

# EVALUATION REPORT

August 2018

## Evaluation of UNICEF Girls' Education Portfolio (2009-2015)

■ ■ **Final Evaluation Report** ■

unicef   
for every child



# EVALUATION REPORT

August 2018

## Evaluation of UNICEF Girls' Education Portfolio (2009-2015)

### ■ ■ Final Evaluation Report ■

## EVALUATION OF UNICEF GIRL'S EDUCATION PORTFOLIO (2009-2015)

© United Nations Children's Fund, New York, 2018  
United Nations Children's Fund  
Three United Nations Plaza  
New York, New York 10017

August 2018

The purpose of publishing evaluation reports produced by the UNICEF Evaluation Office is to fulfil a corporate commitment to transparency through the publication of all completed evaluations. The reports are designed to stimulate a free exchange of ideas among those interested in the topic and to assure those supporting the work of UNICEF that it rigorously examines its strategies, results, and overall effectiveness.

The content of the report does not necessarily reflect the policies or views of UNICEF.

The text has not been edited to official publication standards and UNICEF accepts no responsibility for error.

Designations in this publication do not imply an opinion on the legal status of any country or territory, or of its authorities, or the delimitation of frontiers.

The copyright for this report is held by the United Nations Children's Fund. Permission is required to reprint/reproduce/photocopy or in any other way to cite or quote from this report in written form. UNICEF has a formal permission policy that requires a written request to be submitted. For non-commercial uses, the permission will normally be granted free of charge. Please write to the Evaluation Office at the address below to initiate a permission request.

For further information, please contact:

Evaluation Office  
United Nations Children's Fund  
Three United Nations Plaza  
New York, New York 10017  
[evalhelp@unicef.org](mailto:evalhelp@unicef.org)

# CONTENTS

<b>Preface</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Abbreviations and Acronyms</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Evaluation purpose, objectives and scope	2
1.2 Context	3
1.3 UNICEF Girls' education portfolio	17
1.4 Evaluation report features	20
<b>2 Evaluation Methodology</b>	<b>21</b>
2.1 Evaluation themes, questions, and criteria	22
2.2 Evaluation design and methodology	26
2.3 Data analysis	28
2.4 Limitations, constraints, and mitigation strategies	31
2.5 Ethical issues and considerations	32
<b>3 Evaluation Findings</b>	<b>34</b>
3.1 Positioning and shared understanding	35
3.2 Gender mainstreaming effectiveness	47
3.3 Girls' education interventions	57
3.4 Partnerships	77
3.5 Capacity Development	86
<b>4 Conclusions</b>	<b>93</b>
4.1 Positioning and shared understanding	95
4.2 Gender mainstreaming	97
4.3 Girls' education	99
4.4 Partnerships	103
4.5 Capacity Development	104
<b>5 Recommendations</b>	<b>106</b>

## CONTENTS (cont'd)

### List of Figures

Figure 1.1	Gross Enrolment Ratio – Primary Education, (%) UIS data	4
Figure 1.2	Global primary completion rates, 1999-2015	5
Figure 1.3	Global gender parity index (GPI), 2009-2015	5
Figure 1.4	Gender parity index (GPI) in 2009-2015, by region	6
Figure 1.5	Gross enrolment ratio (GER) for girls at the secondary level, 2009-2015	7
Figure 1.6	Policy Context UNICEF Basic Education and Gender Equality 1999-2014	13
Figure 1.7	Foundational Theory of Change for UNICEF's Girls' Education Programming	23
Figure 2.1	Evaluation Design	28
Figure 3.1	UNICEF and National Policy Contexts and Priorities	35
Figure 3.2	Integrating gender analysis into a rights-based programming process	47
Figure 3.3	Continuum of evidence generation and use	59
Figure 3.4	Adapted Theory of Change	63
Figure 3.5	Framing partnerships based on their contribution to results	78
Figure 3.6	Unsustainable capacity development in UNICEF COs	90
Figure 4.1	Adapted Theory of Change	94
Figure 4.2	Coherence of UNICEF Country Education Programming	96
Figure 4.3	A potential virtuous circle of UNICEF programming in education and gender equality	99
Figure 4.4	Unsustainable capacity development in COs	105
Figure C.1	Theory of Change	127
Figure C.2	Adapted Theory of Change	132
Figure E.1	Key Elements of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021	144
Figure E.2	Goal Area (Outcome) 2 – Theory of Change for UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2018-2021	146
Figure E.3	Gender Results in the Strategic Plan 2018-2021	150

### List of Tables

Table 2.1	Evaluation Themes and Questions	24
Table 2.2	Country case studies and selection criteria	27
Table 2.3	Evidence assessment criteria	29
Table 3.1	Reference to global goals, UNICEF planning documents and the GAP in COARs and CPDs, per region	36
Table 3.2	Number of countries per region referring to specific documents to inform their knowledge of national priorities	38
Table 3.3	UNICEF inputs into planning, 2009–2015	40
Table 3.4	Reported instances of gender mainstreaming: Country offices per region	49

## CONTENTS (cont'd)

Table 3.5	Reported instances of gender mainstreaming activities in all 35 countries, categorized by type (COARs), and specific examples from case study country documents	50
Table 3.6	Gender mainstreaming mentions: Case study country COARs	53
Table 3.7	Proportion of COARs with measurable output and outcome statements for girls' education, 2009-2015	67
Table 3.8	UNICEF partners in the education sector, case study country COARs (2009-2015)	81
Table 3.9	Reported instances of collaboration with COs – regional offices	88
Table A.1	Evaluation themes and objectives, and evaluation criteria	113
Table A.2	Evaluation themes, objectives, and draft evaluation questions	122
Table F.1	Desk review country selection criteria	151
Table G.1	Documents Reviewed	153
Table G.2	Stakeholders consulted through Individual Interviews and Focus Group Discussions during Case Study Fieldwork	153
Table G.3	Global and Regional Level Interviews	154

## List of Appendices

Appendix A	Abridged Terms of Reference	110
Appendix B	UNICEF Girls' Education Chronology	124
Appendix C	Foundational Theory of Change	126
Appendix D	Evaluation framework	133
Appendix E	UNICEF strategic context post-evaluation period	143
Appendix F	Desk review countries and sampling criteria	151
Appendix G	Evidence reviewed	153
Appendix H	Summary of case study findings	155
Appendix I	Desk review of NESPs for case study countries	165

# PREFACE

Girls' education is a key priority for sustainable development, fundamental to ensuring their rights and essential to delivering on the promise to leave no one behind. Not only is access to equitable, quality learning the right of every girl – whoever she may be, wherever she may live – evidence has long shown that educating girls delivers powerful multiplier effects across many areas of human development, including health, nutrition, and protection.

For this reason, girls' education is firmly enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Progress on girls' education was critical to the achievement of MDGs 2 and 3, which specifically relate to universal primary education and gender parity. By 2015, more girls than ever before were in school, stayed there longer, and learned more whilst they were there, and the world is approaching universal coverage of primary education. Despite this impressive progress, however, a range of important challenges remain that contribute to discrimination and gender disparities in education.

Against this backdrop, UNICEF commissioned a global evaluation of its girls' education portfolio from 2009-2015, comprising programmes, interventions, activities and strategies UNICEF and its partners have implemented or supported to improve education outcomes for girls and promote gender equality.

The purpose of the evaluation was to interrogate the progress that UNICEF and partners made towards improving education outcomes for girls by the end of the MDG era. Specifically, it assessed the contribution of the UNICEF girls' education programme towards attaining gender parity in key education measures, and in achieving MDGs 2 and 3 and related Education for All (EFA) goals. It also assessed the efficacy of girls' education programme strategies, and the extent to which UNICEF work in girls' education translated into the desired reforms in education sector policy, planning and budgeting practice. The evaluation also set out to determine whether key lessons were used to influence subsequent choices for girls' education and gender equality programming within UNICEF.

Thirty-five countries, covering all seven regions of UNICEF, were selected as the subject of a desk-based review. From this sample of 35, five countries were selected for field-based case studies, with the aim of illuminating the findings of the desk review by exploring processes, patterns and relationships in more depth than the desk review could achieve. The countries covered were Cote d'Ivoire, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan and Sudan, including both development and humanitarian programming.

The evaluation found, *inter alia*, that while girls' education programming at country level was philosophically aligned with the broad aims of UNICEF global priorities for educating girls, it was not always tightly aligned with national priorities and/or choices. Where



countries had to re-programme for new challenges (e.g. in a humanitarian crisis), emergent girls' education needs were not systematically appraised, mainly because of lack of capacities and/or resources. Country case studies indicated some notable successes in leveraging funding for basic education, most of which concern funding from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). However, there was limited evidence of resources being successfully leveraged for targeted girls' education initiatives, and even less evidence relating to measurable targets towards gender mainstreaming.

The evaluation was executed by Coffey International Development, Ltd. under the guidance and leadership of Simon Griffiths and Robina Shaheen. The Coffey team also included case study leads, Marie-Louise Hoilund-Carlsen and Heidi Ober; data analysts, Isabella Di Paolo and Evelyn Hytopoulos; and project managers, Hannah Al-Katib, Elizabeth Edouard, Jennifer Price and Anusha Mathew. Coffey recruited international consultants to serve in the evaluation team in various capacities. Raisa Venalainen was the original the team leader, while David Dean, Moira Wilkinson, Geraldine Terry and Christine Wallace had substantive roles as case study leads, data analysts and report writers. Bakary Diawara (Cote d'Ivoire), Christiana Okojie (Nigeria), Maimuna Ibrahimo (Mozambique), Amima Sayeed (Pakistan) and Amna Bedri (Sudan) served as national education experts. On behalf of the Evaluation Office, I would like to thank everyone at Coffey, as well as the national counterparts, for their part in the evaluation.

I would also like to extend our gratitude to UNICEF colleagues in the education section at headquarters for their inputs, particularly Gemma Wilson-Clark, who coordinated the consolidation of technical inputs from the section. The important role played by the respective regional education advisers and UNICEF country office education chiefs in Cote d'Ivoire, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan and Sudan cannot go without acknowledgement. Additionally, the support and cooperation received from government partners from the respective countries is highly appreciated.

My colleagues in the Evaluation Office also deserve recognition for their work in seeing the evaluation through. Kathleen Letshabo conceptualized the evaluation approach, managed the evaluation and brought her own expertise in education to bear by providing extensive inputs to finalize the evaluation report. As always, Dalma Rivero, Celeste Lebowitz and Geeta Dey provided strong administrative support throughout the evaluation.

I commend the efforts of everyone involved, and believe that colleagues throughout UNICEF and its vast network of partners, as well as other committed stakeholders' will find the findings, insights and recommendations herein useful and timely.

George Laryea-Adjei  
Director  
Evaluation Office  
UNICEF

# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>BEGE</b>	Basic Education and Gender Equality	<b>EMIS</b>	Education Management Information System
<b>BHC</b>	British High Commission	<b>ESA</b>	Eastern and Southern Africa
<b>C4D</b>	Community for Development	<b>ESARO</b>	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
<b>CCS</b>	Country Case Studies	<b>ESSPIN</b>	Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women	<b>FToC</b>	Foundational Theory of Change
<b>CEE-CIS</b>	Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States	<b>GAP</b>	Gender Action Plan
<b>CFS</b>	Child-Friendly School	<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>CO</b>	Country Office	<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>COAR</b>	Country Office Annual Reports	<b>GEP</b>	Girls' Education Project
<b>CPAP</b>	Country Programme Action Plan	<b>GER</b>	Gross Enrolment Rate
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child	<b>GPE</b>	Global Partnership for Education
<b>CSC</b>	Case Study Country	<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization	<b>HQ</b>	Headquarters
<b>CSR</b>	Case Report Study	<b>HRBA</b>	Human Rights-Based Approach
<b>CSZ</b>	Central and Southern Zone	<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development of the United Kingdom	<b>IFFEd</b>	International Finance Facility for Education
<b>EAP</b>	East Asia and Pacific	<b>IR</b>	Intermediate Results
<b>EAPRO</b>	East Asia and Pacific Regional Office	<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>ECD</b>	Early Childcare and Development	<b>KRA</b>	Key Result Area
<b>ECOSOC</b>	Economic and Social Council	<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator
<b>EFA</b>	Education For All	<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>EiE</b>	Education in Emergencies	<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
		<b>MENA</b>	Middle East and North Africa

<b>MHM</b>	Menstrual Health Management	<b>TLC</b>	Temporary Learning Centre
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education	<b>ToC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>MoRES</b>	Monitoring of Results for Equity System	<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>MTSP</b>	Medium-Term Strategic Plan	<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>MSG</b>	Mother Support Groups	<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>NESP</b>	National Education Sector Plan	<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization	<b>UNEG</b>	United Nations Evaluation Group
<b>ODA</b>	Overseas Development Assistance	<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>OECD-DAC</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee	<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>OOSC</b>	Out-of-School Children	<b>UNGEI</b>	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
<b>PCR</b>	Programme Component Results	<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>RO</b>	Regional Office	<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>ROSA</b>	Regional Office for South Asia	<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>S4YE</b>	Solutions for Youth Employment	<b>WCAR</b>	West and Central Africa Region
<b>SA</b>	South Asia	<b>WCARO</b>	West and Central Africa Regional Office
<b>SEE</b>	Simulations for Equity in Education	<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>SitAn</b>	Situation Analysis		
<b>SMC</b>	School Management Committee		
<b>SMQs</b>	Strategic Monitoring Questions		
<b>SP</b>	Strategic Plan		
<b>SPAP</b>	Strategic Priority Action Plan		
<b>SRGBV</b>	School-Related Gender-Based Violence		
<b>SWAp</b>	Sector-Wide Approach		

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. At the beginning of the period covered by this evaluation, in 2009, UNICEF was working towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the international targets agreed by the United Nations (UN) to halve world poverty by 2015. Progress on girls' education was critical to the achievement of MDGs 2<sup>1</sup> and 3,<sup>2</sup> which specifically relate to universal primary education and gender parity. By the end of the evaluation period in 2015, and around the time that the final Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (2000-2015) was published, more girls than ever before were in school, stayed there longer, and learned more whilst they were there.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the last decade has seen the world approaching universal coverage of primary education for both boys and girls.
2. Despite this impressive progress, a range of important challenges remain that contribute to discrimination and gender disparities, especially at the secondary school level and among the most marginalized children, particularly girls. These challenges include households not being able to afford school fees or favouring boys' education in cases where the family has limited resources, inadequate sanitation facilities in schools, such as a lack of private and separate latrines for girls, and negative community and classroom environments, where girls may face discrimination, violence, exploitation or corporal punishment.
3. Progress in tackling these and other challenges relating to girls' education has been due to the efforts of national governments and the international community. This includes organizations such as UNICEF, which is the UN agency mandated to protect all children and advocate for their rights. UNICEF operates at global, regional and country levels. At the global and regional level, UNICEF education work during the evaluation period was largely upstream, focusing on "engagement with governments and partner organizations to set the education policy agenda and leverage the resources required to achieve the goals of the Education for All (EFA) initiative and the Millennium Development Goals relating to education (MDGs 2 and 3)."<sup>4</sup>
4. UNICEF country offices (COs) employ the widest range of the organization's seven implementation strategies (elaborated below). They work in partnership with national committees and governments, lending technical guidance to country counterparts as the latter design their own long-term pathways to development, while service delivery interventions aim to directly improve the lives of children and their families. All levels are ultimately

---

<sup>1</sup> Goal 2: *Achieve universal primary education*; Target 2.A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

<sup>2</sup> Goal 3: *Promote gender equality and empower women*; Target 3.A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015: Education for All 2000-2015, Achievements and Challenges*, UNESCO, Paris, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'UNICEF's Upstream Work in Basic Education and Gender Equality 2003-2012, Synthesis Report', UNICEF, New York, 2014, pp. 8-9.

accountable for delivering the targets in UNICEF's Strategic Plan, Gender Action Plan and the Education Strategy.

## II. EVALUATION APPROACH

5. The **rationale and purpose** of the evaluation was to:

- a. Assess the contribution of the UNICEF girls' education programme and interventions towards attaining gender parity in key education measures, and in achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2 and 3 and related Education for All (EFA) goals;
- b. Assess the efficacy of girls' education programme strategies, and the extent to which UNICEF work in girls' education has translated into the desired reforms in education sector policy, planning and budgeting practice; and
- c. Determine whether key lessons (documented lessons about what works in girls' education, presented through evaluation findings and other forms of evidence) were used to influence subsequent choices for girls' education and gender equality programming within UNICEF.

6. The **objectives** of the evaluation were to:

- a. Assess UNICEF work in girls' education against the organization's mandate and positioning, and determine if there is a shared understanding of objectives and strategies within UNICEF and between UNICEF and education sector planning processes at national and regional levels; and
- b. Determine the nature and relevance of UNICEF girls' education interventions, assess whether outcomes and pathways

to achieving results were articulated clearly, and analyse the extent to which interventions have yielded the intended results or improved learning outcomes for girls.

7. The **scope of the evaluation** concentrated on the UNICEF Basic Education and Gender Equality (BEGE) programmes, interventions and results. Activities in other Programme Division sections and/or programme components have been assessed only in instances where they were planned to intersect with the BEGE activities and/or results.

8. The **evaluation period**, 2009-2015, covered both the latter part of the Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2006-2013 and the first two years of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017. This provided an opportunity to determine whether lessons learned during the implementation of the MTSP informed interventions carried out in the following strategic plan period.

9. A **Foundational Theory of Change** (ToC) for girls' education was developed by the UNICEF Evaluation Office (Appendix C). This provided an analytical framework for synthesizing various types of data analyses into one coherent narrative around UNICEF contributions to girls' education at the global, regional and national levels. Developed retrospectively for the purposes of this evaluation, the intention was to identify and describe the core dimensions and processes of the UNICEF approach to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women through high quality education opportunities over the course of their lives. The Theory of Change does not reflect a comprehensive overview of the organization's portfolio for girls'

education, but rather a generalized diagram that reflects the logic (either explicit or implicit) behind this programming.

10. The Foundational Theory of Change embeds **five evaluation themes**:
  - i. Positioning and shared understanding;
  - ii. Gender mainstreaming;
  - iii. Girls' education interventions;
  - iv. Partnerships; and
  - v. Capacity development.
11. These themes were organized by the OECD-DAC<sup>5</sup> evaluation criteria of *coherence, relevance, effectiveness* and *sustainability*. Together these were used to organize the **Evaluation Questions** (Table 2.1) and the Evaluation Framework (Appendix D) that were developed and agreed with UNICEF during the inception phase.
12. Thirty-five countries, covering all regions, were selected as the subject of a desk-based review. From this initial sample, five countries were selected for case studies, with the aim of illuminating the findings of the desk review by exploring processes, patterns and relationships in more depth than the desk review could achieve. Taken together, the five case studies cover both development programming and humanitarian programming.

### III. THEMATIC FINDINGS

13. **Positioning and shared understanding:** There is strong evidence from the desk review that UNICEF girls' education programming at a country level was

aligned with the broad aims of the agency's global priorities. Evidence was weaker regarding alignment with national priorities, with little documentary evidence of either widespread analysis or profiling of disadvantaged girls in the countries involved. There was also strong evidence that education teams in COs shared an understanding of child rights and equity, and some evidence that they understood and used many of the strategies<sup>6</sup> set out in the strategic plan (SP), MTSP and Gender Action Plan (GAP), including targeted approaches to girls' education. However, they did not understand or implement the core UNICEF approach of gender mainstreaming to a sufficient extent. Partner understanding of UNICEF guiding principles, notably gender equality, was at times not coherent with that of UNICEF, and in some contexts, partner commitment to these principles was either lacking or diverged. This was particularly true among national government partners. Given that UNICEF works extensively with and through government partners, it is reasonable to suppose that this lack of coherence limited the organization's ability to effectively mainstream gender in education programming throughout the evaluation period (see point below).

14. **Gender mainstreaming:** Gender mainstreaming is "*the process used to ensure that women's and men's concerns, and experiences are integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all legislation, policies and programmes. This leads to equal benefits for women and men and ends the perpetuation of existing*

---

<sup>5</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee.

<sup>6</sup> Strategies such as the seven implementation strategies set out in the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: (1) capacity development; (2) evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy; (3) partnerships; (4) South-South and triangular cooperation; (5) identification and promotion of innovation; (6) support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages; and (7) service delivery.

*inequality*”<sup>7</sup> There is strong evidence that gender mainstreaming efforts were inconsistent and the results unclear. There were various constraints on gender mainstreaming at national levels, including low awareness, within UNICEF and among partners, that gender mainstreaming was a mandated strategy, and a lack of technical capacity within COs. Where training and expertise were introduced, the lack of clear measurable targets regarding mainstreaming has not incentivized follow-through, although there are positive signs that this situation has changed since 2015 – for example, the Gender Action Plan, 2018–2021 (GAP), which requires UNICEF work to be grounded in ‘routine’ and ‘systematic’ gender analysis; the use of a Gender Programmatic Review Tool; and the tracking of progress through key performance indicators (KPIs) on gender embedded in the strategic plan, among other measures.

15. Girls’ education interventions: Although situation analyses are produced by all COs, evidence suggests that few COs produce dedicated gender analyses or analyses with a specific focus on girls’ education. While some education programmes were underpinned by implicit but incomplete theories of change, others were not. Implicit theories of change partly reflected the Foundational Theory of Change developed for this evaluation, which acknowledges that COs should select strategies, inputs and interventions relevant to their contexts. However, the case study evidence shows that the implicit theories of change were developed iteratively in response to various factors, including: crises (in Pakistan and Cote d’Ivoire); an opportunity to take advantage of available programme funding (in Nigeria); political constraints (in Sudan); and because of

a lack of coherence, between programme interventions and the education context and girls’ needs (in Mozambique). There is strong evidence that UNICEF girls’ education interventions were responsive to some aspects of national contexts such as emergencies, but that they did not always consider actual capacities and resources at national and local levels, and in some cases did not respond to emergent girls’ education issues.

16. Results statements for girls’ education were often absent or ill-defined, and there is insufficient evidence from either the desk review or the case studies to determine the extent to which anticipated results were achieved. The lack of adequate results statements and sufficient evidence meant that the evaluation was unable to assess UNICEF’s contribution to attaining gender parity in key education measures, including the MDGs 2 and 3. With regard to targeted girls’ education programming, there is no evidence that gender mainstreaming was used as part of an integral approach. There is also some evidence from the desk review of unintended consequences, both positive and negative. However, it is not clear that gender mainstreaming was part of an integral approach to these targeted programmes and initiatives. While Sudan and Cote d’Ivoire COs took steps to mitigate adverse unintended consequences, there was no evidence of these risks having been considered systematically prior to implementation. There is strong anecdotal evidence that: 1) advocating for policy changes and implementation; and 2) building and maintaining school infrastructure were seen as the most successful types of intervention in terms of achieving education outcomes for girls and gender

---

<sup>7</sup> UNGEI (2012), “Gender Analysis in Education: A Conceptual Overview. Working Paper No.05” pp. 3.

equality in education. There is also significant evidence that enrolment drives and Education Management Information System (EMIS) capacity development were seen as having been successful, but that these tended to be too modest in scale to make a lasting difference to girls.

17. The evaluation team's analysis suggests that UNICEF programming in gender and girls' education was not, on the whole, designed to be scalable or sustainable. Institutional factors outside of direct UNICEF control should have been systematically and explicitly considered throughout the design and delivery of programmes to ensure programme strategies could plan for or mitigate these as far as possible.
18. **Partnerships:** UNICEF seeks to work in partnership at all levels. However, the review found little evidence of UNICEF adopting the type of strategic approach set out in its own guiding principles. Instead, UNICEF adopted an opportunistic and pragmatic approach, which sometimes led to an incoherent approach to girls' education at the country level. While working through partnerships was beneficial to both UNICEF and its partners, in some countries these same partnerships exposed UNICEF to risks that were not mitigated or managed effectively. In addition, it is unclear if these partnerships were effective in terms of their contribution to improvements in girls' education outcomes and gender inequality in education. With regard to leveraging of resources, the absence of reported targets, as well as gaps in reporting on the actual amounts leveraged by UNICEF, meant that it was not possible to establish from the desk review how successful UNICEF and its partners were in leveraging resources for either targeted girls' education or gender mainstreaming. The case study reports do contain examples of some notable

successes in leveraging funding for basic education, most of which concern funding from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). However, there is limited evidence of resources being successfully leveraged for targeted girls' education initiatives, and even less evidence specifically relating to gender mainstreaming.

19. **Capacity development:** The case studies suggest that UNICEF education team members had some of the skills that were required for girls' education programming. However, most had little or no technical capacity in gender mainstreaming, nor did they use available tools that would have helped them to mainstream gender into their education programmes. Very few had participated in training specifically on girls' education or gender mainstreaming, and there is no formal knowledge management system to sustain institutional capacity. With regard to external capacity development, evidence suggests that UNICEF in case study countries implemented many education-related capacity development activities of different types with stakeholders at all levels of government. Rather than targeting girls' education or gender equality specifically, most of these activities addressed all kinds of capacity issues in the education sector. The effects of this capacity development on girls' education programming are mixed. There is significant evidence, notably from Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire, of some positive effects with regard to greater capacity to design and implement girls' education programmes. However, there is also strong evidence from Pakistan, Mozambique and Sudan that these activities were not effective or sustainable because they were not delivered in a systemic way and were focused on individual officials.



## IV. CONCLUSIONS

20. **Positioning and shared understanding:** The relevance and coherence of girls' education programming was dependent on UNICEF's positioning on child rights and equity, and the extent to which staff, consultants and partners shared an understanding of the guiding principles, strategies and programme choices. There was evidence of alignment with international priorities, particularly where there were strong partnerships between UNICEF, GPE, the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), and national governments. Alignment with national priorities was not as evident. Within UNICEF, the promotion of gender equality is identified as a foundational strategy. At CO level, however, while education teams shared an understanding of child rights and equity, gender equality was seen instead as a programmatic option, not always understood and inconsistently implemented. COs lacked a shared understanding of the principles of gender mainstreaming and other UNICEF global policies that would allow them to translate these principles into programming.
21. **Gender mainstreaming:** Gender mainstreaming, along with targeted interventions for girls' education, are the twin strategies of the GAP. However, COs did not systematically employ gender mainstreaming as a strategy. Education teams in COs tended to rely too much on smaller targeted approaches (such as single-sex latrines or gender sensitive textbooks), rather than using it as one element of a dual approach alongside gender mainstreaming. Although these interventions point to the existence of gender-sensitive programming, the evaluation found little documented evidence of the systematic analysis and programming that would constitute a gender mainstreaming approach. The coherence and relevance of UNICEF girls' education programming were weaker because of this. Gender mainstreaming is a difficult process which requires a good quality gender analysis, which was not always available to CO education teams. It also requires a thorough understanding of what gender mainstreaming means (see above) and the ability to translate this into country programming. Furthermore, because it is difficult, it needs to be incentivized within reporting and performance structures. This was introduced after the Mid-Term Review of the Medium-Term Strategic Plan in 2012. However, additional guidance provided at that time would only have translated into programming in countries that were designing a new country plan in 2014, and evidence of their effects would not emerge until years later. The introduction of the GAP 2014-2017 towards the end of the evaluation period also shows institutional changes that UNICEF made to improve its approach to gender equality and education.
22. **Girls' education interventions:** UNICEF girls' education and gender equality programming seems to have been a small part of an overall education programme. Targeted interventions appeared in many of the programmes but were often at too small a scale to make a real and lasting difference to girls' education, and it was not always clear to what extent the UNICEF interventions were purposefully complementary to the interventions of other actors, except perhaps in relation to other UN agencies. Education programmes were responsive to changes in context such as emergencies, and the UNICEF humanitarian response around education service provision is a strength, but one which inadvertently addressed gender inequalities rather than having been planned to do so.

23. The case study countries did not have explicit theories of change supported by analysis exploring the situation of girls with respect to education and gender empowerment. Although UNICEF evidently works closely with partner governments and has done much to build the capacity of partners, the Foundational Theory of Change and those implicit in CO plans do not pay sufficient attention to the wider country context. Many of the programme interventions in case study countries made assumptions about governments' abilities to adapt and increase budgets as a result of advocacy campaigns, or take to scale models, standards and systems that had been introduced. More institutional analysis would have provided a better indication of which activities were most likely to influence practice and be sustained. Similarly, assumptions were made regarding the capabilities of communities and parents to react to enrolment and sensitization campaigns that were not sufficiently researched or evident. At the same time, UNICEF appears to have supported effective service delivery at the field level (some of which was targeted at girls), which informed its knowledge of the situation of girls and successfully fed into advocacy campaigns at country and global levels.
24. **Partnerships:** UNICEF strategically aligns with other organizations to achieve shared goals, create synergies, deliver added value and provide direct support for implementation. The span of UNICEF partnerships, from global to local levels, is perceived as a key strength by its partners. Working through partnerships was beneficial to both UNICEF and its partners, and these partnerships are critical to delivering effective programmes and sustainable outcomes. At the same time, the evidence from this evaluation shows an inconsistent approach to partnerships that contributed to an incoherent approach to girls' education. At times, some of these partnerships did not align with UNICEF guiding principles as set out in the Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships. Some partners were not always committed to UNICEF core values around girls' education. There were examples of a lack of commitment to and ownership of the need for gender equality in education. More generally, it was not clear how effectively these partnerships contributed to improving girls' education. The documents provided for review lacked information about UNICEF partnership strategies, specifically for improving girls' education outcomes and improving gender inequality. As with all implementation strategies, partnerships should be underpinned by a clear rationale, strategy and set of objectives for achieving the goal of gender equality in education.
25. The ability to leverage extra resources is an important aspect of partnerships, especially as UNICEF financial resources are relatively modest. Yet COs' efforts to leverage additional resources were not systematically reported; for instance, there was inadequate reporting on either targets or the actual amounts leveraged. While there were some successes in leveraging resources to support the education sector in general, the limited evidence available suggests that only a small proportion of leveraged funds targeted girls' education initiatives specifically. Case studies showed that gender mainstreaming was even less likely to receive leveraged funding, underlining its marginalization in the context of UNICEF education programming.
26. **Capacity development:** During the evaluation period, there was little evidence that the necessary capacities in gender mainstreaming for upstream work in girls'

education existed within UNICEF COs. This hampered their ability to strengthen the capacity of government partners to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate girls' education programmes and interventions. Capacity-development (through sporadic cascade training or on-the-job assistance, particularly around gender mainstreaming) did occur, some of which was seen as successful, particularly in developing an EMIS system. But it was not always seen as a strategic element of the programme and often did not go far enough (i.e. to include analysis of the data generated), and much of it seems to have dissipated due to the lack of a formal knowledge management system to mitigate disruptions resulting from frequent movement of international staff.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

27. **Recommendation 1:** Education teams at headquarters (HQ), regional office (RO) and CO levels should agree upon expectations, targets and approaches to achieving improvements in girls' education and gender equality in education. The UNICEF position should be informed by global data, evidence and policymaking in gender and education. Education teams in HQ, ROs and COs should understand and actively support the UNICEF corporate strategy for gender mainstreaming – especially the dual-track approach set out in the GAP focusing on adolescent girls and the completion of secondary education.
28. **Recommendation 2:** UNICEF HQ and ROs should build on the current support (such as Regional Gender Advisers) to further support COs and their Education Teams to translate the principles of gender equality and girls' education set out in the GAP and other relevant policies into practical programmatic actions and strategic partnerships that improve gender equality in education.
29. **Recommendation 3:** Partnerships should remain an integral part of the approach to improving girls' education and gender equality. UNICEF COs should leverage the support of HQ and RO to draw on effective global and regional partnerships to build appropriate alliances at the country level.
30. **Recommendation 4:** UNICEF education teams would benefit from the introduction of a capacity development mechanism through training and mentoring on gender equality in education. This would better enable all staff to understand and implement UNICEF guiding principles and policies for gender equality and education. An education-focused induction system would also allow new staff to understand the country, gender, and education contexts on arrival in post.
31. **Recommendation 5:** To improve accountability and learning across COs, there is a need to articulate clear, specific and measurable results (outcomes, outputs and targets) for gender equality and girls' education within the country programme document (CPD) and ensure that associated accountability mechanisms for reporting purposes are clearly specified.

# 1

## INTRODUCTION



In 2016, the UNICEF Evaluation Office commissioned a global evaluation of the girls' education portfolio from 2009-2015, comprising programmes, interventions, activities and/or strategies that UNICEF has implemented or supported to improve education outcomes for girls and promote gender equality during this period. Coffey International Development (Coffey) was contracted to carry out the evaluation.

This report contains the conclusions, and recommendations of that evaluation. The report also aims to:

- Summarize the purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation;
- Describe its various stages and the methods used;
- Draw attention to changes that were made after the inception report was finalized; and
- Set out a synthesis of the evaluation findings.

## 1.1 EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

### 1.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation was to:

- Assess the contribution of the UNICEF girls' education programme and interventions towards attaining gender parity in key education measures, and in achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2 and 3 and related Education For All (EFA) goals;
- Assess the efficacy of girls' education programme strategies, and the extent to which UNICEF work in girls' education has translated into the desired reforms in education sector policy, planning and budgeting practice; and

- Determine whether key lessons (documented lessons about what works in girls' education, presented through evaluation findings and other forms of evidence) were used to influence subsequent choices for girls' education and gender equality programming within UNICEF.

### 1.1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Assess UNICEF work in girls' education against the organization's mandate and positioning, and determine if there is a shared understanding of objectives and strategies within UNICEF, between education teams and staff at CO, regional and HQ levels, and between UNICEF and education sector planning processes at the national and regional levels; and
- Determine the nature and relevance of UNICEF girls' education interventions, assess whether outcomes and pathways to achieving results were articulated clearly, and analyse the extent to which interventions have yielded the intended results or improved learning outcomes for girls.

### 1.1.3 Scope

The evaluation concentrated on BEGE programmes, interventions and results. Other activities and/or programme components have been assessed only in instances where they were planned to intersect with the BEGE

activities and/or results. Appendix B contains a chronology of the important agreements, events, policies and plans that form the backdrop to the BEGE programme during the evaluation period.

The evaluation period, 2009-2015, covered both the latter part of the Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP), 2006-2013 and the first two years of the UNICEF Strategic Plan (SP), 2014-2017.<sup>8</sup> This provided an opportunity to determine whether lessons learned during the implementation of the MTSP informed interventions carried out in the strategic plan period.

Thirty-five countries, covering all regions, were selected as the subject of a desk-based review. From this initial sample, five countries were selected for case studies, with the aim of illuminating the findings of the desk review by exploring processes, patterns and relationships in more depth than the desk review could achieve. Taken together, the five case studies cover both development and humanitarian programming.

## 1.2 CONTEXT

At the beginning of the period covered by this evaluation, in 2009, UNICEF was working towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the international targets agreed by the United Nations (UN) to halve world poverty by 2015. Progress on girls' education was critical to the achievement of MDGs 2<sup>9</sup> and 3,<sup>10</sup> which specifically relate to universal primary education and gender equality. By the end of the evaluation period in 2015, and around the

time that the final Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (2000-2015) was published, more girls than ever before were in school, stayed there longer, and learned more whilst they were there.<sup>11</sup>

2015 marked the end of the MDG period, and the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 4 of the SDGs seeks to "ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning". This goal recognizes that major progress has been made towards increasing access to education at all levels and increasing enrolment rates in schools, particularly for women and girls, but that a greater focus is needed on the quality of education to enable the achievement of effective learning outcomes.

Goal 5 of the SDGs aims to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". This entails tackling discrimination against women and girls, including issues of: sexual and gender-based violence; child marriage; female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C); effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making; and access to health services, in particular reproductive health services.

### 1.2.1 State of girls' education

→ More girls are enrolled in primary schools, and the gender gap in primary education has narrowed. However, not all girls enrolled are completing the primary education cycle.

<sup>8</sup> Unless otherwise stated, references to the SP throughout the document will refer specifically to the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017.

<sup>9</sup> Goal 2: *Achieve universal primary education*; Target 2.A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

<sup>10</sup> Goal 3: *Promote gender equality and empower women*; Target 3.A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

<sup>11</sup> EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015.

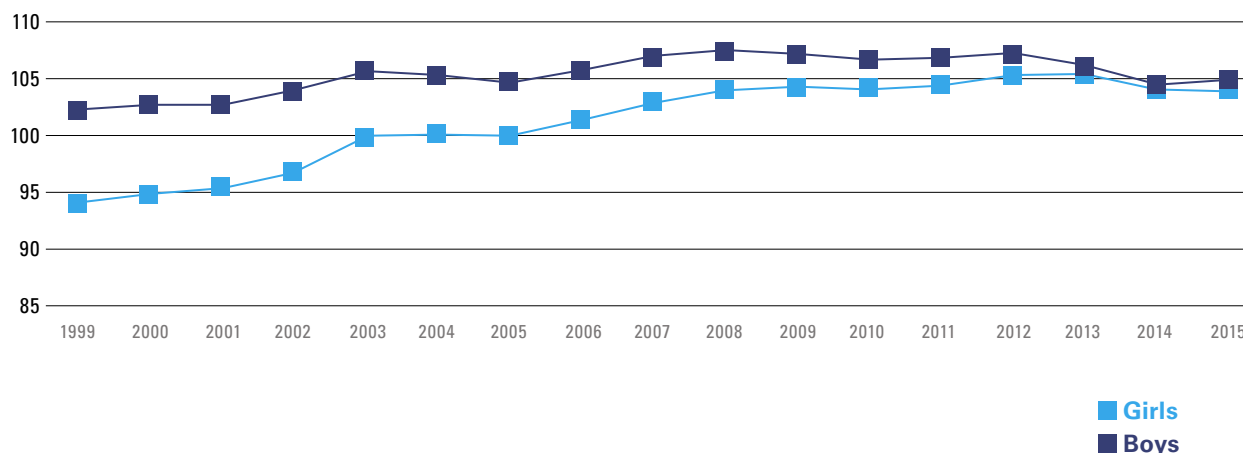
The last decade has seen the world approaching universal primary coverage, with a majority of children, both boys and girls, entering primary education in most countries around the world. Figure 1.1 shows that the gross enrolment ratio (GER) for girls has increased from 93 per cent in 1999 to 104 per cent in 2015. There are still many girls and boys who are above primary school age enrolled in primary education, but this percentage is falling as more and more children enter school at the correct age.

While data are not available for all countries covered by this study,<sup>12</sup> the available data show that, in those countries that are covered, the gap in enrolment between boys and girls in the

last year of primary has substantially narrowed, from 8.13 per cent in 1999 to 0.8 per cent in 2015. However, although more girls and boys are staying in school longer, not all are completing the full primary cycle. In desk review countries, 24 per cent of girls and 23 per cent of boys did not complete primary school in 2015.

This trend is also evident at the global level. The World Bank reported that in 2015, only 41 per cent of girls and 51 per cent of boys in the least developed countries completed their primary education, which suggests there has been less progress in achieving universal primary completion compared to enrolment as indicated in Figure 1.2.<sup>13</sup>

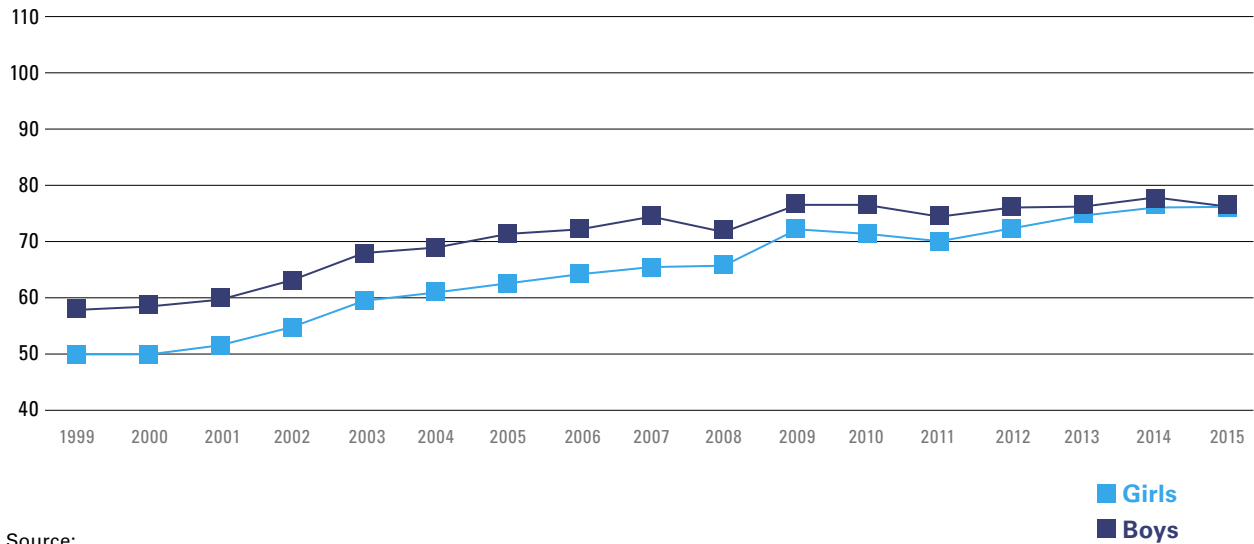
**FIGURE 1.1** Gross Enrolment Ratio – Primary Education, (%) UIS data



<sup>12</sup> Among the 35 countries included in the study, there are some large data gaps. The World Bank did not report any primary completion data on Afghanistan for the 1999 – 2015 period. There were also important gaps (with data for eight years or less) for Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, Sudan, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tajikistan and Timor Leste.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Institute for Statistics (UNESCO UIS), <<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.CMPT.ZS>>, accessed June 2018.

**FIGURE 1.2** Global primary completion rates, 1999-2015

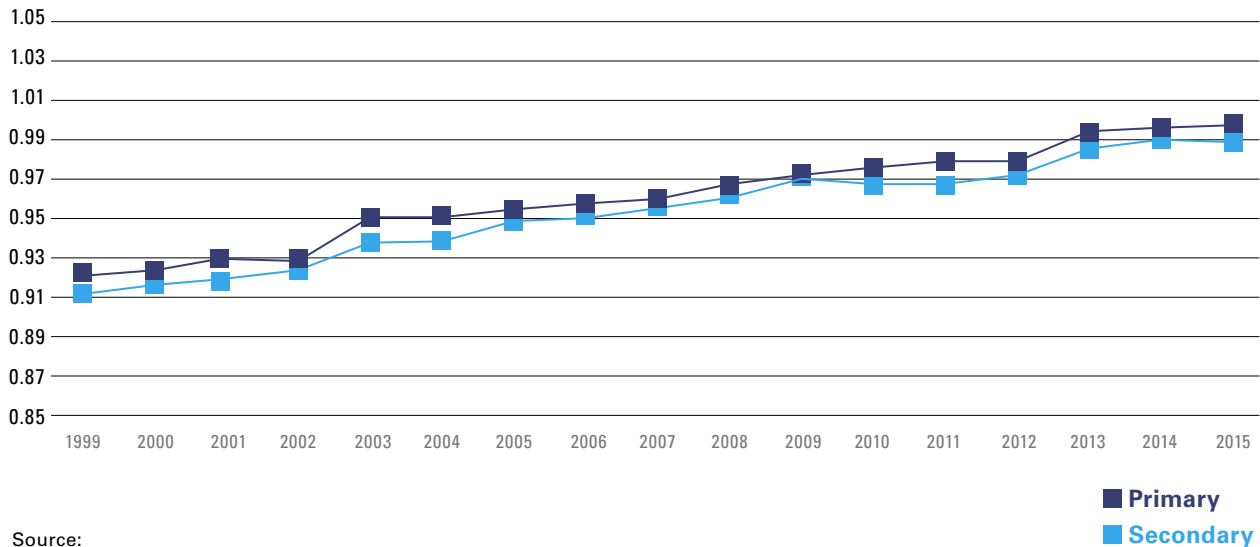


Source:

Achieving near-universal enrolment in primary education has also improved gender equality. Figure 1.3 shows that from 1999 to 2015, the gender parity index (GPI) for gross primary enrolment increased from 0.92 to 0.99. At lower secondary level, the GPI rose from 0.91 to 0.98

over the same period. Although this still shows gender inequality – with fewer girls in school compared to boys – it does indicate a narrowing of the gender gap in both primary and secondary education.

**FIGURE 1.3** Global gender parity index (GPI), 2009-2015



Source:



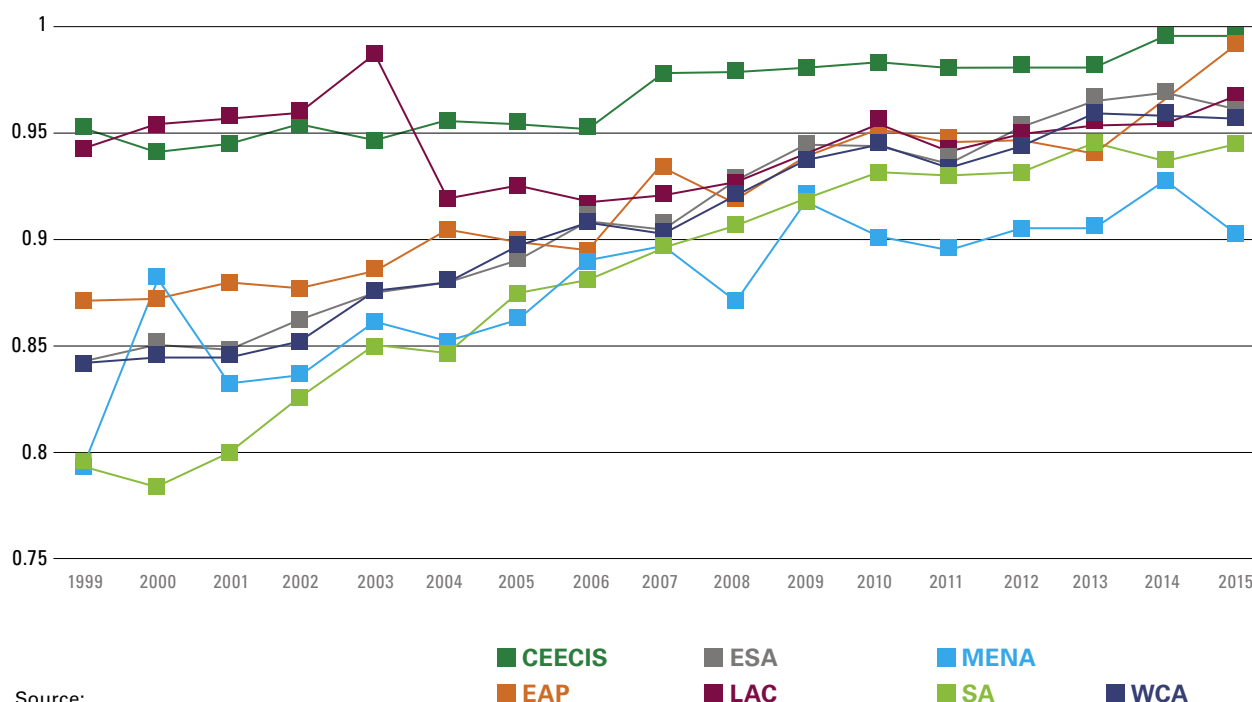
Figure 1.4 shows that across the 35 countries covered in this evaluation, there have been regional differences with regards to reductions in the gender gap in primary education since 1999. Desk review countries in four of the six regions (South Asia, West and Central Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, and Middle East and North Africa) made significant progress, with an average increase in GPI of 12 percentage points or more between 1999 and 2015. Countries in the Middle East and North Africa region that were covered by this evaluation, however, still show the greatest gender gaps in primary education.

→ More girls and boys are transitioning from primary education and enrolling in lower secondary education. Gender equality in primary education appears to be higher than in secondary education.

Globally, more girls have been enrolling in lower secondary education since 1999. The gross enrolment ratio for lower secondary education in 1999 was 67.9 per cent for girls compared to 74.2 per cent for boys. This increased to 84.2 per cent for girls and 85.7 per cent for boys by 2013.

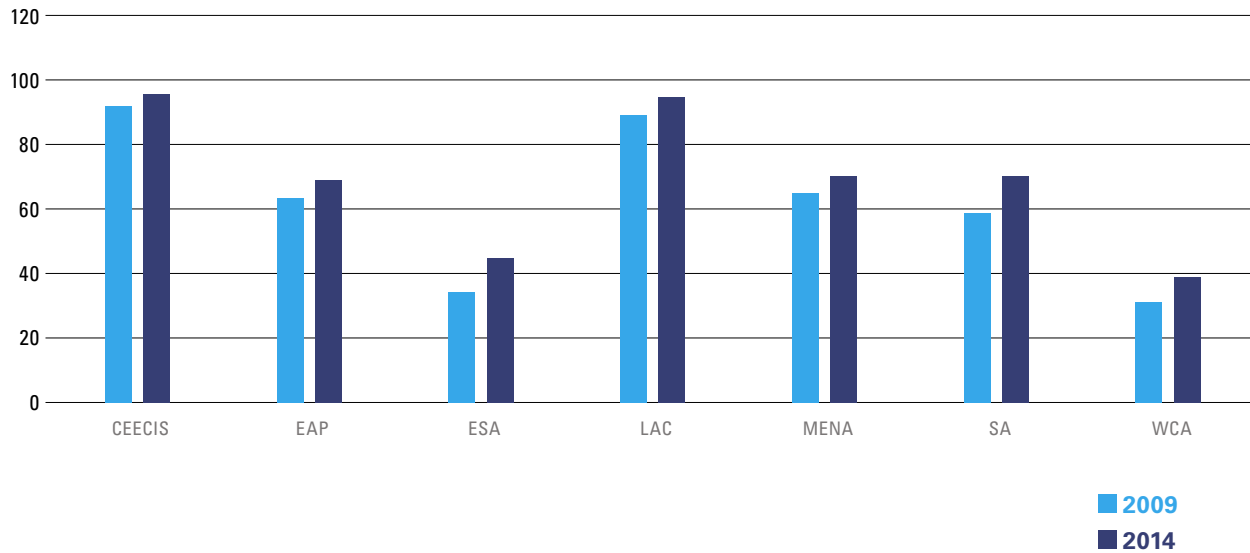
The regional trends in lower secondary education shown in Figure 1.4 indicate that although the trend was generally positive, significantly fewer girls were enrolling in secondary schools in 2014 than in 2009 in East Asia and the Pacific (a 22 per cent reduction), and slightly fewer (a 2 per cent reduction) in Eastern and Southern Africa. However, in South Asia there was an increase in the gross enrolment ratio by 9 per cent (from 42.13 per cent in 2009 to 51.76 per cent in 2014).

**FIGURE 1.4** Gender parity index (GPI) in 2009-2015, by region



Source:

**FIGURE 1.5** Gross enrolment ratio (GER) for girls at the secondary level, 2009-2015



For the 35 countries covered by this evaluation, GPI at secondary level increased from 0.75 in 1999 to 0.95 in 2015. More girls are transitioning from primary education to lower secondary education, although the difference in transition rates between boys and girls is very small. For example, the transition rate from primary to lower secondary education for girls in 1999 was 73.9 per cent, and increased to 85.6 per cent in 2015. For boys, it was 85.6 per cent in 1999 and 86.4 per cent in 2015.<sup>14</sup> This shows that while the gap between boys and girls has narrowed, a lower share of girls make the transition from primary to lower secondary education compared to boys.

→ More girls who enrolled in lower secondary schools are staying and completing this level of education.

There is very little difference between boys' and girls' completion rates. In fact, slightly more girls are completing lower secondary education than boys globally, and gender parity achieved at this level is higher than at the primary level. However, in the 35 countries included in this evaluation, the average completion rate at the lower secondary school level remains higher for boys, though the gap has narrowed.<sup>15</sup> In terms of gender equality at the lower secondary level, greater progress was achieved in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA), with a GPI of 0.84 in 1999 and 0.96 in 2015. In the Middle East and North

<sup>14</sup> UNESCO UIS, <<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.PROG.MA.ZS?view=chart>>, <<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.PROG.FE.ZS?view=chart>>, accessed June 2018.

