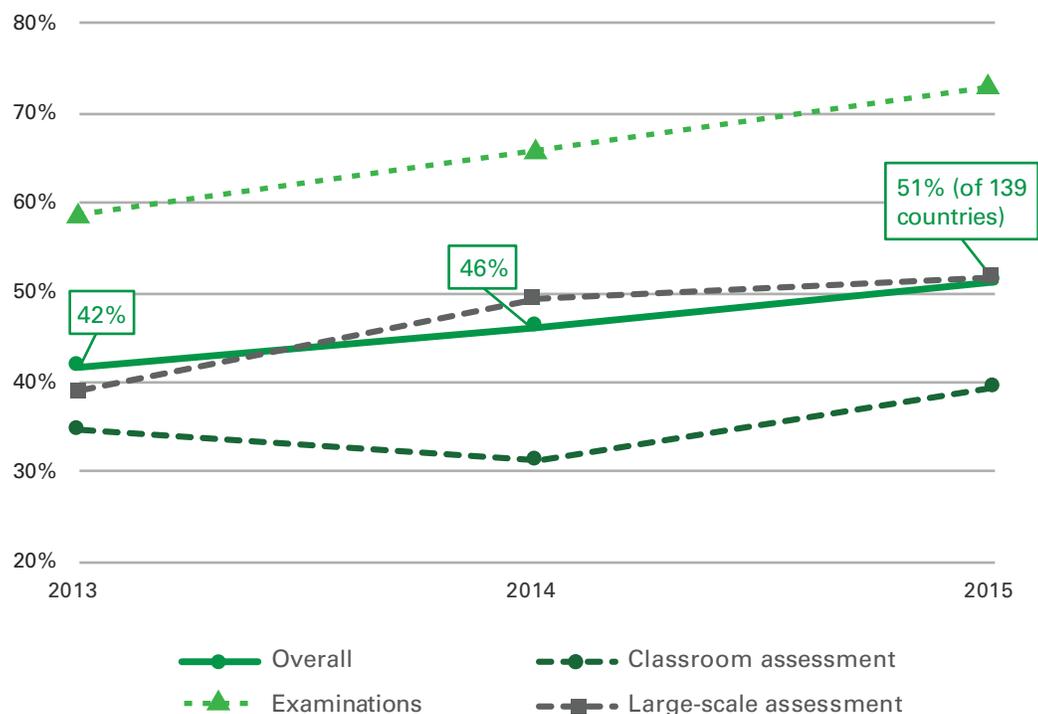
UNICEF's East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Secretariat (SEAMES) are co-leading the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metric (SEA-PLM) initiative to develop a common set of tools and protocols for Southeast Asian countries to measure the learning outcomes of primary-school-aged children. To date, four countries have piloted this innovative assessment, which covers the key domains of reading, writing, mathematics and global citizenship/civics education.

Rather than assess a single subject area, the SEA-PLM has distinct tools and protocols for four subject areas – which can be used as a package or separately – along with a survey tool to measure learning environment, school, classroom, and student context. In each subject tool, anchor items from other global assessment tools (i.e., Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS)) are included to allow for referenced analysis.

In addition, the SEA-PLM initiative aims to build capacity within and between SEA countries to measure learning outcomes, analyse the results and use this analysis for policy reform.

FIGURE 7

Output indicator P5.c.1: Countries with well-functioning student learning assessment systems, especially for early grades



the percentage of countries increased from 45 per cent to 62 per cent over the same time period. Progress on this national-level indicator has been extremely limited in the East Asia and Pacific region, which suggests that the South East Asia – Primary Learning Metric Initiative (outlined below) is a timely and necessary one.

Strong national learning assessment systems are critical but complex, and many countries face important challenges in moving forward. For instance, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic has system-level assessments and examinations but lacks functional classroom assessment, while in The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, literacy assessments show little improvement in learning outcomes. To overcome these challenges, UNICEF has used a combination of strategies, including capacity building; partnerships at both national and supranational levels; South-South cooperation; evaluation; evidence generation and research; and policy dialogue and advocacy.

In some countries, examinations are used to bridge the gap between formal and non-formal education. In Swaziland, equivalency modules are being developed with UNICEF funding, and each module’s final assessment will allow non-formal learners to re-enter the formal system at the appropriate level. In Myanmar, UNICEF advocated for temporary learning spaces in camps for internally displaced persons in Rakhine State, and the Ministry of Education now allows children living in such camps to take the Government-led end-of-year exam and receive education certificates.

A number of UNICEF offices around the world are embarking on ambitious and innovative initiatives related to the assessment of learning outcomes. For example, the notable progress seen in Latin America and the Caribbean was capitalized on at an international seminar in Uruguay on measurement and assessment of non-academic skills based on best practices from other Latin American and Caribbean countries, provided by UNICEF.

This will lead to nationwide assessments of those skills in primary and secondary school in 2016 and 2017.

CURRICULUM REFORM OR DEVELOPMENT



A strong curriculum on which teachers can base their lessons is an important ingredient in improving learning outcomes. These include finding new ways to guide the teaching and

learning of traditional subjects such as reading, writing, mathematics and science. Curricula have a key role to play in the achievement of SDG 4 and are an essential means for attaining learning that is inclusive, sustainable and holistic. For reforms to be effective, the curriculum should reflect a society's shared vision of education while taking into account local, national and global needs and expectations. It must also be aligned with teacher training, teaching and learning materials, pedagogy and assessment.

UNICEF is supporting a number of countries in curriculum reform or development, in many cases involving a more competency-based focus. In 2015, UNICEF supported a roll-out of the national curriculum in the Maldives, which reflects contemporary thinking skills and life skills competencies. UNICEF also continued to support the development and roll-out of the new competency-based curriculum for pre-primary, primary and secondary levels in Rwanda that will help to equip graduates with the relevant skills required for the country's future labour market and social demands, provided all the other elements (teachers, materials, assessment, etc.) are also in place.

Curriculum reform or development must also strengthen efforts to reach the most marginalized. For example, in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, five new regionalized curricula were drawn up and approved for additional indigenous peoples, benefiting 6,000 children from these communities, mostly in the Amazon region, which are identified as highly vulnerable groups. In Botswana, a curriculum framework, modules and educator guidance were developed to support the effective teaching of out-of-school learners.

In order to support these reforms, UNICEF has used a mix of strategies that include the gathering of evidence about what works; the promotion of dialogue on the goals that the education system should try to attain; and the development of technical capacity.

“Progress is being made on the percentage of countries with well-functioning student learning assessment systems, especially for early grades, with an increase from 42 per cent in 2013 to 51 per cent in 2015.”

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT TO ADVANCE EQUITY



Substantial and growing evidence²⁰ suggests that access to high-quality teachers can play a powerful role in ensuring the academic success of disadvantaged children and the closing of

achievement gaps between these children and their more advantaged peers. In the classrooms of the most effective teachers, students from disadvantaged backgrounds learn at the same rate as those from advantaged backgrounds.²¹ Yet in many countries, higher-quality teachers are disproportionately concentrated in the schools and classrooms of wealthier children.

This is why a substantial amount of UNICEF funds were spent on teacher development in 2015. US\$34 million was spent exclusively on teachers with 77 per cent of the funds spent on capacity development, 20 per cent on service delivery and the remaining 3 per cent on the rest of interventions including policy dialogue, communication for development, monitoring and evaluation. In addition teacher development and pedagogy are a key component of CFS spending, which totalled roughly US\$127 million. Accordingly, 42 countries from all seven regions provided evidence of results on teacher development. Their activities ranged from capacity development, teacher policy, school effectiveness and inclusive education to quality assurance and institutional strengthening. In addition, UNICEF has joined the Joint Initiative on Teachers headed by the Teachers Task Force because it provides an opportunity to collaborate with others in improving learning and teaching results for children in the most marginalized countries.

The in-service education of teachers is focused on improving student learning across the life cycle, including using mobile phones and distance education in innovative ways where needed to expand access to teachers in rural areas. For example, in South Africa, the virtual school Ukufunda supports increased access to teaching and learning resources to both learners and educators, and the Minister of Basic Education uses the app to reach out to the 480,000 teachers in the basic education system. In Benin, in-service training modules were developed to better equip teachers to improve classroom practices, and the proportion of teachers skilled in classroom pedagogy grew from 10 per cent to 30 per cent.

Improving the accountability of school leadership is an emerging area of capacity development in several countries. UNICEF supports the improvement of education management information systems in many countries (see PA 5) which include data on teachers. In Zimbabwe, for example, UNICEF has been supporting the upgrade of the Teacher Development Information System (TDIS) database, and efforts are under way to merge the TDIS and EMIS.

Despite the substantial investment and expenditure in the in-service training of teachers, there has been inadequate evaluation as to whether the investment is contributing to improved learning outcomes. Increased availability and use of learning outcome data can help evaluate impact of these interventions.

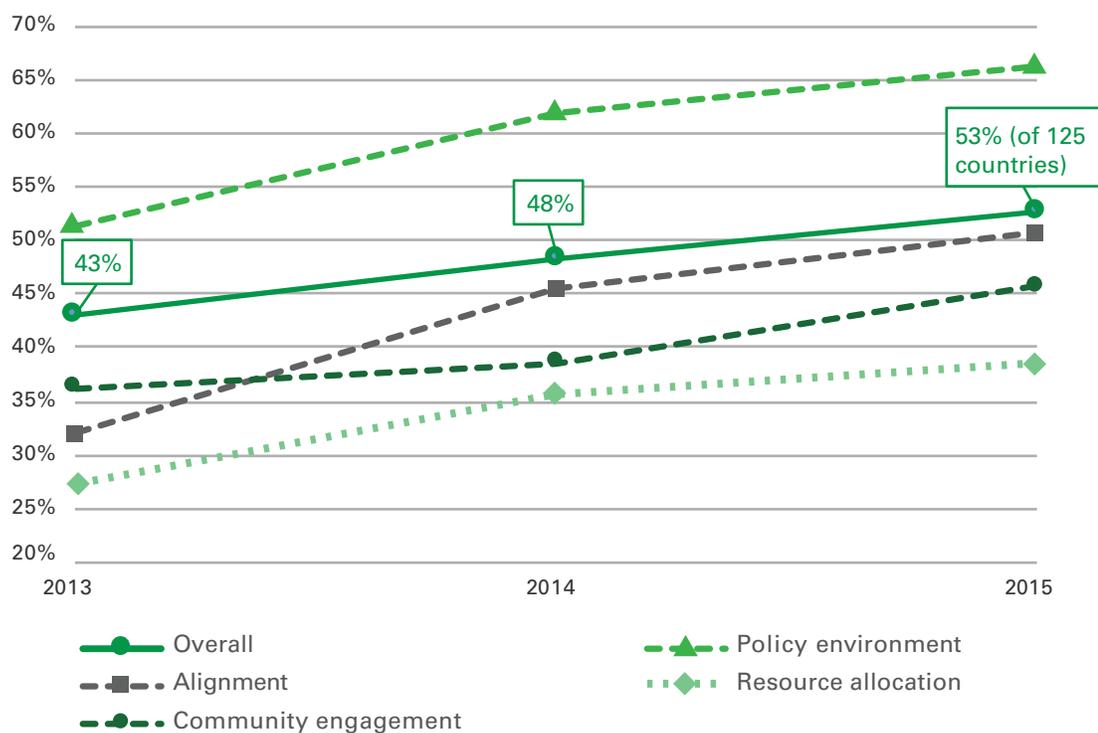
MULTILINGUAL/MOTHER-TONGUE EDUCATION

A key equity priority for UNICEF is multilingual education to allow children to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades. These programmes include mother-

tongue-based multilingual education and intercultural bilingual education (IBE), and often have a dual purpose: the improvement of learning outcomes among children from minority-language communities, and the promotion of social integration and the dialogue between cultures. UNICEF's work in this area has combined a number of strategies: policy dialogue and advocacy; evidence-building; partnerships that may also include civil society organizations; delivery of services and materials; capacity building, often focused on professional development of teachers and principals; and evaluation in order to demonstrate the effectiveness of these approaches.

Significant progress has been achieved in ensuring that children have the opportunity to learn in their mother tongue, as the percentage of countries with an education policy/sector plan that includes multilingual education has increased from 43 per cent in 2013 to 53 per cent in 2015.²² Figure 8 illustrates the progress on the overall indicator and on the four subdomains: alignment, community engagement and resource allocation. Some 66 per cent of countries have a national policy or law establishing the right of all children to receive

FIGURE 8
Output indicator P5.e.6: Countries with an education policy/sector plan that includes multilingual education to allow children to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades



Multilingual education in Cambodia: Access to learning for children from ethnic minorities

Cambodia is home to an estimated 24 ethnic minority groups, many of whom reside in the country's five north-eastern provinces. The cultures and languages of indigenous ethnic minority groups are distinct from the mainstream Khmer culture and language, and only a few speak or understand Khmer, Cambodia's national language.

Children from these ethnic minorities face multiple barriers to participation in school – they live in remote locations with limited qualified teachers, and Khmer, the language of instruction generally used in schools, is not their mother tongue. Research shows that children learn best in the language they use at home.

Following intensive UNICEF support, and in partnership with CARE, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport endorsed the Multilingual Education National Action Plan (MENAP), including projections of enrolment data, teachers and plans for provincial-level expansion of multilingual education (MLE) in preschool and primary school, enabling children from indigenous and ethnic-minority-communities to build a strong foundation for learning and achievement. Specifically, there is a commitment to increase the number of MLE preschools by 88 per cent, and the number of primary schools by 100 per cent, as well as to expand the number of trained MLE teachers by 72 per cent. A particular focus will be placed on improving teacher training, enhancing MLE teacher status and further revising learning materials.

By 2015, the MLE programme was expanded to serve approximately 1,500 children through preschools, and more than 4,000 children in MLE schools at primary level. UNICEF also promoted the transformation of all MLE community schools into government schools so that they receive a school operating budget. As a result, the number of government MLE schools has increased each year. Moreover, the Ministry has agreed to include data on children's ethnicity in their Education Management Information System (EMIS).

A recent study, 'Effectiveness of Bilingual Education in Cambodia: A longitudinal comparative case study of ethnic minority children in bilingual and monolingual schools', supported by CARE and with UNICEF's financial support, showed that ethnic Kreung and Tampuan children attending MLE schools performed significantly better in mathematics than children of the same age and ethnicity attending Khmer-language-only schools.

Moving forward, UNICEF will work with the Ministry and CARE to ensure further expansion beyond 2018. UNICEF will also support the Government to ensure that the MENAP is used as the basis for allocating recurrent financing linked to teacher training, teacher salaries, as well as the production of indigenous teaching and learning materials, and school monitoring.

education in their mother tongue at least during the early grades of primary school, suggesting that the political will to promote mother-tongue education exists.

Large gains have been made in the percentage of countries where teacher training, recruitment and pupil assessment processes are aligned with mother-tongue policies, from 32 per cent of countries in 2013 to 51 per cent in 2015. This means that more children are not unfairly marginalized due to their language and that they are much more likely to advance further in education and achieve higher learning outcomes and skills. The allocation of resources, despite some progress, remains the most challenging subdomain and UNICEF will continue to support countries to provide children with suitable materials and qualified teachers.

The Middle East and North Africa region has recorded the most substantial progress in the percentage of countries with an education policy/sector plan that includes multilingual education, from only 11 per cent of countries in 2013 to 42 per cent in 2015. Globally, UNICEF is on track to meet the target of 65 per cent of countries by 2017.

Programmes involving multilingual education have continued to grow in 2015. In Ethiopia, the region of Benishangul-Gumuz developed curriculum materials for Grade 3 in two local languages, reaching more than 16,000 children (49 per cent girls), with UNICEF's help. In addition, five mother-tongue centres in primary schools were provided with training and materials in order to improve early-grade literacy skills in three local languages, benefiting 3,652 children.

In Peru, a holistic approach to IBE has combined partnerships with civil society organizations, capacity building, curriculum development, and improvement of learning assessment processes, while also paying attention to gender and sustainability issues. Professional development and technical assistance efforts reached 7,056 principals and teachers; 13 trainers; 107 IBE learning companions; 22 regional officials; and 133 local experts, also leading to the accreditation of 120 new IBE teachers. In terms of sustainability, several regions have started self-funding mother-tongue-based assessments, following the training processes conducted by UNICEF. This work responds to demands for quality IBE that indigenous organizations have stated in several events across different regions.

A clear example of evidence-based, impactful policy dialogue is Viet Nam. There, mother-tongue-based bilingual education (MTBBE) students met the required competencies in three subjects (mother tongue, Vietnamese and mathematics) and even outperformed non-MTBBE students in mathematics. An impact evaluation, as well as the 2014–2015 annual assessment, helped reconfirm the relevance of this policy. This contributed to the Government's decision on Viet Nam Basic Education Curriculum/Textbook Reform, which allows development of learning materials in selected subjects in both mother tongue and Vietnamese, and makes teaching more culturally responsive.

EDUCATION MATERIALS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING, INCLUDING CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY



UNICEF provided education materials to 14.9 million individual children and 348,801 classrooms in 2015, making a total of 31.2 million children and approximately 586,000 classrooms supplied with education materials since 2014. Both numbers are on track for UNICEF's targets. These materials range from books and school kits to technologies for children and classrooms. UNICEF employed a wide range of strategies, including innovation, capacity building, partnerships and evaluation – for instance, evaluating the effectiveness of the use of technologies.

The distribution of these materials reached many children disadvantaged by remote or conflict-affected settings. In Burundi, the annual Back to School campaign provided school kits to more than 250,000 vulnerable and excluded children in six provinces, complementing the distribution of kits by the Ministry of Education. In Lebanon, a total of 239,588 children, both Lebanese and refugees, received school supplies for the 2015–2016 academic year, including stationery and learning materials, which alleviated the cost of schooling for vulnerable families and facilitated access to education for many children. In Nepal,

innovation met tradition, with beneficial results: An early-grade reading programme combined training, orientations, and materials development and provision, and a 'Library Book Horse' was piloted: horses carried books to remote mountain schools lacking learning resources. This project reached more than 25,000 children and trained some 540 teachers and 800 school leaders on the importance of early reading. Reading scores in Grade 3 in Bajura district increased to 65 per cent in 2015, from 42 per cent the previous year.

LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION AND ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT



UNICEF is committed to ensuring that children and young people are equipped with the tools they need to improve their own lives and to make positive contributions to their families, communities and society. In 2015, UNICEF continued to support life skills education and adolescent development by focusing on learning for life and school-to-work transition. The capacity of both young girls and boys and adolescents was enhanced in areas such as advocacy, communication and leadership.

There are 30 countries actively working on life skills education, and UNICEF is working in partnership with ministries of education and ministries of youth and sports in 10 countries²³ to integrate life skills education into national curricula in primary and secondary education, which include content and interventions related to peace building, sports and reproductive health. In other countries, such as Burundi, Somalia and South Sudan, links have been made between life skills and peacebuilding, and South Sudan has mainstreamed both into the national curriculum.

The ongoing dire conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic has deprived adolescents of a range of opportunities for their learning and skills development, which used to be available countrywide. But in 2015, approximately 13,000 adolescents, half of them girls, accessed life skills workshops supported by the Ministry of Awqaf (the Ministry of Religious Affairs) and UNICEF, where they gained better knowledge and understanding of potential risks of early marriage and recruitment to armed groups in the crisis context.

In the context of rising dropout rates in secondary schools in Costa Rica, UNICEF aided the Ministry of Education in promoting the national strategy, I'm All In, which aims to achieve continuity, reintegration and academic success in adolescence. Instead of focusing solely on dropout rates, this strategy focuses on the more comprehensive concept of educational exclusion. The strategy has already begun implementation, focusing on 196 secondary schools

located within 75 priority districts of particular need, and reaches 112,170 students, representing 28 per cent of all secondary schools and areas where 45 per cent of the total exclusion is concentrated.

Quality learning environments in child-friendly schools

Improving learning outcomes for all children depends on quality learning environments that are consistent with standards for child-friendly schools (CFS) as a key driver of equity in education. These standards must fully reflect the four principles of CFS: child-centeredness, inclusion, participation and protection. The child-friendly schools model is a human-rights-based approach stemming from the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It stresses that learning should be gender-sensitive and lead to greater gender sensitivity among learners. Likewise, schools should enhance learning around health, resilience and protection (in being safe and protective) and empathy for others (in being rights-based and inclusive). Improving

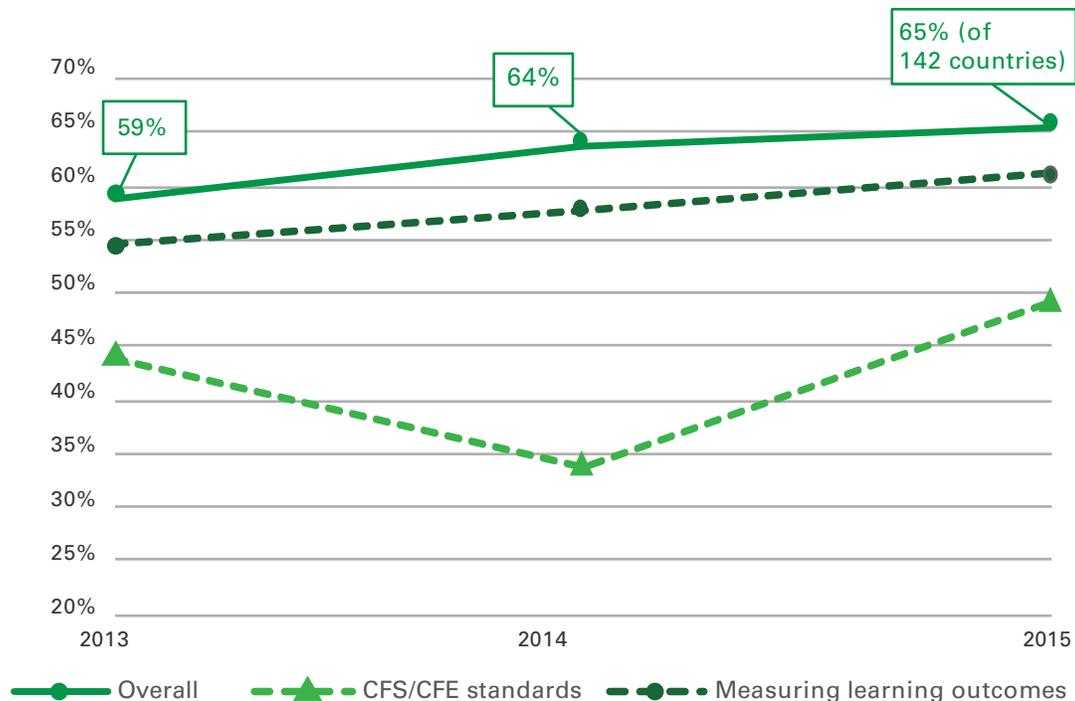
“In the context of rising dropout rates in secondary schools in Costa Rica, UNICEF aided the Ministry of Education in promoting the national strategy, I’m All In, which aims to achieve continuity, reintegration and academic success in adolescence.”

learning outcomes for all children includes the provision of quality learning environments that are consistent with standards for CFS as a key driver of equity in education. This is also strengthened through cross-sectoral interventions in schools, such as school health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programming.

In all seven regions, the CFS approach continues to be used to improve the quality of education, including learning outcomes. In 2015 globally, US\$127 million was spent on these activities: a substantial share (46 per cent)

FIGURE 9

Output indicator P5.b.2: Countries with quality standards consistent with CFS/CFE or similar models developed or revised



on service delivery; 35 per cent on capacity development; and the rest (19 per cent) on other activities, including operating costs and evidence generation and monitoring. Figure 9 shows the progress of all UNICEF countries reporting on this indicator (142 in 2015). Countries are rated on a 1–4 scale on two components: CFS/child-friendly education (CFE) standards and measuring learning outcomes, and their scores are then averaged.

UNICEF has successfully worked on developing and embedding quality standards, consistent with the CFS approach, into national education systems as the percentage of countries with such standards has increased from 59 per cent in 2013 to 65 per cent in 2015.²⁴

Figure 9 illustrates the progress on the overall indicator and its two subdomains: CFS/CFE standards²⁵ and measuring learning outcomes. The overall indicator value is above that of both subdomains, as some countries are performing well in only one domain, which raises their overall score. The progress on standards means that more countries have national quality standards that promote child-centeredness, inclusion, participation and protection. The specific subdomain on measuring learning outcomes reflects the emphasis UNICEF places on learning and measuring of learning beyond basic numeracy and literacy skills and the progress in this subdomain means that in more countries children's development is being measured in a more holistic way.

The East Asia and Pacific region recorded the largest increase in the percentage of countries with quality standards consistent with CFS/CFE, from 65 per cent in 2013 to 82 per cent in 2015. However, progress in South Asia and West and Central Africa was limited, which suggests that UNICEF will need to focus on these regions if it is to reach the ambitious target of 91 per cent of countries by 2017.

UNICEF worked on strengthening CFS in West and Central Africa in 2015, funding the extension of quality CFS to reach 138,855 children (66,718 girls) now in school in the intervention area, the least-developed Sahel region. This progress in 2015 stemmed from efforts on five fronts: a campaign that reached 69,188 people through inter-personal communication, and almost 900,000 people through radio, for children's education and community participation in school management; the finalization of education quality standards and CFS teacher training modules; the production of a CFS manual for 43,000 teachers; the training of 3,651 education inspectors and pedagogical advisers; and awards given to the best-performing CFS schools and pupils.

In Pakistan, UNICEF re-focused on capacity development for the CFE framework, with stronger focus on gender equality to reach disadvantaged adolescent children, especially girls. Capacity gap assessments and capacity

development plans for Punjab, Balochistan and Sindh were developed in non-formal education and continuous professional development, for the implementation of education sector plans/district plans. Provincial departments, district and school levels were targeted using an equity lens including gender-responsiveness in implementing alternative learning pathways; early childhood education (ECE); learning assessments and continuous professional development for improved mentoring, supervision and learning outcomes, especially to benefit marginalized girls; and supporting the development of robust data management systems and sector governance. Early learning development standards (ELDS) were put in place to improve school readiness and community responsiveness. Punjab and Balochistan examination commissions reviewed data to inform assessment matrices, linking these to continuous professional development for better pedagogical skills and instructional methodology.

Further, UNICEF's capacity for downstream provision across countries was strengthened by the new Primary School Furniture Procurement Guidelines developed by UNICEF's Innovation Unit and Education Centre to support local procurement for UNICEF colleagues, which covers all aspects of furniture planning, such as design, production, delivery and maintenance.

CROSS-SECTORAL INTERVENTIONS

In addition to traditional CFS approaches, UNICEF promotes inclusive, quality learning environments through the integration of cross-sectoral interventions, involving WASH, or school health. These activities can enrich and expand the education of students, facilitate service delivery for these other sectors and enhance the quality of learning environments.

In Nicaragua, the Education Committees from 10 schools in two regions received hygiene kits, basic tools and repair parts, as well as training on school infrastructure maintenance, care and functioning. They now have their own school action plan to maintain or improve WASH services. Regional governments are providing follow-up, and with UNICEF support they also organized hygiene and sanitation clubs, with the participation of 100 children (49 girls) from 14 schools.

The enhanced School Health Programme (e-SHEP) implementation was further strengthened in 14 UNICEF-supported districts in Ghana in 2015, with the establishment of School Health Committees and the development of implementation guidelines. Reference manuals to facilitate teaching and learning on e-SHEP components have been distributed to all the basic schools and made available online, and a national scaling-up exercise is anticipated. In addition, Namibia has adopted

the World Health Organization's Health-Promoting School Initiative as a key strategy to deliver on the Vision 2030 goal of ensuring equity and access to quality education for all Namibians, especially young people.

UNICEF's efforts to ensure quality learning environments through CFS and cross-sectoral interventions complement and overlap with its efforts to reach the most disadvantaged children, discussed in the chapter on strengthening equity in education that follows.

Summary and going forward

In 2015, the share of reporting countries with sound learning assessment systems grew from 46 per cent to 51 per cent. Countries with CFS standards were at 65 per cent, an increase of 1 per cent from the previous year. The number of multilingual education policies increased from 48 per cent to 53 per cent.

Looking back, UNICEF has garnered several lessons learned that can guide future progress. For example, there is a real opportunity for growth in the quality of service delivery through expanding evaluation, of teacher trainings in particular, as well as multilingual education and education materials provided directly to students and classrooms. In addition, a mapping on all of the activities undertaken by UNICEF regional and country offices worldwide to reach more out-of-school girls through non-formal education would be helpful in planning future strategies. There is also a great need to complement life skills education with a stronger focus on socio-emotional learning and psychosocial support in order to better serve the needs of adolescent girls and boys, particularly those in difficult settings. It became increasingly apparent that examinations can be a valuable mechanism for bridging from non-formal to formal education. Improved learning outcomes showcased in programme evaluations can persuade national decision-makers to revise policies.

Moving forward, enhancing UNICEF's capacity to support government partners at the country level, and improving the quality and appropriate use of learning assessment data will be key to monitoring and delivering on the SDGs and meeting children's needs. In addition, in supporting the wider sustainable development agenda, it will be important to work with governments to understand various trade-offs and sequencing options within available resources, so that the most marginalized are not left further behind. All children across the life cycle, irrespective of poverty, gender, disability, language or location, must be provided with the opportunity to receive the effective support they need to learn.



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PROGRAMME AREA 3 – STRENGTHENING EQUITY IN EDUCATION

Key inputs and results in 2015

Results chain for equity in education: The results chain applies Theory of Change principles and presents the expected linkages between spending, interventions and progress on UNICEF's Strategic Plan output and outcome indicators for equity. For example, by supporting expanding access for children with disabilities, UNICEF is improving inclusive education, which will in turn result in higher numbers of children in school and increased learning outcomes.

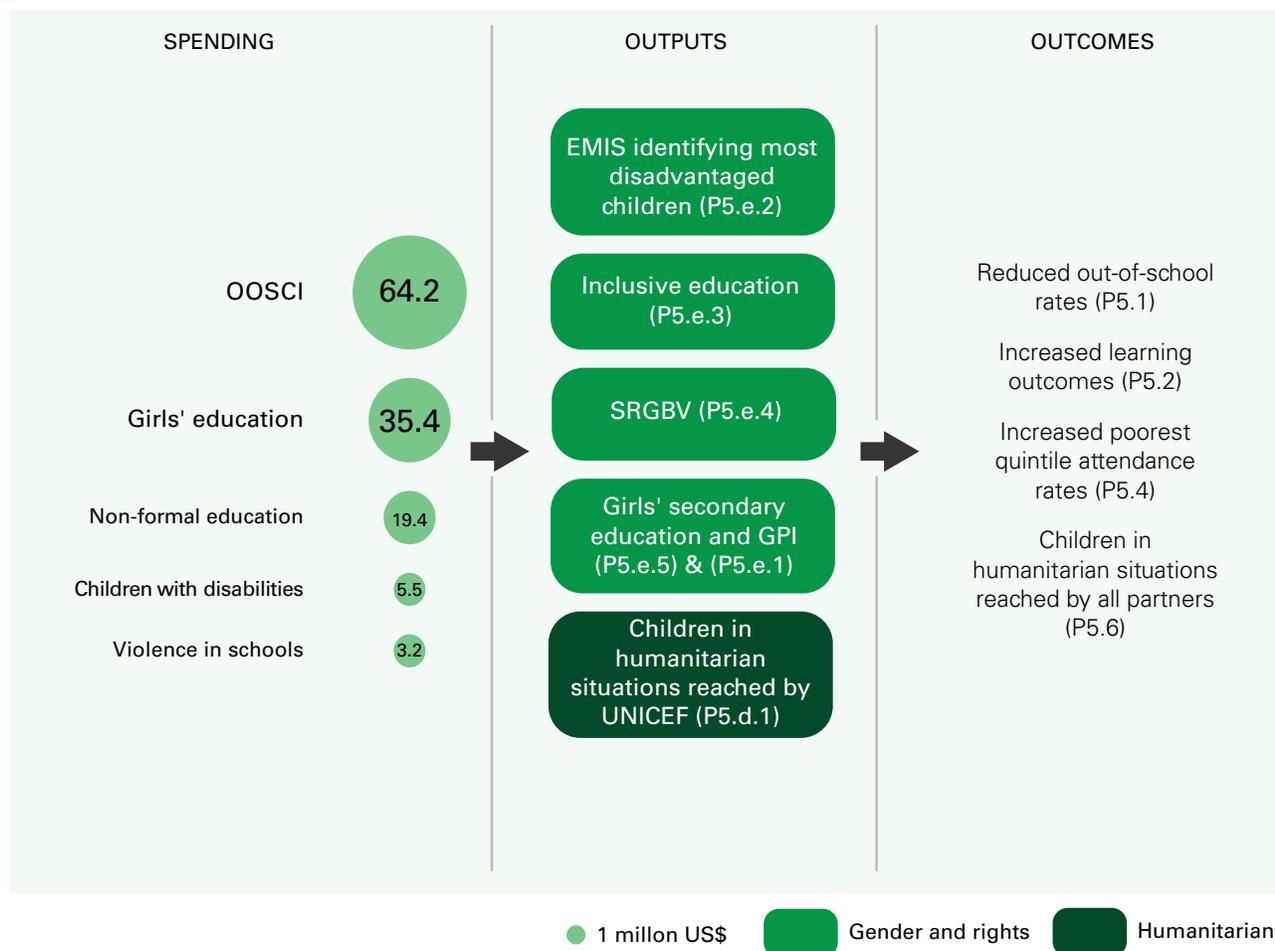
Overall expenditure to support equity in education: UNICEF's equity-driven programming and commitment to the most marginalized children is illustrated in its equity-focused investment of US\$128 million in 2015, representing approximately 13 per cent of total education expenditure. The global Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) is the centrepiece of UNICEF's equity work and accounted for approximately half of the total spending in this area. This important initiative crosses all areas of the equity agenda and targets the most vulnerable groups depending on country contexts. UNICEF also has significant targeted spending on particular vulnerable groups – for example, approximately US\$35 million was

spent on girls' education, with a further US\$3 million on violence in schools, while approximately US\$6 million was spent exclusively on inclusive education.

