



EDUCATION in CONFLICT and TRANSITION CONTEXTS

Case studies from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nepal and Southern Sudan

Publication

Field Notes

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Cover photo © UNICEF/NYHQ2006-0539/Noorani. A woman teacher leads a mathematics class at Al Humaira Girls' School in the town of Kabkabia in North Darfur State, Sudan.

Field Notes is an evidence-based Divisional publication series, documenting good practices in innovative UNICEF programming, policy and operations. Each Field Note focuses on one theme, contextualizing the topic within a discussion of major issues, illustrating implementation in the field through case studies, and identifying good practices to inform UNICEF staff and our partners.

Field Notes are produced by UNICEF's Division of Policy and Practice in collaboration with UNICEF technical sections and country offices where programming is being undertaken. The editors of the series are Ian Thorpe and David Stewart of the Policy, Advocacy and Knowledge Management Section.

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Acknowledgements

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The Right to Education



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Children's education is often disrupted during emergencies, whether they are caused by armed conflict or natural disaster, and many children never return to school when the emergency is over, significantly diminishing their own opportunities and their country's ability to break the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment. Of the estimated 72 million primary school-age children out of school worldwide, as many as 25 million live in countries affected by conflict.¹ Education is an important intervention in emergencies, as it can provide physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection to children, and often remains a high priority for children and parents even amidst emergencies. Re-establishing education in communities and system-wide following a crisis can have an important stabilizing effect, serve as a peace dividend in countries emerging from conflict and help reduce disaster risk. Education also provides an essential foundation for the realization of many other development goals.

UNICEF is actively engaged in addressing education in emergencies and post-crisis contexts. It has a well established field presence before, during and after crises and a strong track record of providing education in the aftermath of emergencies. UNICEF is also increasingly involved in developing post-crisis education systems, employing the approach of "building back better" to ensure that countries are able to develop strong and sustainable education systems.

This Field Note outlines UNICEF's role in providing education in conflict-affected contexts. It presents recent developments in this field and discusses lessons learned and good practice based on our experience. Through country case studies this publication illustrates some of the innovative approaches UNICEF is using to ensure that children have continued access to education during and after conflicts and crises. The cases look at Schools as Zones of Peace in Nepal, the Go to School Initiative in Southern Sudan and school provision and capacity building interventions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. UNICEF is committed to supporting conflict-affected countries in establishing quality, relevant and equitable education systems in order to realize the right of children and youth to education and to promote more peaceful and just societies.



Thematic Overview

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ISSUE

Emergencies, whether caused by armed conflict or natural disaster, disrupt education for millions of children around the world every year. It is estimated that at least 25 million primary school-age children are currently out of school in conflict-affected countries, comprising one third of the total global out-of-school population.² In some countries entire generations are being deprived of their right to quality education. The repercussions of this situation for human and national development are severe: Lack of education significantly diminishes people's opportunities and the ability of countries to break the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment. While the number of out-of-school children has decreased globally since 2000, the ratio in conflict-affected countries has remained stable. Thus, significant work remains to be done in countries affected by conflict in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All goals by 2015.

Recent years have seen significant shifts in the approach to humanitarian assistance, including the provision of education during emergencies. Of particular note for UNICEF's work is the:

- Increased recognition of the right to education in emergencies and their aftermath;
- Establishment of the Education Cluster as part of the humanitarian reform process;
- A stronger focus on ensuring continuity between humanitarian and development work;
- Increased attention to post-conflict transition helps to prevent relapses into violence and strengthen longer-term peace-building efforts.

The Right to Education

All children have a right to a quality education in all situations and at all times, including in emergencies. Education has been formally recognized as a human right since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Since then, the right to education has been affirmed in numerous global treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.⁵ These treaties establish an entitlement to free, compulsory primary education for all children and an obligation by duty-bearers to develop equitable quality secondary and higher education.⁶ They further establish the multiple aims of education: to promote personal development; to strengthen respect for human rights and freedoms; to enable individuals to participate effectively in society; and to promote understanding, friendship and tolerance.⁷ Indeed, education is an indispensable foundation for the fulfillment of any civil, political, economic and social rights.

Guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (1979), UNICEF's mission is to protect children's rights, to help governments realize their obligations and to expand children's opportunities to claim their rights and reach their full potential. Ensuring continued and equal access to quality, relevant and protective education is at the core of the UNICEF mandate.

What does UNICEF mean by 'education in emergencies'?³ Education in emergencies refers to the provision of formal and non-formal education in

situations where children lack access to government or community education systems due to armed conflicts or natural disasters. It encompasses both non-formal education programmes, which are often set up in the immediate wake of an emergency, and the establishment or reintroduction of formal government, community or other sustainable education systems during the transition and post-conflict or -crisis periods.⁴

UNICEF is committed to helping countries restore normality for children and adolescents affected by emergencies as part of the process of rebuilding communities, institutions, systems and individual lives in all emergencies and post-crisis situations. In education, UNICEF works to ensure that:

- All children have equal access to the protection and learning opportunities afforded by schools and a quality education.
- The safety, security and other basic needs of children affected by conflict and natural disasters become an integral part of the humanitarian response through quality education interventions.
- Quality education serves as a critical peace dividend in post-conflict societies and as a platform for rebuilding young lives and for building or rebuilding systems and institutions.
- The principle of *building back better* guides efforts to re-establish education systems and give comprehensive support to post-conflict rehabilitation and development processes.



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A boy attends a class in Badalebe School, near Goma, capital of North Kivu Province, DRC

The critical importance of education in emergencies for children and for societies.

For children living in emergencies and transition contexts, access to safe, quality education is an important means of physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection. Safe, structured places for children to learn and play protect them from life-threatening risks such as landmines, abduction and recruitment by armed groups. Furthermore, continuing education during emergencies can minimize the negative effects of conflict or crisis on children's emotional and so-

cial development, while at the same time providing necessary skills to increase their social and economic opportunities.⁸

Education also plays a critical role in the wider reconstruction of conflict-affected societies. Establishing education at the community and system levels following a conflict can have an important stabilizing effect. It can enhance social cohesion, facilitate economic recovery and contribute to building peace.⁹ Education also underpins the realization of many other development goals, and as such it needs to be central to post-crisis development efforts.

Because education is a core function of the State (as duty-bearer) and a basic service the State is responsible for providing to its people,¹⁰ education is often the most widespread and visible institution in a country, present even in the most remote regions.¹¹ Education can mitigate causes of conflict and contribute to more just, peaceful and prosperous societies.¹²

Global policy and operational frameworks for education in emergencies.

In the last decade, significant progress has been achieved in education in emergencies and post-crisis situations. The **Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)** has played a primary role in raising international awareness of the importance of education in emergencies and post-crisis recovery through advocacy and strategic partnerships.¹³ INEE is a repository of resources on education in emergencies and complements the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Education Cluster through its technical and advocacy mandate.

The INEE Minimum Standards (MS) for Education; Preparedness, Response, Recovery help development actors implement a minimum level of educational access and quality in emergencies and early reconstruction. They also help ensure the accountability of organizations that provide these services. The MS were recently recognized as a formal companion to the Sphere standards for humanitarian response.

UNICEF, together with Save the Children, co-leads the **Education Cluster of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)** for humanitarian assistance.¹⁴ The IASC Education Cluster provides inter-agency leadership for stakeholders working to strengthen systemic emergency preparedness and response at global and country levels. The Education Cluster focuses on developing national and sub-national capacity and advocates integrating disaster-risk reduction, preparedness, response and mitigation into national policies, plans and budgets. The cluster approach facilitates a coordinated response in emergency situations through

networks of education stakeholders on the ground, and ensures collaboration with other clusters, such as protection, shelter, camp management and early recovery.¹⁵

As of February 2010, 37 of the 41 countries implementing the cluster approach have an Education Cluster.¹⁶ UNICEF is the Education Cluster leader or co-leader in all but one of these countries. In a positive advance, Ministries of Education are increasingly beginning to lead education efforts during and after emergencies with the support of the international community.¹⁷

UNICEF's protection and assistance role during emergencies is guided by the Organization's **Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Settings** (CCCs). The CCCs provide a framework for accountability, helping to ensure predictable, effective and timely humanitarian action. They are fulfilled by working closely with host governments and other partners.

UNICEF'S EDUCATION WORK IN EMERGENCIES AND POST-CRISIS TRANSITIONS

UNICEF sees education in emergencies as a development activity from the emergency preparedness and relief phases onwards. When an emergency occurs, UNICEF focuses simultaneously on responding to immediate needs and on planning to address the longer-term requirements of the education system. By working hand in hand with governments and other key stakehold-

ers, UNICEF aims to 'build back better'. This approach emphasizes building the capacity of national governments to prepare for and respond to emergencies and focuses on conflict prevention and risk reduction.¹⁸ An estimated 5.4 million children in declared emergencies in 24 countries were reached with education interventions in 2009.

UNICEF's experience shows that it is often useful to provide education in emergencies in three phases, which at times occur in parallel.

First phase: Education for recreation and protection. The emergency response in the first weeks after a disaster occurs usually emphasizes non-formal approaches, such as creating safe spaces for children to learn and play,

providing recreational and learning materials, and teaching important life skills, such as health and sanitation, HIV and AIDS awareness and prevention and environmental education. These interventions ensure that children experience the minimum interruption of their education while at the same time providing them with physical, psychological and cognitive protection.

Second phase: Towards re-establishment of formal learning spaces. Once the acute emergency phase is over, UNICEF focuses on reopening schools and establishing formal learning environments. This entails getting children back to school, rehabilitating the destroyed physical and institutional education infrastructure and providing educational alternatives for those



Children in Southern Sudan wave notebooks bearing the UNICEF logo

Providing learning kits and school-in-a-box

Providing teaching and learning kits, as well as recreational kits, has become part of the standard response in emergencies, both by UNICEF and by other organizations. Learning and teaching materials can be a powerful catalyst for re-establishing educational activities and have a positive impact on enrolment and the motivation of children and their families. UNICEF's first pre-packaged education kit is known as a 'school-in-a-box'.²⁰ It provides essential learning and teaching materials for use in places where education services have been disrupted due to sudden severe situations. Other packages, including 'school-in-a-carton'²¹ and recreation kits,²² allow for a flexible and tailored response. Many country offices have created adaptations to suit local needs.

School-in-a-box kits contain basic minimum materials for about 40 primary school-age children and one teacher. For classes of more than 40 students, a kit of 'Extra materials' can be ordered to cater for an additional 40 children. The contents are designed to last for about 3 months.

who missed out on schooling, including adolescents and young adults.