<sup>15</sup> According to UNESCO UIS data, the lower secondary completion rate for boys was 43.3 per cent in 1999, and 56.46 per cent in 2015. For girls, it was 37.5 per cent in 1999 and 55.4 per cent in 2015.

Africa (MENA) region, the GPI improved from 0.79 in 1999 to 0.9 in 2015, and in South Asia (SA) from 0.79 in 1999 to 0.94 in 2015.

→ Barriers to girls' education persist.

Although impressive progress has been made during the past few decades, a range of important challenges remain that contribute to discrimination and gender disparities, especially at the secondary school level and among the most marginalized children, particularly girls. These challenges relate to both supply-side constraints and negative social norms, including households not being able to afford school fees or favouring boys' education when faced with limited resources, inadequate sanitation facilities in schools, such as a lack of private and separate latrines for girls, and negative community and classroom environments, where girls may face discrimination, violence, exploitation or corporal punishment.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, schools often lack sufficient numbers of female teachers<sup>17</sup> and there are few role models who can demonstrate the benefits of girls continuing with their education.

Adolescent girls face further disruptions to their education, ranging from household obligations and child labour to child marriage and gender-based violence. Recent estimates show that one third of girls in the developing world are married before the age of 18, and one third of women in the developing world give birth before the age of 20. It is also estimated that

if all girls had access to secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, child marriage would fall by 64 per cent, from almost 2.9 million to just over 1 million.<sup>18</sup>

During the period covered by the evaluation, events such as the global financial crisis in 2008 constricted the financial capital of national governments and donors alike, and the poorest households in low-income and middle-income countries where UNICEF works were among those hardest hit.<sup>19</sup> This period also witnessed an increase in humanitarian emergencies. In 2013, more than half of children who were out of school lived in conflict-affected countries. In these contexts, school-aged girls are often most at risk of violence, and are sometimes explicitly targeted.

Despite the renewed focus on education in the SDGs, traditional Overseas Development Aid (ODA) for education in 2014 stood at about \$12 billion – 4 per cent less than in 2010.<sup>20</sup> ODA for basic education has stagnated, remaining at an average of 41 per cent of all aid to education from 2003/4 to 2014, and around 8 per cent of total ODA.<sup>21</sup> The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimates that more than double the current levels of spending would be required to achieve SDG education targets by 2030. During the evaluation period, education in humanitarian and conflict-affected settings received a relatively small proportion of the humanitarian

---

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Unterhalter, Elaine, et al., *Interventions to Enhance Girls' Education and Gender Equality: Education rigorous literature review*, United Kingdom Department for International Development, London, 2014.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 'The Impact of Women Teachers on Girls' Education – Advocacy Brief', UNESCO, Paris, 2006.

<sup>18</sup> 'The Impact of Women Teachers on Girls' Education'.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'Annual Report 2009', UNICEF, New York, 2009.

<sup>20</sup> United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, 'Aid to Education Falls for the Sixth Consecutive Year', Press release, UNESCO, Paris, 6 June 2017, <<https://en.unesco.org/news/aid-education-falls-sixth-consecutive-year>>, accessed June 2018.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, *Education for People and Planet: Creating sustainable futures for all*, Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report, UNESCO, Paris, 2016, <[https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/2016\\_Aid\\_Tables.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/2016_Aid_Tables.pdf) - page=3>, accessed June 2018.

budget (less than 2 per cent), which prevented those children who are most marginalized from accessing a quality education.<sup>22</sup>

### 1.2.2 UNICEF context and global positioning

The progress in girls' education outlined in the previous section has been due to the efforts of both national governments and the international community. This includes organizations such as UNICEF, which is the UN agency mandated to protect all children and advocate for their rights. Since its adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Convention on the Rights of the Child has guided the UNICEF mission for children. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the other essential reference point. UNICEF work in this field is also anchored in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), which requires all entities in the United Nations system to mainstream gender in their activities. UNICEF implementation strategies and programming priorities, as well as the organization's focus on equity, all arise from that mission. UNICEF champions a rights-based approach, and recognizes the instrumental role of gender equality in achieving the broader social and economic goals of the UN system.<sup>23</sup>

Currently, UNICEF serves 193 countries and territories. Although the organization's scope of work has expanded over the years, its major focus remains on fulfilling children's fundamental rights.

### 1.2.3 UNICEF structure: administration and management

The organizational structure of UNICEF follows from its mandate. With a high level of horizontal and vertical coordination, the organization is as dynamic as it is complex. While the Executive Board sets the direction and parameters for planning and action at global, regional and country levels, in practice the organization is highly decentralized. The efficiency and effectiveness of any given level, however, is interconnected with that of the others, and relationships are complementary and reciprocal.

**UNICEF operates at global, regional and country levels.** At the global level, UNICEF education work is largely upstream, focusing on "engagement with governments and partner organizations to set the education policy agenda and leverage the resources required to achieve the goals of the Education for All (EFA) initiative and the Millennium Development Goals relating to education (MDGs 2 and 3)."<sup>24</sup> Regional work is also predominantly upstream, playing a critical role in South-South exchange and general capacity-development.<sup>25</sup> Regional offices aggregate and analyse national-level data to identify trends, coordinate and activate regional networks, and also generate evidence to influence regional and global programming and policy. Country-level work employs the widest range of the organization's seven implementation strategies.<sup>26</sup> They work in partnership with national committees and governments, lending technical guidance to country counterparts as the latter design their own long-term pathways to development, while service

<sup>22</sup> United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, 'Humanitarian aid for education: why it matters and why more is needed', Education for All Global Monitoring Report, Policy Paper 21, UNESCO, Paris, 2015.

<sup>23</sup> See General Assembly Resolution 802 (VIII) of 6 October 1953.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 2014. UNICEF Upstream Work in Basic Education and Gender Equality', pp.8-9.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> The seven strategies to implement the UNICEF Strategic Plan are: i) capacity development; ii) evidence generation and evidence-based policy dialogue and advocacy; iii) partnerships; iv) South-South and triangular cooperation; v) Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages; and vi) Service delivery.

delivery interventions aim to directly improve the lives of children and their families. Country offices draw on evidence, resources and technical expertise from the global and regional levels to build internal capacity, influence national policy and design program interventions.<sup>27</sup> All levels are ultimately accountable to the targets in the Strategic Plan and the Gender Action Plan.

### 1.2.4 UNICEF partnerships

UNICEF strategically aligns with other organizations to maximize “shared goals and synergies so that its added value, commensurate with its mandate, is demonstrated, and coherent support is provided to partners and country governments.”<sup>28</sup> UNICEF comparative advantage derives from its strong country presence, unique position to generate and aggregate data, to pilot and innovate, and to amplify proof-of-concept in order to advocate for effective and efficient interventions with country partners.

Unlike agencies such as the World Bank or the African Development Bank, UNICEF has not traditionally spent large sums on school infrastructure. Instead, UNICEF has used its position and membership in key education forums, often as a lead organization, to influence the global education agenda. Even before UNICEF shifted its emphasis towards upstream work, partnerships have been a critical component of the organization’s vision and impact. Its success to date has been possible precisely because of its orientation towards collaboration with country

partners, as well as its long-term commitment to equity in general and specifically in the places it works. Major stakeholders and UNICEF partnerships are discussed below.

### National governments

UNICEF is a partner to national governments, providing technical, financial and human resources to strengthen the overall education systems as well as partner countries’ awareness of, and commitment to, eliminating disparities in educational access, retention and learning, with a special focus on gender equality. An important aspect of these partnerships involves national capacity development. In the last decade, UNICEF has made an organizational shift towards more upstream work to develop in-country capacity, with the aim of ensuring that national partners have the information and competencies required to build equitable systems integral to their long-term sustainability, including those relating to basic education and gender equality.<sup>29</sup> UNICEF closely aligns its planning activities to government planning cycles. More specifically, UNICEF Country Programme Documents (CPDs) are designed by working with, and must be approved by, national governments, while COs support the development of national education policy and planning. UNICEF is also committed to the principle of sector-wide budget support, and in many instances, UNICEF supports the development of national education plans and helps leverage funding for national plans and priorities.

---

<sup>27</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘About UNICEF’, UNICEF, New York, <[http://www.unicef.org/about/who/index\\_faq.html](http://www.unicef.org/about/who/index_faq.html)>, accessed June 2018.

<sup>28</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017’, UNICEF, New York, pp. 25.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Upstream Work in Basic Education and Gender Equality’ defines upstream work as “UNICEF activities which were intended to have or had a system-wide, sustainable effect on the national capacities of public sector duty-bearers in the basic education sector for fulfilling children’s rights, directly or indirectly”. According to the same report, although upstream work has been present in UNICEF activities from the outset, there has been a shift towards upstream work since 2006. Upstream work was included as a key component of the MTSP 2006–2009, where a new cross-cutting theme of ‘policy advocacy and partnerships for children’s rights’ was introduced.

## **The Global Partnership for Education (GPE)**

The GPE arose directly out of the 2000-2015 Education for All (EFA) Agenda. Originally named the “EFA Fast-Track Initiative”, it encouraged low-income countries to develop national education plans and to commit greater political and financial resources. In exchange for these efforts, donor countries and multilateral partners committed to provide funding and expertise to help countries achieve their national education targets.<sup>30</sup> UNICEF is a member of the GPE Board and engages with GPE and partners globally on matters of policy, strategic analysis, goal monitoring/reporting, joint advocacy, and resource mobilization. At the country level, UNICEF is active within GPE Local Education Groups and is the implementing partner for GPE grants in 18 countries covered by the study.

## **The United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI)**

UNGEI received its mandate at the UN World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000. The goal of the initiative is to narrow the gender gap in primary and secondary education. UNICEF hosts the UNGEI Secretariat and also sits on its Global Advisory Committee. Like UNICEF, UNGEI has a presence at global, regional and national levels. It has strong relationships with national governments, and its regional focal points work closely with UNICEF Regional Education Advisors. The initiative’s comparative strength at regional, national and sub-national levels, however, is in its extensive reach with local non-governmental organizations and alternative or non-formal education providers that work alongside governments to improve girls’ access to education. UNGEI works closely with the GPE.

## **The Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI)**

The OOSCI was identified as a strategic programme initiative in 2012 and is a key partnership between UNICEF, UNESCO and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and is funded in part by the GPE. The initiative works in more than 50 countries with the overall goal of ensuring that all children have access to education, enter school at the right age, and complete a full cycle of education. It also guides relevant education sector reforms in participating countries. The initiative’s focus on equity was pioneering in its pursuit and use of data to understand the barriers to children’s, and especially girls’, access to formal schooling. OOSCI predates the Monitoring of Results for Equity (MoRES) system and was key in developing the determinants framework for that system. In 2012, OOSCI activities included 26 national studies and national capacity strengthening initiatives related to the collection and management of education statistics, policy analysis and strategy development.

## **The World Bank**

The World Bank has been a constant and key partner in achieving educational equity. Since 2005, UNICEF has worked closely with the World Bank in the School Fee Abolition Initiative. In 2009, they jointly published a toolkit, *Six Steps to Abolishing Primary School Fees: Operational Guide*, and a series of case studies, *Abolishing School Fees in Africa: Lessons from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Mozambique*. In 2011, the two organizations launched the Simulations for Equity in Education (SEE) project to assist “countries to identify cost-effective strategies for reaching children who are excluded from or underserved by education

---

<sup>30</sup> <http://webarchive.unesco.org/20161125221834/http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/funding/fast-track-initiative/>

systems.”<sup>31</sup> The partnership between UNICEF and the World Bank capitalizes on the respective strengths and positioning of each organization. Whereas UNICEF has an extensive country presence, the World Bank brings substantial financial resources and technical capacity. The World Bank, like UNICEF, is also on the UNGEI Global Advisory Committee. UNICEF is also working with the World Bank on its focus on adolescent girls and boys through the Solutions for Youth Employment (S4YE).

### **Other partners, including bilateral and multilateral donors, NGOs and INGOs**

The Education Strategy delivers its results under the MTSP, 2006-2013, SP, 2014-2017, GAP, 2014-2017 and UNICEF Education Strategy, 2006-2015 “*in partnership with other key partners, including non-governmental and civil society organizations.*”<sup>32</sup> With the shift to upstream work to influence whole education systems, where possible, in-country partnerships have flowed through national systems. The aim of UNICEF is to help build high quality public education systems so that all children may gain access to formal schooling. Where this is not possible, UNICEF works in the short and medium term with regional or local education service providers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), inter-governmental organizations (INGOs) or providers in the private sector, to coordinate the provision of alternative and non-formal education for those children most marginalized due to gender, poverty and geographic location.

### **Education Cannot Wait: a fund for Education in Emergencies**

The Fund was launched in 2015 and responds directly to the SDG commitment to ensure a quality education for all and leave nobody behind. This was the second global fund to prioritize education in humanitarian settings, following on from the UNICEF Education in Emergencies and Post-Crisis Transition Fund 2007–2009, and was designed to quickly initiate additional support for children in emergencies and protracted crisis situations.<sup>33</sup> UNICEF became the temporary host and administrator of the Education Cannot Wait Secretariat while the permanent hosting arrangements were established. UNICEF is currently developing a policy for gender analysis for all programmes supported through this fund.

The Education Commission was established in 2016 to reinvigorate the case for investing in education and to chart a pathway for increased investment to develop the potential of all of the world’s young people. It proposed an International Finance Facility for Education (IFFEd)<sup>34</sup> that could mobilize an additional \$10 billion annually for education by 2020. The model brings together public and private donors, alongside international financial institutions like the World Bank and the regional development banks, to create low-interest finance packages for lower-middle-income countries. Funding is tied to countries increasing their own level of investment in education and carrying out education sector reforms.

---

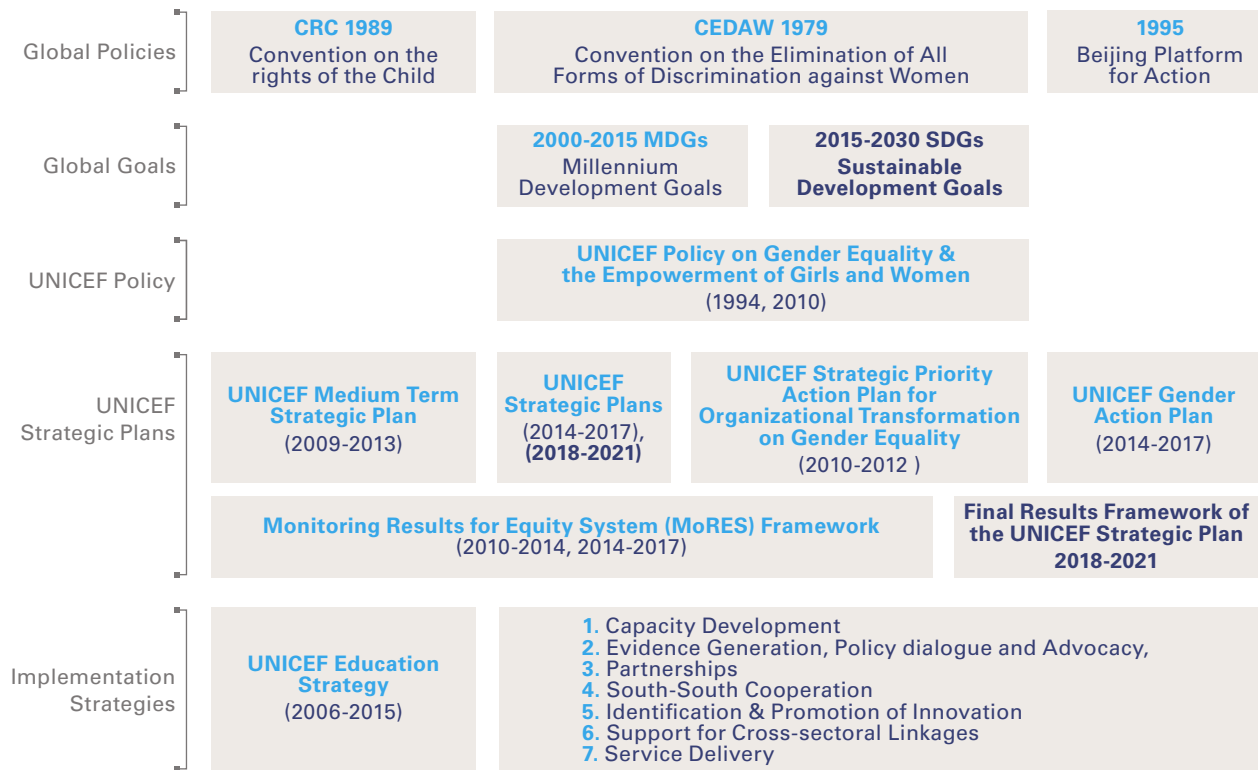
<sup>31</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/education/files/SEE\\_brochure\\_FINAL\\_web.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/education/files/SEE_brochure_FINAL_web.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, Education Strategy, 2006-2015, pp.3.

<sup>33</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Education in Emergencies and Post-Crisis Transition: Consolidated 2009 progress report to the Government of the Netherlands and the European Commission’, UNICEF, New York, 2009.

<sup>34</sup> International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity, ‘The Learning Generation: Investing in education for a changing world’, New York, 2016.

**FIGURE 1.6** Policy Context UNICEF Basic Education and Gender Equality 1999-2014



### 1.2.5 UNICEF corporate context that influenced BEGE programming for period under evaluation

The UNICEF Executive Board determines the organization’s operational course to fulfil its mission. Key corporate policies generated at the executive level provide strategic guidance to UNICEF programming in general. These documents are the SP and accompanying Results Framework and the GAP. The broad scope of the BEGE portfolio is delineated by these documents.

#### Basic Education and Gender Equality (BEGE) 1999–2014

Between 2009 and 2015, the following documents formed the basis for UNICEF’s BEGE policy and programming work:

1. Medium-Term Strategic Plan 2006-2009 (13) (MTSP 2006-2009);
2. Strategic Plan 2014-2017 (SP 2014-2017); and
3. Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2014-2017.

At regional and country levels, there are additional guidance and policies that reflect regional trends and are tailored to country-specific needs. Relevant examples of these documents include *“Promoting Gender Equality through UNICEF-Supported Programming in Basic Education”* and the *“Policy, Programming and Procedure Manuals.”*

The second **Medium-Term Strategic Plan**, spanning the period 2006-2013, re-committed UNICEF to the goal of increasing opportunities



for girls to access schooling and participate meaningfully. The focus areas were young child survival and development, basic education and gender equality, HIV/AIDS and children, child protection, policy advocacy, and partnerships. However, it also pursued a more ambitious goal of gender equality and women's empowerment, both under the Basic Education and Gender Equality (BEGE) "focus area," and as one of five supporting cross-cutting strategies of the MTSP.

Within BEGE, girls' education was the main vehicle for pursuing a broader goal of "eliminating gender disparity at all educational levels [by 2015], addressing other disparities in education, and promoting gender equality in society through education." The focus area of BEGE had a specific target of increasing transition rates for girls and boys from primary education to secondary education, with an emphasis on disadvantaged children and improvement of the gender parity index in primary and secondary. It also had a target for increasing the proportion of Grade 1 cohorts (especially girls) who reach the final grade of primary school.

A key component of the MTSP was the notable shift towards more upstream work. This was defined as "*UNICEF activities intended to have a system-wide, sustainable effect on the national capacities of public sector duty-bearers in the basic education sector for fulfilling children's rights, directly or indirectly.*"

**The Strategic Plan (SP) 2014-2017** aimed to support the rights of disadvantaged and excluded children to survive and to thrive, while simultaneously strengthening the foundation for expanded, sustainable and inclusive development for all children. This included strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers to

realize their obligations. There were seven key outcome areas in this SP: (1) health; (2) HIV and AIDS; (3) water, sanitation and hygiene; (4) nutrition; (5) education; (6) child protection; and (7) social inclusion, and it emphasized gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women as important results across all seven outcomes. This included a specific outcome indicator relating to girls' education, namely '*Improved and equitable access to and completion of quality, inclusive education with a focus on improving learning outcomes.*'

In addition to these over-arching frameworks, there were a number of specific **action plans addressing gender**. These included:

- **Gender Equality Policy and Strategic Priority Action Plan (SPAP 2010):** The formulation of the Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Girls and Women updated the 1994 policy of the same name and was followed by the development of the three-year Strategic Priority Action Plan (SPAP), which mandated that all UNICEF assisted programming, including in emergencies, contribute to gender equality in clearly defined and measurable ways. An end-of-cycle review, conducted in 2013, noted that UNICEF has made considerable progress on leadership commitment, inter-agency partnerships, and strengthening the planning and reporting processes. However, the review also identified that programming frameworks, monitoring and tracking of gender equitable results, adequate technical capacity and expertise on gender and commitment of resources are areas that require further improvement.

- **Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2014-2017:**<sup>35</sup> UNICEF further developed the Gender Action Plan (GAP), 2014-2017, which sat alongside the Strategic Plan in its directive power. Besides mainstreaming gender across all programs, the plan provided a framework for targeting gender-driven inequities. It specifically translates the UNICEF mandate for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women by elaborating *“the gender dimensions of the programmatic results across the seven outcome areas of the Strategic Plan along with the relevant indicators for measuring success.”*<sup>36</sup> The GAP is also accompanied by an outcome and indicator framework to which global, regional and country offices are held accountable.
- **Monitoring of Results for Equity System (MoRES):** The MoRES framework is ancillary to the SP 2014-2017 and shapes planning and programming in equal measure. The framework was designed to more accurately *“achieve the desired outcomes for the most disadvantaged children”* by enabling more effective program design, implementation and monitoring. MoRES emphasizes strengthening the capacity of government and partners to regularly monitor outcomes so that timely course correction can be made.<sup>37</sup>

At **regional and country levels**, there are additional guidance and policies that reflect regional trends and are tailored to country-specific needs. Relevant examples include *“Promoting*

*Gender Equality through UNICEF-Supported Programming in Basic Education”* and the *“Policy, Programming and Procedure Manuals.”*

In addition to these policy frameworks, there are different types of strategies within UNICEF discourse and practice. Among them, two are relevant here:

1. Implementation strategies; and
2. Sectoral strategies (specifically the Education Strategy).

The implementation strategies are high level, corporate strategies that facilitate the seven organizational outcome areas for the Strategic Plan, 2014–2017. The seven implementation strategies<sup>38</sup> include capacity development, evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy, partnerships, South-South cooperation, identification and promotion of innovation, support for cross-sectoral linkages, and service delivery. All seven are used, in varying combinations, at the global, regional and country levels in accordance with the respective spheres of influence at each level, and in proportion to the opportunities and attributes of any given context. Each strategy is classified as upstream or downstream relative to its potential to impact on children’s lives.<sup>39</sup>

The Education Strategy, 2006-2015 establishes priorities for undertaking education programming and policy work and adds detail to the BEGE-specific outcomes and indicators in the MTSP and in its successor, the SP. The document asserts that all work must be grounded in a human rights-based approach to programming and accompanied by strong advocacy.

<sup>35</sup> Unless otherwise stated, references to the GAP throughout the document will refer specifically to the Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017.

<sup>36</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017, pp.1.

<sup>37</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, Formative Evaluation of UNICEF’s Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES): From evidence to equity?, UNICEF, New York, 2014, pp. 26.

<sup>38</sup> Four of these are also referred to as “programme strategies” in the Programme, Policy and Procedure Manual.

<sup>39</sup> Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017, pp.1

It identifies both thematic priorities as well as priority countries and target populations, and describes funding and resource allocation.

The priority themes include: equal access and universal primary completion, empowerment through girls' education and gender mainstreaming, and emergencies and post-crisis education cluster interventions. The two cross-cutting areas included are early childhood development and school readiness and enhancing quality in primary and secondary education.

### 1.2.6 UNICEF strategic context post evaluation period

UNICEF is currently operating under a new Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 and Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021. The new strategic plan is accompanied by theories of changes for each of the goals.<sup>40</sup> While these developments fall outside of the years covered by this evaluation, they are relevant to the conclusions of the study.

#### Strategic Plan 2018-2021

SP 2018-2021 describes the results to be achieved by UNICEF and key partners, and reinforces the centrality of mainstreaming gender equality as a cross-cutting priority in ensuring that no child gets left behind. Goal Area 2 address the education function, and makes the following commitment:

*Girls and boys, in particular the most marginalized and those affected by humanitarian situations, are provided with inclusive and equitable quality education and learning opportunities.*

The Theory of Change statement<sup>41</sup> for Goal Area 2 reads:

*If countries have strengthened education systems for gender-equitable access to quality education from early childhood to adolescence, including children with disabilities and minorities; and if they have strengthened their education systems for gender-equitable learning outcomes, including early learning; and if they have institutionalized skills for learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship and employability: Then every child, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, can learn.*

#### Gender Action Plan 2018-2021

The Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2018-2021<sup>42</sup> sets out how UNICEF will promote gender equality across the organization's work, in alignment with the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021. It elaborates the gender dimensions of the programmatic results across the five goal areas of the Strategic Plan, as well as the steps to strengthen gender across change strategies and institutional systems and processes.

A key lesson learned from GAP 2014-2017<sup>43</sup> is the critical contribution that UNICEF's investment in senior-level gender expertise has made at the regional level. However, accessing adequate gender expertise at the country level remains a challenge, and a priority for GAP 2018-2021.

<sup>40</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'Theory of Change Paper, UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018–2021: Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged', UNICEF, New York, 2017.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, pp.34.

<sup>42</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021, Draft', UNICEF, New York, 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Draft Gender Action Plan; telephone interview with UNICEF Senior Education Advisor on 22 January 2018.

Improvements have been made on the results framework,<sup>44</sup> which incorporates the impact, outcome and output indicators necessary for monitoring progress. While impact- and outcome-level results reflect the combined efforts of Governments, United Nations entities, output-level results and indicators capture the full range of support that UNICEF provides in various country contexts (including in humanitarian situations),

This approach to output formulation is based on a lesson learned from implementation of the SP 2014-2017, where it was not always easy to track the various types of contributions that UNICEF made. Country offices will need to determine which target outcomes (i.e. access, learning outcomes, skills development under Goal Area 2) are most appropriate for their programme contexts and target groups and identify which core skills (at the output level) they need to support.

### 1.3 UNICEF GIRLS' EDUCATION PORTFOLIO

#### 1.3.1 Targeted program interventions

Across programming contexts, UNICEF has implemented its work in girls' education programming with the aim of attaining gender parity in key education measures and affecting reforms in education sector policy, planning and budgeting practices. In UNICEF countries, programmes focus on child protection and rights, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Gender Based Violence (GBV), out of school /marginalized children, Early Childhood Development (ECD), child protection and gender sensitive curricula. Below we present examples of targeted program interventions.

#### Advancing girls' secondary education

For almost a decade before the GAP was developed, there was abundant evidence that girls' secondary education can positively influence not only girls' lives, but also development outcomes, including reducing child and maternal mortality, alleviating poverty, contributing to equitable growth, and changing social norms.<sup>45</sup>

Despite this evidence, fewer than half of countries were expected to achieve the Education for All goal on gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2015. Within this period, no country in sub-Saharan Africa was projected to achieve parity at both levels.<sup>46</sup> Currently, the available data show that while most regions made gains, only Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE-CIS) achieved gender parity, and trends in the South Asia region reversed.

To remove key barriers and bottlenecks to gender equality in secondary education, UNICEF committed to building capacity and enhancing evidence-based advocacy, including strengthening education management and information systems (EMIS) in country and creating incentives and protection for females entering the teaching profession. These are prominent features of the UNICEF approach to creating policy and legislative environments that are conducive to expanding secondary education for adolescent girls. Similarly, to support the most vulnerable girls, UNICEF promotes transition to post-primary education, with particular attention to creating gender-responsive curricula and pedagogy and ensuring safe and supportive learning environments. Increasing demand focuses on reducing structural and cultural barriers to adolescent girls' participation in schools, such as early marriage.

---

<sup>44</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'Final results framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021', UNICEF, New York, 2017.

<sup>45</sup> GAP, pp. 10.

<sup>46</sup> United Nation Children's Fund, 'UNICEF Global Evaluation of Girls' Education, Inception report', UNICEF, New York, 2016.

## Ending child marriage

UNICEF has long partnered with organizations that work at the community level, such as Tostan<sup>47</sup> and CRECCOM<sup>48</sup> in Africa, to reduce the incidence of child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation or Cutting (FGM/C). Through the Office of Research, UNICEF has also supported research to understand and end harmful social norms and practices, including child marriage.<sup>49</sup> These efforts have contributed to change, although a significant proportion of girls continue to face the prospect of marrying as adolescents.

UNICEF has committed to engage with national and international human rights organizations to advocate for policies and standards to define the minimum age to marry and to place consent for the decision to marry with those people getting married. As with the other targeted priorities, social norms and structural barriers are key determinants of a family's disposition towards child marriage. These circumstances have implications for both supply and demand interventions. To increase supply, UNICEF aims to link its programmatic efforts to prevent child marriage with interventions that advance secondary education for girls, as well as formal and non-formal educational efforts that promote acquisition of life skills.<sup>50</sup> At the same time, UNICEF will also pursue those interventions proven to heighten demand, namely communication campaigns, community mobilization,

cash and other incentives<sup>51</sup> by applying and amplifying the evidence about the alternatives to and benefits of ending child marriage.

## Addressing gender-based violence in emergencies

Gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive violations of human rights,<sup>52</sup> spanning socio-economic groups and geographic regions. It is estimated that one in three women will experience physical or sexual abuse in her lifetime,<sup>53</sup> and this can happen anywhere – at home, in the community, and in schools. The UNICEF strategy to tackle gender-based violence includes building the capacity of first-responders in Level 2 and Level 3 emergencies<sup>54</sup> to attend to the psychosocial and physical needs of those targeted by violence, and mainstreaming gender dimensions into all its programmatic work across sectors.

The three targeted gender priorities identified in the GAP – namely ending child marriage, addressing gender-based violence in emergencies, and advancing girls' secondary education – are interconnected and rooted in many of the same underlying causes. As a result, progress made on any one of these priorities will contribute to gains in the others. Alongside the targeted gender priorities, the GAP also promotes taking advantage of opportunities to push toward more systemic change when possible through gender mainstreaming, which is discussed in the next section.

---

<sup>47</sup> African-based organization working directly with rural communities leading their own development.

<sup>48</sup> CRECCOM is a Malawian NGO.

<sup>49</sup> Mackie and LeJuene (2009), "Social Dynamics of Harmful Practices: A New Look at the Theory – Special Series on Social Norms and Harmful Practices", UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

<sup>50</sup> Gender Action Plan, 2014-17, p.11.

<sup>51</sup> Gender Action Plan, 2014-17, p.11.

<sup>52</sup> Gender Action Plan, 2014-17, p.13.

<sup>53</sup> United Nations Population Fund, 'Gender-based violence: Overview', UNFPA, New York, [www.unfpa.org/gender-based-violence](http://www.unfpa.org/gender-based-violence), accessed June 2018.

<sup>54</sup> UNICEF categorizes all emergencies as Level 1, 2 or 3, depending upon severity and level of organizational response required.

### 1.3.2 Gender mainstreaming approach

Gender mainstreaming is *“the process used to ensure that women’s and men’s concerns and experiences are integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all legislation, policies and programmes. This leads to equal benefits for women and men and ends the perpetuation of existing inequality.”*<sup>55</sup>

In essence, by addressing equity systematically and systemically over time, gender equality is achieved. Gender mainstreaming assumes that gender plays a defining role in individual lived experiences throughout the life-cycle, and as such, is an important category of data collection and analysis.

Targeted interventions rely on gender mainstreaming to identify, through data analysis, where gaps or bottlenecks exist. In contrast to targeted gender priorities and interventions, gender mainstreaming elevates the profile of gender within any framework by making it more visible. Some examples include:

- Using disaggregated data to highlight disparities within a country based on biological sex and disadvantaged groups;
- Using gender budget analysis to identify and advocate for gender-responsive investment within education priorities;
- Promoting life skills education with a gender focus in child-friendly schools, especially at the post-primary level, including sexual and reproductive health;
- Supporting female role models in education, such as female teachers, school heads and senior officials, or women in key positions in politics and development;<sup>56</sup> and

- Building national capacity to generate and use data on gender and other disparities.

While both targeted and mainstreaming approaches are valuable, the advantage of gender mainstreaming lies in its potential not just to attend to girls’ and women’s immediate needs, but to transform gender relations themselves as well as the institutions imprinted with unequal power dynamics to systemically alter the opportunities, burdens, responsibilities, and expectations for women and men and girls and boys.

#### **Increasing national capacities in mainstreaming**

UNICEF aims to build national capacity in mainstreaming to make organic, systemic progress towards three priority themes of:

1. Equal access and universal primary completion;
2. Empowerment through girls’ education and gender mainstreaming; and
3. Emergencies and post-crisis education interventions.

Contributing to the first priority theme, as part of the School Fee Abolition Initiative, UNICEF built national capacity by sharing lessons from successful countries to support other countries’ work towards abolishing school fees. In the area of empowerment, UNICEF helps promote gender budget analysis by developing national capacity for results-based budgeting. UNICEF also assists with creating safe learning spaces for children in emergencies by providing, for example, information technology, supply packages and other services. And UNICEF contributes to strengthening the capacity of other stakeholders responsible

<sup>55</sup> UNGEI (2012), “Gender Analysis in Education: A Conceptual Overview. Working Paper No.05” pp. 3.

<sup>56</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Promoting Gender Equality through UNICEF-supported Programming in Basic Education: Operational guidance’, UNICEF, New York, pp.13.

for facilitating the right of children to education, including parents, communities, teachers, heads of schools, education administrators and planners, policymakers and investors.<sup>57</sup>

## 1.4 EVALUATION REPORT FEATURES

The synthesis of the evidence gathered and analysed throughout this evaluation process is structured around the selected evaluation questions and themes. Section 2 sets out the evaluation methodology and Section 3 presents the key findings, across the five themes of:

- i. Positioning and shared understanding;
- ii. Gender mainstreaming;
- iii. Girls' education interventions;
- iv. Partnerships; and
- v. Capacity development.

Section 4 summarizes the findings together with a set of conclusions and recommendations relating to the five themes.

---

<sup>57</sup> UNICEF Education strategy, p. 14

# 2

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY





## 2.1 EVALUATION THEMES, QUESTIONS AND CRITERIA

### 2.1.1 The Theory of Change

The foundational theory presented as Figure 1.7 is an evaluation tool that provides an analytical framework for synthesizing various types of data analyses into one coherent narrative around UNICEF contributions to results for girls' education at the global, regional and national levels. Developed retrospectively by the UNICEF Evaluation Office, it was meant to identify and describe the core dimensions and processes that UNICEF has used to promote gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women. This Theory of Change (ToC) is not a comprehensive overview of the UNICEF girls' education portfolio, but rather a generalized diagram (shown in Figure 1.7) that reflects the logic (explicit or implicit) behind this programming. It juxtaposes UNICEF's mandate for supporting girls and women with strategies for addressing bottlenecks in the realization of children's right to education. The Theory of Change also summarizes the main outputs, outcomes, and potential impacts of UNICEF girls' education programming.

The Theory of Change integrates two strategic planning periods for UNICEF (MTSP 2006-2013 and SP 2014-2017), each with its own unique outputs and outcomes, and thus reflects the sharpened focus for girls over time, as well as some continuity in UNICEF strategies and interventions. The distinction between these two planning periods, provided in greater detail in the Terms of Reference, may be important for explaining variations in the strategies and approaches employed by UNICEF for girls' education over time in specific countries or regions.

UNICEF is a decentralized organization, and the system is dynamic and shaped by constant changes in political, economic, social and environmental conditions at the global, regional and national levels. Therefore, a composite Theory of Change was developed in an attempt to bring together the more detailed ToCs from each of the case studies. Assumptions are also described and are taken into consideration and tested in the analysis and synthesis of the evaluation results.

As noted above, the Theory of Change embeds five evaluation themes:

- Positioning and shared understanding;
- Partnerships;
- Capacity development;
- Girls' education interventions; and
- Gender mainstreaming.

These themes were organized according to the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of *coherence*, *relevance*, *effectiveness* and *sustainability*. Together these were used to organize the evaluation questions (Table 2.1) and the evaluation framework (Appendix D) that were developed and agreed with UNICEF during the inception phase.

**FIGURE 1.7**

**Foundational Theory of Change for UNICEF's Girls' Education Programming**



**TABLE 2.1** Evaluation Themes and Questions

OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria	Themes	Evaluation Questions
<b>Coherence and Relevance</b>	<b>1. Positioning and shared understanding</b>	1.1 Alignment: To what extent was UNICEF country programming in girls' education aligned with global and national priorities (Education Sector Plan) at the time the programme was defined?
		1.2 Shared understanding: To what extent is there a shared understanding of guiding principles, strategies (e.g. gender mainstreaming, targeting), and/or girls' education programme choices: a) among UNICEF education program staff (at HQ, ROs and COs); and b) between UNICEF education staff and partners (government implementers and decision-makers in the education sector, and non-government implementing partners)?
		1.3 Collaboration: To what extent did UNICEF education teams collaborate effectively with other divisions and country teams to achieve outcomes for girls and promote gender equality? What efficiencies were achieved?
<b>Effectiveness and Sustainability</b>	<b>2. Partnerships</b>	2.1 Benefits of partnerships: What were the mutual benefits of working through partnership arrangements? What trade-offs and/or risks were incurred to ensure that partnership arrangements worked as intended, and how were risks mitigated?
		2.2 Credibility: What are the views and/or experiences of partners relative to UNICEF contributions to the partnership, and UNICEF's credibility?
		2.3 Leveraging resources: How successful have UNICEF and its partners been in leveraging resources for targeted work on girls' education, and for gender mainstreaming?
<b>Effectiveness and Sustainability</b>	<b>3. Capacity Development</b>	3.1 Internal capacities: To what extent did education country teams have the key tools, skills and systems required for programming to achieving girls' education outcomes?
		3.2 External capacities: What contribution (if any) has UNICEF made towards the development of national capacity (governments, partners) to analyse, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate girls' education programmes and interventions?

◀ Table 2.1 (cont'd)

OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria	Themes	Evaluation Questions
<b>Effectiveness and Sustainability</b>	<b>4. Girls' Education Interventions</b>	4.1 Situation analysis: To what extent was UNICEF programming informed by a gender analysis, evidence of what works in which context, and a needs analysis, including: 1) profiles of disadvantaged girls; 2) educational disadvantages that girls experience; and 3) system-level barriers to girls' education?
		4.2 Responsiveness: To what extent were UNICEF-supported interventions responsive and/or adaptable to the national context, capacities, and available resources?
		4.3 Internal logic: What are the underlying theories of change (explicit or inferred) behind girls' education programmes in the respective country, and how have these changed over time?
		4.4 Clarity of results statements: How well were the expected outputs and outcomes of UNICEF's targeted activities in girls' education defined? To what extent were UNICEF's objectives and intended results realised?
		4.5 Complementarity: To what extent did UNICEF girls' education programmes complement programmes by other stakeholders (at global, regional and country levels)?
		4.6 Cross-sectoral arrangements: In what ways was girls' education programming carried out within cross-sectoral arrangements (with Health, Nutrition, WASH, HIV/AIDS, Social Policy, etc.) and with what results? What efficiencies, capacities, and/or gaps, if any, were filled by taking a cross-sectoral approach?
		4.7 Positive or negative unintended consequences: Were there any positive or negative unintended consequences in girls' education and gender mainstreaming work, and how were negative consequences mitigated?
		4.8 Effectiveness: What type of education programme interventions and activities (advocacy, policy dialogue, capacity development) have effectively contributed to supporting the achievement of education outcomes for girls, and gender parity in education outcomes?
		4.9 Scalability, sustainability: To what extent have UNICEF-supported interventions been scalable and/or sustainable?
<b>Effectiveness and Sustainability</b>	<b>5. Gender Mainstreaming</b>	5.1 Effectiveness: Were UNICEF approaches to gender mainstreaming in education in the time period effective in achieving the expected results?
		5.2 Lessons learned: What lessons has UNICEF learned about the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming and targeted approaches during the period of the MTSP (2009-2013), and to what extent were these incorporated into the Strategic Plan (2014-17) and Gender Action Plan?

## 2.2 EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.2.1 Data sources

The overall data collection strategy was to use a range of sources, methods and tools to collect information so that findings could be cross-checked and triangulated. As established in the inception report, the evaluation was largely informed by qualitative data, using a contribution analysis approach. However, some secondary quantitative data and evidence, for instance on girls' enrolment and completion, were also used to establish trends throughout the evaluation period. The data collection strategies are set out below. Originally, a thematic study was planned to explore the impact of UNICEF programmes on girls' transition between different school stages. However, this was removed from the evaluation following the inception phase and an additional case study country added in its place.

### 2.2.2 Desk review

Regional and national program documents covering UNICEF interventions in 35 countries in different regions were systematically reviewed. A list of the countries included in the desk review, as well as the sampling criteria, are presented in Appendix F. Regional and national programme plans and reports, as well

as evaluation reports on specific initiatives, were analysed against the evaluation questions. Altogether, 375 documents were reviewed (291 country and regional UNICEF documents, 28 global documents and 47 national Education Sector Reports).<sup>58</sup>

Not all the evaluation questions could be answered through the desk review alone. For instance, evaluation question 2.2, which concerns UNICEF credibility with its partners, could only be answered through the country case studies and interviews at global and regional levels. Additionally, a failure to obtain certain reports from UNICEF, together with gaps in the reports that were obtained, meant that there was insufficient information to conduct evaluative assessments. The desk review process culminated in a report that was a key source of evaluation data for this synthesis.

### 2.2.3 Case studies

#### Sampling strategy

Case studies of UNICEF girls' education programming were carried out in five of the 35 countries sampled for the desk review. The five countries selected were: Nigeria, Pakistan, Mozambique, Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan. Table 2.2 sets out the criteria used to select the sample of five case study countries.

---

<sup>58</sup> These also include nine additional documents for the case study countries (CSCs), which are all of the evaluations produced between 2009 and 2015 related to the education sector, gender or activities that could impact on girls' schooling.

**TABLE 2.2** Country case studies and selection criteria

Country	Region	High spending (within region)*	Girls' education inequality	Girls' education programming	GPE country	UNGEI country	OOSCI country	Education in emergencies
Côte d'Ivoire	WCA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Nigeria	WCA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pakistan	SA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mozambique	ESA	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Sudan	MENA	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

\* High spending is defined here as being among the top 10 countries in terms of UNICEF spending on girls' education programming.

### Preparation and piloting

Before visiting the countries concerned, each case study lead compiled brief issues papers based on the desk review report, country office (CO) documents and other secondary data. The issues papers provided useful orientation and pointed to specific areas of enquiry to follow up during primary data collection.

A pilot case study was conducted in Nigeria, where primary data was collected between 28 November and 10 December 2016. Following the pilot case study, data collection instruments were modified to reflect field experience, and these modified instruments were used as the basis for the four subsequent country case studies.

### Primary data collection

Primary data collection consisted of individual interviews and focus group discussions with a total of: 127 government representatives; 102 UNICEF staff; 224 programme beneficiaries, and 121 other implementing partners (including NGOs, sister UN agencies, and other international organizations). Primary data were collected for Pakistan, Mozambique, Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan between February and March 2017. Appendix G provides a detailed

breakdown of the numbers and types of informants who took part in interviews and group discussions in each case study country.

### Outputs of primary data collection

Brief field reports were generated at the end of the country visits, followed by the case study reports themselves. The case study reports, the issues papers and the field reports were all used as data sources for this global synthesis. The case study reports formed a basis for generating evaluation findings. The issues papers provided information about programmes and their contexts, helping in the development of plausible narratives to explain the evaluative findings. The field reports have been used to identify gaps in information and the reasons for such gaps.

### Global and regional level key informant interviews

Telephone or Skype interviews were conducted with 16 relevant staff from UNICEF HQ and regional office (RO) levels, as well as senior staff from organizations that are partners of UNICEF at the global level. Appendix G provides a list of key informants who were interviewed. While these interviewees could not comment on all the evaluation questions, their insights are

used where appropriate, both to sharpen and deepen the analysis based on the evidence from other sources.

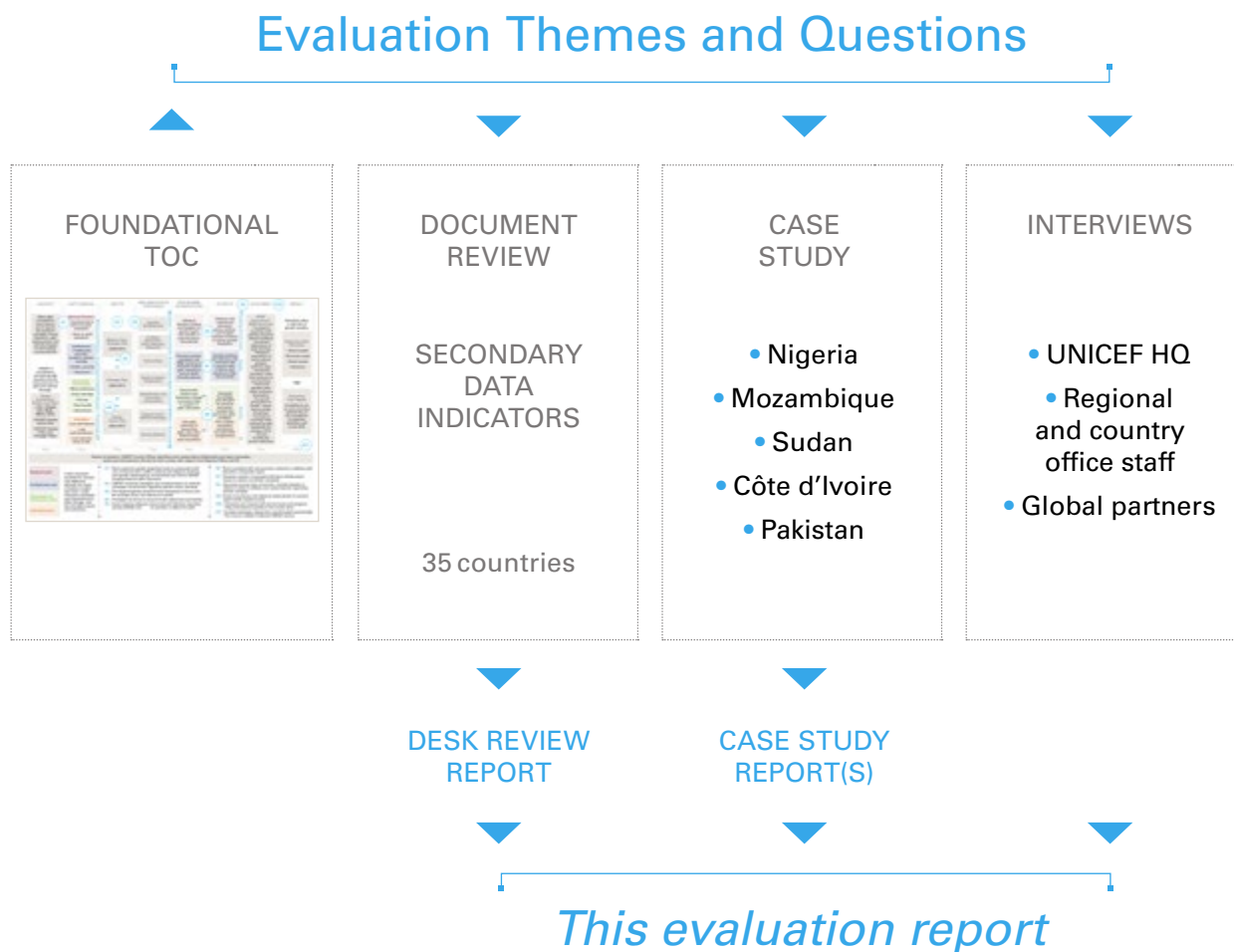
Figure 2.1 presents a summary of the evaluation design and methods, reflecting the changes that were made after the inception phase.

## 2.3 DATA ANALYSIS

This sub-section provides an overview of how the data were organised and analysed, covering:

- Data organization;
- The process of developing evaluative statements; and
- The system used to assess the strength of the evidence.

**FIGURE 2.1** Evaluation Design



### 2.3.1 Developing evaluative statements and narratives

The data collected were organised by theme, evaluation question and output. There were seven outputs in all: the desk review report, each of the five case study reports, and a set of notes from the global-level interviews; together, the global/regional interview notes were treated as a single output.

Inductive coding was used to generate evaluative statements in answer to each evaluation question, based on the evidence contained in the seven outputs. This resulted in a set of robust evaluative statements. These statements were tested, elaborated on and refined through an iterative process as the analysis proceeded. Once all the outputs were analysed, evaluative narratives were developed for each question. They were designed to provide nuanced answers to the evaluation questions and identify similarities, differences, patterns and trends.

### 2.3.2 Assessing the strength of evidence

The strength of the evidence supporting each statement was assessed and categorized, with evidence from all the relevant outputs considered and given equal weight.

A set of criteria was developed, which is shown in Table 2.3. ‘Robust’ evidence means evidence that is clear and specific, with some detail. Vague evidence with less detail was judged to be of poorer quality, but still significant. After applying these criteria to the evidence from each output, it was possible to estimate the *overall* strength of the accumulated evidence in relation to each question, using the evidence strength thresholds (‘minimum strength of evidence required’) shown in the table. These thresholds apply to both positive and negative evidence. The evaluative statements were then categorized according to the strength of evidence. Two examples of evidence categorized as strong and little, respectively, are provided in Box 2.3 below.

The design, approach, strategies and methods briefly described here were both systematic and rigorous. In combination, they have ensured that the evaluative assessments presented in this synthesis report are valid, robust and nuanced.

**TABLE 2.3** Evidence assessment criteria

Strength of evidence category	Minimum strength of evidence required
<b>Strong evidence</b>	Robust evidence in at least four relevant outputs, possibly but not necessarily accompanied by some poorer quality evidence in other outputs.
<b>Adequate evidence</b>	Robust evidence in 1-3 relevant outputs OR poor-quality evidence in 5 relevant outputs.
<b>Little evidence</b>	Poor quality evidence only, in at least 1 relevant output.
<b>No evidence</b>	No information on which to base a finding.



Throughout the synthesis report, evidence has been categorized according to the categories outlined in Table 2.3. Two examples of strong and little evidence which can be found in this report are provided below.

**Strong evidence:** The synthesis report finds that there is strong evidence that UNICEF seeks to work in partnership at all levels.

This statement is based partly on the evidence found in the desk review. Here, analysis of UNICEF documents showed that *“it is clear that UNICEF conducts a large part of both its upstream and downstream work through partnerships, and that these arrangements provide great added value to the organization’s work. There were mentions of the importance of partnerships for leveraging resources, policy change and increasing efficiency. Across all countries, the single most important partner mentioned is the Ministry of Education. This was listed as a key partner for all countries across the seven years, with the exception of Nigeria in 2010. Here, there was no explicit reference to education authorities, but rather, to “government partners” in general. In the case of Nigeria, both state-level and federal- or province-level education departments were key UNICEF partners. Other government partners mentioned in association with education activities include the Ministry of Planning and Development (Côte d’Ivoire), the Ministry of Family, Women and Social Affairs (Côte d’Ivoire), the National Institute of Disaster Management (Mozambique), the Ministry of Youth (Pakistan), and the Ministry of Health (Sudan).”*

**Little evidence:** The synthesis report found little evidence of resources being successfully leveraged for targeted girls’ education initiatives, and even less evidence specifically relating to gender mainstreaming.