Constraints and challenges: Almost by definition, work towards greater equity and inclusion in education involves the most complex and challenging issues that keep children from accessing education and learning. These issues range from inequitable societal gender norms and gender-based violence to system-level constraints that still preclude the inclusion of many children with disabilities and/or children from the poorest families. There is also a need to appreciate that many children are disadvantaged from numerous and layered inequities, such as ethnic minority girls who live in the most rural and impoverished parts of a country.

Two major challenges that the global community faced in 2015 were the need to minimize the risk of losing ground on equity in countries affected by emergencies, such as those in West Africa after the Ebola outbreak, and the need to ensure that equity and inclusion were specifically addressed in the new sustainable development agenda. At the same time, a key challenge in country-level work was the need for better data, on topics such as reaching children with disabilities, the effects of school-related gender-based violence, and the impact of child-friendly schools (CFS) on learning.

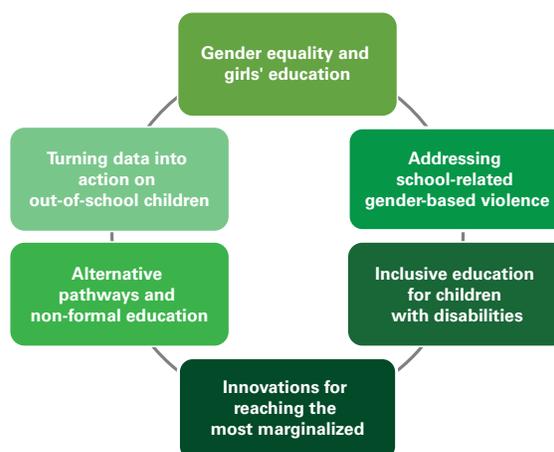
FIGURE 10
Results chain for equity in education



Key strategies: UNICEF uses multiple strategic entry points globally, regionally and at country level, represented in the figure on the right. These help to engage in and strengthen equity in education around the world, addressing multiple interlinked issues of inequality.

Reaching the most disadvantaged

Despite considerable progress over the past two decades, there are still 59 million children of primary school age and 65 million of lower secondary school age who are excluded from education. Some of these children will enter school as over-aged students at some time in the future, but with much reduced chances of completing their education. Some have attended school in the past but have dropped out (or been pushed out) early. The most disadvantaged children, especially those



from the poorest households, ethnic minorities, girls, children with disabilities and those in rural areas, face such insurmountable barriers that they may never set foot in a classroom. Reaching these children is a central equity priority for UNICEF, which tracks global progress on out-of-school children with a focus on the last of a country's children to be served, in getting out-of-school rates below 5 per cent, and those from the poorest families.

TURNING DATA INTO ACTION: THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN INITIATIVE



Launched in 2010, the Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI), a partnership between UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, is one example of UNICEF's commitment to translating data on equity in education into action to reach disadvantaged girls and boys. The initiative's central goal is to obtain a substantial and sustainable reduction in the number of children out of school worldwide. OOSCI starts at the country level by building the capacity of partner governments to conduct a statistical analysis of available data (often from household surveys) to produce detailed information on children who are out of school and at risk of dropping out. The evidence generated by this analysis consists of 'profiles' of children, disaggregated by characteristics such as sex, household wealth, urban or rural location, ethnicity, disability and child labour. These profiles enable the identification of the key barriers that are keeping or pushing children out of school, often including the hidden or indirect costs of education; cultural or systemic biases against girls, ethnic groups or children with disabilities; distance to school; and security issues. The findings from OOSCI studies are used in UNICEF's global advocacy as well as upstream policy dialogue at the national level to advocate for changes in government policies and strategies to reduce or eliminate these barriers, and to assist governments with more equitable education sector planning.

OOSCI has been extremely successful in increasing the number of countries that are able to identify the profiles of children out of school and analyse the barriers that have led to their exclusion. The initiative was initially joined by 26 countries spread across UNICEF's seven regions, and this number has since grown to 87. In 2015, of the 37 OOSCI country studies that had so far been completed, 8 were published, a further 20 studies were launched, and 3 studies are being updated using more recent data. The impact of these studies on national education sector plans ranges from system-wide changes, such as second-chance education programmes, to targeted interventions, such as the introduction of mobile schools for pastoralist communities.

In the Middle East and North Africa, where progress on the out-of-school indicators has been especially strong,

several countries have already made substantial progress on following up on the recommendations of OOSCI reports. As an example, data generated under OOSCI have extensively supported Tunisia's current national education reform process, particularly informing ongoing policy development and advocacy. In Jordan, the launch of the OOSCI study by the Ministry of Education in 2015 has generated new partnerships and strategic focus on providing inclusive education services to children with disabilities in public schools. In most countries, OOSCI supported the updating of outdated demographic data kept by ministries of education and supported national efforts to improve EMIS reliability and accuracy. Of note is the example of the Sudan, where the need for improvement was highlighted as part of OOSCI and actions were implemented to strengthen EMIS. As a result, national EMIS was moved from a paper-based to a computerized system and capacity development was included as part of the OOSCI work at country level.

Other regions have also shown concrete impact from OOSCI, with translation to national education sector plans and activities in many countries including Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia and Viet Nam. For example, based on OOSCI study findings and recommendations regarding girls who are engaged in economic and household work in Ethiopia, learning materials have been provided to 14,000 girls, as well as incentives to poor families to send their girls to school, which led to the re-enrolment of 47,500 out-of-school children.

In addition, OOSCI used its country experience to inform several products for global use in 2015: the new OOSCI website, <allinschool.org>, provides easy access to more than 100 documents and has enabled 21,700 downloads of the summary OOSCI global report 'Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All'. In addition, the OOSCI Operational Manual published by UNICEF provides step-by-step guidance for national governments to conduct a robust study on out-of-school children. The Operational Manual draws heavily on the original methodology developed for OOSCI, supplemented by lessons learned from more than 30 studies conducted in partner countries.

ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION



A significant number of disadvantaged and marginalized children and youth continue to face barriers in access to education, and this is in part due to the inappropriate and inflexible nature of education. Whether it is for children in remote areas, children from migrant groups, or youth who need 'second-chance' education, the diversity of barriers can only be addressed through similarly diverse provisions through varied providers, both formal and non-formal.

Across countries, UNICEF supports a range of education provisions outside of the formal system, including those supported by faith-based organizations, small-scale targeted NGOs, and communities, which are designed to reach disadvantaged out-of-school children. Strategies include not only expansion of access but also essential support to curriculum development, development of teaching and learning materials, teacher training and other quality improvement measures. In close collaboration with governments, UNICEF also contributed to efforts around certification of non-formal education programmes as well as programmes such as accelerated learning models, which aim to facilitate the reintegration of students back into formal education systems.

In sub-Saharan Africa, where countries have been particularly struggling to get larger numbers of their children into school, UNICEF has been working on many fronts in 2015. For example, in Ethiopia, the Alternative Basic Education programme has continued to play a vital role in the provision of basic primary education in the pastoral areas.

In Bangladesh, the Each Child Learns (ECL) initiative aiming at improving the learning levels of the most disadvantaged was expanded to 980 public primary schools, a total of 7,438 teachers were trained, and approximately 400,000 students were reached. The number of children out of primary school decreased to 9 per cent (9 per cent for boys and 8 per cent for girls), down from 15 per cent in 2010, and a total of 3,902 children were mainstreamed into formal schools upon completion of ECL's basic education course.

INNOVATIONS FOR REACHING THE MOST MARGINALIZED



UNICEF's increasing focus on innovation as a means of reaching the most marginalized children with quality education is illustrated by the increase in the number of countries

working in this area from 132 in 2013 to 145 in 2015. There has also been a related increase in the percentage of these countries with innovative approaches at scale to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children, from 30 per cent in 2013 to 35 per cent in 2015. In Figure 11, the progress is evident, especially in relation to developing national strategies and traction in relation to innovation in education. Although only 34 per cent of countries have strong evidence of successful and cost-effective innovations in education, this has increased dramatically from 2014 and is expected to increase further as more innovations are evaluated. The CEE/CIS region has demonstrated particularly strong progress on this indicator, increasing from a relatively low baseline of

21 per cent to 38 per cent of countries with innovative approaches at scale in 2015.²⁶

Innovations in education can be powerful tools for alternative education options for children who are out of the reach of formal education. For example, in the Sudan, UNICEF helped design and deploy an electronic game that can be played on tablets as an alternative delivery tool for basic mathematics. This game has so far been effective in demonstrating improved mathematics learning outcomes for out-of-school children living in pastoralist communities through the active participation of community volunteers that guide the learning environment; government support and certification; and the interactive and self-learning nature of the game. In terms of scaling-up, eLearning Sudan has been able to leverage grants and awards that are 65 times what UNICEF invested initially. The project has so far reached 589 children aged 7–9 from 19 rural, semi-nomadic or internally displaced persons communities across three states of the Sudan (Gedaref, White Nile and North Kordofan). With the available new resources, the project will be able to adapt and expand in Lebanon, Jordan and Chad, providing alternative education services to 170,000 by 2020. This project illustrates the importance of embedding evaluation and results monitoring into the design of innovative approaches.

UNICEF's efforts to get the most disadvantaged children into school through avenues such as OOSCI, alternative pathways and innovations, share common cause and overlap with its work on quality learning environments centred on CFS, discussed in the previous chapter. These efforts are also tied into UNICEF's approach to innovation in education more broadly (see Strategic Context of 2015 for more details).

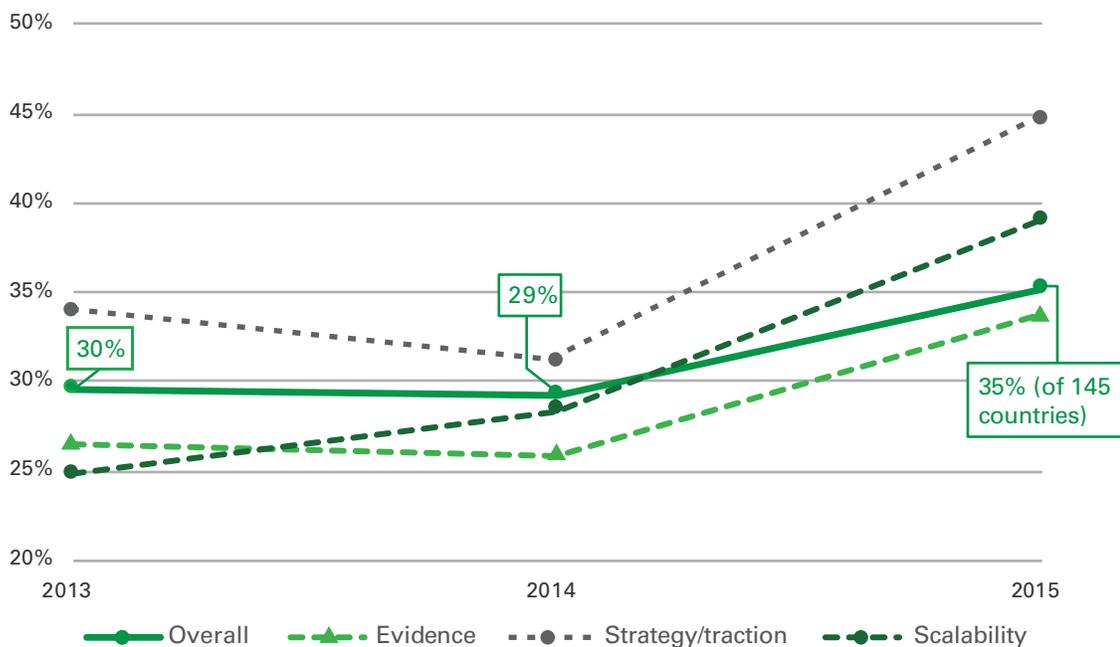
Gender equality and girls' education

At the global level, progress towards gender parity in primary education has been significant, but the poorest girls remain out of school and, where disparity is most severe, it is generally girls that are most disadvantaged. Poverty and location often combine with gender to create deep inequalities within countries. Based on current trends, lower secondary school completion in sub-Saharan Africa will not be achieved until 2111 for the poorest girls, compared with 2051 for the richest girls and around 2090 for the poorest boys. Solutions will require the support of men and boys, as well as the leadership of women and girls.

The many additional benefits of educating girls, such as delayed marriage, lower fertility rates and greater civic engagement, are only fully realized when girls are able to complete lower secondary education. Yet progress in

FIGURE 11

Output indicator P5.b.1: Countries with innovative approaches at scale to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children



achieving gender parity at lower secondary appears to have stalled, with the percentage of countries achieving parity declining slightly, from 38 per cent in 2013 to 37 per cent in 2015. However, this apparent lack of progress for girls is due to worsening of the situation for boys. Progress for girls has been achieved as the percentage of countries in which girls are disadvantaged at lower secondary has fallen from 41 per cent in 2013 to 36 per cent in 2015. But at the same time, the number of countries in which boys are disadvantaged has increased – from 22 per cent at the baseline to 27 per cent.

UNICEF is supporting low and low-middle income countries to progressively realize SDG 4 of 12 years of quality primary, lower and upper secondary education for all. Advancing girls' education to secondary is one of four targeted priorities in the UNICEF Gender Action Plan (2014–2017), with 53 country offices across all seven regions reporting progress in 2015. To reduce gender disparities and enable all girls and boys to have an equal opportunity to learn, UNICEF adopts a variety of evidence-

based strategies at both primary and lower secondary. These include improving education quality, strengthening gender-responsive sector planning, engaging community support, and making schools more affordable, accessible and responsive to the specific needs of girls and boys. These are delivered through inter-sectoral programmes that recognise the way in which specific barriers may impact boys and girls differently.

The core work of UNICEF is to strengthen education systems to ensure quality education for all, while addressing the gendered barriers faced by girls and boys. This includes reviewing the curriculum and removing gender stereotypes from learning materials, providing gender training to teachers, supporting the use of learning assessment data in schools and at national level, and providing communities with key data to strengthen accountability.

Mainstreaming gender considerations into national education sector plans and policies is key to ensuring that girls and boys enter and succeed at school. To ensure

Gender Action Plan

UNICEF's Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2014–2017 sets out how UNICEF will promote gender equality at the global, regional and country levels. Aligned to the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014–2017, the GAP elaborates the gender dimensions of the programmatic results across the seven outcome areas of the Strategic Plan along with the relevant indicators for measuring success. It also describes the steps UNICEF is undertaking with regard to institutional effectiveness in implementing the programmatic work on gender, through commitment of resources and strengthening of staffing, capacity and systems. Further information can be found in the GAP Board Report 2016.

Efforts are being focused in a subset of 10 countries against which results will be reported in the next year. A girls' education review tool has been designed and piloted in Malawi and will inform girls' education programming across the global portfolio.

Improving access to learning opportunities for girls in Afghanistan through community-based education

Prolonged armed conflict has resulted in larger numbers of out-of-school children in Afghanistan, and the majority of girls are not able to complete the full cycle of primary education. Despite significant progress made in education sector for more than a decade, the primary school gross enrolment ratio is 75 per cent, with girls at 63 per cent and boys 86 per cent. Sustained support is required to keep the current 8.6 million children in school and to enroll an estimated 3.5 million out-of-school children, 70 per cent of whom are girls.

A combination of supply and demand factors act as barriers to girls' access schools. These include long distances to schools, insecurity, socio-cultural practices and norms, such as early marriage. There is also a limited supply of girls' schools (at 16 per cent of schools) and a shortage of qualified female teachers (at 30 per cent of teachers). Moreover, 50 per cent of schools are without adequate buildings, water and sanitation facilities, and most of them lack boundary walls for security.

A recent assessment of Ministry of Education programmes in Afghanistan has identified community-based education as the most effective means of reaching out-of-school children, especially girls, in an insecure context. Since these schools are based on community demand, are generally within walking distance for children and teachers are identified locally, there appears to be a greater acceptance and willingness on the part of families to send their girls to these schools.

Accordingly, UNICEF supports the Ministry of Education to implement community-based education (CBE) and alternative learning programmes in the 10 most deprived provinces and selected districts of seven other provinces without formal schools. CBE has also been institutionalized in the system and is one of the three key areas funded by the GPE programme.

This work is done through:

- Community needs assessments;
- Advocacy and community mobilization for girls' education;
- Technical assistance and capacity building for implementing the CBE policy;
- Establishing partnerships with NGOs where access and security are difficult for government counterparts; and
- Monitoring using a combination of approaches, such as the Government's academic supervision and third parties.

As a result of this programme, nearly 49,000 out-of-school children (50 per cent girls) accessed learning opportunities through 1,800 community-based schools in 2015, surpassing the planned target for the year by 23 per cent.

sustainable change, UNICEF works closely with ministries of education to strengthen their commitment and capacity to build and report on gender responsive education systems. In 2015, UNICEF, UNGEI and the GPE developed guidelines for gender-responsive sector planning and designed workshops to build regional capacity.

UNICEF works with communities, including girls themselves, to tackle gender norms that can limit girls' education. In Bangladesh, UNICEF trained more than 27,000 primary and secondary school teachers, mobilizing students to advocate against child marriage. In Nigeria, UNICEF has influenced key decision makers in five states with a package of communication for development interventions, including radio and TV debates. This contributed to the doubling of female head teachers in 2015, increasing safety in schools and providing girls with role models. UNICEF has supported girls' clubs and female mentors to support girls' participation in the United Republic of Tanzania, Nigeria and Kenya. In the United Republic of Tanzania, UNICEF expanded TUSEME clubs to a further 90 schools, reaching 420 in total. TUSEME, meaning 'Let's Speak Out' in Kiswahili, is an approach that aims to empower girls to understand and overcome problems that constrain their social development, including academic achievement.

With families forced to make difficult choices, distance, cost and insecurity can have a greater impact on girls' access to education than on that of boys. In Afghanistan, UNICEF has supported the Ministry of Education to increase the number of girls and boys enrolled in remote areas. Over the past six years, 380,000 children (55 per cent girls) have enrolled in 3,700 community-based primary schools and 132,000 have transitioned to the formal public schools at end of Grade 3. To improve the retention of adolescent girls, safety in and around schools is being prioritized. To date, more than 200 schools have been constructed or rehabilitated with gender-segregated latrines, water points and boundary walls. In Mali, UNICEF is providing scholarships and worked with local women's groups to enable 85,800 children (mostly girls) to be retained in school.

To keep girls and boys in school and learning, schools need to be responsive to the specific challenges faced by adolescents. In Mexico, UNICEF created forums that enabled indigenous girls to advocate with state authorities to address barriers to their education, including lack of teaching in their own language, early pregnancy, discrimination and violence. In countries including Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania, UNICEF has provided technical assistance to design flexible re-entry policies for pregnant or married school girls. UNICEF has also contributed to the global evidence base on adolescent girls' menstrual hygiene management by

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improving the availability of clean, gender-segregated WASH facilities, as well as access to information and materials. Research carried out in 14 countries is being used to inform evidence-based interventions in partnership with national governments.

In a number of countries, particularly in Latin America, boys are failing to complete lower secondary. UNICEF is working to identify and address the barriers to boys' participation, which include gang violence, the need to seek employment, and migration. In El Salvador, UNICEF provided technical assistance for the design of a gender-responsive national strategy for school retention. This included life skills curricula and teacher's manuals responding to the needs of adolescent boys.

One third of girls that are out of school are living in countries affected by conflict. Through the Learning for Peace programme, UNICEF has worked with government partners in 14 countries to address gender inequities in education in humanitarian settings. Strategies include removing gender stereotypes from learning materials in Pakistan, strengthening the gender-responsiveness of teaching in Uganda, introducing a Code of Conduct to address gender-based violence in Liberia, and supplying girls with cash transfers to increase their school attendance in South Sudan. UNICEF published an advocacy brief on Gender, Education and Peacebuilding presenting evidence on how gender inequality can be a driver of conflict and showcasing gender-transformative approaches to peacebuilding.²⁷

SCHOOL-RELATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

In 2015, 22 per cent of the 122 UNICEF country offices reporting had a national education sector policy or plan that specified school-related gender-based violence prevention and response mechanisms. While the percentage has remained static, the number of country offices reporting has grown from 105 to 122 since

United Nations Girls' Education Initiative

In 2015, UNGEI advanced its policy advocacy agenda through strengthened partnerships and new and innovative collaborative ventures. In particular, UNGEI played a key role as advocate for equitable and inclusive Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through lobbying and advocacy, UNGEI effectively influenced the Incheon Declaration and the Education 2030 Framework for Action to ensure gender equality is strongly reflected in the education vision, goals and accompanying targets and indicators.

UNGEI's leadership on ending school-related gender-based violence has continued to achieve results. In 2015, the Global Working Group to End SRGBV, a partnership of 40 agencies that was launched in 2014, gained international recognition by influencing the annual theme of the 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women. This led to a global campaign on gender-based violence in and around schools, and influenced activism on school-related gender-based violence around the world. Nearly 800,000 individuals were reached through social media alone. In addition, UNGEI was awarded a grant from the Government of Canada to implement a joint initiative with Education International to engage teacher unions in efforts to end school-related gender-based violence. The project, Teacher Unions Take Action on SRGBV, includes seven unions from five countries in Eastern and Southern Africa.

UNGEI's partnership with GPE was strengthened in 2015. UNGEI co-hosted the gender consultation for the development of the new GPE Strategic Plan 2016–2020, and lobbied effectively for inclusion of gender equality as a foundational principle for the Partnership. The new strategy commits to mainstream attention to gender across all goals and programmes. UNGEI also continued to advance joint efforts with the GPE on gender-responsive sector planning, finalizing the UNGEI-GPE Guidance for Developing Gender Responsive Education Sector Plans, and designing regional workshops for strengthening national capacity. Country-level training will take place in 2016 with UNICEF support.

The UNGEI Fund for Documentation of Good Practice in girls' education and gender equality was recognized in 2015 as an innovative and effective approach to strengthening local level capacity as well as building evidence on girls' education. The Good Practice Fund, launched in 2013 in collaboration with the Overseas Development Institute, supported 17 organizations and local governments, across 14 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia to document promising interventions that have increased educational opportunities for girls and advanced gender equality. Case studies highlighted a range of approaches to increasing girls' enrolment and participation, improving learning and building girls' capacities and agency, with a focus on girls in situations of poverty and marginalization. This evidence has informed work of partners, including UNICEF.

Building on 10 years of engagement with the Education for All Global Monitoring Report (EFA-GMR), in 2015 UNGEI launched a joint effort with the GMR team to strengthen the focus on gender issues in global reporting on education. With UNGEI financial and technical support, the GMR produced a policy brief on school-related gender-based violence and the 2015 GMR Gender Summary, which was downloaded over 15,000 times in the last three months of 2015 alone, and translated into Urdu (in addition to French, Spanish and Arabic) in order for the Pakistan Coalition for Education to share it with standing committees on education across the Pakistani national and provincial assemblies.

At the regional level, UNGEI worked with partners to commission the development of a new school-related gender-based violence curriculum resource in East Asia and the Pacific, and to support the African Union to highlight gender equality in the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016–2025. At the country level, UNGEI regional committees and local partners contributed to a large training on girls' education issues in Bangladesh, awareness campaigns in Mali, a Gender, Inclusion and Disability Technical Working Group in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and legislation against child marriage in Malawi.

2013, reflecting increasing recognition by governments of school-related gender-based violence as a barrier to girls' participation and learning. UNICEF, in collaboration with GPE and UNGEI, is conducting action research in sub-Saharan Africa to generate evidence of what works to reduce school-related gender-based violence and to promote safe and supportive environments. In addition, UNICEF is linking education and protection to prevent child marriage in 12 countries.

Figure 12 illustrates that UNICEF-supported countries are having greater success in developing national legal/policy frameworks that address school-related gender-based violence, but that greater attention needs to be placed on developing systems to track incidences of school-related gender-based violence and the provision of safe and supportive learning environments for girls.

Evaluation of a four-country programme in West Africa found that a sustained, multi-sectoral approach, with focused efforts to build ownership at the national and community level, were common features of successful models to address school-related gender-based violence. In 2015 the 'Addressing SRGBV to Promote Safe and Supportive Learning Environments for Girls Initiative' by UNICEF, in partnership with GPE and UNGEI, launched

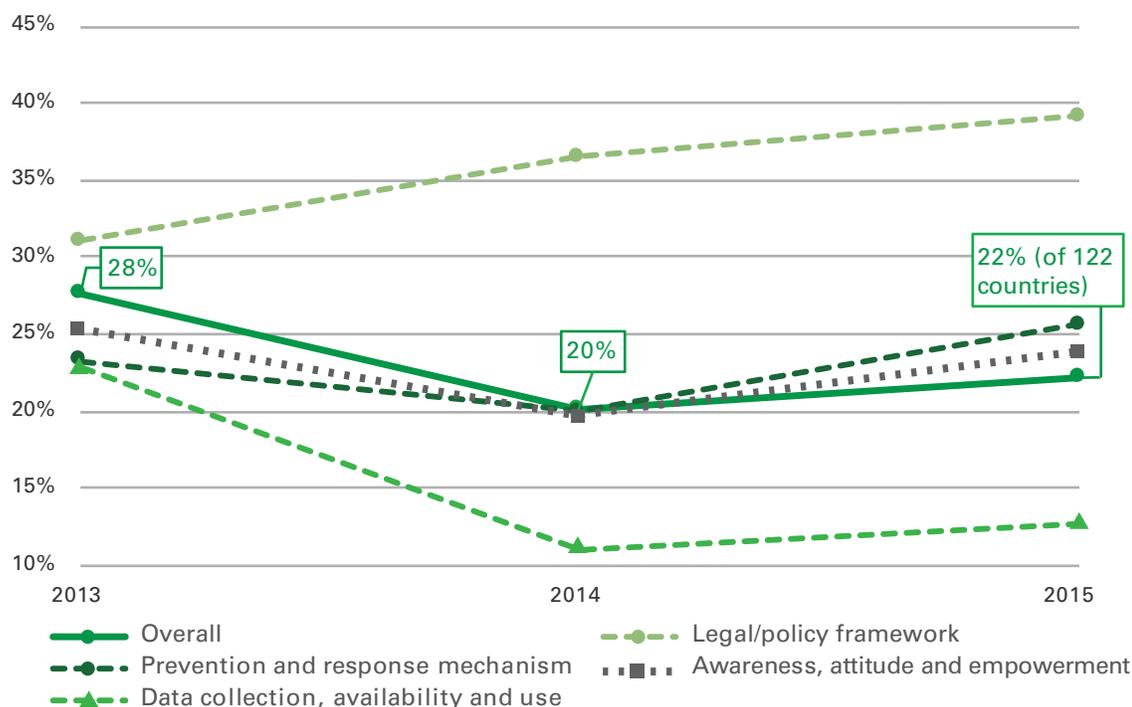
school-related gender-based violence prevention programming as part of Ethiopia's fifth education sector development programme. The initiative in Togo, Zambia, Ethiopia and Cote d'Ivoire promotes a systematic approach to addressing school-related gender-based violence as part of education sector plans based on evidence in terms of 'what works' in particular country contexts. In Papua New Guinea, UNICEF supported capacity building of school counsellors on school-related gender-based violence, while in Serbia, a web-based system for reporting violence in schools was designed, and a manual for schools on prevention of gender-based violence was disseminated in 900 schools.

Inclusive education for children with disabilities

While data on children with disabilities are often incomplete and of poor quality, there is substantial evidence that these children are disproportionately excluded from education. In many low- and middle-income countries, children with disabilities face a double barrier: social bias against disability, which often strongly discourages these children from going to school, and a

FIGURE 12

Output Indicator P5.e.4: Countries with an education sector policy or plan that specifies prevention and response mechanisms to address gender-based violence in and around schools



lack of capacity in schools to accommodate their needs. As a result of these barriers, children with disabilities are less likely to go to school, more likely to drop out early, and less likely to learn key skills such as reading, writing and mathematics than children without disabilities. In fact, household survey data show that, on average, almost half of all children with disabilities are out of school – although this can rise to more than 90 per cent in some countries.²⁸ UNICEF makes inclusive education for children with disabilities a prominent priority and tracks its progress at the country level.

Since 2013, the percentage of countries implementing policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities with UNICEF support has increased from 36 per cent to 43 per cent.²⁹ UNICEF has been particularly successful in supporting governments to develop laws and/or policies on inclusive education (76 per cent of countries), and in improving attitudes towards inclusive education (56 per cent of countries). This progress means that in more countries the rights to education of children with disabilities are being recognized and supported. The South Asia region has recorded the most significant levels

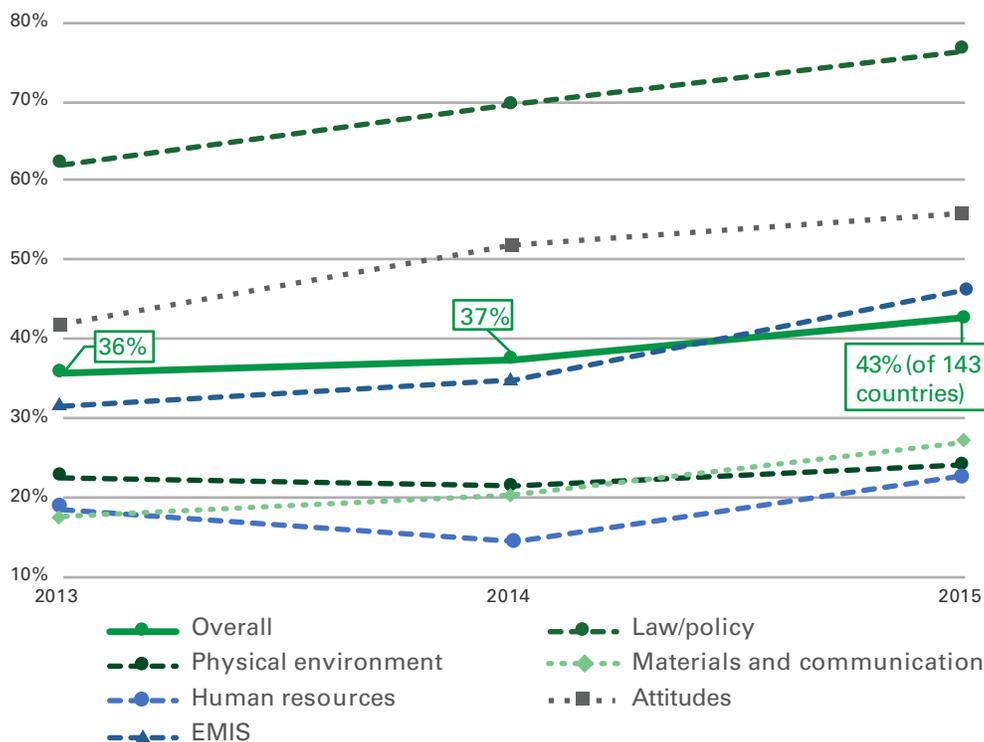
of progress on this indicator, increasing from 25 per cent of countries in 2013 to 38 per cent of countries in 2015.