Third phase: Supporting government institutions. In this phase, UNICEF works closely with government institutions to support their capacities so that they can take ownership of the reconstruction process. In conflict-affected situations, it is often necessary to work on several fronts simultaneously. For example, in contexts with ongoing violence and insecurity, UNICEF adopts a two-pronged approach to ensure children's access to quality education: It offers school- and community-level interventions, such as sustained 'go to school' campaigns, and supports government institutions in building the long-term resilience of the education system.¹⁹

EXAMPLES IN ACTION

Based on UNICEF's many decades of work in emergencies and conflict-affected countries, the following approaches have been identified as effective in providing education to children and youth and supporting system reconstruction.

'Back to school' campaigns.

Through 'back to school', 'go to school' and 'welcome to school' campaigns, UNICEF encourages community-level engagement, distributes essential school materials and provides temporary learning spaces when necessary. UNICEF employs these initiatives to enrol and keep children in school fol-

lowing emergencies, during chronic crises (civil war, for example), and in transitional and post-crisis contexts. At the same time, it strengthens the capacity of Ministries of Education through technical assistance with policy, guidelines and system development and programme planning. These campaigns employ intense advocacy, communication and social mobilization efforts. They are informed by the principle of 'building back better' and use the Child-Friendly School model, underpinned by a human rights-based approach. These campaigns are opportunities to mobilize resources and introduce innovations to support relevant, high quality and inclusive education in the long term.

UNICEF has gained extensive experience in supporting national Ministries of Education to mount these rolling campaigns in the aftermath of emergencies. They have been implemented with significant success in contexts as diverse as Afghanistan, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Rwanda, Southern Sudan, Uganda and many more. The focus of UNICEF's support varies depending on the situation on the ground. It may provide learning and teaching materials and establish safe learning spaces when necessary, as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or support rebuilding the entire education system, as in Southern Sudan.

Experience suggests that improved enrolment numbers are not sustainable without a systemic approach to develop-

ing the education system. To enable the education system to support increased demand for education qualified and trained teachers, child-friendly learning spaces, infrastructure, learning materials and institutional capacity are all required. Capacity building and support provided at the central level must be matched by support at the community level, so that education policies and strategies can be understood and implemented in harmony across the system.

The case of Southern Sudan, among many others, shows that if increased enrolment is not accompanied by improved educational quality and relevance, children will begin to drop out, since they and their parents do not see any reason to stay in school. In order to sustain these initiatives, it is necessary to scale up education provision to reach as many children as possible.

Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALPs).

ALPs offer children and adolescents (8–18 years old) who have missed periods of their education a second chance to complete primary school, mostly by compressing the curriculum. UNICEF, in cooperation with various partners, has assisted Ministries of Education in Afghanistan, Angola, Liberia, Nepal, Sierra Leone and many other countries to implement ALPs. While challenges persist in the implementation of these programmes – including lack of qualified teachers, limited capacity of national educational institutions to provide supervision, poor monitoring and

Child-Friendly Schools (CFS)²⁵

UNICEF's CFS model is a comprehensive approach to children's well-being and education. Child-friendly schools are as concerned with the health, safety, security, nutritional status and psychosocial well being of the child as with teacher training, the appropriateness of the teaching methods and learning resources used. They promote child participation, create space for children to express their views and opinions, help children learn to follow rules and regulations, and promote wider community involvement while providing quality education.

Child-friendly spaces/environments are an adaptation of the child-friendly school model for emergency settings. In emergencies and their aftermath, child-friendly spaces promote physical and emotional security, social and cognitive development, and health and nutrition in an integrated way. They also offer a gathering place for children and their families where other programmatic services can be implemented. Such learning spaces need to become protected environments where pupils and teachers can build resilience, heal and engage in self-expression.

Child friendly spaces have been established in many countries affected by armed conflict or natural disasters. First launched in Kosovo in 2000, the Child-Friendly Spaces Initiative provided basic services to large numbers of Kosovar refugee children and women. Since then, the concept has been adapted to respond to emergency conditions in Angola, Colombia, El Salvador, Liberia, the North Caucasus region and Timor-Leste.

evaluation – they help protect and realize the right to education for hundreds of thousands of over-aged students.

Non-formal, complementary and alternative education programmes.

These programmes promote access to primary and vocational education and, less frequently, secondary education for disadvantaged groups, including internally displaced young people, ex-child soldiers, ex-combatants, girls and older out-of-school youths, particularly those in post-conflict situations. In these contexts, there may not be sufficient capacity or political will to meet the needs of children whose education has been disrupted by a conflict or natural disaster.²³

In post-conflict transition contexts, adolescents and youths who missed out on schooling and training opportunities are a group of special concern. They constitute a valuable human resource and a potential labour force. At the same time, however, they may present a risk in these fragile environments by joining armed groups or returning to fighting if they are not provided with alternative opportunities, such as education, vocational training and other tracks to begin making a livelihood.²⁴ Representing almost half of the population in many low-income and conflict-affected countries, young people must be empowered to be a force for peace and development.

Providing formal and non-formal post-primary educational opportunities for youth requires increased attention by education stakeholders in conflict-affected countries.

Working with a rights-based approach: Focusing on the excluded and marginalized.

An important element of UNICEF's human rights-based approach to education is to ensure that programmes are inclusive and do not further perpetuate existing inequalities. In particular, they must adequately address the needs of marginalized populations and those groups whose rights are at risk of being violated. This requires paying adequate attention to issues such as ensuring that

An innovative cross-border programme to link peace-building and education in West Africa: Learning Along Borders for Living Across Boundaries (LAB4LAB)

The Mano River runs through Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia. The disadvantaged border communities along the river have long been subject to conflict. LAB4LAB seeks to use high-quality education with strong links to local communities as a catalyst to promote a new quality of life in these areas. The project is creating child-friendly and environmentally sustainable schools that also provide other community facilities and services, such as water and sanitation, solar power, information technology and community radio. Schools are being built on both sides of the border so that neighbouring countries are linked by quality institutions rather than by deprivation and grievance. The close links between the schools and their communities are expected to foster pride, a new sense of development possibilities and better connection to their governments. In this way, affected communities can turn their attention to development activities rather than continue to be incubators of national and cross-border conflict.

Stakeholders, including policy makers, school managers, teachers and supervisors, are included from the start in all phases of the reflection process, the articulation of educational approaches and the selection or development of educational materials. By end of 2009, the initiative benefited some 6,000 children 6–12 years old who attend 20 primary schools constructed following the Child-Friendly School model.

schools are physically accessible to all groups, safe and secure; that appropriate curriculum is taught, with attention to the content and language of instruction; and that outreach is done with all groups to meet the needs of ethnic and other minority communities, displaced populations and others.

Lessons from Kosovo

In Kosovo, which is currently going through a difficult and prolonged post-conflict transition, education interventions are set against the backdrop of a complex inter-ethnic divide. This has resulted in long-term camps for internally displaced people where emergency education services are still required, and where the transition process remains challenging. UNICEF advocates the right of all children to basic education during this period of deep social divisions and instability and supports quality, inclusive education services for ethnic and national minorities. UNICEF has also worked closely with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to reform the national primary curriculum to better meet the linguistic and cultural needs of ethnic minorities and ensure that it follows Child-Friendly School principles.

CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

Countries can restart the development process after crises and rebuild their communities, institutions, systems and societies through education. UNICEF is committed to supporting conflict-affected countries in establishing quality, relevant and equitable education systems in order to realize the right of children and youth to education and to promote more peaceful and just societies.

Despite progress in this field, significant gaps continue to constrain the contribution education can make towards longer-term peace and development. Some of the most challenging obstacles include:

Inadequate resources. Funding estimates for education in emergencies show that conflict-affected countries receive a disproportionately low amount of education aid despite their great demonstrated need.²⁷ In addition to a low flow of external education aid, the national budgets of these countries also tend to allocate insufficient resources to education due to limited funds and competing priorities. In consequence, generations of young people are being deprived of their basic rights and of the opportunities that education provides to them and their society.

Disconnect between relief and development and related financing mechanisms. The current types and modalities of aid also restrict expansion of children's access to quality and relevant education in low-income post-conflict countries. Current financing modalities are designed for either humanitarian or development aid. Neither type reflects the complex needs faced by countries transitioning from relief to reconstruction and development. In countries with on-going volatility – because emergencies either persist or re-erupt – relief and developmental efforts coexist. The vast majority of donors and agencies, including UNICEF, are structured to split policy and operational responsibility between development programmes and humanitarian relief activities. While the attitude

and approach towards education in emergencies is evolving, institutional mandates and funding cycles make it difficult for donors and multilateral organizations, even with the best intentions, to support the necessary longer-term and sector-wide investments for educating children and youth affected by conflict, especially among displaced populations.

Recognizing the importance of education in emergency contexts and addressing these challenges, UNICEF was provided with an opportunity to support education in emergencies and post-crisis transition through a major contribution by the Government of the Netherlands. The aim is to get countries 'back on track' by developing education

systems, supporting innovations, nurturing key partnerships and enhancing the knowledge base of lessons learned and good practice. The Education in Emergency and Post-Crisis Transition (EEPCT) programme, also supported by the European Commission, gives UNICEF the opportunity to make a major investment in improving strategies and reaching large numbers of children affected by emergencies.

The EEPCT programme is currently in its third year and is now being implemented in 38 conflict- or natural disaster-affected countries. It is committed to enhancing the capacities and effectiveness of government education systems and ensuring continuity in education services during and after emergencies.

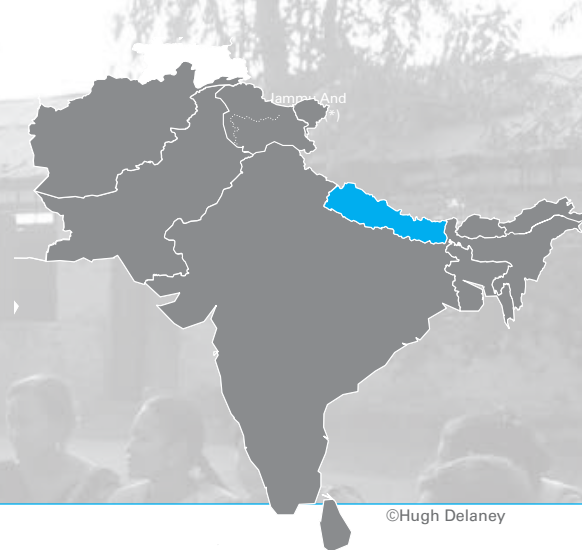
The following case studies from Nepal, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Southern Sudan illustrate the critical and catalytic role education is playing in various phases of emergencies and post-conflict transition. They examine the country context and detail the practical steps taken to implement programming, the results achieved, lessons learned and challenges faced. These cases highlight good practices and provide ideas and inspiration for future education in emergency programming for UNICEF and our partners around the world.