According to the desk review document, the evidence on leveraging resources is vague, as follows: *“Based on the evidence gathered from Country Office Annual Reports (COARs), it is not clear how education resourcing targets at each UNICEF country office are set. Furthermore, the majority of country offices do not report on their education resourcing target. There is very limited information in COARs about leveraging funding for education by other partners. Strategies mentioned include: relationship-building with traditional donors; exploring new relationships to mitigate changing contexts; exploring new relationships with the private sector; supporting the government on proposals to leverage resources for education; setting up educational toolkits, and organizing visits for donors and high-profile celebrities. However, the extent to which these methods were successful was generally not clear in reporting. There were also limited reports of the use of evidence to leverage funding for education. In the absence of a definition of what success in leveraging resources would look like, it has not been possible to make an evaluative assessment on the leveraging of resources during the evaluation period.”*

### 2.3.3 Validating the recommendations

The initial drafts of the recommendations were developed based on the findings and evidence. Additional steps were undertaken to seek validation of the recommendations so as to increase the likelihood of their utility, actionability, and implementation.

Hence a review and validation of the recommendations was conducted by selected stakeholders, six members of the evaluation reference group, all of which were UNICEF staff, but contributing to girls' education results from different perspectives. The review panel was asked to provide feedback on two aspects as follows:

- a. The validity of the recommendations in the context of the evidence presented in the synthesis report, and
- b. The extent to which the recommendations are actionable in the context of the organization's future strategic direction and the wider global context of its support for girls' education.

After initial drafting and review by the Evaluation Manager, recommendations were further subjected to the following validation process:

1. The review panel received a template containing a list of recommendations, accompanied by the terms of reference and guidance note explaining the review and validation process;
2. Following feedback and additional drafting from the review panel, revised recommendations were submitted to the Evaluation Manager for further consideration and discussion;
3. A final set of recommendations was shared with the review panel, and included in the final evaluation report.

## 2.4 LIMITATIONS, CONSTRAINTS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

### 2.4.1 Desk review

- The desk review was heavily dependent on explicit evidence contained in programme plans and reports of ROs and COs. Several problems were encountered while collecting and analysing these documents:
- The evaluation team could not obtain many of the relevant RO and CO documents despite repeated efforts. Due to resource limitations, the desk review was limited to documents on the UNICEF intranet or website. Several documents required for the review, such as regional office documents for 2011 and 2012, and 2012 COARs for Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire, were missing from these sites.
- Many important aspects of girls' education programming, such as cross-sectoral arrangements and collaboration among UNICEF offices, were not systematically included in regional and country-level reporting.
- Reporting was often too vague to be useful. For instance, the nature of capacity development activities was not always properly explained, programme outputs and outcomes were not clearly defined, and the specific contribution of UNICEF to the effectiveness of interventions was not always defined.

Many reports did not provide sufficient evidence to support assertions, for instance regarding claims of programme effectiveness.

In general, there was significant variation in the quality of reporting between different years of the evaluation period and across ROs and COs, resulting in an inconsistent and patchy evidence base.

*Mitigation strategy:* The most significant shortcomings and gaps in the documentary evidence were explicitly identified in the desk review report. Country case study leads requested missing documentation once introduced to staff in case study country offices. An issues paper was produced for each country case study, which highlighted the main evidence gaps across the evaluation questions. The primary research conducted for the country case studies attempted to fill the gaps in the documentary evidence.

## 2.4.2 Case studies

- During the process of planning and conducting the case studies, several problems were encountered that have affected the quality and quantity of information collected:
- There were delays during the inception phase; for instance, sampling for the case studies took longer than expected.
- Once the case study countries were selected, several delays hindered the case study teams in their preparation for the country visits, including delays in: finalizing case study teams, CO agreement to case study proposals, and issuing visas and travel permits. Also, in some countries, UNICEF officers were not readily available for interview, due to both staff mobility and competing commitments and responsibilities.
- Where data collection spanned two weekends, e.g. in Pakistan, this reduced the time available for interviews and group discussions.
- The case study evaluation teams generally found a high turnover among UNICEF staff in COs since the end of the evaluation period (2009-2015). This compromised

the institutional memory among UNICEF staff about what happened, how and why across the evaluation period as a whole. At times, the case study teams found it difficult to distinguish between feedback from interviews and group discussions that referred to the situation during the evaluation period in contrast to perceptions about the current status or what happened after the end of the evaluation period.

*Mitigation strategy:* The case study leads spoke to CO staff before the field visits to discuss and agree on the most appropriate and feasible places to visit, and most appropriate staff and stakeholders to participate in the research, given the time available. These discussions considered contextual factors based on CO feedback. In consultation with the CO, case study teams took a flexible and responsive approach to organizing and sequencing the research activities in-country to ensure it was conducted as efficiently and effectively as possible.

## 2.5 ETHICAL ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Our research, analysis and evaluation report adhered to the required ethical principles for research and evaluation, and in particular United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) guidelines.<sup>59</sup> As evaluators, we ensured that we exercised independent judgement and operated in an impartial and unbiased manner. We produced evaluation reports that are credible, based on reliable data and observations, and which provide a comprehensive and balanced presentation of the evidence. During data collection, any sensitive issues or concerns, including conflicts of interest, were raised with the UNICEF evaluation manager as soon as

---

<sup>59</sup> Ethical considerations were set out in full in section 3.11 of the approved inception report.

they were identified. We were fully accountable for the completion of the evaluation as agreed with the UNICEF evaluation manager.

This included:

- a. **Identifying the need for and securing necessary approval.** The team worked in accordance with local laws and obtained any required approval in advance from the relevant organization and the local/national authorities.
- b. **Avoidance of harm to participants and confidentiality.** The safety of respondents was of paramount importance and a top priority. Respondent participation was voluntary, without undue burden, free from any duress, consensual and furnished with written consent where possible. We ensured that confidentiality of information, privacy, and the anonymity of the study participants remained of utmost importance. In the same way, safety and security of evaluators working in the field was also a priority; they were provided the necessary training, on-the-ground support and the equipment to avoid any unforeseen circumstances.
- c. **Research and evaluation respected respondent dignity, vulnerabilities and cultural sensitivities.** The evaluation team took into account the variances in ethnicities, local culture, religious beliefs, gender, disability, age and other variables like socio-economic classes before and during the assignment. In carrying out the evaluation, we were mindful to use evaluation instruments that were appropriate to the cultural settings and developmental status/capacities of the respondents.

- d. **Rights of individuals and institutions were respected.** The evaluation team ensured that ample time and opportunity was provided for respondents to make independent decisions about participating without pressure or fear of penalty. During data collection, we respected the interviewee's confidentiality, and the interview notes and any recordings were accessible to the team members only.
- e. **Fair selection and representation of respondents.** Our sample ensures that participants were selected to enable collection of data that fulfils the aims of the evaluation.

In addition to the above, researchers/evaluators fully considered all the possible ethical challenges that they might encounter during the evaluation process and adopted appropriate steps to minimize the effects of these prior to the fieldwork and implementation phases.

# 3

## EVALUATION FINDINGS



### 3.1 POSITIONING AND SHARED UNDERSTANDING

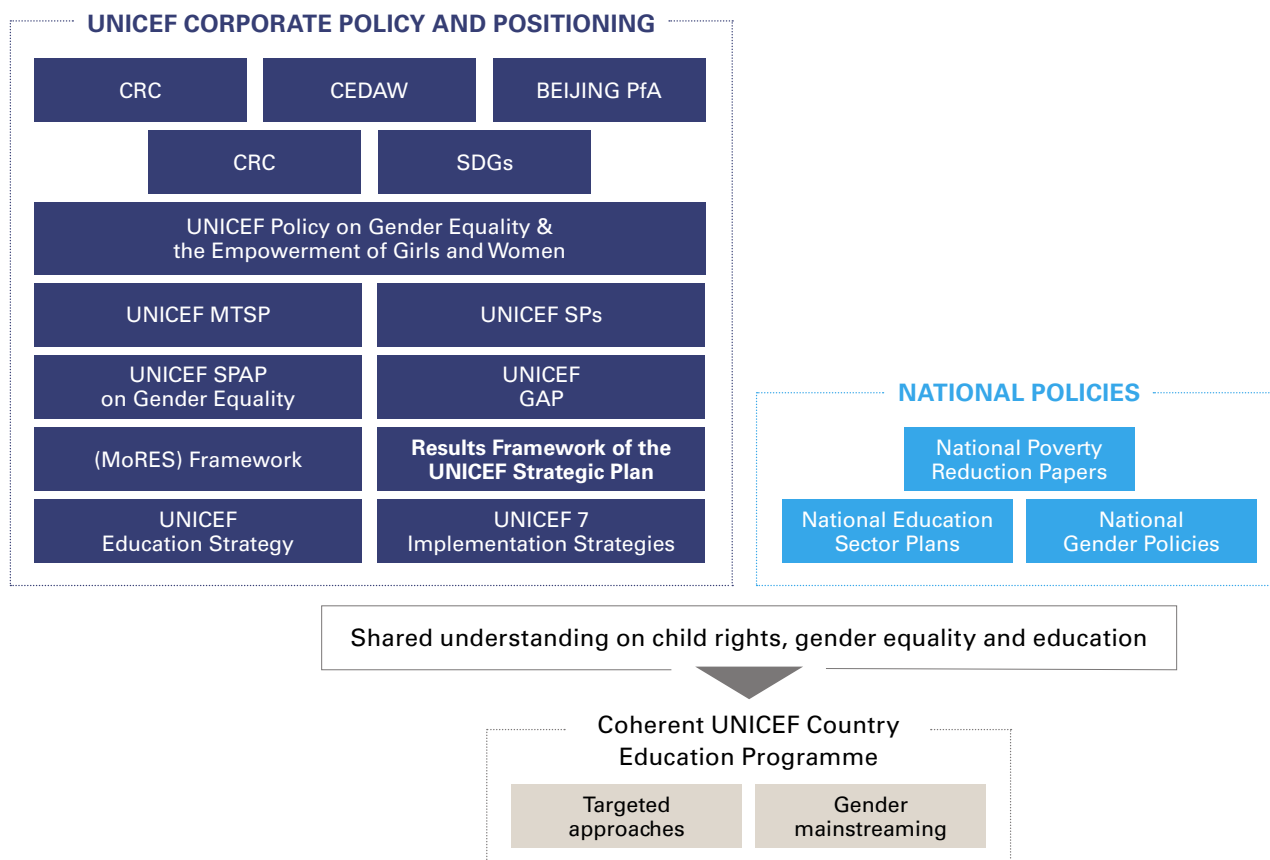
The first objective of the evaluation addresses UNICEF global positioning and shared understandings within the organization, and with governments and other key partners, of the principles underpinning work on girls' education.

The two evaluation questions on this theme concern alignment of UNICEF girls' education programming with global and national priorities, and the extent to which there was a shared understanding of global and organizational guiding principles among different levels of UNICEF offices and with UNICEF partners at

national level. Evaluation criteria of **relevance and coherence** of UNICEF girls' education programming were also addressed.

Figure 3.1 below illustrates how the UNICEF policy context and corresponding results frameworks, monitoring frameworks and implementation

**FIGURE 3.1 UNICEF and National Policy Contexts and Priorities**



strategies combine with national policy contexts and consequent priorities to shape UNICEF education programmes at country level.

### 3.1.1 Alignment with global and national priorities

In addition to the UNICEF MTSP (2006–2013) and the Strategic Plan (2014–2017), there were several overarching global policies and goals, as well as corporate strategic plans, policies and action plans, in force during the evaluation period (2009–2015) that are described in detail in Section 1.2.5.

The national policy context is characterized not only by the global goals and conventions, but also by national-level poverty reduction strategies and plans, national education sector plans and national policies on gender. Together, these inform national priorities for programming in girls’ education and gender equality.

#### Alignment with global priorities

In the context of the evaluation, where the aforementioned international goals, policies and plans were referred to in UNICEF Country Programme Documents (CPDs), this was interpreted as an attempt to align girls’ education programming at the country level with global

priorities. Table 3.1 below shows the number of UNICEF country offices per region that referred to MDGs, SDGs, MTSP, SP and the GAP in their COARs and CPDs in the years following their publication.

Analysis of the 248 available CPDs and COARs from the 35 countries included in the desk review shows that most (but not all) of the countries in each region mentioned relevant MDGs. These were usually in the situation analysis (SitAn) section of the report, referring to the situation of the country against these goals.

There were some instances of UNICEF supporting specific countries toward the achievement of (usually) MDG 2, or influencing them to work more on MDG outcomes. There were also some specific references to the education programme including activities such as advocacy around achievement of the MDGs (e.g. Cambodia), joint development of action plans (e.g. Timor Leste) and references that sited the education planning within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) outcome areas, which in turn were in line with MDGs (e.g. Bolivia, Tanzania). Mentions of relevant SDGs were far fewer, which is understandable since the SDGs had only been finalized in 2015, the final year of the evaluation. These mainly

**TABLE 3.1** Reference to global goals, UNICEF planning documents and the GAP in COARs and CPDs, per region

Region	MDGs (2009)	SDGs (2015)	MTSP (2009)	MTSP (2010)	SP (2014)	SP (2015)	GAP (2014)	GAP (2015)
CEE/CIS	2/3	0/3	3/3	0/3	0/3	0/3	0/3	0/3
EAP	2/3	0/3	3/3	1/3	1/3	0/3	0/3	0/3
ESA	6/7	3/8	6/7	2/7	0/8	2/8	1/8	3/8
LAC	2/3	0/3	2/3	0/3	1/3	0/3	1/3	1/3
MENA	3/5	2/5	2/5	0/5	0/5	0/5	2/5	2/5
SA	5/5	2/5	1/5	0/5	1/5	3/5	3/5	3/5
WCA	8/8	1/8	1/8	0/8	1/8	1/8	3/8	5/8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29/34</b>	<b>8/35</b>	<b>18/34</b>	<b>3/34</b>	<b>4/35</b>	<b>6/35</b>	<b>10/35</b>	<b>14/35</b>

reported on the situation regarding SDGs in the SitAn, or advocacy around ownership and achievement of the new goals (Nepal). There were also few mentions of the EFA goals, but it is possible that countries saw these as a subset of the relevant MDGs (which, substantively, they are).

UNICEF strategic documents, (i.e., the MTSP, SP and the GAP), are in themselves aligned with international commitments relating to girls' education and gender equality. COARs and CPD references to these were less evident than references to the MDGs, with only 18 of 34 countries referring to the MTSP in the year after publication and even fewer (four of 35 in 2014 and six of 35 in 2015) mentioning the SP.

References within the COARs to the MTSP were in regard to alignment of programming areas to MTSP focus areas, whereas references to the SP and GAP were fewer. References to the MDGs/SDGs and UNICEF strategic plans diminished throughout the evaluation period, but since the introduction of the GAP in 2014, most COs in the sample referred to it in their CPD or COAR – except for those in the East Asia and Pacific (EAP) region and CEE-CIS. Examples can be seen in Box 3.1 below.

## Strategic Monitoring Questions

Since the 2014 Strategic Plan, UNICEF country offices have had to report on data identified from national sources using the annual corporate reporting system, which consists of the COAR and regular reporting against Strategic Monitoring Questions (SMQs) that are tied to many of the output indicators in the Strategic Plan. The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 includes 24 indicators that can be disaggregated further into a total of 36 indicators.

For each SMQ, COs present a framework rubric in the key output areas that not only provide a basis against which to report on programme progress but also give an indication of what good programming would include. Even though the GAP states that *“the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is central to the mandate of UNICEF and its focus on equity”*, when it comes to highlighting issues specifically related to girls' education programming or gender equality, the indicators are focused on gender *equality* and not gender *empowerment*. The list below shows some of the main areas covered.

- Gender parity – the use of gender parity indices at all educational levels to inform targeting.

### BOX 3.1

#### Examples of alignment of country programmes showing the role of the GAP

Based on the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 and the GAP, Burkina Faso CO finalized a gender gap analysis to identify keys to successful programming. A gender specialist was recruited at the National Officer D (NOD) level who will be dedicated to supporting the CP planning process and furthering interagency partnerships to promote gender equality.

Based on a 2015 gender review, UNICEF in Nigeria and partners developed an action plan that included integration of gender analysis within the SitAn, gender assessments of WASH, education and nutrition programmes, and evaluation of WASH, education and nutrition programmes using gender action plan performance standards. The review, guided by the SP, 2014-2017 and the GAP, enabled the Nigeria country programme to shift from legislative advocacy and normative work to direct programme support and integration of gender aspects into programme results.



- Gender-based violence – in terms of the existence or not of policies relating to this.
- Disaggregated data – the generation, collection and analysis of data disaggregated by gender (amongst other factors).
- Gender-responsive learning environments, including – availability of teachers and a growing pool of female teachers; updated and gender-responsive curricula and learning materials, including expansion of science, technology, engineering and math learning opportunities; sanitation infrastructure and hygiene education, including menstrual hygiene management (MHM);
- Gender ‘equality’ – a focus on this within programming with associated resourcing and budgeting.
- Gendered social norms – strategic communication and community mobilization to address behaviour change and discriminatory social norms.

### Alignment with national priorities

This section looked at where CPDs and COARs had specifically referred to national education sector plans (NESP), SitAns, needs analyses and gender analyses. Where they exist, the national education sector strategy and/or plan would be expected to be a foundational document for UNICEF education programming, and gender analyses would also be expected for programmes addressing gender equality. Table 3.2 below shows where these documents were referred to as produced and as employed.

As indicated in Table 3.2 above, 25 out of 35 countries referenced NESPs at least once in the five years of the evaluation period. Each country (save one in ESA) also mentioned having carried out at least one situation analysis, and in some cases three or four. However, within the COARs of these countries, there were very few references to education, gender or girls’ education programming as a result of the SitAns. Although there were 13 gender analyses carried out, only five of these were referred

**TABLE 3.2** Number of countries per region referring to specific documents to inform their knowledge of national priorities

Region	COARS referencing NESP (2009-15)	COAR states situation analysis produced (2009 – 15)	COAR states situation analysis used (2009-15)	COAR states gender analysis produced (2009 – 15)	COAR states gender analysis used (2009-15)
CEESIS	0	3/3	1/3	0/3	0/3
EAP	1/3	3/3	2/3	0/3	0/3
ESA	7/8	7/8	6/8	5/8	1/8
LAC	3/3	3/3	3/3	1/3	0/3
MENA	3/5	5/5	3/5	2/5	2/5
SA	4/5	5/5	5/5	4/5	1/5
WCA	7/8	8/8	7/8	1/8	1/8

to as a basis for programming. There is little documentary evidence, therefore, that UNICEF COs designed their programming to align with country needs in relation to girls' education and gender equality, as identified through situation, needs, or gender analyses.

The evidence on alignment from the case studies is more emphatic. All five country case studies stated that UNICEF's girls' education programming was aligned with both global and national priorities. NESP for the five case study countries are aligned with global priorities in that they have been the foundation of GPE funding, and alignment with the MDGs and EFA goals is a pre-requisite.

Pakistan had an education sector plan for the whole of the evaluation period, while the other four countries had education sector plans from 2011 or 2012. That said, the NESP was not referenced in the CPDs of Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire or Mozambique, and in Pakistan, references were not to alignment with national priorities set

out in the NESP, but rather to the NESP being aligned with child-friendly spaces (CFS) or other UNICEF priorities.

Similarly, the SitAns often specifically include an analysis of the situation of women and children, and although this would rarely be of sufficient depth on its own, it would inform education and gender equality programming. As with the sample countries, in the case study countries there were only a few references within the SitAns to education, gender or girls' education (Box 3.2).

Table 3.3. below provides a detailed breakdown of the situational analysis of girls as outlined in the case study reports, and the UNICEF contribution to global and national priorities. This indicates that although there was little documentary evidence in the desk review that country programmes were aligned with country priorities, the case studies suggest that they may have been aligned with country needs.

### BOX 3.2

#### Examples of references to education in situation analyses (case study countries)

**In Pakistan** in 2009 there was a SitAn of gender disparities in elementary education as part of a gender toolkit, and in 2010 "a gender audit of textbooks and curriculum was conducted in Punjab in addition to a situation analysis on school damage and gender disparity in education in the flood-affected areas".

**In Mozambique** in 2010, "UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education in preparing the ground to draft the gender strategy" and "budget briefs were produced which provided evidence for advocacy, contributing to increases in allocation... to education of 17% ...in 2013-14". In 2014, "UNICEF committed to support the Ministry of Education with the review and dissemination of the gender strategy and the action plan for special needs education in 2015, as well as to help combat gender-based violence that impedes girls' education".

**In Nigeria** in 2013, a "teacher development needs assessment was undertaken as part of the education situation analysis and assessment".

**TABLE 3.3 UNICEF inputs into planning, 2009–2015**

Country	Situation of Girls	Global Priorities	National Priorities
<b>Côte d'Ivoire</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girls make up a larger proportion of out-of-school children;</li> <li>• When in school, girls have low achievement levels;</li> <li>• Extreme poverty;</li> <li>• Cultural norms on the status of the girl child;</li> <li>• Opportunity cost: income forfeited by family if girl child is not gainfully employed or not married off;</li> <li>• Early marriage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF programming covers all UNDAF outcomes, including those addressing MDG2 and MDG3;</li> <li>• Coordinates UNGEI network.</li> </ul>	<p>UNICEF contributed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education sector work planning, based on the education policy;</li> <li>• Drafting of the girl's education strategy;</li> <li>• Advocated for inclusion of girls in the social protection plan;</li> <li>• Development of the "next decade education sector plan".</li> </ul>
<b>Mozambique</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child marriage and adolescent pregnancy are a major cause of school drop-out;</li> <li>• Low quality of education and low levels of learning achievement;</li> <li>• Low transition levels to secondary schools;</li> <li>• Inequality of access to education by income and urban-rural divide;</li> <li>• Shortage of secondary schools, especially in rural areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF is aligned to MDGs 2 and 3 and Education for All (EFA) goals;</li> <li>• UNICEF is the coordinating agency for the GPE.</li> </ul>	<p>UNICEF activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting government data management and evaluation, especially finalization of the 2008 Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey;</li> <li>• Engaging with government to include quality standards, out-of-school children and early childhood development in the Education Sector Support Programme (2012-2016);</li> <li>• Integrating lesson learning from the CFS programme into national education policy;</li> <li>• Advocating towards the approval of a national strategy to prevent and eliminate child marriage;</li> <li>• Advocating for a stronger focus on girls' completion of a full cycle of primary and secondary education and tackling sexual violence in schools in the 2016-2020 education gender strategy.</li> </ul>

◀ Table 3.3 (cont'd)

Country	Situation of Girls	Global Priorities	National Priorities
<p><b>Nigeria</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender parity almost attained in south of the country, high inequality in northeast and northwest;</li> <li>• Especially high rate of out-of-school children in the northwest and northeast of the country, and mostly in rural areas;</li> <li>• In the north, issues include distrust of western education and preference for Qu’ranic education, early marriage, and absence of female teachers;</li> <li>• High rates of child marriage and adolescent pregnancy prevent transition to secondary school;</li> <li>• Low completion rates of primary school (and decreasing during the evaluation period);</li> <li>• Poverty and high costs of education, such as school uniforms, transport costs, and learning materials;</li> <li>• Low quality of education and frequent teacher strikes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF is aligned to MDGs 2 and 3 and Education for All (EFA) goals;</li> <li>• Lead UNGEI agency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2009, UNICEF supported the development of quality education sector plans based on the educational policy and strategic simulation model (EPSSim) in Bauchi, Jigawa and Niger states;</li> <li>• In 2013, sustained UNICEF advocacy resulted in \$1.45 million in government allocations for provision of WASH facilities in communities and schools in Sokoto, Katsina, Niger and Kogi States and in the Federal Capital Territory;</li> <li>• In 2014, Anambra State formally adopted CFS standards and was scheduled to begin state-wide implementation thanks to UNICEF support;</li> <li>• In 2014, the 5 UNICEF GEP 3 States (Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Niger, Bauchi) adopted enrolment drives as state-wide activities to promote universal basic education;</li> <li>• Assisted Kebbi, Gombe, Taraba, Benue, Ebonyi, Osun and Oyo States and the Federal Capital Territory to develop plans and strategies to address the socio-economic barriers preventing out-of-school children (OOSC) from enrolling in formal primary schools.</li> </ul>

◀ Table 3.3 (cont'd)

Country	Situation of Girls	Global Priorities	National Priorities
<b>Pakistan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patriarchal structure entrenched in social, cultural and religious systems;</li> <li>• 35% of girls are out of school, compared to 22% of boys;</li> <li>• Early marriage;</li> <li>• Limited availability of government girls' secondary schools and shortage of female teachers – leading to a low post-primary transition;</li> <li>• Exchange of girls for debt settlement;</li> <li>• Domestic violence;</li> <li>• Bonded labour and economic exploitation of girls;</li> <li>• Very large urban-rural divide for girls' education – due to poverty, cultural resistance to girls' education, and lack of girls' schools;</li> <li>• Regional disparity – with Federally-Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) faring the worst in terms of girls' access to education;</li> <li>• Insurgency activities often target girls' schools – high crime and violence discourages parents from sending children to school.</li> </ul>	<p>UNICEF contributes in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF is aligned to MDGs 2 and 3 and Education for All (EFA) goals;</li> <li>• UNICEF is aligned with the SDGs, in particular SDG 4 on inclusive education for all;</li> <li>• UNICEF is the GPE coordination agency in the Balochistan and Sindh provinces.</li> </ul>	<p>UNICEF contributed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping to develop the National Education Policy (2009) and the EFA National Review (2015), providing technical assistance to GoP;</li> <li>• Helping to develop a strategy for integrated school health in Punjab (2009);</li> <li>• Supporting the development of Provincial ECE strategies in Punjab (2011);</li> <li>• Supporting the development of provincial education sector plans (KP Education Sector Plan, 2010–2015; Balochistan Education Sector Plan, 2013–2017; Sindh Education Sector Plan, 2013–2016; Punjab Education Sector Plan, 2013–2018);</li> <li>• Advocating for the integration of CFS, disaster risk reduction, social cohesion and resilience, gender, health and hygiene education, equity and urbanization in the Sindh Education Sector Plan (2013).</li> </ul>

◀ Table 3.3 (cont'd)

Country	Situation of Girls	Global Priorities	National Priorities
<b>Sudan</b>	<p>Conflict has affected girls' education in several ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For one, it has increased migration and internal displacement. Long travel distances to school place girls at risk of violence and kidnapping – thus parents often choose to not send girls to school.</li> <li>• Conflict has also increased poverty. When faced with economic constraints to education, parents often choose to send boys to school rather than girls.</li> <li>• Other factors include:</li> <li>• Low government spending on education, lack of investment in quality staff training.</li> <li>• Patriarchal social norms and attitudes;</li> <li>• Early marriage and pregnancy;</li> <li>• Pastoralist lifestyle and migration;</li> <li>• Preferences for Qu'ranic education;</li> <li>• Child labour;</li> <li>• Resistance from families to mixed sex schools.</li> </ul>	<p>UNICEF contributes in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinating agency of the GPE;</li> <li>• Commitment to the achievement of the MDGs, especially Goals 2 and 3;</li> <li>• Commitment to the mainstreaming of the SDGs in 2015.</li> </ul>	<p>UNICEF contributed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2008, helping to establish the Girls' Education Administration within the MoE, to increase the government's focus on girls' education;</li> <li>• Supporting the GoS in implementing the interim basic education strategy, to ensure that 80% per cent of school-aged children have access to quality basic education;</li> <li>• Advocating for the adoption of the national strategy for education of children with disabilities, for the strategy on nomadic education; and updating the girls' education strategy;</li> <li>• Supporting 17 states to develop plans aligned with the country's education sector strategic plan for 2012-2016;</li> <li>• Supporting the development of the national school construction strategy to mainstream CFS standards in school construction.</li> </ul>

The content of NESPs is a good indicator of the extent of UNICEF influence on gender and education among its government partners. A review of the NESPs of the five case study countries found very little evidence of, or even references to, gender and education and girls' education. It is clear, however, that there is strong alignment between UNICEF and government partners more broadly and across other themes, and it is possible that UNICEF education programming

may also have been so closely linked to that of national governments that alignment with the NESP was taken for granted and not articulated in the documents.

Surprisingly, however, the education sector joint sector review, an annual review and planning session held with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education in every country, was mentioned only once by UNICEF Pakistan (as the means towards donor alignment and harmonization).

---

## IN SUMMARY:

---

In summary, there is strong evidence from the desk review that UNICEF girls' education programming at a country level was aligned with the broad aims of its global priorities. Evidence was weaker regarding alignment with national priorities, with little documentary evidence of either widespread analysis or use of investigations into the situation of girls in the countries involved.

---

### 3.1.2 Shared understanding of guiding principles and strategies

UNICEF is mandated to support the realization of children's right to education, particularly among girls and the most marginalized. Gender equality is also central to the UNICEF mandate. Therefore, UNICEF girls' education programming is informed by a rights-based approach to education and the principle of gender equality, as well as being aligned to the relevant national and global priorities. To have a coherent and relevant programme, it is imperative that there be a shared understanding of those guiding principles and priorities both among UNICEF staff at all levels, and between UNICEF staff and their partners at country level.

The foundational Theory of Change indicated that COs were obliged to combine the twin strategies of targeted approaches and gender mainstreaming approaches. In the two final years of the evaluation period, COs were also expected to know and understand the seven implementation strategies introduced in the 2014 Strategic Plan.

The evaluation team looked for CO understanding of these strategies and how best to combine them in their national contexts. Since

in most cases the staff present during the evaluation period were no longer in post, findings in this section are drawn from interviews with UNICEF staff and consultants presently working in the case study countries. Interviews centred on their knowledge of the following in relation to girls' education and gender equality:

- Knowledge of global goals and conventions: e.g. the Convention on the Rights of the Child, CEDAW, Beijing Platform;
- Knowledge of UNICEF guiding principles embodied in those conventions, such as child rights, non-discrimination, devotion to the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development, respect for the views of the child and 'substantive'<sup>60</sup> equality for women;
- Knowledge of UNICEF implementation strategies as detailed above.

#### UNICEF staff and consultants

Across all case study countries, UNICEF staff and consultants demonstrated understanding and easy reference to the global goals, and some or all of the guiding principles cited in the high-level conventions and key UNICEF documents such as the MTSP, SP and gender policies. However, it was often uneven. For instance, in Mozambique, UNICEF staff universally understood that the protection of children's rights is at the core of the organization's mandate and guides all its programming. Beyond that, individuals cited another one or two principles, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, equity or life-cycle approach, but no two people offered the same additions.

---

<sup>60</sup> The state must do more than just ensuring that there are no existing laws that directly discriminate against women. It must also take whatever measures are needed to ensure that women actually experience equality in their lives.

Among UNICEF staff and consultants, there was much weaker understanding of either the twin approaches of *targeted programming* and *gender mainstreaming*, or of the seven implementation strategies. Often respondents were familiar with the terms but did not see them as 'strategies' (Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire case study reports). There was almost universal recognition of *capacity development* as one of the main strategies used by UNICEF. Regarding specific strategies for gender equality, staff could either name a targeted approach or describe the importance of girls' education programming, but were generally unable to give a consistent description of gender mainstreaming beyond the disaggregation of data. The knowledge and understanding of gender mainstreaming is discussed in more detail elsewhere (section 3.2), but there was not a shared understanding of what was meant by gender mainstreaming nor how to implement it as part of the twin approach with targeting across programmes.

### **Partners**

Partners outside the organization, as well as beneficiaries, readily named the high-level, core principles that guide the work of UNICEF, though they could not always identify the strategies employed. Respondents identified children's rights and equity as the fundamental drivers of the organization's programming. In Pakistan, Nigeria and Sudan, partnerships among UNICEF, UNGEI and national governments to develop sector plans (or in Pakistan's case, the One UN Programme, which was specifically designed to ensure shared understanding of guiding principles and strategies) supported the development of shared understanding of girls' education objectives and programme choices, and strengthened knowledge of many of the guiding principles.

A potential constraint to UNICEF work is government understanding and buy-in. In Côte d'Ivoire, there was an important divergence of understanding between government officials and UNICEF education staff. This was highlighted by a member of the technical group on child protection, who indicated that there was no commitment to the rights-based approach in the education system in Côte d'Ivoire. This was illustrated by the regional directorate of education not requiring, and not expecting to undertake, planning based on protecting the rights of children or the human rights-based approach. There were also reports of tensions between UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire and its partners, because until recently, the MoE interpreted the term 'gender mainstreaming' as 'female autonomy', a concept that conflicts with gender norms in the country.

Many UNICEF partners across the case study countries were not able to name specific UNICEF strategies other than capacity and evidence generation in the form of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS). However, many could describe them in other terms, for example through description of child-friendly schools (most common) or every child in school. In some countries, a targeted approach was taken for granted, but as with UNICEF staff and consultants, there was little shared understanding of gender mainstreaming or how it might be implemented. There was also little understanding amongst some partners of how combinations of the different strategies could together address gender inequity.

UNICEF COs can choose the combination of strategies that best suit the national context in order to address barriers to girls' education and gender equality programming. Sometimes, however, these choices were not supported by the government, as illustrated in Box 3.3 below.



**BOX 3.3****Lack of government support for UNICEF strategies in Mozambique and Sudan**

Consistent with the position of UNICEF HQ, UNICEF Mozambique successively shifted its resources away from direct service delivery (material support) towards capacity development, advocacy and policy dialogue. However, in interviews with government counterparts at all levels and with school-level stakeholders and beneficiaries, almost all expressed the need for material support in the form of school construction, addition of water and sanitation facilities, and the provision of school 'kits' for children for whom the purchase of school supplies presented a barrier to access. The divergence in strategic priorities between UNICEF programme staff and their government counterparts suggests a gap in communication about alignment of resources with the strategies most effective in reaching desired outcomes.

In Sudan, a similar situation was resolved by a 'blurring of the strategy'. There was evidence of a shared understanding across UNICEF CO staff and partners that its targeted approach supporting girls' education should be deprioritized in favour of a less targeted approach to education to benefit boys as well as girls, due to the government's desire to move away from solely targeting girls' education. While this suggests a pragmatic approach to education programming, it did not reflect the organization's commitment to addressing gender inequality in education.

Despite these constraints, the UNICEF CO was able to deliver interventions that were aimed at benefiting girls' education, including: supporting the creation of the Girls' Education Administration within the Ministry of Education; forming and training parent-teacher associations (PTAs), enabling them to mobilize families to send or return girls to school; teacher training for female teachers; and hiring girl graduates as local teachers to address a lack of teachers that could speak the local languages required.

**IN SUMMARY:**

In summary, there is strong evidence that education teams in COs shared an understanding of child rights and equity, and understood and used many of the strategies including targeted approaches to girls' education, but did not understand or implement the core UNICEF strategy of gender mainstreaming to a sufficient extent. Partner understanding of the UNICEF guiding principles, notably gender equality, was at times not coherent with that of UNICEF, and in some contexts partner commitment to these principles was either lacking or diverged, particularly among national government partners. This can, in some cases, pose challenges, as working with government partners is central to the design, development and implementation of UNICEF programme strategies. UNICEF partners also include NGOs delivering UNICEF programmes. In this case, understanding UNICEF guiding principles is very important to ensure effective programme implementation.

### 3.2 GENDER MAINSTREAMING EFFECTIVENESS

This section reviews UNICEF approaches, and the effectiveness of its gender mainstreaming approaches, in girls' education during the period of the evaluation (2009–2015). It also considers lessons learned regarding gender mainstreaming and the extent to which these were incorporated into the organization's guiding policies (SP 2014–2017 and the GAP).

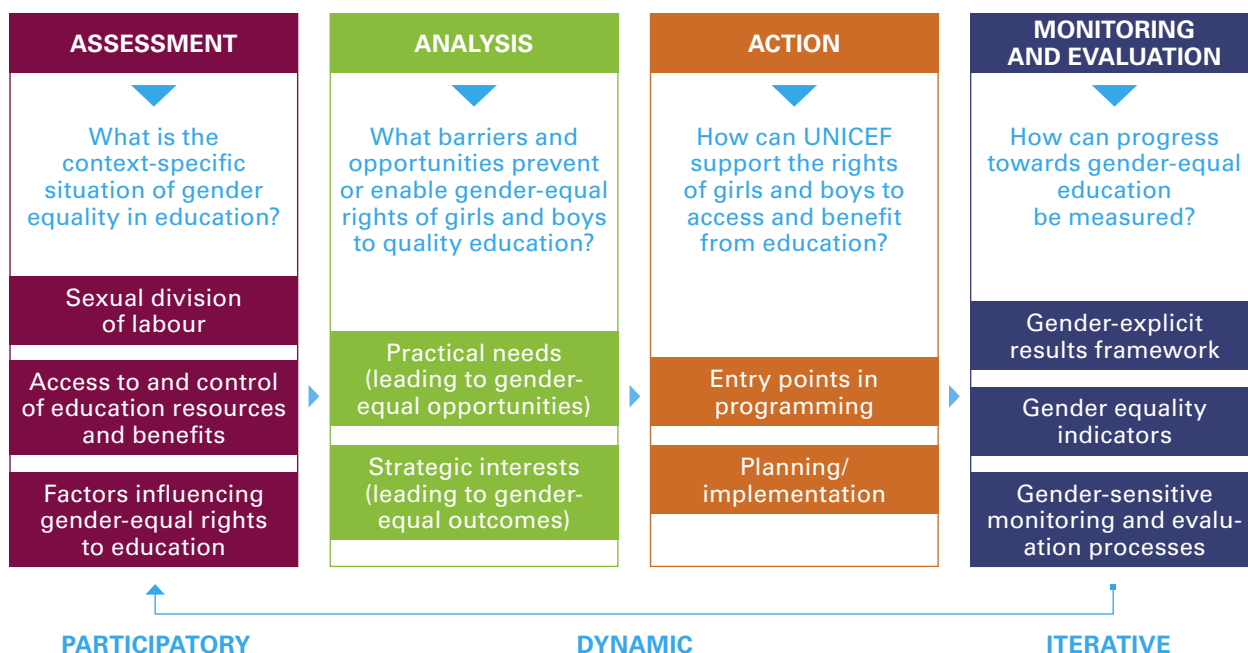
UNICEF has adopted the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) definition of gender mainstreaming:

*“The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in all areas*

*and at all levels, and as a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.”<sup>61</sup>*

The ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality. UNICEF published extensive operational guidance in 2011 on 'Promoting Gender Equality through UNICEF-Supported Programming in Basic Education'.<sup>62</sup> In this guidance, UNICEF set out how gender analysis should be integrated into a rights-based programming process, which is shown in Figure 3.2 below.

**FIGURE 3.2** Integrating gender analysis into a rights-based programming process<sup>63</sup>



<sup>61</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council, Agreed conclusions 1997/2.

<sup>62</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'Promoting Gender Equality through UNICEF-Supported Programming in Basic Education: Operational Guidance', UNICEF, New York, 2011.

<sup>63</sup> 'Promoting Gender Equality Operational Guidance', adapted from a schema developed by Patricia Thomas for the Canadian International Development Agency's gender equality course, 2004.

- The key message from this guidance is that the assessment and analysis of gender equality needs to explicitly and systematically lead to actions that enable UNICEF to have a differential impact on girls' education to achieve gender parity, which should then be monitored and evaluated to ensure these actions have been achieved. The UNICEF Promoting Gender Equality Operational Guidance <sup>64</sup> explains that *"in practice, gender mainstreaming means:*
  - *Identifying gaps in gender equality through the use of sex-disaggregated data;*
  - *Analysing the underlying causes;*
  - *Developing strategies to close those gaps;*
  - *Putting resources and expertise into implementing strategies for gender equality;*
  - *Monitoring implementation; and*
  - *Holding individuals and institutions accountable for results."*

This guidance stresses that gender mainstreaming is not an end in itself. It is a process that ultimately leads to the goal of achieving gender equality. If gender mainstreaming was being implemented effectively, we would expect the documentation and case studies to show explicit evidence of the actions taken through programme design and implementation processes to effectively address barriers to gender equality in girls' education.

An earlier finding of the evaluation (section 3.1.2) showed that several UNICEF CO staff did not understand or implement the core UNICEF strategy of gender mainstreaming to a sufficient extent and instead focused on targeting in their programming.<sup>65</sup>

As outlined in sections 1.2 and 1.3, while both targeted and mainstreaming approaches are valuable, it is important that both approaches are used. Unlike targeted interventions, gender mainstreaming has the potential to move beyond girls' and women's immediate needs within a given space, toward transforming gender relations and redressing institutional unequal power dynamics to systemically alter the *"opportunities, burdens, responsibilities, and expectations"* for women and men and girls and boys.

There is scant reference to gender mainstreaming in CPDs and COARs (although the lack of available documentation for 2012 should be noted).

The desk review found that:

- **Less than 50 per cent of CPDs, and 59 per cent of COARs, contained references to gender mainstreaming.**
- **Reporting on the use of gender mainstreaming was inconsistent** at both regional and CO levels, and between reporting years for the same CO.

<sup>64</sup> UNICEF (2011), 'Promoting Gender Equality: An Equity-Focused Approach to Programming – Operational Guidance Overview', p.14

<sup>65</sup> The case studies showed a limited understanding of gender mainstreaming. This was determined through desk reviews, interviews with staff in country and focus group discussions. The case studies found that: in Cote d'Ivoire *"the period [of the evaluation] was characterized by limited capacities, limited understanding of the very concept of gender (beyond targeted programming for girls' education) and a limited institutional transfer of knowledge"*; in Mozambique *"neither internally nor among government partners was there a strong understanding of the various strategies (e.g. gender mainstreaming, targeting ) employed for promoting girls' education outcomes"*; in Nigeria, *"within UNICEF and among external stakeholders there was no shared understanding of what gender mainstreaming is, how to use it fully, or what successful gender mainstreaming looks like"*; in Pakistan, *"from 2009 to 2015 there was a strong focus on girls' education in UNICEF programming in Pakistan, but gender mainstreaming was not, and is still not, particularly evident in girls' education programming"* and in Sudan, *"CO staff had inconsistent knowledge of gender and gender mainstreaming definitions, and knowledge on how to carry out gender mainstreaming in programming. Additionally, examples given of gender mainstreaming were inconsistent and weak."*

- While references to gender mainstreaming were high in 2009, there was a gradual decrease from 2010 to 2014. There was a **noticeable increase in references to gender mainstreaming in COARs in 2015**, compared with the period 2010-2014. This may reasonably be attributed to the adoption of the GAP in 2014. See Table 3.4, which shows the number of countries per region, per year that referred to gender mainstreaming in annual reporting.
- **It was not possible to make a systematic assessment of the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming from the desk review alone**, because even where programme documents mentioned gender mainstreaming, they did not present clear, measurable targets.

Where gender mainstreaming activities were mentioned, they were predominantly preparatory activities such as conducting gender audits evaluating the degree to which gender issues are mainstreamed into a given office or

programme, and providing training to UNICEF staff or partners. There were very few explicit activities that used the results of these audits or demonstrated staff capacity to mainstream gender in programming.

Table 3.5 below shows the number of instances where gender mainstreaming activities were reported in COARs, alongside some specific examples from case study country (CSC) documents. Using the framework above (Figure 3.2), we provide a summary assessment of the extent to which there is evidence of actions being taken, and whether clear progress was made between 1) assessment, to 2) analysis, and finally 3) actions in programming.

In many instances, it is unclear whether actions were taken to ensure gender mainstreaming in programming, which in many cases reflects the lack of detail provided in COARs. It is therefore not always possible to assess whether no action was taken, or if reporting failed to provide evidence of actions taken.

**TABLE 3.4** Reported instances of gender mainstreaming: Country offices per region<sup>66</sup>

Region	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
CEE/CIS	2/3	2/3	3/3	1/3	1/3	1/3	2/3
EAP	3/3	1/3	3/3	1/3	1/3	1/3	2/3
ESA	7/7	5/8	4/8	3/8	6/8	4/8	4/8
LAC	3/3	1/3	2/3	1/3	3/3	1/3	2/3
MENA	4/5	4/5	3/5	3/5	4/5	2/5	4/5
SA	4/5	2/5	3/5	2/5	1/5	4/5	5/5
WCA	7/8	5/8	4/8	1/8	1/8	4/8	6/8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30/34</b>	<b>20/34</b>	<b>22/35</b>	<b>12/35<sup>67</sup></b>	<b>17/35</b>	<b>17/35</b>	<b>25/35</b>

<sup>66</sup> This table indicated if COARs referred to “gender mainstreaming” in COARs in each year, as opposed to the number of references within any one report during that year.

<sup>67</sup> There were a high number of missing documents in 2012 which will likely account for the very low number of references during that year.

TABLE 3.5

Reported instances of gender mainstreaming activities in all 35 countries, categorized by type (COARs), and specific examples from case study country documents

Type of main-streaming activity	No. of mentions	Examples from case study countries
<b>Gender audits/ research</b>	106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five references found in the CSC documents in total, including one strong reference showing gender audit / review findings that were <b>analysed</b> and <b>actioned</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Mozambique, it was reported that a review of the programme against the GAP was conducted. This led to renewed organizational focus and the inclusion of a specific outcome focusing on gender issues (COAR, 2015).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Three</i> reports indicate positive results as a result of gender audits, but the action taken by UNICEF to improve gender mainstreaming is unclear, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Pakistan, results of a gender audit were reported to have encouraged the Secretary of Education to agree that policy level investments in girl-friendly education infrastructure are needed. However, the action taken by UNICEF is not clearly stated, nor whether this led to improved education outcomes – e.g. that the additional policy investments were implemented (COAR, 2010).</li> <li>• In Nigeria, the CO built on the results of a gender review to better incorporate gender into situation analysis, and the resultant “<i>shift from legislative advocacy and normative work to direct programme support and integration of gender aspects into programme results</i>”. However, it is unclear what this means in practice (COAR, 2015).</li> <li>• Sudan’s 2013 COAR reports participating in the global UNICEF gender review designed to carry out bottleneck analysis in gender mainstreaming. The COAR lists the outputs of the review, but it is unclear if these are findings from the review, or if these were actioned by the country programme.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>One</i> report (Nigeria COAR, 2009) refers to steps taken to better assess gender inequality through the inclusion of gender-specific indicators to monitor programme investments and implementation, but does not provide an explanation of how this data will be analysed and used.</li> </ul>
<b>Training of UNICEF staff<sup>a</sup></b>	58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three references found in the CSC documents in total. These references provide some information about what happened as a result of the training provided to UNICEF staff, but there is no information about how this tangibly led to greater gender mainstreaming in country programming. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICEF Sudan participated in the UN Gender Thematic Group (GTG) training workshop to strengthen performance on gender equality by mainstreaming gender into key policies, programmes and action plans and to enhance UN coordination on gender equality and/or women’s empowerment. However, it isn’t clear what change resulted from this training, or whether actions were taken forward (COAR, 2015).</li> <li>• In Pakistan, the results of an assessment commissioned by UNICEF identified the need for additional in-house gender capacity development, but cite that the fast-developing internally-displaced persons crisis meant these recommendations were not acted upon (COAR 2009).</li> <li>• In Pakistan, UNICEF re-established and trained a gender focal point group, and at the time of reporting were in the process of identifying a consultant to undertake thematic gender analysis. It is not yet clear how this will lead to gender mainstreaming in programming (COAR 2012).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup> This refers to training in gender mainstreaming for UNICEF staff.

◀ Table 3.5 (cont'd)

Type of main-streaming activity	No. of mentions	Examples from case study countries
<b>Training for partners<sup>b</sup></b>	43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six references to training for partners found in the CSC documents.</li> <li>• Two references provide strong examples of where training of partners led to clear actions towards gender mainstreaming:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pakistan formed a gender in education working group comprising 120 stakeholders which led to specific actions, such as the creation of core gender units and provincial working groups to support the acceleration of gender parity and equality in education; the development of gender tool-kits; and the commissioning of research studies to assess the impact of infrastructure reforms (COAR 2009).</li> <li>• In Sudan, a gender analysis for adolescent and youth programming was supported by UNICEF in two states. 300 government officials, religious leaders, social workers and youth organizations participated in capacity-building workshops to discuss the findings. This led to the adoption of a national girls' education strategy designed to address gender-based disparities and inequities, including the construction of 23 gender-sensitive water and sanitation facilities in schools (COAR 2013).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• One reference from the Nigeria 2014 COAR reports a gender review profile of the child and social protection policies/strategies led to partner training needs being assessed; training of 100 government officials; and monitoring of how those skills were used to practice. However, no examples are provided to show how these skills were used. Furthermore, it is unclear from reporting if the training was sufficiently gender- and education-focused.</li> <li>• Three examples provided little or no evidence to indicate that training provided to partners led to more effective gender mainstreaming:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Côte d'Ivoire, 202 government officials received training in gender mainstreaming, but no further information is provided on how these skills were used or monitored (COAR 2010).</li> <li>• In Nigeria, UNICEF supported training of over 100 directors and permanent secretaries on gender and social protection capacity building, and their role in policy-making processes. High-level government officials received capacity building to better articulate girl-child education social protection issues and initiatives. However, no evidence is provided to show how the skills developed from this training are being used or enforced, or how UNICEF will ensure sustainable outcomes (COAR 2013).</li> <li>• UNICEF Sudan reported training and capacity development activities in the 2010 COAR, including support to the government to adopt the girls' education plan developed in 2008; promoting gender mainstreaming by training government and NGO partners; encouraging programmes to identify gender gaps, using sex disaggregated data, and developing key indicators for gender-focused analysis and reporting. The reporting is unclear about what support is provided in these areas, and does not evidence how this led to gender mainstreaming in programming.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>b</sup> This refers to instances of UNICEF providing gender mainstreaming training to external partners, in particular government officials but also staff of other international agencies and NGOs.

◀ Table 3.5 (cont'd)

Type of main-streaming activity	No. of mentions	Examples from case study countries
<b>Gender disaggregated data<sup>c</sup></b>	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four references were found in the CSC documents.</li> <li>• Only one reference demonstrates clear progress from assessment to analysis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Pakistan, UNICEF encouraged the integration of gender disaggregation and analysis. A specific example was provided to show how this can be used to identify gender disparities, although this example was not education specific and did not provide details of how UNICEF will use this information (COAR 2012).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Most references to gender-disaggregated data refer to assessing current levels of gender disparity, but do not explain how this information is used to inform the UNICEF approach to education programming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Nigeria 2010 COAR reports sex-disaggregated surveys being undertaken, but not how the results will be used to inform programming;</li> <li>• The Pakistan 2010 COAR reports a gender and child unit being established to address the special vulnerabilities of women and girls, including disaggregation of data by age and sex;</li> <li>• The Sudan 2014 COAR uses gender disaggregated data to describe the current situation of boys and girls in education, but it is not clear how this has informed programming.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Gender integrated into situation analyses</b>	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only two references found from CSC documentation. Both references are from Nigeria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2013, reporting shows that steps were taken to develop tools to better analyse the situation of girls, monitor results, and inform decision making.</li> <li>• The 2015 COAR shows that the integration of gender into the situation analysis was specifically actioned as a result of the gender review conducted during the year.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Child-Friendly Schools<sup>d</sup></b>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One reference found in the CSC documents – Sudan 2013 COAR.</li> <li>• This example indicates that UNICEF Sudan conducted a gender analysis to identify barriers to girls in accessing and participating in targeted schools. The findings fed into a gender strategy and framework for gender mainstreaming. The report states that this led to activities such as advocacy and teacher training for more inclusive, attractive and supportive school environments for girls, especially those in rural conflict-affected areas, and principles of inclusiveness, participation and child-centeredness were implemented in 400 child-friendly schools.</li> </ul>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>258</b>	

<sup>c</sup> This refers to activities related to the production of gender-disaggregated data, or its use in programming. For example, UNICEF supported the National Institute of Statistics in Rwanda for the development of the Gender Statistics Framework (2011). In Somalia (2012), programming was based on sex-disaggregated data, while reports produced are also disaggregated to understand the impact of UNICEF interventions on girls, boys, women and men.