The progress currently being made suggests that UNICEF is on track to meet its target of 46 per cent of countries by 2017. However, despite the overall progress, constrained education budgets and stagnating global financing for education have contributed to the limited progress being made in relation to the physical environment, adequate human resources and the availability of suitable learning materials for children with disabilities (see Figure 13).

At the global level, UNICEF has engaged in active advocacy for inclusive education for children with disabilities. It has maintained very close linkages with the GPE, taking on several leadership roles, including participating in the GPE Technical Reference Group on inclusive education, and co-convening a thematic consultation on education for children with disabilities that helped to shape GPE's new Strategic Plan. In addition, as a co-convenor of the World Education Forum, UNICEF made a strong call to world leaders for investment in inclusive education and children with disabilities.

FIGURE 13

Output indicator P5.e.3: Countries with policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities



Inclusive Education in the Republic of Moldova: Children with special educational needs and children with disabilities in regular schools

The Republic of Moldova inherited an education system in which children with disabilities were placed in special residential schools or children's homes, taught at home, or not educated at all. In fact, parents were encouraged by the system to leave their children with disabilities in special institutions, and society at large treated disability as shameful.

In seeking to increase access to quality education, especially for disadvantaged groups, UNICEF has partnered with the Ministry of Education to promote inclusion of children with disabilities, with adequate support, in regular education settings. The objectives of UNICEF's programme in the country are to:

- Increase the number of children with disabilities in regular schools to 50 per cent by 2017; and
- Increase the number of teachers who accept children with disabilities in their classes to 70 per cent by 2017.

This system-strengthening programme works by improving the legal and regulatory frameworks; introducing child-centred pedagogy in teacher-training courses; developing guidance notes and methodology for individualization of the education process; developing support services; and promoting adequate funding and management of institutions and implementation of CFS standards. In addition, it works to address social norms; promote acceptance and respect for the education rights of children with disabilities; and change the practices of parents, classmates and teachers with regard to the participation of children with disabilities in education.

As a result of this programme, the number of children with special educational needs, including children with disabilities in regular primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Moldova, increased significantly in recent years. By the end of 2015, the number of children with special educational needs in regular education settings had reached 10,393, including 1,829 children with disabilities. The latter represents 35 per cent of school-age children with disabilities. At the same time, the number of children with disabilities in special schools reached 1,033, registering a 42 per cent decrease from 2013.

In addition, psycho-pedagogical support services are now available in all 35 districts of the country, and all 238 staff members are now able to support schools and teachers in the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classes. A set allocation for inclusive education in the per-pupil education funding formula now allows schools to create enhanced learning environments for children with disabilities. Data on children with special educational needs and on children with disabilities in regular schools are now collected by the National Bureau of Statistics. Moreover, schools now monitor psycho-pedagogical assistance services, identifying strong and weak points, existing obstacles, and changes that need to be made to make the services more efficient, and set the basis for further interventions for promotion of inclusive education throughout the system.

Moreover, UNICEF played a key role in defining targets and indicators for disability inclusion on SDG 4, particularly 4.5 and 4.a.

In April 2015, UNICEF collaborated with the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on a Day of General Discussion on the right to education for persons with disabilities. UNICEF inputted into the development of the agenda for this and made several presentations on different aspects of inclusive education in collaboration with the UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office. Subsequently, in discussion with the CRPD, it was also agreed that UNICEF would support the committee in drafting of the General Comment No. 4 on the right to inclusive education, Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. UNICEF has

inputted at different stages of the drafting process of the General Comment, which is expected to be adopted by the CRPD committee in 2016.

UNICEF has continued to develop tools and guidance to generate evidence on children with disabilities and to build the capacity to meet their needs. For example, contributing to progress on serving children with disabilities, as well as children from ethnic and linguistic minorities, was notably the 14 technical booklets that UNICEF produced on a variety of topics concerning how to make an education system more inclusive for these children, from policies and laws to teacher training. These booklets now serve as the foundation for UNICEF's activities on children with disabilities at global and country levels. Each of the booklets is accompanied by a webinar,

which is available on Vimeo for the widest possible dissemination. Each booklet is developed in a screen-reader-ready PDF, allowing the use of a screen reader for people with visual impairments, and each contains a QR code which, when scanned, connects the reader directly to the webinar, an exciting use of new technology to increase user-friendliness. In addition, the UNICEF Supply Division's intensified focus on children with disabilities culminated in a global meeting of internal and external experts to raise awareness, inspire and exchange knowledge on assistive technology products. Revisions to supply components in education kits will help teachers and caregivers to include more children in learning and play.

Also in 2015, UNICEF piloted an Inclusive EMIS Guide to collecting data on the inclusivity of the education system using the school census in partner countries. Most ministries of education collect data for their EMIS through an annual school census; however, very few of these instruments collect robust data either on children with disabilities who are in school or on the accessibility of school buildings and the availability of assistive devices. By enabling ministries of education to improve the data on children with disabilities that they collect, the Inclusive EMIS Guide will contribute to the development of more equitable education sector plans and the promotion of inclusive education. Further, volume 3 of the Education Sector Analysis Guidelines will include a new chapter on inclusive education.

At the country level, UNICEF combines upstream policy dialogue and advocacy to promote inclusive education with governments and civil society with practical programmes that deliver education services for children with disabilities, often in collaboration with other partners. Addressing the challenges in the Middle East and North Africa region, for example, in Jordan, following assessments in 2014 and 2015 that revealed that more than half of children with disabilities are not in school, more than 2,000 students with disabilities were integrated into formal schools in 2015 through a partnership between UNICEF and Mercy Corps. Resource rooms were established in 55 double-shifted schools where children received accommodative and mobility equipment, as well as rehabilitative sessions. Training and awareness sessions were also provided to 951 teachers and 7,476 community members to encourage the education of children with disabilities. Strides have also been made on policy work, resources and service delivery in Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Morocco.

Summary and going forward

As of the latest data in 2015, 27 out of 122 reporting countries were addressing school-related gender-based violence, versus 29 out of 105 reporting at the 2013 baseline. Prioritization of girls' secondary education remained at 27 per cent of reporting countries from the first baseline in 2014. Countries implementing sound policies on inclusive education for children with disabilities rose to 43 per cent from the baseline of 36 per cent in 2013, putting it well on track to meet its 2017 target.

As girls and other marginalized children face multiple barriers to staying in school and learning, UNICEF must expand multi-sectoral approach to system strengthening at greater scale. On a country-by-country basis, the most marginalized children will be identified and strategies developed to support them in accessing quality opportunities for learning, working to remove the many significant barriers to quality education that many still face. Going forward, the renewed focus on inclusive education and on gender equality, beyond parity, in the SDGs must be accompanied by a serious investment of funding and human resources equal to the challenges before us.



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PROGRAMME AREA 4 – EDUCATION IN HUMANITARIAN SITUATIONS

Education is a human right for all children and is both life-saving and life-enhancing in emergency contexts. In 2015 alone, 462 million children from 3 to 18 years of age were living in 35 countries affected by humanitarian emergencies and protracted crises, 75 million of whom have had their education disrupted.³⁰ By 2018, it is estimated that half of the world's poor and the majority of out-of-school children will live in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.³¹ In the context of climate change, displacement and attendant conflicts are on the rise, as are natural disasters. Crises in the Central African Republic, Iraq, Mali, Nigeria, the State of Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and Yemen, and Ebola-affected countries such as Liberia have resulted in complex and diverse challenges. Many other countries that are recovering from years of protracted violence or natural or climate change-related emergencies and making progress towards sustainable development results for children, remain fragile and potentially at risk for relapsing into violent conflict or heightened levels of vulnerability. In these contexts, access to basic social services such as education and the protection of child rights is largely hampered due to pervasive insecurity and weak institutions and education systems – leading to widespread child deprivation and heightened vulnerability, increased poverty, and increasing exposure to violence.

To tackle these very difficult challenges, UNICEF remains committed to leading, delivering and supporting education for children in emergencies and protracted crises.

Key inputs and results in 2015

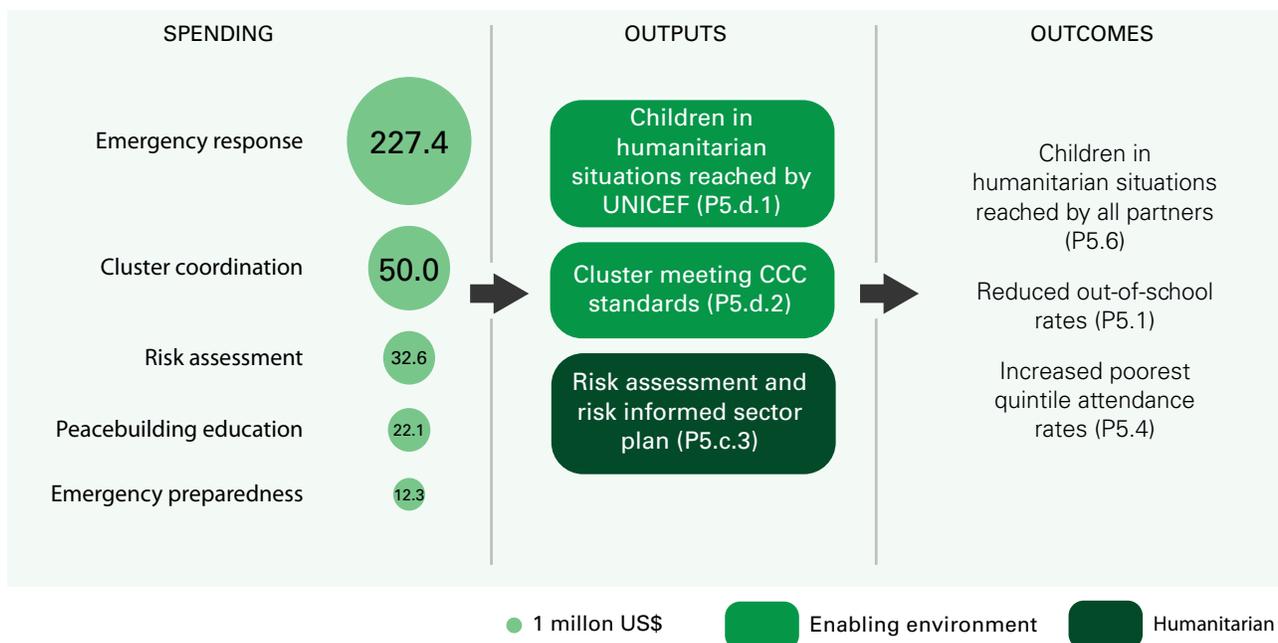
Results chain for education in humanitarian situations:

The results chain applies Theory of Change principles and presents the expected linkages between spending, interventions and progress on UNICEF's Strategic Plan output and outcome indicators for education in humanitarian situations. For example, by channelling funds and technical assistance to emergency response, UNICEF is increasing the percentage of girls and boys in humanitarian situations who are able to access educational opportunities, reducing the number of out-of-school children worldwide.

Overall expenditure to support education in

humanitarian situations: There has been a significant increase in spending on education in humanitarian situations and related activities such as peacebuilding education and disaster risk reduction, from a total of US\$231 million in 2014 to US\$344 million in 2015. The majority of this increase occurred in emergency response spending, which increased from US\$120 million to US\$227 million in 2015. The growing human and economic costs of humanitarian situations further emphasizes the need for education systems that are risk-informed and better prepared for emergencies and that actively

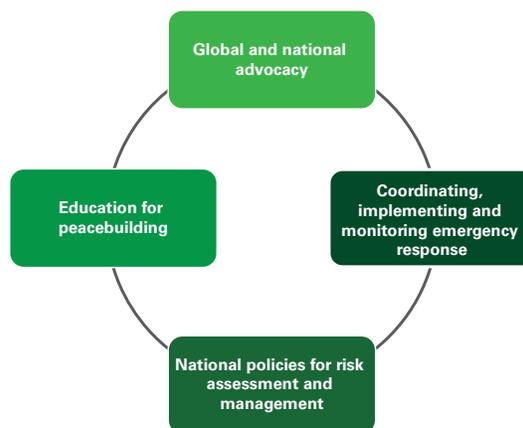
FIGURE 14
Results chain for education in humanitarian situations



contribute to stable, peaceful societies. UNICEF has invested US\$67 million in supporting countries to carry out risk assessments, enhance emergency preparedness and develop peacebuilding education. The emergency clusters play a crucial role in ensuring that this investment reaches the most vulnerable in dynamic and fragile situations, and US\$50 million was spent on cluster coordination and strengthening in 2015.

Constraints and challenges: 2015 was a year of many complex crises, both related to conflict and natural disasters around the world, many exacerbated by changes in climate. As a result, progress in education was hindered by multiple challenges impacting access and quality. Furthermore, continued attacks on education³² increased risks posed in and around schools themselves. The humanitarian system, while improving, is not yet able to fulfil the educational rights of children and youth in crisis-affected contexts. Prioritization of education remains low, despite progress made in advocacy and through transformative efforts such as the No Lost Generation campaign. Funding remains fractured, unpredictable and provided over short-term horizons, and unable to make needed connections to transitional planning and development goals in the sector. Add to this, ongoing constraints regarding capacity, data and provision of safe services in insecure environments.

Key strategies: UNICEF plays a central leadership role in emergency response and recovery, as well as in preparedness and prevention. Its core strategies for serving countries are illustrated in the figure below. UNICEF also engages in advocacy on many issues, such as the need for increased resources for education in humanitarian situations to reach more children.



Reaching children in humanitarian situations

EXPANDING CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO EDUCATION



Despite the challenges, there is a growing acknowledgement that education is not only a right, but that in situations of emergency, chronic crisis and early reconstruction, it provides

physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection that can be both life-saving and life-sustaining. Through the humanitarian appeals process, UNICEF and partners set targets for the number of children they aim to reach with education support in humanitarian situations. In 2015, UNICEF and partners reached 11,013,498 children – 59 per cent of the combined target. This is an increase from the previous year where combined efforts reached 10,449,392 children (51 per cent of the target). Specifically for UNICEF, the organization supported 7,537,375 children with access to formal or non-formal education – 70 per cent of UNICEF's target of 10,767,679. The percentage of children reached has gone up steadily since the 2013 baseline of 59 per cent, but more work remains before all children targeted are reached.

While these indicators pertain specifically to countries supported by UNICEF in which the Education Cluster was active in 2015, UNICEF's work in humanitarian settings is much broader. It includes both acute emergencies and protracted crises or situations of fragility, which are notably fluid and difficult to predict. Challenges to ensuring access to education for children in settings such as these include the common de-prioritization of education in humanitarian aid, as well as practical challenges such as insecurity or damage to physical infrastructure. Nonetheless, the progress being made is mainly due to the high capacity and quality of leadership and technical staff on the ground, a good network of both national and international partners to coordinate response, enhanced data analysis and management, and engagement in advocacy at all levels to fill the gaps on growing issues such as attacks on education and to maintain a focus on the criticality of providing educational opportunities for all children no matter what the context.

ADVOCATING FOR INCREASED RESOURCES



A key advocacy priority for UNICEF is increasing the share of humanitarian funding to education.

The share of global humanitarian funding for education was only 1.4 per cent in 2015³³ which is well short of what is needed to reach all children in humanitarian situations with quality education.

“In 2015, UNICEF and partners reached 11,013,498 children – 59 per cent of the combined target. This is an increase from the previous year where combined efforts reached 10,449,392 children - 51 per cent of the target.”

In 2015, UNICEF spent 19 per cent of its own humanitarian expenditure (Other Resources – Emergency) on education.³⁴ It has also done a tremendous amount of work at all levels to advance financing for education in emergencies outside of the organization. In advance of the World Humanitarian Summit, UNICEF has played a leading role in developing new approaches to supporting education in emergencies and protracted crises. In particular, UNICEF is engaged in the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity, the most promising development on the global scene at present. In support of the Syrian crisis, UNICEF was asked by the Government of Norway to write the Syria Crisis Education Strategic Paper for the London 2016 Donor Conference,³⁵ where education was a priority area of focus. In recognition of the magnitude of the humanitarian situation, the conference raised more than US\$11 billion in pledges, including, but not specific to education – US\$5.8 billion for 2016 and a further US\$5.4 billion for 2017–2020 to enable longer-term response planning.

In addition, since early 2015 UNICEF has played a leadership role as both a member of the group of champions and at the technical level to help develop the Education Cannot Wait Fund. The discussion around this initiative garnered significant attention, building on the outcomes of the Oslo Summit on Education for Development in July 2015, which called for a joint global initiative to mobilize collective action and significant funding for education in crises. The fund will offer greater political visibility and push, especially to speed up response times in crises: the expertise, capacity and capabilities needed to provide advice and to be on call whenever there is an emergency driven by armed conflict or a natural disaster; guaranteed pooled financing in place that is ready to deliver immediate help at a time of crisis, even before appeals are issued; and predictable funding for education in these contexts over a period of at least three and up to five years.

UNICEF's contributions have been central to the development of this initiative through a number of approaches to move the work forward, including analysis of the problem with Education Clusters, advocacy, technical support, and research and evidence building. UNICEF brought political leaders together to champion the need for a solution, and worked closely with partners on the proposal. UNICEF has also led or supported nearly

all of the technical work to design the fund, and hosted country visits to aid its development. UNICEF also commissioned the Overseas Development Institute to conduct a thorough analysis of the scope and value of the Education Cannot Wait Fund through financial support from Norway, USAID and DFID. Ultimately, UNICEF has been named interim host of the fund, which is projected to launch at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016.

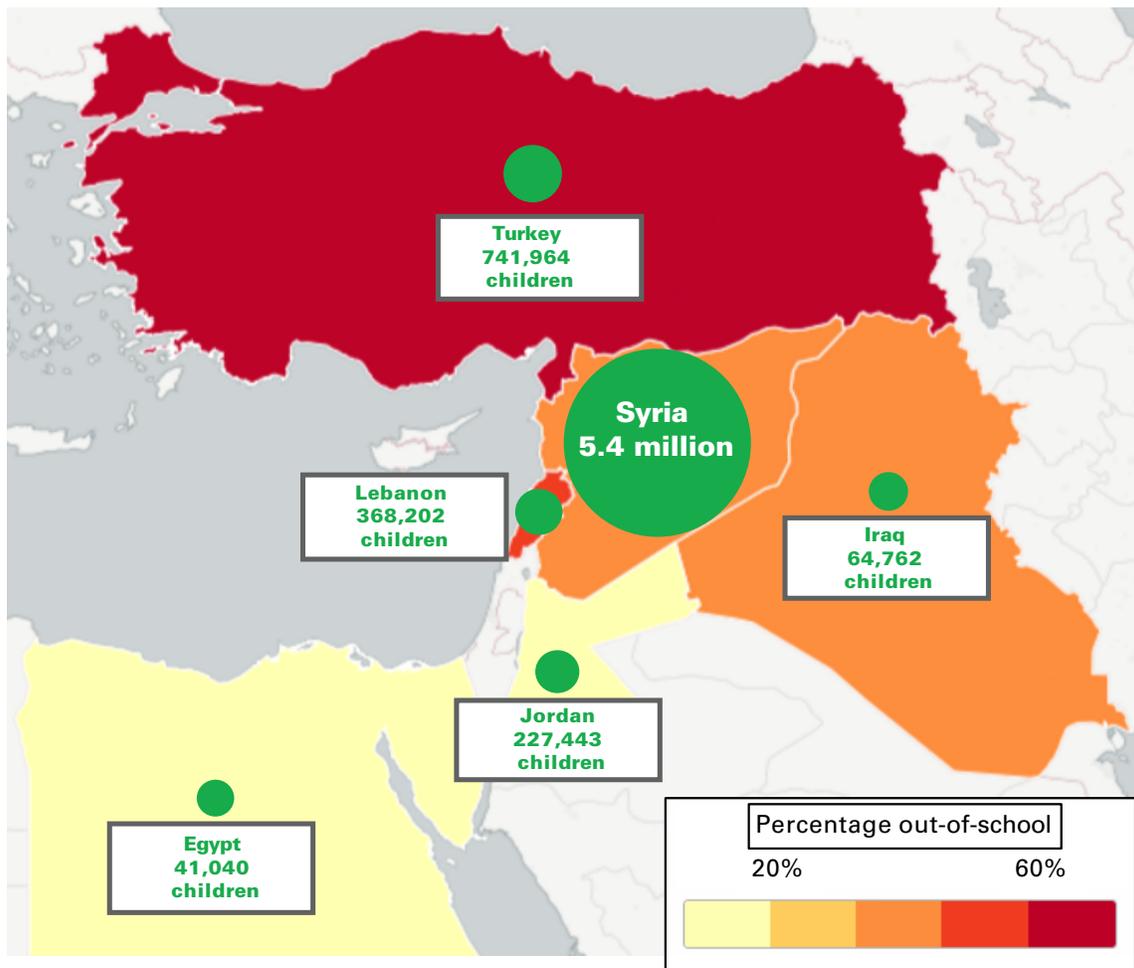
Also in 2015, UNICEF, UNHCR and DFID partnered to form the first Humanitarian Education Accelerator with the aim of understanding how to transform effective and innovative pilot projects into scalable educational initiatives, building the evidence of what does and does not work.

Cluster coordination and emergency response

The Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) constitute UNICEF and its partners' global framework to uphold the rights of children affected by humanitarian crisis. In 2015, out of the 21 countries reporting on education in emergencies and that UNICEF was appointed as the lead agency with an activated Education Cluster, 14 had a coordination mechanism for education that met CCC standards for coordination, compared with 11 out of 15 such countries in the 2014 baseline. In real terms, the need for strong education coordination, from an acute emergency phase into

FIGURE 15

Out-of-school children as a result of the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic



Source: No Lost Generation (2016). Syria Crisis Education Strategic Paper. London 2016 Conference

“In Turkey, UNICEF worked closely to support the Ministry of National Education to conduct an Equivalency Examination for Foreign Students, administered in Arabic for Syrian and Iraqi Grade 12 students. Those who passed the exam received a certificate issued by the Turkish Government, allowing them to progress to tertiary education.”

early recovery and transition, increased as the scale and complexity of humanitarian situations grew during 2015.

‘Success’ in cluster coordination depends on a variety of factors, from global financial and technical support to timing and political economy. At the global level, UNICEF is a co-lead with Save the Children on the Education Cluster Steering Group. At country level, this co-lead arrangement is seen as a positive and productive partnership, as discussed further in the Partnerships chapter. UNICEF’s strategic approach to education in emergencies and its added value of expertise in coordination helps to make resilient connections between global policy, technical standards and country-level assistance, as well as between points on the humanitarian-transition-development continuum. One country example of this comes from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, where the Education Cluster is led by the Ministry of Education, supported by UNICEF and Save the Children, and is providing strategic guidance and ensuring coherence in the complex internally displaced persons and refugee responses. As is the case in Iraq, UNICEF is usually the largest agency on the ground in a humanitarian response working and leading education coordination and response efforts.

Core elements of education in emergency responses often focus on access (temporary learning spaces, reconstruction and accelerated learning programmes); supplies (School in a Box, teaching and learning materials); teacher training (psychosocial support, earthquake safety and life skills); and Back to School campaigns. This is supported by coordination mechanisms to increase accountability and avoid overlap. When done well, these combined interventions can support the strengthening of government education systems. In Turkey, UNICEF continued its close cooperation with the Government in strengthening systems (capacity development, infrastructure and services) for upholding the educational rights of Syrian children in Turkey by convening stakeholders and facilitating coordination as co-chair of

the education working group in Ankara and Gaziantep, and enrolling approximately 279,000 Syrian children. UNICEF also contributed substantially to the development and implementation of YOBIS, a system for tracking Syrian students’ attendance and performance, as well as for the generation of report cards and diplomas/certificates. YOBIS is good example of data management and use linking humanitarian response with longer-term, analysis and evidence-based development.

Lessons learned from various contexts show that government leadership and coordination across the education sector are crucial for effective and sustainable responses. The No Lost Generation (NLG) initiative has been instrumental for UNICEF in understanding what works best in longer-lasting crises. The NLG initiative has provided a framework for critical interventions in education and child protection, bridging immediate response plans with longer-term development efforts. In education, interventions have included strengthening existing education systems, scaling up access and improving learning. This approach represents a globally significant shift in supporting the leadership of national ministries of education to include vulnerable children and young people (refugees and migrants) in national education systems, as well as through non-formal education and supporting affected host-community children equitably.

This past year marked a year of significant changes to the global environment in which UNICEF operates. The Ebola virus disease (EVD), for example, posed new and complex challenges to traditional humanitarian response and compelled UNICEF to consider new approaches and processes to reach the most marginalized and vulnerable children. UNICEF’s West and Central Africa Regional Office and country teams in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone worked collaboratively to manage regional and country-specific EVD responses. In Sierra Leone, UNICEF led a successful Back to School campaign, with 96 per cent of schools being successfully reopened. To support this work, 24,700 hygiene kits were distributed, ensuring that 3,472 schools were equipped with minimum hygiene packages for Ebola prevention compliant with protocols, benefiting 694,000 children enrolled.

In Guinea, and across the region, UNICEF supported the development of safe-school opening protocols, which included training a total of 1,363 education personnel and 15,346 teachers (of 80,567) in Guinea alone. Radio stations in EVD-affected countries produced messages to encourage parents to bring water to school where there were no water points, which was the case in more than 80 per cent of schools. Radio learning programmes, along with psychosocial support programming, were prepared

in part by UNICEF. Later in the year, UNICEF evaluated the organizational response to the EVD emergency. Chief among the lessons emerging from the response effort was the need to strengthen systems, including education systems, to mitigate the impact of future crises on children's well-being and learning.

In addition to new types of challenges that emerged out of the EVD response, UNICEF continued to support the education needs of children affected by refugee crises related to the Syrian Arab Republic and beyond. The Syrian

crisis has had a devastating impact on the education of Syrian children and youth within Syria as well as those who are refugees in neighbouring countries. The scale of this impact can be seen in Figure 15, where 40 per cent of the 5.4 million children and youth in the Syrian Arab Republic are currently out of school. In Turkey, there are more than 700,000 Syrian refugee children and youth, with more than 60 per cent of them out of school, while in Lebanon nearly 1 in every 2 of the 370,000 Syrian refugee children and youth do not have access to education.

Learning for all in the crisis: The self-learning programme for out-of-school children in the Syrian Arab Republic

Due to the ongoing crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, an estimated 2.1 million school-age children (5–17 years old) remain out of school, and half a million are at risk of dropping out of school. Some 6,000 schools – one in four – have been destroyed, damaged or used for shelter and other purposes. Attacks on schools take place across the country. Given the ongoing conflict and violence, it is difficult for children to go to school and learn in a protective learning environment. Furthermore, humanitarian access is significantly limited in some areas, as insecurity impedes aid organizations from delivering humanitarian response, including education services and supplies. In addition to the shortages of available schools, teachers and educational materials, children in the Syrian Arab Republic encounter multiple complex barriers to learning opportunities, including internal displacement, poverty and child labour.

To address this challenge, UNICEF Syria has worked with the Ministry of Education and UNRWA to develop a self-learning programme for out-of-school children to continue learning despite current hardships. The central aim of the programme is to enable out-of-school children to continue their education at home, or in community centres, in line with the national curriculum and to prepare and pass the national exams, so that they will be able to re-enter the formal education system when it is better available to them. The self-learning materials are designed and developed as condensed and fast-tracked learning materials, and cover all core subjects in Grades 1–9. By the end of 2016, UNICEF and partners aim to reach out to at least 500,000 out-of-school children with the self-learning programme in both accessible and hard-to-reach and/or besieged areas in the country.

In Aleppo and Hama, UNICEF has launched a pilot of the self-learning programme for 2,000 out-of-school children through the establishment of community learning centres. These centres are generally held in existing spaces, such as internally displaced persons' collection centres, mosques, NGO centres or private homes, where out-of-school children can come and learn using the self-learning materials under the support by community volunteers and internally displaced teachers. Girls and boys are to have equitable access to these self-learning opportunities regardless of sex, age or location.

A total of 50 self-learning materials (all core subjects for Grades 1–9) have been finalized, and the materials are printed and ready for 500,000 beneficiaries in the Syrian Arab Republic. The materials meet the national standards with technical inputs from the Syrian Ministry of Education experts, and are accredited and endorsed by the Ministry of Education. In addition, UNICEF is currently planning a qualitative assessment of the self-learning programme to feed into programming.

The self-learning programme has significant potential for scalability and replicability not only for out-of-school children inside the Syrian Arab Republic, but also for Syrian refugee children across the Middle East region, since it is aligned with the Syrian national curriculum.

Many refugee crises are long term in nature, creating the need for UNICEF to help bridge the humanitarian-development divide in refugee contexts with strategic partners such as UNHCR. Some of the unprecedented challenges in 2015 included: conducting comprehensive needs assessments in fluid environments; providing logistical support (coordination, temporary learning spaces, double shifting in host schools, camp and temporary settlement schools); analysing policy decisions on curricula and dealing with language of instruction, the provision of resources and teacher issues (using migrant and refugee teachers and teacher professional development and support). There were also challenges around enhancing crisis-sensitive and responsive EMIS to support evidence-based response accounting for monitoring of equity, quality and inclusiveness.

In response to the ongoing Syria crisis, the Middle East and North Africa Regional Office played a key role in providing technical guidance and support to enhance synergies, coordination and to promote best practices at the sub-regional level, with a view of scaling up education access and quality. Helping every child to realize her/his right to education, especially for the most disadvantaged, requires creating a conducive policy environment in and across affected countries. In Turkey, for example, UNICEF worked closely to support the Ministry of National Education to conduct an Equivalency Examination for Foreign Students, administered in Arabic for Syrian and Iraqi Grade 12 students. Those who passed the exam received a certificate issued by the Turkish Government, allowing them to progress to tertiary education. In Lebanon, UNICEF supported and worked closely with the Reaching All Children with Education Programme Management Unit in providing a coordinated and effective framework for education interventions and quality assurance. Through the Whole of Syria approach, UNICEF helped to improve strategic and operational coherence in the delivery of education within the Syrian Arab Republic and through cross-line and cross-border interventions. UNICEF also deployed staff from headquarters and country office teams on surge missions to support responses (e.g., one Immediate Response Team mission to Iraq; assessment, fundraising and proposal writing support) and overall capacity development. In 2015, there were a total number of 753 surge deployments, of which 51 were for education and an additional 15 were related to education coordination.

In the Syrian crisis, UNICEF also continued to provide access to education. Between November 2014 and November 2015, there was an overall decrease of

8 percentage points in the out-of-school children rate, which can be in part attributed to the establishment of additional Temporary Education Centers in Turkey and the enrolment of an additional 113,000 Syrian children in public schools in Lebanon (40 per cent increase in the 2015/16 school year compared with the 2014/15 school year). In Iraq, UNICEF supported building pre-fabricated schools in host communities and camps, as well as additional classrooms in formal schools, which helped to expand absorption capacity. School-based management through PTAs and community engagement resulted in the rapid rehabilitation of more than 500 schools occupied by Iraqi internally displaced persons in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and the resumption of learning.

In line with its equity focus, UNICEF collects sex-disaggregated data on both students and teachers. In some contexts, activities with a focus on female teachers are being implemented – for example, providing female teacher transportation or accommodation near schools to keep teachers safe. Ensuring inclusive education for children with disabilities in humanitarian situations is still a fairly new area of focus for country offices, but strides are being made. In the Domiz Syrian Refugee Camp in Iraq, the teaching staff, led by an outstanding principal, are working to ensure that students with disabilities are completely integrated into inclusive school activities. One of these students got one of the highest exam scores in his grade.