Children in a classroom are visible through a hole in the wall at Kinkole Primary school, DRC



NEPAL:

Schools as Zones of Peace: Education for stabilization and peacebuilding



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In 2006, Nepal emerged from a decade-long civil war. Despite peace-building efforts, ongoing political flux poses a threat to the consolidation of peace, particularly in the *terai*, or plain lands, a term used to refer to the southern districts bordering India. To ensure that children do not miss school as a result of conflict, school closures or intimidation, UNICEF supports Schools as Zones of Peace (SZOP) in partnership with the Government of Nepal and other education stakeholders. SZOP strengthens the resilience of schools and communities and calls for commitments from political leaders and opposition groups to protect the right to education. It is a key component of UNICEF's peace-building framework, which aims to promote a culture of peace and tolerance; show respect for different ethnic groups, opinions and values; and promote civic responsibility among children and young people.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

From 1996 to 2006, Nepal suffered from a civil conflict between Nepali Government forces and Maoist insurgents. Schools were often at the centre of the political struggle: Children were recruited into armed groups at schools, political groups solicited supporters on school grounds, and School Management Committees (SMCs) were often polarized by out-of-school issues and unable to function. Moreover, even when schools were not direct targets, their functioning suffered because strikes and violence in the streets often made it impossible for children and teachers to attend school.

The peace process, ongoing since 2006, is gradually restoring stability to the country. This has had a positive effect on educational indicators. Steady progress has been made in enrolment rates and in ensuring that girls attend school. Recently published official data report a net enrolment rate of 93.7

per cent in 2009, compared to 87.4 per cent in 2006. Equity-related indicators also show progress: The Gender Parity Index for primary school has reached 0.98, while 39.6 per cent of teachers in 2009 are female, up from 30.6 per cent in 2006.¹

Children's right to education remains under threat. Flare-ups of political unrest and local conflicts, particularly in the *terai*, however, continue to disrupt daily activities in some rural districts. This hinders schools operations and limits the Government and other education stakeholders' capacity to deliver services and implement programmes.

A 2009 Assessment of Child Protection Concerns of Children in *Terai* Districts, conducted by UNICEF, reveals the current alarming situation of children's rights. Their right to education is particularly threatened due to the political and social climate. In the 2007/08

school year, it is estimated that in some districts 50 to 150 school days (out of a total of 220) were lost to *bandhs*, protests, curfews and other conflict-related causes.²

The two most prominent issues causing school closure and inhibiting peaceful learning environments are:

- Strikes and *bandhs* do not exclude schools, and little effort is made to ensure that students make up lost days.
- Fear of violence from armed groups persists in the *terai*. Many schools and teachers receive threatening demands for money or donations, and many are afraid to report these threats. It is alleged that some *terai*-based armed groups are recruiting and using children as arms carriers, social mobilizers, sentries and messengers. These groups continue to use schools for their own objectives: as meeting places, arenas for bringing conflict to the surface, and recruitment grounds for new supporters.

Strengthening resilience. Analysis by UNICEF and partner organizations concluded that if children were to avoid missing school as a result of school closures and intimidation, the resilience of the schools needed to be strengthened and political commitments made and kept to protect their right to education. In this context, political, security and humanitarian actors needed to make the cessation of armed groups' association with schools and children an urgent priority. To advance this goal, UNICEF devised a Peacebuilding

Strategy that links interventions across sectors to the overarching goal of conflict prevention and peace-building. In the education sector, Schools as Zones of Peace (SZOP) is one of UNICEF's key contributions.

APPROACH: SCHOOLS AS ZONES OF PEACE

SZOP is one approach UNICEF and partners are using to protect the right of children to access school in conflict- and crisis-affected areas and to ensure education is not hampered by violence. It parallels the education sector's broader work to support efforts to better predict, prevent and prepare for emergencies. The aim is to improve the quality of the education response in emergencies and transitions and to use the education system to foster a culture of peace and human rights.

SZOP emerged during Nepal's civil war as a response to the conflict's effect on schools. In 2001, as the conflict escalated, the Government declared a national state of emergency. In response, education partners in Nepal developed Children as Zones of Peace, an advocacy network which brought together NGOs, INGOs, UN agencies and donors to protect children from the effects of conflict.

A consensus emerged that schools were a key entry point for peace advocacy, and in turn SZOP was launched. In addition to advocacy, SZOP incorporates diverse programming at the school, village and district levels. SZOP programming builds on UNICEF's ongoing efforts to develop holistic schools, in particular through the Child-Friendly Schools Initiative and the roll-out of the Quality Education Resource Package.³

Advocacy and Programming. A dual approach – including advocacy and local programming – allows SZOP to encompass a wide array of activities that reflect the situation, needs and resources available in each community. Initiatives include programmes for child clubs, school-based support to orphans of the conflict, and protecting students from forced recruitment and teachers from harm. More recently, some SZOP programmes are helping to reintegrate former child soldiers and children associated with armed forces and armed groups back into their schools and communities. A common pillar of SZOP programmes is the development of school Codes of Conduct, which help unite communities, governments and armed groups around key principles that protect the right of children to education.

SZOP aims to:

- Reduce school closures caused by political activity;
- Reduce the presence of armed forces in and around schools;
- Reduce misuse of school grounds and buildings;
- Encourage political parties to honour commitments to school functionings;
- Improve governance by SMC/PTA systems and increase local ownership of schools;
- Improve conflict resolution within schools;
- Increase inclusiveness at the school level.

KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS

Children at the forefront of SZOP. Child clubs have a long history in Nepal. It is estimated that as many as 10,000 such clubs are active throughout the country. Through child clubs, children lead SZOP initiatives. They raise awareness of the challenges faced in their schools and contribute to solutions, such as forming school Codes of Conduct. In 2007 a national-level consultation programme brought together child club representatives to discuss the key issues facing children. Here children themselves demanded that their schools be made into Zones of Peace. This confirmed the SZOP campaign's success in mobilizing and empowering children and schools to advocate for their rights and also reflected the need for increased support for protecting children's right to education.

KEY STEPS: IMPLEMENTING SZOP IN NEPAL

National efforts at peace-building have stimulated recognition of the importance of school governance. Since 2008, UNICEF and partners have spread the SZOP campaign into areas where political turmoil is ongoing and even intensifying. There SZOP plays a critical role in protecting children's right to uninterrupted education. Key issues which were considered in the design and implementation of the scale-up of SZOP include:



A teacher and child in a SZOP school in Saptari



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A planning meeting with local NGO workers and teachers for SZOP

Identifying areas for SZOP support. In order to target those areas and Village Development Committees (VDCs) which were seeing the most disruption of schools due to political unrest, consultations were organized with district-level stakeholders. In all, 524 schools in 178 VDCs and 5 municipalities were selected for direct support through the SZOP programme. Today SZOP is being implemented in nine districts, eight of which are in the *terai*.

KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS

The importance of effective partnership. The American NGO World Education (WE) has worked in Nepal for over 30 years and has extensive experience with schools in conflict-affected areas. In 2008, UNICEF began working with WE to implement SZOP. UNICEF and WE work with other NGOs, including Child Workers in Nepal (CWIN) on national- and district-level advocacy and Partnership Nepal and others on training. These local partners, whose staff members speak the local language and understand the complexities of situations on the ground, are critically important to the success of SZOP and the development of school – and village development committee – Codes of Conduct.

Training and capacity building. District orientations on SZOP have been given in nine districts throughout the *terai*. These were followed by public hearings with NGO representatives, political parties, stakeholders and representatives of the media. During these hearings the major political parties signed commitments to implement and maintain SZOP. Public hearings in Kathmandu and Dhanusa District were televised nationally through Kantipur Television. SZOP trainings for NGOs, schools and community facilitators, which include information on how to respond to conditions of political interference, have increased civil society capacity to advance the campaign.⁴

Continuous advocacy with major political parties. Ongoing advocacy with major political parties has made political actors aware of their role in protecting children's right to education. The highlight of these efforts was the 2008 high-level advocacy meeting in Kathmandu, where ten Constituent Assembly members representing *terai* districts publicly supported the principle of SZOP. This, together with similar statements from fellow party members at the district level, reinforced the institutional pledge and helped attract more political support for SZOP.

SZOP Codes of Conduct. Codes of Conduct (CoCs) are the basis of stakeholder commitments to making schools free of violence. Stakeholders include community members, schoolchildren, teachers, government officials, political parties and armed groups. The specifics of each situation mean CoCs must be adapted to the local realities of each conflict-prone area. The exclusion of certain groups is often both cause and result of the conflict. Thus, the process of bringing together disparate groups to formulate a CoC is often as important as the resulting signed CoC. The CoC development process permits interaction among school, community, pupils and other actors and promotes greater transparency and accountability, strengthening the school's capacity for governance. Often issues that previously provoked tension, such as school entitlements, terms of reference of the School Management Committee or Parent-Teacher Association, and scholarship distribution, become more workable.

KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS

Generating public awareness and acceptance through media. Public awareness of the existence and impact of Codes of Conduct is critical for the success of SZOP. So a vigorous media campaign produced and disseminated advocacy materials such as radio jingles (public service announcements) which aired on local FM radio stations; posters and leaflets in local *terai* languages; and a poster, leaflet and sticker campaign explaining SZOP in four languages. A 12-episode, in-depth radio programme about SZOP, which aired on Radio Sagarmatha (FM 102.4 MHz) in Kathmandu and other major cities and other local FM radio stations, targeted a well-educated audience to raise awareness of the problems in the *terai* and create a critical mass for lobbying. Press statements have also been used to reach the public. After three separate bomb explosions – in a school, a public bus park, and during a public festival – strongly worded press statements communicated the danger of these actions for children and advocated zero tolerance for such actions. The SZOP message was reinforced by 45 large billboards erected in the nine districts.

Process of developing the Code of Conduct (CoC): Two models.

In developing Codes of Conducts, two predominant models have emerged: community-led and centrally-led. During the recent political unrest in the *terai*, UNICEF and partners are using both approaches to develop national-, district-, VDC- and school-level Codes. In both scenarios, UNICEF and partners work with communities through an initial series of steps to develop CoCs:

- Stakeholders identify schools which experience conflicts that disrupt children's schooling or where strikes or *bandhs* cause closure. To do this, they use infor-

mation from district informants, district government officials, police, women's development offices, child welfare boards, NGOs, teachers unions, UNICEF staff, politicians and media.