<sup>d</sup> Mentions of the CFS approach were counted *only insofar as the documents explicitly discussed their gender implications and/or their role in promoting girls' education*. General mentions of the CFS approach were not included in the analysis.

The five case studies showed a decrease in references to mainstreaming and the same recurrence in 2015, in response to the GAP. As seen in Table 3.6, while four out of five countries referenced gender mainstreaming activities in 2010 and 2011, the number fell to one (Sudan) in 2012 and 2013, and none did so in 2014. Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique and Nigeria reported their gender mainstreaming efforts in 2015.

The case studies identified some notable reported instances of gender mainstreaming. For instance, in Mozambique, the Zero Tolerance campaign and gender strategy components of the CFS initiative were effective examples of mainstreaming. These helped raise awareness of gender inequality in general, while making a strong statement against sexual abuse of girls in school, creating punitive mechanisms for

redress for girls who were affected. Through CFS WASH interventions targeting girls' access, toilets and water pumps have been built. Water pumps were reported to have the effect of bringing girls to school, since they could also collect water there.

In Nigeria, gender was mainstreamed in all phases of the girls' education programme (GEP) through: building an effective EMIS and developing partners' capacity to use it in training for school-based management committees, and integrated Qur'anic education.

However, the following examples in Box 3.4 from Côte d'Ivoire and Pakistan illustrate efforts to introduce gender mainstreaming that were not effective in embedding the approach in country programs.

**TABLE 3.6** Gender mainstreaming mentions: Case study country COARs

Region	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Côte d'Ivoire			✓				✓
Mozambique		✓					✓
Nigeria	✓	✓	✓				✓
Pakistan	✓	✓	✓				
Sudan		✓	✓	✓	✓		



**Côte d'Ivoire**

- 2010: A gender specialist was hired with the objective of mainstreaming gender in emergencies and post-conflict programming. The development of gender tools and templates was piloted for child survival and development and child protection programming. A gender task force was established and gender markers introduced.
- In 2014, there was recognition of the limited capacities of the office to address gender-related issues. This was set to be addressed in 2015 through the staff learning plan.
- In 2015, gender mainstreaming was referenced again when UN Women sponsored a gender score card analysis of the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming by the UN country team (UNCT). Areas for improvement included: Planning, UNCT capacities, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, and discussion of gender issues at UNCT meetings.
- There were plans to further mainstream gender in the 2017-2020 country programme.

**Pakistan**

- In 2009, the UN Gender Focal Points Informal Working Group was formed in Pakistan, enhancing the capacity to “deliver as one” in gender equity.
- In 2011, “a pivotal year for gender mainstreaming” in Pakistan, a draft Gender Strategic Plan of Action (SPAP) was drawn up to operationalize the UNICEF 2010 gender policy. Gender focal points were appointed in each programme section and a core group was formed to ensure gender is mainstreamed across programmes.
- Technical support was provided by the gender focal points at CO and in the provincial offices to ensure that clearly defined and measurable gender-quality development results were achieved for both boys and girls. Inputs were also provided for the humanitarian projects, and gender markers were allocated to the proposals received to ensure that women’s, men’s, boys’ and girls’ concerns were proportionately addressed in the programme design and implementation.
- In 2012, the UN Gender Focal Point was re-established, but UNICEF did not undertake a gender analysis in 2012 and 2013, and the planned gender work plan did not materialize. A comprehensive gender strategy is still lacking.
- In 2015, the need to strengthen gender-focused programming (emerging from the mid-term review) led the country office to recruit a gender specialist. The CO also developed multi-year work plans specifically addressing equity, gender and human rights.

The desk review found that 12 COs reported a lack of in-house specialized skills as the most important obstacle to mainstreaming gender within their programmes. All except one of the case study countries (Nigeria) participated in internal training on gender mainstreaming. In most cases, there were no clear and measurable targets for gender mainstreaming, and

as a result it has not been possible to assess the extent to which, where employed, gender mainstreaming was effective. COARs sometimes included unsubstantiated statements regarding the uptake of gender-sensitive approaches to education programming due to UNICEF influence.

**BOX 3.5****UNICEF influence on partners**

In 2010, 18 Nigerian states as well as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) had begun to implement gender-sensitive and inclusive education plans as a result of UNICEF advocacy and training.

In Pakistan in 2010, findings from a gender audit of curriculum and textbooks and a situation analysis of gender disparity in education in flood-affected areas encouraged the Secretary for Education to agree that policy-level investments in girl-friendly education infrastructure were needed.

Project evaluations were reviewed as part of the case study process<sup>68</sup> as another potential source of evidence on the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming, but the evidence is very sparse and inconsistent. Again, there were positive examples of the beginnings of gender mainstreaming, with the establishment of gender markers and programme action plans, but the lack of a clear results framework meant

that it was not possible to assess how effectively these had translated into programme activity. In 2015 however, with the release of the GAP, the case studies showed more promising integration of gender mainstreaming results into programming, so that in future years it will be possible to assess the effectiveness of its implementation

**BOX 3.6****Examples of gender mainstreaming results into programming from case studies****Nigeria, 2015**

Based on a 2015 gender review, UNICEF and partners developed an action plan that included the integration of gender analysis within the SitAn, gender assessments of WASH, education and nutrition programmes, and the evaluation of WASH, education and nutrition programmes using gender action plan performance standards. This review, guided by the SP, 2014-2017 and the GAP, enabled the country programme to shift from legislative advocacy and normative work to direct programme support and integration of gender aspects into programme results.

**Mozambique, 2015**

In November 2015, UNICEF Mozambique conducted an external gender analysis of its programming. With the support of an Eastern and Southern Africa-based gender consultant, it aimed to review UNICEF Mozambique's current programme against the GAP and support the development of a gender focus for new UN and UNICEF programming. Results included confirmation of UNICEF Mozambique's focus on the GAP priority of child marriage, as well as a commitment to several gender mainstreaming priority areas in line with national and regional priorities. This focus was reinforced with the development of UNDAF planning, in that an entire outcome area was developed that will focus on gender issues, which will, in turn, be echoed with a similar gender outcome in the UNICEF Mozambique 2017-2020 country programme of cooperation.

<sup>68</sup> The following evaluations were reviewed: for Mozambique, 'End-Cycle Evaluation of the Child-Friendly Schools Programme' (2012); for Nigeria, 'Formative Evaluation of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative' (2012) and 'Impact Evaluation of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) within the UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation' (2014); for Pakistan, 'Evaluation of Social Reintegration of Street Children Project' (2012), 'Evaluation of UNICEF Programmes to Protect Children in Emergencies' (2014), 'Mid-term Evaluation Report of the UNICEF Programme "Protecting Child Rights in Cotton Farming Areas of Pakistan' (2015), 'Evaluation of Young Champions Initiative for Girls' Education' (2015); for Sudan, UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: Accelerating Change (2012), 'End-Project Evaluation of the Youth Leadership, Empowerment, Advocacy and Development in Sudan' (2015).

As mentioned previously, stakeholder perceptions of bias in targeting initiatives might have been avoided had gender been mainstreamed into interventions from the outset, for instance through more awareness-raising activities.

---

#### IN SUMMARY:

---

There is strong evidence that gender mainstreaming efforts were inconsistent and the results unclear. There were various constraints on gender mainstreaming at national levels, including low awareness that gender mainstreaming was a mandated strategy and a lack of technical capacity in COs. Where training and expertise were introduced, the lack of clear measurable targets regarding mainstreaming has not incentivized follow through, although there are positive signs that this situation has changed since 2015.

---

### 3.2.1 Lessons learned on mainstreaming

The end-of-cycle review of the MTSP confirmed the benefits and relevance of gender mainstreaming. In response, the SP contains a renewed commitment to mainstreaming gender equality in all relevant policies, programmes and activities.<sup>69</sup>

Lessons learned:

- While gender gaps are narrowing, continuation into secondary education still needs major effort.
- Due to the intersecting nature of multiple disadvantages related to social class, location, poverty, language, disability and gender, further in-depth analysis and response are required.

- Scaling up efforts for the most marginalized requires strong partnership at global, regional, national and local levels.
- In gender equality and mainstreaming, strides have been made with respect to the collection, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated data and information. Following an evaluation in 2008, UNICEF updated its policy on gender equality. The organization is currently implementing a three-year strategic priority action plan, which is tracked with the help of 19 benchmarks, 13 of which have been operationalized to varying degrees. UNICEF has also introduced a 'gender equality marker' to track financial expenditures as a part of its results-based plans in country programmes of cooperation. While gender reviews and gender-sectoral analysis, particularly in education and child protections sectors, have become a regular feature, there is an uneven application across regions and sectors. Moreover, further effort is needed to improve capacity among staff with technical skills on gender.

The SP also commits UNICEF to:

- Including gender-related indicators at outcome and output levels for all seven outcome areas, one of which is education.
- Strengthening the use of a gender marker to track the prioritization of gender in programmatic activities and related expenditures.
- Creating objective, field-relevant indicators to accompany performance benchmarks tracking the success of gender mainstreaming.
- Developing performance indicators to monitor management strategies for mainstreaming gender in UNICEF operations, such as staff capacity.

---

<sup>69</sup> Paragraph 30 of the SP.

These provisions have the potential to strengthen monitoring and staff accountability for gender mainstreaming.

The GAP also affirms that promoting gender equality, not just gender parity, in pre-primary and primary education continues to be central to the work of UNICEF. Mainstreaming in education is to be driven by a focus on quality and learning, as well as the importance of education as a foundation for equitable gender socialization.

### 3.2.2 Lessons learned on targeting

The end-of-cycle review of the MTSP contained several recommendations on targeting girls' education that resonate with some findings of this evaluation. Key points are summarized below:

- Additional analysis should be carried out to address the agenda for young people and adolescents, among other things through a renewed focus on adolescent girls and support to post-basic education.
- The MTSP focus on equity and girls should be enhanced by more sophisticated gender analysis and interventions that consider the intersecting nature of multiple disadvantages related to social class, location, poverty, language, disability and gender.
- Financial barriers and discrimination to access need to be addressed and efforts to improve the quality of education must be strengthened.
- The intersectoral nature of child protection was highlighted during the MTSP programme cycle.

#### **In response, the SP emphasizes:**

- Improved and measurable learning outcomes and renewed involvement in secondary education.

- Synergy across different outcomes, such as challenging discrimination against girls to simultaneously contribute to improving girls' education, ending child marriage and improving maternal health.
- The empowerment of girls and women, through improved access to services and opportunities.
- Addressing gender-related needs and actions of girls, boys, fathers, mothers and communities.
- Collecting and using sex-disaggregated and other gender-related data.
- The GAP sets out four corporate priorities: advancing girls' secondary education, addressing gender-based violence, promoting gender-responsive adolescent health, and ending child marriage.

**The lessons related to gender mainstreaming and targeting girls' education that were identified in the MTSP end-of-cycle review were incorporated into the SP and the GAP.**

## 3.3 GIRLS' EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS

UNICEF girls' education interventions employ diverse implementation strategies and produce many types of outputs. The resulting outcomes provide a basis for assessing the organization's **effectiveness and the sustainability of its work in education and gender equality**. This section covers nine evaluation questions, which begin by asking to what extent UNICEF girls' education programming (i.e. its implementation strategies and programme interventions) was informed by evidence of what works, and how responsive it was to that evidence. The evaluation also examined evidence of theories of change that underpinned these programmes. We also assess the clarity of UNICEF results statements and how effective UNICEF girls' education programming was in achieving those

results. This section also considers the agency's complementarity with the work of other stakeholders at global, regional and national levels.

### 3.3.1 Use of evidence in UNICEF programming

This section reviews the extent to which UNICEF has generated and used gender analysis, gender audits and needs analysis and evidence of what works and in what context, including: 1) profiles of disadvantaged girls, 2) educational disadvantages that girls experience and, 3) system-level barriers to girls' education, as a basis for its programming throughout the evaluation period as reported in regional office annual reports and COARs and from the case studies.

While the situation analyses in each COAR described the overall situation facing children, they were mostly gender-blind, infrequently differentiating conditions or experiences on the basis of gender. In addition to the general situation analyses, many countries carried out more specialized situation analyses of particular

sub-sectors (such as pre-primary education) or sub-groups (age-related, ethnicity-related, regional, or for specific groups, for example pastoralists). Some of these included a focus on gender or girls' education. This situation seems to have changed after 2014 with the introduction of the new SP and GAP. By 2014, the analysis was becoming more sophisticated and went beyond issues of parity. There were more examples of UNICEF COs using evidence about the educational disadvantages that girls face and the system level barriers to girls' education to inform programming.

There was however, very little profiling of disadvantaged girls or deeper analysis of the situation of girls in relation to education or gender equality, with only adequate quality of evidence that gender analysis has been used to inform education planning and programming.

More information is available from the case studies. Box 3.7 gives examples of some of the additional gender analysis conducted in these countries and used to inform programming.

#### BOX 3.7

#### Examples of relevant analyses in the case study countries

- In Sudan, UNICEF assisted the MoE in developing the Girls' Education Strategic Plan, 2009–2011. This plan contained a situation analysis including socio-economic and health factors that affect women and girls.
- In Nigeria, the CO analysed MICS data, programme-wide situation analyses and annual school censuses through a gender lens.
- In Côte d'Ivoire, the 2014 SitAn highlighted unfulfilled rights and socio-economic inequalities affecting the most vulnerable children and women but did not contain profiles of disadvantaged girls or an analysis of the systemic barriers to girls' education.
- In Mozambique, a gender audit (2010) and a SitAn (2014) analysed gendered barriers to education.
- In Pakistan, the 2012 SitAn included a discussion on the educational disadvantages of girls and the system-level barriers that they face.
- In Pakistan, UNICEF conducted gender and situation analyses in 2012 and 2013. Staff in country offices appeared to have developed a strong evidence-based understanding of who is the most marginalized and how, where and with what effects on their education.

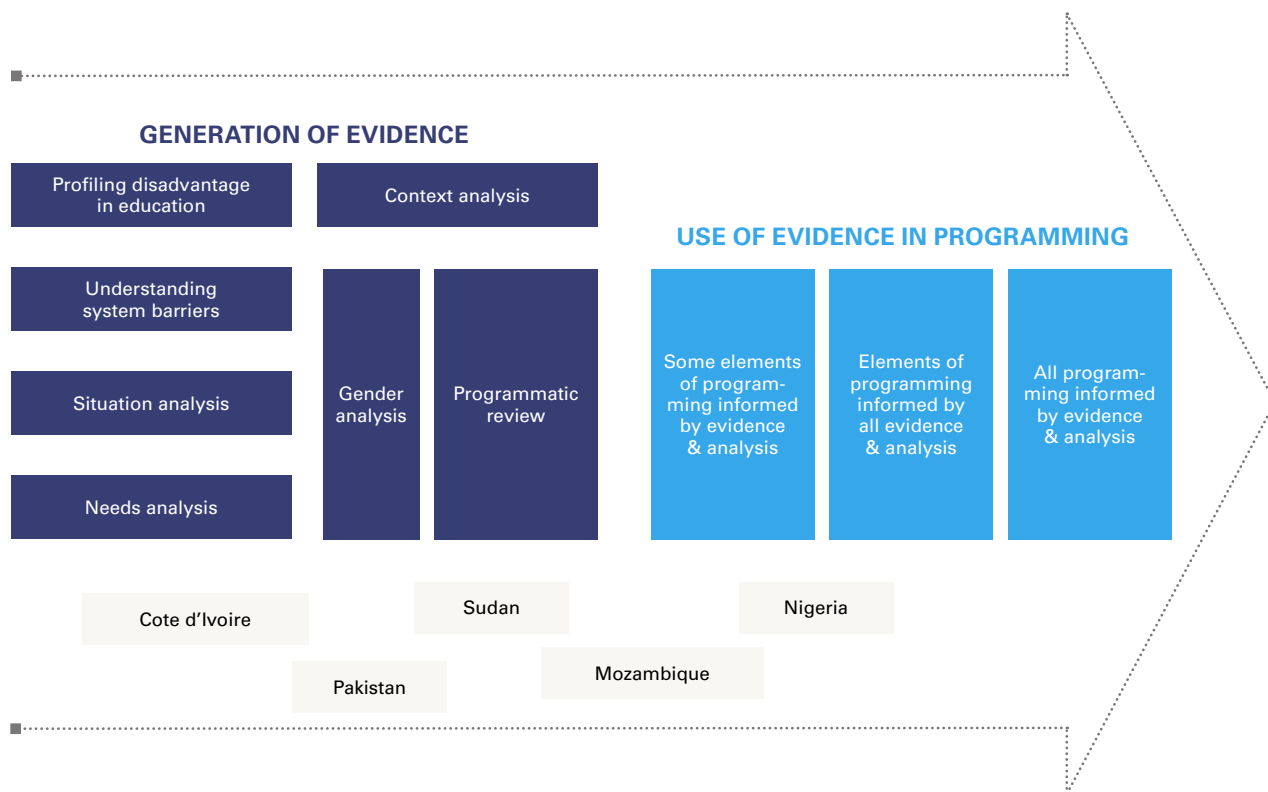
Although evidence was often generated, this was not always done in a systematic way. Figure 3.3 below shows the continuum from generation of evidence to its use in programming, with each country indicatively represented on a different part of that continuum during the evaluation period.

Each country programme had a SitAn to draw on, but these were generally too high level to inform girls' education and gender equality programming specifically. Some programmes carried out a needs assessment with reference to particular sub-sectors or groups, which were gender disaggregated and used in some cases. Only one of the five case study countries carried

out gender-based profiling. Gender analyses were carried out in most offices to differing extents, but there were few cases where gender analysis informed the whole of the education programming.

Added to these background analyses were programmatic reviews and context analyses which were carried out periodically. Some of these resulted in education and gender equality programme changes, but not all. Consequently, it was possible to find examples of elements of programming which were based on gender analysis, evidence of what works in which context and a needs analysis, but not all programming was informed by evidence and analysis.

**FIGURE 3.3** Continuum of evidence generation and use



In **Nigeria**, UNICEF GEP programming demonstrated an understanding of the profiles of disadvantaged girls, the educational disadvantages they faced, and the system-level barriers to their education, which was informed by gender analysis, but this did not extend to all of their programming. The responsiveness of the enrolment drives and cash transfer interventions could be tracked explicitly to the analysis of the situation and barriers girls faced. However, interventions targeting education quality did not show a similar grounding in situation analysis. For example, various sources reported that the increase of female enrolment had resulted in overcrowding in primary education.<sup>70</sup> UNICEF programming had not taken context and available resources into account, and interview and observational data from this evaluation showed that the continued emphasis on access was disproportionate to the investments in improving the quality of education in schools.

UNICEF staff noted that monitoring and evaluation was embedded in the programme design cycle. They also reported that with each implementation of the mapping and listing tool, they reflected on the research process and used what they learned to improve both the programming for girls and the quality of data collected. They also responded well to changes in context (e.g. Ebola, intercommunal violence and cholera outbreaks) and recognized the requirement for better coordination of their response.

In **Mozambique**, some components of UNICEF programming were informed by analyses and a specific gender audit, but the programme was not coherent. The two policy initiatives, the gender strategy and the Zero Tolerance Campaign, were well informed by gender analysis, addressed the profiles of disadvantaged girls, and articulated the system level barriers to their education. Few of the school system-based components introduced within the CFS approach responded particularly to the situation

facing girls and the barriers to education they encountered. This was despite the 2010 gender audit stating:

*“Girls’ performance will not automatically improve and reach the level of boys unless schools become gender-responsive.... Women teachers - and men teachers, too - need gender training in order to help them reach a full understanding of the complexities of gender relations.”*

In 2014, after the MTR review, UNICEF used a context analysis and fiscal space analysis of the education sector (among other sectors) to respond to the programme context and available resources by closing the CFS initiative. Although the initiative was increasing access to school and retention, there was no learning improvement and it was too costly for the government to take on.

In **Sudan**, UNICEF girls’ education programming was informed by situational, needs-based response and the identification of barriers to girls’ education. The extent to which these strategies and analyses fed into programmatic design was mixed. Situational analysis and analysis of barriers were incorporated, but it is less clear how gender analysis fed into the programmatic design. Programmes were responsive to: natural disasters and conflict (through the provision of essential education supplies, temporary learning spaces, gender-sensitive WASH facilities, and training on education in emergencies for parent-teacher association members); and were responsive to evidence from analysis of EMIS data revealing inadequate resource allocation to basic education as a key barrier. Only 2.7 per cent of Gross Domestic Product is spent on education. UNICEF Sudan engaged with the MoE and advocated for increased domestic spending on basic education.

UNICEF **Pakistan** conducted gender and situation analyses in 2012 and 2013. Staff in the CO appeared to have developed a strong evidence-based understanding of who is most marginalized, how, where and with what effects on their education. But there is little evidence available explaining how the findings from these analyses were used to inform the design and delivery of UNICEF education and gender equality programmes. UNICEF responded to emergency situations during the evaluation period. Temporary learning centres were established to accommodate displaced communities, where some girls experienced schooling for the first time. However, UNICEF did not respond programmatically to the lack of secondary places for girls.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, there was no specific gender analysis, but the SitAn and the MICS informed programming. The structured use of in-depth situational analyses increased towards the end of the evaluation period. It remains unclear, however, to what extent this process of analysis aligns with the programme cycle and how these analyses were updated over time. The general situation analysis of children in Côte d'Ivoire did not contain specific profiles of girls and a diagnostic of systemic disadvantages. While relevant barriers and issues such as access, education quality, and governance were all targeted as part of CO efforts in relation to girls' education, there was an imbalance in the ratio of investment in each of these areas. This was especially the case with regards to access to education and the quality of education for girls. The case study found that the quality of education was being undermined by a focus on access, and that programming decisions were not responsive to the lack of government institutional capacity, investment in education and the slow rate of changing social norms.

There is strong evidence that COs generated much of the required background evidence of the situation of education in their particular

country context. Some COs carried out more detailed analyses on particular sections of society, but these were not systematically carried out with a gender perspective. Nor were there many COs that carried out focused research into the situation of disadvantaged girls and how they were educationally disadvantaged. Contextual analyses did not always include analysis to determine the fiscal space available for the introduction of particular interventions, and from the desk and case studies it appears that not all COs used all of this background information to inform their programming in girls' education and gender equality.

There is some evidence that UNICEF programming was designed using a situation analysis, gender analysis, and needs analysis that informed the adaptation of its programming.

### 3.3.2 Theories of Change

The evaluation themes and questions were framed by the Foundational Theory of Change. Each of the country case study reports includes an assessment of the extent to which the Foundational Theory of Change (and related assumptions) are supported by the evaluation evidence. The conclusions presented in

---

#### IN SUMMARY:

Although SitAns are produced by all COs, few COs produce dedicated gender analyses or analyses with a specific focus on girls' education. Also, while some other types of analyses did incorporate gender issues, this was not done consistently, and they did not always contain profiles of disadvantaged girls. There is adequate evidence that some, but not all, girls' education and gender equality programming was informed by evidence.

---

section 4 are derived from the synthesis of all of

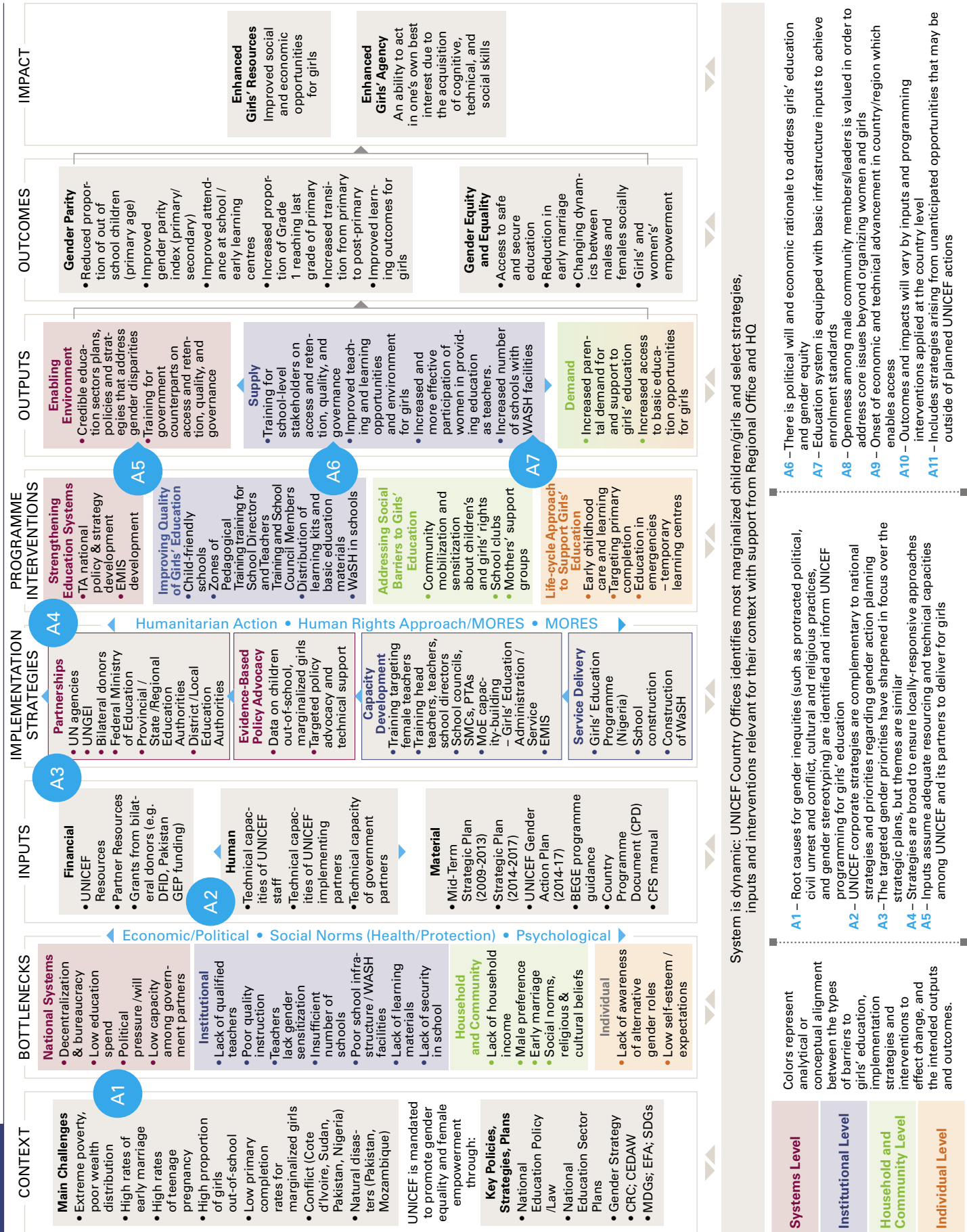


the evidence gathered throughout the evaluation process. They also provide an indication of parts of the Foundational Theory of Change, in particular the supporting assumptions that hold true, and where the evidence diverges from this and suggests an alternative narrative.

In the UNICEF programming cycle, CPDs set out the national context – typically informed by a SitAn (often in relation to the global context) – the country programme elements, how this relates to national priorities and the UNDAF, and the programme components. It was not until 2015 and the introduction of programme strategy notes that COs were required to develop theories of change to support the design of new programmes, and were provided guidance to do this.

During the country case studies, the evaluation teams found little or no evidence of explicit theories of change underpinning the rationales for education programming in general or activities supporting girls' education specifically. Therefore, this section summarizes the changing national contexts of the five case study countries and assesses the *implicit* logic that, in the estimation of the evaluation teams, underpinned girls' education interventions during the evaluation period. Figure 3.4 (and Appendix C) below presents a synthesized Theory of Change adapted from the foundational Theory of Change on the basis of the evidence collected through the case studies.

FIGURE 3.4 Adapted Theory of Change



### **All five case study countries identified similar bottlenecks to girls' education**

**At the systems level,** national education systems in all five case study countries were characterized by relatively low or uneven expenditure on education, leading either to regional bias or underspending on particular parts of the education system. High levels of bureaucracy and decentralization also made it difficult for UNICEF to disburse funding consistently between federal and state levels. This was compounded by a lack of technical capacity across government, particularly in gender mainstreaming.

**At the institutional level,** schools and the communities and children they served faced barriers relating to lack of teachers, poor quality instruction (including the lack of gender-sensitive pedagogy), lack of schools and poor quality infrastructure (including WASH facilities) and learning materials in schools. These barriers reflect shortages of financial and technical capacity among government partners to provide the quality of education provision that was in demand.

**At the household and community levels,** poverty and extreme poverty was a common barrier to girls' education across all five case study countries. Poverty-related barriers stop girls going to school because of the direct costs and opportunity costs experienced by households with little or no income. This is compounded by under-resourced education systems that are unable to subsidize poor families through interventions like bursaries, scholarships or stipends. Households' inability to afford schooling is also compounded by social norms, religious and cultural beliefs, contributing to a greater burden on girls to fulfil household duties, mistrust of secular education among conservative populations, and teenage

pregnancy and early marriage (the latter often being used as a practical household strategy to escape poverty). These barriers combine in different ways, depending on context, to culminate in a preference among poor households to educate boys rather girls.

At the individual level, a combination of systemic, institutional and household barriers contribute to low self-esteem and low levels of aspiration among girls with regard to education and their life chances generally, which is exacerbated by a lack of awareness of alternative gender roles or pathways they could take.

### **Across all five case study countries, UNICEF responded effectively to major national and regional shocks**

The bottlenecks that are generally described in Figure 3.4 are prevalent at multiple levels of national education systems. They tend to reflect normative situations in these countries. However, barriers to girls' education are very context-specific. The national, regional and district contexts in which UNICEF worked were all very different, and during the evaluation period, communities and education systems experienced major shocks. Across all five countries, UNICEF demonstrated a flexible approach to programming in response to different types of shocks.

In Pakistan, UNICEF adopted an education in emergency (EiE) approach in response to catastrophic floods and earthquakes.<sup>71</sup> Throughout this period, UNICEF education programming decisions were understandably very much shaped by these humanitarian disasters. UNICEF diverted its resources to support relief interventions and maintained a focus on education through the provision of temporary learning centres (TLCs), benefiting children whose schools had been destroyed or were

---

<sup>71</sup> Pakistan Case Study Report, pp.25.

not functioning at the time. While this intervention was not targeted at girls, it unintentionally specifically benefited some girls where the TLCs provided the first time they had been able to access education.

In Côte d'Ivoire, UNICEF also adopted an EiE approach in response to institutional crisis and conflict.<sup>72</sup> Côte d'Ivoire went through a phase of high insecurity because of the post-election crisis in 2007, which resulted in mass school closures. During the crisis (2009-2012), UNICEF did not specifically target girls, but sought to reach as many children as possible.

In Sudan, UNICEF implemented an EiE approach in response to conflict.<sup>73</sup> UNICEF, along with other aid organizations and bi-laterals, were prevented from accessing some remote areas due to fighting and insecurity, and were restricted from implementing activities that were not deemed feasible. This lack of access played a major role in limiting progress on girls' education. UNICEF made efforts to respond to this in their programming by continuing to support the MoE systems and coordination functions in Khartoum, and ensuring programming was flexible in border areas to accommodate internally displaced persons (IDP) and returnees. In many places, schools were set up in close proximity to IDP camps, which meant girls did not have to travel far for water and firewood, helping to increase enrolment rates in these areas. A UNICEF education officer commented that many families in rural areas were nomads. Traditionally within these communities, many did not see the value of putting children (either boys or girls) in schools. The displacement caused by the conflict meant

many families were forced to stay in one area in IDP camps. Being permanently located in one place provided the opportunity for these families to send their girls to school. UNICEF targeted these families as part of its larger awareness-raising activities, which encouraged families to consider the importance of education. This had the unexpected positive benefit of increasing the attendance of nomadic (now IDP) girls in schools.

### **Programme interventions were too broad and incoherent to effectively improve girls' education outcomes**

Outside the emergency phase of UNICEF education programming, its approach to programme interventions in support of girls' education was characterized by fragmented and incoherent programme approaches that did not systematically target gender inequality and girls' education.

The redesigned Girls' Education Programme (GEP) 3 in Nigeria<sup>74</sup> during the second half of the evaluation period (2012-2015), funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), demonstrated the most explicit and well-articulated Theory of Change across the five case study countries. The Nigeria case study found evidence that all UNICEF staff and consultants were aware of the theories of change relevant to their portfolios. Each component of the GEP3 had its own strategy paper, with an embedded ToC. This situation contrasts with the earlier years of the evaluation period (2009-2012), during which UNICEF appeared to prioritize breadth over depth in its approach to girls' education. Although inclusive, this approach lacked clarity and coherence and

---

<sup>72</sup> Cote d'Ivoire Case Study Report, pp.9.

<sup>73</sup> Sudan Case Study Report, pp.27.

<sup>74</sup> The GEP has operated in three phases since its inception: GEP 1 ran from 2005 until 2008; GEP 2 ran from 2009 until 2012; and GEP 3 began in 2013 and is due to run until 2019. For additional information on GEP 3, please see: <https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-202643>.

constrained the effectiveness of the UNICEF approach to girls' education, ultimately leading to the redesign of the programme.

In Mozambique, the main UNICEF intervention was the CFS initiative, which takes a holistic multi-sectoral approach to improving the quality of the school environment to promote effective learning. The global Theory of Change behind the CFS model assumes a high level of customization and attention to cross-cutting areas of marginalization at the country level. However, the case study found few references to girls and none to gender equality. This made it difficult to conclude which specific bottlenecks to girls' education the programme set out to address; in this respect, many of the school-based CFS interventions were gender-blind. It was difficult to distinguish how interventions addressed marginalization caused by poverty compared to the marginalization of girls caused by gender-related norms. In other words, the interventions do not seem to have been designed to have a differential effect on girls' participation in school.

In Sudan, UNICEF responded to the political reality of working with a Ministry of Education that did not want to specifically target girls' education, which led to a shift in focus from girls' education to education for both boys and girls. While adopting a pragmatic approach, UNICEF was able to deliver some targeted interventions such as setting up a girls' education administration within the MoE. Generally, however, there was little evidence of any targeted approaches that would effectively address the specific bottlenecks that girls in Sudan faced in accessing a quality education.

In Pakistan, UNICEF did deliver the "Every Child in School" initiative and WASH improvements through the CFS programme. It also focused on community mobilization to promote girls'

education by working with school management committees (SMCs) and mother support groups (MSGs), with some success. However, a key finding from the case study was that the major problem facing girls' education in Pakistan was the shortage of girls' schools, and especially a lack of access to secondary schooling. Despite this, UNICEF maintained its focus on universal primary education. On the whole, there was little evidence of an implicit Theory of Change that reflected the social and policy contexts or any changes to these contexts (such as the growing lack of secondary provision for girls). Programming was target-driven and characterized by input monitoring rather than by a strong rationale and strategically coordinated approach.

From the case studies, it appears that prior to 2012, UNICEF education programming was concentrated on achieving greater access to schools (aligning with MDG2) and effectively responding to emergency situations limiting that access. Although some gender strategies were developed, there is little evidence of them being used systematically to frame and inform CO education programming decisions about how to target improvements in girls' education. With the exception of the GEP3 in Nigeria, there was little evidence of a coherent implicit or explicit Theory of Change that analysed the country context or informed a strong rationale for UNICEF strategic and programmatic interventions to specifically improve girls' education and gender equality.

A distinct lack of evidence to enable an assessment of the organization's rationale and strategies to support education and gender equality is illustrated in the next section, which looks at how well the expected outputs and outcomes of targeted activities in girls' education were defined, and the extent to which they were delivered.

## IN SUMMARY:

Some education programmes were underpinned by implicit but incomplete theories of change. For most other programmes there was little significant evidence that they were supported by a clear Theory of Change. Implicit theories of change partly reflected the Foundational Theory of Change developed for this evaluation. The Foundational Theory of Change acknowledges that COs should select strategies, inputs and interventions relevant to their context, but from the case study evidence, the implicit theories of changes were fragmented due to crises (Pakistan, Côte d'Ivoire); opportunistic programming (Nigeria); pragmatic programming decisions (Sudan); or lacked coherence given the education context (Mozambique). In summary, during the evaluation period theories of change were not evident as a key tool used for designing programmes.

### 3.3.3 Clarity of results statements

In order to assess the results of UNICEF programming in girls' education and gender equity with any accuracy, it is necessary to understand clearly what the programmes

intended to achieve. There was a change in the way that UNICEF reported these intentions over the evaluation period. Results were sometimes reported against high-level targets such as MDGs or the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP). In 2011, "programme component results" (PCRs) were introduced. In 2013, the term "intermediate results" (IR) was introduced, and in 2014, PCRs were replaced by "outcome statements" and IRs by "output statements". During the first three years, COARs did not use the terms "outputs" and "outcomes". There seems not to have been a requirement for baselines as a rule, and guidance for measurement of outputs and outcomes only started to appear after 2010.

Table 3.7 is based on the findings from the desk review, and shows that although attempts were made to be clearer about what was to be achieved through UNICEF programming, there was very little evidence of these statements being measurable. Before 2013, less than half of COARs contained measurable output statements and it was only in 2013 and 2014 that more than one COAR (i.e. two) contained *output* statements that were *all* measurable. Only three out of 35 countries ever achieved this.

**TABLE 3.7** Proportion of COARs with measurable output and outcome statements for girls' education, 2009-2015

Year	How results were reported	% of COARs with measurable output statements	% of COARs with measurable outcome statements
2009	Results were reported in an ad hoc way and there were rarely clear result statements at output level. At the outcome level, in some instances, MDGs or CPAP results were referenced.	32%	47%
2010	Results continued to be reported in an ad hoc manner.	33%	43%
2011	COARs tended to reference result areas from the MTSP along with PCRs.	9%	43%
2012	All COARs included PCR and IR statements.	65%	74%
2013	All COARs included PCR and IR statements.	56%	23%
2014	All COARs included output and outcome statements.	54%	48%
2015	All COARs included output and outcome statements.	50%	38%

*Outcome* statements were more clearly stated, with over a third of countries every year (except for 2012, when there is a lack of data for some countries) having some measurable outcome statements. There were five countries for which all outcome statements were measurable in at least one year during the evaluation period. This is perhaps because outcome statements tended to reference increased enrolment or improvements in WASH facilities – outcomes that were perhaps easier to describe, quantify, measure and report.

In a few instances, COs had both measurable and evidenced outcome and output statements, but only two out of the four countries with measurable and evidenced output or outcome statements could show positive achievement in delivering those outputs or outcomes. These were in the latter half of the evaluation period.

This situation was also evident in the case studies. None of the case study countries had measurable output and/or outcome indicators every year. Only Sudan had some measurable outcome indicators with some evidence of achievement for four out of the seven years. Other countries had these for three or fewer years. At the output level, by 2015, only three of the five countries had measurable and evidenced output statements. During the evaluation period, none of the case study countries had outcomes for which there was sufficient evidence to clearly determine achievement against all of the intended results.

As shown in Table 3.7 above, most COARs did not have measurable outputs and outcomes, while targets or objectives for result statements were not made clear in many of them. In some cases, the language used was too vague

to enable the assessment of achievements against any targets – for instance, “increased demand for quality education”; “adequate government plans to reduce gender disparities”; or “evidence-based strategic reforms and partnerships for improving quality and learning strengthened”.

In other cases, quantitative targets were set that were not indicative of achievement of the required result, e.g. “learning outcomes improved in basic subjects, including life skills and peace education, through training of 2,000 regular teachers and 2,000 unqualified teachers,” or were not possible to measure, e.g. “capacity of primary schools enhanced to provide appropriate care and support for children with special needs, including children with disabilities, in at least ten deprived districts”.

The example below from Côte d’Ivoire shows how reporting often concentrated on a description of activities, with no link between the activities undertaken and the outputs or outcomes to be.

*“A large number of children and teachers at public primary schools received school supplies and educational materials through the kits and textbooks distribution program initiated by the government in 2012 as a result of UNICEF education campaigns during the five last years”<sup>75</sup>.*

This improved somewhat during the latter part of the evaluation period; activities were reported on with more detail, but without a straightforward link between output and activities. In the example below from Mozambique, the link between the output and the activity is more apparent.

---

<sup>75</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Cote d’Ivoire Annual Report, 2013’, UNICEF, Abidjan, 2014, <[https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Cote\\_dlvoire\\_COAR\\_2013.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Cote_dlvoire_COAR_2013.pdf)>.

**“OUTPUT 2: Capacities developed for the implementation of strategic reforms in quality management and standards and teacher development.**

*In 2014, UNICEF continued to support the Ministry of Education for the drafting of guidelines for implementing quality standards. UNICEF provided technical support as a member of the national technical team established by the National Directorate for Guaranteeing and Managing Quality. Currently these standards and guidelines are being tested in 600 schools (expanded from 240 schools end 2013)”<sup>76</sup>.*

Targets or objectives for result statements were not made clear in most COARs. While outputs or outcomes may be measurable if presented alongside targets, there were often no clear baselines or benchmarks to demonstrate achievement.

Given the lack of precision in setting targets, and the lack of established baselines and reporting, it has not been possible to determine the extent to which UNICEF objectives and intended results in girls’ education and gender equality programming were realized during the evaluation period.

The SP introduced a results framework that included access, completion and GPI targets at a global impact level and gave outcome and output targets (expressed as a number of countries). There were also targets for the number of countries achieving high enrolment, increased learning outcomes, higher attendance rates for

the poorest quintile, increases in government expenditure on education, increased school readiness, and access to formal and non-formal education for children in emergencies. Many of these would be very difficult to measure with any degree of certainty. There is little evidence therefore that UNICEF staff developed clear and measurable outputs and outcomes for girls’ education activities. In February 2016 (after the evaluation period), UNICEF published guidance notes on the strategic plan (SP 2014-2017) country profiles and education indicators.<sup>77</sup>

#### IN SUMMARY:

There is strong evidence that results statements for girls’ education were often absent or ill-defined. There is insufficient evidence from either the desk review or the case studies to determine the extent to which anticipated results were achieved.

### 3.3.4 Complementarity of girls’ education programmes with those of partners

Complementarity among programmes is an important aspect of programme **effectiveness**. Poor coordination among girls’ education programmes may lead to overlaps and inefficiencies. If UNICEF complements other programmes by maximizing its comparative advantages of convening power, strong field links, experience, and successful advocacy for girls’ education, then UNICEF programmes will be more effective. There is evidence that this is already taking place in some contexts.

<sup>76</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Mozambique Annual Report, 2014’, UNICEF, Maputo, 2015, <[https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Mozambique\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2014.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Mozambique_Annual_Report_2014.pdf)>

<sup>77</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Strategic Plan 2014–2017 Country Profiles and Education Indicators: Guidance Notes’, UNICEF, New York, 2016, <[https://www.unicef.org/education/files/SP\\_Education\\_Profiles\\_and\\_Indicators\\_Guidance\\_Feb\\_25.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/education/files/SP_Education_Profiles_and_Indicators_Guidance_Feb_25.pdf)>.



For example, in Mozambique, UNICEF focused on primary education programming while the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) focused on secondary education.

### Global level

Amongst global actors in education, UNICEF is seen as an important partner with convening power and capacity to advocate for policy change.

*“They have this tremendous capacity to convene partners in a way that I think other agencies can’t to the same extent; in advocacy, particularly around child rights, and in sharing credible data with regard to girls’ education which other organizations can use.”*

(GPE interviewee)

The global/regional-level interviews provided several insights into the ways in which UNICEF activities complemented those of UNGEI and GPE in particular, as described in Box 3.9 below.

### UNICEF and other UN agencies

Evidence from the case studies found a number of examples of UNICEF working together with and complementing other UN agencies, but it often appears that this complementarity is opportunistic rather than strategic, except perhaps for the examples of ‘One UN’ work. In Sudan, UNICEF complemented the work of UNESCO to improve school infrastructure by providing interventions aimed at improving the quality of education and school resources. In Côte d’Ivoire, school feeding by the World Food Programme (WFP) complemented UNICEF education activities, and UNICEF work with mother and daughter clubs complemented the work of UNFPA with regard to limiting

#### BOX 3.9

#### UNICEF complementarity with UNGEI and GPE

**UNGEI:** The consensus among global and regional stakeholders interviewed was that the relationship between UNICEF and UNGEI was highly complementary at the global level. UNGEI played an important role in global advocacy, making the case for prioritizing girls’ education among donors. UNICEF COs then took this message to their national partners. In turn, UNICEF experience on the ground fed into the UNGEI knowledge base and provided evidence for its advocacy. UNGEI was able to pioneer new priorities, in particular a developing focus on girls’ secondary education, which UNICEF was also interested in pursuing.

**GPE:** During the evaluation period, UNICEF complemented the GPE in various ways, contributing to the latter’s goal-setting, policy harmonization, strategic analysis, monitoring and evaluation and joint advocacy efforts. At the national level, the UNICEF partnership with GPE takes different forms, depending on the circumstances. For instance, in Sudan, UNICEF facilitated GPE involvement, co-chairing the Local Education Group with the government. In other cases, UNICEF is an implementing agency for the GPE. The UNICEF officer leading the out-of-school children initiative pointed out that there was a powerful synergy between UNICEF national-level advocacy on education and the ability of GPE ability to channel substantial resources. For instance, as has already been stated, UNICEF helped governments to obtain GPE funding in Nigeria, Sudan and Côte d’Ivoire.

teenage pregnancy. In Pakistan, several UN agencies, including UNICEF, worked together through the One Programme, which strengthened coherence and efficiency of the UN system in Pakistan; box 3.10 shows examples of this.

### **Complementarity with national and local partners**

At the national level, UNICEF girls' education programmes clearly complemented those of governments (this was reported in all case studies). However, evidence of complementarity with other stakeholders, such as bilateral donors and NGOs, is inconclusive. In Mozambique, UNICEF participated with bilateral and multilateral donors in a sector-wide approach (SWAp), but respondents commented on the low level of direct cooperation with other agencies working in similar fields or geographic areas. In Nigeria, UNICEF implemented the DFID Girls' Education Programme (GEP) and worked closely with another DFID programme, the Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN, implemented by Cambridge Education), drawing upon UNICEF methods and tools in school management committee capacity-building.

The Mozambique, Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire case studies found coordination with other organizations working on education was uneven at both

national and district levels. Although there were instances where organizations felt that collaboration (in one instance, in terms of adherence to UNICEF standards of implementation) was beneficial, some pointed to overlaps in several areas of their operation. In Sudan, there is evidence that the gender in education sector meetings coordinated by UNICEF did not lead to collaboration with donor agencies and NGOs. A UNICEF HQ staff member commented that UNICEF programmes tended not to coordinate as closely with international NGO programmes as they do with government programmes, but that UNICEF can sometimes provide groups of NGOs with a voice vis-a-vis governments as a result of these high-level connections.

#### **IN SUMMARY:**

There is strong evidence to suggest that COs work closely with governments, which helps to ensure complementarity of programming. There is also strong evidence of UNICEF complementarity with other stakeholders, in particular global initiatives. The evidence regarding bilateral agencies and NGOs is insufficient, although it suggests that there is less coordination with NGOs than with other types of partners.

#### **BOX 3.10**

#### **UNICEF complementarity with other UN agencies in Pakistan**

- UNFPA and UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Health on curriculum development and the delivery of sexual health and family planning education guidelines;
- UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO and the International Labour Organisation worked together to establish an adolescent girls' platform and worked at policy level with provincial and local governments;
- In Punjab, a more conservative province, the joint focus was on child marriage;
- UNFPA collaborated with UNICEF on technical support to government, e.g. Article 25A;
- UNICEF worked closely with UNESCO on out-of-school children initiatives; and
- UNESCO and UNICEF meet regularly at CO Representative level to discuss all aspects of collaboration.

### 3.3.5 Unintended consequences of girls' education interventions

In any programme, there will be unintended consequences. These may be positive – for instance, if UNICEF introduced a particularly successful approach to teaching in a set of schools, which teachers from other schools heard about and wanted to replicate. They can also be negative, where, for example, instead of teachers wanting to replicate the approach proffered by UNICEF, the children left other schools to join UNICEF schools.

The desk review found that throughout the documents reviewed, reports of unintended consequences – whether positive or negative – were limited. The Nigeria, Sudan and Pakistan case study reports specifically inquired into unintended consequences and reported examples of positive unintended consequences benefitting individual girls and women at the local level. These included increased resources, heightened confidence and self-esteem, employment for girls, individual empowerment, and increased social capital within their communities.

Many of the unintended consequences in Nigeria related to shifting gender dynamics in communities. For instance, several women interviewed for the case study, who were part of the school-based management committees and mothers' associations, stated that they had experienced changes in their relationships with their husbands and other males in the community. Through their community mobilization training, and the authority and purpose they gained because of their role in getting girls into schools, they were able to engage more positively with the men in their community.

In Sudan, as a result of the new demand for girls' education, local communities needed teachers who spoke the local language and were sensitive to the context. In the past, the

GoS had placed teachers from other areas in schools with resourcing gaps, but this had been problematic. To address this gap, some girls who completed secondary school supported by UNICEF were given positions as teachers in the schools. This filled a teacher gap while at the same time benefiting women teachers and the communities. This was not originally intended, but was a positive consequence of young women completing their studies through UNICEF-supported programmes.

In Pakistan, girls who had previously never attended school enrolled in UNICEF temporary learning centres for displaced communities and were subsequently able to enter mainstream education.

The *negative* unintended consequences of UNICEF girls' education interventions appear to have been due to a lack of strategic or long-term thinking. Barriers were identified and addressed, but the attendant assumptions and risks were not explored. Those that were identified in the case studies were: 1) school overcrowding, with an attendant lack of teachers and a reduction in educational quality; and 2) stakeholders' concerns about the exclusive or specific focus on girls. We expand on these issues in the section below. Both may have been predicted with more strategic thinking and a 'Do No Harm' approach to programming, which is well-known to UNICEF in its humanitarian interventions.

#### **School overcrowding**

Enrolment drives aimed at girls and their parents led to over-subscribed and/or over-crowded schools in Nigeria, Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire. According to the Nigeria case study report, overcrowding was the result of stimulated demand and insufficient investment in school infrastructure. This threatened to reverse gains in girls' access to school. In Sudan, an enrolment drive increased demand to such an extent

that schools lacked teachers and were forced to turn girls away, causing disappointment and resentment. School overcrowding also had a negative impact on educational quality. The fact that this problem arose in three out of five case studies because of a common UNICEF activity (i.e. the enrolment drives) suggests that it may be a common issue. This was a symptom of one of the criticisms levelled at UNICEF in the global/regional interviews – namely, the tendency not to consider the resource requirements of governments in coping with the effects of UNICEF programming.

### Concerns about the focus on girls

In some communities, the UNICEF focus on girls was perceived as creating an unfair advantage, which caused resentment among many stakeholders (Mozambique, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Sudan case study reports). In Sudan, even some UNICEF staff expressed the view that targeting girls was tantamount to disadvantaging boys. These findings resonate with comments by a senior DFID counterpart who suggested that UNICEF needs to take a holistic approach to promoting gender equality rather than concentrating on the education sector as the only vehicle to this end.

Individual case study reports contain other evidence of unintended consequences. For instance, in Côte d'Ivoire, volunteer teachers focusing on girl protection and members of 'Clubs Meres-Filles' were exposed to pressure from parents following their efforts to discourage child marriage in their locality.