UNICEF also supported strengthening national education systems and capacity development for better planning, budgeting, monitoring and coordination, with a focus on equity, inclusiveness and quality. In Lebanon, for example, UNICEF supported the development of an accelerated learning programme to provide children (7–17 years old) who have been out of school for more than two years with a condensed version of the Lebanese curriculum, allowing them to reintegrate into public education. In Jordan, UNICEF worked with the Government and partners to create an integrated informal education programme called Makani (My Space), providing numeracy, literacy, English and science classes as well as life skills and psychosocial support to 38,400 of the most vulnerable Jordanian and Syrian children. In Iraq, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education to run catch-up classes and learning through satellite education.

These challenges and response strategies and activities are not unique to the Syria crisis. Supported by the Learning for Peace programme, for example, UNICEF worked in the field of longer-term refugee support using an education for peacebuilding approach. Elements included:

- Providing access to education opportunities for internally displaced persons and refugees (Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda);
- Helping host communities to absorb 'shocks' of refugee influxes by providing technical, human and logistical support (Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia and Uganda);
- Mitigating tensions and risks of interpersonal and intergroup conflict through formal and non-formal services between host as well as internally displaced/refugee communities by integrating children from newly incoming families in formal and non-formal learning and leisure activities (Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Pakistan and Uganda);
- Providing capacity development programmes for refugees returning home (language, literacy, vocational skills in Somalia);
- Providing life skills and vocational programmes for youth in areas where they are at risk of being recruited by gangs or militants (Dadaab, Somalia);
- Supporting community institutions' negotiation efforts with military and stakeholder groups to protect or make schools become Zones of Peace (South Sudan and Yemen); and
- Empowering PTAs in internally displaced communities to ensure increase of re-enrolment rates (above 3 per cent in most schools) as well as improving girls' enrolment, re-engaging out-of-school children and kick-starting community support for better-quality education (South Sudan and Yemen).



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Dealing with risk

In addition to UNICEF's support in response to humanitarian situations, UNICEF works with governments in developing prepared and responsive education systems. Between 2013 and 2015, the percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with an education sector plan/policy that includes risk assessment and risk management increased from 19 per cent to 32 per cent.³⁶ UNICEF was particularly successful in supporting governments in carrying out risk assessments and developing risk reduction strategies. Ensuring that these strategies are supported with adequate human and financial resources will be a key challenge for the relevant countries and for UNICEF in order to reach its very ambitious target of 100 per cent by 2017.

In its efforts to assist countries in improving risk assessment and reduction strategies, UNICEF supported institutional and individual capacities of government, frontline workers, civil society and school communities at national and sub-national levels for humanitarian and development programmes. Six countries that suffered huge humanitarian crises – Iraq, Kenya, Myanmar,

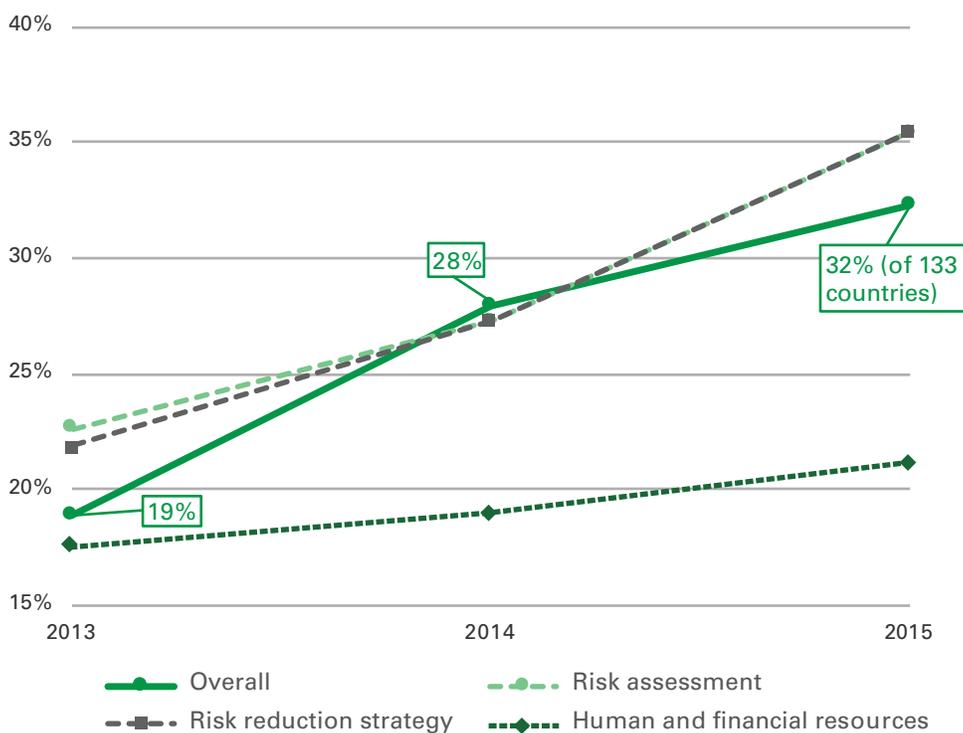
Pakistan, South Sudan and the Sudan – consumed substantial spending (more than US\$1 million per country) in better plans and systems.

Overall, the two foremost strategies in supporting risk-informed programming were service delivery and capacity development, at 54 per cent and 21 per cent of spending in this area, respectively, with additional investments in more than a dozen other strategies.

One challenging and growing area related to managing risks is around attacks on education, which continued in many countries, including Colombia, State of Palestine, Nigeria, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. In addition to harming and traumatizing students, teachers and communities, and damaging or destroying school infrastructure, attacks pose significant financial and logistical challenges for governments and development partners. For example, the Government of Nigeria has documented the destruction of 679 classrooms by Boko Haram in Adamawa State alone, at an estimated cost of US\$10.4 million. As part of UNICEF's response, in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states, 677 teachers were trained in pedagogy and psychosocial support, 39,100

FIGURE 16

Output indicator P5.c.3: Countries with an education sector plan/policy that includes risk assessment and risk management



school bags and 421 school kits were distributed, and 159 school tents were set up in camps for internally displaced people. UNICEF, along with partners, continued strong advocacy work with the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, commissioning a paper on 'What Ministries Can Do to Protect Education from Attack', and bringing together 10 composite country teams to create three-month country action plans to deal with attacks on education. UNICEF continued to promote the concept of 'safe schools' encompassing safety from all risks, including attacks, disasters, epidemics and others.

In Ebola-affected countries, UNICEF worked with the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to develop simple protocols for the safe operating of schools, including listing essential equipment, safe hand-washing procedures and guidelines for communities, teachers and students. Youth volunteers were trained to deliver key safety messages. In Latin American countries, UNICEF worked with the Global Business Coalition for Education on a campaign aimed at galvanizing action from students, communities, schools and the private sector, to keep schools safe from armed violence. UNICEF also worked in a number of African countries to develop approaches for addressing school-related gender-based violence.

In other country-level work, UNICEF continues to focus on multi-hazard and multi-risk assessments for risk reduction and preparedness, in collaboration with partners. In Pakistan, provincial multi-hazard Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans were developed and aligned with the Government's provincial and district plans, and contingency agreements were signed as proactive arrangements for organized response. Provincial governments in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh were supported in rolling out School Safety Action Plans and developing community-based disaster risk reduction mechanisms.

In Nepal, following the earthquakes, comprehensive school safety focusing on three pillars (safe learning facilities, school disaster management and risk reduction/resilience) was recognized as a major component in the new School Sector Development Plan (2016–2022). Under the leadership and coordination of the Department of Education and district education offices, UNICEF supported the capacity building of 87,476 local education stakeholders (52 per cent women, 177 children with disabilities) in 380 schools from five districts on mitigation of disaster risk, development of evacuation routes in schools and training on simulation drills. The Disaster Risk Management Guidelines drafted in 2014–2015 were implemented in earthquake-affected districts as a part of capacity building and reconstruction work.

Education for peacebuilding

The Learning for Peace programme is a four-year programme funded by the Government of the Netherlands, and implemented in 14 conflict-affected countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, West Africa, the Middle East and South and East Asia. It is an innovative programme in that country offices were mandated to conduct conflict analysis research first before developing education work plans suitable to contribute to the mitigation of the identified conflict factors. Learning for Peace has enabled UNICEF to integrate peacebuilding approaches into programming and to generate evidence.

An evaluation in 2015 concluded that the Learning for Peace programme successfully demonstrated that supporting social services such as education can make a significant contribution to peacebuilding results, even though some of the necessary building blocks are yet to be put in place. UNICEF is well positioned to engage in peacebuilding work based on its mandate and institutional strengths. However, the organization needs to navigate sensitivities, identify entry points, focus resources on high-risk environments to achieve scale and emphasize the primacy of context-specific programming. The Learning for Peace programme furthermore demonstrated that conflict-sensitive and/or peacebuilding programming that attempts to address drivers of conflict requires strong leadership support to enable cross-sectoral collaboration and ultimately mainstreaming of peacebuilding solutions.

UNICEF will seek to mainstream lessons learned through its forthcoming capacity development efforts worldwide to integrate risk-informed programming components into UNICEF country office situation analyses and country development plans. Furthermore, UNICEF is supporting the preparation of a new chapter on conflict and disaster risk analysis for education sector planning, to be published in the forthcoming volume 3 of the Education Sector Analysis Guidelines.

Throughout 2015, the 14 country offices participating in the Learning for Peace programme continued to integrate peacebuilding into education policies, and vice versa. The country offices also developed institutional capacity to deliver conflict-sensitive education, strengthened community and individual capacities for management and transformation of conflict, improved access to and quality of education, and generated evidence for enhanced advocacy efforts.

In Somalia, for example, UNICEF supported a participatory curriculum framework reform process based on youth-led community consultations across all three zones of the country. Data collection for the public consultations was carried out by more than 200 young people from diverse ethnic groups. Through this process,

the Ministry of Education, as well as other education stakeholders and community leaders, came to recognize the importance of youth leadership and participation in decisions that affect them, while welcoming a new curriculum framework that ensures delivery of education that is relevant to the community and its young people.

UNICEF concluded a two-year research partnership with the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) comprising 17 studies covering 25 countries.³⁷ The research generated three key outputs that altogether highlighted the central role that education has been, can, and should play in building peaceful societies. These included:

- A case study evidence for donors and education practitioners on how governments can promote curriculum as well as school governance and school culture reforms to support nationwide transitional justice efforts;
- A review of lessons learned from reparations programmes and how these support efforts of rehabilitation and reintegration; and
- Recommendations on how community or locally based outreach activities and informal educative initiatives can play a role in addressing histories of violence in the recent past.

UNICEF also funded a study led by education partner FHI360 entitled 'Does Horizontal Education Inequality Lead to Violent Conflict?'. The study examined the statistical correlation between education inequality and violent conflict, and specifically, to what extent education inequality across ethnic and religious groups affects the likelihood of starting a violent internal conflict at national and sub-national levels. Education, conflict, wealth, demographics and country profile data were collected from more than 200 public databases for 111 countries spanning 50 years, from 1960 to 2013. No such data set had been compiled before, and it has been made publicly available by the Learning for Peace programme. The study found that:

- The likelihood of violent conflict doubles for countries with high levels of intergroup inequality in education, after controlling for known conflict risk factors, such as wealth, political regime, geography and others; and
- The effect of educational inequality of ethnic and religious groups on violent conflict has been present since 2000. Although inequalities in education were much higher in the 1970s and 1980s, high levels of education inequality may not have been considered a sufficient reason for grievance then, when intergroup inequality was commonplace.

Both studies underscore the critical role of education in building peaceful societies and improving the lives of men, women, boys and girls. In the context of an increasingly complex development landscape, such evidence increases the development community's understanding of risks, thereby enabling risk-informed policy engagement, programming and advocacy.

Summary and going forward

Education is a lifeline for girls and boys who are refugees, survivors of conflict or other crises in their own countries, and is both the best hope for their future and their country's pathway towards recovery, stability and sustainable development. Progress in 2015 on all fronts, from risk management to coordination to children reached, was positive but did not reach all projected targets, notably due to resourcing shortfalls and to an ever-increasing number of complex, large and simultaneous humanitarian situations requiring response. Prioritization of education in humanitarian situations is a constant challenge, at both global and national levels, and there is a particular need to safeguard against crises being overlooked, especially in the case of forgotten protracted crises. Going forward, progress on these issues must depend either on the adoption and substantial funding of the Education Cannot Wait Fund to be launched in May 2016, or on other avenues for significant bolstering of support to reach children in humanitarian situations.

Moving forward, UNICEF will provide substantial support to the global community as interim host of the Education Cannot Wait Fund, which will contribute to expanded, better coordinated and better-funded responses, and an overall increased capacity to respond to crises. UNICEF will also focus on implementing valuable lessons learned, such as the importance of analysing all risks, including conflict, to inform robust education sector plans, as well as the utility of demonstrating to governments the connection between funded budget lines for preparedness and effective emergency response.

A recent research effort with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative³⁸ in mapping vulnerability and how it influences risk-informed programming will be valuable for policy and advocacy work going forward. An important priority, linking humanitarian with development, will be in providing effective risk-informed programming, including education for peacebuilding, and resources that countries can use to deal with the difficult and complex issues that arise in providing education in humanitarian situations. UNICEF will also continue to contribute to improved cluster coordination and, ultimately, to building sustainable solutions and strengthened, more resilient education systems.



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PROGRAMME AREA 5 – GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS AND SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

Strong education systems are essential if all children and youth are to have access to good quality learning opportunities, regardless of their circumstances. With domestic financing often largely exceeding external financing, it is primarily through strong national systems that education finances can be translated into results. A strong education system promotes both access and learning for all, with particular attention being given to its most marginalized and vulnerable populations. It allocates and manages its funding efficiently and according to need. Decisions on how to construct classrooms, procure teaching and learning materials, or develop, deploy and support teachers impact upon how well limited resources are used and the extent to which these resources meet the needs of the most marginalized. A strong education system ensures that data, including learning outcome data, is transparent and accessible, enabling key decision makers – parents, teachers, schools and ministries of education – to make evidence-based decisions and seek continual improvement. Education systems cover all levels of education, often supported by agencies involved in areas such as teacher development, curriculum development, school inspection and national assessment and examinations. Hence strong partnerships support and complement the system strengthening that UNICEF does at the country level. Partnerships are also crucial to UNICEF’s coordination and planning at the global level.

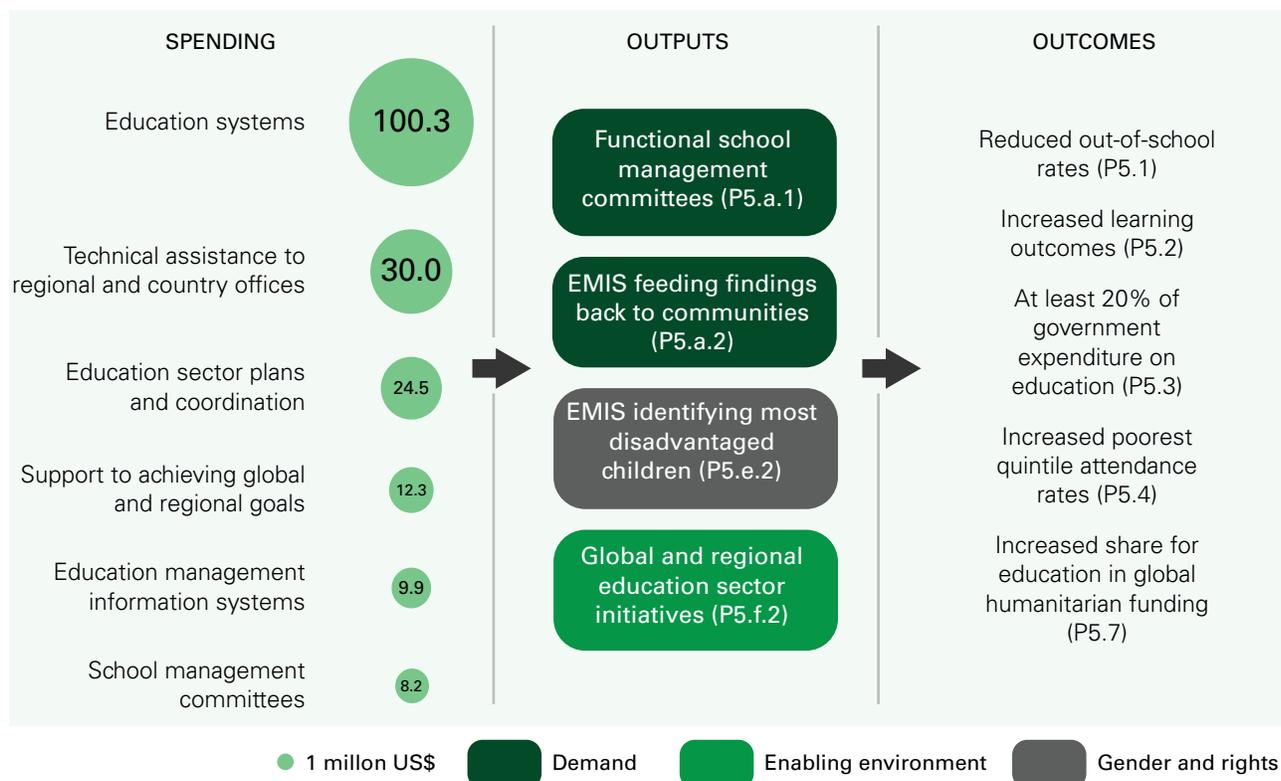
Key inputs and results in 2015

Results chain for global partnerships and system strengthening: As with each previous programme area, the results chain applies Theory of Change principles and presents the expected linkages between spending, interventions and progress on UNICEF’s Strategic Plan output and outcome indicators for global partnerships and system strengthening. To give one example, by supporting the development of EMIS, UNICEF is improving their ability to provide disaggregated data to help identify the most disadvantaged children and feed information back to communities, which in turn helps to reduce dropout rates and increase learning outcomes.

Overall expenditure to support global partnerships and system strengthening: In 2015, UNICEF invested US\$185.3 million (18.5 per cent of total education expenditure) in supporting national education system strengthening and enhancing global partnerships. Of this total, US\$100.3 million – approximately 54.2 per cent – was spent supporting education systems, and a further US\$24.5 million was invested into the development of education sector analyses and plans to guide system development and support access to GPE grants. EMIS and SMCs are key output areas under the Strategic Plan 2014–2017 and represented US\$18.1 million of 2015 expenditures.

Constraints and challenges: UNICEF is working with governments to tackle binding constraints to the effective delivery of quality education services for all children.

FIGURE 17
Results chain for global partnerships and system strengthening

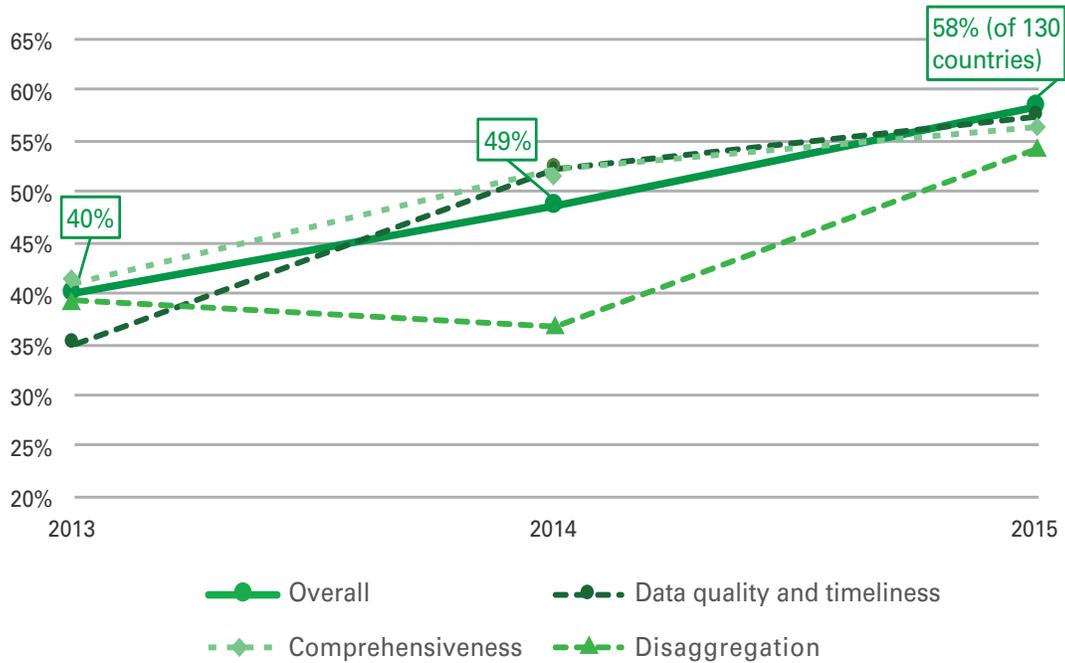


One of the most significant constraints is that of limited finances as only 21 per cent of programme countries dedicate the recommended 20 per cent of government expenditure to education. To make the most of limited finances education systems must be data driven and efficient. However, in many cases there is a lack of appropriate data or country-specific evidence, for example, significant capacity gaps with regard to the development of policies and plans; lack of transparency; and political economy issues. UNICEF addresses these issues by advocating for the collection and monitoring of data to inform policy and delivery and through the provision of tools, approaches and capacity-building support to assess and address equity, learning and system-efficiency challenges. This includes the strengthening of data on learning and on children with disabilities, where data gaps are the largest. In particular, efforts have been made to include reflection of disability both in national EMIS systems and in the MICS. However, improved data and evidence is not enough. UNICEF also supports improved analysis and addressing of political economy issues and promotes greater transparency and accessible feedback of data and information to education stakeholders at

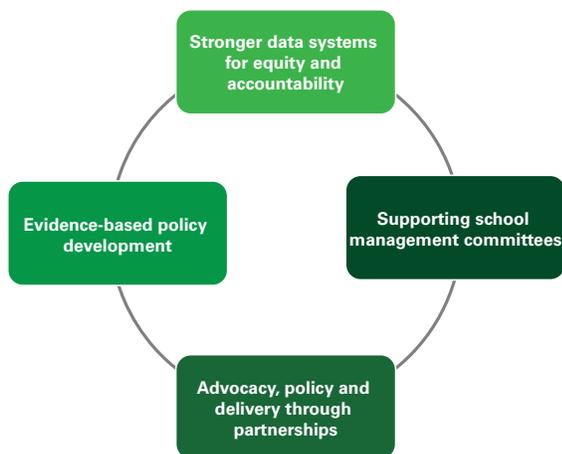
all levels of the system. Finally, in many countries, civil society education providers contribute to reaching a large percentage of children. UNICEF has therefore included support to this segment of the education system within its efforts to strengthen national education systems. In some cases, this has meant strengthening links between schools supported by civil society (e.g., those that are faith-based) and those supported by the government, to facilitate student transfers. In other cases, this work has involved training civil society providers or supporting to the further development of civil-society led education in some countries where the coverage of government-supported education is largely insufficient.

FIGURE 18

Output indicator P5.e.2: Countries with EMIS providing disaggregated data that allow identification of barriers and bottlenecks that inhibit realization of the rights of disadvantaged children



Key strategies: In order to effectively support education system strengthening, UNICEF uses multiple strategic approaches globally, regionally and at country level, represented in the figure below.



Strong national systems and planning

EMIS AND GLOBAL DATA SYSTEMS

In practice, system strengthening often starts with UNICEF support to national (EMIS, examinations database, etc.) as well as global or regional (MICS, regional learning assessment survey, etc.) data systems. Two Strategic Plan 2014–2017 indicators deal directly with tracking progress on the improvement of EMIS in countries, with particular attention to their equity and gender responsiveness, and their role in promoting transparency of data and accountability to communities.

Significant progress has been achieved in supporting countries to strengthen their EMIS, with 58 per cent of countries reporting a reliable and comprehensive EMIS that monitors the most marginalized children, compared with 40 per cent in 2013. This means that, overall, countries’ ability to identify disadvantaged children in their

EMIS and to use this information to address the issues they face has increased. Progress has been consistent across all three subdomains (see Figure 18) and it suggests that UNICEF is on track to meet its global target of 75 per cent by 2017. This global progress is reflected in a number of regions, most notably East Asia and Pacific (from 42 per cent of countries to 77 per cent), Latin America and Caribbean (from 29 per cent of countries to 50 per cent) and West and Central Africa (30 per cent of countries to 43 per cent).

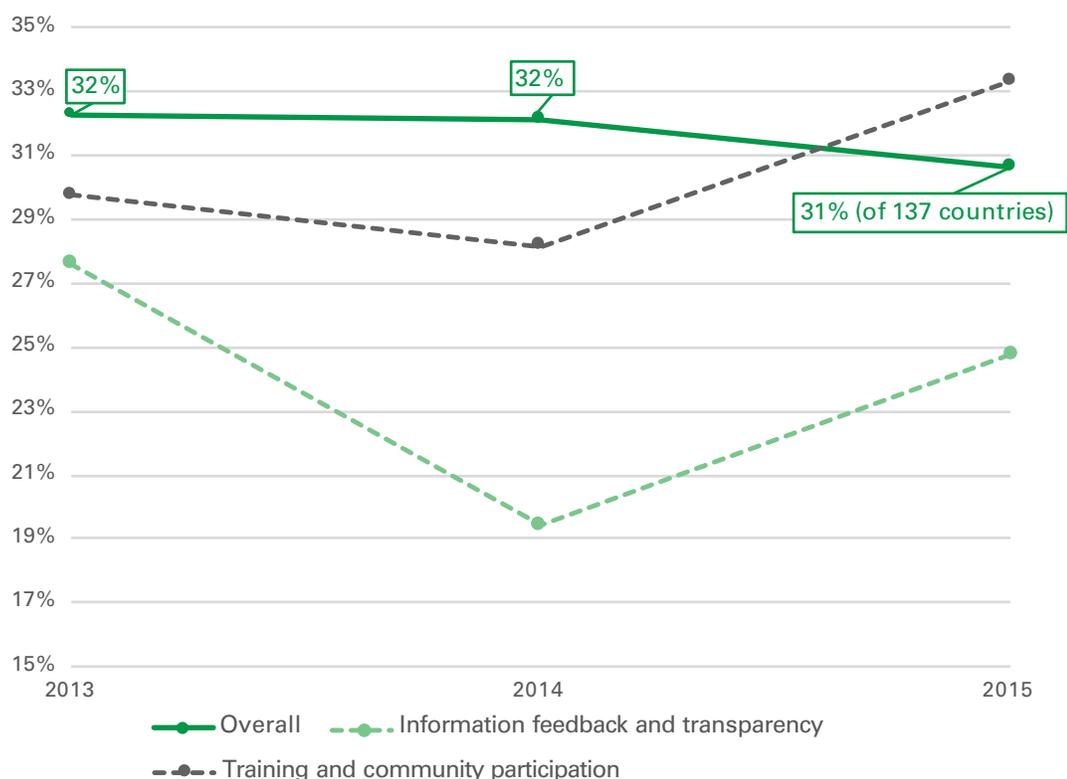
This indicator is an important component of UNICEF's equity agenda: The disaggregation dimension requires that an EMIS collect data on at least five types of disability using ICF-based definitions in order to receive the highest rating, while the Data Quality and Timeliness and the Comprehensiveness dimensions ensure that the EMIS is not only well designed but robustly used and useful. Progress on the disaggregation component made a leap this year, from 39 per cent to 69 per cent, meaning that many countries that, in 2014, were collecting, at best, data on gender and location, now also collect information on at least three different types of disability. Progress with regard to comprehensiveness, and data quality

and timeliness means that response rates from schools are increasing and that data that are collected are both increasingly reliable and available quickly to inform action.

In order to promote greater levels of local accountability and involvement of parents and communities in the education of their children, UNICEF supports governments in sharing their EMIS data with school communities. Although the percentage of countries in which the EMIS feeds findings back to communities or SMCs has slightly decreased (from 32 per cent to 31 per cent³⁹) there has been a significant increase in the number of countries working on this issue, from 124 to 137 (see Figure 19A). In addition, there has been a significant amount of progress in supporting countries from a 'weak' to an 'initiating' level. In 2013, 34 per cent of countries had an average score less than 2 and by 2015 only 26 per cent had such a low overall score (see Figure 19B). There was a corresponding increase in the number of countries with scores in between 2 and 2.5, from 34 per cent in 2013 to 43 per cent in 2015. This means that more countries have some information feedback tools and have some degree of community/parental involvement in school management.

FIGURE 19A

Output indicator P5.a.2: Countries in which the EMIS feeds findings back to communities or school management committees (SMCs)



In 2015, there was an increase on both domains (see *Figure 19A*) but not the overall indicator. This was because: (i) countries that were already strong in one domain, and already had an average of 2.5 or more, strengthened the other domain; and (ii) countries strengthened one domain but not enough to raise their average to 2.5 or more. Of the two subdomains, information feedback and transparency remains the lowest and is therefore a key component of UNICEF's work in this area – for example, the Data Must Speak project outlined below.

This indicator is important for equity and learning because of its emphasis on transparency and community empowerment. Through its requirements regarding accessible, user-friendly and illiterate-friendly versions of EMIS data to be posted in local communities, it helps to give the most disadvantaged communities the capacity to make informed decisions and hold schools and education managers accountable.

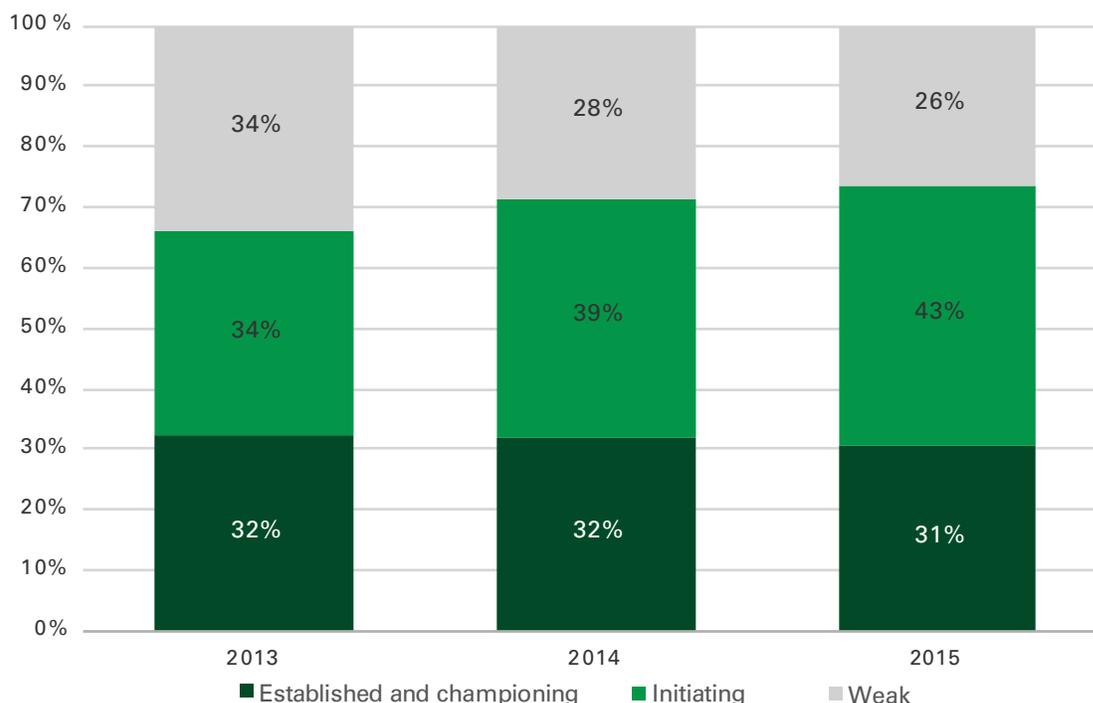
In 2015, UNICEF supported strengthened capacity building at the country level with regard to data and EMIS, in particular in Eritrea, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu and the United Republic of Tanzania. For example,

in Eritrea, 578 officials of the Ministry of Education, Zobas and sub-Zobas, directors and supervisors were trained in data collection, processing and utilization for planning, monitoring and reporting. Emphasis was placed on data disaggregation and comprehensiveness. As a result of the training, the Ministry of Education developed a simplified yet comprehensive EMIS questionnaire that will systematically capture information on children with disabilities, and will be disaggregated by location, wealth quintile and other factors.