- NGOs visit schools and communities to see if they are interested and brave enough to be part of the programme. Only if they express interest does the process proceed.
- NGOs host a VDC-level meeting to explain what the SZOP programme can and cannot do. This helps create realistic expecta-

tions and ensure that armed and political groups know about the programme. If they are not consulted, armed groups often work to undermine SZOP efforts.

- At district-level orientations, the Code of Conduct concept is discussed. In some communities, political leaders wholeheartedly embrace and immediately prepare a VDC-level Code of Conduct. Others must check with district or central party leaders to determine their stance, party policy and whether they can sign a CoC.

Community-led	Centrally-led
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the school level, the first step is to hold a mass meeting of the whole community. The focus is on identifying the impact of conflict on the school and the sources of conflict. • School communities then decide if they want to prepare a CoC, what needs to be included and who needs to sign it. Some communities do this in a matter of hours. Others take weeks, as grass-roots political workers, rebels from armed groups or local union leaders consult with district or national leaders. • Once the CoC is signed it is prominently displayed at the school so that everyone knows what has been committed to and who signed it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In districts where armed or political groups are fearful of signing CoC without central approval, SZOP network partners encourage political leaders to publicly declare support for Schools as Zones of Peace. In some cases, they have been confronted on television, national radio, in local mass meetings and other settings and asked to endorse the approach. • Once general approval exists at the central level, SZOP partners develop national and then local CoCs. They consult with political leaders, take public statements and prepare drafts to be shared with stakeholders (at the school level this includes school community members; at the VDC and district levels this includes all unions and political parties). Given that neglect of schools is often the result of district level behaviour, increased district engagement in school CoCs can prove helpful. • In turn, this becomes a national CoC. The challenge then is ensuring that agreements made at the national-levels are adhered to by local level armed and/or political groups.

Examples from the field: Negotiating Codes of Conduct

In western Nepal during the civil war, underground opposition groups and government troops both interfered with school functioning. As a result, local NGO partners used a bottom-up approach to generate approval for SZOP. In time, opposition groups and governments officials signed on to CoCs at the school level. Meetings were held with army commanders who publicly committed to respect school CoCs. Once a general agreement had been reached at the local level, stakeholders began working for district-level consensus. Because Maoist rebels, a major force in the area, were operating underground, having them sign the district CoC could have exacerbated conflict. However, many rebels publicly agreed to respect the CoC. As a result, many schools succeeded in: removing armed groups and/or the army from school buildings; stopping armed individuals or soldiers from entering classrooms or school grounds during school hours, including for indoctrination sessions; keeping schools open more regularly; reducing school dropout rates; raising awareness of improvised explosive devices and stopping them from being brought into schools; and addressing discrimination against lower-caste or minority groups.

The experience in the *terai* with the current Madhesi movement has been different. Local-level cadres of this political group have little autonomy and are directed by their district-level organizations. When partners attempted to negotiate school-level CoC, local leaders refused to sign until they had a clear commitment from the central command and district levels. It was not until the national-level CoC for SZOP was signed in Kathmandu that many district leaders agreed to sign a district CoC. In turn, local leaders waited to sign until after their national- and district-level colleagues were on board. A greater focus has therefore been placed on national and regional advocacy since isolated, school-based interventions have proven insufficient in this region.



Students standing next to their school's Code of Conduct

Role of community. In all cases, community participation is critical to the implementation of SZOP. Community members play the main role in pressuring political and armed groups to keep schools open and create a better educational environment for their children. School committees also play the critical role of monitoring violations of their SZOP Code of Conduct.

KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS

The importance of SMCs and PTAs.

Building schools' capacity for management and governance is critically important to their functioning and the sustainability of SZOP. Evidence shows that schools with active School Management Committees (SMCs) and/or Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) function better and tend to have better facilities and more community support. Without active SMCs and PTAs there is no structure to address or diffuse conflict, making the school more vulnerable to intimidation and external interference. Reports from UNICEF's partner organization World Education show that capacity building of SMCs and PTAs – making them more representative and accountable, clarifying roles, ensuring transparency, increasing commitment, resolving long-standing issues and building collaboration between parents, community and teachers – prevents further conflicts.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

Synergy between SZOP's advocacy and awareness efforts has created an environment conducive to SZOP success in many parts of the *terai*. This has led to public commitments by major political parties and local authorities to implement SZOP Codes of Conduct at the local and national levels.

Nationally, there is increased awareness that children's education – and implicitly schools – should not be used to advance political agendas. Local stakeholders including parents, teachers and children have become more aware of SZOP issues and are able to express their support through public hearings. Children have become more empowered to demand their right to education; they speak up more often and in a more compelling manner. School communities are increasingly aware of their obligation to make sure schools stay open and are safe, and to address the source of problems, whether internal issues like corruption, mismanagement or discrimination, or external ones like interference, extortion or forced use of children for armed groups or political events.

Reduction of school closures due to political activities.

- Over 1 million students in 3,337 schools directly benefited from

schools being kept open more days as a result of fewer strikes and *bandhs*. The spillover effect is amplifying the effects of SZOP: During the December 2009 nationwide Maoist strike schools remained open, extending the benefit of SZOP to all 7 million Nepali schoolchildren.

- More schools are refusing to close for small incidents and *bandhs*.
- Schools in conflict-affected villages are resuming longer hours as required to help students catch up with classes.

Codes of Conduct in place.

- 524 schools have received support to hold meetings and undertake planning for SZOP.
- All 9 districts have signed CoCs prepared with WE partners and CWIN support.
- 128 VDCs and 5 municipalities had prepared CoCs by October 2009.
- 325 new schools had a Code of Conduct in place by 31 January 2009.
- All national stakeholders and political groups (with the exception of armed Madhesi groups) endorsed a national SZOP Code of Conduct.

Improved governance by SMC/PTA systems and local ownership.

- Schools without governance structures have started to form SMCs and PTAs.
- SMCs are more active and transparent in supporting schools and holding meetings.
- Schools in SZOPs are being proactive in addressing problems and mobilizing resources; they report improved transparency about finances and decision-making.
- Parents are more aware of facilities provided by the government and are more committed to run schools by government rules.
- Teachers and SMCs are more proactive in addressing discrimination between caste groups.

Reduced misuse of school grounds and buildings, including reduced presence of armed forces.

- Political armed groups have moved

camps out of schools; police personnel were moved out of one school.

- Armed groups are cautious and do not enter schools with arms, as they have done in the past.
- Many schools have been successful in reducing the inappropriate use of school property for agricultural activities, animal slaughter, weddings and political programmes.

Political parties have honoured commitments.

- Those parties that signed the CoC have, in general, met their commitments. For example, in Dhanusha District, the Madeshi Forum exempted schools when calling a district *bandh*. In Bara, Saptari and Dhanusha, the Madeshi forum recently called for all offices and businesses to close except schools.
- Armed political groups have been respectful of the CoC, and there have been reports that there is less extortion and interference in several districts.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The volatile security situation: This continues to delay the consolidation of peace, including the SZOP programme. Frequent strikes and *bandhs* in the *terai* hamper progress, although local NGOs have usually been able to find their way through the political dynamics. Transportation is often a problem during strikes. Current volatility also makes it difficult to plan an exit strategy for SZOP.

Attacks on teachers and members of school governance bodies, forced closure of schools and extortion from school funds and teachers: These situations continue to affect schools. In some of the worst incidents, a principal was shot dead when he refused to appoint the SMC chairman's daughter as a teacher; a District Education Officer died of a heart attack when challenged by Young Communist League workers over corruption; a pressure bomb was placed in front of the District Education

Office in Dhanusha. Community members, school management, students and NGO facilitators have sometimes felt insecure when engaging in SZOP activities and expressing their opinions. This sense of insecurity was justified when the Democratic Terai Liberation Front (DTLF) issued a threat and demanded that SZOP work be stopped unless prior permission was obtained from the district-level representative of the DTLF.

Lack of monitoring and absence of a strong leading role by the District Education Offices (DEOs): In the most violent areas, government officials fear for their lives and refuse to monitor schools. This leaves teachers unsupported and frustrated. Communities feel forgotten and are more suspicious of explanations regarding resources. The situation encourages inappropriate interference by SMCs. Especially in these communities, the schools and their governance structures are susceptible to the phenomenon of elite capture, which perpetuates the exclusion of less powerful social groups and negatively affects the functioning of schools and the quality of education.

Engaging political groups: There are still a number of underground political/criminal armed groups which have not formally signed the SZOP Code of Conduct. In the *terai*, many members of these armed groups are known and are being invited to meetings as members of the 'school community', where they are encouraged to sign and

honour school-CoC. In this way, social pressure for behaviour change is being applied, even though these groups are not declared as formal signatories.

Humanitarian relief vs. development:

Implications for funding: UNICEF and partners have struggled to determine if SZOP sits in the development or humanitarian and crisis environments, given the ongoing outbreak of acute hostilities. The challenge of fitting the programme within a clearly defined category has implications for funding and donor support. Previously, the education cluster and humanitarian community included SZOP in the Consolidated Appeals Process; however, there is not general agreement that this campaign should sit within a humanitarian response. This should be addressed to ensure programming can continue.

Looking ahead: SZOP will continue to consolidate schools currently engaged in SZOP and to expand. Many areas still urgently need assistance to reduce the effects of conflict on schools. The national Learn without Fear campaign is working to ensure that schools are protective environments and is informing current efforts at national school sector reform. A national meeting in 2009 brought together key stakeholders to gather feedback on the SZOP programme and input for policy reform. An evaluation is planned for 2010. Efforts to engage members of parliament will be intensified in coming months.



Children attending a SZOP school in Saptari 2

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SOUTHERN SUDAN

The Go to School Initiative: A holistic approach to rebuilding the education system



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In the wake of 21 years of conflict, Southern Sudan is working to build a state from the ground up, including its structures, systems and institutions. The region suffers from an extreme dearth of infrastructure, acute poverty and a population which has had little or no access to schools for generations. The Go to School Initiative is in the forefront of Southern Sudan's efforts to ensure that children are enrolled and stay in school and that the public is educated on the importance of education. To meet the demands of the bulging enrolment created by the campaign, UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Education to improve the quantity and quality of education, construct school infrastructure and systems, and develop human and institutional capacity to ensure sustainability.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

For 21 years Southern Sudan suffered from a civil war fought between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army. The war caused tragic loss of life, destroyed the region's infrastructure, eroded economic resources and caused suffering to the people of the Sudan. The education system was devastated by violence and lack of investment.