There were only a few mitigating actions reported in evidence sources. In Côte d'Ivoire, UNICEF responded to perceptions of bias towards girls by distributing schoolbags to boys as well as girls, while in Sudan, UNICEF changed its declared focus from girls' education to include boys too. Such responses, while regarded as rebalancing efforts, have the

potential to damage gender equality unless they are accompanied by gendered approaches and social mobilization efforts to raise awareness about inequality. A less controversial mitigating action (though still lacking a long-term view) was reported in Sudan, where UNICEF now tailors its enrolment drives to the number of school places available in order to prevent the problem of schools being over-subscribed.

Although the Foundational Theory of Change sets out several assumptions and risks, there was no evidence in the country case studies of mitigating actions being taken to address programming assumptions that had not held true, or risks that had turned into actual issues.

Overall, there is some evidence that positive and negative consequences arose as a result of UNICEF girls' education and gender equality programming and that negative consequences were mitigated.

---

#### IN SUMMARY:

With regard to targeted girls' education programming, there is strong evidence of both positive and negative unintended consequences. There is no evidence in relation to gender mainstreaming, as this strategy was rarely implemented. While there is significant evidence from Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire that COs took steps to mitigate adverse unintended consequences, there was no evidence of these risks having been considered systematically prior to implementation.

---

### 3.3.6 Programme effectiveness

This section examines the evidence from the desk review and case studies to understand what type of programme interventions have been effective in supporting the achievement of education outcomes for girls, and gender

parity in education outcomes. The desk review found that there were two major areas in which UNICEF was seen to be effective in this regard.

The first was in advocacy and policy dialogue. There is strong evidence that global and national partners consider UNICEF effective in advocating for an enabling environment for girls' education (global/regional-level interviews), and credit UNICEF with putting girls' education on the political agenda in many countries. UNICEF field experience and UNGEI access at a global level meant that this partnership was very successful at advocating for girls' education and gender equality issues.

*"UNICEF's agreement to host UNGEI was a really big contribution."*

(Bilateral partner interviewee)

*"Communication is truly UNICEF's niche. They know how to touch hearts. They use media effectively."*

(World Bank interviewee)

At a national level, UNICEF effectiveness in advocacy is apparent in each of the case studies through enrolment drives focusing on awareness-raising and community mobilization (Nigeria, Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire case study reports), where UNICEF carries out campaigns at the beginning of the school year advocating strongly for parents to send their children to school. This finding needs to be considered in light of the evidence about the negative unintended consequences of some enrolment drives. In Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan, the case studies also point to the existence of sex-disaggregated data collection as successes in capacity development around installation and data collection for EMIS.

Advocating for government policy changes and implementation was highlighted as a success in the Nigeria, Pakistan, Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique and Sudan case study reports.

However, changes in budget allocations for education did not always follow as a result of these interventions, for instance in Pakistan. Also, in Sudan, although policies were in place, implementation did not always follow due to lack of resources or full government buy-in.

At the country level, the desk review found that service delivery was judged to be effective more often than other types of girls' education interventions in COARs. This was echoed in the Mozambique, Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan case studies and in Nigeria, where stakeholders universally and emphatically cited construction and maintenance of classrooms, water pumps and sex-separate improved latrines as effective interventions leading to greater demand for them.

Despite these reported successes, the case studies found that while there was a lot of evidence about the different types of girls' education programme interventions and activities, there was little reported evidence about their effectiveness. In Nigeria, although *"girls' education interventions were largely responsive to girls' needs and the barriers to education those girls faced, the various girls' education interventions evaluated were insufficiently effective within the time frame when measured strictly against the MTSP and SP results. Using the country office's own rolling work plan, the programme did not meet the country programme target either"*. In Mozambique, the effectiveness of the CFS initiative (the main programme targeting girls) was low, and most of the school system-based CFS components were discontinued. In Côte d'Ivoire, it was found that the push for access without corresponding attention to quality limited the effectiveness of investments made in girls' education in general.

Overall, reported successes tended to be successes for education as a whole, rather than specifically for girls or in terms of addressing gender inequalities. For instance, the desk

review and the case studies found substantial anecdotal evidence around increased female enrolment but also found attribution to UNICEF difficult. Also, due to the absence and/or weakness of results statements around girls' education and gender equality (and corresponding evidence to substantiate them), it is difficult to say whether UNICEF programming was effective in supporting the achievement of education outcomes for girls, and gender equality in education outcomes.

#### IN SUMMARY:

There is strong anecdotal evidence that: 1) advocating for policy changes and implementation; and 2) building and maintaining school infrastructure were seen as the most successful types of intervention in terms of achieving education outcomes for girls and gender equality in education. There is also significant evidence that enrolment drives and EMIS capacity development were seen as having been successful, but that these tended to be too modest in scale to make a lasting difference to girls.

### 3.3.7 Scalability and sustainability of supported interventions

Effective interventions need to be sustained if they are to continue to impact positively on the lives of children and girls in particular. The evaluation assessed the extent to which UNICEF had supported interventions that were capable either of being taken to scale (i.e. expanded from a limited scale to a larger reach) or sustained (i.e. programme outputs persisting after the withdrawal of UNICEF assistance of any kind).

Several distinct sustainability and scalability strategies used by UNICEF offices were identified by the desk study as follows:

#### Strategies to promote scalability:

- Piloting a programme prior to the national government either adopting it in its own programming or incorporating key elements into national education policy;
- Partnering with government from the outset of a programme cycle;

#### Strategies supporting sustainability:

- Building a government's capacity to monitor and implement a programme effectively and efficiently;
- Coordinating an evaluation or feasibility study focusing on the sustainability potential of a programme; and
- Encouraging a government to include a specific programme in their own interventions.

The desk review found that only around a quarter of programmes across the 35 countries during the evaluation period were judged to be either sustainable or scalable as a result of these strategies, and only five of these were education programmes with a focus on gender or girls' education. However, it should also be noted that the lack of clearly measurable results, and the annual reporting structure, means that it is not possible to know the true extent to which these programmes were either scaled or sustained.

The case studies reflected the use of many of these strategies with regard to interventions supporting girls' education and gender equality. In all of these, UNICEF has employed a strategy of working with government from the outset of the programme, and in many cases has also invested in capacity development of government staff at various levels so that they had the skills to monitor and implement a programme. There were also cases where UNICEF encouraged governments to include a specific programme in their own interventions.

Partnerships with government, however, need to take into account factors including the resources required to deliver a particular initiative, partners' capacities, and the political economy of the relationship. This is discussed elsewhere, as is the effectiveness of the UNICEF strategy for capacity development. Capacity development for sustainability needs to be strategic and institutional. The evidence from this evaluation suggests that this has not always been the case, compromising the effectiveness of UNICEF sustainability efforts.

UNICEF strategies yielded some benefits: In Pakistan, for instance, the CFS model was scaled up across a number of provinces, and in Sudan, the UNICEF education team was successful in getting the MoE to incorporate elements of UNICEF-tested interventions included in their policies. However, in most cases the interventions were either too expensive to take to scale (e.g. CFS in Mozambique), and/or too costly to sustain by government (e.g. interventions in Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire). Policies that had buy-in from government did not then receive the commensurate budget allocations (e.g. girls' education strategy in Sudan) or were subject to changes in government and 'fell from favour', as in Nigeria). UNICEF was sometimes mentioned to be in a situation where, without its support to basic education, the system could face substantial challenges, since there was not sufficient national investment in the sector (as in Sudan). In one case, the feeling was that UNICEF had been there so long that there was no reason for government to consider sustaining anything without UNICEF support.

At the community level, many of the interventions may be scalable and sustainable, but they often started too small to make a real difference and were sometimes hard to scale or sustain (e.g. teacher training, which requires both capacity and resources that many countries do not have to take to scale).

These issues are not confined to the case study countries, and neither are they confined to UNICEF. Nigeria, for instance, suffers from fluctuating levels of income, which in turn affects the stability of funding available to support policies or interventions for girls' education and gender equality. In addition, changes in government may result in changes in policy, however long and hard-fought the development of those policies has been.

Although it was not possible to see how UNICEF has attempted to redress such issues, UNICEF Mozambique seems to have adapted its approach: the CO reduced its education footprint from a number of provinces to just two so that resources and capacity could be concentrated. Support was also moved to inclusion in the SWaP, which was designed to increase resource availability and pool funding to scale up promising interventions.

In some of the case study reports, UNICEF education staff point to issues that are seen as barriers to success in scaling and sustaining their interventions, but which actually point to a failure of programming to systematically take into account the institutional factors, such as capability in terms of resources (both human and capital), and capacity of the governments with which they were working.

---

#### IN SUMMARY:

There is strong evidence that UNICEF programming in gender and girls' education was not, on the whole, designed to be scalable or sustainable. In some cases, institutional factors that should have been addressed and included in systematic programming were instead seen as constraints which were outside of UNICEF control.

---

### 3.4 PARTNERSHIPS

UNICEF defines partnerships as:

*“Voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits.”<sup>78</sup>*

UNICEF partnerships provide strategic and operational foundations for delivering **effective** and **sustainable** education programmes capable of addressing the causes of gender inequality. Having established the programme aims and objectives, UNICEF COs choose their combination of strategies to achieve these. Partnerships allow UNICEF to amplify its contribution to development work.

In 2009, the UNICEF Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships included recommendations for a set of guiding principles, including:

- **Focus on delivering results for children** – UNICEF will engage in partnerships and collaborative relationships that provide **a clearly defined added value** to the achievement of internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs, as well as UNICEF strategic priorities as outlined in the MTSP and workplans.
- **Partner selection criteria** – UNICEF will partner with organizations and entities **committed to the core values of UNICEF**, the United Nations, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, conforming with

the principles of good governance, including transparency, accountability and sound financial management.

- **Alignment and ownership** – the activities of partnerships and collaborative relationships involving UNICEF should be aligned with and complement harmonized donor policies and national development plans, and should help to achieve sustainable development and foster national and local ownership and capacity development to realize children’s rights.
- **Transparency and equity** – the objectives and activities of partnerships and collaborative relationships should be fully transparent and involve mutual contributions as well as shared risks and benefits for all partners.
- **Integrity and independence** – partnerships and collaborative relationships shall maintain the integrity and independence of UNICEF and protect the organization’s brand.

In 2012, UNICEF published a report on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships, which expanded the original strategic framework and proposed three priority approaches to enhance UNICEF performance in partnerships:

1. Framing the contribution of partnerships to results;
2. Investing strategically in key multi-stakeholder partnerships; and
3. Strengthening UNICEF capacity for effective partnering.

As the primary guiding principle, the focus on delivering results for children was central to the selection, development and management of

<sup>78</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, “UNICEF Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships”, UNICEF, New York, 2009, pp.6.



partnerships. UNICEF classified partnerships<sup>79</sup> that would contribute to results in one or more of the following four ways (shown in Figure 3.5):

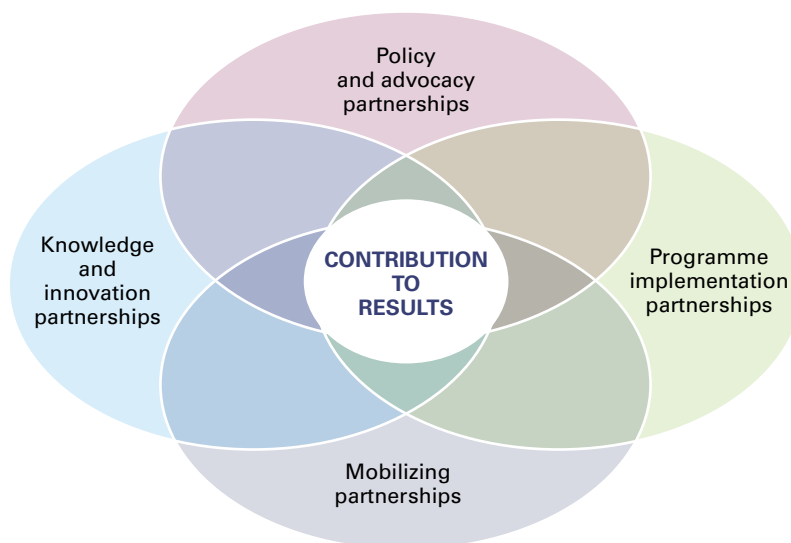
1. **Programme implementation partnerships** contribute to the implementation of programmes, increasing the reach and coverage of essential supplies and services through direct intervention and capacity development, in cooperation with governments in programme countries.
2. **Knowledge and innovation partnerships** contribute to the development and strengthening of technical expertise, fostering development and introduction of innovative solutions to children’s issues, and establishing strategies for scale-up.
3. **Policy and advocacy partnerships** contribute to development and adoption of norms and standards, policies and legislation, and increased investment in child rights.

Partnerships focus on collaboration and coordinated approaches to evidence-based policy advocacy and communication.

4. **Mobilizing partnerships** help to mobilize financial and non-financial resources from donors and other partners in support of UNICEF-assisted programmes. They also complement advocacy partnerships by helping to mobilize public awareness of children’s issues through targeted communication, particularly in industrialized countries.

The evaluation examined the mutual benefits, risks and trade-offs of working through the types of partnership arrangements classified above, the views of partners on the UNICEF contribution to these partnerships, and UNICEF success at leveraging resources for girls’ education and gender equality by effectively mobilizing partnerships.

**FIGURE 3.5** Framing partnerships based on their contribution to results



<sup>79</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Report on the Implementation of the Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships, UNICEF, New York, 2012.

### 3.4.1 Mutual benefits of working through partnerships

UNICEF partnerships spanned global, regional, national and local levels, which gave it a strong comparative advantage among agencies working on girls' education (global/regional interviews). At the global level, UNICEF was an important partner in two education-related initiatives or networks: UNGEI and the GPE. However, no evidence was found during this evaluation of leveraging OOSCI work for girls' education outcomes, even though three of the case study countries (Nigeria, Pakistan and Sudan) were OOSCI partner countries. It was pointed out that in Nigeria the ability to work through OOSCI was constrained by the government's failure to recognize the scale of the issue of out-of-school children.

#### Benefits of partnerships to UNICEF

UNICEF benefited from partnerships in the following ways as per the guiding principles set out in its Partnership Strategy:

- **Policy and advocacy**

Partnerships at this level allowed UNICEF to have some influence in discussing policy around basic education, girls' education and gender equality. UNICEF field-level experience, particularly in hard-to-reach and crisis-affected areas, and knowledge from close relations with national partners was seen as especially valuable by partners at the global level (interviews with global partners). International and regional interviewees also remarked on the value of UNICEF cross-sectoral expertise and knowledge. For instance, UNICEF experience across both the education and WASH sectors was valuable when it came to discussing policy and programming with

a specific focus on the links between sanitation and girls' education. A number of interviewees stated that it was the UNICEF voice at the table, backed by its experience in the field, that enabled other agencies to include this as an important part of education programming during the early part of the evaluation period.

UNICEF is the lead agency and secretariat for UNGEI. Its relationship with UNGEI is considered by partners as a means through which UNICEF has been able to influence and support a greater focus on girls' education among other policymakers. Through this partnership, UNICEF provided a strong voice for girls' education and raised awareness among the donor community at a global level. Through its partnership with the UNGEI national groups, UNICEF was also able to extend its reach on the ground.

- **Knowledge and innovation**

Partnership with the World Bank allowed UNICEF to draw on the Bank's high-level technical expertise in modelling, which UNICEF itself did not have. Simulations for Equity in Education (SEE), a joint effort between UNICEF and the World Bank, was developed to support and promote education for all children in all places.<sup>80</sup> It was designed to demonstrate how empirical findings from careful analytical work and impact evaluations can be used in tandem with country data to predict the effects of specific interventions. This was intended to lead to better-informed policymaking and help countries invest more effectively in their education systems to reach those who are marginalized and improve overall performance. This was amalgamated with UNICEF country-level expertise to develop such tools as the 'education system

---

<sup>80</sup> UNICEF (2013), Simulations for Equity in Education (SEE): Background, methodology and pilot results

bottleneck analysis', which was used in GPE appraisals of country strategies. The bottleneck analysis is an approach that maps out a hierarchy of constraints to reaching an ultimate outcome. Risk groups are the main equity focus of the analysis. The entire education life cycle is modelled separately for each risk group, so that UNICEF can track the differential outcomes of those groups and figure out how interventions can be best targeted to reduce those differences. Risk groups can be defined in any way that is relevant to the country or the problem at hand – by gender, region, wealth, ethnic group, or any other characteristic and combination of characteristics – depending on the data available. The country situation analysis that ideally precedes using any model, including an OOSCI study or a bottleneck analysis, will identify the most important risk groups.

There were no other references to knowledge and innovation partnerships in the desk review. However, the case studies found one instance in Nigeria where the UNICEF country office had partnered with a research institute from South Africa with expertise in cash transfer programs to supply both software and guidance materials, which "increased efficiencies in initial implementation, trouble-shooting, and course-correction of a cash transfer programme supporting girls' education".

- **Benefits of national partnerships to UNICEF**

All UNICEF country offices entered into partnerships with various levels of government. The desk review found that partnering with governments from the beginning of the programme cycle increased the potential for sustainability of UNICEF interventions. In many countries, UNICEF partnered with NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) to extend its geographical reach.

- **Mobilizing partnerships to leverage resources**

UNICEF serves on the GPE board, its financial advisory committee, and various task teams. Partnerships between UNICEF, UNGEI, GPE and national governments supported the alignment of national education priorities with global goals, for instance in Sudan and Nigeria, which leveraged funding from GPE. Some global/regional-level interviewees also described a powerful tripartite synergy arising from the alliance between UNICEF, UNGEI and GPE.

There is very limited information in COARs about leveraging funding for education by other partners. Strategies mentioned include: relationship-building with traditional donors; exploring new relationships to adapt to changing contexts; exploring new relationships with the private sector; supporting the government on proposals to leverage resources for education; setting up educational toolkits, and organizing visits for donors and high-profile celebrities. However, the extent to which these methods were successful was generally not clear in UNICEF reporting. There were also limited reports of the use of evidence to leverage funding for education. This does not mean that UNICEF did not leverage funds as a result of the various strategies that were reported, but it at least indicates there was a reporting deficit about the effectiveness of these strategies and outcomes in terms of leverage.

- **Benefits of partnerships to UNICEF country offices**

Governments, at national, state/provincial and district levels were the main partners for UNICEF COs, although UNICEF also worked with NGOs and CSOs in some locations. COARs for the five case study countries provide a snapshot of the main

UNICEF partners in education. As shown in Table 3.8, the countries in the sample present a wide variety of partners from all sectors.

Across all countries, **the single most important partner mentioned is the Ministry of Education**. In addition, depending on the country, other government departments were also reported, including: Ministry of Planning and Development (Côte d'Ivoire); Ministry of Family, Women and Social Affairs (Côte d'Ivoire); National Institute for Disaster Management (Mozambique); Ministry of Youth (Pakistan); and the Ministry of Health (Sudan). In Nigeria, both state-level and federal-level or provincial-level education departments were important partners for UNICEF.

**Global partners** mentioned in COARs were the most numerous and diverse. From the case studies, we found the following trends:

- Other UN agencies were mentioned by all countries for every year in the sample. Among these, UNESCO was frequently mentioned by all five, while WFP was mentioned by all

except Nigeria as a key partner supporting school feeding programmes. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was mentioned by all COs except UNICEF Mozambique. In Pakistan, efforts to coordinate work with other UN agencies was part of the One UN approach.

- The World Bank was a prominent partner across all COs. It was particularly important in Sudan, where it is the implementing agency for the GPE (with UNICEF acting as the coordinating agency). In Nigeria, the World Bank was mentioned every year during the evaluation period, except for 2011. The EU was also mentioned as a partner by all COs, in relation to funding of UNICEF education initiatives (e.g. in Pakistan) and as a partner in various coordinating groups at national level (e.g. Sudan).
- DFID was mentioned by all COs except Côte d'Ivoire. It was particularly prominent in Nigeria. This was mostly in reference to GEP, funded by DFID, but also in relation to EMIS training initiatives. Another key partner in Nigeria was the United States

**TABLE 3.8** UNICEF partners in the education sector, case study country COARs (2009-2015)

Region	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Côte d'Ivoire	● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●		● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Mozambique	● ● ● ● ●	● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Nigeria	● ● ●	● ●	● ● ●		● ● ● ● ●	● ●	● ● ●
Pakistan	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	● ● ●
Sudan	●	● ● ●	● ●	● ●	● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●

- – Global partners
- – Government partners
- – International NGOs; ● – National NGOs
- – Other, including corporate partners

Agency for International Development (USAID, which was involved in the delivery of the GPE in Sokoto State throughout the evaluation period.

- UNICEF Sudan reported engagement of ‘non-traditional’ donors; for example, UNICEF worked with the South African government to deliver a girls’ education programme in east Sudan.
- UNICEF Côte d’Ivoire worked with the French government – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Agency for Development (AFD).

### Non-governmental partners

Both international and national organizations were mentioned, although national NGOs were less often specified. Save the Children was mentioned as a key partner in education by all COs except Nigeria. Throughout the evaluation period, Save the Children co-led the education cluster in Côte d’Ivoire, Mozambique and Pakistan with UNICEF. Other international NGOs included War Child Holland (Sudan), Plan International (Sudan), Caritas (Sudan and Côte d’Ivoire), CARE (Côte d’Ivoire, Pakistan), and Action Aid (Mozambique, Nigeria).

UNICEF COs in Nigeria and Pakistan reported working successfully with the private sector to diversify their fundraising strategies. In Sudan and Mozambique, the COs also engaged with universities (Afhad University in Sudan and the Pedagogical University in Mozambique).

### Benefits of partnership to UNICEF

The case studies found that working through partnerships at the national level brought a wide range of benefits to UNICEF, including:

- **Advocacy:** Working in partnership with other organizations provided UNICEF with a more powerful voice with governments. In UNGEI countries, UNICEF was able to

collaborate with the initiative on advocacy at the national level. For instance, in Nigeria, UNICEF worked with UNGEI to advocate for girls’ education in six northern states.

- **Policy influence:** Partnerships with Ministries of Education gave UNICEF the opportunity to influence government policy development (all case study reports), although it has not been possible to see the results of this influence in terms of gender and education issues being prominent in national ESPs.
- **Implementation:** Through its partnerships at national level, UNICEF was able to convene a range of stakeholders (CBOs, FBOs, NGOs) in support of girls’ education objectives, and to mainstream approaches such as CFS.
- **Leveraging of resources:** To an extent, UNICEF has managed to leverage resources through partnership with global donors (such as the EU or DFID) and national governments (e.g. in Pakistan, where partnering with other development partners, including the World Bank, the EU, DFID, the Danish International Development Agency and USAID resulted in the government’s commitment to raise the gross domestic product allocation for education from two per cent to four per cent over a four-year period).

### Risks and trade-offs

There were risks associated with some partnerships, and in some cases UNICEF had to make trade-offs. In some cases, strong partnerships led to the identity of UNICEF becoming confused with that of the partner. At a global level, partners were not always sure where the boundary was between UNICEF and UNGEI, which led to confusion as to which organization they should be speaking to or seeking to work with.

At a country level, there were also examples of confusion: In Sudan, some stakeholders saw UNICEF and the Ministry of Education as interchangeable, and in Nigeria, some district government officials saw UNICEF as the implementing agency for the DFID-funded GEP. This resulted in a loss of profile for UNICEF. This type of confusion could also expose UNICEF to criticism arising from those partners' decisions or shortcomings, undermining UNICEF integrity, perceived credibility and reliability (as reported in the Nigeria and Sudan case studies). However, it is arguable whether it made any difference to the situation of girls supported by the programme.

In Mozambique, UNICEF worked in partnership through the SWAp with many large bilateral and multilateral donors. UNICEF had a lower profile and less influence with government in this instance because of the presence of donors that were making much more funding available.

In Nigeria, the case study found that the close partnership with DFID constrained UNICEF in its ability to contribute its own expertise to the GEP, to the point that at the community level, DFID and UNICEF were often seen as interchangeable. The increased accountability requirements that DFID brought in after the (negative) evaluation of GEP 1 shifted staff focus away from their generative work and strengthening their own capacity to deliver girls' education programming more effectively. The more stringent requirements forced UNICEF to dedicate more human resources and time to demonstrating its performance on the GEP. The case study found that this partnership with DFID may have limited UNICEF opportunities to work with a wider array of donors also working on girls' education and gender equality.

Working closely with governments also had some risks: In socially-conservative contexts, such as Sudan, UNICEF guiding principles of child rights and gender equality may have been compromised by working closely with a government that resented the organization's perceived bias towards girls' education, although the

CO responded by adjusting the education programme and managed to support girls' education through a variety of other means. Another issue highlighted by the Sudan case study was the potential for UNICEF accountability to be compromised by a lack of transparency once funds were passed to the MoE. UNICEF Sudan had no effective strategy for mitigating this risk.

Partnerships with government were also sometimes uneven, in that the UNICEF CO delivered more consistently on its commitments than government partners (Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire case study reports). In some cases, long-term relationships with governments undermined programme sustainability, both because governments took UNICEF support for granted and because UNICEF had no exit strategy (Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire case study reports).

Some national partnerships were weakened by a rapid staff turnover and changes to postings, both in UNICEF COs and within partner organizations (Pakistan case study report). In situations where individual commitment and drive were lacking among UNICEF staff in COs, partnerships suffered, as in the case of the taskforce for adolescent girls' reported in the Pakistan case study.

Sometimes it appears that UNICEF partners with individuals as opposed to organizations, and when postings change, either within the partner organization or within UNICEF, this alters the dynamic of the partnership. This means that partnerships do not have the required institutional strength; they are subject to change, misconceptions and a lack of influence, and therefore are not as effective as they could be.

### **Perceived benefits and risks among UNICEF partners**

There is strong evidence, from many sources, that UNICEF and its COs are well regarded by their partners, from multilateral and bilateral aid agencies to local NGOs and CSOs.

At the global level, both UNGEI and GPE were strengthened by UNICEF involvement. UNICEF involvement with GPE helped to deliver national girls' education outcomes in several case study countries. UNICEF conducted advocacy and provided technical support for policy and programme development, which was followed by GPE channelling funds for national ESPs (Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan case study reports).

National and local partners benefited from working with UNICEF COs, including:

- **Access to UNICEF technical capacity** in upstream work (for instance in Côte d'Ivoire and Pakistan) and **advocacy leverage** (for instance in Côte d'Ivoire).
- **Institutional collaboration and cross-ministerial work** around the theme of girls' education, which was made possible due to the perceived neutrality of UNICEF.
- **Technical support, capacity building and material resources** were provided to programmes at the local level (for instance in Mozambique).

Some risks or trade-offs were reported by UNICEF partners:

- In Côte d'Ivoire, NGOs spoke of **procurement and contracting delays** due to lengthy UNICEF procedures, and reported that this hindered programme implementation, including crisis response initiatives.
- Some interviewees reported that UNICEF advocacy and communications on girls' education **tended to gloss over the challenges** rather than accurately reflect its programming experiences.
- In the early years of the evaluation period, some partners felt that UNICEF may have **over-emphasized 'access' to the detriment of 'educational quality'**. The policy shift from emphasizing access to improving educational quality and learning achievements was a challenge for UNICEF girls' education programming, partly because improvements in learning are difficult to measure and the gender issues in this area are less clear-cut than access to education.

## IN SUMMARY:

There is strong evidence that UNICEF seeks to work in partnership at all levels. However, there is little evidence of UNICEF adopting the type of strategic approach set out in its own priority approaches to partnerships.<sup>81</sup> Instead, UNICEF adopted an opportunistic and pragmatic approach, which sometimes led to an incoherent approach to girls' education. While working through partnerships was beneficial to both UNICEF and its partners, in some countries these same partnerships exposed UNICEF to risks which were not mitigated or managed effectively. There is little evidence available about the risks to partners that are associated with working with UNICEF. There is also little evidence available about the effectiveness of these partnerships in terms of contributing to improvements in girls' education outcomes and gender inequality in education.

### 3.4.2 Leveraging resources for girls' education

At the national level, the evidence on leveraging resources is inconclusive, because:

- **There was an absence of specified targets.** For instance, the desk review found that it is not clear from the COARs how education resourcing targets were set (see the Sudan case study report);
- **There was weak reporting on targets and the amounts for funding actually leveraged** (see the desk review report and the Nigeria case study report);
- **Inconsistent definitions were used** (see the desk review report and the Côte d'Ivoire case study report); and
- **There was very little information** in COARs about partners' success in leveraging funding.

These constraints meant that it was very difficult to estimate UNICEF CO success in this area on the basis of the desk review.

The case studies identified several examples of COs leveraging funds for education in general but very few examples where funds were leveraged for either targeted girls' education initiatives or gender mainstreaming. UNGEI and GPE, initiatives in which UNICEF is closely involved at both global and national levels, were both important platforms for leveraging resources from multilateral and bilateral donors (Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire case studies, and global/regional-level interviews). However, UNICEF work at the country level with the GPE meant that it often acted in a strategic role rather than as an implementer, as a member of the local education group. Examples of UNICEF leverage include:

- **In Sudan, the government obtained GPE funding of \$76.7 million for basic education**, following the development of the interim basic education strategy, which UNICEF helped the government to develop.
- The GPE was also a prominent UNICEF partner in **Côte d'Ivoire, and granted \$41 million** to Côte d'Ivoire to finance education reform between 2012 and 2014.
- UNICEF partnership with **GPE was instrumental in delivering substantial funding to the education sector in Pakistan**, where UNICEF was the coordinating agency for Sindh and Balochistan. Through the GPE, \$100 million was approved for GPE programme implementation, and as a result 760,000 additional children enrolled in primary schools. As the GPE coordinating agency, UNICEF Pakistan continued to integrate sector priorities for girls into district plans, and leveraged an additional \$18 million from the EU for the Balochistan education sector.
- Also in Pakistan, **the UNGEI focal person was highly successful in channelling funds to girls' education.**
- Pakistan CO also **obtained funding for both girls' education and gender mainstreaming from a bilateral donor.**

Although there are examples in the case studies of UNICEF using its influence to leverage funding and resources, these are generally for education as a whole, and there is very little evidence about the resources leveraged for gender mainstreaming, except for the examples from Pakistan.



Due to an absence of reported targets, and gaps in reporting on the actual amounts of leveraged funds by UNICEF, it was not possible to establish from the desk review how successful UNICEF and its partners were in leveraging resources for targeted girls' education or gender mainstreaming. The case study reports contain examples of some notable successes in leveraging funding for basic education, most of which concern GPE funding. However, there is little evidence of resources being successfully leveraged for targeted girls' education initiatives, and even less evidence about approaches involving gender mainstreaming.

### 3.5 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

This section evaluates UNICEF efforts to build the capacity of its education staff and key partners in government in gender-responsive programming; it also seeks to determine whether the necessary capacities for upstream work in girls' education existed in UNICEF and were used effectively. These are key factors contributing to the **effectiveness and sustainability** of UNICEF programming.

The section draws mainly on information from the case studies,<sup>82</sup> but is augmented by an examination of UNICEF COARs and ROARs to assess its capacity-building support to country offices in girls' education and/or gender mainstreaming.

#### 3.5.1 Internal capacity of UNICEF education country teams

##### Capacity requirements for gender mainstreaming

Internal capacity and coverage (in terms of the number of countries in which UNICEF operates) are major factors that enhance UNICEF capacity to effectively support improvements in girls' education outcomes and gender equality. Interviews with UNICEF staff at HQ and in regional offices, and with global partners (e.g. within DFID) who are experts in education and girls' education, identified the need for UNICEF CO education staff to have good knowledge of current education and gender issues, experience of education sector reform, and an understanding of child protection issues. UNICEF staff need clear guidance on the theoretical foundations of gender equality and how to achieve them through creative and informed design of contextualized, targeted gender mainstreaming interventions.

Equally important is the ability to apply that knowledge and experience, to understand data and analyse it from a gender equality perspective, to use evidence for programming purposes, and to be persuasive and insightful as a communicator in relation to the complex and frequently politically- and culturally-sensitive issues surrounding girls' education.

##### Assessment of internal capacity within UNICEF

As discussed above, the case studies found that few staff have technical capacity in gender mainstreaming. Also, there was very little evidence of use of a range of tools available within UNICEF, including guidance developed by UNGEI on girls' education programming. For instance, UNICEF staff in Sudan, Mozambique

and Côte d'Ivoire reported that they rarely or never use the UNICEF manual *"Promoting Gender Equality through UNICEF-Supported Programming in Basic Education"* (2011).<sup>83</sup> It is unclear whether the issue was one of dissemination of the tools, or capacity and demand for their use among UNICEF staff.

There are sporadic training and support opportunities available for CO education staff. Evidence from the case studies suggests that some relevant training was provided, e.g. on gender mainstreaming, but that the impact of such training on professional practice was inconsistent (Sudan, Nigeria and Mozambique case study reports). Box 3.11 contains evidence on relevant training or the lack thereof from the case study countries.

The evaluation did not find evidence of any training or support for UNICEF education teams on changes in global thinking on education policy, the shift from access to quality or

growth in secondary provision, or specific issues that would impact on girls' education outcomes in these countries (such as education quality, teaching skills and secondary education). Although staff reported having the tools, skills and systems required for girls' education programming, the evaluation found that the focus was narrow and concentrated on gender sensitivity or getting girls into school.

### **Capacity-building through collaborative initiatives within UNICEF**

Collaboration between COs and between COs and ROs could have been an effective way of building capacity in gender mainstreaming within UNICEF. Table 3.9 below shows reported instances of collaboration between ROs and COs, including capacity-building initiatives. Underlined symbols show those instances where this collaboration specifically related to girls' education or gender issues.

#### **BOX 3.11**

#### **Evidence of staff training on gender and girls' education in case study countries**

- In Nigeria, some staff members had received training on the GAP in 2014, but most reported that they had little other formal training on theoretical frameworks about gender or gender-responsive programming.
- In Mozambique CO, very few staff members had significant training on gender awareness, theoretical gender frameworks or programming for girls' education and/or gender equality outcomes. Also, the learning outcomes from such trainings were rarely reflected in the CFS training materials used for school directors, teachers, and school council members.
- In Sudan, most UNICEF staff reported that they had little formal training on theoretical frameworks about gender or gender-responsive programming.

<sup>83</sup> This potentially very useful resource provides operational guidance to education staff about: why UNICEF focuses on girls' education and gender equality; how UNICEF contributes to gender equality through that work; and how to apply gender analysis to each stage of the programme cycle. It also gives some examples of good practice.





**TABLE 3.9**      **Reported instances of collaboration with COs – regional offices**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
CEE/CIS		◆			●	◆◆	<u>●</u> ◆
EAP	◆				<u>◆</u> ●	<u>◆</u>	
ESA							
LAC		◆				◆◆	
MENA		◆					
SA					●	<u>◆</u>	
WCA					<u>◆</u>	<u>●</u>	
Country Reports		●	<u>●●</u> ◆		●◆	<u>◆</u> ●	<u>●</u> ◆

- – HQ/RO collaboration
- – RO/CO collaboration
- – HQ/CO collaboration
- ◆ – training, workshops or evaluation
- [underline] – Collaboration focusing on girls or gender-issues

There were few instances of HQ or RO collaboration on training, workshops or evaluation that aimed to build staff capacity to effectively improve gender equality in education. Over seven years and across the 35 countries included in the sample for the desk review, there were only ten instances where training, sharing of information and experience across regions or other forms of capacity-building were carried out with specific reference to girls' education or gender programming.

Box 3.12 below provides examples of capacity-building carried out in relation to girls' education or gender programming through collaboration between COs and ROs. There was very little evidence in the available documentation that would allow us to assess the outcome of these types of activities.

- **WCA 2013** : West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) education section worked jointly with Burkina Faso and Niger COs to conduct a study on MHM and to develop questionnaires and tools to be used in programming.
- **WCA 2014** : WCARO worked with COs on developing capacity on gender and girls' education with a specific focus on school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) through a regional event between four countries.
- **COs 2014** : East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) worked with the Papua New Guinea CO to conduct a gender mainstreaming workshop for 40 participants from various arms of the national department of education and from select provinces. This was followed by training to gender focal points from ten provinces, helping them understand how to employ gender mainstreaming in their work and in schools.
- **COs 2015** : Bangladesh CO, in collaboration with HQ, organized a four-day global workshop in Dhaka (May 2015) on global good practices and strategic directions for strengthening communications for development (C4D) principles and achieving educational goals. Bangladesh was able to share its community engagement strategies to keep adolescent girls in schools and out of marriage. The workshop was attended by government and UNICEF senior officials from 14 countries.

### Other types of internal capacity-building

The case studies pointed to a lack of internal systems for knowledge and data management, which constrained the effectiveness of UNICEF programming and the sustainability of capacity built within COs. In Sudan, education staff were responsible for their own data-gathering and reporting rather than being able to draw on support from the UNICEF monitoring and evaluation (M&E) team. The Pakistan case study report suggested that the prevalence of short postings and rapid staff turnover in COs militated against their efforts to build sustainable staff capacity for girls' education programming. A regional office interviewee expanded on this, stating that even the relative stability among national staff was outweighed by the lack of knowledge management systems:

*"It's the most challenging part of working in UNICEF. We are horrible at maintaining an institutional memory. ... Because we don't have documentation, so you never ever get to read from A to Z. ... In one sense,*

*it is mitigated because we have continuity in the national staff and it's only the internationals who are moving around ... but the mitigation is only possible if people are forthcoming and there's a system by which you can pick the person's brain. But it still doesn't compensate for the lack of a well-documented, analysed piece of work."*

(RO interviewee)

Figure 3.6 illustrates the circular process that appears to be at work, which prevents all staff having the right tools, skills and systems required for programming to achieve girls' education outcomes. As shown in Figure 3.6, frequent staff changes lead to little or no institutional memory. In turn, this limits CO capacity, as trained staff members may leave. If no knowledge management systems or continuous capacity-development initiatives are in place, this issue constrains the ability of COs to mainstream gender in programming, including in education.

There is little evidence to suggest that there was any kind of systemic approach to ensuring the technical capacities of UNICEF CO staff with regard to girl’s education and gender equality. Existing guidance, for instance on gender mainstreaming, was not always used and in some cases not known about.

**IN SUMMARY:**

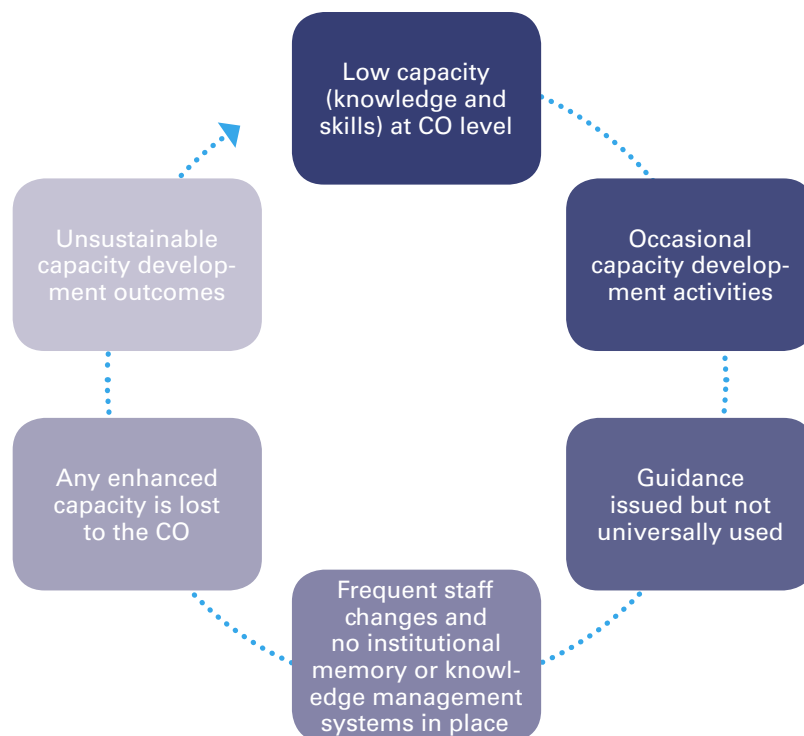
The case studies suggest that while UNICEF education team members had some of the skills required for girls’ education programming, most had little or no technical capacity in gender mainstreaming, nor did they use available tools that would have helped them to mainstream gender into their education programmes. Very few had participated in training specifically on girls’ education or gender mainstreaming and there is no formal knowledge management system to sustain built capacity.

### 3.5.2 Developing national capacity

This evaluation assessed the extent to which UNICEF contributed to the capacity development of its national partners to analyse, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate girls’ education programmes and interventions.

Capacity development was a key implementing strategy, and a total of 452 education-related capacity development initiatives were reported by UNICEF over the evaluation period. All ROs and COs pursued education-related capacity development activities with their government partners, covering all aspects of the education sector, including child protection, disaster recovery and emergency response, early childhood education, child-friendly schools, gender-sensitive curricula, HIV/AIDS and other health issues, out-of-school children, social protection, teacher training, school infrastructure and WASH. However, such activities were rarely reported in

**FIGURE 3.6** Unsustainable capacity development in UNICEF COs



detail, making it difficult to assess the scale and focus of UNICEF interventions in these areas and their effectiveness in delivering improvements in girls' education programming.

Only 13 per cent of the 452 education-related capacity-development activities targeted girls' education or were related to gender equality, while 4.8 per cent focused on inclusion of marginalized groups in education.<sup>84</sup> For instance, in Mozambique, only two out of 11 capacity-development activities for government partners focused on girls' education. This contrasts with Nigeria, where UNICEF partnered with DFID to deliver the GEP. UNICEF supported workshops for partners ranging from national and state education officials to school-level stakeholders, most of which were part of girls' education interventions. Interviewees in Nigeria reported that while training contributed to improving management and/or pedagogy generally, there was little about the content of the training that participants could identify as specifically gender-sensitive or focused on gender mainstreaming.

The collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data is a prerequisite for gender mainstreaming. Addressing gender equity issues in education relies on robust and reliable EMIS: 19 of 35 country offices included in the desk review supported governments to develop their capacity to set up and run EMIS and other M&E systems, including the collection of sex-disaggregated data (Nigeria and Sudan case study reports). Three of the case studies (Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Mozambique) reported that UNICEF country office staff were skilled in the use of EMIS, but it was not clear if this was as a result of a strategic programme of capacity development.

Most of the capacity-development activities took the form of workshops, but there were also some instances of working alongside government partners to inform policy development (in Nigeria) or to build EMIS capacity, and to provide learning resources. There was little evidence of UNICEF staff sharing the level of technical skills needed to effectively deliver improvements in girls' education or gender equality with their national partners. Nor was there evidence of systematic capacity development with government partners other than the training of teachers.

### **Effectiveness of capacity development with partners**

Capacity-development activities were often reported using vague language, making it difficult to assess how effective they were through the desk review. Most of the capacity-development activities that were reported as successes concerned EMIS.

The case study evidence on the effectiveness of capacity development is mixed. Interviews with government partners who had participated in UNICEF capacity-development activities revealed that although a lot of training and investment in capacity development had been carried out, the benefits were not always sustained. Box 3.13 provides examples of the mixed results from capacity development.

As with all work with government partners, capacity development efforts need to account for the high demands placed upon them and the likelihood of frequent staff movement. Capacity development needs to be strategically delivered to have a sustainable effect on the institution as a whole rather than just the individuals within those institutions. In many cases, UNICEF chose to focus on increasing capacity on development

---

<sup>84</sup> This includes groups such as people living with disabilities, indigenous or low-caste people. There were also 20 mentions (4.4%) related to education for out-of-school children.

- In Mozambique, the benefits of training, which was predominantly through workshops, were found to be generally low, but capacity development was more effective in supporting district-level education officials than national education officials. Low levels of capacity in relation to implementing the GAP inhibited programme effectiveness as key parts of the GAP framework were not used in programming.
- In Nigeria, there was a mixed impact of capacity development with government partners. A concerted capacity development effort by the GEP resulted in education authorities at all levels being able to speak knowledgeably about children's rights, the importance of changing social norms and the role of data in analysing girls' situations. However, in most cases, both the programme and the Nigeria case study were not able to measure the conversion of new knowledge into personal behaviour change, transfer to institutional practices, or the direct contribution of capacity-development activities to policy shifts or broader girls' education outcomes over time.
- Embedding a UNICEF education officer inside the federal MoE in Nigeria proved to be highly effective in terms of building capacity. Conversely, interviews with teachers who had participated in training indicated that the training had little effect on their capacity to support girls' education.
- In Pakistan, Mozambique and Sudan, capacity development focused on individuals. Insufficient attention was paid to strengthening institutions, with the result that the effects of the capacity development undertaken during the evaluation period was not sustained, because government officials were often moved around within ministries.
- In Sudan, government officers working with EMIS were not adequately trained to analyse the data they collected, which they found frustrating (Sudan case study report). This contrasted with the Côte d'Ivoire case study findings, which noted that 'there are indications that the capacity to use evidence in design and management is prevalent enough throughout the system to become part of the culture' (of the Ministry of Education).

and use of EMIS systems. It appears, however, that where this has been the case, it has not always been systemic, in that the people trained in data collection have not always been trained in analysis and the use of that data.

Furthermore, due to the lack of capacity in gender analysis within UNICEF itself, data have also not been used to inform gender mainstreaming in education programming specifically. There were instances in the case studies where capacity development with officials working on policies was seen to be effective, but there was no commensurate implementation of the policies. This points to a need for deeper institutional analysis and more strategic programming to deliver effective and sustainable capacity development.

#### IN SUMMARY:

There is strong evidence that UNICEF COs in case study countries implemented many education-related capacity-development activities of different types and with stakeholders at all levels of government. Rather than targeting girls' education or gender equality, most of these activities addressed different types of capacity issues in the education sector.

The effects of these capacity development activities on girls' education are mixed.

In Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire, there is evidence of improvements in government capacity to design and implement girls' education programmes, while in Pakistan, Mozambique and Sudan, there is little or no evidence that these activities were effective or sustainable because they were not delivered in a systemic way and were focused on building the capacity of individual officials.

# 4 CONCLUSIONS





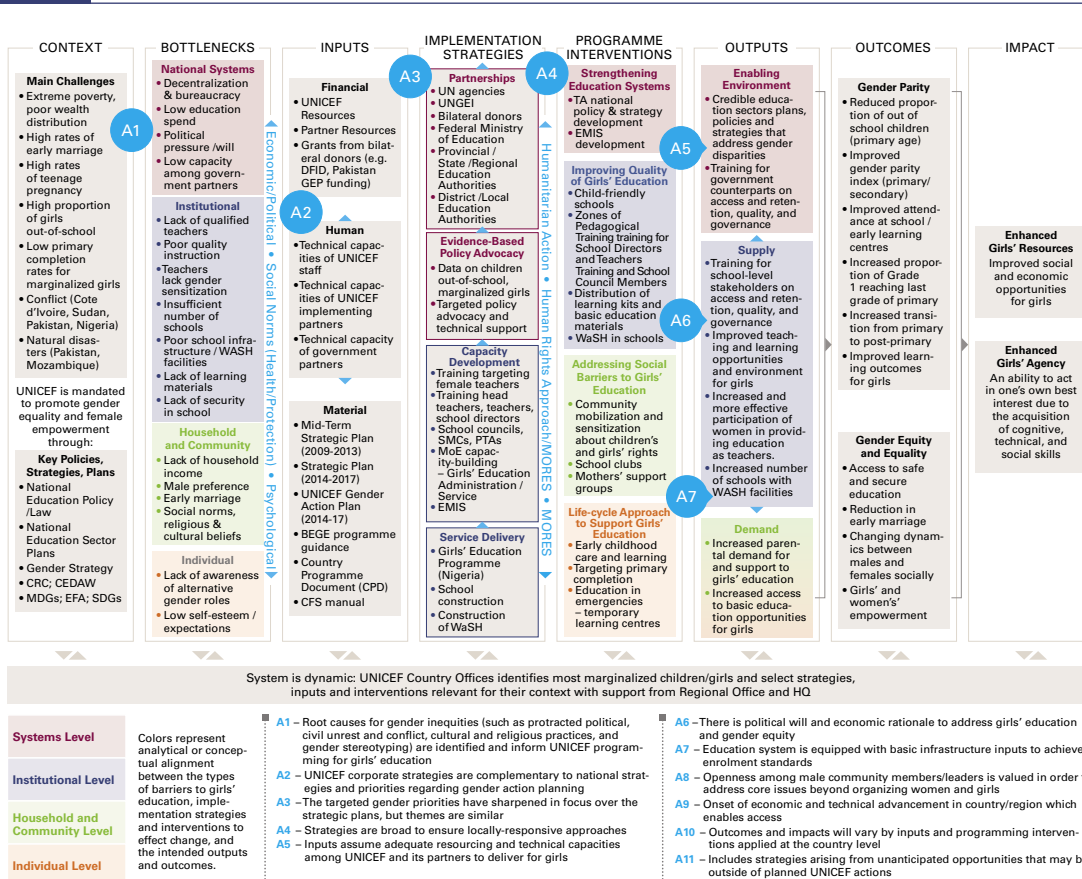
The conclusions for each evaluation theme are framed by the following five evaluation themes, guided by the evaluation questions:

- Positioning and shared understanding;
- Gender mainstreaming;
- Girls' education interventions;
- Partnerships; and
- Capacity development.

The evaluation themes and evaluation questions were framed by a foundational Theory of Change, which is provided in Appendix C. Each of the country case study reports (for Mozambique, Pakistan, Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan and Nigeria) includes an assessment of the extent to which the foundational theory of change (and

supporting assumptions) are supported by the evaluation evidence presented in the findings and conclusions. The following conclusions are derived from the synthesis of all the evidence gathered throughout the evaluation process. They also provide an indication of which parts of the foundational Theory of Change, in particular the supporting assumptions, hold true; where the evidence diverges from this, they suggest an alternative narrative. Figure 4.1 presents a synthesized Theory of Change adapted from the Foundational Theory of Change following the case studies, which is assessed in greater depth in Section 3.3.2.

**FIGURE 4.1** Adapted Theory of Change



## 4.1 POSITIONING AND SHARED UNDERSTANDING

### ■ SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

---

In summary, there is strong evidence from the desk review that UNICEF girls' education programming at a country level was aligned with the broad aims of its global priorities. Evidence was weaker regarding alignment with national priorities, with little documentary evidence of either widespread analysis or profiling of disadvantaged girls in the countries involved.

There is strong evidence that education teams in COs shared an understanding of child rights and equity, and some evidence that they understood and used many of the strategies including targeted approaches to girls' education. But they did not understand or implement the core UNICEF strategy of gender mainstreaming to a sufficient extent. Partners' understanding of the UNICEF guiding principles, notably gender equality, was at times not coherent with that of UNICEF, and in some contexts partners' commitment to these principles was either lacking or diverged, particularly among national government partners.

---

The **relevance and coherence** of girls' education programming was dependent on UNICEF's positioning on child rights and equity, and the extent to which staff, consultants and partners shared an understanding of the guiding principles, strategies and programme choices. There was evidence of alignment with international priorities, particularly where there were strong partnerships between UNICEF, UNGEI, GPE and national governments. Alignment with national priorities was not as evident.

In COs, education teams shared an understanding of child rights and equity. Figure 4.2 below shows the various different corporate, global and national policies COs had to draw upon, together with their understanding of the root causes of gender inequalities, to ensure a shared understanding with their national partners and to design a coherent education programme.