National learning assessment data are rarely used as much as they could be by national stakeholders because learning/examinations databases are often not compatible with the EMIS. In response, UNICEF has been supporting the harmonization of learning and EMIS data in several countries, including Madagascar, Nepal, Togo and Zambia. In Nepal, work is going further and involves the development of an equity index reflecting both children's opportunity to access education and learn, and equity in opportunity for different groups, with the purpose of being able to assess inequities and inform pro-poor resources distribution, in particular within the ongoing GPE programme that supports the education sector plan.

FIGURE 19B

Distribution of countries by overall rating for Output Indicator P5.a.2



Information on teachers is often lacking or insufficient, and in Somalia, a teacher database to facilitate planning, supervision and performance management of teachers is part of the education strategy and is already in effect, thanks to UNICEF support. In Zimbabwe, efforts are under way to merge the teacher development information system and the EMIS.

For data to be used, it is not enough that they be reliable – data must also be made available in a way that is understandable to the user. UNICEF is therefore supporting, through the Data Must Speak project, the development of school profile cards that can be understood by semi-literate and illiterate populations in five countries, including Zambia, where such cards are being sent to all schools alongside the EMIS questionnaire. In Guatemala, UNICEF supported the Government (through the corporate-wide Monitoring of Results for Equity System or MoRES approach – see *'Strengthening UNICEF's capacity to deliver'* below) in assigning a unique registration code to students, developing a flexible enrolment portal for teachers to be able to regularly update enrolment information, and designing a report card to track students at risk of dropout and failure. Work undertaken in Guatemala was then shared globally with other countries in a webinar led by the Minister of Education.

Work at the country level was further supported by global and regional-level work, such as ongoing support to the development of MICS modules on learning assessment and parental participation, with piloting undertaken in Belize and Ghana in 2015. This represents a crucial step towards measurement of the new SDG indicator on learning outcomes, which requires both a globally comparable measure of learning outcomes and one that includes all children (in and out of schools) – something that was never done before. The modules, once finalized, will constitute a global public good, available and adaptable to all contexts. In addition, a review of UNICEF's education portfolio (2006–2014) is under way, to be finalized in 2016, which uses available data in education progress and spending to assess UNICEF's overall targeting to needs and its contribution to achieving results (see *Box The Education Portfolio Review on page 72 for preliminary findings*).

EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY DEVELOPMENT



To ensure stronger education systems, technical, coordination and policy dialogue support to the development of evidence-based national policies and plans is essential. UNICEF's work with national systems goes well beyond EMIS to include numerous aspects of education sector analysis, plans and policies. The results of this work

can be seen in the 10 output indicators that directly address policy (P5.b.2, and all indicators under output areas P5.c and P5.e). The degree of success in systems strengthening is dependent on factors such as country ownership, capacity building and political economy. This is why UNICEF's approach is to ensure that governments are in the driver's seat in policy processes, and that education sector analyses involve internal staff and build internal capacity for future work. In addition, volume 3 of the Education Sector Analysis Guidelines that UNICEF is developing with GPE, UNESCO-IIEP, World Bank and DFID will include four new chapters: political economy/governance; institutional capacity; inclusive education; and conflict and disaster risk analysis.

In 2015, UNICEF supported the development of education sector analyses in Afghanistan, Bissau Guinea, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Lesotho, Madagascar, Nepal, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe, either by providing financial and/or technical support to the development of the analysis or by peer-reviewing the draft sector analysis. UNICEF's support adopts a 'learning by doing' approach, with the expectation that, with time and experience, countries will be able to undertake the exercise themselves. Translating education sector analyses into concrete policy then requires the development of financial simulations to identify trade-offs and assess financial sustainability of the proposed interventions. UNICEF has therefore supported, in 2015, the development of the Côte d'Ivoire financial simulation model and is also providing ongoing support to Burkina Faso, Pakistan, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, and Sao Tome and Principe using the Simulations for Equity in Education (SEE) model, which helps governments make evidence-based choices based on equity-focused simulations.

To further strengthen the policy-making process, UNICEF organized four regional training workshops in 2015 to build capacity in the understanding and use of education sector analyses by national teams and development partners. These workshops focused on West and Central Africa Region and Eastern and Southern Africa Region countries about to develop new education sector plans, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan and Zimbabwe, and were very well received by participants. New requests for training have come from additional countries in sub-Saharan Africa as well as from the South Asia region. Training and capacity building for policy development and implementation also took place at country level. For example, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, UNICEF supported the training of 30 senior specialists from the Ministry of Education and the National University of Laos in education planning and management.

UNICEF is a member of the Local Education Group (LEG) in many countries, and often plays a coordination role

Targeting educational inequities in the context of disaster recovery: Nepal's equity index

In Nepal, despite progress in terms of education access, efficiency and gender equality, there remain substantial inequities among disadvantaged population groups.

To address this need, the Government of Nepal, with UNICEF support, has developed a Consolidated Equity Strategy for the School Education Sector that was launched in December 2014. The main objectives of this strategy are to reduce the current disparities in educational opportunities for children in basic and secondary public education in Nepal. As focal point for the Education Development Partners Group and GPE Coordinating Agency, UNICEF Nepal is at the forefront of strategic education policy development and implementation in the country.

Since then, difficulties have increased for the most affected populations following the massive earthquakes of 25 April and 12 May 2015, and the political crisis which led to disruptions to school services for months, affecting 1.6 million children. Out of Nepal's 75 districts, 15 had already been identified as programme priority districts with high numbers of out-of-school children and illiteracy, and 14 additional districts have been heavily impacted by the earthquake, affecting 1.1 million children.

The implementation of the consolidated Equity Strategy includes the development and computation of an Equity Index. Throughout 2015, UNICEF provided significant support to the Government in the conception and development of the index for all 75 districts. The Equity Index captures district-level disparities in access, participation and learning outcomes in basic and secondary-level education, and will inform the implementation of the new Education Sector Plan, as well as being instrumental in prioritizing system recovery efforts for the most disadvantaged.

At the national level, it is intended that the Equity Index will become a key planning and programming tool, as it allows ranking of all districts based on educational outcomes with a strong equity lens: priority districts are immediately identified, along with the educational component in need of support, as well as the main drivers of inequity in each district.

At district level, the 'unpacking' of the equity index value allows for better targeting of interventions to the most disadvantaged children and is intended to lead to greater efficiency in resource allocation in all districts, and particularly in the southern priority districts with high levels of illiteracy and large number of out-of-school children and in the districts most affected by the earthquake.

In the context of education system recovery for districts affected the most by the earthquake, this tool will help to better capture and monitor compounded inequities faced by affected populations such as displaced people. Simultaneously, in the southern districts that were impacted the most by political unrest resulting in prolonged school closure, the equity index will serve the same purpose and point towards the dominant inequity factors such as caste, gender or geographical location for example.

Hence, using the Equity Index should help to facilitate a more precise local-level targeting of the most disadvantaged children.

within it. In 2015, UNICEF was instrumental in ensuring better coordination of partners around policy development, implementation and monitoring. For example, in Guinea-Bissau, UNICEF organized LEG meetings to ensure better coordination, in particular with donors, around the development of the new Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016–2025. In Honduras, UNICEF brought together national education authorities, the private sector, international cooperation partners, NGOs, municipal leaders, teachers and other civil society representatives

at an international symposium on universalization of pre-basic education in Honduras, which was instrumental in mobilizing resources for the plan's implementation.

Support to a strong education system able to develop and implement sound education sector plans involves support to the involvement of decentralized-level stakeholders and their contribution to central and decentralized planning. One example of this can be found in Ghana, where UNICEF's assistance enabled the participation of

“In Guatemala, UNICEF supported the Government in assigning a unique registration code to students, developing a flexible enrolment portal for teachers to be able to regularly update enrolment information, and designing a report card to track students at risk of dropout and failure.”

regional and district level actors in the National Education Sector Review to inform the discussions based on sub-national evidence and experience. UNICEF also supported 14 districts to develop their Annual District Education Operational Plans (ADEOPs) ahead of the deadlines set by the Ghana Education Service (GES). The quality of the ADEOPs has been acknowledged and GES has used those that were developed with UNICEF support as samples for other districts for learning.

STRENGTHENING UNICEF'S CAPACITY TO DELIVER

National system strengthening also involves the strengthening of UNICEF's own capacity to deliver results in support of systems. This involves improved support and guidance in country-level programming, including through results-based management (RBM) training, the introduction of strategy notes, and the continued implementation in 2015 of the MoRES approach using a mix of corporate and education-specific guidance, country-specific support and several webinars. UNICEF has been reflecting these priorities in recruitment processes through the update of technical competencies with an increased focus on analytical, programme design and results reporting skills and their integration into generic job descriptions and vacancy announcements for education staff positions. This focus has been reflected in the ongoing Talent Group recruitment process as well as through the creation of new positions of data/analysis/learning assessment specialists at country office, regional office and headquarter levels.

School management committees

Support to school management committees (SMCs), school councils, parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and other community structures is crucial to strengthening social accountability. Through this support, the most vulnerable groups and communities can be given a voice in school management and decision-making processes. Work in this area includes the creation of new structures,

their training and empowerment and the dissemination of lessons learned.

UNICEF has a long history of supporting school-based management, and the ability to work simultaneously at community and national levels gives the organization a distinct comparative advantage in this area. Since 2013, the percentage of UNICEF-supported countries with functional SMCs at primary and secondary level has increased from 34 per cent to 45 per cent (*see Figure 20*). This means that in more countries SMCs exist and are authorized to make important decisions regarding school planning, budgeting and monitoring. As in indicator P5.a.2 above, UNICEF has been most successful in supporting community participation (63 per cent of countries), but more work needs to be done in developing the community's role in monitoring the school's performance and holding education managers accountable.

Progress in supporting functional SMCs has been most pronounced in Eastern and Southern Africa, where the percentage of countries with functional committees at primary and secondary level increased from the baseline of 48 per cent in 2013 to 71 per cent in 2015. Progress was much more limited in the East Asia and Pacific region and Middle East and North Africa, suggesting that UNICEF needs greater focus on this topic in these regions over the coming years.

In addition to system-level monitoring, UNICEF also tracks the numbers of distinct management structures⁴⁰ that received training directly funded by UNICEF on topics such as school management, school planning, school health/hygiene, inclusive education, financial management, etc. In 2015, UNICEF trained 48,971 SMCs, PTAs and school communities, giving a total of 96,112 trained since 2014. This suggests that UNICEF is on track to meet its cumulative target total of 188,564 by 2017. In 2015, some 5,420 communities in Burkina Faso were trained on income-generating activities. In the Sudan, training targeted 4,888 community members to enhance their participation in school decisions and activities, including with regard to school co-management, the development of school improvement plans, and contribution to enrolment campaigns and tracking or registration of out-of-school children.

Critical to the success of SMCs and PTAs is that they be truly representative of all members of the community in terms of gender, age or social standing. Moreover, enabling communities is a key component of UNICEF's work to advance gender equality. Hence, UNICEF pays particular attention to ensuring balanced representation of different stakeholder groups in the SMCs/PTAs it supports. For example, in Myanmar, training has included an emphasis on ensuring gender balance in SMCs. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, UNICEF has advocated for the participation of children and females in the

FIGURE 20

Output indicator P5.a.1: Countries with functional school management committees (SMCs) at primary and secondary level



committees in a context where cultural practices go against such inclusion. In some contexts, the participation of some stakeholder groups has been supported through the creation of dedicated structures – e.g., children’s clubs or mothers’ associations. In Somalia, 646 child-to-child clubs have been created alongside 858 SMCs to ensure children’s involvement in social mobilization towards increased enrolment and retention.

In the Middle East and North Africa region, UNICEF is leading on a School-Based Monitoring and Action initiative (also known as ‘INSAF’) that integrates support to the identification of the situation and barriers with regard to children’s access and retention, learning, and the development and implementation of action plans at the decentralized level (including at the district and school levels) towards improved equity in access and learning.

INSAF is well advanced in Morocco, and explorations have begun in eight other countries in the region.

UNICEF’s support to SMCs in different settings has increased its understanding of what works well in what kinds of contexts. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the work done by UNICEF and its partners to strengthen the capacity of families and communities contributed to the achievement of increased investment and funds for improvements of school infrastructure and materials. Lessons learned were then turned into a leaflet, ‘Social and Community Participation in Education’.

Beyond school management committees, UNICEF has also engaged with civil society as a provider of education services in certain contexts. In some cases, civil society-led education may be ad hoc, low quality and unaccredited, and the government may have limited information on providers and the institutions

and children they support. In these contexts, UNICEF has engaged in a variety of actions aimed at supporting links between the different segments of the education system. In Mauritania, it has trained faith-based providers to strengthen the quality of the education they provide to children. In Malaysia, it has helped map education institutions that provide education to undocumented children. In a number of other contexts – this is often the case for early childhood education – government-supported provision is unable to cater to a significant proportion of children. UNICEF has therefore worked to strengthen the capacity of civil society to provide quality early childhood education (e.g., in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea).

Engaging in policy and advocacy through global partnerships

UNICEF partners with many organizations worldwide to bring about results in education. Following are a few central relationships that must be highlighted.

Global Partnership for Education: In 2015, UNICEF continued to play a significant role in the GPE at global and country levels.

Throughout 2015, UNICEF contributed significantly to shaping the GPE's new Strategic Plan for 2016–2020, including through surveys with country and regional offices, taking part in thematic consultations on girls' education, education sector analysis, fragile and conflict-affected countries, and co-convening a consultation on inclusive education. The adoption of an ambitious SDG education goal in September 2015 informed the Strategic Plan, which was adopted by the UNICEF Board of Directors in December 2015.

UNICEF also worked closely with the GPE Secretariat and partners to ensure that the GPE's new results framework is able to chart its contribution to equity, efficiency and learning objectives, and is leading work with GPE to develop an Equity Index which will track progress in all GPE countries on overall equity in outcomes. In addition, UNICEF is participating in a GPE Technical Reference Group on inclusive education that is helping to inform the GPE Implementation Plan that gives attention to the inclusion of children with disabilities.

At the country level, UNICEF continued to be a member of LEGs in all 61 GPE countries. UNICEF was a coordinating agency in 41 of these countries in 2015. In this role, UNICEF supported developing country partners in their engagement with GPE, including through support on Education Sector Analysis and Education Sector Plan (ESP) Development Grants, facilitation of new applications for GPE grant support, amendments to grant programmes

to respond to changing contexts, including due to conflict and fragility, and organization of joint sector reviews.

As well as much-needed financing and a platform for better coordination, GPE encourages partner countries to develop education sector plans that provide a road map for system-level transformation. UNICEF mobilizes and provides global best practice advice and guidance to GPE partner countries to ensure that education sector plans focus on equity (with a particular emphasis on gender), improve learning outcomes, and are resilient to a range of risks. For example, in 2015 UNICEF assisted in the formation and adoption of new education sector plans and strategies in the Republic of Congo, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Burundi, among other countries.

In 2015, UNICEF acted as Managing Entity in nine countries, especially those experiencing significant development challenges and fragility. In Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen and Zimbabwe, UNICEF managed GPE Implementation Grants and supports governments to ensure effective delivery of education services. In 2015, UNICEF continued to act as supervising agency in Afghanistan and during an important democratic transition. There, it is supporting the Ministry of Education to achieve the GPE's fundamental goal of increasing and sustaining equitable access to education in 13 provinces, covering 40 remote districts in Afghanistan.

UNGEI: The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) is a multi-stakeholder partnership committed to improving the quality and availability of girls' education and contributing to the empowerment of girls and women through transformative education. As a demonstration of UNICEF's commitment to equity in education, and in particular addressing girls' inequitable experience of education, the Agency has hosted UNGEI since its establishment in 2000. In this role, UNICEF supports staff costs for the Secretariat as well as four regional focal points, and the operational costs and the overall programme budget for UNGEI. UNICEF also makes available the decentralized structure for coordinating regional and country-level work as well as UNICEF's overall in-house technical capacity to inform and strengthen UNGEI, especially the Education Programme and the Division of Communications. (*See PA 3, UNGEI Box on page 45 for details.*)

Educate A Child: Launched in 2012, Educate A Child (EAC) is a global initiative under the Education Above All Foundation in Qatar with the goal of reducing the number of children out of school by at least 10 million by the end of the 2015–2016 school year. UNICEF's first partnerships with EAC started in 2012, and a framework agreement was signed in 2013. In 2015, UNICEF's partnership with EAC was expanded to bring quality education to more than 3 million children through co-funded programmes in

Chad, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and Yemen with more than US\$155 million in pledged contributions from EAC. An additional programme is planned to begin in Nigeria in 2016, with over US\$35 million in co-funding from EAC to reach more than half a million children.

Save the Children International: The working relationship with Save the Children International on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Education Cluster is collaborative and productive. UNICEF and Save the Children have shifted to a model of co-leadership, through the two global cluster coordinators (one from each organization) and through mutual high-level representation on the Education Cluster Steering Group, which provides strategic guidance to the global cluster coordinators. Having Save the Children co-lead in governance as well as technical leadership assures better global, regional and country-level collaboration. It provides opportunities to address key issues and challenges, especially related to recruitment of coordination staff, division of labour and building our respective capacities in education in emergencies. The opportunity for brainstorming, solving problems, discussing advocacy and other issues together at the global level with a key implementation partner in the field is a symbiotic and strategic relationship for UNICEF.

Summary and going forward

There has been significant progress in the percentage of countries with functional SMCs, from 34 per cent in 2013 to 45 per cent in 2015. Countries with EMIS that provide disaggregated data to advance equity in education grew from 40 per cent in 2013 to 58 per cent in 2015, while there has been underlying progress in feeding EMIS findings back to communities. This information feedback to communities will continue to be a focus of UNICEF's system strengthening work as it is crucial in empowering communities to monitor their schools and hold schools and education system managers accountable. On the advocacy front, additional work is needed to increase the share of partner countries allocating at least 20 per cent of their budgets to education as well as a more equitable allocation of resources within the sector. To the extent that UNICEF has been, or indeed will be, successful in global and national advocacy or in systems strengthening, this success relies in large part on our partnerships with other key actors in the education sector, and UNICEF will continue to engage extensively in this. Several global initiatives in 2016 (see *Strategic Context of 2015 on page 9 for more details*) may expand both UNICEF's capacity for this work and that of the global community.



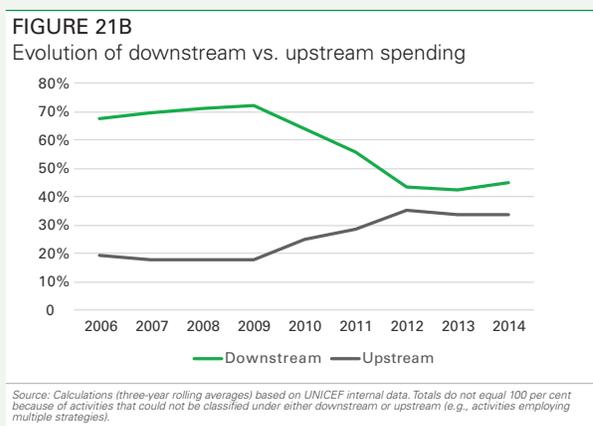
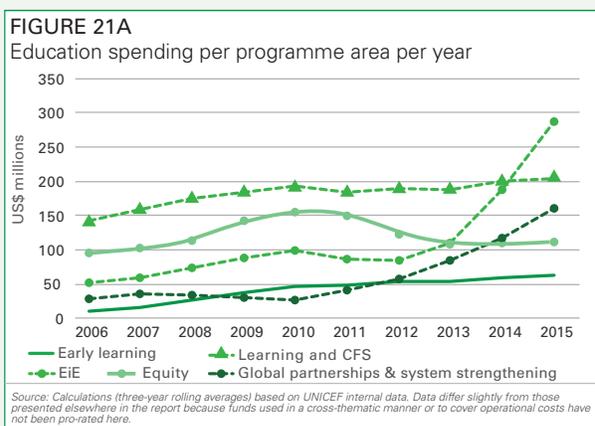
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The Education Portfolio Review

The Education Portfolio Review is a data-based assessment of UNICEF's education portfolio over the 2006–2015 period. This assessment includes an in-depth analysis of education spending status and trends; an evaluation of how well spending reflects most crucial needs (targeting); and an investigation of linkages between spending and results. Preliminary results are presented below:

An increased focus on emergency response, early learning and system strengthening, with support increasingly delivered at the upstream level

Spending allocated to different education programme areas has evolved significantly over the 2006–2015 period: Education in Emergencies has more than tripled since 2012, driven by crises in the Middle East and North Africa. Spending for early learning was multiplied by 5.6 between 2006 and 2015, in line with research pointing at the crucial importance of early learning for later learning, retention and progression (hence supporting the Strategic Plan areas of equity and learning). Finally, system strengthening has increased five-fold between 2006–2010 and 2015, recognizing that it is through support to policies, standards, data, knowledge and capacity that UNICEF has the most potential to impact upon education outcomes for children at scale (see Figure 21A).



In line with the above, the type of support UNICEF is providing within each of the programme areas is shifting towards an increased focus on enhancing the enabling environment. As an illustration, in 2015, 67 per cent of early learning spending was dedicated to support to policy and standard development, against only 28 per cent in 2006, and the volume of funding dedicated to learning assessments more than doubled in 2013–2015 as compared with 2010–2012. Figure 21B further shows that support is increasingly delivered at the upstream level.

Strengthening focus on those most in need

Overall, UNICEF non-emergency education spending has become increasingly targeted to the poorest countries: in 2015, 56 per cent of this spending went to low-income countries vs. 40 per cent in 2006, 28 per cent to lower-middle-income countries vs. 37 per cent in 2006, and 16 per cent to upper-middle-income countries vs. 22 per cent in 2006. A statistical analysis helps better identify the factors associated with education spending: country population, poverty, emergencies, education-specific needs and lower education official development assistance are all associated with higher education spending. While this shows evidence of targeting, there are also significant variations between countries in similar situations, reflective, in part, of needs for improvement in targeting and in part of diverse donor interests, country capacity to raise funding or other country-specific conditions that cannot be captured by the data. A further analysis looked at spending in specific programme areas vs. needs in these areas and showed some level of targeting. For example, on average, links between gender spending and needs have improved between 2007 and 2013. However, the analysis also shows room for improvement, both with regard to gender and the targeting of resources for out-of-school children and early learning and with regard to the targeting of UNICEF support to the poorest schools in some countries.

These results are already driving reflections on ways to strengthen UNICEF's responsiveness to needs, and further results from the Education Portfolio Review will inform future work planning.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The year 2015 saw unprecedented political and public resolve – including the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – to address some of the greatest global challenges. Also known as Agenda 2030, the SDGs are of great importance to children and the work of UNICEF for the coming 15 years. They set multiple, ambitious, child-centred targets that demand significant and sustained investment for the long term. To be fit for purpose in this evolving context, UNICEF revised its Strategic Plan 2014–2017 resource requirements by outcome area from the US\$14.8 billion originally planned to US\$17 billion.

Of the two main types of resources, ‘regular resources’ are un-earmarked, unrestricted funds that help UNICEF respond rapidly to emergencies, maintain programme continuity, identify and address the root causes of inequity, and deliver services in the most remote and fragile contexts. Because regular resources are not

earmarked for a specific programme, they can also provide seed capital to develop innovative approaches to some of the world’s most challenging issues and ensure a credible reach and specialized expertise on the ground.

Thanks to these foundational resources, UNICEF and partners can bring solutions to scale and contextually replicate them through additional and complementary earmarked funds or ‘other resources’, which include pooled funding modalities such as thematic funding for UNICEF Strategic Plan outcome and cross-cutting areas. These other resources are restricted to a particular programme, geographical area, strategic priority or emergency response. Flexible and predictable other resources should complement a sound level of regular resources for UNICEF to deliver its mandate.

TABLE 1

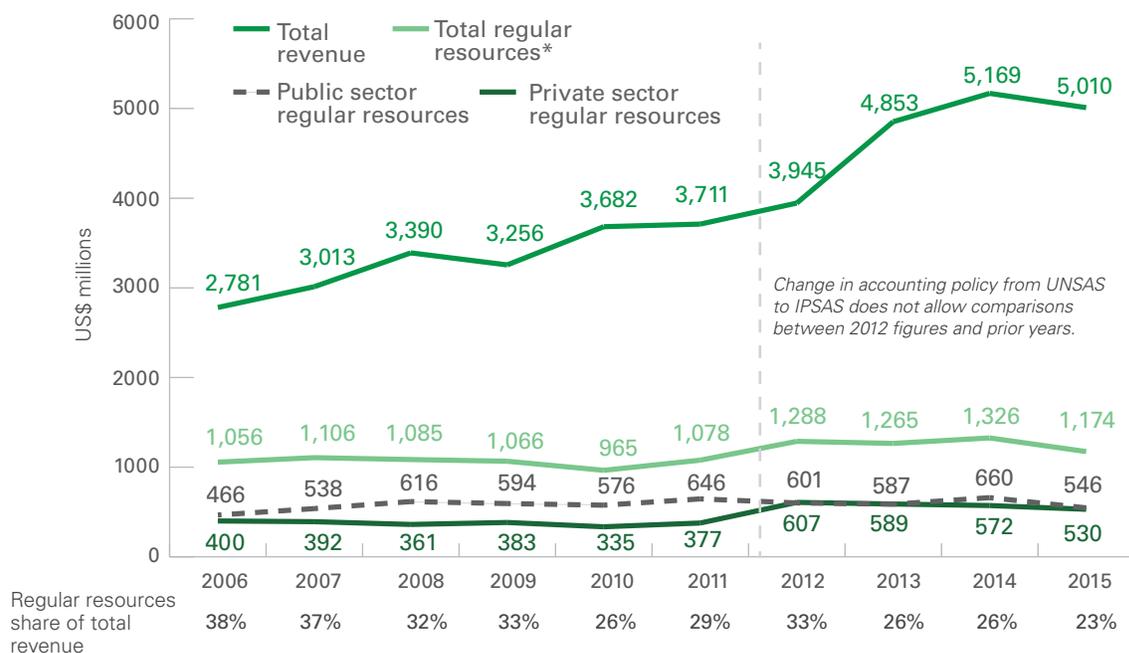
Strategic Plan integrated results and resources framework by outcome area, 2014–2017: Updated planned amounts (US\$ millions)

Outcome	Planned 2014–2017		
	Regular resources	Other resources	Total resources
Health	1,023	3,760	4,783
HIV and AIDS	183	671	854
WASH	548	2,014	2,562
Nutrition	365	1,343	1,708
Education	730	2,686	3,416
Child protection	438	1,611	2,050
Social inclusion	365	1,343	1,708
Totals	3,652	13,429	17,081

* Data as of 1 April 2016.

FIGURE 22

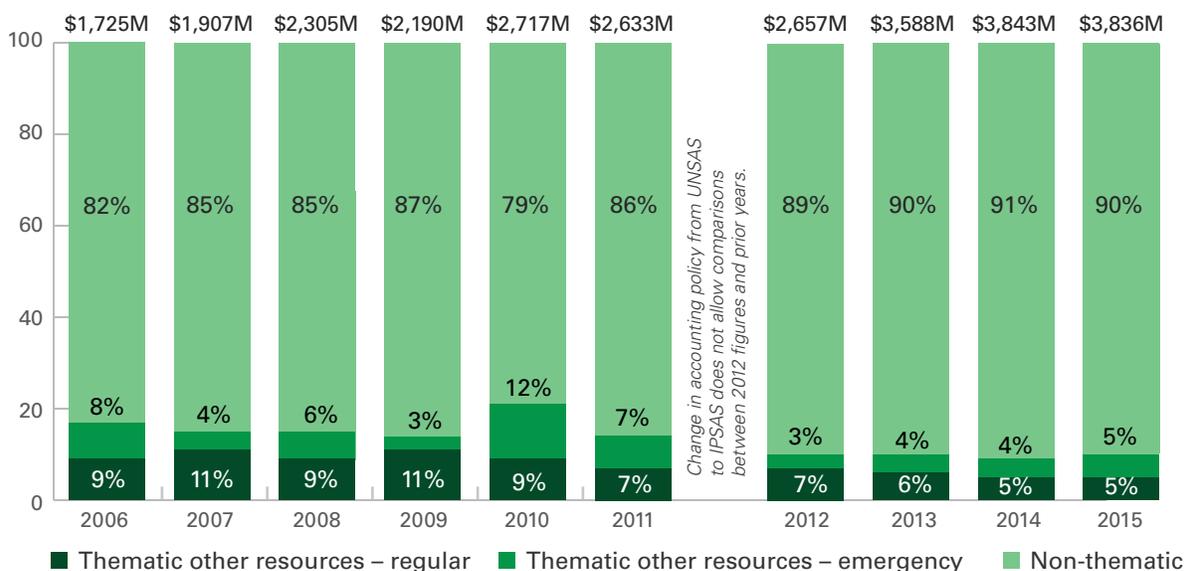
Regular resource share by resource partner category, 2006–2015*



* Total regular resources includes other Revenue from interest, procurement services and other sources

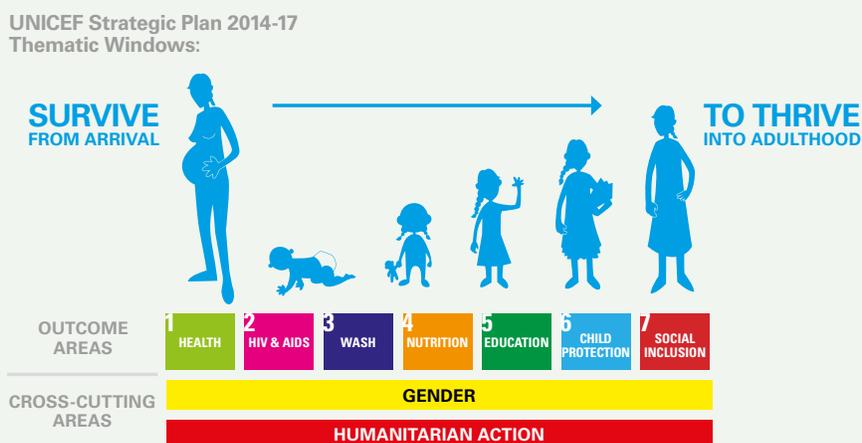
FIGURE 23

Other resources, 2006–2015: Thematic vs. non-thematic



The value of thematic funding (OR+)

While regular resources remain the most flexible contributions for UNICEF, thematic other resources (OR+) are the second-most efficient and effective contributions to the organization and act as ideal complementary funding. Thematic funding is allocated on a needs basis and allows for longer-term planning and sustainability of programmes. A funding pool has been established for each of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017 outcome areas as well as for humanitarian action and gender. Resource partners can contribute thematic funding at the global, regional or country level.



Contributions from all resource partners to the same outcome area are combined into one pooled-fund account with the same duration, which simplifies financial management and reporting for UNICEF. A single annual consolidated narrative and financial report is provided that is the same for all resource partners. Due to reduced administrative costs, thematic contributions are subject to a lower cost recovery rate, to the benefit of UNICEF and resource partners alike. For more information on thematic funding, and how it works, please visit www.unicef.org/publicpartnerships/66662_66851.html.

PARTNER TESTIMONIAL

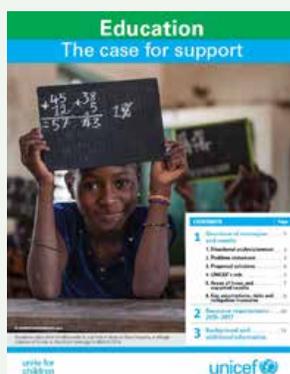
Children are a priority on Sweden's international agenda. Sweden has a long tradition of standing up for children's rights. UNICEF has been working for children for almost 70 years, and is a key partner to Sweden in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance.