The 2005 signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement brought an end to the protracted civil war and opened a window of opportunity in Southern Sudan for recovery, reconstruction and development. In the wake of the Agreement, the GoSS has shown high-level commitment to education in its reconstruction and development agenda, prioritizing expanded access, improved quality and the promotion of gender equality and social change. It is also working to build the institutional and human capacity needed to sustain development of the education sec-

tor into the future. Yet the challenges remain immense.

In 2008, nearly 2 million children in Southern Sudan remained out of school, including 990,000 primary-school-aged children. Sixty-five per cent of teachers are untrained or undertrained, and only 12 per cent of school teachers are female. Classroom space also remains a challenge to the functioning of the education system: Of the 13,500 classrooms in Southern Sudan, only 22 per cent are permanent, while 37 per cent are open-air or 'under tree' schools.¹

The magnitude of Southern Sudan's challenge in rebuilding its education system is underscored by grim social, economic and geographical factors. Since few children had the opportunity to complete secondary school during the war, there is an extremely limited pool of literate, trained adults qualified to teach. In 2009 1.4 million children were enrolled in primary school while only 44,000 were enrolled in secondary school; of these

one third and one fourth respectively were female.² According to the 2006 Sudan Household Health Survey, only 2.5 per cent of Southern Sudanese women aged 15–24 are literate.³ Compounding this challenge, the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) has mandated a move to an English-pattern curriculum after years of following an Arabic curriculum. Training teachers in this new curriculum and language requires sustained, long-term investment in order to achieve systemic change. Geographically, the region's vast area – 383,537 square kilometres with barely five kilometres of paved roads – makes it nearly impossible to deliver basic school supplies and construction materials to remote areas.

APPROACH: THE GO TO SCHOOL INITIATIVE

In 2006 the President of Southern Sudan, with support from UNICEF, launched the high-profile Go to School (GTS) Initiative – a comprehensive programme which aims to address the quantity and quality of educational opportunities, build systems and ensure sustainability. It caters to the educational needs of the school-age population and returnee children of Southern Sudan. The goal is to build a sustainable education system that effectively addresses immediate and long-term needs and empowers the GoSS to respond to changing education needs in the future.

The Go to School Initiative is the roadmap used by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Joint Assessment



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Students raise their hand in a crowded second-year class in the UNICEF-supported Munuki Centre Basic School

Mission (JAM) targets, and the goals of Education for All (EFA). Government officials are ultimately accountable for the Initiative's progress with goals, targets and priorities based on MoEST needs assessments. The Initiative is at the core of UNICEF's nationwide Basic Education programme for 2009–2012 and one of UNICEF Southern Sudan's flagship programmes. As a result, it has benefited from a substantial investment of financial and human resources.

The GTS Initiative is built on four pillars:

1. Increasing access for all geographic locations, social groups and genders (Making the doors open);
2. Improving quality and learning outcomes (Making the schools work);
3. Building partnerships and capacity for reconstruction and transformation (Making the systems work);
4. Ensuring accountability and visibility.

A wide range of activities aligned with the four pillars is being implemented in partnership with stakeholders, including UN agencies, international NGOs, civil society organizations, children, parents, teachers and local leaders.

Pillar one: Increasing access

The first pillar of the Initiative focuses on facilitating access to school for children who were not in school during the war.

In the first year, a major drive to rapidly boost enrolment numbers took centre stage. This required working with education authorities, NGOs and communities to create demand for education. Promoting girls' education, mainstreaming gender issues and reaching out to hard-to-reach children were critical parts of the enrolment drive.

The overall result of this work is that 1.6 million girls and boys, adolescents, pastoralists, orphans and vulnerable children formerly living in conflict in Southern Sudan now have equitable access to primary education, including pathways to alternative education programmes such as Accelerated Learning Programmes for over-aged students, Intensive English Language Courses for learners of Arabic background, and Pastoralist Education for children in cattle camps.

Pillar two: Improving quality

The second pillar of the Initiative focuses on the quality of education offered and works to make the schools better serve children. It includes teacher training, curriculum development, creating child-friendly professional development centres and constructing schools in accordance with the Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) model. Teacher training institutes and county education centres have been established to maintain the longevity of these efforts.

School construction is an important feature of this pillar. Some 2,500 Child-Friendly Schools and Learning Spaces have been established in Southern Sudan. Another 800 schools are to be transformed into models or 'hubs' that will support and guide satellite schools in using the CFS model. The hub model will enable support to be offered to all learning facilities in Southern Sudan by 2012.

Other ongoing initiatives for improving education quality include using literacy clubs to promote literacy, numeracy and life skills education, and the Interactive Radio-based Instruction (IRI) Programme. The life skills curriculum aims to empower both girls and boys, promote psychosocial healing and conflict resolution, teach young people about HIV and AIDS prevention and stopping gender-based violence. All CFSs are required to include life skills development in the curriculum.

Pillar three: Building partnerships and capacity for reconstruction and transformation

The third pillar focuses on maintaining the gains of the first two pillars by building institutional capacity and strengthening partnerships to provide long-term support. To sustain achievements made to date and continue to develop the still weak institutional structure, durable systems and trained personnel are critical.

Producing these requires: building the capacity of education stakeholders at all levels to manage and support the school system (these stakeholders include teachers, communities, government officials, parents and local leaders); quality assurance; improved service delivery; and enhanced monitoring systems.

UNICEF, in its role as the Education Sector Lead, supports the MoEST in developing strategic partnerships through the Education Reconstruction and Development Forum. To date, 11 thematic working groups and approximately 92 partners (including UN agencies, international NGOs and faith-based and community-based organizations) are actively participating in the education sector. Private-sector engagement remains weak but important. These partners are helping to close implementation gaps, support information sharing, strengthen coordination, establish best practices and reduce duplication of efforts.

Pillar three also emphasizes increasing gender equality among students and teachers. In some situations, parents will not allow their daughters to go to school if there are no female teachers. When girls do not complete primary education, their ability to progress through higher levels of schools and possibly become teachers themselves is lost. This makes it essential to establish a flexible but comprehensive teacher development system for Southern Sudan.

Pillar four: Accountability and visibility

The fourth pillar focuses on documentation and making the public aware of the importance of education. The Educational Management Information System (EMIS), currently under development, is a comprehensive data collection system. Public launches and events at national, state and county levels, community mobilization, including children's voices in the media and reporting on the UNICEF website all help to increase attention to education. Together, data and consistent monitoring and evaluation will provide a critical tool for enhanced accountability, evidence-based decision-making and reporting on key education indicators.

KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS

Accountability, visibility and documentation. The GTS Initiative's prominent role in post-war reconstruction and its use of results-based programming is helping to ensure that education remains at the top of Southern Sudan's agenda. On-going formal monitoring visits and consistent reporting on and promotion of GTS Initiative achievements in political circles and in the media are helping to popularize the importance of education. Documenting GTS good practices and lessons learned ensures that future campaigns can learn from Southern Sudan's experience.

KEY STEPS: IMPLEMENTING THE GO-TO-SCHOOL INITIATIVE IN SOUTHERN SUDAN

In a region so large and with some of the poorest infrastructure in the world, implementing the GTS Initiative has required meeting a range of challenges and stimulated much creative thinking. This section highlights key elements of building an education system from the ground up.

School enrolment

The first goal of the GTS Initiative was to rapidly boost enrolment. From 2002 to 2009, the total number of students enrolled in schools quadrupled. The goal now is to continue this positive trend while ensuring the provision of quality education.

School supply distribution

The rapid increase in student enrolment required a massive logistical effort. In 2006, UNICEF facilitated the shipment of over 4,000 metric tons of school supplies into Southern Sudan. Learning materials were transported by boats, airplanes, river barges, trucks, canoes, bicycles and even donkeys. This distribution made it possible for nearly 100 per cent of teachers and students in Southern Sudan to have teaching and learning materials.

Distribution of materials continues to be a challenge due to poor infrastructure and long rainy seasons. Pre-positioning supplies near roads during the dry season helps to eliminate the need for expensive alternatives such as airplanes and helicopters. Also, courses in warehouse management for MoEST staff are helping to enhance the Government's capacity for warehousing and logistical support.

Improving quality

In February 2007, the Initiative shifted its focus to the quality of education so as to improve retention and completion rates and learning achievement for girls and boys. This thrust continued in 2008. The main concern was that if children did not find school interesting and meaningful, they would quickly drop out. To address this, implementation focused on capacity building at all levels, including organizational development and Education Management Development; teacher training and continuous professional development; development of child-friendly learning environments; use of Alternative Education Systems (AES) and curricula; and consistent monitoring of learning outcomes.

Enrolment achievements 2002–2009

2002	2006	End of 2006	End of 2006	2009
343,000 enrolled	Launch Go to School Initiative	800,000 enrolled	1.3 million enrolled	1,532,617 – including 583,745 girls; 973,117 boys; 278,269 are in Alternative Education Systems
Sudan People's Liberation Army/ Movement Survey		Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces Survey	Education Mgm't Information System, 2008	2009 Annual Education Census (preliminary findings)



Grade 4 students raise their hands during a class in a UNICEF-supported school

Teacher training

In 2008 only 35 per cent of teachers in Southern Sudan were certified.⁴ Of this population, almost half were trained in Arabic, yet were expected to deliver an English language-based curriculum. As part of the effort to get qualified teachers in front of learners quickly, 6,000 teachers (25 per cent of them female) have been trained via in-service approaches since 2007. A range of programmes has been implemented to quickly scale up teachers' and community members' capacities. These include:

Retraining to the English curriculum.

Through a partnership between UNICEF and Windle Trust International, Arabic-pattern teachers are taking a specially designed course in interactive teaching and intensive English-language training. The goal is to improve their command of English and enable them to teach the newly introduced English-language curriculum, while also enhancing their pedagogical skills.

Tutors use creative and interactive methods from the beginning, including mime, flash cards, drawings and photos of objects, drama, school visits and teacher observations, amongst others. Towards the end of the course, all the teachers take part in peer micro-teaching, where, after learning detailed lesson planning and scheming, they demonstrate their teaching skills to their tutors and fellow

teachers. They learn from each other and observe common mistakes, which are corrected by their tutors.

Equipping community teachers with basic skills. To enable instruction to commence as quickly as possible, the MoEST, with UNICEF support, trained 5,000 previously untrained teachers. One method used was the FastTrack Teacher Training Programme, which trains secondary-school graduates to teach primary school. They are trained in teaching methodologies for six weeks in preparation for deployment.

Planning and deployment of teachers.