---

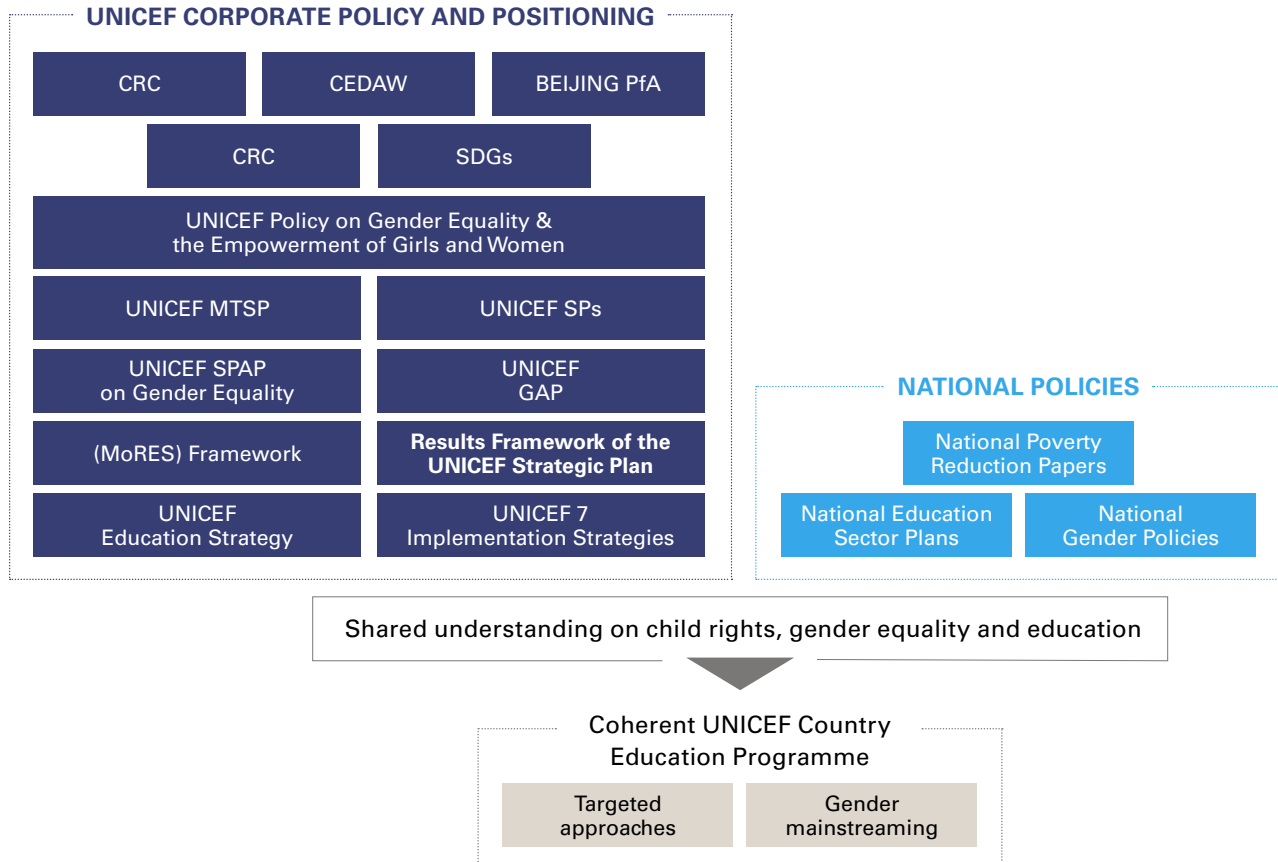
**ToC Assumption A1 – *Root causes of gender inequalities (such as protracted political or civil unrest and conflict, cultural and religious practices, and gender stereotyping) are identified and inform UNICEF programming for girls' education.***

The description of the context to UNICEF girls' education programme set out in the Foundational Theory of Change is accurate. UNICEF has a strong mandate to support the realization of *children's right to education, particularly among girls and the most marginalized groups of young people living in difficult circumstances.*

Poverty, high rates of child marriage and teenage pregnancy were common contextual factors across all five case study countries that contributed to a high proportion of girls being out of school and low primary completion rates. Social norms, religious and cultural beliefs within households and communities led to boys' education being prioritized above girls' education, which was exacerbated among poor households which lack income to afford the direct and indirect costs of schooling. Conflict (in Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan, Pakistan and Nigeria), natural disasters (in Pakistan and Mozambique) and a lack of political will (in Sudan) also proved to be major bottlenecks to girls' education throughout the evaluation period, which affected the strategies that UNICEF implemented in response to these challenges.

---

**FIGURE 4.2** Coherence of UNICEF Country Education Programming



UNICEF corporate strategies set promoting gender equality as a foundational strategy. This was seen instead as a programmatic option, with gender parity an over-riding objective. Gender mainstreaming was not always understood and was inconsistently implemented. Education teams in COs tended to rely too much on smaller targeted approaches (such as single-sex latrines or gender sensitive textbooks) rather than using it as one element of a dual approach alongside gender mainstreaming. Programme coherence and relevance were weaker because of this. COs lacked the ability to use an understanding of the principles of gender mainstreaming and other UNICEF and global policies, struggling to translate them into programming that took these into account.

It is possible that COs also lacked an explicit process or tool to help staff systematically operationalize strategic objectives into programmatic objectives. The Country Programme Document (CPD) is the key planning document used at the start of each five-year programming period. It is generally a high-level and concise document and is not structured or intended to explicitly require COs to describe how to strategically adopt a gender mainstreaming approach to support girls' education. COs did seem to use the tools available that would enable them to implement the objectives of the GAP through their upstream and downstream intervention strategies, but were hampered in this by the lack of in-depth gender and education analysis or profiling of targeted groups of girls.

---

**ToC Assumption A2 – UNICEF corporate strategies are complementary to national strategies and priorities regarding gender action planning.**

UNICEF corporate strategies are complementary to national strategies in that they have the capacity to guide and support the development of national education strategies and gender action planning. However, COs lacked capacity to translate corporate strategies into practical strategies for gender mainstreaming across their education programming.

---

*Relevant changes since 2015:*

Since 2015, Programme Strategy Notes have been introduced. These are internal to UNICEF and describe the multi-year strategies that

UNICEF will pursue to achieve the results outlined in the CPD. They require COs to consider the strategies that are most likely to address gender discriminatory treatment and facilitate the empowerment of girls and women. The UNICEF Gender Programmatic Review Tool is also now available as an important programme instrument complementary to the new (2018) GAP. COs would not have been able to use this tool during the evaluation period. The associated guidance includes the use of a gender causal framework, expanded to integrate gender analysis into a country programme's SitAn by mapping how, in any given context, gender inequality is reflected in outcomes for children, and in the intermediate structural determinants of those outcomes.

## 4.2 GENDER MAINSTREAMING

### ■ SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

---

There is strong evidence that gender mainstreaming efforts were inconsistent and the results unclear. There were various constraints on gender mainstreaming at national levels, including low awareness that gender mainstreaming was a mandated strategy and a lack of technical capacity in COs around this approach. Where training and expertise were introduced, the lack of clear measurable targets regarding mainstreaming has not incentivized follow-through, although there are positive signs that this situation has changed since 2015. The lessons related to gender mainstreaming and targeting girls' education that were identified in the MTSP end-of-cycle review were incorporated into the SP and the GAP (2014-2017).

---

Gender mainstreaming, along with targeted girls' education interventions, were the twin strategies of the GAP 2014-2017 which was introduced in 2014, towards the end of the period under evaluation. The evidence suggests that prior to this point, COs did not systematically

employ gender mainstreaming as a strategy, even though the UNICEF embraced the concept of gender mainstreaming. As a result they faced difficulties in contributing to strengthening education systems to mainstream gender to address girls' education and gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming requires a quality gender analysis and a well thought and explicit process that can be translated into country programming. Most CO education teams did not have the expertise required to execute in this regard. Furthermore, gender mainstreaming needs to be incentivized within reporting and performance structures. This type of reporting was not introduced until 2012 after the mid-term review of the MTSP, when guidance stated that *“the visibility of gender equality and gender mainstreaming as a programme priority needs to be explicitly stated in programme documents and in the reporting of results”*.

Subsequently, the result matrix for SP 2014-2017 included, for each of the seven outcome areas, gender-relevant and gender-transformative indicators at outcome and output levels. But these would only have translated into programming in countries where they were designing a new country plan from 2014. Relatedly, evidence of the effects of these would not emerge until years later. Indeed many of the changes that have improved girls education programming occurred in 2014 and 2015, the most notable of which are indicated below.

#### *Relevant changes since 2015:*

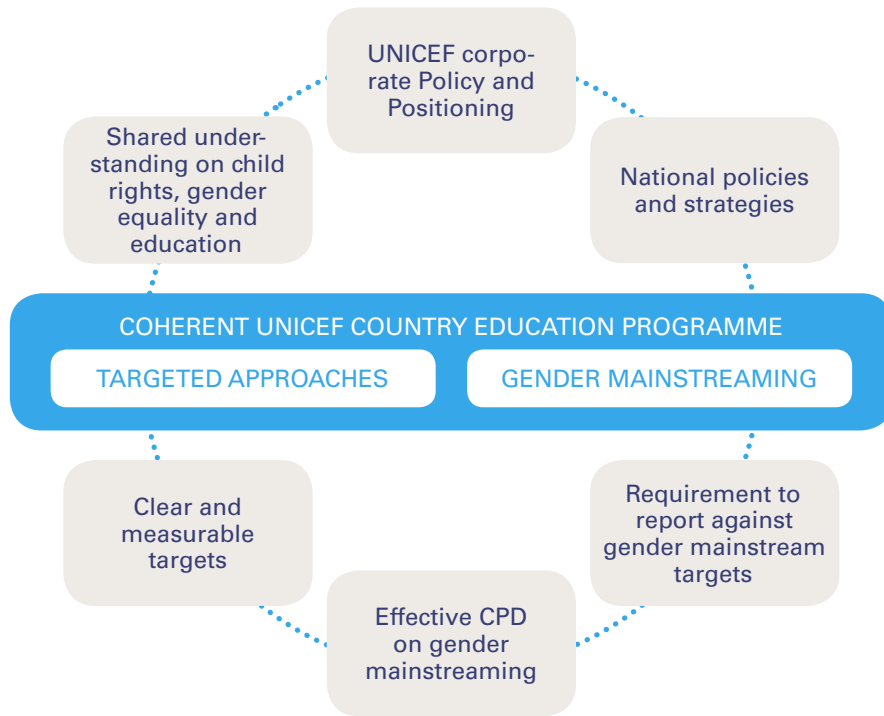
Since the end of the evaluation period, there have been many more concerted efforts to mainstream gender into UNICEF programming and in education programming in particular. The first GAP (2014-2017) drew on lessons learned on UNICEF gender mainstreaming efforts prior to its inception, many of which are reflected in this evaluation. As a result it introduced a stronger focus on gender programming and results as well as monitoring and tracking

of gender-equitable results. It also contained a recognition of the need for adequate technical capacity and improvement in the expertise on gender, and the associated commitment of resources.

In the new Strategic Plan (SP 2018-2021), a major lesson learned was that the systematic application of gender analysis during programme design was essential. SP 2018-2021 includes mainstreaming gender equality as a cross-cutting priority. Gender-responsive programming is one of the eight implementation strategies. The Theory of Change for Outcome Area 2 underlines the requirement for gender-equitable access to education and gender-equitable learning outcomes. The accompanying new GAP, 2018–2021 emphasizes a heightened focus on gender analysis and programming excellence, underpinned by an increased emphasis on gender data and measurement.

The new gender programming review guidance in the GAP 2018-2021 and strategy notes could enable COs to add detail to the CPDs and articulate exactly what was meant by adopting a gender mainstreaming approach to programming in their particular context. This would site the UNICEF programme within the national and international context and systematically consider proposed programmatic elements relevant to the present status of gender equality in education. It would act as a practical means of achieving greater coherence and consistency across the diverse country contexts that UNICEF COs operate in, ensuring that their education programmes are as relevant as possible to the strategic requirements set out in the new SP and GAP as shown in Figure 4.3.

**FIGURE 4.3** A potential virtuous circle of UNICEF programming in education and gender equality



### 4.3 GIRLS' EDUCATION

#### ■ SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Although SitAns are produced by all COs, there is strong evidence that few COs produced dedicated gender analyses or analyses with a specific focus on girls' education. Also, while some other types of analyses did incorporate gender issues, this was not done consistently, and they did not always contain profiles of disadvantaged girls. There is adequate evidence based on reports that some, but not all, girls' education and gender equality programming was informed by evidence.

While some education programmes were underpinned by implicit but incomplete theories of change, there is significant evidence that others were not. Implicit theories of change partly reflected the Foundational Theory of Change developed for this evaluation. The Foundational Theory of Change acknowledges that COs should select strategies, inputs and interventions relevant to their context, but from the case study evidence the implicit theories of change were fragmented because of crises (in Pakistan and Côte d'Ivoire), or to

- ◀ opportunistically take advantage of available programme funding (in Nigeria), or for pragmatic purposes (in Sudan), or because of a lack of coherence given the education context and needs (in Mozambique). There is strong evidence that UNICEF girls' education interventions were responsive to some aspects of national contexts such as emergencies, but that they did not always take into account actual capacities and resources at national and local levels, and in some cases, did not respond to emergent girls' education issues.

There is strong evidence that results statements for girls' education were often absent or ill-defined. There is insufficient evidence from either the desk review or the case studies to determine the extent to which anticipated results were achieved.

There is strong evidence to suggest that COs work closely with governments, which helps to ensure complementarity of programming. There is also strong evidence of UNICEF complementarity with other stakeholders, in particular global initiatives. The evidence regarding bilateral agencies and NGOs is insufficient, although it suggests that there is less coordination with NGOs than with other types of partners.

Regarding targeted girls' education programming, there is strong evidence of both positive and negative unintended consequences. There is no evidence in relation to gender mainstreaming, as this strategy was rarely implemented. While there is significant evidence from Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire that COs took steps to mitigate adverse unintended consequences, there was no evidence of these risks having been considered systematically prior to implementation.

There is strong anecdotal evidence that: 1) advocating for policy changes and implementation and 2) building and maintaining school infrastructure were seen as the most successful types of intervention in terms of achieving education outcomes for girls and gender equality in education. There is also significant evidence that enrolment drives and EMIS capacity development were seen as having been successful, but that these tended to be too modest in scale to make a lasting difference to girls.

There is strong evidence that UNICEF programming in gender and girls' education was not, on the whole, designed to be scalable or sustainable. Institutional factors that should have been addressed and included in systematic programming were instead seen as constraints which were outside of UNICEF control.

The objectives of this evaluation theme were to determine (a) the nature and relevance of UNICEF girls' education interventions in different contexts, including countries undertaking humanitarian programming, (b) whether outcomes and pathways to achieving results are articulated clearly, and (c) whether interventions have yielded the intended results

or improved education outcomes for girls, including gender parity, gender equality, and empowerment of girls and young women.

UNICEF girls' education and gender equality programming seems to have been a small part of an overall education programme. There is little evidence of the in-depth analysis required prior to programming that would inform a

gender-mainstreamed approach complemented with targeted interventions. Targeted interventions appeared in many of the programmes but were often at too small a scale to make a real and lasting difference to girls, and it was not always clear where the UNICEF interventions were purposefully complementary to others', except perhaps when in relation to other UN agencies.

---

**ToC Assumption A3 – *The targeted gender priorities have sharpened in focus over the strategic plans, but themes are similar.***

Without a coherent Theory of Change and clear quantified and qualified results statements about what UNICEF intended to achieve, it is not possible to know exactly what was intended by activities in education and gender equality programming, what the starting points were, and what kind of success UNICEF has had in bringing about improvements. Similarly, there has been no systematic approach to planning for scalability or sustainability.

Education programmes were responsive to changes in context such as emergencies or natural disasters, and this humanitarian response around education service provision is a strength, but one which inadvertently addressed gender inequalities rather than having been planned to do so.

---

**ToC Assumption A4 – *Strategies are broad to ensure locally-responsive approaches.***

Education strategies developed and delivered by COs were broad enough to ensure that approaches were responsive to changing contextual conditions and national priorities. For example, UNICEF demonstrated high levels of flexibility and adaptation when delivering Education in Emergencies approaches in response to the institutional crisis and conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, floods and earthquakes in Pakistan, and the conflict in Sudan.

The case study countries did not have explicit theories of change that explored girls' situations in respect to education and gender empowerment. The CO's generation and use of evidence was constrained by their lack of in-depth gender analysis and ability to translate key policy approaches such as gender mainstreaming into practicable programming.

It appears that during the evaluation period, UNICEF was effective in girls' education and gender equality programming through service delivery at the field level (some of which was targeted at girls); this in turn informed its knowledge of the situation of girls, and successfully fed into advocacy campaigns at country and global levels. Advocacy was centred around the situation of girls and what they were experiencing; at that time, UNICEF lacked the analyses, experience and knowledge to incorporate messages about why girls were structurally disadvantaged and how this could be successfully addressed.

---

**ToC Assumption A7 – *Education system is equipped with basic infrastructure inputs to achieve enrolment standards.***

UNICEF did not always take into account the infrastructure constraints that characterized the education systems they were working with, leading to a lack of capacity in schools to respond to increasing demand following enrolment drives.

Although UNICEF evidently works closely with partner governments and has done much to build the capacity of partners, the foundational Theory of Change and those implicit in COs do not pay sufficient attention to the whole country context in which they worked. Many of the programme interventions made assumptions about governments' abilities to adapt and increase budgets because of advocacy campaigns, or to scale models, standards



and systems that had been introduced. More institutional analysis would have provided a better indication of which activities may have the best opportunity to influence practice and be sustained. Similarly, many assumptions regarding the capabilities of communities and parents to react to enrolment and sensitization campaigns were made that were not sufficiently researched or evident.

---

**ToC Assumption A6 – *There is political will and economic rationale to address girls’ education and gender equity.***

Political will among UNICEF government partners was inconsistent at times, and sometimes at odds with UNICEF global priorities, in particular the GAP. For example, in Sudan, UNICEF had to shift its focus from girls’ education to education for boys and girls because of the MoE preference for this. There was little evidence of COs researching the economic rationale to address girls’ education or the fiscal space that governments had to address it.

The potential risks of employing certain strategies or interventions were not thought through, with the result that there were some unintended negative consequences that could have been avoided or mitigated had a ‘do no harm’ approach been employed.

---

**ToC Assumption A11 – *Includes strategies arising from unanticipated opportunities that may be outside of planned UNICEF actions.***

We found strong evidence of both positive and negative unintended consequences relating to girls’ education programming, but no evidence of gender mainstreaming because this strategy was rarely implemented effectively. There was also little evidence to explain the extent to which UNICEF developed strategies that were explicitly informed by unanticipated opportunities or

constraints outside their planned actions, with the exception of the UNICEF response to major external shocks such as floods, earthquakes, conflict and political crises.

---

There were a number of additional assumptions in the foundational Theory of Change that documentary or case study evidence did not shed any light on. These included the valuing and inclusion of a male voice, and technological advances that may enable greater access.

*Relevant Changes since 2015:*

With the introduction of the SP, 2014-2017, UNICEF HQ supported staff in twelve COs to make better use of data and evidence. This enabled them to reflect more on the effectiveness of their education programming, and there is now (in 2018) an explicit Theory of Change for education programmes that refers to gender objectives reflected in the GAP, 2018-2021.

This includes a much more comprehensive system of outcome and output results indicators, with global indicators identified across three levels (gendered child outcomes, intermediate determinants, structural determinants). However, there is still no comprehensive Theory of Change for girls’ education and gender empowerment at the country level that would support the new global Theory of Change. It is not clear whether CO education staff have been given guidance in the construction of their own tailored ToCs, and although there is much stronger emphasis on the need to carry out gender analysis, institutional analysis and political economy analysis are not yet institutionalized features of the planning cycle.

## 4.4 PARTNERSHIPS

### ■ SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

---

There is strong evidence that UNICEF seeks to work in partnership at all levels. However, there is little evidence of UNICEF adopting the type of strategic approach set out in its own guiding principles. Instead, UNICEF adopted an opportunistic and pragmatic approach, which sometimes led to an incoherent approach to girls' education. While working through partnerships was beneficial to both UNICEF and its partners, in some countries these same partnerships exposed UNICEF to risks that were not mitigated or managed effectively. There is little evidence available about the risks to partners that are associated with working with UNICEF. There is also little evidence available of the effectiveness of these partnerships in terms of their contribution to improvements in girls' education outcomes and gender inequality in education.

Due to an absence of reported targets and gaps in reporting on the actual amounts leveraged by UNICEF, it was not possible to establish from the desk review how successful UNICEF and its partners were in leveraging resources for either targeted girls' education or gender mainstreaming. The case study reports do contain examples of some notable successes in leveraging funding for basic education, most of which concern GPE funding. However, there is little evidence of resources being successfully leveraged for targeted girls' education initiatives, and even less evidence about approaches involving gender mainstreaming.

---

UNICEF strategically aligns with other organizations to achieve shared goals, create synergies, deliver strategic added value and provide direct support for implementation. The span of UNICEF partnerships, from global to local levels, is perceived as a key strength by its partners. Working through partnerships was beneficial to both UNICEF and its partners, and these partnerships are critical to delivering effective programmes and sustainable outcomes. At the same time, the evidence from this evaluation shows an inconsistent approach to partnerships, which in turn contributed to an incoherent approach to girls' education. At times, some of these partnerships did not align with the guiding principles set out in the UNICEF Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships. Some partners were not always committed to UNICEF core values around girls' education. There were examples of a lack of alignment and ownership of the need for gender equality in education, and it was generally not clear how effective UNICEF partnerships were in contributing to improved results for girls' education.

The ability to leverage extra resources is an important aspect of partnerships, especially as UNICEF financial resources are relatively modest. Yet CO efforts to leverage additional resources were not systematic; for instance, there was inadequate reporting on either targets or the actual amounts leveraged. While there were some successes in leveraging resources to support the education sector in general, the limited evidence available suggests that only a small proportion of leveraged funds targeted girls' education initiatives specifically. Gender mainstreaming was even less likely to receive leveraged funding, underlining its marginalization in the context of UNICEF education programming.

The evaluation found that UNICEF did not have the capacity to effectively use gender mainstreaming in its education programming during the evaluation period. A lack of capacity within COs to fully understand gender mainstreaming and a lack of knowledge about how to practically apply gender mainstreaming in complex and dynamic education contexts also constrained

the organization's capacity to form partnerships at the country level that effectively delivered improvements in girls' education outcomes.

The 2012 report on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships stressed the importance of strengthening UNICEF capacity to develop partnerships that strategically contributed to its results. In the UNICEF documentation

that was reviewed, and during the case studies, there was a distinct lack of information about UNICEF partnership strategies specifically for improving girls' education outcomes and improving gender inequality. As with all implementation strategies, partnerships should be underpinned with a clear rationale, strategy and set of objectives for achieving the organization's goal of gender equality in education.

## 4.5 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

### ■ SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

---

There is adequate evidence from the case studies to support the findings that UNICEF education team members had some of the skills required for girls' education programming. However, most had little or no technical capacity in gender mainstreaming, nor did they use tools available at the time that would have helped them to mainstream gender into their education programmes. Very few had participated in training specifically on girls' education or gender mainstreaming, and there is no formal knowledge management system to sustain built capacity.

There is strong evidence that UNICEF COs in case study countries implemented many education-related capacity development activities of different types and with stakeholders at all levels of government. Rather than targeting girls' education or gender equality, most of these activities addressed all kinds of capacity issues in the education sector. The effects of capacity development on girls' education programming are mixed. There is significant evidence, notably from Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire, of some positive effects, with greater capacity to design and implement girls' education programmes. However, there is also strong evidence from Pakistan, Mozambique, and Sudan that these activities were not effective or sustainable because they were not delivered in a systemic way.

---

Gender-responsive programming and implementation requires shared understanding and capacity within UNICEF CO education teams and within their government partners. During the evaluation period, there is little evidence that the necessary capacities in gender mainstreaming for upstream work in girls' education existed within UNICEF COs. This hampered their ability to strategically plan and execute capacity development with government partners to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate girls' education programmes and interventions.

Although there was strong evidence that CO staff were aware of UNICEF guiding principles, they did not have all the tools necessary to translate these principles into coherent programming, and there was no systematic capacity-building around staff needs. This was particularly the case with the development of theories of change and gender mainstreaming. Capacity-building that was done through sporadic cascade training or on-the-job assistance from ROs and HQ, particularly around gender mainstreaming, seems to have been

dissipated because of the lack of a formal knowledge management system to mitigate the impact of frequent turnover of international staff. Figure 4.4 summarizes the self-reinforcing effects of a lack of a systematic approach to institutional capacity development within UNICEF during the evaluation period.

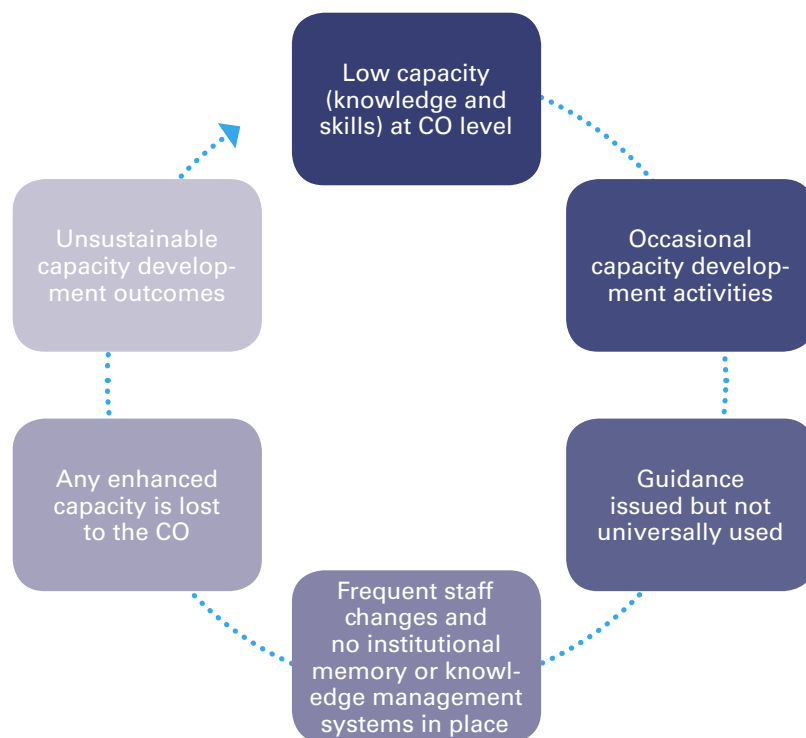
**ToC Assumption A5 – Inputs assume adequate resourcing and technical capacities among UNICEF and its partners to deliver for girls.**

UNICEF COs and their partners did not have the technical capacities needed to consistently and systematically deliver gender mainstreaming or gendered approaches to education. An ad hoc approach to providing capacity development in gender mainstreaming complemented by high staff turnover contributed to a lack of institutional knowledge and resources. In

diverse and challenging contexts, COs often took pragmatic approaches to support girls' education in response to opportunities and contextual bottlenecks.

Without a high level of internal capacity, education teams in COs were hampered in the quality of the capacity development they could undertake with their national government partners and others. In most cases this concentrated on training, some of which was seen as successful (particularly in developing an EMIS system). However, this was not always seen as a strategic element of the programme and often did not go far enough (e.g. to include analysis of the data generated), or was again dissipated through frequent staff changes among government partners.

**FIGURE 4.4** Unsustainable capacity development in COs



# 5

## RECOMMENDATIONS



This evaluation focused on reports and experiences of changes in education and gender equality that were evident in UNICEF country contexts during the 2009–2015 evaluation period. For this reason, these recommendations are focused on changes that UNICEF could make to help deliver improvements in education and gender equality through country office programming, while recognizing that UNICEF works at global, regional and country levels to fulfil its strategic objectives.

Since the end of the evaluation period in 2015, UNICEF has made significant changes to the way that it approaches and supports education and gender inequality at HQ, regional and country levels. In January 2018, UNICEF published its Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021, accompanying results frameworks, and an extensive Theory of Change Paper (see Appendix E for more details). While these plans, frameworks and other UNICEF initiatives fall outside the evaluation period, they are important because they already go some way to putting into action some of the recommendations from this evaluation. As far as possible, through this evaluation process with UNICEF, we have tried to consider the changes UNICEF has made since 2015 when finalizing the recommendations.

During the evaluation period, we found little evidence of UNICEF delivering tangible improvements in basic education and gender equality. Country Offices were aware of the SP, 2014-2017 and the GAP, 2014-2017. However, staff in-country were generally not clear about what was expected of them with regards to using gender mainstreaming as a precondition to intervening to improve gender equality and girls' education, or as part of a dual-track approach to gender and education.

This lack of awareness was exacerbated by situation analyses that did not specifically focus on: education and implementation strategies; improving staff understanding of the relative differences and drivers of inequality between

boys and girls; and how COs should improve gender equality in education (with what anticipated results). Accordingly, results statements, specifically for gender equality in education, were either incomplete, poorly defined or not defined at all. Not only were staff in COs unclear about what was expected in terms of gender mainstreaming, they also lacked the expertise and know-how to use the tools that were available to practically apply the requirements of the SP and GAP through education programming in unpredictable, dynamic and complex environments.

Partnerships are an important implementation strategy for UNICEF, but during the evaluation period, the UNICEF approach to partnerships at the country level lacked a strategic rationale setting out how partnerships could be used to improve gender equality in education. Furthermore, the high turnover amongst UNICEF staff and partners, in particular government partners, resulted in a loss of built capacity and institutional memory, which in turn constrained the benefits of strategic partnerships that had been established. Without stronger knowledge management and a systematic approach to the capacity development of staff in its COs, the UNICEF approach to gender equality and education was inconsistent, fragmented, and lacked continuity across the years covered by this evaluation.

By and large, the findings, conclusions and recommendations set out in this report have been informed by evidence collected for the

2009 -2015 evaluation period. It should also be noted that some of these conclusions and findings arise out of systemic issues related to the way that UNICEF, as a large decentralized organization, approached planning, programming and accountability processes during this period. *Therefore, we recognize that some recommendations may only be fully actionable within a wider framework of organizational change.*

Furthermore, the strategic changes UNICEF has made since 2015, including the introduction of implementation guides and strategy notes, means that UNICEF COs now have a much more results-orientated approach to gender equality and education, and have access to more guidance than they had during the evaluation period. UNICEF is currently working with Cos to operationalize the new SP and GAP, and to agree how implementation can best be supported.

With all this in mind, the following recommendations have been developed with the intention of helping UNICEF at headquarters, regional and country office levels to develop effective strategies for improving the delivery of gender equality through its education programming.

---

**Recommendation 1: Education teams at HQ, RO and CO levels should establish and agree on expectations, targets and approaches to achieving improvements in girls' education and gender equality in education. The UNICEF position should be informed by global data, evidence and policymaking in gender and education. Education teams at HQ, RO and CO levels should understand and agree to support the UNICEF corporate strategy for gender mainstreaming – especially the dual-track approach set out in the GAP, 2018-2021 focusing on adolescent girls and secondary education completion.**

---

To incentivize greater knowledge and understanding about the use of gender mainstreaming in education among staff in COs, HQ and Ros

should require the specific inclusion of gender analyses and detailed profiling of target groups in the CPD preparation process. Completed CPDs should include clear and measurable targets concerning the use of a gender mainstreaming and targeted girls' education approach. Reporting requirements for COARs should reflect annual monitoring of these targets.

---

**Recommendation 2: UNICEF HQ and ROs should build on the current support (such as regional gender advisers) to COs and their education teams to effectively use available tools to translate the principles of gender equality and girls' education set out in the GAP, 2018-2021 and other relevant policies into practical programmatic actions and strategic partnerships that improve gender equality in education.**

---

Education staff should either be recruited for their prior knowledge and experience of operationalizing gender mainstreaming in education, or be supported by key staff with gender expertise through a systematic training programme during induction and through continuous professional development. This should introduce staff to the tools available for operationalizing the GAP, 2018-2021 and developing coherent theories of change around the delivery of the new SP, 2018-2021 outcomes and outputs. A programme of awareness-raising and capacity-building should equip staff with the ability to carry out or commission situation analyses that include institutional mapping, gender analysis, detailed profiling of targeted groups (particularly adolescent girls), political economy analysis and capacity assessments, as well as risk analysis that refers to 'do no harm' principles. Many of these tools are now accessible online through Agora, but may need to be enhanced with a specific girls' education module and/or curated specifically for education staff development. Dissemination of these tools and approaches could be a role for the RO gender advisers.

---

**Recommendation 3: Partnerships should remain an integral part of the overall UNICEF approach to improving girls' education and gender equality. COs should leverage the support of regional offices to draw on effective global and regional partnerships to build appropriate alliances at the country level.**

---

UNICEF global and regional partnerships often shape the type of partnerships developed at the country level. Partnership strategies at the country level that are focused on gender equality in education should be underpinned by a clear rationale and set of objectives and framed by targets (including targets for investment levered) that define the results that UNICEF wants to achieve. This should include a clear assessment of the strategic and programmatic risks associated with different types of partnerships. Strategic partnership frameworks should be regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that they continue to effectively support girls' education and gender equality.

UNICEF now has updated 'How Strategies', which include systematic approaches to partnership. HQ needs to ensure that these are rolled out through offices so that each CO education team is familiar with them and can use them in their programming.

---

**Recommendation 4: UNICEF education teams would benefit from the introduction of a capacity development mechanism, through training and mentoring, on gender equality in education. This would better enable staff to understand the UNICEF guiding principles and policies for gender equality and education, improve access to relevant tools to implement these, and build awareness of changing global education policy. An education-focused induction system would also allow new staff to understand the country, gender and education contexts on arrival at post.**

---

This recommendation would also improve UNICEF capacity development work in education with government partners. In the longer term, and perhaps as part of a wider UNICEF corporate initiative to develop a knowledge management system, education teams in HQ, ROs and COs would benefit from the development of a more formal way of retaining knowledge and experience. This would allow more immediate access to better quality information about lessons learned, both for enhanced country programming use and for high-level advocacy, as shown in Figure 4.5.

Much of the expertise and knowledge required for knowledge management regarding girls' education, and gender equality more broadly, resides within UNGEI through its HQ and country-based institutions. Closer partnerships or a more formal recognition of a knowledge management role undertaken by UNGEI for UNICEF may be an option to explore.

---

**Recommendation 5: To improve accountability and learning across COs, there is a need to articulate clear, specific and measurable results (outcomes, outputs and targets) for gender equality and girls' education within the CPD, and ensure that associated accountability mechanisms for reporting purposes are clearly specified.**

---

Without a well-articulated Theory of Change or rationale for intervention, a solid evidence base, and a rigorous exploration of the assumptions underpinning programming, results statements will continue to be vague and difficult to measure and will not adequately capture the UNICEF contribution to girls' education and gender equality outcomes. Similarly, if accountability for results in girls' education and gender equality is firmly embedded at the country level, then there are greater incentives to ensure that mechanisms are in place to systematically track, monitor and report results against agreed performance targets for education.



# APPENDIX A:

## ABRIDGED TERMS OF REFERENCE

### EVALUATION UNICEF'S GIRLS' EDUCATION PORTFOLIO IN BEGE (2009-2015)

#### I. Background, evaluation rationale and use

1. The Evaluation Office (UNICEF, New York) plans to commission a global evaluation of the girls' education portfolio – programmes, interventions, activities and/or strategies that UNICEF has implemented or supported to improve education outcomes for girls, and to promote gender equality. The evaluation will be launched in the second quarter of 2016.
2. UNICEF's current work in girls' education can be traced back to the momentum created by the passage of the Convention of the Rights of a Child in 1990, and commitments made following the World Declaration on Education For All (UNESCO, 1990). A policy review that was conducted in 1994 identified three operational approaches and/or strategies deployed by UNICEF towards gender equality and empowerment of girls and women; these were (i) gender mainstreaming; (ii) promoting gender-specific programme activities targeting girls and women; and, (iii) giving special attention to the girl child<sup>85</sup>. For UNICEF and its partners, the agenda in the 1990s coalesced around the assisting governments to take girls' education on as a means of leveraging overall progress in EFA, and achieving equity goals in the education sector. With the initial support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), UNICEF launched a multi-country girls' education programme in 1994, entitled the African Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI). AGEI received additional funding support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1996 to 2004.
3. Beyond AGEI, UNICEF's first Medium Term Strategic Plan (2002-2005) identified girls' education as one of five programming priorities, and articulated the objective to 'get all girls in school; help all girls to stay in school; and, ensure that all girls learn what they need to succeed'<sup>86</sup>. It also pursued a more ambitious goal of gender equality and women empowerment, to be pursued both under the Basic Education and Gender Equality (BEGE) 'focus area', and as one of five supporting cross-cutting strategies of the MTSP<sup>87</sup>. Within BEGE, girls' education was the main vehicle for pursuing a broader goal of "eliminating gender disparity at all educational levels [by 2015], addressing other disparities in education, and promoting gender equality in society through education"<sup>88</sup>. UNICEF's Strategic Plan (2014-2017) and related planning instruments articulate a sharpened focus on gender equality and empowerment of girls and women<sup>89</sup>, to be achieved through a gender mainstreamed approach and targeted corporate priorities of advancing girls' secondary education,

<sup>85</sup> E/ICEF/1991/L.0005. Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls; a policy review. (UNICEF, 1994)

<sup>86</sup> Medium Term Strategic Plan, 2002-2005, p17

<sup>87</sup> Medium Term Strategic Plan 2006-2009; para 101-103. The other cross-cutting areas were

<sup>88</sup> UNICEF Education Strategy (2007), para 12b

<sup>89</sup> Strategic Plan, 2014-2017; Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017

addressing gender-based violence, promoting gender-responsive adolescent health, and ending child-marriage.

4. UNICEF has funded multi-country research and programmes and invested in advocacy and research to promote an enabling environment for girls' education, leveraged key partnerships for girls' education work with UNESCO, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), World Bank, to mention a few. UNICEF HQ hosts the Secretariat for the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI), an advocacy platform for girls' education that brings together United Nations system, donor agencies, international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector at the global, regional and country levels. Two other developments are key to understanding inequities faced by girls – namely, the launching in 2010 of the Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI), and the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) framework, a primary operational response to a commitment UNICEF made to sharpen its focus on equity.
5. Rationale for the proposed evaluation: The coverage of girls' education initiatives within UNICEF is quite significant from a programmatic standpoint, and as a cross-cutting strategy that enables girls to access their rights. For instance, 102 of 142 UNICEF country offices indicated in 2013 that their education sector plans included specific measures to reduce gender disparities, while 79 reported an existence of some policies that provided partial or full guarantee that pregnant girls and young

mothers could continue their education. With expenditures at 25.9 percent of the entire budget for BEGE in the same year, the level of investment on girls' education programmes has also been significant. And as mentioned in paragraph 8 of this ToR, the thematic report captures results reported by UNICEF country offices in 2013. 2013 was the last year of the MTSP, hence there is an opportunity to confirm (or disconfirm) these results in the evaluation proposed here, and verify baseline markers against which progress in girl's education can be assessed in the future.

6. While girls' education and/or gender mainstreaming was addressed as a cross-cutting theme in a number of global evaluations<sup>90</sup> and country programme evaluations<sup>91</sup>, only two global evaluations addressed girls' education directly in the past 10 years, both with a narrow focus on the objectives and results of the planned initiatives<sup>92</sup>. A third and related global evaluation focused on the implementation of UNICEF gender policy of 1994.<sup>93</sup> For these and related reasons, there is a need for evaluative information on the effectiveness of UNICEF's strategies and the added value of UNICEF's girls' education work, and a need to assess UNICEF's follow through on its commitments for gender equality and related results.
7. Evaluation use: Within UNICEF, key users of the findings of the evaluation will be the Education Section and country office education teams as they continue to refine their girls' education programmes and/or strategies. Other potential users include the Gender Equality Task Force which has

---

<sup>90</sup> Child Friendly Schools programming (UNICEF, 2009); Global evaluation of life skills education programmes (UNICEF, 2012); UNICEF's upstream work in basic education and gender equality, 2003-2012 (UNICEF, 2014), to mention a few.

<sup>91</sup> A search of the UNICEF evaluation database in December 2015 yielded more than 50 country programme evaluations on girls' education and gender reviews/audits.

<sup>92</sup> Changing lives of girls; evaluation of the African girls' initiatives (UNICEF, 2004); Formative evaluation of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNICEF, 2012);

<sup>93</sup> Evaluation of gender policy implementation in UNICEF (UNICEF, 2008)

oversight for implementation of UNICEF's gender policy, and the Gender Rights and Development Section who are the custodians for the gender action plan and an implementing partner of the Education Section in a number of programmes<sup>94</sup>. Within the Programme Division, ADAP, Child Protection, HIV/AIDS, and WASH do implement programme components which contribute to protection of girls, and/or to promote their hygiene, their physical and mental well-being. The evaluation should endeavor to generate evidence and lessons that can improve practice in those areas. Evaluation findings should also be targeted to have utility beyond UNICEF.

## II. Purpose of evaluation its objectives

8. In almost all programming contexts, UNICEF's girls' education programmes/interventions stated as a minimum, the goal of reducing gender disparity and/or achieving gender parity. However, a significant number of girls' education initiatives went beyond gender parity to indicate achieving gender equality as the intended outcome. A few other programmes indicated women's empowerment as the intended outcome, even though there was no attempt to articulate a clear path towards achieving this outcome, or how success will be measured.
9. Hence the purpose of the evaluation is to assess the contribution of UNICEF's girls' education programme and interventions towards attaining gender parity in key education measures, and in achieving MDG 2 and 3, and related EFA goals, and to assess the efficacy of girls' education programme strategies, and the extent to which UNICEF's work in girls' education has translated to the desired reforms in education sector policy planning and budgeting practice. The evaluation will also determine whether key lessons (documented lessons about what works in girls' education, evaluation findings, and other evidence) have been used to influence subsequent choices for girls' education and gender equality programming within UNICEF. In that way the evaluation will address both learning and accountability, and provide necessary evidentiary inputs for the end-term assessments of UNICEF's Strategic Plan (2014-2017). Table A1 below presents a summary of themes to be covered by the evaluation, related objectives, with indicative evaluation criteria.
10. The five evaluation themes presented here highlight the key issues in UNICEF's girls' education work, and in working with government partners and other duty bearers in pursuit of gender equality, and to ensure that girls' are provided with meaningful education/learning opportunities. The evaluation has included the theme of 'gender mainstreaming'<sup>95</sup> as a key concept because it offers a means by which the evaluation can measure progress towards gender equality. Indeed, if gender mainstreaming as defined above was the default in terms of how governments enact policies in the education sector, or how actions and transactions are carried out in the political, economic and societal spheres in the first place, the need for targeting girls and women for special intervention would be obviated.

---

<sup>94</sup> Working for an equal future: UNICEF's Policy on Gender equality and empowerment of girls and women (2010); Gender Action Plan, (2014-2017)

<sup>95</sup> According to the United Nations, gender mainstreaming is a process of "assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetrated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."

**TABLE A.1** Evaluation themes and objectives, and evaluation criteria

Evaluation Themes	Key components and Evaluation criteria	Evaluation Objectives
1 UNICEF's positioning and shared understanding	Programme coherence; global best practices; UNICEF's internal collaboration and coordination (relevance, coherence, efficiency)	To assess UNICEF's work in girls' education against the organization's mandate, its positioning, and global best practice, and to determine if there is a shared understanding of objectives and strategies within UNICEF (between BEGE and other PD sections/sectors, and with DPS, and EMOPs), and shared principles and alignment of goals at the country level between UNICEF and education sector planning processes.
2 Girls' education interventions	Improving outcomes for girls; pathways to achieving results; contribution to education and related outcomes (coherence; relevance, effectiveness, sustainability)	To determine the nature and relevance of UNICEF's girls' education interventions in different contexts, including countries undertaking humanitarian programming, and to assess whether outcomes and pathways to achieving results are articulated clearly, and whether interventions have yielded the intended results or improved education outcomes for girls, including gender parity, gender equality, and empowerment of girls and young women.
3 Gender mainstreaming	Good practice in gender mainstreaming and national systems strengthening: (coherence, effectiveness, sustainability)	To examine the efficacy of UNICEF's gender mainstreaming strategy and to identify mainstreaming efforts at country level that are believed to be best practice, and assess/confirm their effectiveness against education system strengthening goals.
4 Technical capacities for girls' education programming and upstream work	Policy-dialogue; evidence for gender responsive planning and budgeting; improving gender auditing practice; influencing investments in girls' education; knowledge management (efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability)	To evaluate efforts at building capacities of UNICEF education staff and key partners in government in gender-responsive programming, and to determine whether the necessary capacities for upstream work in girls' education exist in UNICEF, and whether they are utilized effectively.
5 UNICEF's partnerships	Partnership strategy; credibility of UNICEF as a partner; added value of UNICEF/UNGEI partnership (coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability)	To examine whether UNICEF's engagement in partnerships <sup>a</sup> around girls' education is strategic efficient, and mutually beneficial, and whether UNICEF's partnership strategy contributes significantly to advancing girls education and/or education outcomes for girls.

<sup>a</sup> The major partnerships for resource mobilization, policy development and advocacy within programme countries are GPE, UNGEI, and UNESCO. Other partnerships include global and regional organizations, national governments, donor nations, public institutions, private institutions/organizations.

11. Expanding on the objectives stated in Table A1, Table A2 proffers a mix of descriptive and normative questions that the evaluation seeks to answer. **Descriptive**

**questions** are aimed to provide information and verifiable facts about the girl's education programming landscape (e.g., the country context, including

development challenges that necessitated girls' education programming; description of UNICEF-supported girls' education activities; implementation modalities; selection of implementing partners; and, coverage of intended beneficiaries, among others). Answering **normative questions** involves making judgments, based on application of explicit criteria for weighing evidence (e.g., whether there is coherence in UNICEF approach; relevance and adequacy of UNICEF strategies against national goals; the contribution of UNICEF's girls' education programmes/interventions towards stated outcomes; scalability and sustainability of programme/interventions etc.).

### III. Scope of the evaluation

12. Period to be covered: Girl's education was a certifiable priority for three consecutive strategic planning periods.<sup>96</sup> However, the evaluation will cover the girls' education portfolio in the period 2009-2015, comprising of the latter part of the previous MTSP, 2006-2013 (to determine the efficacies of UNICEF's programme strategies and identify the lessons for programmes improvement); and, the first two years of UNICEF's current Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 (to determine if there is a clear rationale and coherence between the lessons learned in earlier work and the new strategies for girls' education programming).

Thematic focus (UNICEF and partners): Any one evaluation cannot cover all the questions about programming choices and results accruing from it. Rather the evaluation will limit itself to the themes that are outlined in Table A1 of this ToR, namely, (i) UNICEF's positioning and shared understanding of girls' education work; (ii)

improving outcomes for girls through targeted programmes and interventions; (iii) gender mainstreaming; (iv) upstream work in girls education, including strategic planning; (v) technical capacities to strengthen systems for gender-responsive programming; and, (vi) UNICEF's partnerships for girls' education work.

13. Sectoral coverage (UNICEF): While the bulk of the results in girls' education were pursued under Basic Education and Gender Equality (BEGE) focus area, a number of the results are being targeted under Child Protection, ADAP, HIV/AIDS and WASH programmes. In the current planning period, additional inputs into the programme sectors are reflected in the Gender Action Plan. The evaluation will mainly focus on BEGE programmes/intervention and results. Activities in other PD sections and/or programme components will be assessed only in instances where they were planned to intersect with the BEGE activities and/or results.
14. Geographic coverage (UNICEF and partners): UNICEF has extensive coverage of girls' education and programming to reduce gender disparities (102 of 142 countries reported work on this area in 2013). A comprehensive desk-based review and analysis of existing documents necessary for the global, regional levels to determine if UNICEF is engaged in the right activities, and/or if UNICEF's advocacy for girls' education is producing the intended results. At the country level, the review and analysis will document the status of the work that UNICEF is carrying out with national partners in promoting girl's education, for normal development programming, and for programming in humanitarian programming (or programming in fragile contexts).

---

<sup>96</sup> MTSP, 2002-2005; MTSP, 2006-2013; and, UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017

15. Coverage of girls' education work by others (non-UNICEF): UNICEF has forged different types of partnerships to carry out work around the girls' education agenda, the most prominent being with UNGEI, GPE and UNESCO. The evaluation is expected identify key non-UNICEF partners, and to examine their experiences and contribution to girls' education results (by implementing a survey or comparable approach). A sample of key partners should be invited to contribute their views through in-depth interviews. The evaluation is also expected to sample work of other organizations that have no direct ties to UNICEF, who are important contributors to the work of girls' education.

#### IV. Evaluation approach and methodology

16. Execution of the evaluation should include the following elements and/or tasks: (i) conducting a desk-based review of literature topical issues and global trends in girls' education and gender equality work; (ii) conducting an analysis of documents from UNICEF offices and government to identify girls' education intervention, strategies, activities, and reported results and judge their efficacy; (iii) conducting an analysis of comparable data on girls' education from secondary data sources; (iv) field-based data collection using a well-constructed case study approach, and employing a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods obtain primary data from multiple sources; (v) data analysis and formulation of preliminary findings; (vi) articulating an approach to validate preliminary findings (using a delphi survey or a comparable technique) to establish consensus and/or

generalizability of findings, and to obtain additional insights and/or nuances; and, (vii) articulate an approach to validate evaluation recommendations.

17. Evaluation approach/design: The suggested design for this evaluation is a theory of change based approach that utilizes contribution analysis to assess the results of UNICEF programmes, and interventions that UNICEF has inspired in achieving education outcomes for girls, and gender equality. For our purposes, a theory of change is "a process intended to generate a description of a sequence of events that is expected to lead to a particular desired outcome"<sup>97</sup>. Offered in Appendix B, a draft theory of change was created retrospectively by the Evaluation Office in its endeavour to shape the evaluation framework.

18. While this theory of change provides a broad understanding of pathways for change in girls' education in the entire period of the evaluation, evaluators should note that (i) girls' education programming during the period 2009-2013 was not necessarily based on explicit theory of change (or theories of change); and, (ii) flexibility and responsiveness to context are core to country programming, hence each country office followed its own, context-specific knowledge/understanding of what will drive changes in girls' education. Evaluators should note, also, that the Strategic Plan (2014-2017) does proffer a theory of change for UNICEF's education response/component.

19. Evaluation methods, to be further refined during the inception phase, should include sampling of participating countries; instrument development and validation; a data

---

<sup>97</sup> Vogel, I. (2012) "Review of the Use of 'theory of change' in International Development", Review Report, Department for International Development. Available at: [http://www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d/pdf/outputs/mis\\_spc/DFID\\_ToC\\_Review\\_VogelV7.pdf](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d/pdf/outputs/mis_spc/DFID_ToC_Review_VogelV7.pdf)

collection strategy involving a document review exercise and secondary data analysis and field visits to a sample of countries; and, data analysis (coding and verification).

- a. Sampling strategy: The sampling strategy should articulate criteria for sampling (i) key informants from UNICEF (Education Section, other collaborating in the Programme Division, seven regional education offices; (ii) key implementing partners and beneficiaries including girls (iii) the 35 countries to be selected for a desk-based study; (ii) a smaller number of countries (4-6) for field-based data collection; and, (iv) countries to participate in the delphi survey (or a comparable technique) to confirm/disconfirm evaluation findings. To be finalized in collaboration with the Education Section during the inception phase, criteria for selection of case study countries may include geographical coverage, programming context (e.g., strong girls' education component, education in emergencies, etc.); presence of key programming partnerships (e.g., UNGEI, GPE, Education Cluster, etc.); presence of sector coordination mechanisms, to mention a few.
- b. Instrument development and validation: The evaluation will pay particular attention to the development of instruments and their validation in order to reduce conceptual and measurement error. Hence a draft data collection toolkit will be required and approved as part of the inception phase. One week of piloting of draft instruments is suggested for the first country visit.
- c. Data collection: Data collection activities will be conducted as follows:
  - (i) Global data and information may be collected using UNICEF Medium-Term Strategic Plan and Strategic

Plan indicators and internationally comparable indicators on progress on girls' education. This global data collection may also include information on UNICEF's global work with regard to girls' education and specific information on a global UNICEF-supported initiative.