The most excluded and most vulnerable children are reached by UNICEF's thematic funding. As a form of un-earmarked programme support, Sida believes that this financing modality enhances effectiveness since it provides greater flexibility and the possibility to plan activities over the long term, while still being able to act quickly in the event of a crisis. Over the years, Sida's support to UNICEF has moved away from earmarked support towards fewer and larger contributions and increased thematic funding. This trend reflects Sida's confidence in UNICEF as an effective actor and a strong advocate for the implementation of children's rights.

Sida shares UNICEF's belief that all children have a right to survive, thrive and fulfill their potential - to the benefit of a better world. This means equal access to services and care that can make all the difference in children's lives. Children are the next generation who will help build the future. It is our mutual responsibility to give them the best possible conditions. Effectiveness should be the foundation of such an engagement.

Ms. Charlotte Petri Gornitzka -
Director-General, Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)

Supporting UNICEF's ability to deliver results for children



UNICEF's Cases for Support make the case for investing in children, while also spotlighting how the organization is able to deliver robust returns on such investments – for children and for society at large.

Investments in the most vulnerable children not only improve their lives and fulfil the obligation to realize their rights, they also yield benefits for everyone. Improving children's well-being – from providing essential health care and adequate nutrition and securing access to quality education, to protecting children from violence and exploitation – helps to break intergenerational cycles of deprivation that hamper economic development and erode social cohesion.

For each area, the Case describes the key results that UNICEF works to achieve and outlines the theory of change behind these results. This starts with an analysis of the situation of the world's children, focusing on the challenges facing the most deprived, and an overview of the evidence-based solutions that UNICEF promotes. The Cases also focus on lessons learned from our experience across the world and draw attention to current risks and the measures needed to mitigate them. Finally, they detail the resources needed to achieve results and highlight current gaps in funding.

www.unicef.org/publicpartnerships/files/EducationTheCaseForSupport.pdf

In 2015, funding to UNICEF was over US\$5 billion for the second year in a row, thanks to the organization's loyal and new resource partners. At the same time, slowing economic growth and currency fluctuations – particularly of major European currencies and the Japanese Yen vis-à-vis the US dollar – resulted in an overall decrease of 11 per cent of regular resources compared to 2014. Totalling US\$1,174 million, this was the lowest level of regular resources in four years. At 23 per cent of overall revenue, this was the lowest level of regular resources in UNICEF's history, down from 50 per cent at the turn of the new millennium. Un-earmarked contributions from public sector resource partners decreased by 17 per cent. As a result, UNICEF relied more heavily on softly earmarked funding streams for delivery of critical and otherwise underfunded programmes and activities.

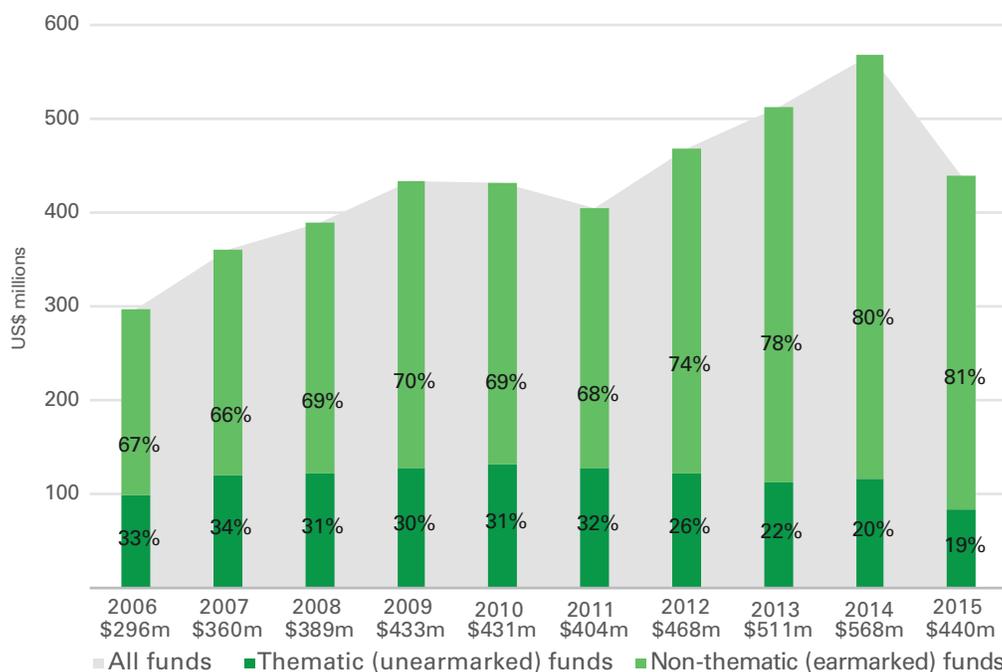
Of the US\$5,010 million of UNICEF's revenue in 2015, US\$3,836 million was earmarked. Of these other resources, US\$390 million was softly earmarked as thematic, marking a 14 per cent increase from the US\$341 million in 2014. UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2014–2017 called for partners to enhance funding aligned to the organization's strategic mandate. The flexibility and potential predictability of thematic funding makes these pools an important complement to regular resources for both development and humanitarian programming and the links between the two. This is in line with the universal mandate of UNICEF and in support of country-specific priorities.

TABLE 2
Top 20 resource partners to education, 2015*

Rank	Resource partners	Total (US\$)
1	Norway	79,160,106
2	European Commission	66,354,527
3	Global Partnership for Education	57,881,997
4	United States of America	43,085,809
5	The United Kingdom	23,862,627
6	Germany	22,770,143
7	UNICEF-Qatar	15,700,653
8	Swedish Committee for UNICEF	12,712,999
9	Australia	12,425,445
10	United States Fund for UNICEF	11,794,348
11	Sweden	9,411,598
12	One UN Fund (MPTF Office)	6,521,921
13	United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF	5,958,280
14	German Committee for UNICEF	5,925,944
15	Canada	5,252,825
16	Spanish Committee for UNICEF	4,815,940
17	Danish Committee for UNICEF	4,620,813
18	Netherlands Committee for UNICEF	4,100,892
19	Netherlands	3,750,000
20	Japan Committee for UNICEF	3,645,115

* Figures do not include financial adjustments.

FIGURE 24
Education other resources funding trend, 2006–2015



* Regular resource are not included since they are not linked to any outcome or cross-cutting area at the time of contribution by a partner.

** Change in accounting policy to IPSAS on 1 January 2012 does not allow for comparisons between 2012 figures and prior years.

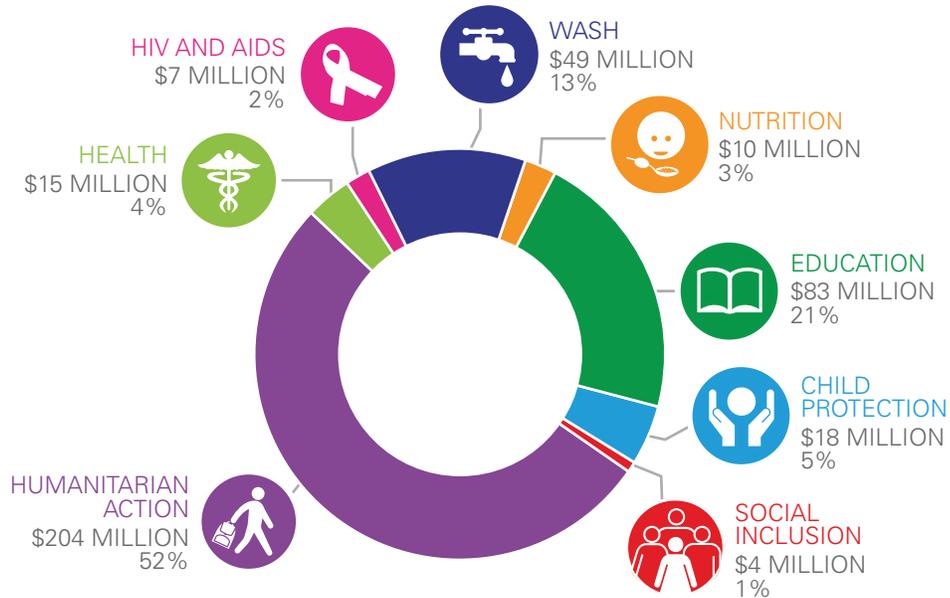
In 2015, UNICEF received US\$440 million total other resources for education, a 23 per cent drop from 2014. The most prominent resource partners in this area of UNICEF’s work included Norway, the European Commission and the Global Partnership for Education (see Table 2).

The highest thematic, flexible contribution to education came from Norway. This was closely followed by the

European Commission’s specific support towards work in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey; the Global Partnership for Education, which provided large-scale support to various countries to implement the national Education Sector Plans, including Chad, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Zimbabwe, among others; and the United States of America, notably for getting children into school in Afghanistan.

FIGURE 25

Thematic revenue share by outcome area and humanitarian action, 2015: US\$390 million

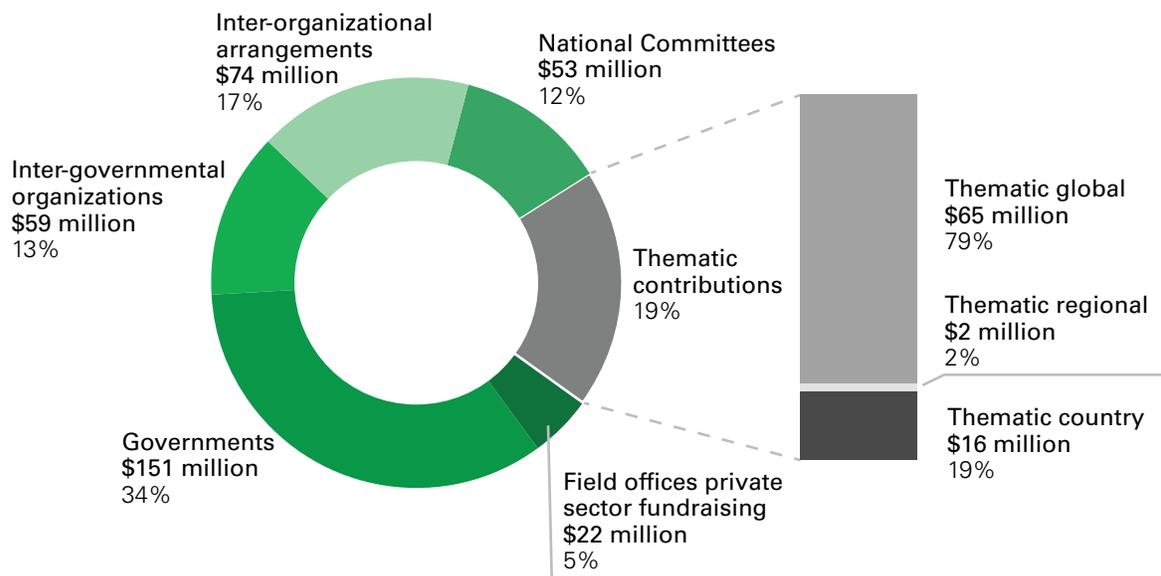


In 2015, UNICEF received US\$83 million in thematic contributions for education (see Figure 25), a 29 per cent drop compared to US\$116 million in 2014, in part due to currency fluctuations and the strengthening of the US dollar.

Thematic contributions were 19 per cent of total 'other resources' for education. Of these thematic contributions for education, 79 per cent were given most flexibly as global thematic funding, rather than as regional or country-specific funding (see Figure 26).

FIGURE 26

Other resources by funding modality and partner group, education, 2015: US\$440 million



* Does not include US\$2 million in adjustments

Over 75 per cent of thematic contributions received for education came from the Government of Norway, followed by the Governments of Luxembourg and Sweden (see Table 3).

Just over 20 per cent of thematic funding came from the private sector. Notably, the United States Fund for UNICEF and the Korean Committee for UNICEF

contributed to education programming at the country and regional levels (see Table 3).

UNICEF is seeking to broaden and diversify its funding base (including thematic contributions). The number of partners contributing thematic funding to Education dropped from 51 in 2014 to 49 in 2015.

TABLE 3
Thematic revenue to education by resource partner, 2015

Resource partner type	Resource partner	Total (US\$)	Percentage
Governments 77%	Norway	62,173,738	75.39%
	Luxembourg	764,706	0.93%
	Sweden	317,429	0.38%
National Committees 20%	United States Fund for UNICEF	2,585,712	3.14%
	Korean Committee for UNICEF	2,475,722	3.00%
	Swedish Committee for UNICEF	1,260,243	1.53%
	United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF	1,214,696	1.47%
	Netherlands Committee for UNICEF	1,091,013	1.32%
	Italian Committee for UNICEF	934,995	1.13%
	Norwegian Committee for UNICEF	915,920	1.11%
	German Committee for UNICEF	790,385	0.96%
	French Committee for UNICEF	759,885	0.92%
	Spanish Committee for UNICEF	749,766	0.91%
	Danish Committee for UNICEF	692,330	0.84%
	Canadian Committee for UNICEF	288,874	0.35%
	Japan Committee for UNICEF	284,018	0.34%
	Portuguese Committee for UNICEF	283,960	0.34%
	Polish Committee for UNICEF	283,798	0.34%
	Belgian Committee for UNICEF	270,849	0.33%
	Turkish Committee for UNICEF	241,713	0.29%
	Finnish Committee for UNICEF	222,685	0.27%
	Czech Committee for UNICEF	220,530	0.27%
	Swiss Committee for UNICEF	177,048	0.21%
Hong Kong Committee for UNICEF	156,244	0.19%	
Australian Committee for UNICEF	150,637	0.18%	

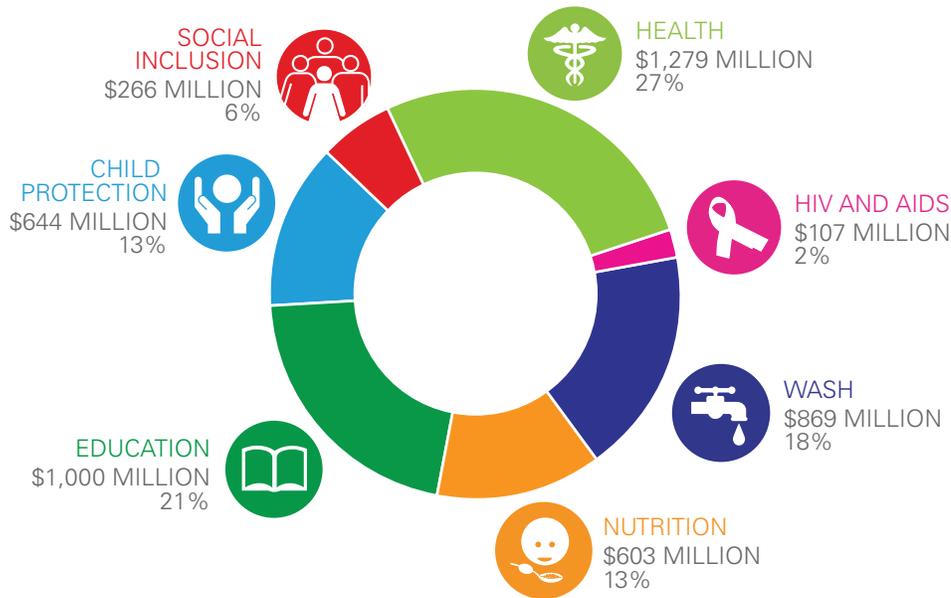
TABLE 3
Thematic revenue to education by resource partner, 2015

Resource partner type	Resource partner	Total (US\$)	Percentage
	Hungarian Committee for UNICEF	118,735	0.14%
	Hellenic Committee for UNICEF	62,673	0.08%
	Slovak Committee for UNICEF	61,431	0.07%
	Ireland Committee for UNICEF	59,459	0.07%
	Luxembourg Committee for UNICEF	58,446	0.07%
	New Zealand Committee for UNICEF	40,701	0.05%
	Israeli Committee for UNICEF	38,726	0.05%
	Austrian Committee for UNICEF	34,140	0.04%
	Lithuanian Committee for UNICEF	8,221	0.01%
	Iceland National Committee for UNICEF	5,955	0.01%
Field offices private sector fundraising 3%	UNICEF-United Arab Emirates	783,241	0.95%
	UNICEF-China	526,791	0.64%
	UNICEF-Brazil	500,647	0.61%
	UNICEF-India	316,927	0.38%
	UNICEF-Malaysia	257,321	0.31%
	UNICEF-Croatia	111,456	0.14%
	UNICEF-Thailand	38,305	0.05%
	UNICEF-Romania	27,751	0.03%
	UNICEF-Qatar	24,645	0.03%
	UNICEF Bulgaria	24,608	0.03%
	UNICEF-Indonesia	23,860	0.03%
	UNICEF-Kuwait	16,804	0.02%
	UNICEF-Ukraine	15,869	0.02%
	UNICEF-Mexico	3,000	0.00%
Grand total		82,466,605	100.00%

*Figures do not include financial adjustments.

FIGURE 27

Total expenses by Strategic Plan outcome area, 2015



In 2015, spending on education amounted for 21 per cent of UNICEF’s expenditure, up only slightly from 20 per cent the previous year. Expenses are higher than the income received because expenses are comprised of total allotments from regular resources and other resources (including balances carried over from prior years) to the outcome areas, while income reflects only earmarked contributions from 2015.

emergency’ (see Figure 28). This reflects the significant needs of children living in humanitarian situations, and the growing awareness of the importance of ensuring education in emergencies. This was particularly relevant in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States and in the Middle East and North Africa, where spending on emergencies accounted for more than 60 per cent of total education spending, in large part as a response to the Syrian crisis.

The most significant increase in expenditure between 2014 and 2015 was in relation to ‘other resources –

FIGURE 28

Expenses by year for education, 2014–2015

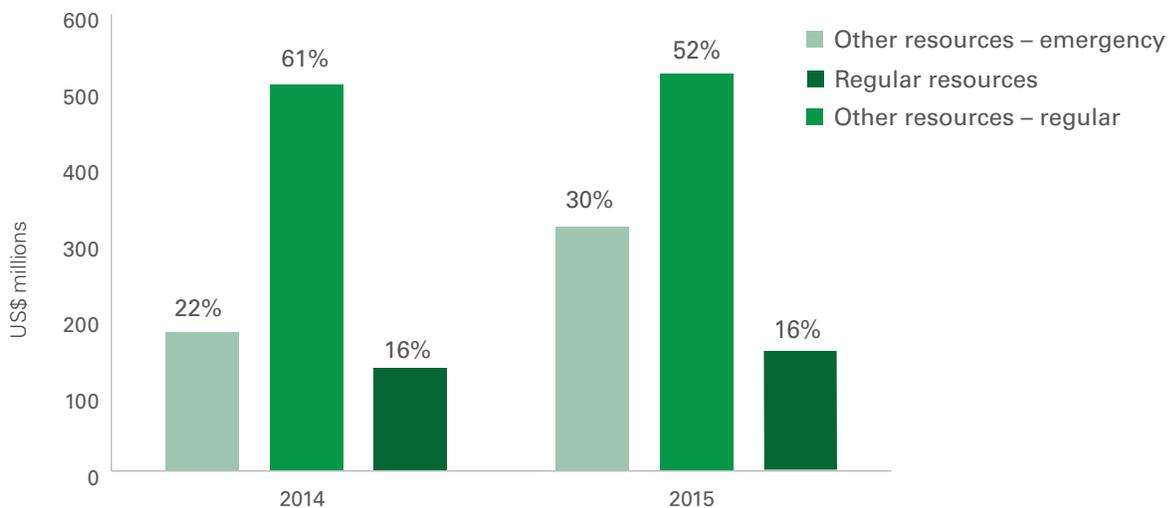
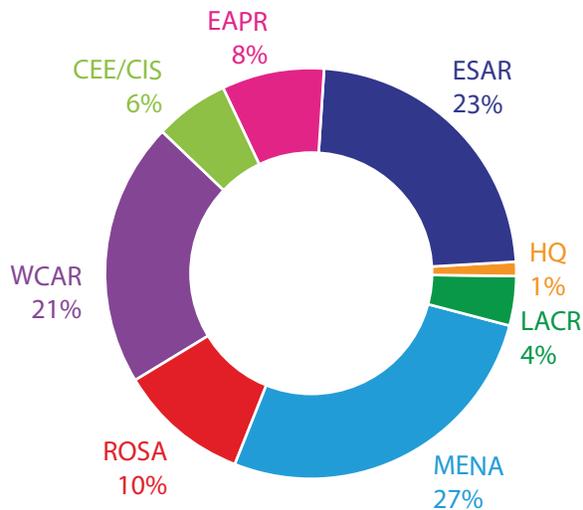


FIGURE 29
Total expenses by region for education, 2015



In 2015, the largest expenditure for education was in the Middle East and North Africa region, followed by the Eastern and Southern Africa region and the West and Central Africa region. Together, these regions accounted for more than 70 per cent of total expenditure for education.

The countries receiving the largest amount of funding in 2015 were among those affected by many emergency and humanitarian crises during 2015. One of the largest and most complex humanitarian situations, the Syrian crisis, also carried over to many of the countries on the list of top expenditures for education, including Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Jordan. Outside of expenditures for emergencies, countries receiving programme implementation grants from the Global Partnership for Education, including the Central African Republic, Chad, South Sudan and Zimbabwe, were also among the list of top expenditures by country for education.

FIGURE 30
Expenses by region and funding source for education, 2015

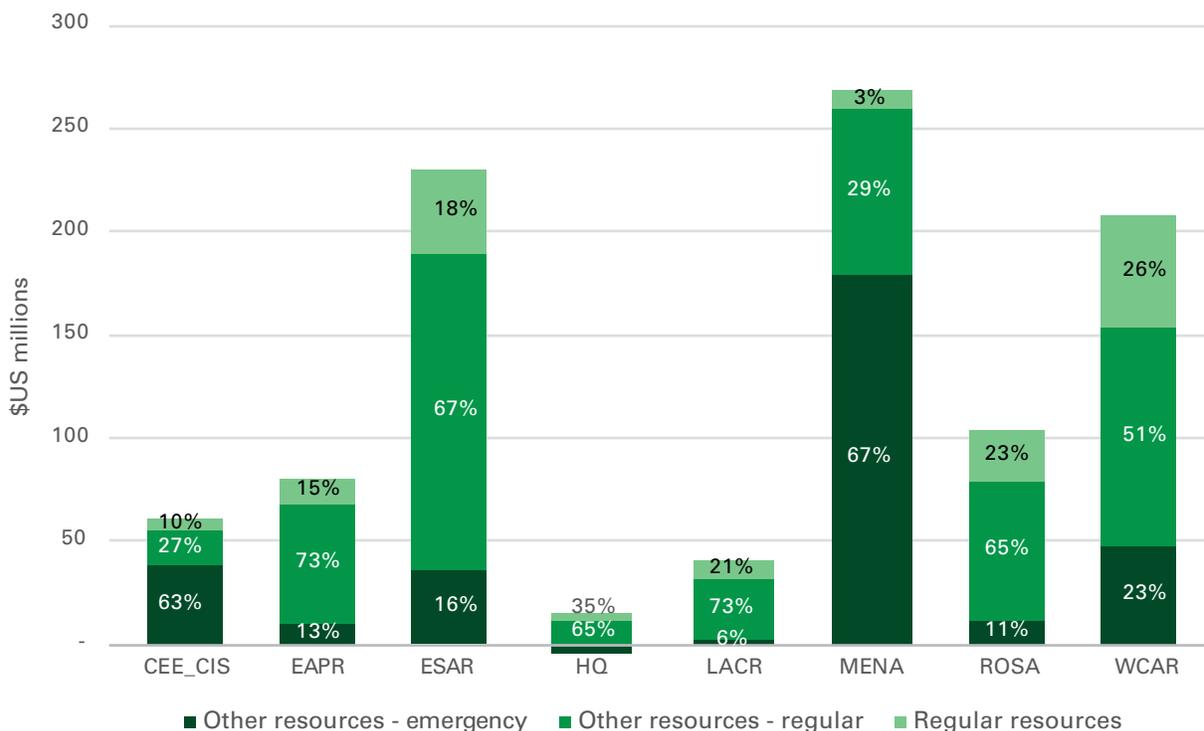


TABLE 4

Top 20 country or regional offices, by expense for education, 2015 (US\$)

Country	Other resources - emergency	Other resources - regular	Regular resources	Grand total
Lebanon	74,057,571	17,128,014	638,958	91,824,544
Iraq	48,688,158	10,420,427	698,258	59,806,843
Zimbabwe	13,309	47,397,648	1,067,424	48,478,380
Afghanistan	1,083,087	31,560,900	9,720,133	42,364,120
South Sudan	20,537,309	16,589,369	1,135,398	38,262,077
Turkey	32,180,921	1,225,820	331,349	33,738,089
Jordan	21,588,533	10,530,792	533,990	32,653,315
Democratic Republic of Congo	6,552,438	14,321,223	11,684,072	32,557,732
Syria	21,412,674	7,728,896	789,464	29,931,034
Chad	1,882,733	20,745,197	6,974,258	29,602,188
Sierra Leone	11,993,832	7,286,436	1,539,908	20,820,176
Sudan	5,340,404	12,195,393	1,686,290	19,222,088
Myanmar	657,551	15,985,197	2,327,145	18,969,893
Somalia	2,297,789	14,217,912	2,096,267	18,611,968
Malawi	289,595	14,504,472	3,229,164	18,023,231
Ethiopia	4,284,681	7,049,668	6,494,698	17,829,048
Pakistan	1,681,157	11,285,740	4,235,314	17,202,211
Mali	3,347,754	8,006,239	3,904,016	15,258,008
Central African Republic	4,916,300	8,227,409	1,527,305	14,671,014
Uganda	4,232,086	4,710,729	4,761,495	13,704,310
Total Top 20	267,037,880	281,117,483	65,374,905	613,530,268

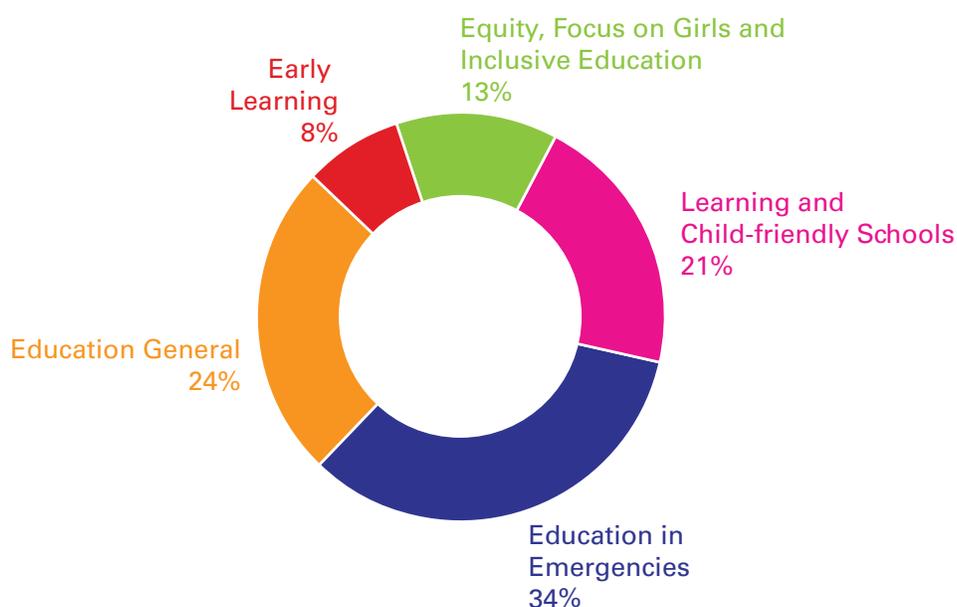
Education in emergencies activities accounts for roughly a third of all expenses for the sector. This reflects both the growing acknowledgement of the importance of investing in education in emergencies and protracted crises, but also the overall increase in the number of children in humanitarian situations requiring education assistance. There is a risk that growing humanitarian education needs could divert resources away from vulnerable populations in more stable, but often fragile, states. The next-highest category of education spending was 24 per cent on general education activities, highlighting UNICEF's support to countries to develop strong and responsive education systems, use evidence-based education strategies and advocate for the development of capacities to ensure that education commitments are translated into policies and programmes.

In the context of a global learning crisis, UNICEF invested 21 per cent of total expenditure on education to support strengthening the quality of the learning environment,

combined with better data on learning outcomes through strengthened learning assessment. The remaining 30 per cent was used to support countries to address early learning and reach the most marginalized children.

At the half point of the current Strategic Plan, by the end of 2015, expenses reached close to 50 per cent of the revised planned amounts by outcome area. By using expenses as a proxy for revenue, the Strategic Plan remains 50 per cent unfunded. Specifically for education, the gap is 47 per cent up to the end of 2015 for the 2014–2017 planned period. UNICEF looks forward to working closely with its partners to meet these funding needs and fulfil the shared commitments and results towards Agenda 2030.

FIGURE 31
Expenses by programme area for education, 2015*



* Figures include funds used in a cross-thematic manner or to cover operational costs. Programme area totals differ slightly from those presented in the report body due to a reclassification of some expenditure areas, e.g., teacher development and deployment/teacher training and support for basic education is presented under PA3 rather than PA5, as is the case in internal financial reporting.

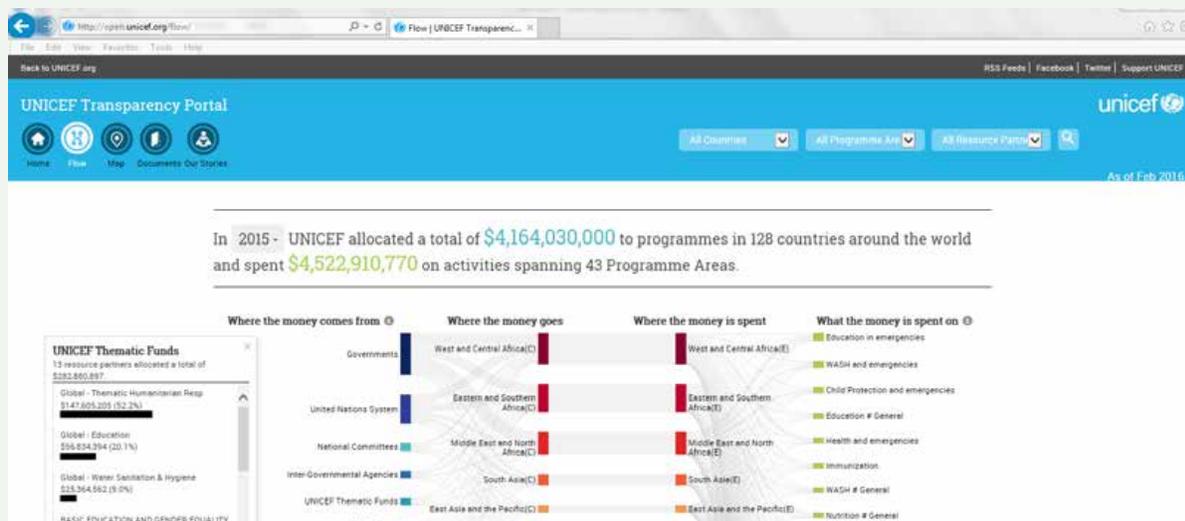
TABLE 5

Strategic Plan integrated results and resources framework by outcome area, 2014–2017: Updated planned amounts, actual expenses and funding gap (US\$ millions)*

Outcome	Planned 2014–2017			Actual expenses			Funding gap		
	Regular resources	Other resources	Total resources	Regular resources	Other resources	Total resources	Regular resources	Other resources	Total resources
Health	1,023	3,760	4,783	473	2,035	2,508	550	1,725	2,275
HIV and AIDS	183	671	854	73	141	214	109	530	640
WASH	548	2,014	2,562	211	1,385	1,596	336	630	966
Nutrition	365	1,343	1,708	196	892	1,088	170	451	620
Education	730	2,686	3,416	293	1,533	1,827	437	1,153	1,590
Child Protection	438	1,611	2,050	302	856	1,158	136	756	892
Social Inclusion	365	1,343	1,708	244	265	509	121	1,078	1,199
Totals	3,652	13,429	17,081	1,792	7,107	8,899	1,860	6,322	8,182

*Expenses as a proxy for revenue received.

Follow the flow of funds from contribution to programming by visiting <http://open.unicef.org>.