To increase MoEST's knowledge of the country's teaching staff and strengthen its ability to deploy teachers where they are needed most, the Ministry, with UNICEF support, conducted a verification and head count exercise. The data collected – including the number and qualifications of teachers – paired with a payroll system, will enable the Ministry to more equitably distribute teachers

throughout the region and, in time, deliver education to all children.

Meeting the needs of diverse learners

The Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) allows students to complete the primary curriculum in a shorter time by using condensed syllabi. Each level of ALP is designed to cover two grades of primary school in one school year, allowing eight years of primary education to be covered in four. This programme is designed to:

- Enable out-of-school learners to enter or return to formal education and complete it;
- Offer opportunities for older girls and boys to access and complete the basic education curriculum;
- Provide a faster route to completing basic education for vulnerable groups;
- Enable over-age learners in lower primary classes to catch up with their peers in the formal education system.

ALP Enrolment (2008–2009)⁵

Year	Girls	Boys	Total	Total Number of Centres
2009	81,257	112,097	193,354	1,018
2008	37,041	47,847	84,888	630
Increase 2008–2009	44,216	64,250	108,466	388

Girls' Education Movement amplifies 'Children's Voices' in Sudan

JUBA, Southern Sudan, 15 August 2007 – Every Tuesday morning, while her younger brother and sisters are still climbing into their school uniforms, Suku Jane Simon, 16, climbs onto a chair at Southern Sudan Radio, adjusts a pair of headphones and coolly announces the start of her own broadcast.

"I advise every child – girl and boy – to go to school," she says into the microphone. "Education is key. When I see a girl who does not go to school, I say to her, 'My sister, let us go to school, for you are poor in mind.'"

The programme, 'Children's Voices,' is a weekly feature at Southern Sudan Radio. Co-hosted by students and teachers, the broadcast is just one of many activities organized by the local chapter of GEM, a grass-roots initiative that promotes equality in education through child participation. In addition to the radio broadcast, Suku and her classmates host a weekly programme on Juba Television and conduct outreach sessions in the local market, where they encourage working children to stay in school. "We have to keep informing them, telling them to wake up and go for education, because education is helping us," Suku says. "A child is ready to hear your advice because you are the same size." Suku's words carry a special resonance in Southern Sudan. Very few girls here finish eight years of primary school. Hundreds of thousands of children do not attend school at all, while early marriage, cultural traditions and the lack of adequate school facilities pose particular challenges for girls.

Like many of her peers, Suku fled Southern Sudan during the war. Educated at a refugee camp in Uganda, she returned to Juba with her family following the signing of the 2005 peace agreement. Today, Suku is turning the painful experiences of the past into positive plans for the future. Already fluent in four languages, she hopes to use her GEM activities as a platform for becoming a professional journalist. "We have seen a dramatic change in Suku since she started with GEM," says the headmaster at Juba Day Secondary School. "She is doing so well in school, and she is so well-liked. Through GEM, it seems she has gotten confidence in herself. "Really, she has become a blessing to us." *Adapted from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sudan_40602.html*

Ensuring gender equity in education

The Girls' Education Movement (GEM) mobilizes out-of-school children through peer-to-peer interaction. UNICEF supports GEM programmes in countries across the region. They aim to sensitize young people to the importance of education, with a special focus on girls' education, encouraging enrolment and teaching basic life skills.

GEM school clubs are the main social mobilization and public information component of the GTS Initiative. They empower girls to take on leadership roles and boys to act as strategic allies, all the time working to increase girls' access to education and children's participation in social mobilization. GEM clubs use drama, song, theatre, marching and the media to share education and child rights messages with their friends, parents, out-of-school children and the public at large. In many cases GEM clubs offer life-skills education such as training on gender, HIV and AIDS, mine risk and peace education. They also provide psychosocial support. To date, nearly 10,000 young people and teachers have benefited from GEM facilitators' training, and there are more than 600 GEM clubs across all ten states of Southern Sudan.

KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS

Social mobilization of children by children. GEM clubs are helping young people bring about positive changes at both school and community levels. Monitoring has shown that GEM is one of the key interventions leading to increased enrolment, especially among girls. The clubs' success in increasing interest and engagement with education are evidence of young people's great influence on their peers and interest in issues that affect them in society.

Capacity building for sustainability

UNICEF and MoEST work closely together to build capacity at central and local levels and develop education policy. Staff secondment from UNICEF to provide major technical support is one strategy for accomplishing this. To date, a draft Education Act has been written, a harmonized curriculum for primary grades 5 through 8 completed,

and key policy frameworks on the school calendar, exams, and languages of instruction formulated. Additional frameworks on financing and budgets; teacher development, quality assurance and qualifications; and library and learning assessment have been developed. Civil society engagement on gender equity in education is also on the rise. A local branch of the Forum for African Women Educationalists has opened in Juba and is working alongside the local NGO Concern for Mothers and Children in Sudan (COMOCS) to assist the Government in developing Gender in Education Policies and Programmes.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

Pillar one: Increasing access

- 400,000 children (50 per cent of them girls) enrolled annually in both formal schools and non-formal Alternative Education System programmes;
- 1,500 learning spaces established, including 100 Alternative Education Systems centres established annually as pathways to other stages of education;
- Adequate quantities of learning and teaching materials (at least 17,000 student kits, 17,000 teacher kits, 3,500 head teacher kits, 3,500 recreational kits, 25,000 school bags, 6 million exercise books) procured and distributed annually and used effectively by 1.5 million girls and boys.

Pillar two: Improving quality

- Minimum Quality Standards institutionalized through use of the CFS model;
- 800 learning spaces developed as model and cluster support schools to catalyse CFS development;
- An additional 3,000 teachers (25 per cent female) trained in interactive methodologies and creative facilitation skills by in-service and Intensive English language courses;
- Outcomes-based curriculum developed.

Pillar three: Building partnerships and capacity

- Tools for education quality assurance and monitoring in place;

- Teacher education strategy and Qualifications Framework established;
- Teacher training institutes and Southern Sudan Institute of Education established and programmes harmonized;
- Qualifications and Learning Assessment system established and in use;
- First joint study on sociocultural and economic barriers to schooling in Southern Sudan conducted by MoEST and UNICEF in 2008 to inform policy interventions, plans, strategies and approaches, technologies and organizational arrangements.

Pillar four: Accountability and visibility

- GTS Initiative launched at national, state and community levels;
- Southern Sudan Education Act drafted and ready for approval and several sector strategies initiated, including a strategy on teacher education;
- Education Management Information System (EMIS) now fully functional and beginning to influence sector planning (the next phase of EMIS will address quality indicators, including CFS indicators, as a basis for planning and management);
- Improved coordination of education donors, greater transparency, and increased support for sector

priorities with stakeholders working through at least 11 technical working groups;

- 2010–2012 rolling Medium-Term Expenditure Framework and 2010 budget in place and roadmap for medium- and long-term predictable funding developed;
- 600 Girls' Education Movement clubs established; 10,000 students and teachers trained in GEM;
- Children's voices increasingly present in the media and at centre of GTS activities.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Maintaining quality: The quality of learning outcomes in Southern Sudan remains an enormous challenge. In many places, high enrolments stress available resources and over-full classrooms challenge teachers to keep control. Both issues decrease the quality of learning. However, with appropriate policies, plans and strategies in place, targets for access, equity and quality can still be met.

Gender and education: Considerable support is needed to develop a gender policy and to mainstream gender issues throughout the education system. Female enrolment still remains low at 34 percent, a proportion that has remained static since 2006. Unsupportive home

and community environments continue to cause high dropout rates, especially among girls. To bolster the success of the GTS Initiative and lay the groundwork for broader policies and strategies that nurture both girls and boys, the education community needs to maintain its focus on achieving gender balance.

Teacher monitoring and motivation:

To keep teachers motivated and present in schools, adequate and regular remuneration is critical. This will help stem the high rate of turnover. And to continue to enhance the quality of education – including quality of teaching and content delivery – the level of inspection and supervision of teachers must be improved.

Coordinating stakeholders: Given the large number of partners working in Southern Sudan, increased coordination between stakeholders is essential to harmonize education programming, key policies and legal frameworks, and improve communication across the sector.

Financing sources and modalities: Adequate financial and human resources for education are needed to sustain the advances achieved by the GTS Initiative. Implementing many small uncoordinated projects will not make a sizable impact or bring about desired changes for Southern Sudan. More funding is required from both the Government of Southern Sudan and external partners and donors to maintain the substantial progress to date.

Capacity building for long-term sustainability:

Sustaining the education system will require continued attention to strengthening local, professional, institutional and individual capacities and over time transferring full ownership of the system to the Government of Southern Sudan. Key pillars of the GTS Initiative must also continue and grow, including construction of more education facilities, recruitment and training of many more teachers, and procurement and distribution of education materials.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Ensuring access, strengthening resilience and building capacity: Education in a chronic emergency



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The Democratic Republic of the Congo has been in a chronic state of emergency for much of the last 10 years. As a result, the region is characterized by massive population displacement, widespread poverty and a near total absence of basic government services. Like other government functions, the education system has been greatly affected by the on-going conflict. Schools continue to be the target of attacks by armed groups; more than half of the region's children do not attend school; teachers, when they receive salaries at all, are nearly always under-remunerated; and school infrastructure is in ruins. In this fragile and at times hostile environment, UNICEF is working to provide immediate access to education for all children and strengthen community resilience, while at the same time building the government's long-term capacity to support an equitable and quality education system.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

For more than three decades, the Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular the eastern regions (Eastern DRC) has suffered chronic emergency conditions punctuated by frequent outbreaks of violent conflict. In 2010, 2.1 million people – nearly half of the region's population – are displaced; over half of these are children and adolescents.¹ As a result, there is a great need for humanitarian aid in all sectors. The combination of frequent and widespread population displacement, poverty and a near total absence of government services has created a situation in which livelihoods are threatened, the population suffers from acute malnutrition and disease, and children are frequently unable to attend school.

The impact of the conflict on the education system and on children's ability to learn is immense. Data and statistics for the most conflict-affected regions are

either not available or unreliable and not disaggregated to reflect gender dimensions. Nevertheless, national data illustrate the severity of the education situation. DRC is ranked 176th out of 182 countries on the Human Development Index. In 2008, its primary-school completion rate was 53 per cent, with significant disparities between girls and boys and urban versus rural areas.² Efforts to close the gender gap have produced favourable results in the majority of the provinces of the DRC. In 2007, the gross primary-school enrolment ratio was 68 per cent for boys and 54 per cent for girls. In the same year, the adult literacy rate was estimated to be 67 per cent.³

Lack of education infrastructure, a poorly adapted curriculum and extreme poverty are significant barriers to entry and completion of school. The primary causes of the grim education situation are a dearth of school infrastructure, qualified teachers, and materials and uniforms. All of these problems are compounded by extreme poverty. In the absence of

Government funding, families are being asked to pay school fees of US \$1-3 per child per month. This is often an impossible amount for a population with an average per capita GDP of less than US \$100 per year. When children do enrol in school, they find curriculum content that is not adapted to their needs, their environment or the labour market, and a poorly motivated teaching population. Socio-economic obstacles, such as early marriage for girls, child labour and the risk of HIV and AIDS on households, create yet another barrier to access and completion of school.