- (ii) For the sample of 35 countries, education sector statistics will be collected from reputable sources (e.g., EMIS, UIS MICS, World Bank and other reputable sources). Also, a desk-based analysis of UNICEF documents and official education sector documents (national development plans, education sector plans, past evaluations findings) will be conducted to identify girls' education intervention, strategies, activities, and reported results and judge their efficacy. These analyses are intended to yield data that will facilitate a deeper understanding of the education sector context, issues around girls' education and gender equality programming, and to answer questions around a shared understandings of girls' education work, and determine UNICEF's strategic engagement in the country and its positioning relative to its comparative advantage. Data from this exercise will be organized in a matrix to enable between country comparisons.
- (iii) Case studies: Case studies will provide the opportunity to collect primary data at the country level through interviews of UNICEF country office staff, government partners, implementing partners, and others who participate in education sector groups, private sector partners, and beneficiaries. Two

types of case studies are envisaged; 'country-based' and 'thematic' case studies. Country-based case studies (3-4) will assess the extent to which achievement of intended results girls' education work is influenced by contextual factors, and the presence (or absence) of certain inputs. To that end, case study sites will be similar in that they will all be selected on the basis of their significant focus on girls' education and gender equality. However country cases should offer important contrast in terms of programming context (e.g., programming in an emergency or fragile context) and the required inputs.

d. Data analysis: The data analysis approach should indicate the unit of analysis (e.g., programmes/programme strategies, or discreet interventions or activities that are intended to achieve education outcomes for girls, or cross-sectional programmes intended to achieve gender equality). Also, the data analysis discussion should offer an indicative set of indicators (input, output and outcome), how data will be organized, classified, compared and displayed, relative to the evaluation themes and evaluation questions (or clusters of evaluation questions). The data analysis approach should also examine understandings and perceptions of different categories of stakeholders, and the feasibility of comparing trends across countries.

20. Ethical considerations: Conventional ethical guidelines are to be followed during the evaluation. Specific reference is made to the UNEG guidelines. Good practices not covered therein are also to be followed. Any sensitive issues or concerns should

be raised with the evaluation management team as soon as they are identified. Two particular issues should be noted:

- a. The evaluation methodology may indicate children as informants or objects of study. In all contacts with children, the UNEG ethical guidelines regarding issues like confidentiality and not exposing the child to danger must be carefully respected.
- b. In addition to exercising ethical considerations for informed consent, no participant may be compelled to cooperate with the evaluation. UNICEF will direct staff to participate where needed.

## V. The evaluation team, management and governance arrangements

21. The Evaluation Office will contract with an institution (consulting firm, research institute, university, or a consortium) with the appropriate capacity to carry out a complex, multi-country evaluation. Based on their understanding of the task, the organization should offer **a team of senior and mid-level evaluation professionals**. Additional expertise may be enlisted through subcontracting arrangements (e.g, enhancing capacity for case studies and/or case studies by incorporating national evaluators).

22. Desired skills and competencies for the evaluation team: The core evaluation team must offer the following demonstrated experience, knowledge and competencies:

- a. Exceptional technical knowledge, skills and expertise in evaluation concepts and capacity to execute a multi-country evaluation effort, including skills to execute proposed case studies;
- b. In-depth knowledge and experience in conducting evaluations with education experience in education policy



- development/advocacy; gender-based theories, practices and analyses; partnerships in education development; education systems strengthening; public sector budgeting approaches or education economics analysis'; aid effectiveness; or comparable professional area/content.
- c. Programming experience in girls' education interventions;
  - d. Expertise/experience in developing results frameworks, tools or guides for monitoring and evaluation;
  - e. Strong quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis skills, and experience qualitative comparative analysis, correlational analyses, and data analysis using statistical software;
  - f. Excellent language and communication skills in English, French and Arabic, including facilitation skills, particularly design of stakeholder consultations exercises;
  - g. Strong report writing skills in English: and, computer literacy in Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Knowledge of other forms text and graphic representations (e.g., text mining software) will be an added advantage.
23. The evaluation team must have experience of working cross-culturally in development, and demonstrate capacity in managing evaluation projects and teams. The evaluation team will be required to demonstrate familiarity with UNICEF work for children and gender rights, to have experience/familiarity with countries of different typologies, including countries undertaking humanitarian programming. Adequate gender and geographic balance is also desirable.
24. The team leader is required to work on the evaluation full time throughout the duration of the evaluation (8-month period). He/she will be required to lead in the data collection and analysis efforts, and to assure quality and validity of all activities, as well as contribute to drafting the report and editing. Other tasks may be assigned by the team leader, hence their inputs may require less time. In all cases, the level of effort should be indicated for all team members, and for all the stages of the evaluation.
25. Participation of present and former UNICEF staff: All current UNICEF staff and consultants may be involved only as informants or in other specific roles (e.g. member of the steering committee). **However, they are not eligible to be evaluation team members.** Former UNICEF staff that have worked on BEGE programmes may be members of the evaluation team if they meet technical qualifications for skills. However, any prior involvement with UNICEF should be declared in the technical proposal in order to work around any possible conflicts of interest.

## VI. Management and governance arrangements

26. Evaluation management: The evaluation will be **managed by the Evaluation Specialist**, UNICEF's Evaluation Office. The Evaluation Specialist will have overall responsibility for the following:
- a. facilitation of initial consultations with relevant staff in the UNICEF HQ, and arrange for subsequent meetings and consultation with the global reference group;
  - b. day-to-day coordination and supervision of all activities of the evaluation team, and decision-making;

- c. technical management of all phases the evaluation, according to the terms of reference and stipulations of the inception report;
  - d. consulting and liaising with the Evaluation Focal Point in the Education Section in key moments in the evaluation;
  - e. facilitating internal and external review and quality assurance processes, including being the liaison between UNICEF and the reference group;
  - f. approving all deliverables, and
  - g. preparing publishing-ready versions of the reports for issuing by the Director, Evaluation Office.
  - h. providing overall guidance to the evaluation team on UNICEF requirements and standards for evaluative work.
27. The global reference group: To be appointed by the Director, Evaluation Office, a global reference group will provide oversight of the evaluation, with members responsible for receiving updates on a pre-determined schedule as the evaluation reaches certain milestones (e.g., inception phase, end of data collection phase); reviewing selected evaluation products (inception report, evaluation brief and final/penultimate report) and providing written comments to the evaluation team through the evaluation manager; and, contributing to the post-evaluation management response, action plan and dissemination strategy.
28. Field level consultation and review: In case study countries where field work will be conducted, a consultation mechanism should be established by the UNICEF Country Office. Where feasible, existing structures such as the education sector team

should be used for the purpose of drawing the attention of national actors to the evaluation, and engaging them on substantive issues. This structure should receive the evaluation report and a plan for field-based activities before they commence, receive a briefing at the end of field data collection activities, and receive the draft case study report for comments.

## VI. Evaluation products/deliverables

29. Several products will be expected from the evaluation activities: 1) an inception report; 2) a report of the document review analysis containing initial evaluation findings, including a PowerPoint presentation to facilitate a stakeholder consultation exercise; 3) the final report of the evaluation report (complete first draft to be reviewed by the Evaluation Manager; second draft to be reviewed by reference group, and a penultimate draft); 4) live data and diagrams to be used for publication; and 5) a PowerPoint presentation used to share findings with the reference group and for use in subsequent dissemination events. Outlines and descriptions of each evaluation products proffered in this section are meant to be indicative<sup>98</sup>. The UNICEF Evaluation Office reserves the right to ensure the quality of products submitted by the external evaluation team and will request revisions until the product meets the quality standards as expressed by the Evaluation Office.
30. Inception report: The inception report will be instrumental in confirming a common understanding of what is to be evaluated, including additional insights into executing the evaluation. At this stage evaluators will refine and confirm evaluation questions, confirm the scope of the evaluation, further

<sup>98</sup> While bidders are welcome to modify the structure of each deliverable to enhance their coverage and clarity. However, products are expected to conform to the stipulated number of pages, where that applies.

improve on the methodology proposed in this terms of reference and their own evaluation proposal to improve its rigor, as well as develop and validate evaluation instruments. The report will include, *inter alia*,

- a. Evaluation purpose and scope – confirmation of objectives and the main themes of the evaluation;
- b. Evaluation criteria and questions – final set of evaluation questions, and evaluation criteria for assessing performance;
- c. Evaluation methodology – a sampling plan (including sampling criteria); a description of data collection methods and data sources (including a rationale for their selection); draft data collection instruments (with a data collection toolkit as an annex); a mapping that identifies descriptive and normative questions and criteria for evaluating evidence, and a data analysis plan; a discussion on how to enhance the reliability and validity of evaluation conclusions; the field visit approach, a description of the quality review process<sup>99</sup>; and, a discussion on the limitations of the methodology;
- d. Proposed structure for the final report;
- e. Evaluation work plan and timeline – a revised work and travel plan;
- f. Resources requirements – detailed budget allocations, tied to evaluation activities, work plan, deliverables.
- g. Annexes (organizing framework for evaluation questions, data collection toolkit, data analysis framework)

The inception report will be 15 - 20 pages in length (excluding annexes), and will be presented at a formal meeting of the reference group.

31. Desk-review and document analysis report: This report will present preliminary findings from the desk-based document review and analysis of UNICEF documents, (planning documents, national education sector documents, workplans), and other UNICEF sources. Where feasible, evidence from other evaluations, both UNICEF and non-UNICEF, and other similar resources should also be presented. The report should be 15 - 20 pages in length (excluding annexes, if any), and should be accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation that can be used in stakeholder consultations.
32. Field reports: For each country where field-based data collection was conducted, the evaluators should prepare a summary of the activities that were conducted, data that was collected, and the limitations encountered the field. The summary should not exceed 4 pages of substantive text (excluding annexes), and two annexes (an outline of the case study report, and a list of persons that were interviewed).
33. Case study reports: The case study leader in each country is responsible for developing a complete draft of the case study report. The report will not exceed 25 pages, **excluding** the executive summary and annexes. A complete draft report will include:
  - a. a description of country context and education sector reform/transformation agenda;

---

<sup>99</sup> UNICEF has instituted the Global Evaluation Report Oversight System (GEROS), a system where final evaluation reports are quality-assessed by an external independent company against UNICEF/UNEG standards for evaluation reports. The evaluation team is expected to reflect on and conform to these standards as they write their report. The team may choose to share a self-assessment based on the GEROS with the evaluation manager.

- b. an assessment of UNICEF's interventions, strategies, activities and results in girls' education against a set of agreed evaluation criteria;
  - c. an analysis of critical issues in girls' in the education sector in the country, and objectives of the UNICEF country programme and desired results as they relate to the policy agenda of the country;
  - d. statements of findings, well substantiated by the data and evidence;
  - e. recommendations (not more than one per evaluation theme) on improvements that the country programme needs to make on the imperative for educating girls, and how it should relate with the education systems, governments and other actors;
  - f. list of background materials used; and
  - g. annexes (evaluation terms of reference; annotated description of methodology; and, list of people interviewed).
34. Final evaluation report: The report will not exceed 50 pages, **excluding** the executive summary and annexes. A complete draft report will include:
- a. an analysis of key issues in girls' education (excerpted from the desk review report);
  - b. an assessment of UNICEF's mandate, strengths and weaknesses relating to girls' education, against agreed evaluation criteria;
  - c. evaluation findings and conclusions, well substantiated by the data and evidence, cross-referenced against evaluation themes and evaluation criteria;
  - d. a parsimonious set of actionable recommendations that correspond with evaluation conclusions, and a description of how they were validated;
  - e. bibliography and list of background materials used; and
  - f. annexes (evaluation terms of reference; annotated description of methodology; data analysis framework, list of people interviewed, etc.).
35. PowerPoint presentation: Initially prepared and used by the evaluation team in their presentation to the reference group, a standalone PowerPoint will be submitted to the Evaluation Office as part of the evaluation deliverables.
36. Data, live data tables and graphics will be submitted to the Evaluation Office as part of the evaluation deliverables.
37. Reports will be prepared in English, according to the UNICEF House Style and UNICEF standards for evaluation reports as per GEROS guidelines. The first draft of the final report will be received by the evaluation manager who will work with the team leader on necessary revisions. The second draft will be sent to the reference group for comments. The evaluation manager will consolidate all comments on a response matrix, and request the evaluation team to indicate actions taken against each comment in the production of the penultimate draft.

**TABLE A.2** Evaluation themes, objectives, and draft evaluation questions

Evaluation Themes, objectives and evaluation criteria	Draft evaluation questions
<p><b>1. UNICEF’s positioning and shared understanding:</b> To assess UNICEF’s work in girls’ education against the organization’s mandate, its positioning, and global best practice, and to determine if a shared understanding of objectives and strategies within UNICEF (between BEGE and other PD sections/ sectors, and with DPS, and EMOPs), and shared principles and alignment of goals between UNICEF and education sector planning processes. (relevance, coherence, efficiency)</p>	<p>1.1 Does UNICEF implement and/or support the right programmes solutions and strategies that exemplify global best practices in girls’ education and gender mainstreaming?</p> <p>1.2 Has UNICEF positioned itself well in girls’ education work at the global, regional and country levels relative to its partners?</p> <p>1.3 Is there a shared understanding of guiding principles and choice of programmes strategies in girls’ education among program staff, government decision-makers and implementers in the education sector, and UNICEF implementing partners?</p> <p>1.4 Did UNICEF education teams collaborate effectively with other divisions to achieve outcomes for girls’ and promote gender equality? What efficiencies, if any, were realized through the collaboration and/or coordinate strategy?</p> <p>1.5 In what ways was girls’ education work carried out in a cross-sectoral framework achieved different or better results than work carried out by BEGE alone? What gaps in BEGE’s capacity were filled by taking a cross-sectoral approach?</p>
<p><b>2. Girls’ education interventions:</b> To determine the nature and relevance of UNICEF’s girls’ education interventions in different contexts, including countries undertaking humanitarian programming, and to assess whether outcomes and pathways to achieving results are articulated clearly, and whether interventions have yielded the intended results and/or outcomes for girls, including gender parity, gender equality, and empowerment of girls and young women.</p>	<p>2.1 Are UNICEF supported girls’ education programmes and solutions relevant to the issues that girls face in their respective country? How was the relevance of the programmes ascertained?</p> <p>2.2 What are the underlying theories of change (explicit or inferred) behind girls’ education work in programme countries?</p> <p>2.3 What are the factors that account for the improvements in education outcomes for girls (increased enrolment rates, participation and learning), and gender equality?</p> <p>2.4 To what extent has UNICEF supports girls’ education programmes supported the achievement of education outcomes for girls and gender equality in different programming contexts (LICs, MICs, fragility/humanitarian)?</p> <p>2.4 How have unintended negative consequences in girls’ education and gender mainstreaming work (if any) been mitigated?</p>
<p><b>Gender mainstreaming:</b> To examine the efficacy of UNICEF’s gender mainstreaming strategy and to identify mainstreaming efforts at country level that are believed to be best practice, and assess/confirm their effectiveness against education system strengthening results.</p>	<p>3.1 What evidence can UNICEF proffer for advancing girls’ education goals through gender equality into entire country programmes as a crosscutting theme?</p> <p>3.2 What strategies did UNICEF employ to achieve results and improve girls’ education outcomes during the period of the MTSP (2009-2013), in contrast with the period of the Strategic Plan (2014-17)?</p> <p>3.3 What evidence can UNICEF proffer for effectiveness of gender mainstreaming in strengthening education system to deliver (education) outcomes for girls during the period of the MTSP (2009-2013), in contrast with the period of the Strategic Plan (2014-17)?</p> <p>3.4 How successful has UNICEF and partners been in leveraging resources from different sources for gender mainstreaming work?</p>

◀ **Table A.2** (cont'd)

Evaluation Themes, objectives and evaluation criteria	Draft evaluation questions
<p><b>Technical capacities for girls' education programming and upstream work:</b> To evaluate efforts at building capacities of UNICEF education staff and key partners in government in gender-responsive programming, and to determine whether the necessary capacities for upstream work in girls' education exist in UNICEF</p>	<p>4.1 What evidence can UNICEF proffer for advancing girls' education programming through a sector based approach (Education, Health, Nutrition, WASH)?</p> <p>4.2 Do UNICEF supported girls' education programmes offer lessons for education policy reform, practice or any other aspect of education system strengthening? (curriculum reform, sector planning and budgeting, teacher training, performance measurement, etc.)?</p> <p><b>4.3</b> What are the key skills, tools, and systems required for girls' education programming and effective gender mainstreaming? Were the required institutional arrangements and accountabilities in place?</p> <p><b>4.4</b> To what extent has the UNICEF capacity building strategy taken into account the special skills and capacities that are required for effective advocacy with senior government officials?</p> <p>4.5 Has UNICEF articulated the skills, tools and capacities to enable national counterparts to engage effectively in policy dialogue and other upstream activities? Are there corresponding capacity development/improvement plans for national counterparts?</p>
<p><b>UNICEF's external partnerships:</b> To examine whether UNICEF's engagement in different types of partnerships are strategic and credible, and whether UNICEF's partnership strategy contributes significantly to advancing girls education and/or education outcomes for girls in countries of different typologies, including countries undertaking humanitarian programming;</p>	<p>5.1 What partnerships and mechanisms does UNICEF utilize for girls' education programming and gender mainstreaming? What aspects of girls' education programming were carried out through collaboration with key partners in education development? What are the key results that were achieved through these partnerships and mechanisms?</p> <p>5.2 Has there been a mutual strengthening of capacities girls' education programming and gender mainstreaming between UNICEF and partners by working through partnerships? What trade-offs were made to ensure that partnership arrangements work as intended? What risks were incurred?</p> <p>5.3 How do partners view as UNICEF's contributions to the partnership? What is the most valuable asset that UNICEF brings into its collaboration with others? Do collaborators view UNICEF as a credible partner</p>

## APPENDIX B: UNICEF'S GIRLS' EDUCATION CHRONOLOGY

Year	UNICEF's Global context of Girls' Education (major agreements and events)
Earlier	
1980s	Convention of the Rights of a Child 1989
1990s	Education For All (EFA) founded by UNICEF, UNESCO and the World Bank. Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls; a policy review. (UNICEF, 1994) identified three operational approaches and/or strategies deployed by UNICEF towards gender equality and empowerment of girls and women; these were (i) gender mainstreaming; (ii) promoting gender-specific programme activities targeting girls and women; and, (iii) giving special attention to the girl child. 1994 UNICEF launched African Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI) - 2004
2000	Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): Achieve Universal Primary Education (Goals 2); Promote gender equality and empower women (Goal 3); UNICEF becomes the Secretariat for UNGEI. (2000?)
2001	Girls' Education becomes UNICEF's "Organizational Priority No. 1" in Medium-Term Strategic Plan 2002-2005 adopted in 2001.
2002	UNICEF's Medium Term Strategic Plan (2002-2005) identified girls' education as one of five programming priorities, and articulated the objective to 'get all girls in school; help all girls to stay in school; and, ensure that all girls learn what they need to succeed (p. 17). The MTSP highlighted synergies with the other four priorities (i.e., Integrated ECD, Immunization Plus, HIV/AIDS and Child Protection), and encouraged cross-sector collaboration.
2004	UNICEF advances education parity through publishing "The State of the World's Children 2004: Girls, education and development", focuses on girls' education and its relationship to all other development goals and to the promise of Education For All.
2006	Medium Term Strategic Plan 2006-2009; recommitted to the goal of increasing opportunities for girls to access schooling and participate meaningfully. However, it also pursued a more ambitious goal of gender equality and women empowerment, to be pursued both under the Basic Education and Gender Equality (BEGE) 'focus area', and as one of five supporting cross-cutting strategies of the MTSP.
2009	The UNICEF MTSP 2006 to 2009 extended to 2013. UNICEF Executive Board adopts UNICEF strategic framework for partnerships and collaborative relationships.
2010	Working for an Equal Future UNICEF Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of girls and women (May 2010) The Dakar Declaration on Accelerating Girls' Education and Gender Equality is a key achievement. BEGE KRA 2 develops the Out of School Children Initiative, with UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).
2012	Report on the end-of cycle review of the medium-term strategic plan 2006 – 2013 (dated 7.12.2012) The initiative is a partnership between UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics with support from the Global Partnership for Education.

◀ UNICEF's Girls' Education Chronology (cont'd)

Year	UNICEF's Global context of Girls' Education (major agreements and events)
2013	<p>The UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017 (dated 11.7.2013)</p> <p>BEGE thematic report for 2013<sup>8</sup> provides a summary of the achievements/results in advancing girls' education and gender equality, compiled from 142 UNICEF country office reports.</p>
2014	<p>UNICEF Gender Action Plan 2014 – 2017 (dated 11.4.2014)</p> <p>UNICEF's current Strategic Plan (2014 – 2017) and related planning instruments articulate a sharpened focus on gender equality and empowerment of girls and women, to be achieved through a gender mainstreamed approach and targeted corporate priorities of advancing girls' secondary education, addressing gender-based violence, promoting gender-responsive adolescent health, and ending child marriage.</p> <p>Formative Evaluation of UNICEF's Monitoring Results for Equity Systems (MoRES) 8 August 2014)</p> <p>UNICEF's Upstream work in Basic Education and Gender Equality 2003 – 2012. (Dated July 2014)</p>
2015	<p>Agenda for Sustainable Development; Sustainable Development Goals (2015)</p>



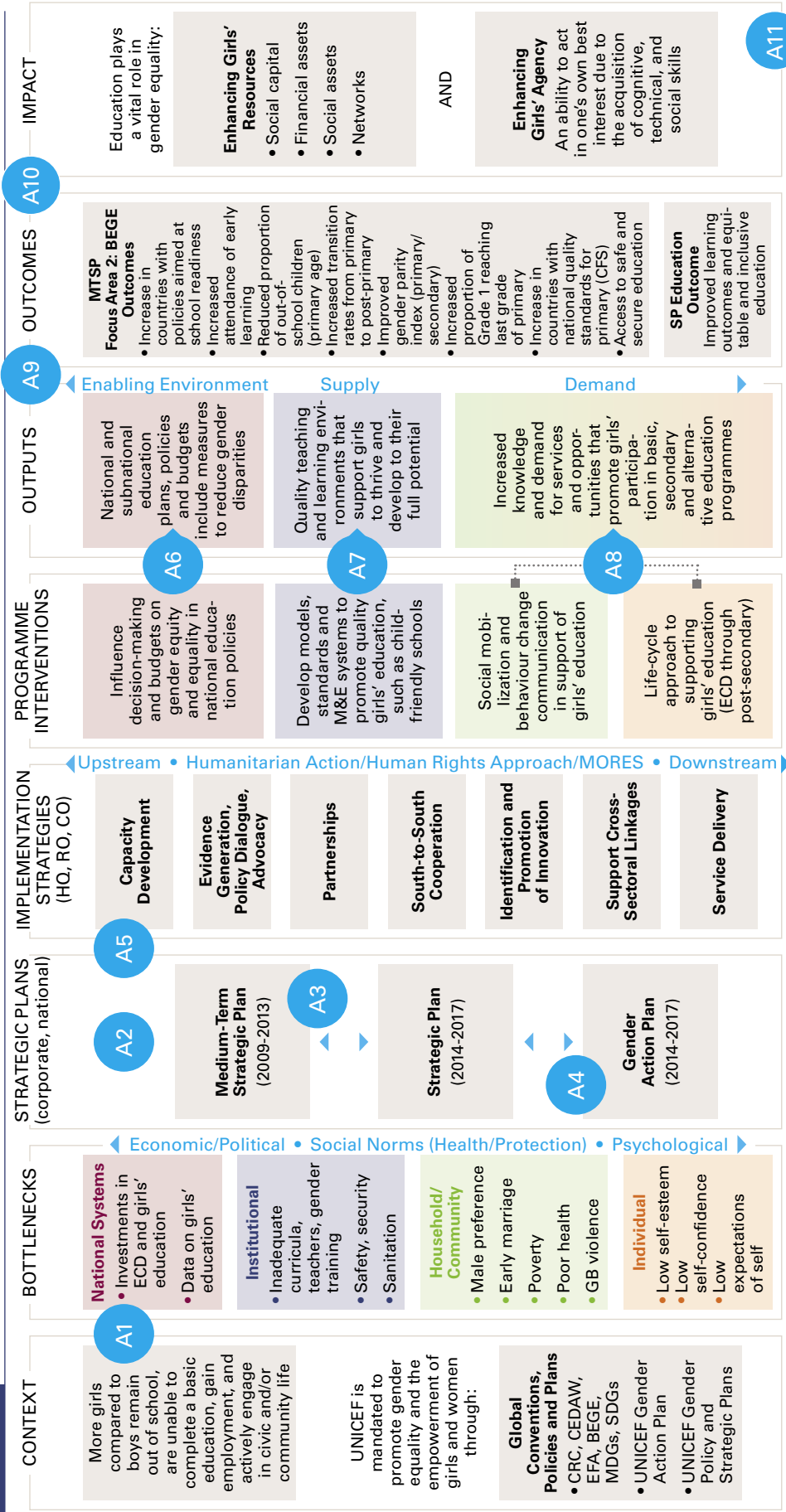
## APPENDIX C: FOUNDATIONAL THEORY OF CHANGE

A foundational theory of change (ToC) for girls' education has been developed by the UNICEF Evaluation Office. This retrospectively developed girls' education theory of change provides an **analytical framework** for synthesizing various types of data analyses into one coherent narrative on UNICEF's contributions to results for girls' education at the global, regional and national level. Developed retrospectively for the purposes of this evaluation, the intention is to identify and describe the **core dimensions and processes** of UNICEF's approach to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women through high quality education opportunities over their life-course. The theory of change does not reflect a comprehensive overview of UNICEF's girls' education portfolio, but rather, a generalized diagram that reflects the logic (either explicit or implicit) behind this programming. It does so by illustrating and describing the relationship between **UNICEF's mandate** for girls and women and its **strategies for addressing bottlenecks** in the realisation of children's right to education through a range of programming interventions in humanitarian and development contexts. The theory of change also summarizes the main **outputs, outcomes, and potential impacts** of UNICEF's girls' education programming. The **evaluation themes** are embedded throughout this theory of change in a number of ways. For example, the evaluation theme on 'UNICEF's partnerships' demonstrates an interest in examining this implementation strategy in greater detail, due to the substantial investments made in this approach for girls' education.

The theory of change **integrates two strategic planning periods** for UNICEF (MTSP 2006-2013 and SP 2014-2017), each with their own unique outputs and outcomes. At the same time, the current Strategic Plan (SP) is based upon lessons learned and unfinished business from the MTSP, and thus reflects a sharpened focus for girls over time with some continuity in UNICEF's strategies and programming interventions. The distinction between these two planning periods, provided in greater detail in the terms of reference, may be important for explaining variations in the strategies and approaches employed by UNICEF for girls' education over time in specific countries or regions.

From an evaluative standpoint, this theory of change is viewed as a 'living document' that will further refined and improved upon as new insights become available through iterative data collection and analyses. It is adapted or tailored to evaluation case studies to provide country specific examples of the pathways to UNICEF's results and outcomes for girls' education. This is because UNICEF is a highly **decentralized organization** and the **system is dynamic** and shaped by constant changes in political, economic, social and environmental conditions at the global, regional and national level. Key **assumptions or risks** are also described and will be taken into consideration and tested in the analysis of the evaluation results.

**FIGURE C-1** Theory of Change



System is dynamic: UNICEF Country Offices identifies most marginalized children/girls and select strategies, inputs and interventions relevant for their context with support from Regional Office and HQ

**A1** – Root causes for gender inequities (such as protracted political, civil unrest and conflict, cultural and religious practices, and gender stereotyping) are identified and inform UNICEF programming for girls' education

**A2** – UNICEF corporate strategies are complementary to national strategies and priorities regarding gender action planning

**A3** – The targeted gender priorities have sharpened in focus over the strategic plans, but themes are similar

**A4** – Strategies are broad to ensure locally-responsive approaches

**A5** – Inputs assume adequate resourcing and technical capacities among UNICEF and its partners to deliver for girls

**A6** – There is political will and economic rationale to address girls' education and gender equity

**A7** – Education system is equipped with basic infrastructure inputs to achieve enrolment standards

**A8** – Openness among male community members/leaders is valued in order to address core issues beyond organizing women and girls

**A9** – Onset of economic and technical advancement in country/region which enables access

**A10** – Outcomes and impacts will vary by inputs and programming interventions applied at the country level

**A11** – Includes strategies arising from unanticipated opportunities that may be outside of planned UNICEF actions

Colors represent analytical or conceptual alignment between the types of barriers to girls' education, implementation strategies and interventions to effect change, and the intended outputs and outcomes.

## Context

UNICEF is mandated to support the realization of children's right to education, particularly among girls and the most marginalized groups of young people living in difficult circumstances, as outlined in Articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Hence, the **goal** of UNICEF's girls' education programming as articulated in Key Result Area 2 (KRA 2) of Basic Education and Gender Equality is to **promote gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women by ensuring their access, participation and completion of high quality education**. Throughout UNICEF, girls' education programmes are led by Education teams in collaboration with other sectors (mainly ECD and WASH, but also with health, nutrition and social welfare). In many countries, programmes are intended to contribute to addressing deficits in lower access and school participation rates for girls in comparison to boys, and of girls being unable to complete a basic education, gain employment, or actively engage in civic and community life. UNICEF's girls' education programming is also aligned with national and international development goals for the education sector as defined in the Millennium Development Goals, Education for All goals and Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and policies regarding gender mainstreaming that are aligned with the objectives of UNICEF's girls' education programming to improve gender parity, equity and equality in education outcomes.

## Bottlenecks

UNICEF recognizes that **in order for it to fulfil its global mandate for girls and women, the organization must continuously assess bottlenecks**

that prevent their access to high quality education opportunities, especially in regions and countries with high levels of inequity. It is **assumed** that root causes for gender inequities (such as protracted conflict, cultural and religious practices and gender stereotyping) are identified and inform UNICEF's programming for girls' education. UNICEF analyses these bottlenecks through an **ecological model of child development**, in which it is recognized that: a) **individual-level characteristics**, for example low self-esteem and self-confidence, contribute to girls' belief in their capabilities to learn; and that: b) **household and community factors** contribute to these psychological beliefs among girls through social norms and practices that favor males and early marriage, expose girls to gender-based violence, and limit girls' poor access to health and sustainable livelihoods; in addition to: c) **institutional-level factors** that prevent girls from enrolling and staying in school, such as the quality of learning environments, a lack of female teachers, inadequate gender training, poor safety, sanitation and WASH in schools; which are shaped by economic and political conditions and the capacity of: d) **national education systems** to respond, such as a the level of investment in girls' education or mechanisms to monitor the situation of girls' education at a sufficient level of data disaggregation.

## Gender Action Plan Programmatic Framework

UNICEF recognizes that **in order to fulfil its global mandate for girls and women**, it is not sufficient to focus exclusively upon equity in education outcomes for girls, but rather, that **all programming must address gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women**. The Gender Action Plan provides a corporate-level programmatic framework to guide action planning for girls and women **across sectors and**

**divisions**, including: a) **identifying and targeting gender priorities**; b) **mainstreaming gender in programmes**; and c) **addressing gender-related bottlenecks and barriers** (see the GAP for definitions and descriptions of these concepts). One example of this effort is the institutionalization of the Monitoring of Results for Equity System (MoRES), which supports UNICEF Country Offices in identifying gender-related bottlenecks associated with demand, supply and the enabling environment required for its programming to succeed. It is **assumed** that corporate strategies are complementary to national strategies and priorities regarding gender action planning and that strategies to address bottlenecks are broad to ensure locally responsive approaches. It is also **assumed** that targeted gender priorities have sharpened in focus over UNICEF's strategic plans, but the themes are similar.

### Implementation Strategies

It is hypothesized that if gender priorities and bottlenecks inform the range of implementation strategies and interventions selected by UNICEF Country Offices, the organization will be in a strong position to effectively deliver results for girls' education. These implementation strategies have sharpened in focus and expanded over time, with variations in emphases between the MTSP 2009-2013 and SP 2014-2017 (see the current SP for definitions of each strategy). These implementation strategies include both 'upstream' policy advocacy with national leaders and government representatives, as well as 'downstream' activities to influence the quality of education service delivery. All implementation strategies are grounded in a human rights based approach to advocate for the most marginalized groups of children, including through UNICEF's humanitarian actions for girls' education in emergencies, conflict and peacebuilding contexts.

The country-level delivery of girls' education programming relies upon global and regional actions from UNICEF Regional Offices and Headquarters. For example, global and regional actions have included funding multi-country research and programmes and invested in advocacy and research to promote an enabling environment for girls' education, leveraging key partnerships for girls' education work with UNESCO and UIUS, the Global Partnership for Education, and World Bank, to mention a few. UNICEF Headquarters also hosts the Secretariat for the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI), an advocacy platform for girls' education that brings together United Nations system, donor agencies, international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector, and works at the global, regional and country levels. Therefore, it is hypothesized that there are synergies in the application of these implementation strategies across the organization in terms of planning and advocating for girls' education interventions. Inputs assume adequate resourcing and technical capacities among UNICEF staff to deliver for girls. It is also assumed that unanticipated opportunities that may be outside of UNICEF's planned activities are also taken into consideration by the organization.

### Programme Interventions

It is hypothesized that UNICEF's girls' education programme interventions are aligned with gender priorities and bottlenecks in a given country and are supported by a mix of implementation strategies appropriate for the development or humanitarian context. **If the alignment between bottlenecks, demand, supply and the enabling environment is well articulated in the design of the programme interventions, then the organization will be in a strong position to effectively deliver results for girls' education.** Programme interventions

target both 'upstream' and 'downstream' activities and span the development-humanitarian spectrum, as summarized in the table below.

Upstream interventions focus upon: a) **influencing decision-making and budgets** on gender equity and equality in national education policies; and b) **developing national models, standards and monitoring and evaluation systems** to promote quality girls' education. Downstream interventions focus upon: a) **social mobilization and behaviour change communication** in support of girls' education; and b) a **life-cycle approach** to supporting girls' education (from early childhood development through post-secondary education). Some examples of UNICEF's upstream programme interventions for girls' education include: Gender Budgeting and Child Friendly Schools. Examples of UNICEF's downstream programme interventions for girls' education include Let Us Learn and communication for development interventions integrated into the Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme.

## Outputs

**If UNICEF effectively implements programme interventions, then it is expected that the demand, supply and enabling environment for girls' education will be improved** through these efforts. A more detailed results framework for UNICEF's Basic Education and Gender Equality Programming can be found in the MTSP 2009-2013 and SP 2014-2017, with links to specific national and international development goals, targets and indicators.

- Within the **enabling environment**, it is hypothesized that UNICEF interventions will result in **national and subnational education plans, policies and budgets** that include measures to reduce gender disparities. This **assumes** there is political will

and economic rationale to address girls' education and gender equity. Example of this output include pro-girl policies and strategies to get and keep girls in school, policies that remove cost barriers for girls' education, and more equity-focused data are available and used in the policy making process.

- In terms of **supply**, it is hypothesized that UNICEF interventions will result in **quality teaching and learning environments** that support girls to thrive and develop to their full potential. This **assumes** the education system is equipped with basic infrastructure inputs to achieve enrolment standards, with the exception of humanitarian situations in which UNICEF often must take action to restore learning and safeguard education systems by establishing temporarily learning spaces for the resumption of quality education. Examples of this output include more policies against corporal punishment and the protection of children, and improvements in girls' life skills education.
- On the demand side, it is hypothesized that UNICEF interventions will result in **increased knowledge and demand for services and opportunities** that promote girls' participation in basic, secondary and alternative education programmes. This **assumes** an openness among male community members/leaders is valued in order to address core issue beyond organizing women and girls. Examples of this output include greater accessibility to accelerated and alternative education programmes for girls living in situations of conflict.

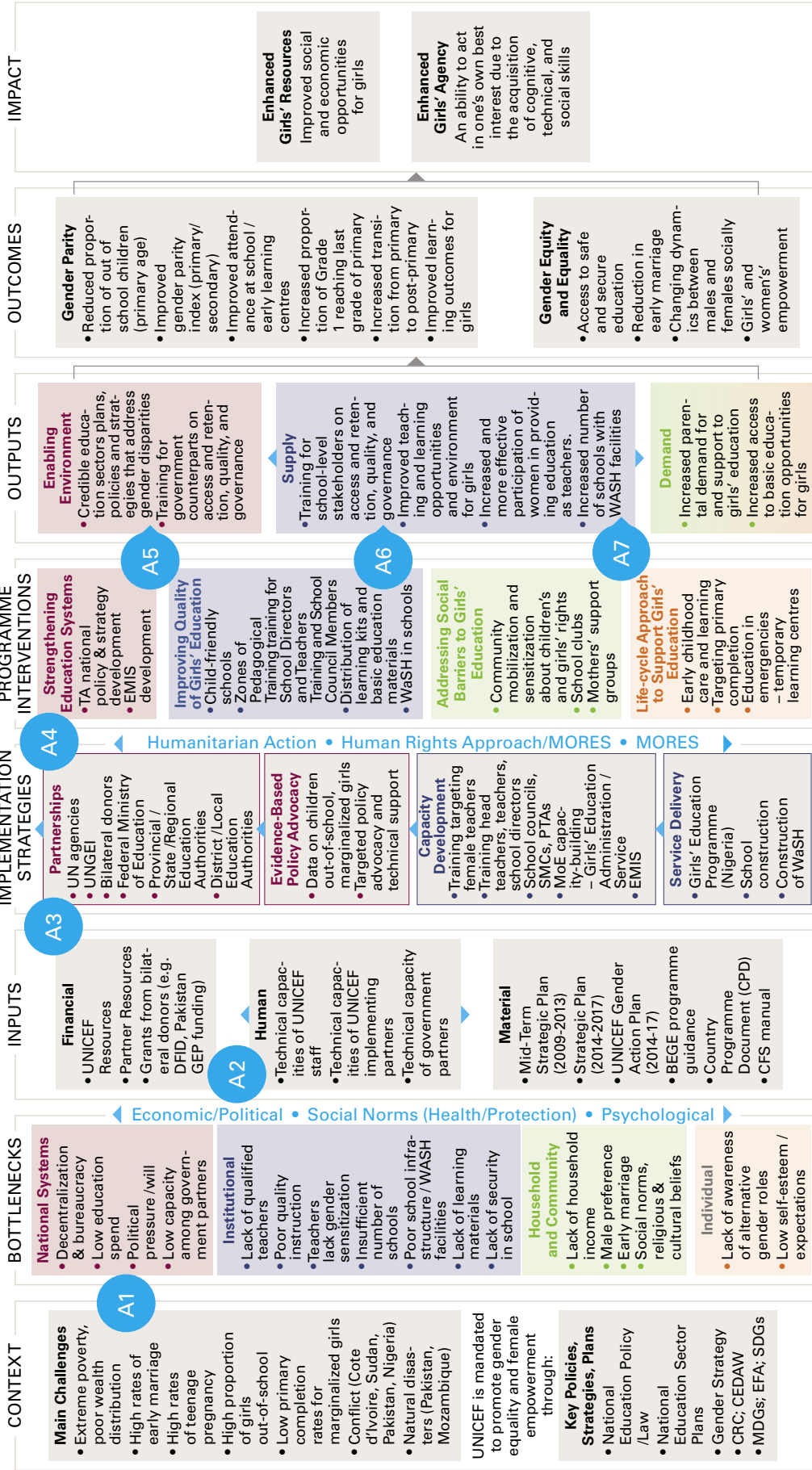
## Outcomes

It is hypothesized that UNICEF's contributions to the enabling environment, supply and demand will result in three primary outcomes for girls' education: a) gender parity in access, participation, competition, transition rate and learning outcomes; b) gender equity in terms of social inclusion, social justice, the empowerment of girls and women, and their safety and protection; and c) gender equality, or equality opportunities and life chances for girls and boys. Moving from outputs to outcomes requires the availability of quality data and evidence, a receptiveness among national partners to put more emphasis on learning outcomes and their measurement, and funding and/or the reprioritization of limited resources to support girls' education initiatives. It is assumed that outcomes and impacts will vary by implementation strategies, inputs and programme interventions at the country level. A more detailed outline of the anticipated outcomes of UNICEF's Basic Education and Gender Equality Programming can be found in the MTSP 2009-2013 and SP 2014-2017.

## Impact

Based upon research and evidence, it is hypothesized that **UNICEF's contributions to girls' education will have the long-term potential to impact girls' resources and agency**. Enhancing girls' resources refers to the benefits of education in improving their social capital, financial assets and networks; whereas, girls' agency refers to the ability to act in one's own best interest due to the acquisition of cognitive, technical and social skills.

**FIGURE C.2** Adapted Theory of Change



System is dynamic: UNICEF Country Offices identifies most marginalized children/girls and select strategies, inputs and interventions relevant for their context with support from Regional Office and HQ

- A1** – Root causes for gender inequities (such as protracted political, civil unrest and conflict, cultural and religious practices, and gender stereotyping) are identified and inform UNICEF programming for girls' education
- A2** – UNICEF corporate strategies are complementary to national strategies and priorities regarding gender action planning
- A3** – The targeted gender priorities have sharpened in focus over the strategic plans, but themes are similar
- A4** – Strategies are broad to ensure locally-responsive approaches
- A5** – Inputs assume adequate resourcing and technical capacities among UNICEF and its partners to deliver for girls
- A6** – There is political will and economic rationale to address girls' education and gender equity
- A7** – Education system is equipped with basic infrastructure inputs to achieve enrolment standards
- A8** – Openness among male community members/leaders is valued in order to address core issues beyond organizing women and girls
- A9** – Onset of economic and technical advancement in country/region which enables access
- A10** – Outcomes and impacts will vary by inputs and programming interventions applied at the country level
- A11** – Includes strategies arising from unanticipated opportunities that may be outside of planned UNICEF actions

Colors represent analytical or conceptual alignment between the types of barriers to girls' education, implementation strategies and interventions to effect change, and the intended outputs and outcomes.

- Systems Level**
- Institutional Level**
- Household and Community Level**
- Individual Level**

# APPENDIX D: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Evaluation Criteria	Theme	Evaluation Question	Judgement Criteria	
Coherence and Relevance	Positioning and shared understanding		Evidence that UNICEF country programming in girls' education are explicitly aligned with <b>global UNICEF strategic priorities</b> as set out in relevant policy and planning documents – in particular the MTSP, SP, Gender Action Plan.	
		<p><b>1.1 Alignment:</b> To what extent was UNICEF country programming in girls' education aligned with global and national priorities (Education Sector Plan) at the time the programme was defined?</p>	Evidence that UNICEF country programming in girls' education are explicitly aligned with <b>national priorities</b> as set out in national policy and planning documents.	
		<p><b>1.2 Shared understanding:</b> To what extent is there a shared understanding of guiding principles, strategies, (e.g., gender mainstreaming, targeting), and/or girls' education programme choices a) among UNICEF education program staff (HQ, RO and CO); and b) between UNICEF education staff and partners (government implementers and decision-makers in the education sector, and non-government implementing partners)?</p>	Evidence that <b>UNICEF education programme staff (across HQ, RO, CO)</b> have the same understanding of the guiding principles, strategies, approaches to design programming for girls' education	
		<p><b>1.3 Collaboration:</b> To what extent did UNICEF education teams collaborate effectively with other divisions and country teams to achieve outcomes for girls and promote gender equality? What efficiencies were achieved?</p>	Evidence that outcomes for girls and promotion of gender equality were achieved through <b>effective collaboration (collecting and sharing information, strengthening capacities, implementing joint initiatives, pooling technical expertise, formulating common advocacy positions, developing policy guidance and influencing major donors on behalf of education)</b> between UNICEF education team, HQ, Regional offices and other country teams.	



	Definition of Standards	UNICEF Staff	National Partners	Global Partners	Desk Review	Case Study
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> explicit statements and sufficient demonstration of alignment to global UNICEF strategic priorities available for country programming.</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration of alignment to global UNICEF strategic priorities available for country programming.</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Only mentions of alignment to global UNICEF strategic priorities available for country programming.</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No explicit statements of alignment to global UNICEF strategic priorities available for country programming.</p>	✓			✓	✓
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> explicit statements and sufficient demonstration of alignment to national priorities available for country programming.</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration of alignment to national priorities available for country programming.</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Only mentions of alignment to national priorities available for country programming.</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions of alignment to national priorities available for country programming.</p>	✓	✓		✓	✓
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> explicit references and sufficient demonstration of using the UNICEF guiding principles and strategies (that were relevant during the evaluation period) when making programming decisions</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit references to the UNICEF guiding principles and strategies (that were relevant during the evaluation period) when making programming decisions</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mention of UNICEF guiding principles and strategies (that were relevant during the evaluation period) when making programming decisions</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No reference to the UNICEF guiding principles and strategies (that were relevant during the evaluation period) when making programming decisions</p>	✓		✓		✓
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Sufficient demonstration that partners (government and non-government) either use UNICEF guiding principles and strategies or have similar strategies for making programming choices, and agree with UNICEF's approach to programming</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Some demonstration that partners either use UNICEF guiding principles and strategies or have similar strategies for making programming choices, and agree with UNICEF's approach to programming</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mention from partners they either use UNICEF guiding principles and strategies or have similar strategies for making programming choices, and agree with UNICEF's approach to programming</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> no mention or disagreement from partners that they either use UNICEF guiding principles and strategies or have similar strategies for making programming choices, and agree with UNICEF's approach to programming</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration that UNICEF education teams in country achieved outcomes for girls and promoted gender equality by collaborating (as defined in judgement criteria) with other divisions to fulfil an identified need.</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration that UNICEF education teams in country achieved outcomes for girls and promoted gender equality by collaborating (as defined in judgement criteria) with other divisions to fulfil an identified need.</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions that UNICEF education teams in country achieved outcomes for girls and promoted gender equality by collaborating (as defined in judgement criteria) with other divisions to fulfil an identified need.</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No evidence that UNICEF education teams in country achieved outcomes for girls and promoted gender equality by collaborating (as defined in judgement criteria) with other divisions to fulfil an identified need.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Evaluation Criteria	Theme	Evaluation Question	Judgement Criteria	
Effectiveness and Sustainability	<i>continued:</i> <b>Partnerships</b>	<p><b>2.1 Benefits of partnerships:</b> What were the mutual benefits of working through partnership arrangements? What trade-offs and /or risks were incurred to ensure that partnership arrangements worked as intended, and how were risks mitigated?</p>	<p>Evidence from <b>partner</b> that partnership arrangements benefited UNICEF and partner Evidence from <b>UNICEF</b> that partnership arrangements benefited UNICEF and partner Examples of <b>mutual benefits</b> of UNICEF education and partner working through partnership arrangements</p>	
			<p>Evidence from <b>partner</b> of trade-offs to partnership arrangements Evidence from UNICEF of trade-offs to partnership arrangements Examples of risks or trade-offs (and mitigation strategies) of UNICEF education and partner working through partnership arrangements</p>	
		<p><b>2.2 Credibility:</b> What are the views and/ or experiences of partners relative to UNICEF's contributions to the partnership, and UNICEF's credibility?</p>	<p>Views/Experiences of UNICEF's partners on <b>UNICEF's role as a partner</b> Views/Experiences of UNICEF's partners on <b>UNICEF's credibility as a partner</b></p>	
		<p><b>2.3 Leveraging resources:</b> How successful has UNICEF and its partners been in leveraging resources for targeted work on girls' education, and for gender mainstreaming?</p>	<p>Evidence that UNICEF has made <b>systematic efforts to leverage additional resources</b> for targeted work on girls' education and gender mainstreaming <b>through advocacy and partnerships and by generating evidence to inform decision-making.</b></p>	
		<p><b>3.1 Internal capacities:</b> To what extent did education country teams have the key tools, skills and systems required for programming to achieving girls' education outcomes?</p>	<p>Evidence that <b>education country teams had the skills to design and implement programming</b> (upstream and other) to achieve girls' education outcomes</p>	
	<b>Capacity Development</b>	<p><b>3.2 External capacities:</b> What contribution (if any) has UNICEF made towards the development of national capacity (governments partners) to analyse, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate girls' education programmes and interventions?</p>	<p>Evidence that <b>UNICEF country programming worked toward building the capacity</b> of government (analysis, planning, implementing, M&amp;E, decision making) for girls' education programming</p>	
		<p>Evidence that <b>government have improved capacity</b> (analysis, planning, monitoring, evaluating, decision-making) in girls' education programming and <b>attribute it to UNICEF</b></p>		

	Definition of Standards	UNICEF Staff	National Partners	Global Partners	Desk Review	Case Study
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration that UNICEF and UNICEF partners found working through partnership arrangements mutually beneficial</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration that UNICEF and UNICEF partners found working through partnership arrangements mutually beneficial</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions from UNICEF or UNICEF partners that working through partnership arrangements was mutually beneficial</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions from UNICEF and UNICEF partners that working through partnership arrangements was mutually beneficial</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration of UNICEF and UNICEF partners experiencing trade-offs or identifying risks and mitigating for them when working in a partnership arrangement.</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration of UNICEF and UNICEF partners experiencing trade-offs or identifying risks and mitigating for them when working in a partnership arrangement.</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of UNICEF and UNICEF partners experiencing trade-offs or identifying risks and mitigating for them when working in a partnership arrangement.</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions of UNICEF and UNICEF partners experiencing trade-offs or identifying risks and mitigating for them when working in a partnership arrangement.</p>		✓			
	N/A	✓	✓	✓		✓
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient evidence that UNICEF education teams in country are systematically leveraging resources for targeted work and for gender mainstreaming and consistently meeting their targets</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements about UNICEF education teams in country leveraging resources for targeted work and for gender mainstreaming and meeting their targets</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of UNICEF education teams leveraging resources for targeted work and for gender mainstreaming, but no targets or systematic approaches to leveraging resources discussed.</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> UNICEF education teams in country do not have targets for leveraging resources for targeted work and for gender mainstreaming and have not systematically leveraged resources for targeted work and for gender mainstreaming</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration that UNICEF education country teams were not limited by their skills/tools/systems (capacity gaps identified, capacity-built or support provided) in achieving girls' education outcomes.</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements that key tools, skills and systems (based on gaps) provided to UNICEF education country teams to enable achievement of girls' education outcomes.</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of UNICEF education country teams having difficulty achieving girls' education outcomes due to their skills/systems</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mention of UNICEF education country teams' ability to achieve girls' education outcomes due to their skills/systems (capacity gaps identified, capacity-built or support provided).</p>	✓	✓			✓
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statement and sufficient demonstration that UNICEF education country teams programming included capacity building of government based on identified needs for girls' education programming.</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statement that UNICEF education country teams programming included capacity building of government based on identified needs for girls' education programming.</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mention of UNICEF education country teams programming included capacity building of government for girls' education programming.</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mention of UNICEF education country teams programming included capacity building of government (based on identified need) for girls' education programming.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Sufficient demonstration that government partners have improved capacity for girls' education programming based on UNICEF's contributions.</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Some demonstration that government partners have improved capacity for girls' education programming based on UNICEF's contributions.</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions that government partners have improved capacity for girls' education, no evidence of it being based on UNICEF's contributions.</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No evidence provided that government partners have improved capacity for girls' education programming</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓

◀ Evaluation Framework (cont'd)