FUTURE WORKPLAN

UNICEF is currently at a unique juncture with the transition to a more expansive, universal education agenda with the adoption of the SDGs, and the reflection brought by the Mid-Term Review process of UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2014–2017. In light of these strategic developments, UNICEF will begin work on a new Education Strategy in 2016, involving extensive consultations within the organization as well as with key partners and donors.

Given UNICEF's current mandate and comparative advantages, the organization's focus will remain on helping low-income and lower-middle-income countries, especially those countries with high numbers of out-of-school children and those affected by crisis and fragility, to progressively realize SDG 4 and give every child a fair chance to learn and contribute to other SDGs, including SDG 16 on promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies.

Moving forward, UNICEF will continue to align work plans and monitor progress against the Strategic Plan 2014–2017. UNICEF's priorities for education are equity – ensuring all children, regardless of their circumstances, have equal opportunities in education and learning – ensuring that children secure essential skills, such as literacy, numeracy and a wider range of social, emotional and cognitive skills necessary to empower them to contribute to society.

By 2017, UNICEF aims to contribute to the following results: 28 million fewer children out of school; at least 98 per cent of all children completing primary education; and girls no longer disadvantaged, completing primary school and continuing to secondary school at the same rate as boys. UNICEF will support education systems to become more equitable, with increasing attendance rates for the poorest children, and more effective, with 75 per cent of countries improving learning outcomes by 2017. In order to accomplish all of this, UNICEF will work in the following key programme areas:

Early learning: UNICEF will continue to support countries to put in place early learning policies, curricula and quality standards in order to expand access to quality early learning programmes. Ensuring that the most vulnerable children have an opportunity to develop foundational school readiness skills will require diverse approaches to early learning, combining assessment and support to both formal and non-formal or alternative programme models. Early learning data, monitoring and evidence will be a high priority as well, especially in light of the SDG indicators on early childhood education. Supporting countries in developing and utilizing tools for tracking early learning and development nationally, seeking the integration of such tools into education management information systems, and strengthening the connection between early learning and early-grade metrics will be of key importance. Further, UNICEF will continue to expand its advocacy for

sustainable finance for early learning and will strengthen further technical support to national governments and partners at policy and programmatic levels to increase investment in the early years.

Learning outcomes and child-friendly schools: UNICEF will support countries to improve learning outcomes and the quality of learning environments. All children across the life cycle, irrespective of poverty, gender, disability, language or location, will be provided with the opportunity to receive the effective support they need to learn. UNICEF will continue to support countries to establish national education quality standards that cover pedagogy, learning environments, school ethos, safety and security, water and sanitation in schools, community involvement, infrastructure, and measuring of learning outcomes.

Supporting governments to make sound decisions requires strong evidence and better data. Given the magnitude of the learning crisis, UNICEF will continue to work to strengthen learning assessment systems, particularly for the early grades, and strong accountability structures to improve the way in which investments are transformed into actual learning outcomes for all children. Classroom assessment will emphasize continuous progress monitoring to inform teachers of the effectiveness of learning at the classroom and individual levels, leading to adaptations in approach.

Attention will be given to evaluating the quality and results of the work on capacity development of teachers, as countries spend a substantial amount of funds on this activity but lack sufficient evidence on its efficacy. Countries will be supported to give better attention to teacher policy, evidence generation and scaling up of innovations. More prominence will be given to multi-lingual education as a key policy matter requiring attention to improve learning outcomes and at times to strengthen social cohesion.

UNICEF will continue to address the equity and inclusion challenges impeding girls and boys from learning. This includes increasing demand for quality education that strengthens accountability of school leadership and communities as they work together to promote learning. UNICEF will work with partners to support schools that are safe, child-friendly and inclusive, with learning at the centre. Recognizing that children and adolescents need an education that will equip them with the life skills and social emotional learning required to decipher and shape a world in which knowledge is global, but experience is local, programming in 2014–2017 will continue to underscore the importance of multiple and alternative pathways to learning for disadvantaged and marginalized children and adolescents, recognizing the specific barriers faced by adolescent girls.

Equity – with a focus on girls’ and inclusive education:

UNICEF will contribute to shaping a future that ensures that all children, regardless of their circumstances, have equal opportunities in education from preschool to secondary school level. UNICEF will continue to focus on ensuring the rights of the most disadvantaged children, including those from the poorest families, rural and remote communities, and minority ethnic groups, as well as children with disabilities, child labourers and children affected by conflict or natural disasters. On a country-by-country basis, the most marginalized children will be identified and strategies developed to support them in accessing quality opportunities for learning, working to remove the many significant barriers to quality education that many still face. UNICEF will accelerate work on promoting inclusive education, particularly for children with disabilities, so that more schools are accessible, more teachers are trained, assistive devices are more widely available, and more communities see the value in ensuring that all of their children receive a quality education.

Gender can intersect with other drivers of exclusion, such as cost and distance, to create significant barriers to girls’ education. In line with the UNICEF Gender Action Plan, the Education programme will ensure an increased focus in countries where girls’ education lags behind that of boys on strategies to improve their attendance and learning outcomes, from early childhood through secondary education.

UNICEF will also continue to support countries to make schools safe for children through nationally defined legal frameworks, and associated prevention and response mechanisms for school-related gender-based violence.

In line with the Core Commitments for Adolescents, UNICEF will support countries to expand opportunities for most marginalized girls and boys to complete lower secondary with relevant learning outcomes. Given limited domestic financing, UNICEF has a role in supporting governments to make evidence-based choices on how to equitably expand the sub-sector, without compromising quality across the education system. In many low- and middle-income countries, basic education is fee-free and defined as nine years of primary and lower secondary. Upper secondary, whether general or technical, is rarely compulsory, even in high-income countries, with older adolescents having the right to both work and education. UNICEF will explore approaches that build the skills and knowledge young people will need for both self-reliance and employment, in both development and humanitarian settings. In some contexts, this may include facilitating school-to-work transitions, in partnership with other agencies.

Education in emergencies: Equity and learning will continue to be priorities in humanitarian situations, and UNICEF will continue to scale up its support to countries

to develop or implement up-to-date risk assessments and risk-reduction strategies using new risk-informed programming resources for education. UNICEF will help country-level Education Clusters and other sector coordination mechanisms for education to meet CCC standards for coordination in countries in humanitarian action, including in complex refugee education contexts in protracted crises. In further supporting children and adolescents in these difficult situations, UNICEF aims to reach at least 80 per cent of targeted 3- to 18-year-olds in humanitarian situations with education services, including essential psychosocial support.

The plight of Syrian refugees, the political momentum created by the No Lost Generation, and the funding crises for education in many emergency contexts around the world have catalysed discussions and targeted action on financing for education in emergencies and protracted crises. UNICEF will work to tackle the issue of measuring learning in emergencies to improve programming in refugee education. In addition, UNICEF headquarters in New York will serve as the interim host for the new Education Cannot Wait Fund to be launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016, which will work to address funding, capacity and coordination issues for education in emergency situations.

In a time of global funding shortfalls for education in emergencies, the largest portion of UNICEF’s Humanitarian Action for Children 2016 appeal – 25 per cent – is now, for the first time ever, going towards educating children in emergencies. In 2016, UNICEF’s Humanitarian Action for Children plans to dramatically increase the number of children in crises who are given access to education – from 4.9 million at the beginning of 2015 to 8.2 million in 2016.

Global partnerships and system strengthening:

UNICEF will continue to expand its global role in co-chairing and contributing to international education initiatives and partnerships such as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI), the global Education Cluster, and the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity, which launched in July 2015. With UNGEI, UNICEF will continue its support, alongside GPE, for a guidance and training of ministries of education in gender-responsive sector planning. UNICEF will support the operationalization of GPE’s new Strategic Plan, including through the development of its grant-reporting template and technical support to its results framework and equity index. UNICEF will also continue supporting GPE countries through the development of rigorous education sector analyses through direct technical assistance, capacity building, quality assurance support, and the development of a volume 3 of the Education Sector Analysis Guidelines with four new chapters on risk,

vulnerability, and resilience analysis, inclusive education, political economy and governance, and institutional capacity analysis, in cooperation with UNESCO-IIEP, GPE, DFID and the World Bank.

UNICEF's system-strengthening work will also focus on generating and using evidence, analysis and data. UNICEF will continue generating new and robust evidence on innovative, scalable and cost-effective strategies to improve education outcomes for the most marginalized children, including stepping up work on innovations in humanitarian contexts in partnership with DFID and UNHCR. Lessons learned from UNICEF's innovation work will be reflected in an upcoming report on innovations in education and in an event on learning and innovations.

In 2016, UNICEF will begin the roll-out of RBM training for UNICEF staff, including education staff, and this will complement and strengthen the ongoing mainstreaming of the MoRES approach in the education sector. UNICEF's continuing support to more rigorous evidence and monitoring and evaluation for equity-focused programming will involve the finalization of the UNICEF Education Portfolio Review (*see box on page 72*) and the preparation of its education evaluation and research strategy, to be part of the new UNICEF education strategy. UNICEF will also continue supporting the Out-of-School Children Initiative, education sector analyses, and the Simulation for Equity in Education model.

In addition, UNICEF will begin the second phase of the Data Must Speak programme, which strengthens equity-focused system management and social accountability. UNICEF will continue participating in technical discussions on the post-2015 indicators and will support improved data collection tools, including the finalization of revised MICS questionnaires with new modules on learning assessment, parental participation, and children with disabilities. It will also continue its work with the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics and will cooperate with other regional and national assessments to increase and improve the use of their results for policy, programming and instruction.

Emerging issues and lessons learned

In addition to a new global development agenda, 2015 marked a year of significant changes to the global environment in which UNICEF operates. Issues such as urbanization and climate change are garnering increasing importance and global relevance, as seen in the adoption of the universal SDGs. Further, the European migrant/refugee crisis posed new challenges to traditional humanitarian response and compelled UNICEF to consider new approaches and processes to reach the most marginalized and vulnerable children.

One way in which UNICEF learned from these challenges came following efforts to evaluate the organization's response, identify lessons moving forward, and make the changes necessary to take these lessons on board and prepare the organization for the challenges and opportunities underscored by the changing global environment in which UNICEF operates. Three areas of work were identified as emerging issues for children moving into the future: migration, urbanization and climate change. While UNICEF continues to develop and shape its thinking around these areas, it will also build on existing work in these areas where UNICEF leadership and focus in programming, research, data investments and capacity will be necessary to achieve significant gains for children.

- The threat to children affected by the European migration/refugee crisis has implications for children's access to quality education. Unaccompanied children, language of instruction, certification and technology-based learning tools are all factors that UNICEF will consider when addressing this complex issue.
- Additionally, cities are becoming home to a growing proportion of the world's children. Low-cost private schooling and construction of schools have been identified as key options to consider when programming with the rise of urbanization. Cross-cutting work is important to address this, as issues of child labour are salient for securing and protecting education for all children in today's cities.
- The mounting global crisis of climate change has the potential to undermine many of the gains we have made in child survival and development – and poses even greater dangers ahead. UNICEF will continue to scale up and mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster-risk reduction plans into the education sector. This work is based on the principles of child-friendly education and aims to integrate climate change, disaster risk and environmental issues across the education system, including within policies and legislation, education sector plans and budgets, curricula and examinations, teacher education, school infrastructure and facilities, learning environments, and school governance and management.



EXPRESSION OF THANKS

UNICEF expresses its sincere appreciation to all resource partners that contributed to the work on education in 2015 through this thematic funding window. It is because of thematic funding that UNICEF has been able to provide technical, operational and programming support to countries in all regions, both for upstream work to improve education systems and the more targeted and strategic interventions that help deliver quality services to marginalized children and communities. Thematic funding provides greater flexibility, longer-term planning and sustainability of programmes. It reflects the trust that resource partners have in the capacity and ability of UNICEF to deliver quality support under all circumstances and has made possible the results described in this report.

Special thanks go to the Government of Norway for its partnership and consistent and generous contributions to achieve results in education, and for its thoughtful inputs on this report.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADEOPs	Annual District Education Operational Plans	MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
CBE	Community-based education	MENAP	Multilingual Education National Action Plan
CCCs	Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action	MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
CFE	Child-friendly education	MLE	Multilingual education
CFS	Child-friendly schools	MoRES	Monitoring Results for Equity System (UNICEF)
CRPD	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	MTBBE	Mother-tongue-based bilingual education
DFID	Department for International Development	NGO	Non-governmental organization
EAC	Educate A Child	NLG	No Lost Generation
ECCE	Early childhood care and education	OOSCI	Out-of-School Children Initiative
ECD	Early childhood development	OR+	Other resources (UNICEF)
ECE	Early childhood education	ORE	Other resources — emergency (UNICEF)
ECL	Each Child Learns	PA	Programme area
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council	PBEA	Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy
EFA	Education for All	PTAs	Parent-teacher associations
ELDS	Early learning and development standards	R4D	Results for Development Institute
EMIS	Education Management Information System	RBM	Results-based management
e-SHEP	Enhanced School Health Programme	RR	Regular resources (UNICEF)
ESP	Education Sector Plan	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
EVD	Ebola virus disease	SEA-PLM	South East Asia Primary Learning Metric
GES	Ghana Education Service	SEE	Simulations for Equity in Education
GMR	Global Monitoring Report	SMCs	School management committees
GPE	Global Partnership for Education	SMQ	Strategic Monitoring Questions
IBE	Intercultural bilingual education	SRGBV	School-related gender-based violence
ICTJ	International Center for Transitional Justice	TDIS	Teacher Development Information System
IECD	Integrated early childhood development	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning	UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
INEE	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
LEG	Local Education Group	UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
		WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

ANNEX A

Note: all percentages for output indicators have been computed out of the total number of countries in which UNICEF is active in the area. For example, the percentage for “Countries with functional school management

committees at primary and secondary level” is computed out of all countries where UNICEF actively supported school management committees in 2014.

Impact indicators	2009	2010	2011	Baseline	Update	2017 Target	Source
5a. Number of primary school-age children out of school and related gender parity index (GPI)	57.9 million	56.4 million	57.1 million	57.8 million	59.2 million	35.6 million	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
Female	30.8 million	30.2 million	30.0 million	30.5 million	30.9 million	17.8 million	
Male	27.1 million	26.2 million	27.0 million	27.3 million	28.3 million	17.8 million	
GPI	0.89	0.87	0.90	0.89	0.92	1.00	
5b. Primary completion rate (expressed as Gross Intake Ratio in the last grade of primary) and related GPI	92%	92%	91%	92%	92%	98%	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
Female	90%	91%	91%	91%	91%	98%	
Male	93%	93%	92%	93%	93%	98%	
GPI	0.97	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	1.00	

Outcome indicators	2013 Baseline	2014	2015 Update	2017 Target	Source
P5.1a Countries with primary school age out-of-school rate below 5%	44% (51/117 countries)	41% (48/118)	43% (53/123)	57%	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
Female	36% (40/111)	33 % (36/109)	37% (42/114)	50%	
Male	41% (45/111)	37% (40/109)	38% (43/114)	50%	
P5.1b Countries with lower secondary school age out-of-school rate below 5%	24% (22/91)	20% (18/92)	25% (26/102)	27%	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
Female	21% (17/82)	18% (16/84)	18% (17/93)	27%	
Male	22% (18/82)	16% (15/84)	20% (19/93)	27%	
P5.2 Countries with increasing learning outcomes	63% (33/52)	75% (41/55)	76% (41/54)	75%	Standardised learning outcome surveys
Female	61% (27/44)	71% (35/49)	68% (32/47)	75%	
Male	68% (30/44)	73% (36/49)	70% (33/47)	75%	
P5.3 Countries with at least 20% of government expenditure on education	20% (21/103)	24% (23/97)	21% (21/98)	25%	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
P5.4a Countries with poorest quintile attendance rate above 80% in primary education.	48% (32/67)	54% (43/80)	55% (48/87)	60%	data.unicef.org
P5.4b Countries with poorest quintile attendance rate above 25% in early childhood education.	17% (9/53)	20% (11/55)	29% (15/52)	42%	
P5.5 Programme countries in which at least 80% of children aged 36–59 months have been engaged in activities with an adult to promote learning and school readiness	31% (16/52)	35% (19/55)	34% (22/65)	60%	data.unicef.org
P5.6 Number and percentage of all partners-targeted children in humanitarian situations accessing formal or non-formal basic education (“reached”)	Not available	51.1% Reached: 10,449,392 Targeted: 20,431,751	59.5% Reached: 11,013,498 Targeted: 18,521,151	At least 80% of targeted population.	Strategic Monitoring Questions (SMQs)
P5.7 Percentage for education in global humanitarian funding	1.9%	1.5%	2.6%	At least 4%	OCHA

Output indicators	2013 Baseline	2014	2015 Update	2017 Target	Source
Output a: Enhanced support to communities with disadvantaged and excluded children to start schooling at the right age and attend regularly					
P5.a.1 Countries with functional school management committees at primary and secondary level	34% (45/134)	34% (48/142)	45% (62/139)	47%	SMQs
P5.a.2 Countries in which the Education Management Information System feeds findings back to communities or school management committees	32% (40/124)	32% (44/137)	31% (42/137)	43%	SMQs
P5.a.3 Number of School Management Committees or Parent Teacher Associations or School communities (or similar structure) that received training funded by UNICEF	Not available	47,141	96,112	188,564	SMQs
Output b: Increased national capacity to provide access to early learning opportunities and quality primary and secondary education					
P5.b.1 Countries with innovative approaches at scale to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children	30% (39/132)	29% (42/144)	35% (51/145)	40%	SMQs
P5.b.2 Countries with quality standards consistent with child-friendly schools/education or similar models developed or revised	59% (79/134)	64% (89/140)	65% (93/142)	91%	SMQs
P5.b.3 Number of children who were provided with individual (one-per-child) education materials funded by UNICEF	Not available	16.3 million	31.2 million	65.2 million	SMQs
P5.b.4 Number of classrooms that were provided with classroom education materials funded by UNICEF	Not available	237,371	586,172	949,484	SMQs
Output c: Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up quality and inclusive education					
P5.c.1 Countries with well-functioning student learning assessment system, especially for early grades	42% (56/134)	46% (65/141)	51% (71/139)	76%	SMQs
P5.c.2 Countries with effective early learning policies and quality early learning programmes	31% (41/133)	37% (52/141)	45% (64/143)	70%	SMQs
P5.c.3 Countries with an education sector plan/policy that includes risk assessment and risk management	19% (20/106)	28% (38/136)	32% (43/133)	100%	SMQs
Output d: Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that girls and boys have access to safe and secure forms of education and critical information for their own well-being in humanitarian situation					

Output indicators	2013 Baseline	2014	2015 Update	2017 Target	Source
P5.d.1 Number and percentage of UNICEF-targeted children in humanitarian situations accessing formal or non-formal basic education ("reached")	59% Reached: 5,980,443 Targeted: 10,209,333	64% Reached: 8,608,522 Targeted: 13,367,771	70% Reached: 7,537,375 Targeted: 10,693,359	100%	SMQs
P5.d.2 Countries in humanitarian action where country cluster coordination mechanism for education meet the Core Commitments for Children standards for coordination	Not available	73% (11/15)	67% (14/21)	100%	Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS)
Output e: increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of school readiness and performance					
P5.e.1 Countries with gender parity (between 0.97 and 1.03) in lower secondary education	38% (48/128)	40% (51/127)	37% (48/130)	47%	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
P5.e.2 Countries with Education Management Information Systems providing disaggregated data that allow identification of barriers and bottlenecks that inhibit realization of the rights of disadvantaged children	40% (53/132)	49% (54/111)	58% (76/130)	75%	SMQs
P5.e.3 Countries with policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities	36% (48/134)	37% (52/139)	43% (61/143)	46%	SMQs
P5.e.4 Countries with an education sector policy or plan that specify prevention and response mechanisms to address gender-based violence in around schools	28% (29/105)	20% (24/119)	22% (27/122)	32%	SMQs
P5.e.5 Countries where girls' secondary education, in terms of enrolment, retention, and completion is a recognised, targeted and budgeted education priority	Not available	27% (30/110)	27% (28/102)	40%	SMQs
P5.e.6 Countries with an education policy/sector plan that includes multilingual education to allow children to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades	43% (47/109)	48% (62/128)	53% (66/125)	65%	SMQs
Output f: Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in education					
P5.f.1 Number of peer-reviewed journal or research publications by UNICEF on education	31	31	17	15	SMQs
P5.f.2 Number of key global and regional education sector initiatives in which UNICEF is the co-chair or provides coordination support	18	18	21	20	HQ and Regional Offices

The table below presents the breakdown of UNICEF Country Offices responses to the annual reporting questions where they assess the in-country situation in all domains that are relevant to their country programme. Scores of 1-4 are assigned based on criteria specified in indicator guidance notes.

SMQ responses	Championing (Score 4)	Established (Score 3)	Initiating (Score 2)	Weak (Score 1)
P5.a.1 Countries with functional school management committees at primary and secondary level				
Community Participation in relation to functional school management committees in primary and secondary schools.	11%	52%	29%	8%
Accountability in relation to functional school management committees in primary and secondary schools.	8%	37%	41%	13%
Monitoring in relation to functional school management committees in primary and secondary schools.	2%	38%	47%	12%
P5.a.2 Countries in which the education management information system feeds finding back to communities or school management committees				
Information Feedback and Transparency in relation to Education Management Information System feeding findings back to communities.	3%	22%	59%	16%
Training and Community Participation in relation to Education Management Information System feeding findings back to communities.	2%	31%	44%	23%
P5.b.1 Countries with innovative approaches at scale to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children				
Evidence in relation to Innovative approaches at scale to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children.	3%	30%	48%	19%
Strategy/Traction in relation to Innovative approaches at scale to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children.	9%	36%	31%	24%
Scalability in relation to Innovative approaches at scale to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children.	5%	34%	48%	13%
P5.b.2 Countries with quality standards consistent with child-friendly schools/education or similar models developed or revised				
CFS/CFE Standards in relation to Quality standards consistent with child-friendly schools (CFS)/education (CFE) or similar models developed or revised.	6%	43%	46%	5%
Measuring Learning Outcomes in relation to Quality standards consistent with child-friendly schools (CFS)/education (CFE) or similar models developed or revised.	21%	39%	32%	7%

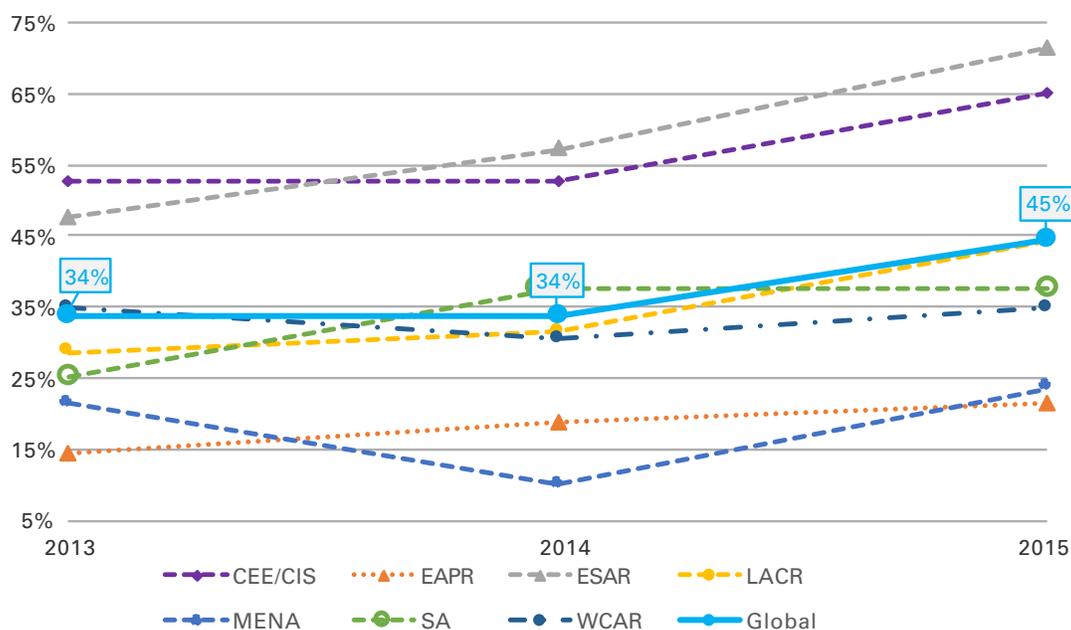
SMQ responses	Championing (Score 4)	Established (Score 3)	Initiating (Score 2)	Weak (Score 1)
P5.c.1 Countries with well-functioning student learning assessment system, especially for early grades				
Classroom Assessment in relation to Well-functioning student learning assessment system, especially for early grades.	2%	37%	55%	6%
Examinations in relation to Well-functioning student learning assessment system, especially for early grades.	9%	63%	21%	6%
National (or system-level) Large-Scale Assessment in relation to Well-functioning student learning assessment system, especially for early grades.	9%	42%	25%	24%
P5.c.2 Countries with effective early learning policies and quality early learning programmes				
Early Learning Curriculum and Standards in relation to Effective learning policies and quality early learning programmes.	11%	42%	39%	8%
ECCE Facility in relation to Effective learning policies and quality early learning programmes.	9%	31%	37%	23%
Community Participation in relation to Effective learning policies and quality early learning programmes.	4%	46%	33%	17%
P5.c.3 Countries with an education sector plan/policy that includes risk assessment and risk management				
Risk Assessment in relation to Education sector plan/policy that includes risk assessment and risk management.	7%	28%	35%	30%
Risk Reduction Strategy in relation to Education sector plan/policy that includes risk assessment and risk management.	6%	29%	36%	28%
Human and Financial Resources in relation to Education sector plan/policy that includes risk assessment and risk management.	2%	19%	54%	24%
P5.e.2 Countries with Education Management Information Systems providing disaggregated data that allow identification of barriers and bottlenecks that inhibit realization of the rights of disadvantaged children				
Data quality and timeliness in relation to well-functioning education management information systems.	8%	50%	29%	13%
Comprehensiveness in relation to well-functioning education management information systems.	20%	37%	36%	8%
Disaggregation in relation to well-functioning education management information systems.	6%	49%	37%	9%
P5.e.3 Countries with policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities				
Law/Policy in relation to Policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities.	24%	53%	20%	4%

SMQ responses	Championing (Score 4)	Established (Score 3)	Initiating (Score 2)	Weak (Score 1)
Physical Environment in relation to Policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities.	1%	23%	45%	31%
Materials and Communication in relation to Policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities.	1%	26%	60%	13%
Human Resources in relation to Policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities.	1%	22%	56%	21%
Attitudes in relation to Policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities.	2%	54%	38%	6%
EMIS in relation to Policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities.	8%	38%	38%	16%
P5.e.4 Countries with an education sector policy or plan that specify prevention and response mechanisms to address gender-based violence in and around schools				
Legal/Policy Framework in relation to Education policy or sector plan that specifies prevention and response mechanism to address gender-based violence in and around schools (SRGBV).	7%	33%	49%	12%
Prevention and Response Mechanism in relation to Education policy or sector plan that specifies prevention and response mechanism to address gender-based violence in and around schools (SRGBV).	4%	21%	41%	33%
Awareness, Attitude and Empowerment in relation to Education policy or sector plan that specifies prevention and response mechanism to address gender-based violence in and around schools (SRGBV).	3%	20%	52%	25%
Data Collection, Availability and Use in relation to Education policy or sector plan that specifies prevention and response mechanism to address gender-based violence in and around schools (SRGBV).	1%	12%	61%	26%
P5.e.5 Countries where girls' secondary education, in terms of enrolment, retention, and completion is a recognised, targeted and budgeted education priority.				
Creating Demand in relation to Girls' secondary education, in terms of access, retention, and learning is a recognised, targeted and budgeted priority.	6%	15%	60%	19%
Supportive Learning Environment in relation to Girls' secondary education, in terms of access, retention, and learning is a recognised, targeted and budgeted priority.	7%	27%	52%	14%
Prioritisation and Resource Allocation in relation to Girls' secondary education, in terms of access, retention, and learning is a recognised, targeted and budgeted priority.	6%	31%	33%	31%
P5.e.6 Countries with an education policy/sector plan that includes multilingual education to allow children to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades.				
Policy Environment in relation to Education policy or sector plan that includes multilingual education to allow children to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades.	29%	37%	25%	9%

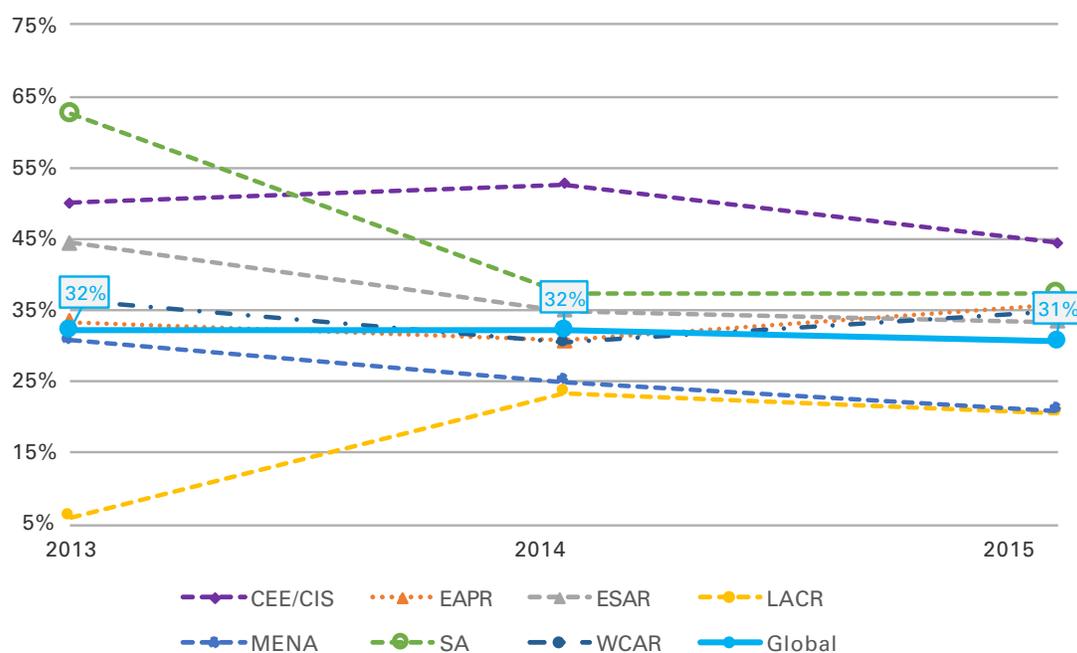
SMQ responses	Championing (Score 4)	Established (Score 3)	Initiating (Score 2)	Weak (Score 1)
Alignment in relation to Education policy or sector plan that includes multilingual education to allow children to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades.	13%	38%	28%	21%
Resource Allocation in relation to Education policy or sector plan that includes multilingual education to allow children to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades.	15%	24%	28%	33%
Community Engagement in relation to Education policy or sector plan that includes multilingual education to allow children to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades.	7%	39%	42%	13%

ANNEX B: PROGRESS ON OUTPUT INDICATORS BY REGION

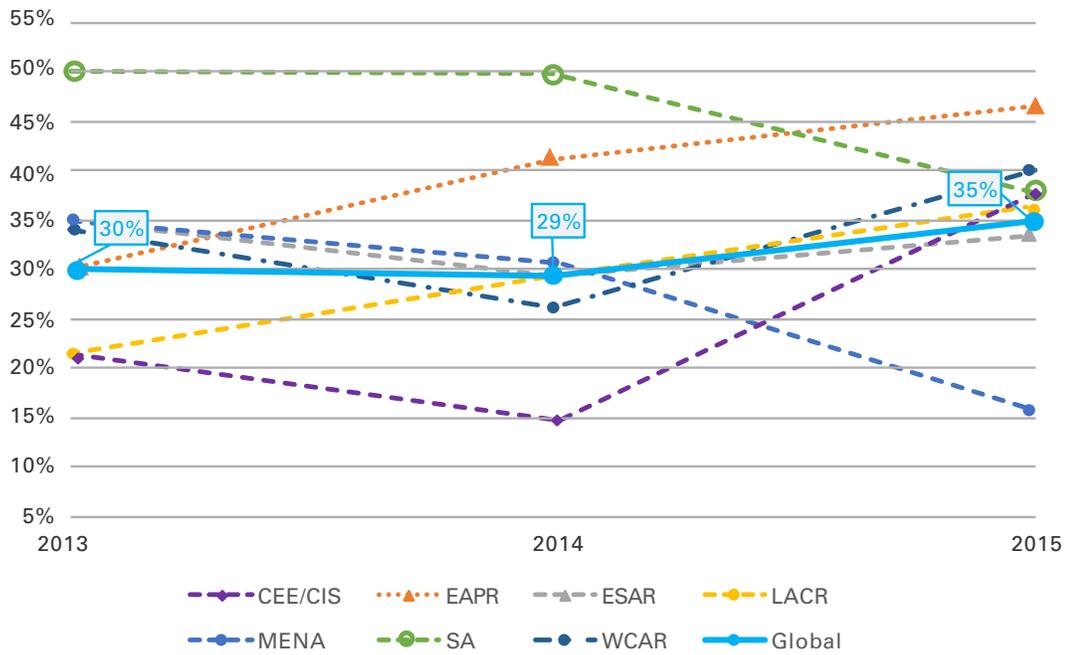
P5.a.1 Countries with functional school management committees (SMCs)