Schools are used by internally displaced persons (IDPs) and armed groups as places of refuge. Frequent influxes of IDPs and activity by armed groups in and around schools seriously challenge the education system. Schools are often the first public buildings to be occupied by IDPs when they do not have access to safe temporary shelters. They are also frequently used by armed groups as bases or offices. School furniture is burned as cooking fuel, and school latrines are used by the broader population, making it difficult to maintain hygienic conditions and exposing children to diseases, including cholera. Thus, even when schools are eventually returned to children, the school equipment has often disappeared or been damaged. Adding to the longer term impact, when IDPs settle, they frequently choose to live in host communities rather than camps. Their children are then absorbed into host-community schools. This coping mechanism has led school populations in the region to swell by an average of 30 per cent.



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A girl collects firewood in a Kibati camp for the displaced

Children not in school are at greater risk for harm. The large numbers of school-aged children who are not enrolled in school often have no access to safe and protective environments during the day. These children are particularly vulnerable to recruitment into armed groups and to economic and sexual exploitation. Girls in particular suffer from armed groups, as they are sometimes made to serve as military ‘wives’.

“A child is not just the physical self, but a whole person. In an environment where they don’t have the opportunity to socialize with other children, where they have no opportunity for education, normalcy will never return and trauma will prevail.”

APPROACH: INCREASING ACCESS, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND BUILDING GOVERNMENT CAPACITY

In light of the chronic nature of Eastern DRC’s emergency, UNICEF and other partners are working to harmonize relief, rehabilitation and development efforts. For the education sector, this means working concurrently to ensure continued access to education, strengthen community resilience and build the capacity of govern-

ment institutions, in particular at regional and local levels, and civil society partners. To meet immediate needs, education stakeholders focus on building functioning schools, training capable teachers and equipping students and teachers with adequate materials. To foster sustainability, they build capacity at the community and government levels and work to build widespread commitment to protect children’s right to education.

Evidence shows that households’ decisions to return to their villages of origin are closely linked to the presence of schooling in the return location and the timing of the school year.⁴ For children affected by conflict, schools play a major role in restoring normality by providing services to help them process violent experiences, allowing for interaction with peers, and reducing the risk of their being recruited by armed groups or forced into labour.

UNICEF and partners use two parallel mechanisms to respond to household needs in Eastern DRC. These programmes support the distribution of essential household goods and ensure that learning is possible by distributing basic education materials, establishing temporary learning spaces, and building latrines and hand-washing facilities. The inclusion of education in Eastern DRC’s emergency programming is significant, as education is most often not included among humanitarian interventions. This approach recognizes the significance of

education as a life-sustaining, and sometimes life-saving, intervention.

The Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM).

Co-managed by UNICEF and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in partnership with several international NGOs, the RRM is designed to provide critical multi-sectoral assistance to victims of complex emergencies, natural disasters and epidemics with a focus on displaced persons. Since RRM’s start in 2004, the programme has responded to hundreds of acute humanitarian crises across Eastern DRC and assisted more than 1.7 million people.

The RRM aims to guarantee standby capacity for four key activities:

- Rapid multi-sectoral assessments within 72 hours of news of a crisis, security and access permitting;
- Response in three primary sectors: household family relief; water, sanitation and hygiene assistance; and primary education, and two secondary areas: providing basic medicines and health supplies to partner organizations and health facilities, and distributing BP-5 high-protein biscuits;
- Advocacy and coordination with other actors to promote complementary emergency activities in the fields of food security, health and protection;
- Systematic monitoring of activities and interventions.

In 2006, the humanitarian community realized there was a need for systemized support for households returning to their villages of origin, so they created the Programme of Expanded Assistance to Returnees to complement the RRM.

The Programme of Expanded Assistance to Returnees (PEAR).

The PEAR is a three-month, multi-sectoral assistance programme designed to meet the immediate needs of people returning to their villages of origin after long-term displacement. Managed by UNICEF, PEAR works in four provinces of Eastern DRC and is implemented by five NGO partners: AVSI, Catholic Relief Services, Norwegian Refugee Council, International Rescue Committee and Solidarités.

PEAR has three main goals:

- Provide the humanitarian community with information about areas of return;
- Meet returnees' basic household needs;
- Provide children access to education.

The Rapid Response to Population Movement (RRMP). In 2010 the relief community merged the RRM and PEAR to create the Rapid Response to Population Movement (RRMP) programme. The RRMP will harmonize the needs of displaced persons, returnees and host families by ensuring emergency monitoring, bringing multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations and continuing to protect beneficiaries by endorsing the 'do no harm' principle.⁵ RRMP will help ensure that school building is routinely linked to education programming, training and follow-up and will continue the campaign to abolish school fees.

Stakeholders believe the RRMP will be better suited to respond to the new phenomena emerging from Eastern DRC's prolonged emergency: long-term displacements with increasing pressure on host communities, massive returns to home villages, and back-and-forth population displacement due to continued insecurity. In 2010, more than 1.7 million people in Eastern DRC will benefit from RRMP multi-sectoral assistance in non-food items, water and sanitation, and education, all of which promote child survival and access to school in families affected by population movements.

IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION ASSISTANCE IN EASTERN DRC

Shorter-term goals

The short-term goal is to expand coverage. In Eastern DRC the primary effort is to create safe and protective learning environments for children. To achieve this, response teams work with communities to assess five key areas:

- **Is there a space for children to learn?** If no, what temporary learning space would be appropriate for the loca-

tion and the community, taking into consideration cultural norms?

- **Is there a teacher standing in front of the students?** If no, what support is required for a teacher to be there?
- **Do schools have materials?** If no, how many of which supplies are needed to make the students, teachers and school function?
- **Are teachers giving quality instruction?** If no, can a Mobile Teaching Support Team be dispatched to the area and assist with training in-service teachers and/or preparing community members to teach?
- **How is the environment/community?** How can support be extended to the host community to minimize tension between internally displaced and host community populations?

Once the situation is assessed and schools are in place, education stakeholders undertake a range of activities to increase access to education for both girls and boys and improve the quality of the teaching.

Innovative approach to training teachers. Mobile Teacher Support Teams. To improve the quality of education reaching IDP populations, which are mobile and widely dispersed, UNICEF established two Mobile Teacher Support Teams in late 2007. The programme is implemented by local NGO partner Alpha Ujuvi and Italian NGO AVSI. Mobile Teams are composed of government trainers and inspectors and

NGO staff; members serve as focal points in early childhood, primary and adolescent education and psychosocial support. They work in a satellite structure, with trained networks in various districts ready to respond to schools with high numbers of IDPs or returnees. Trainers are mobilized once the training needs of a school have been assessed and the zones where schools are located are sufficiently secure and accessible.

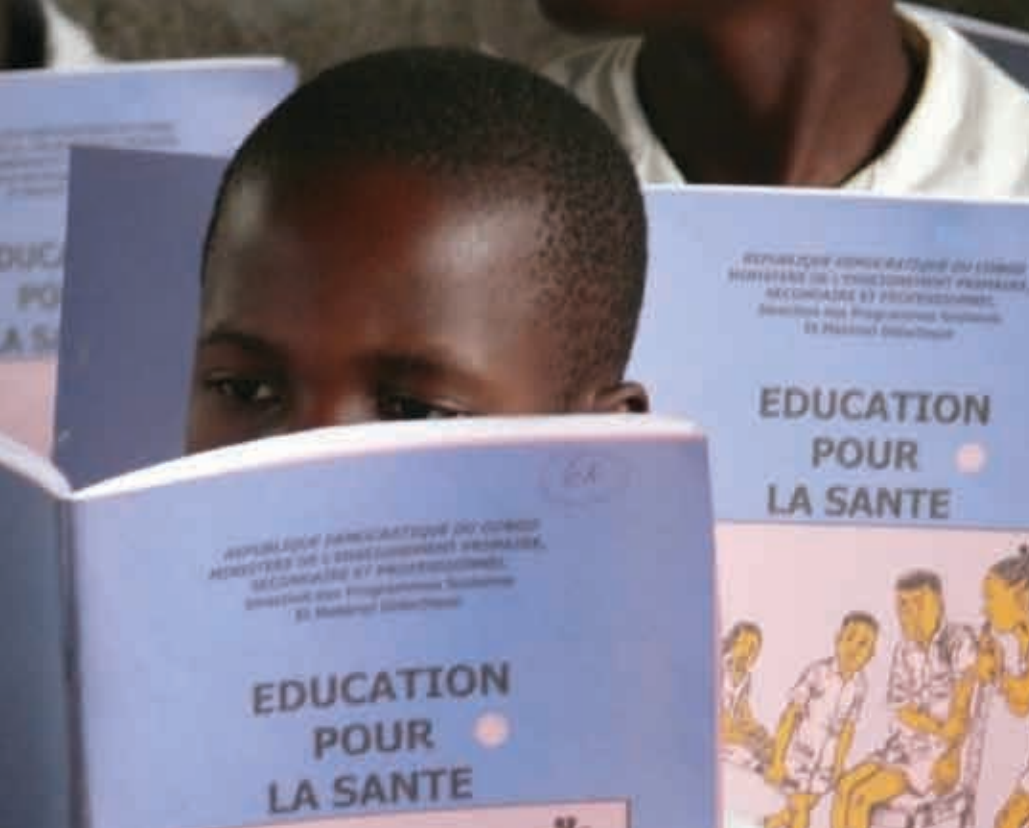
The Mobile Teams work on five main pillars:

- **Training for teachers** – Basic training includes the national school curriculum, classroom management and psychosocial support. Teachers are trained during the academic year in the afternoon or on weekends.
- **Capacity building** – Training for government inspectors and Parent Committees covers the importance of education, particularly for girls; psychosocial support; and protection for children.
- **Support for school fee payment** through the promotion of local initiatives which reduce the burden of fees for parents.
- **Psychosocial support to teachers and children** affected by fighting and displacement, including messaging against sexual violence.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** conducted by trained government inspectors.