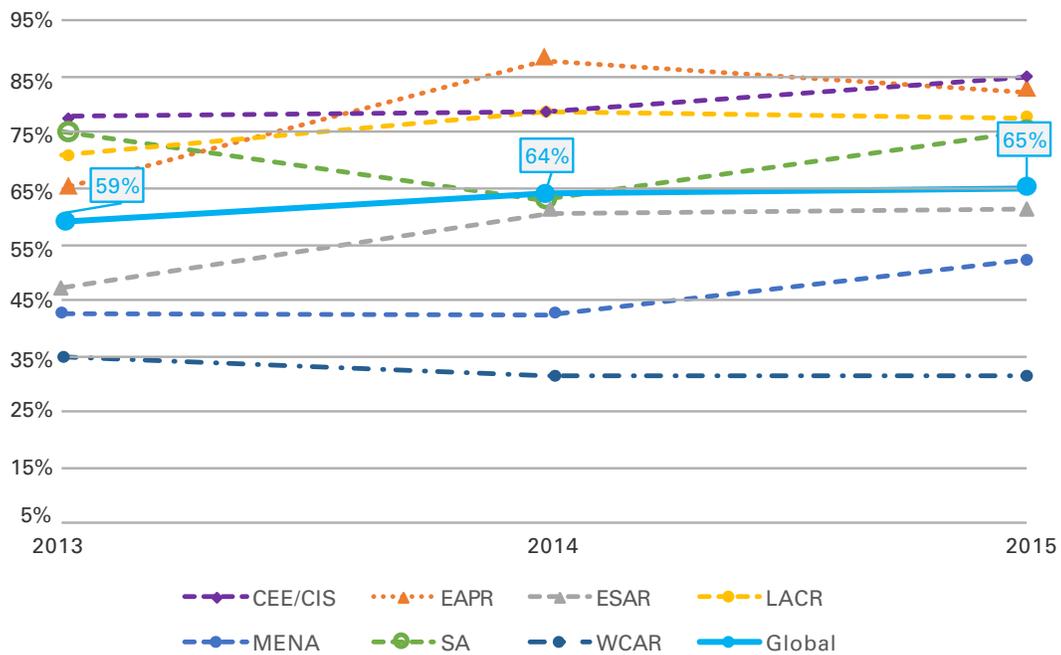
P5.a.2 Countries in which the education management information system feeds findings back to communities/school management committees



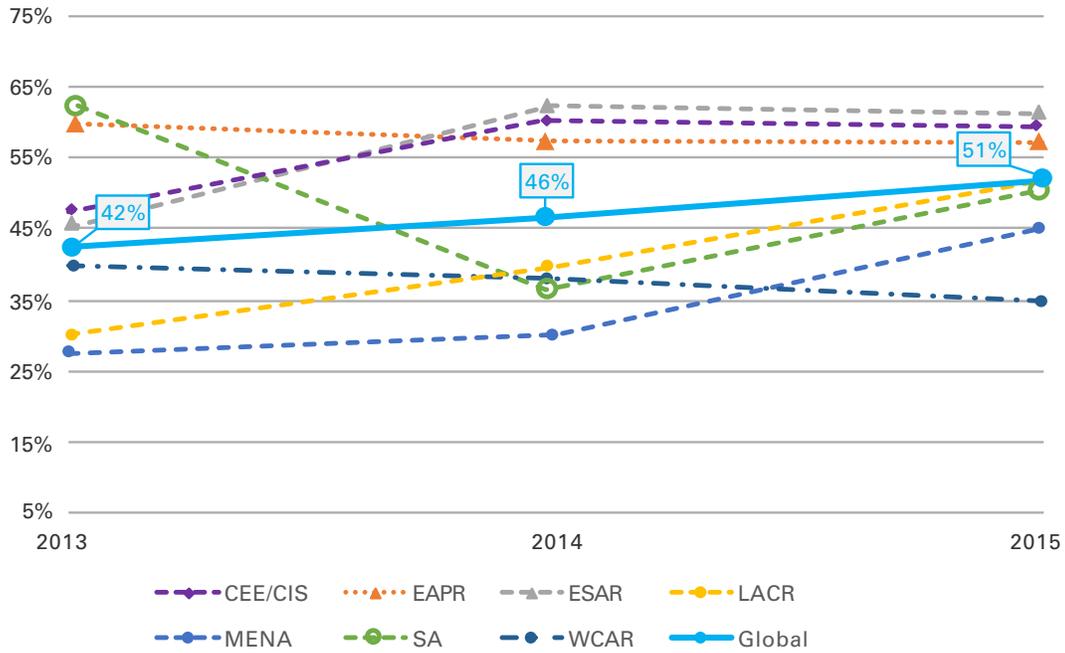
P5.b.1 Countries with innovative approaches at scale to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children



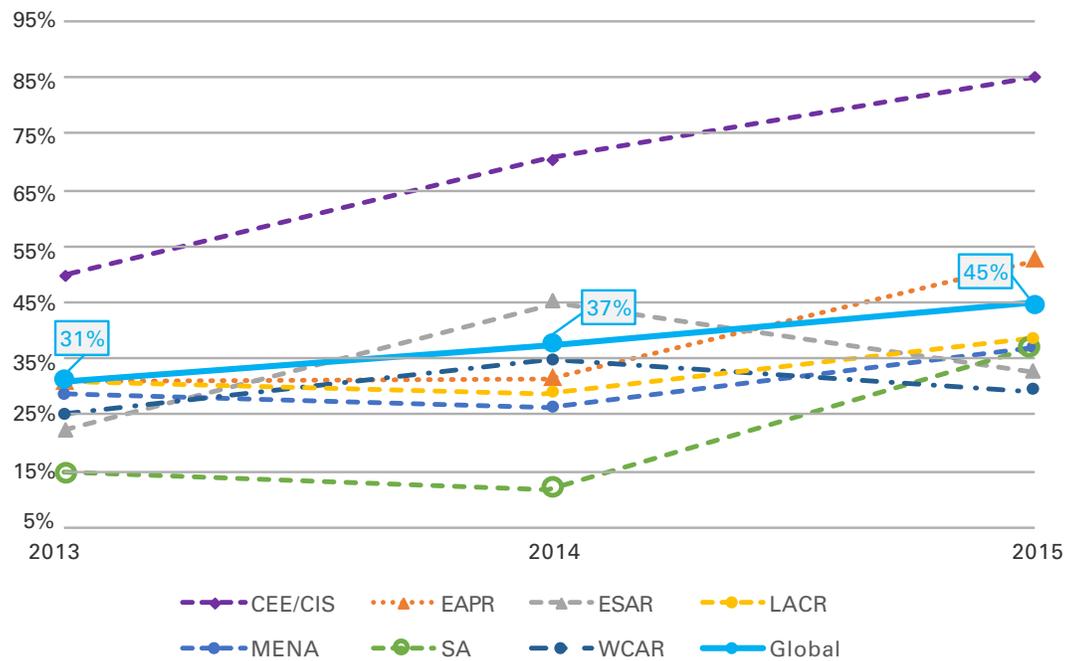
P5.b.2 Countries with quality standards consistent with child-friendly school/education or similar models developed or revised



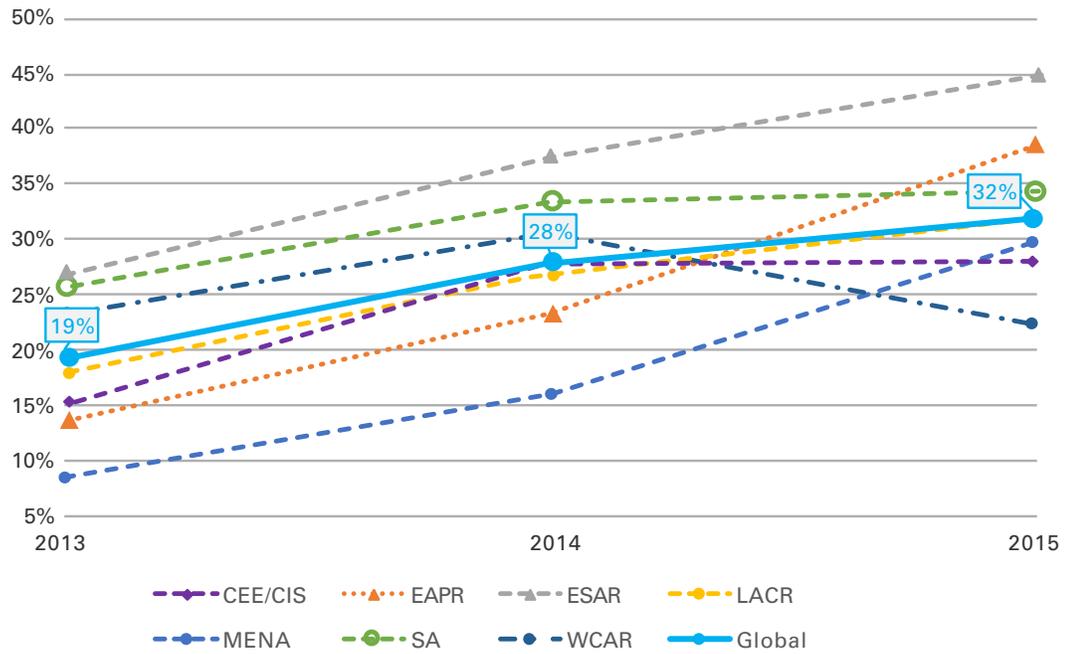
P5.c.1 Countries with well-functioning learning assessment system, especially for early grades



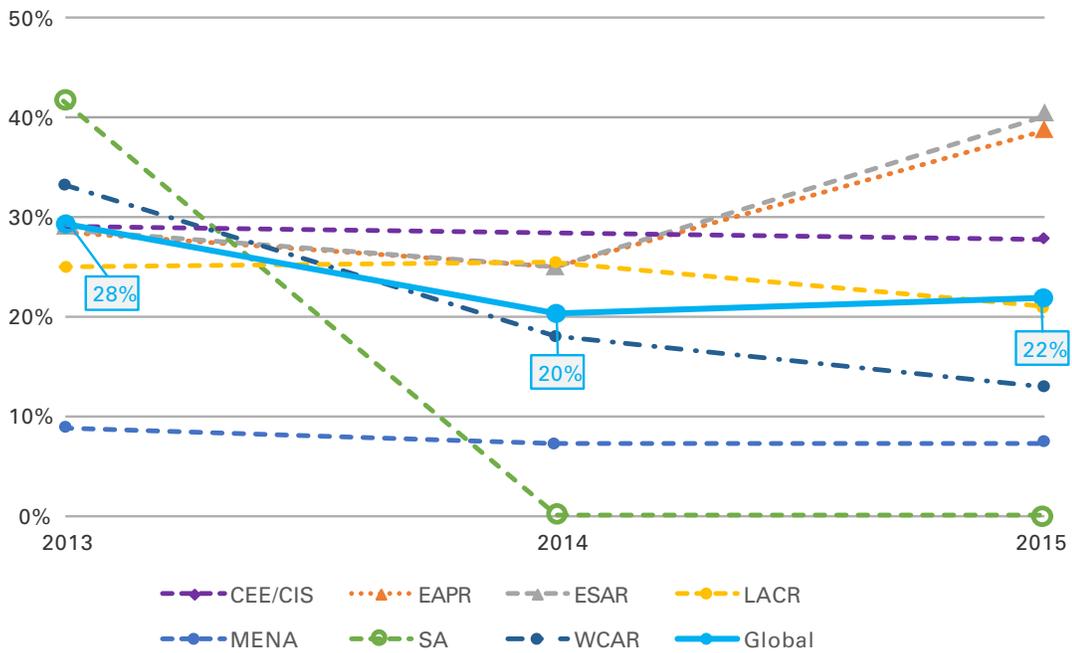
P5.c.2 Countries with effective early learning policies and quality early learning programmes



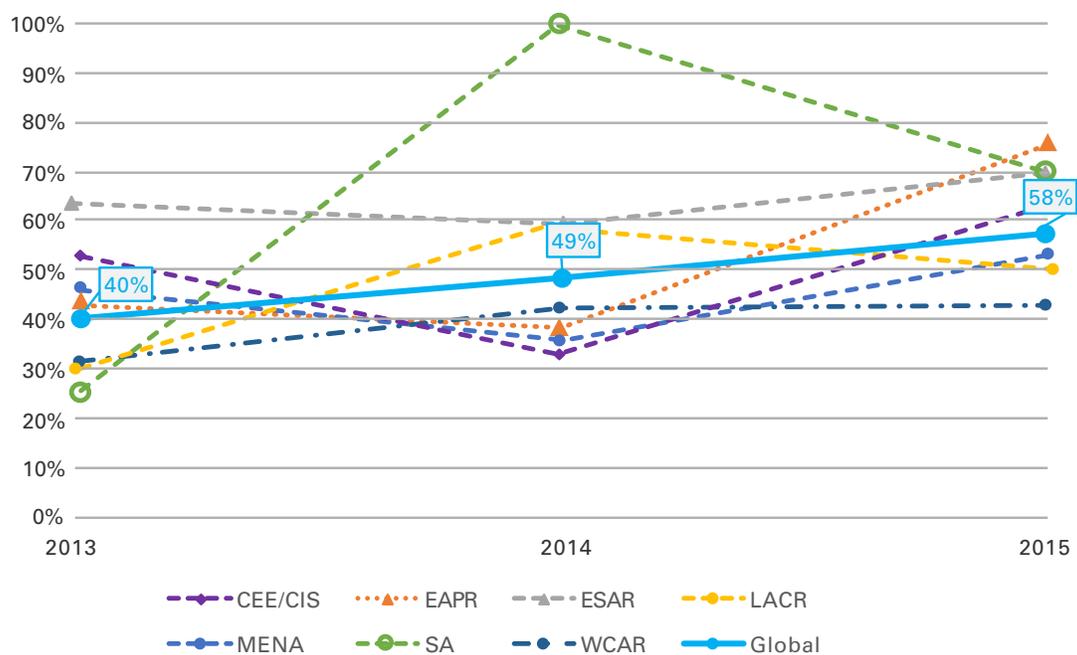
P5.c.3 Countries with an education sector plan/policy that includes risk assessment and risk management



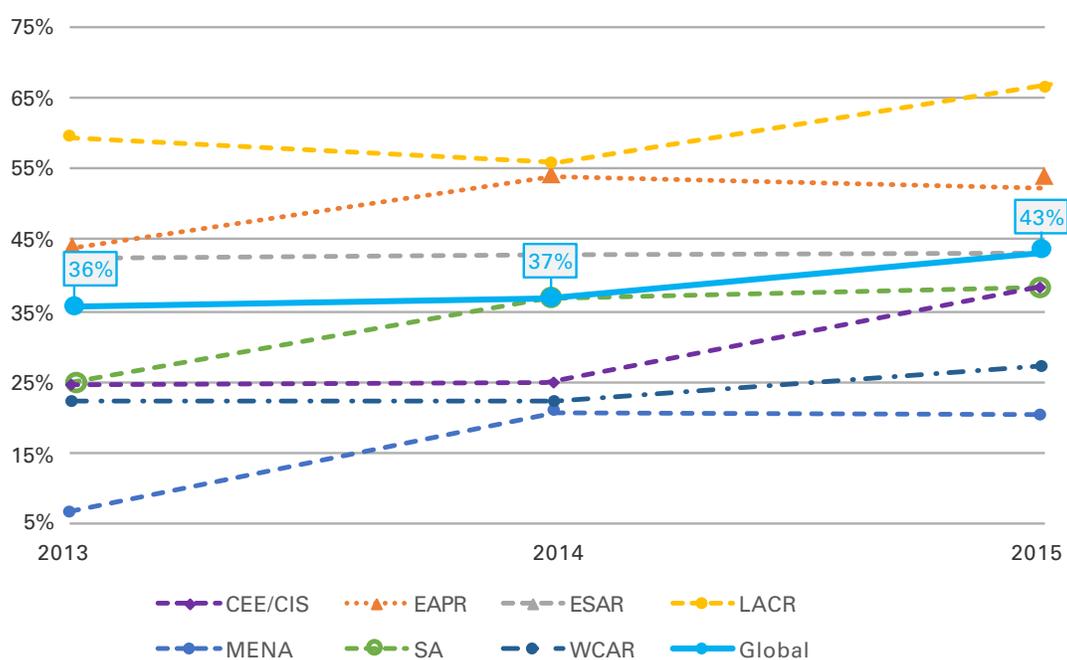
P5.e.4 Countries with an education policy/sector plan that specify prevention and response mechanisms to address gender-based violence in and around schools (SRGBV)



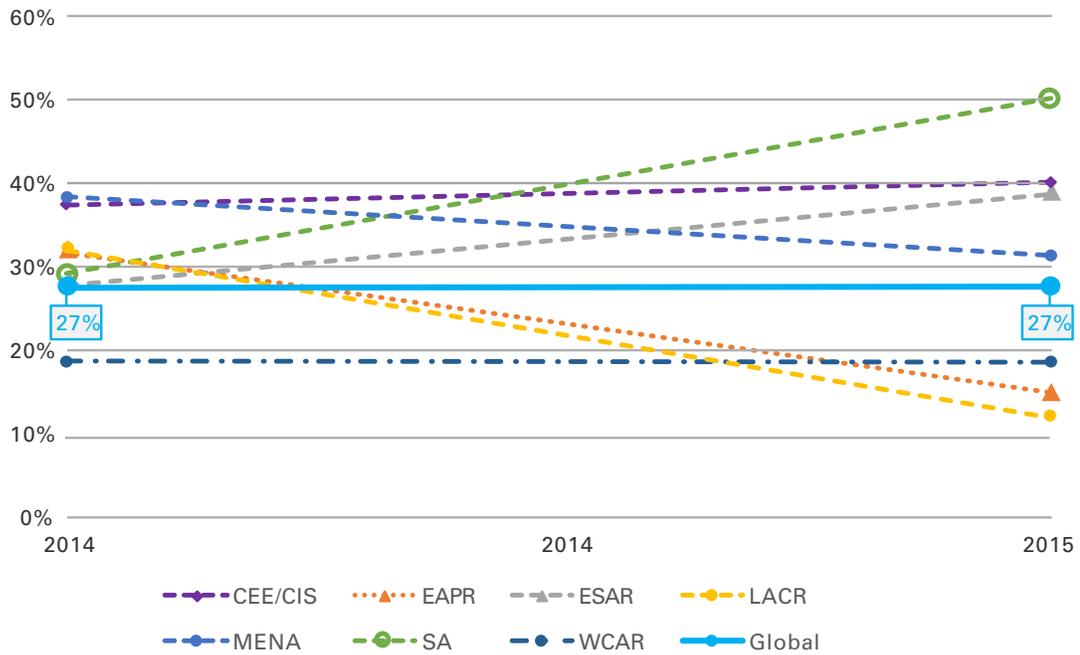
P5.e.2 Countries with well-functioning education management information systems providing disaggregated data that allow identification of barriers and bottlenecks that inhibit realization of the rights of disadvantaged children



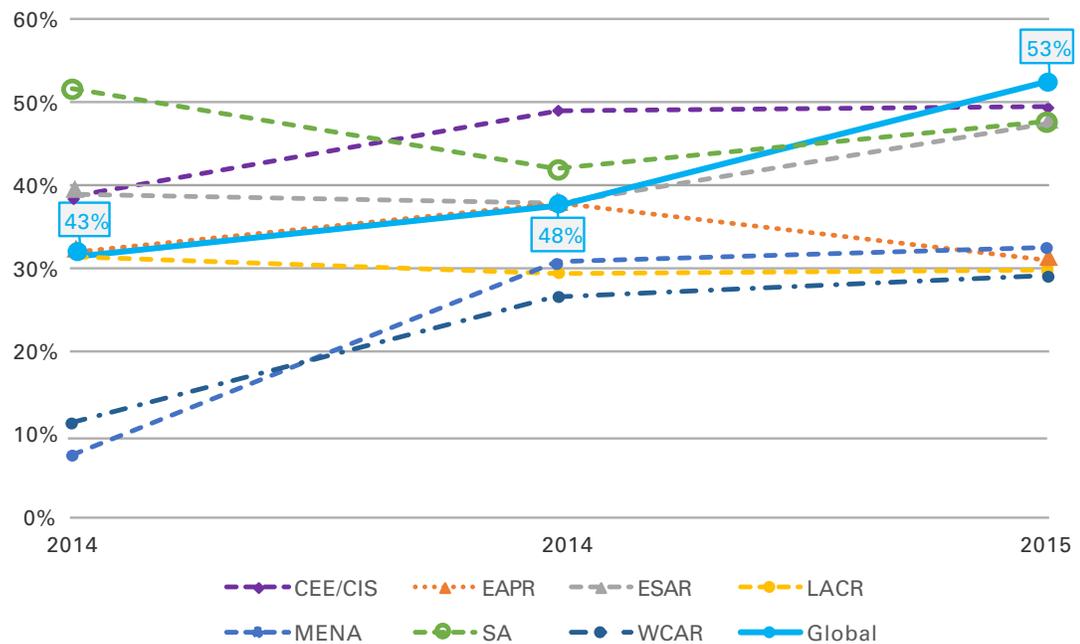
P5.e.3 Countries with policies on inclusive education covering children with disabilities



P5.e.5 Countries where girls' secondary education, in terms of enrolment, retention, and completion is a recognised, targeted and budgeted education priority



P5.e.6 Countries with an education policy/sector plan that includes multilingual education to allow children to learn in their mother tongue during the early grades



ENDNOTES

1. UNICEF, 2015. The Investment Case for Education and Equity.
2. <<https://blogs.unicef.org/blog/achieving-the-education-sdg-start-early-and-stay-the-course/>>
3. This 75 million figure builds on earlier calculations of 65 million children aged 3–15 whose education has been affected in 35 crisis-affected developing countries, and now includes those who are 16–18 years of age. This analysis was originally prepared for the Oslo Summit and is drawn from UNICEF figures included in their Humanitarian Action for Children appeal, plus Nepal, for 2015.
4. EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2015.
5. Nicolai, S., et. al. 2016. Education Cannot Wait: proposing a fund for education in emergencies. London: ODI. <<https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/10497.pdf>>
6. OECD, 2014. Fragile States 2014 : Domestic Revenue Mobilisation in Fragile States <<http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-peace/conflictandfragility/docs/FSR-2014.pdf>>.
7. Out of UNICEF's 159 programme countries, 156 countries recorded education activities as part of their results reporting.
8. <www.he-accelerator.org>
9. Lively Minds. 2015. "Report on Pilot Project to Improve Early Years Education and Care through Community-Run Play Schemes."
10. Partners in this programme include: War Child Holland, UNICEF, Sudan's Ministry of Education through its National Council for Literacy and Adult Education (NCLAE) and e-Learning Sudan Working Group, Ahfad University for Women, TNO Netherlands (Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research), Flavour (software developer), and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
11. eLearning Sudan: Research Report for Phases I and II. (2012-2015).
12. Ibid.
13. DFID's Multilateral Aid Review (MAR) 2011 & 2013 update and the 2012 review by the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) both underlined the need to strengthen management for results, even though they rated UNICEF very highly in comparison to other multilateral organizations.
14. School Readiness: A Conceptual Framework (UNICEF/ Britto, 2012, p. 7).
15. Historically, the Costa Rican Ministry of Public Education (MEP) has not defined what its role should be in relation to education before 5.3 years; to this effect, the net enrolment rate for the transition year (5.3 years) is 87 per cent while the rate for the Interactive II period (at 4.3 years) is just 61 per cent. Furthermore, preschool education reform did not include the importance of education for children between 0–4 years. With the strong commitment of MEP, it is expected that a 78 per cent coverage can be reached for preschool education in the coming years.
16. See Output Indicator P5.d.1: Percentage of children, targeted by UNICEF in humanitarian situations, accessing formal or non-formal basic education (including pre-primary schools/early childhood learning spaces), on page 92.
17. Also of note from a gender equality perspective was that, in 2015, only 37 per cent of children from all countries had received this type of engagement from their fathers, specifically, as opposed to 67 per cent receiving engagement from any adult.
18. EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2012. <<http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/report/2012/youth-and-skills-putting-education-work#sthash.LAUYHt4L.dpbs>>
19. For each qualitative indicator, country offices must assess the in-country situation using a 1–4 scale on 2 to 6 indicator subdomains. The average of these scores is then used to determine whether a country satisfies that particular indicator: an average less than 2.5 is considered a 'No', and an average 2.5 or more is a 'Yes'.
20. Barrett, A., Ali, S., Clegg, J., Hinojosa, J. E., Lowe, J., Nikel, J., Novelli, M., Oduro, G., Pillay, M., Tikly, L. and Yu, G. 2007. Initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning: a review of recent literature. Background paper for EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008. UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report, Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality for All, 2013/14. Chudgar, A. and Luschei, T. 2015. Evolution of policies on teacher deployment to disadvantaged areas. Background paper for EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015.
21. Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2005). Academic and social advantages for at-risk students placed in high quality first grade classrooms. *Child Development*, 76(5), 949–967.
22. For each qualitative indicator, country offices must assess the in-country situation using a 1–4 scale on 2 to 6 indicator subdomains. The average of these scores is then used to determine whether a country satisfies that particular indicator: an average less than 2.5 is considered a 'No', and an average 2.5 or more is a 'Yes'.

23. China, Kenya, Malawi, Nepal, Nicaragua, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia
24. For each qualitative indicator, country offices must assess the in-country situation using a 1–4 scale on 2 to 6 indicator subdomains. The average of these scores is then used to determine whether a country satisfies that particular indicator: an average less than 2.5 is considered a ‘No’, and an average 2.5 or more is a ‘Yes’.
25. Standard is a broad goal statement that defines what stakeholders should know and be able to do in order to fulfill a CFS/Quality Basic Education dimension. For example standards related to “Pedagogy” may include, but are not limited to, standards on teacher professional preparation; on curriculum, instructional design and assessment practices; teaching methodologies; use of mother tongue in instruction, etc.
26. For each qualitative indicator, country offices must assess the in-country situation using a 1–4 scale on 2 to 6 indicator subdomains. The average of these scores is then used to determine whether a country satisfies that particular indicator: an average less than 2.5 is considered a ‘No’, and an average 2.5 or more is a ‘Yes’.
27. UNICEF, Gender, Education and Peacebuilding Brief, 2016 <<http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/cat-about/gender-education-and-peacebuilding-brief>>
28. Mizunoya, S. et al. “Towards Inclusive Education: A Global Picture of the Impact of Disability on School Attendance.” Manuscript.
29. For each qualitative indicator, country offices must assess the in-country situation using a 1–4 scale on 2 to 6 indicator subdomains. The average of these scores is then used to determine whether a country satisfies that particular indicator: an average less than 2.5 is considered a ‘No’, and an average 2.5 or more is a ‘Yes’
30. Nicolai, S., et. Al. 2016. Education Crisis Platform: A proposed way forward, London: ODI
31. OECD, 2014. Fragile States 2014 : Domestic Revenue Mobilisation in Fragile States <<http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-peace/conflictandfragility/docs/FSR-2014.pdf>>.
32. Attacks on education are any intentional threat or use of force—carried out for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic, religious, or criminal reasons—against students, educators, and education institutions. See Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack website for more details. <<http://www.protectingeducation.org/what-attack-education>>
33. This figure is different from the one in the SP results framework in annex (2.6 per cent) due to the fact the methodology used for the results framework calculates the education share after excluding “sector not yet classified” and “Multi-sector” funds.
34. This denotes UNICEF’s expenditure of Other Resources – Emergency (OR-E), and does not include Other Resources – Regular (OR-R) or Regular Resources (RR).
35. <www.oosci-mena.org/london-education-conference-2016>
36. For each qualitative indicator, country offices must assess the in-country situation using a 1–4 scale on 2 to 6 indicator subdomains. The average of these scores is then used to determine whether a country satisfies that particular indicator: an average less than 2.5 is considered a ‘No’, and an average 2.5 or more is a ‘Yes’.
37. Argentina, Bangladesh, Chile, Colombia, Cote d’Ivoire, France, Germany, Guatemala, Northern Ireland, Kenya, Lebanon, Morocco, Nepal, Peru, Poland, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Switzerland, Ukraine, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Croatia and Kosovo.
38. Two examples include: Pham, P, Vinck, P, and Gibbons, N. (2015). Population-based survey on peace and education: Uganda. Boston: Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Harvard University. (Forthcoming). The Uganda map can be accessed at www.peacebuildingdata.org/interactivemaps/UGANDA2014#/?series=Overall.
39. For each qualitative indicator, country offices must assess the in-country situation using a 1–4 scale on 2 to 6 indicator subdomains. The average of these scores is then used to determine whether a country satisfies that particular indicator: an average less than 2.5 is considered a ‘No’, and an average 2.5 or more is a ‘Yes’.
40. Care was taken to ensure no structure was double-counted if it received more than one type of training. For example, if 200 school management committees were trained on school planning and the same school. Management committees were trained on inclusive education, the total number of school structures reached would be 200, while if different SMCs were reached by the two interventions the total number would be 400.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

- pg. 18 In class, a 5-year-old student traces the number three on a flip chart, as part of a numeracy lesson. In 2014, UNICEF began supporting the establishment of community-based preschools in minority-language-speaking communities in Ermera and Viqueque Districts. A total of 6,000 preschool-age children and their parents/ caregivers will benefit from an inclusive, participatory preschool learning approach. Return of investment for preschool education is higher than investment in any other level of education.
- pg.27 Boys, carrying UNICEF backpacks, walk towards thatch huts and tent shelters in an area of the Gado site for refugees from the Central African Republic, in East Region. The children attend school in a learning and protection space built through the Children of Peace project funded by the European Union and supported by UNICEF. The project, which targets nearly 36,300 children 3 to 17 years old from preschool to post-primary school – including 3,150 in host communities – aims to ensure continued access to education and social integration for all school-age Central African children in refugee sites and host communities in East and Adamawa Regions.
- pg.38 Ali Badji Maïga, a 7-year-old student in a first-year class, learns how to write at Alpha Moya School in Timbuktu. For this child who lives in a conflict-affected area, education is a strong symbol of peace and a return to normal life. Ali is increasing her skills and her future economic and social opportunities, which will benefit her in the long term.
- pg.50 On 11 March 2015, in Guinea, a girl looks up from writing in a notebook while attending class at the Mangalla School, in the town of Guéckédou, Guéckédou Prefecture. Because of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak, schools across the country remained closed after the conclusion of the July–August 2014 holidays and did not reopen until 19 January 2015. UNICEF and partners have worked to help reduce, as much as possible, the risk of EVD transmission. Efforts have included training teachers to implement safety measures, such as daily temperature screenings, and supplying thermometers and hand-washing kits for schools.
- pg.61 On 7 May 2015, children play with blocks and other puzzle pieces with letters, numbers and words in Nepalese and English, in a UNICEF-supported child-friendly space in Bilaune Danda Village in Sunaulo Bazar Village Development Committee in Dhading District, Nepal. The district is 1 of 12 that were severely affected by the massive earthquake.



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