Planning meeting with educators

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A boy reads a book in his health education class

Improving access through adaptive schooling. To ensure students of all types are able to learn or catch up on missed school years UNICEF and partners have created innovative education programmes that meet learners needs. A few examples of this include:

Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALPs). ALPs allow children and youth who have dropped out of school or have never been to school to re-enter the formal education system and complete their primary education in three years rather than six. The programme targets children over age 10 and is open to both IDP and host communities. Communities lead these programmes, identifying the sites where classes can take place and ensuring payment of educators' salaries. Local NGOs often support training and the provision of materials. At the end of three years, students take the official Ministry of Education TENAFEP exam, which certifies completion of primary school. Proof of success in the TENAFEP ensures that children can continue their studies when they move. For displaced children, it is vital that if and when they return to their communities of origin, they have evidence of having passed the exam. In 2009, approximately 44,000 children entered ALPs.

Vocational Training. For those youth for whom it is deemed too late to enter formal school, vocational training programmes are being made available. Vocational programmes enable youth to take an active role in the community and develop livelihoods that will support them in the future.

Holiday schooling. During long summer holidays, summer schools are being organized to provide a safe and protective environment for both in-school and out-of-school children. Activities are a combination of catch-up sessions and recreation. UNICEF partners with the International Rescue Committee and AVSI to support this programme.

Providing a foundation through Early Childhood Centres. The Early Childhood Development project aims to provide young children with a strong foundation in life by offering a holistic package that addresses their rights in the areas of nutrition, education, protection, health and stimulation. At the same time, these programmes free parents during the day, enabling them to earn a living. Children who attend Early Childhood Centres are later supported to attend primary school, and primary school teachers are also trained to support first graders starting their formal education.

Longer-term goals

The **longer-term goal** is to develop community resilience, schools which can respond to current and future emergencies, and government capacity to support a sustainable education system.

Building community resilience. Community resilience is critical to quickly resume schooling when communities are affected by armed conflict or disaster. Examples of how UNICEF and its partners help build the resilience of communities and schools include:

Parent Committees. Education stakeholders are working through the schools to develop Parent Committees, which then take on central roles in school management. Members are elected by their communities and then trained by Ministry of Education trainers in school management skills such as school financing, teacher payments, income-generating activities, basic accounting and good governance. Parent Committees contribute to children's learning and to keeping children in school. Observed results of the training include: reduction of physical and verbal abuse by teachers; increased attention and sensitivity in gender issues; increased interest and participation from parents in children's education; increased respect for teachers from community members.

KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS

Income-generating activities to supplement teacher salaries. Some schools have opted to implement income-generating activities (IGAs) such as farming, agricultural production and flour refining to supplement teacher salaries. These activities are decided upon, implemented and monitored by the communities themselves, with leadership from Parent Committees. In some communities the proceeds from IGAs have reduced school fees by 50 per cent for host-community schoolchildren and by 90 per cent for IDP children. The Parent Committee manages the funds and ensure that they are used in accordance with community decisions.

Psychosocial support programming is now considered essential to address the impediments to learning caused by trauma. Extra-curricular activities are used to encourage children to express them-

selves freely and to work through their emotions. The training teachers receive in psychosocial support also improves classroom relationships and their treatment of students.

Peace education plays a key role in emergencies and post-crisis transition. In Eastern DRC many children are surrounded by violence and as a result grow up without knowing peace. Peace education workshops teach important life skills such as citizenship, conflict resolution and effective communication and help instill in children self-esteem and respect for others. To support this work, Parent Committees sensitize parents to the psychological issues that children may suffer from and encourage them to meet children's psychosocial needs.

KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS

A conflict-sensitive approach to providing education. In Eastern DRC, education stakeholders are committed to rehabilitating and constructing classrooms within the host communities, rather than building separate schools in the IDP camps. Host-community children and displaced children thus attend school side by side. This situation integrates the two communities and helps reduce any conflict that may exist. Host-community schools benefit from materials provided, and teachers receive training in a variety of topics, including peace education, conflict resolution and psychosocial support, which help to build a culture of peace in Eastern DRC. Strategies to integrate displaced and other vulnerable children into host communities include: supporting host schools to implement double-shift teaching by holding both morning and afternoon classes, distributing teaching and learning materials, and identifying additional classrooms and training additional teachers. In some situations the schools also benefit from 'school canteens', which lessen the household food burden by providing children with meals at school.

Building government capacity at the local, provincial and national levels. UNICEF supports the national and provincial Government technically and financially with teacher training, curriculum development and implementation, develop-

ment and distribution of learning and teaching materials, information management and data collection, construction and rehabilitation of education infrastructures and school governance.

At the national level, UNICEF works closely with the Government and with education donors to develop policy and strategy. Through the Education Thematic Working Group, UNICEF supports the development of a national education strategy. It partners closely with the Government to finalize the National Early Childhood Policy and the National Youth Policy. UNICEF is a staunch advocate of abolishing school fees and works to ensure that equity and quality remain in the forefront of all discussions on education.

At the provincial level the Education Cluster ensures Government participation and promotes its central role in implementing the education response. UNICEF project officers work daily with their Government counterparts to ensure practical training in contract writing, teacher training, monitoring and follow-up. Government workers participate in writing the Cluster's Terms of Reference and setting agendas. The cluster's lead and co-lead verify that all decisions made by the cluster correspond with government priorities.

KEY ELEMENT FOR SUCCESS

Key success factor: Building capacity at all levels. The Education Cluster, at both national and provincial levels, is playing an important role in coordinating the humanitarian response. In 2009 much emphasis was placed on informing cluster members (government, and local and international NGOs) about the Strategy of Education in Emergencies, the Minimum Standards (INEE) and the cluster approach. At the provincial level, key tools (Terms of Reference, common indicators and strategy, and eventually quarterly news briefs) have been identified to enhance cluster functioning and coordination and ensure that they make education interventions strategic and coordinated.⁶

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

- **Enrolment:** In 2009, UNICEF's emergency education project supported 78,823 IDP children to attend early childhood centres. 244,915 children benefited from primary education, and 30,050 displaced and vulnerable children benefited from Accelerated Learning Programmes through UNICEF-supported Centre de Rattrapage Scolaire programme.
- **Literacy:** 2135 teenagers, including 1281 girls, have participated in the literacy teaching programme developed by UNICEF and its partners in South Kivu. 1850 other teenagers, including 962 girls, who had abandoned school have also benefited from this programme.
- **Integration of IDP children into host schools:** Approximately 65 per cent of schools (188 schools) in Goma and Masisi territory and 1,553 teachers had enrolled 30,643 displaced children (45 per cent of total enrolled children) as of December 2008. Government representatives and schools in non-project areas also encouraged traditional coping mechanisms such as integrating displaced children into host-community schools.
- **Schools rehabilitated:** In 2009, 649 schools were rehabilitated, allowing 64,900 children to learn in more secure environments.
- **Mobile Teaching Support Teams:** Since October 2007, Mobile Teams have reached 85 host schools with 46,247 children (44 per cent girls, 36 per cent IDP children) and 1,025 teachers.
- **Psychosocial training for teachers and life skills for youth:** In 2009, 851 teachers were trained in psychosocial support for traumatized children. 19,500 adolescents in IDP locations received information about preventing HIV infection, and 4000 teenagers learned about HIV and AIDS, reproductive health, peace and citizenship in life-skills classes.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Education interventions in Eastern DRC are showing stakeholders clearly that no single intervention can keep children in school during emergencies. Maintaining and amplifying current efforts to provide comprehensive assistance through improved teaching, increased parental sensitization on the importance of education, and physical and material support is critical for the advancement of Eastern DRC's children and youth. Key considerations moving forward include:

Insecurity and population issues: On-going insecurity in Eastern DRC makes much of the population inaccessible, which hampers programme implementation, supply delivery, monitoring, and information and data collection. Continued population movement compounds these challenges. Education stakeholders continue to work in a difficult environment and require continued support to facilitate these activities.

Funding: The international humanitarian community has an enormous opportunity to increase funding to education, and in doing so, radically amplify its effect. In 2008, education in Eastern DRC received 23 per cent of its funding requirement, and in 2009, only 19 per cent. Traditionally, education has not been considered 'life-saving' and so was not included as a priority sector in emergencies. A concerted effort to educate donors about the life-improving and often life-saving effects of education is critical.

Teacher training and monitoring: The number of trained primary and secondary school teachers remains extremely low in Eastern DRC. Without significant progress in this area, increasing the quality and coverage of education will be impossible. Ensuring the Government has the human and resource capacity to monitor the quality of teaching and the impact of training is a critical next step.

Coordination and the cluster approach: Coordination efforts in the education sector have increased substantially in recent years. The Cluster approach is greatly

enhancing the humanitarian community's coordination but there is more work to be done. In the education sector, important areas like income-generation activities, livelihood and micro-finance do not have specific clusters and don't fit well into the cluster architecture, so they receive less support. In some places, education cluster activities focus predominantly on rehabilitating schools and neglect other aspects of emergency education programming.⁷

In the 2008/09 school year, many cluster leads attended international training sessions on Education in Emergencies (EiE) and Cluster Coordination (CC); others studied the INEE minimum standards. Training invigorates the education cluster approach and ensures that members are aware of both the standards they should maintain and their responsibilities and accountability. To ensure that Government is taking a lead role in education, consistent partnership through the cluster is important.

Boys take part in a mechanics course at a UNICEF-supported vocational training centre



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- The school-in-a-carton contains the same items as above except the metal box is replaced by a cardboard box.
- The recreation kit contains the following items: metal box, ruled exercise book, ball-point pen (black), handball, junior handball, referee's whistle, inflating kit for balls, measuring tape, student's slate, white chalk, UNICEF bag, UNICEF T-shirt, UNICEF baseball cap, UNICEF decal, tabards, volleyball, net, junior football, basketball, sponge ball, picket with flag, skipping rope, frisbee.
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Democratic Republic of the Congo Case Study

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Girls attend a UNICEF-supported school in Sudan

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Of the estimated 72 million primary school-age children out of school worldwide, as many as 25 million live in countries affected by conflict. Education is an important intervention in these settings, as it can provide physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection to children, and is often prioritized by children and parents. Re-establishing education at the community and system levels following a crisis can have an important stabilizing effect, serve as a peace dividend in countries emerging from conflict, and help reduce disaster risk. This publication outlines UNICEF's role in providing education in conflict-affected contexts. Through country case studies it illustrates some of the innovative approaches UNICEF is using to ensure children's right to education is realized in all situations, including in conflict and transition contexts.

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