Evaluation Criteria	Theme	Evaluation Question	Judgement Criteria	
<p><i>continued:</i> Effectiveness and Sustainability</p>	<p>Girls' Education Interventions</p>	<p><b>4.1 Situation analysis:</b> To what extent was UNICEF's programming informed by a gender analysis, evidence of what works in which context and a needs analysis, including 1) profiles of disadvantaged girls; 2) educational disadvantages that girls experience and; 3) system level barriers to girls' education?</p>	<p>Evidence that <b>UNICEF's programming was designed</b> using a situation analysis, gender analysis, needs analysis</p>	
		<p><b>4.2 Responsiveness:</b> To what extent were UNICEF-supported interventions responsive and/or adaptable to the national context, capacities, and available resources?</p>	<p>Evidence that <b>UNICEF-supported interventions were adapted</b> based on a situation analysis (context, capacities and resources)</p>	
		<p><b>4.3 Internal logic:</b> What are the underlying theories of change (explicit or inferred) behind girls' education programmes in respective country, and how have these changed over time?</p>	<p>Description of theory of change presented by UNICEF country offices</p>	
		<p><b>4.4 Clarity of results statements:</b> How well were the expected outputs and outcomes of UNICEF's targeted activities in girls' education defined? To what extent were UNICEF's objectives intended results realized?</p>	<p>Evidence that UNICEF staff developed clear and measurable <b>outputs</b> and <b>outcomes</b> for their girls' education activities</p>	
			<p>Evidence that UNICEF <b>achieved its intended results</b></p>	
		<p><b>4.5 Complementarity:</b> To what extent did UNICEF girls' education programmes complement programmes by other stakeholders (at global, regional and country levels)?</p>	<p>Evidence that <b>UNICEF programmes were designed and adapted to complement other programmes</b> targeting girls' education outcomes and gender equality at <b>global level</b></p>	
	<p>Evidence that <b>UNICEF programmes were designed and adapted to complement other programmes</b> targeting girls' education outcomes and gender equality at regional level</p>			

Definition of Standards	UNICEF Staff	National Partners	Global Partners	Desk Review	Case Study
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration of countries carrying out situation analysis, gender analysis and needs analysis, and it affecting the design and adaptations of its programming</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration of countries carrying out situation analysis, gender analysis and needs analysis, and it affecting the design and adaptations of its programming</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of countries carrying out situation analysis, gender analysis and needs analysis, but no evidence of its effect on design or adaptations to programming</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions of countries carrying out situation analysis, gender analysis and needs analysis</p>	✓		✓	✓	✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration of UNICEF CO adapting its programming to respond to its situation analysis/changes to context, capacities and resources</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Mentions of UNICEF CO adapting its programming to respond to its situation analysis/changes to context, capacities and resources</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of UNICEF CO adapting its programming</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions of UNICEF CO adapting its programming</p>	✓		✓		✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Detailed description of a theory of change behind programming and explanation of how it has changed over time</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Detailed description of a theory of change behind programming</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> General description of a theory of change behind programming</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No theory of change explicit or inferred behind programming</p>	✓				✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> UNICEF country education teams have and report on clear and measurable outputs and outcomes for their girls' education activities in annual reports</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Mentions of measurable output and outcomes for girls' education activities in annual reports</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mention of outputs or outcomes for girls' education activities in annual reports; however, they are unmeasurable</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> UNICEF country education teams do not have output or outcome statements in annual reports</p>				✓	✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> UNICEF country education teams report and demonstrate sufficient evidence of achievement of clear and measurable outputs and outcomes for their girls' education activities in annual reports</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> UNICEF country education teams provide evidence of achievement of outputs and outcomes for girls' education activities in annual reports</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> UNICEF country education teams state achievement of outputs and outcomes for girls' education activities in annual reports without providing evidence</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> UNICEF country education teams do not have measurable output or outcome statements in annual reports</p>	✓			✓	✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration that UNICEF programmes were developed based on UNICEF's comparative advantages, using a situation analysis and built to complement other programmes</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration that UNICEF programmes were developed based on UNICEF's comparative advantages, using a situation analysis and built to complement other programmes</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions that UNICEF programmes were developed based on UNICEF's comparative advantages, using a situation analysis or built to complement other programmes</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions that UNICEF programmes were built to complement other programmes</p>	✓		✓		✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration that UNICEF programmes were developed based on UNICEF's comparative advantages, using a situation analysis and built to complement other programmes</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration that UNICEF programmes were developed based on UNICEF's comparative advantages, using a situation analysis and built to complement other programmes</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions that UNICEF programmes were developed based on UNICEF's comparative advantages, using a situation analysis or built to complement other programmes</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions that UNICEF programmes were built to complement other programmes</p>	✓		✓		✓

Evaluation Criteria	Theme	Evaluation Question	Judgement Criteria	
<p><i>continued:</i></p> <p><b>Effectiveness and Sustainability</b></p>	<p><i>continued:</i></p> <p><b>Girls' Education Interventions</b></p>	<p><i>continued:</i></p> <p><b>4.5 Complementarity:</b> To what extent did UNICEF girls' education programmes complement programmes by other stakeholders (at global, regional and country levels)?</p>	<p>Evidence that <b>UNICEF programmes were designed and adapted to complement other programmes</b> targeting girls' education outcomes and gender equality at <b>country level</b></p>	
		<p><b>4.6 Cross-sectoral arrangements:</b> In what ways was girls' education programming carried out within cross-sectoral arrangements (with Health, Nutrition, WASH, HIV/AIDS, Social Policy, etc.) and with what results? What efficiencies, capacities, and/or gaps, if any, were filled by taking a cross-sectoral approach?</p>	<p>Evidence that UNICEF education in team in country <b>achieved outcomes for girls' education and gender equality because of cross-sectoral arrangements</b> (examples of cross-sectoral arrangements)</p>	
		<p><b>4.7 Positive or negative unintended consequences:</b> Were there any positive or negative unintended consequences in girls' education and gender mainstreaming work, and how were negative consequences mitigated?</p>	<p>Evidence that UNICEF education team used <b>cross-sectoral arrangements to fulfil an identified need</b> (include examples of efficiencies, capacities or gaps)</p>	
		<p><b>4.8 Effectiveness:</b> What type of education programme interventions and activities (advocacy, policy dialogue, capacity development) have effectively contributed to supporting the achievement of education outcomes for girls, and gender parity in education outcomes?</p>	<p>Examples of positive or negative unintended consequences Description of how negative consequences were mitigated</p>	
		<p><b>4.9 Scalability, sustainability:</b> To what extent have UNICEF supported interventions been scalable and/or sustainable?</p>	<p>Evidence and examples of programming in specific context that effectively contributed to girls' education outcomes and gender parity</p>	
		<p><b>4.9 Scalability, sustainability:</b> To what extent have UNICEF supported interventions been scalable and/or sustainable?</p>	<p>Evidence that UNICEF designed girls' education interventions that could be sustained by government</p> <p>Evidence that UNICEF designed girls' education interventions that could be taken to scale by government</p>	

Definition of Standards	UNICEF Staff	National Partners	Global Partners	Desk Review	Case Study
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration that UNICEF programmes were developed based on UNICEF's comparative advantages, using a situation analysis and built to complement other programmes</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration that UNICEF programmes were developed based on UNICEF's comparative advantages, using a situation analysis and built to complement other programmes</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions that UNICEF programmes were developed based on UNICEF's comparative advantages, using a situation analysis or built to complement other programmes</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions that UNICEF programmes were built to complement other programmes</p>	✓		✓		✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration that results achieved when girls' education programming carried out through cross-sectoral arrangements with divisions</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Mentions that results achieved when girls' education programming carried out through cross-sectoral arrangements with divisions</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of cross-sectoral arrangements with divisions to carry out girls' education programming (no evidence of results)</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions of cross-sectoral arrangements with divisions to carry out girls' education programming</p>	✓		✓	✓	✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration that needs for girls' education programming were filled by taking cross-sectoral arrangements with divisions</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Mentions that needs for girls' education programming were filled by taking cross-sectoral arrangements with divisions</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of cross-sectoral arrangements with divisions to carry out girls' education programming (no evidence of it filling need)</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions of cross-sectoral arrangements with divisions to carry out girls' education programming</p>	✓		✓		✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration that positive or negative unintended consequences are captured and explanations of how negative consequences were mitigated</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements of positive or negative unintended consequences and mentions of how negative consequences were mitigated</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of positive or negative unintended consequences</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions of unintended consequences</p>	✓		✓		✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration (independent high quality data) interventions in achieving girls' education outcomes and gender parity in education outcomes</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration (quality data) of interventions in achieving girls' education outcomes and gender parity in education outcomes</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of effectiveness of interventions in achieving girls' education outcomes and gender parity in education outcomes</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mention of effectiveness of interventions in achieving girls' education outcomes and gender parity in education outcomes</p>	✓		✓		✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Sufficient observable evidence and self-reported evidence that UNICEF programming during the evaluation period that is no longer directly funded by UNICEF has been sustained by government partners</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements that UNICEF programming during the evaluation period that is no longer directly funded by UNICEF has been sustained by government partners.</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of the sustainability of girls' education interventions</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions of sustainability</p>	✓		✓	✓	✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Sufficient observable evidence and self-reported evidence that UNICEF programming during the evaluation period has been scaled-up by government partners</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements that UNICEF programming during the evaluation period has been scaled-up by government partners.</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of scaling-up of girls' education interventions</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mentions of scaling-up</p>	✓		✓		✓

◀ Evaluation Framework (cont'd)

Evaluation Criteria	Theme	Evaluation Question	Judgement Criteria	
<p><i>continued:</i> Effectiveness and Sustainability</p>	<p><b>Gender Mainstreaming</b></p>	<p><b>5.1 Effectiveness:</b> Were UNICEF's approaches to gender mainstreaming in education in the time period effective in achieving the expected results?</p>	<p>Evidence that UNICEF country team's approaches to mainstreaming gender in education during the evaluation period were effective in achieving girls' education outcomes.</p>	
		<p><b>5.2 Lessons learned:</b> What lessons has UNICEF learned about the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming and targeted approaches during the period of the MTSP (2009-2013), and to what extent were these incorporated into the Strategic Plan (2014-17), and Gender Action Plan?</p>	<p>Evidence that lessons learned about the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming and targeted approaches during the period of the MTSP (2009-2013), were incorporated into the Strategic Plan (2014-17), and Gender Action Plan</p> <p>UNICEF reported examples of lessons learned during the period of the MTSP UNICEF reported examples of lessons learned being incorporated into SP and GAP</p>	



Definition of Standards	UNICEF Staff	National Partners	Global Partners	Desk Review	Case Study
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Explicit statements and sufficient demonstration (including use of high quality data) of UNICEF country team’s use of gender analysis at assessment and design stages, as well as in M&amp;E (disaggregated results and specific indicators) being effective in achieving girls’ education outcomes</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Explicit statements and some demonstration of UNICEF country team’s use of gender analysis at assessment and design stages, as well as in M&amp;E (disaggregated results and specific indicators) being effective in achieving girls’ education outcomes</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Mentions of UNICEF country team’s use of gender analysis at assessment and design stages, as well as in M&amp;E (disaggregated results and specific indicators) being effective in achieving girls’ education outcomes</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> No mention of UNICEF country team’s use of gender analysis at assessment and design stages, as well as in M&amp;E (disaggregated results and specific indicators) being effective in achieving girls’ education outcomes</p>	✓		✓	✓	✓
<p><b>Strong evidence:</b> Lessons learned documented and reported by UNICEF staff then evidenced in the SP and GAP</p> <p><b>Adequate evidence:</b> Lessons documented and reported by UNICEF staff, but not evidenced in SP or GAP</p> <p><b>Little evidence:</b> Lessons learned reported by UNICEF staff</p> <p><b>No evidence:</b> Lessons learned not documented or reported by UNICEF staff or in SP and GAP.</p>	✓		✓	✓	✓

# APPENDIX E: UNICEF'S STRATEGIC CONTEXT POST-EVALUATION PERIOD

## Strategic Plan 2018-2021

The Strategic Plan (SP) 2018-2021 describes the results to be achieved by UNICEF and key partners by 2021 in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the WHAT). It also describes the change strategies necessary for the achievement of results (the HOW) and the internal factors that support the change strategies and the achievement of results (the ENABLERS). See Figure A1 for the Strategic Plan results logic<sup>100</sup>.

The **guiding principles**<sup>101</sup> behind this SP are:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the foundation for everything UNICEF does;
- The SP should operationalize the call to leave no child behind;
- Mainstreaming gender equality is a cross-cutting priority;
- Coherence between humanitarian and development programming; and
- Partnership with Governments, private sector, civil society and within the United Nations development system.

The overarching **lessons learned** from the SP 2014-2017 are summarised<sup>102</sup> as:

- Intensify the strengthening of national systems;
- Investment in disaggregated data;

- Intensify support for inclusive and meaningful participation of children in decisions that affect them;
- Risk-informed programming vital for prevention and response;
- Systematic application of gender analysis during programme design and delivery; and
- Intensify community engagement for addressing the demand-related barriers.

## Theory of Change for the Strategic Plan 2018-2021

UNICEF produced a comprehensive Theory of Change Paper<sup>103</sup> to complement the SP 2018-2021, which elaborates on the broad Theory of Change that underpins it. This Theory of Change post-dates the Foundational Theory of Change that we discuss in Section 1.3, which was developed specifically for the purpose of framing this evaluation.

This new overarching Theory of Change *summarizes how concrete actions that UNICEF takes at the country, regional and global levels contribute to the impacts and outcomes across each of the five goal areas of the plan, as well as the cross-cutting priorities of gender equality and humanitarian action. The paper also elaborates the more specific outcome-level theories of change [for each Goal Area] that help to explain how UNICEF will contribute to the outcomes*

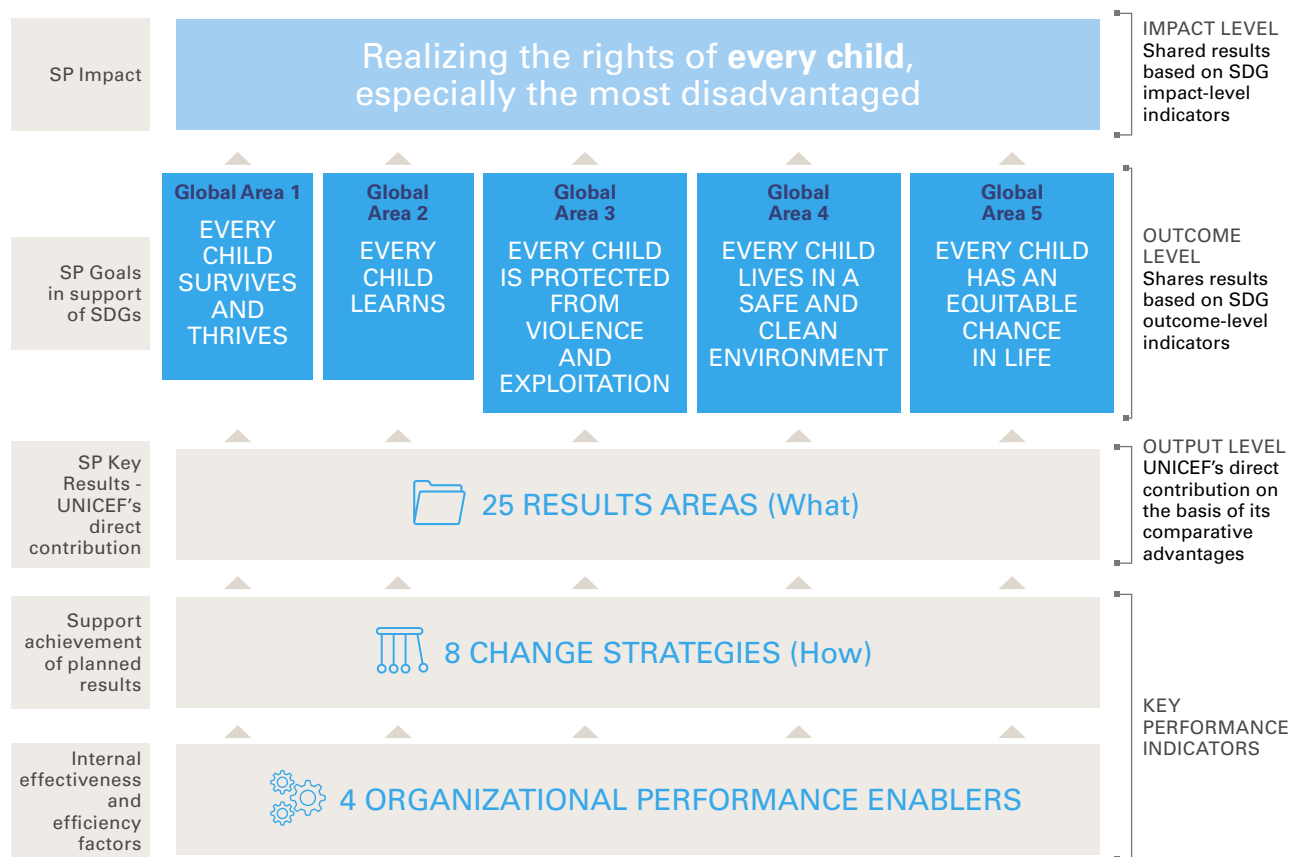
<sup>100</sup> UNICEF, 2017, 'Final Results Framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021', p.5

<sup>101</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/Presentation-SP\\_for\\_22Aug\\_Informal-15Aug2017.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/Presentation-SP_for_22Aug_Informal-15Aug2017.pdf)

<sup>102</sup> Ibid

<sup>103</sup> UNICEF, 2017, 'Theory of Change Paper, UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021, realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged'.

**FIGURE E.1** Key Elements of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021



*in the Strategic Plan and the assumptions and risks framing the organization's work in obtaining results.*<sup>104</sup>

The SP promotes synergies across the five goal areas shown in Figure A1 to address:

- Early childhood development (ECD);
- Adolescent development; and
- Issues affecting children with disabilities.

To capture the contribution of UNICEF to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, the organization has framed its work through 25

outputs contributing to 5 outcomes (goal areas). Each of the goal areas are interlinked, reflecting the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UNICEF's contribution through outputs is *strongly anchored in a rights-based approach to programming. It is also based on lessons learned from the previous Strategic Plan, where it was not always easy to track the various types of contributions that UNICEF made at output level or to manage related accountabilities. It also responds to a recommendation of the Evaluability Assessment of the previous Strategic Plan to strengthen its design and application as a framework rather*

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, p.3.

than as a prescriptive log frame that would apply a global and corporate results logic to nationally owned country programmes.<sup>105</sup>

The SP Theory of Change identifies **eight change strategies** that UNICEF will use across all five goal areas:

1. Programming at-scale results for children;
2. Gender-responsive programming;
3. Winning support for the cause of children from decision makers and the wider public;
4. Developing and leveraging resources and partnerships for children;
5. Harnessing the power of business and markets for children;
6. United Nations working together;
7. Fostering innovation for children; and
8. Harnessing the power of evidence as a driver of change for children.

The SP Theory of Change also describes **four organizational performance enablers** of greater efficiency, professionalism and ethics in the leadership, management and administration of the organization. These enablers comprise four interconnected elements:

1. Governance (modern, transparent and accountable governance for the organization);
2. Management (results-oriented, efficient, effective and collaborative);
3. People (versatile staff, staff as agents of change);

4. Knowledge and information systems (efficient, safe and secure, connecting results and people).

## SP Goal Area (Outcome) 2 – Every Child Learns

Goal Area (Outcome) 2 provides the strategic plan for UNICEF's education section and is defined as:

*Girls and boys, in particular the most marginalized and those affected by humanitarian situations, are provided with inclusive and equitable quality education and learning opportunities.*

UNICEF's Theory of Change Paper expands on the theory of change for each Goal Area. The Theory of Change statement<sup>106</sup> for Goal Area 2 is:

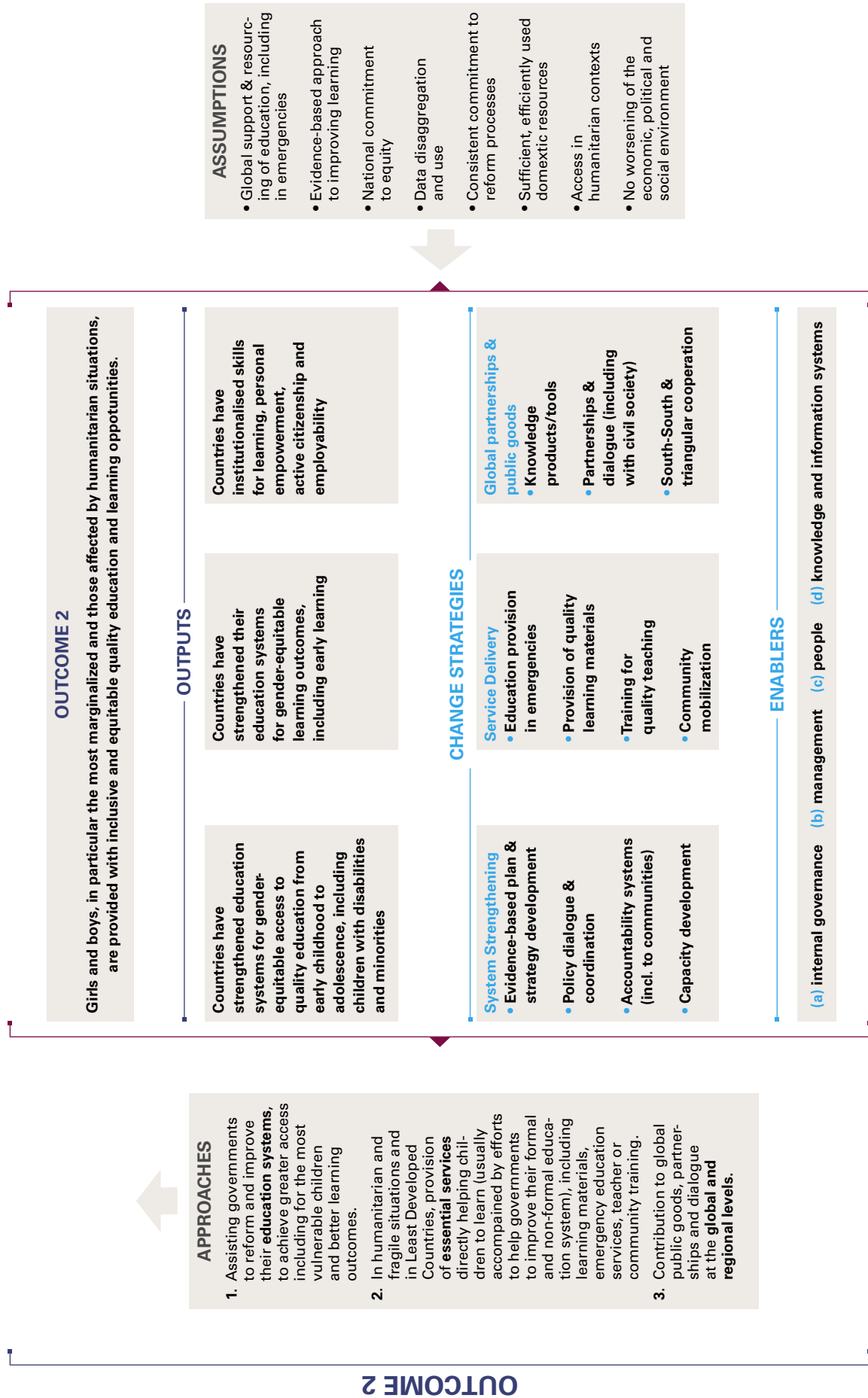
***If** countries have strengthened education systems for gender-equitable access to quality education from early childhood to adolescence, including children with disabilities and minorities; and **if** they have strengthened their education systems for gender-equitable learning outcomes, including early learning; and **if** they have institutionalized skills for learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship and employability: **Then** every child, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, can learn.*

Figure A2 below provide an overview of the Theory of Change supporting Goal Area (Outcome) 2.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, p.4.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, p.34

**FIGURE E.2** Goal Area (Outcome) 2 – Theory of Change for UNICEF’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021



**ASSUMPTIONS**

- Global support & resourcing of education, including in emergencies
- Evidence-based approach to improving learning
- National commitment to equity
- Data disaggregation and use
- Consistent commitment to reform processes
- Sufficient, efficiently used domestic resources
- Access in humanitarian contexts
- No worsening of the economic, political and social environment

UNICEF has identified **three main outputs** for the 2018-21 Strategic Plan that directly contribute to Outcome 2:

- Countries have strengthened education systems for gender-equitable access to quality education from early childhood to adolescence, including children with disabilities and minorities;
- Countries have strengthened their education systems for gender-equitable learning outcomes, including early learning; and
- Countries have institutionalized skills for learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship and employability.

Across each output, UNICEF will work through **three change strategies** to deliver results at scale that are sustainable and resilient:

1. **Strengthening education systems at all levels** (*from the central level to the community level*), *assisting governments to reform and improve their education systems, to achieve greater access, including for the most vulnerable children, to ensure the education system is more safe and inclusive (and in particular disability- and gender-responsive), and to deliver better learning and skills outcomes.*
2. **Direct service delivery**, *including the provision of emergency education services, quality learning materials, training for quality teaching and direct support to community mobilization to help children access education and learn.*

3. **Contribution to global and regional public goods** *such as analytical reports, evaluations, methodological guidance and tools, the promotion of South-South and triangular cooperation/sharing, co-chairing and contributing to international education initiatives, involvement in strategic partnerships and support to dialogue and advocacy for inclusive education and effective learning.*

The SP Theory of Change Paper and our interview with a Senior Education Advisor<sup>107</sup> in UNICEF highlights some of the key changes in Outcome 2 compared to the previous SP (2014-2017):

- An increased prioritization of **learning outcomes**, starting with foundational skills, such as literacy and numeracy.
- A focus on **skills development** for learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship and employability, to ensure that children develop the wide range of transferable skills that they need to progress in later life and for employment. This includes a focus on: *21<sup>st</sup> Century skills* that equips young people with 21st century and employability skills and helps them create entrepreneurial solutions to the barriers that they, and their communities, face<sup>108</sup>; and *Life Skills*<sup>109</sup> that improve girls' personal empowerment and enables them to assess and make choices about their own lives.

---

<sup>107</sup> Telephone interview with UNICEF Senior Education Advisor on 22 January 2018.

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.unicef.org.uk/press-releases/21st-century-skills-unicef-pearson-launch-educational-partnership-children/>

<sup>109</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index\\_statistics.html](https://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index_statistics.html) - "Though recognized by different names – "life skills education", "social and emotional learning", or skills-based health education" – the central notion is the same: education that helps young people develop critical thinking and problem solving skills, that builds their sense of personal worth and agency, and teaches them to interact with others constructively and effectively, has transformative potential. Whether as individuals or nations, in both the developed and developing world, our success as human beings and as democratic societies depends on how well we are able to manage challenges and risks, maximize opportunities, and solve problems in cooperative, non-violent ways. Life skills are defined as a group of cognitive, personal and inter-personal skills that enhance such abilities."

- A stronger emphasis on education outcomes on education outcomes for the **most disadvantaged** children, in addition to access, participation and completion of education.
- Increased investment in equity measurement through **disaggregated data**, as a critical way of scaling up equity-focused programming and advocacy.
- An increased focus on **adolescents** and the needs of marginalized adolescents, which includes: improving the transition of marginalized children and adolescents through the education system to secondary education; and expanding their opportunities to learn and develop new skills, including in STEM<sup>110</sup>.
- An increased emphasis on strengthening **national education systems**, so that all system components are coherently aligned to achieving better results.
- Continued emphasis on strengthening **partnerships** with governments, civil society and within the UN development system to support integrated approaches that address the underlying causes of service gaps.

During the SP 2014-2017, UNICEF HQ supported staff in 12 Country Offices to make better use of data and evidence enabling them to reflect more on the effectiveness of their education programming. Depending on the position of the Country Office in the five-year country program cycle, these reviews have variously informed the development of country program documents, program strategy notes and/or annual work plans, with a focus on strategies for improving girls' education and gender

equality in these programmes, which will be taken forward through the GAP 2018-2021 implementation.

### Gender Action Plan 2018-2021

The Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2018-2021<sup>111</sup> sets out how UNICEF will promote gender equality across the organization's work, in alignment with the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021. It elaborates the gender dimensions of the programmatic results across the five goal areas of the Strategic Plan, as well as the steps to strengthen gender across change strategies and institutional systems and processes.

The changes made in the GAP 2018-2021 as a result of lessons learned from the GAP 2014-2017 align with changes made in the SP 2018-2021, and are summarised<sup>112</sup> as:

- **Realignment of targeted priorities** from four to five priorities – see Figure A3 below – particularly the results relating to gender equality and adolescent girls' well-being and empowerment for SP Goal 2. Gender quality in teaching and education systems represents a new focus in this GAP recognizing that a gender-balanced supply of high quality teachers is essential to making education systems more gender-equitable and supportive of quality education for children, especially in improving learning outcomes.
- Heightened focus on **gender analysis** and programming excellence.
- Articulation of **two themes for integrating gender** [i.e. a) gender equality for girls and boys and b) gender equality in women's

<sup>110</sup> Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

<sup>111</sup> UNICEF, 2017. 'UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021, draft for review, June 29 2017'

<sup>112</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/UNICEF\\_GAP\\_2018-2021-Draft-June\\_16\\_2017.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/UNICEF_GAP_2018-2021-Draft-June_16_2017.pdf)

and men's roles in the care and support of children] across all goal areas and the specification of key results.

- Explicit focus on **boys and men and male-female power relations**.
- Explicit focus on **both humanitarian and development programming**.
- Increased emphasis on **gender data and measurement**.
- Increased emphasis on complementary and **collaborative UN and multilateral partnerships**, especially in the field.

A key lesson learned<sup>113</sup> is the critical contribution that UNICEF's investment in senior-level gender expertise has made to progress under the GAP 2014-2017, especially at the regional level. However, accessing adequate gender expertise at the country levels and within sectors at all levels of the organization remains a challenge that will be a priority under GAP 2018-2021.

## Results Framework for the Strategic Plan 2018-2021

The Results Framework of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021<sup>114</sup> incorporates the impact, outcome and output indicators necessary for monitoring progress. While impact- and outcome-level results reflect the combined efforts of Governments, United Nations entities, the private sector, civil society and other partners, output-level results reflect the specific contribution of UNICEF to the 2030 Agenda. The Results Framework also reflects the UNICEF result-oriented approach to gender equality, as encapsulated in the Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021.

The **output-level results and indicators** capture the full range of support that UNICEF provides in various country contexts (including in humanitarian situations), such as direct service provision, systems strengthening, policy processes and normative work, advocacy, and various types of support related to positive changes in social norms. This approach to output formulation is based on a lesson learned from implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, where it was not always easy to track the various types of contributions that UNICEF made. Country Offices will need to determine which target outcomes (i.e. Access, Learning Outcomes, Skills Development under Goal Area 2) are most appropriate for their programme contexts and target groups and identify which core skills (at the output level) they need to deliver.

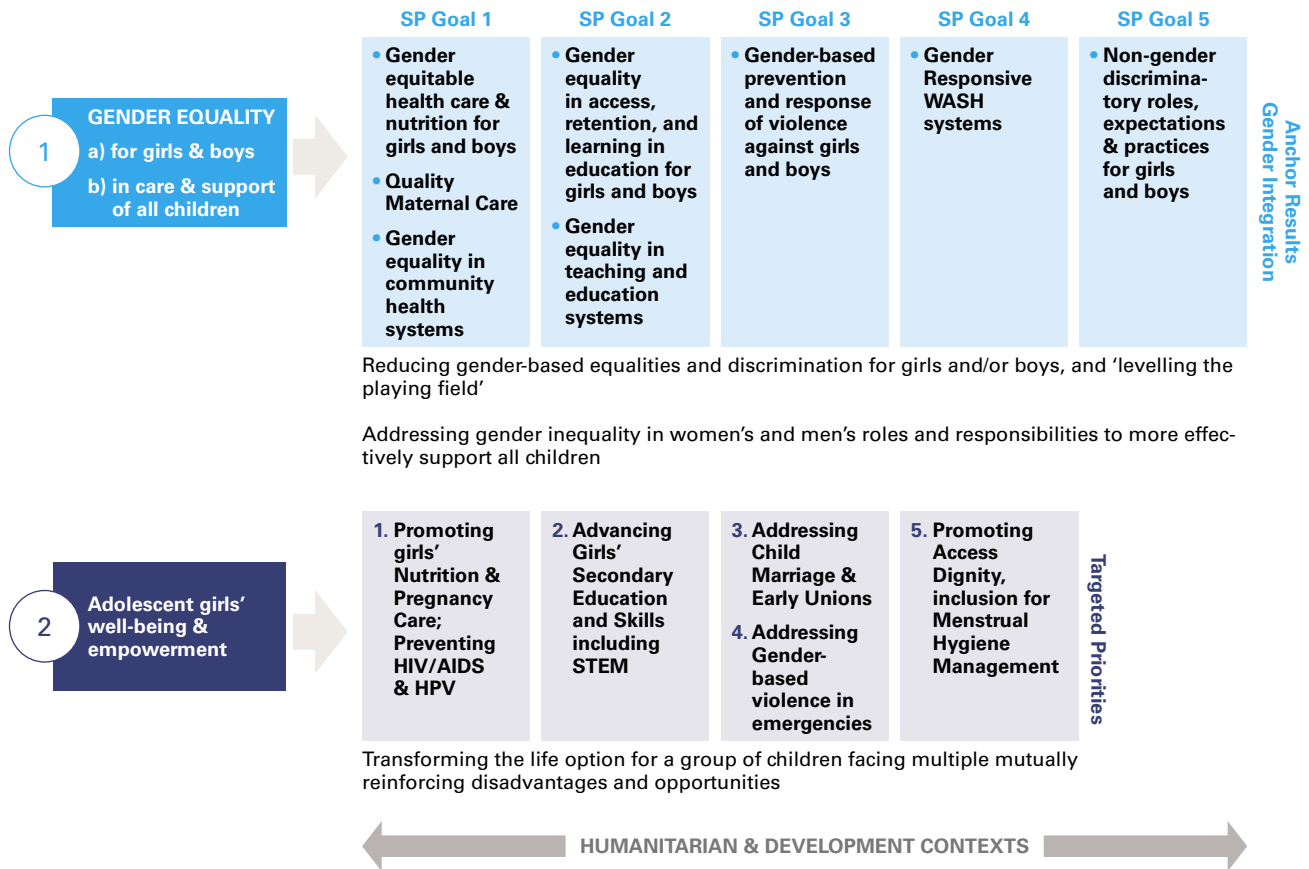
---

<sup>113</sup> UNICEF, 2017. 'UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021, draft for review, June 29 2017'; Telephone interview with UNICEF Senior Education Advisor on 22 January 2018.

<sup>114</sup> UNICEF, 2017. 'Final results framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021'.



**FIGURE E.3 Gender Results in the Strategic Plan 2018-2021**



## APPENDIX F: DESK REVIEW COUNTRIES AND SAMPLING CRITERIA

**TABLE F.1** Desk review country selection criteria

Country	Region	High spending (within region)	Girls' education inequality	Girls' education programming	GPE country	UNGEI country	OOSCI country	EiE programming
Azerbaijan	CEECIS		✓					✓
Tajikistan	CEECIS	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Turkey	CEECIS	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Cambodia	EAP	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Papua New Guinea	EAP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Timor-Leste	EAP	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Ethiopia	ESA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Madagascar	ESA	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Mozambique	ESA	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Rwanda	ESA	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Somalia	ESA	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
South Sudan	ESA	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Tanzania	ESA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Uganda	ESA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Bolivia	LAC	✓		✓			✓	✓
Guatemala	LAC	✓	✓	✓				
Mexico	LAC	✓		✓			✓	
Djibouti	MENA		✓	✓	✓			✓
Egypt	MENA	✓		✓				✓
Lebanon	MENA			✓				✓
Sudan	MENA	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Yemen	MENA	✓	✓		✓			✓
Afghanistan	SA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

◀ Table F.1 (cont'd)

Country	Region	High spending (within region)	Girls' education inequality	Girls' education programming	GPE country	UNGEI country	OOSCI country	EiE programming
Bangladesh	SA			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
India	SA	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Nepal	SA		✓		✓	✓		✓
Pakistan	SA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Burkina Faso	WCA	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Côte d'Ivoire	WCA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
DRC	WCA		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Guinea Bissau	WCA	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Mali	WCA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Niger	WCA	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Nigeria	WCA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sierra Leone	WCA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

## APPENDIX G: EVIDENCE REVIEWED

**TABLE G.1** Documents Reviewed

Document Type	Number
Country Office Annual Reports	226
UNICEF policy and programming documents	43
Country Programme Documents	35
Regional office reports	26
National Education Sector plans and other government policies	50
UNICEF evaluation reports	28
Situation Analyses and Appraisals	9
Other UNICEF	22
Results and activities reports	12
Thematic reports (BEGE, HRBA, sexual violence)	6
Status of girls' education	3
State of the world's children	1
Other non-UNICEF	21
Research Institutions	11
Bilateral Donors	5
International Organisations	4
Other UN	1

**TABLE G.2** Stakeholders consulted through Individual Interviews and Focus Group Discussions during Case Study Fieldwork

Stakeholder Type	Nigeria	Pakistan	Mozambique	Côte d'Ivoire	Sudan	Total
UNICEF Country Office Staff	17	42	9	14	20	<b>102</b>
Government Partners (Federal, State, Local)	40	14	22	26	25	<b>127</b>
Other Implementing Partners (including NGOs, other UN agencies, International Orgs.)	79	14	0	12	16	<b>121</b>
Beneficiaries	75	48	19	78	4	<b>224</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>574</b>

**TABLE G.3 Global and Regional Level Interviews**

Section	Name	Role	Organisation
UNICEF HQ	Josephine Bourne	Global Education Chief	UNICEF, New York
	Gemma Wilson-Clark	Girls' Education	UNICEF, New York
	Mark Waltham	Out of School Children Initiative (OOSCI)	UNICEF, New York
	Nora Fyles	Head of UNGEI Secretariat	UNICEF, New York
Former staff of the Education Section (serving in other UNICEF Offices)	Maida Pasic	Formerly responsible for capacity building	UNICEF, Palestine
	Aarti Saihjee	Formerly split across UNGEI and UNICEF	UNICEF, Ghana
Regional Office Staff	Urmila Sarkar	Regional Education Adviser	UNICEF, South Asia Regional Office, Kathmandu
	Nicolas Reuge	Regional Education Adviser	UNICEF, West and Central Africa Regional Office, Dakar, Senegal
	Shoubo Rasheed Jalal	Regional Advisor, Gender	UNICEF, MENA, Amman
Global partners	Mercy Tembon	Regional Director for the South Caucasus, Europe and Central Asia	World Bank
	Oni Lusk Stover	Education Specialist	World Bank
	Maki Hayashikawa	Education Section Chief	UNESCO
	Koli Banik	Education Specialist (previously)	Global Partnership for Education (GPE) - previously
	Lousie Banham	Senior Education Advisor	Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
	Elin Ruud / Vigdis Cristofoli	Senior Adviser Department for Education and Global Health / Counsellor Education	NORAD
	Sally Gear	Senior Education Advisor	DFID

# APPENDIX H: SUMMARY OF CASE STUDY FINDINGS

Evaluation Question	Côte d'Ivoire	Nigeria	
<b>Positioning and Shared Understanding</b>			
<p><b>1.1 Alignment:</b> To what extent was UNICEF country programming in girls' education aligned with global and national priorities (Education Sector Plan) at the time the programme was defined?</p>	<p>UNICEF Country Office (CO) programming in girls' education was aligned with the global MDG goals and priorities within the Mid Term Sector Plan (MTSP) 2009-2013. The Strategic Plan in 2014-2015 closely aligned with national priorities. The UNICEF Education Section has helped the Ministry of Education (MoE) shape its priorities and develop national strategies, and as consequence the country programme.</p>	<p>UNICEF Nigeria country programming in girls' education was aligned with the global MDG goals, UNICEF priorities of the 2009-2013 Mid Term Strategic Plan (MTSP), the 2014/15 Strategic Plan (SP), the national priorities set out in the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) 10-year strategic plan (2007), and lastly, the Nigeria Vision 20:2020 development blueprint.</p>	
<p><b>1.2 Shared understanding:</b> To what extent is there a shared understanding of guiding principles, strategies, (e.g., gender mainstreaming, targeting), and/or girls' education programme choices a) among UNICEF education program staff (HQ, RO and CO); and b) between UNICEF education staff and partners (government implementers and decision-makers in the education sector, and non-government implementing partners)?</p>	<p>UNICEF staff share a common understanding of guiding principles and of the barriers to girls' education. There is conceptual overlap in the approaches of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire (GoCI)/MoE and UNICEF to girls' education and targeting, in particular reducing the gap between girls and boy's enrolment rates based on a shared understanding of the primary barriers to girls' education in Côte d'Ivoire. However, some evidence suggests that there was little to no shared understanding, nor mainstream usage of concepts such as the rights of the child and gender in governmental education service provision.</p>	<p>Among UNICEF staff and consultants in Nigeria, the level of understanding of the guiding principles of the MTSP, SP, gender policies and programme strategies varies.</p>	
<p><b>1.3 Collaboration:</b> To what extent did UNICEF education teams collaborate effectively with other divisions and country teams to achieve outcomes for girls and promote gender equality? What efficiencies were achieved?</p>	<p>Collaboration with other country teams and divisions at the Head Quarters (HQ) / regional office was very limited beyond exchange of information.</p>	<p>There was little horizontal and vertical collaboration among the UNICEF Headquarters (HQ), regional office and the Nigeria Country Office education teams in effectively contributing to the achievement of girls' education and gender equality outcomes.</p>	

Mozambique	Sudan	Pakistan
<p>UNICEF Mozambique’s country programming in girls’ education was generally aligned with global MDG goals, UNICEF priorities of the 2009-2013 Mid Term Strategic Plan (MTSP), the 2014-17 Strategic Plan (SP), as well as the national education sector plans, in effect between 2009-2015. Programmatically, priorities emphasized achieving equity associated with poverty more than they did gender equality.</p>	<p>UNICEF Sudan country programming in girls’ education was aligned with the global MDG goals and national priorities for education. The establishment of the Girls Education Authority, and support provided to the government to develop policies ensured alignment.</p>	<p>There is strong evidence to support the finding that UNICEF Pakistan’s country programming in girls’ education was aligned with the global MDGs, UNICEF’s priorities in the Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) for 2009-2013, and with the Strategic Plan for 2014-2017. UNICEF supported the development of national priorities through its membership of the core team responsible for the current National Education Policy (NEP 2009) that reaffirms a commitment to the goals of achieving universal and free primary education by 2015, and up to Class 10 by 2025.</p>
<p>Among UNICEF staff in Mozambique, there was a shared understanding of some of the principles of the MTSP, SP, gender policies that guided UNICEF’s education programme choices during the evaluation period. Neither internally nor among government partners was there a strong understanding of the various strategies (e.g., gender mainstreaming, targeting), employed for promoting girls’ education outcomes.</p>	<p>Among UNICEF staff and consultants in Sudan, there is an uneven understanding of the guiding principles of the program strategies that guided UNICEF’s education choices during the evaluation period (gender mainstreaming, etc.). UNICEF staff and government partners had a shared understanding due to the assistance UNICEF offered in developing many of their guiding documents. However, many local NGOs/CSOs did not share the same level of understanding and clarity.</p>	<p>There is little evidence of shared understanding during the evaluation period. Although interviews with current staff indicate there is a strong level of shared understanding among current UNICEF staff and partners, many of the CO staff interviewed were not working in Pakistan during the evaluation period and as such were unable to comment. The current staff supplied little evidence of capacity building training, particularly in gender mainstreaming to ensure that their understanding of key principles is consistent within the office and with HQ. There is strong evidence of a shared understanding between UNICEF and other development partners of barriers to girls’ education in Pakistan. However, the strategies and approaches adopted by each UN agency vary to a great extent.</p>
<p>There was little horizontal collaboration with other country offices in the region that effectively contributed to the achievement of girls’ education outcomes and promoted gender equality. Vertical support from UNICEF ESAR regional office was limited and there was no direct engagement with headquarters or other divisions focused directly on girls’ education.</p>	<p>UNICEF education team collaborated with other UN agencies, UNESCO and WFP, but the collaboration and the results were mixed. It is difficult to verify to what extent the collaboration promoted girls’ education.</p>	<p>Education, Child Protection and WASH Team in-country were able to report and describe examples of collaboration between them to deliver shared objectives to contribute to achieving girls’ education outcomes. However, there was little evidence of any collaboration with the HQs of other country teams.</p>

Summary of Case Study Findings (cont'd)

Evaluation Question	Côte d'Ivoire	Nigeria	
<b>Partnerships</b>			
<p><b>2.1 Benefits of partnerships:</b> What were the mutual benefits of working through partnership arrangements? What trade-offs and /or risks were incurred to ensure that partnership arrangements worked as intended, and how were risks mitigated?</p>	<p>UNICEF's technical capacity and reach at the local level was seen a key benefit of the partnership by government staff. The close relationship has exposed UNICEF interventions to risks that have only partly been mitigated.</p>	<p>Partners' expectations on the definition and terms of the partnership diverged significantly. The perceived benefits and actual trade-offs of working with different partners throughout the evaluation period called into question the net value of those partnerships. UNICEF has been exposed to risks that have not been mitigated.</p>	
<p><b>2.2 Credibility:</b> What are the views and/ or experiences of partners relative to UNICEF's contributions to the partnership, and UNICEF's credibility?</p>	<p>Government and NGO partners testified to UNICEF's credibility within the partnership. Although UNICEF's role has shifted from a first responder to one that works through government structures, the positive perception of its value as a partner has not changed.</p>	<p>UNICEF's credibility and unique contribution to the partnership varied by stakeholder category, and was strongly associated with the quality of the partnership itself. Overwhelmingly and significantly, the closer a stakeholder was to the ground, the stronger they viewed UNICEF as a credible partner.</p>	
<p><b>2.3 Leveraging resources:</b> How successful has UNICEF and its partners been in leveraging resources for targeted work on girls' education, and for gender mainstreaming?</p>	<p>Based on the available criteria and evidence, it is unclear how successful UNICEF and its partners in Côte d'Ivoire were in leveraging resources for targeted work on girls' education and/or gender mainstreaming.</p>	<p>UNICEF and its partners in Nigeria were not successful in leveraging resources for targeted work on girls' education and/or gender mainstreaming, and in rare cases did they state their threshold for success.</p>	
<b>Capacity Development</b>			
<p><b>3.1 Internal capacities:</b> To what extent did education country teams have the key tools, skills and systems required for programming to achieving girls' education outcomes?</p>	<p>Based on the available criteria and evidence, it is not possible to confirm the extent to which education country teams had the tools, skills, and systems required to achieve girls' education outcomes over the evaluation period.</p>	<p>Though girls' education has been an important commitment in UNICEF over time, the skills, systems and tools necessary to effectively programme for girls' education outcomes were not well defined, and hence success (or the lack thereof) during the evaluation period was not measurable.</p>	



	Mozambique	Sudan	Pakistan
	<p>The Government of Mozambique served as the main partner throughout the evaluation period. Working through partnership arrangements were considered beneficial at national, provincial and district levels, though the strength of impressions were uneven across levels and changed over time. Mobility and promotion of individuals within various education sector offices at national and provincial levels, as well as UNICEF staff rotation, affected pace and momentum of forward progress and presented a risk difficult to mitigate.</p>	<p>UNICEF worked particularly well in partnership with the MoE. Both MoE and UNICEF recognised mutual trust as the main benefit of working together. Some trade-offs were that others were unable to see which initiatives were implemented UNICEF and which were by the state. Additionally, there were risks associated by transferring money and responsibility of implementation to the MOE. These risks were not properly mitigated.</p>	<p>UNICEF is considered a trusted development partner by provincial governments, with the Sindh Education Department viewing UNICEF as a key partner. There is adequate evidence that as a result of its coordination and alignment with partners UNICEF has been able to improve the effectiveness of its programming and lever additional resources.</p>
	<p>UNICEF's credibility and unique contribution to the partnership varied depending on the level of government and was associated with the strength of the partnership. Government partners at district level, where actual work and results were immediately visible, had the clearest and most positive view of UNICEF's credibility.</p>	<p>Partners' views of UNICEF's credibility and contribution was strongly positive, but this was associated with the quality of the partnership itself. The closer a partner was to UNICEF, the stronger they viewed UNICEF as a credible partner. Some NGOs at the community level expressed confusion about the activities carried out in partnership with MoE and those with UNICEF.</p>	<p>There is strong evidence that UNICEF's work with provincial governments at the policy and strategic planning level ensured that the organisation is a trusted and credible partner. UNICEF's credibility with all stakeholders is enhanced by its extensive presence at grassroots level, especially in hard to reach areas where it works with marginalised communities and disadvantaged groups.</p>
	<p>From a financial perspective, UNICEF was successful in leveraging resources for the CFS initiative. However, based on the distribution of resources across the components, only a small portion of total investment directly targeted girls' education or gender mainstreaming outcomes.</p>	<p>Based on the evidence, it is unclear how successful UNICEF and its partners in Sudan were in leveraging resources for targeted work on girls' education, and there is no evidence for leveraging for gender mainstreaming. Partners gave mixed examples of leveraging.</p>	<p>UNICEF reported a strong record of leverage up to 2011, but there is no other reported evidence thereafter of the resources leveraged by UNICEF. However, feedback from CO staff provides evidence that UNICEF has successfully leveraged large investments from other organisations. However, it is unclear how much is specifically invested in targeted approaches to girls' education and gender mainstreaming.</p>
	<p>Though girls' education has been an important commitment in UNICEF over time, the skills, systems and tools necessary to effectively programme for girls' education outcomes were not well defined, and hence success (or the lack thereof) during the evaluation period was not measurable.</p>	<p>Education country teams had the tools, skills, and systems required to achieve girls' education outcomes over the evaluation period. But they could have done more to utilize the guidance they had for programming.</p>	<p>Strong evidence indicates that CO staff, both international and national, have high levels of skill and understanding of relevant issues, together with a strong commitment to achieve targets. However, some additional capacity building is required, particularly in gender mainstreaming.</p>

Summary of Case Study Findings (cont'd)

Evaluation Question	Côte d'Ivoire	Nigeria	
<p><b>3.2 External capacities:</b> What contribution (if any) has UNICEF made towards the development of national capacity (governments partners) to analyse, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate girls' education programmes and interventions?</p>	<p>UNICEF carried out capacity building initiatives with government partners which had a direct benefit to girls' education, especially in the areas of strategy and planning. There is also strong evidence to suggest that the capacity building had indirect benefits to girls' education. There is more work to be done, in particular on monitoring and reporting.</p>	<p>To the extent that UNICEF staff themselves possessed the requisite skills, and knew how to use relevant tools and systems, they positively contributed to the development of government partners' capacity to analyse, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate girls' education interventions.</p>	
<b>Girls' Education Interventions</b>			
<p><b>4.1 Situation analysis:</b> To what extent was UNICEF's programming informed by a gender analysis, evidence of what works in which context and a needs analysis, including 1) profiles of disadvantaged girls; 2) educational disadvantages that girls experience and; 3) system level barriers to girls' education?</p>	<p>There is strong evidence to suggest that UNICEF uses various types of analysis to inform programming, depending on the intervention and needs. This includes multiple indicator cluster survey and situation analysis to understand barriers to education. These analyses have been shared with the government to feed into their programming. There was no specific gender analysis covering the early part of the evaluation period.</p>	<p>UNICEF's programming was informed by gender analysis and demonstrated an understanding of the profiles of disadvantaged girls, the educational disadvantages they faced, and the system-level barriers to their education.</p>	
<p><b>4.2 Responsiveness:</b> To what extent were UNICEF-supported interventions responsive and/or adaptable to the national context, capacities, and available resources?</p>	<p>Overall, there is strong evidence that UNICEF's support and interventions have been responsive to the context, capacity and resources. This is reflected in UNICEF's diverse roles in the crisis and post-crisis environment, where it has exhibited leadership and adaptability in both local-level response and higher-level advocacy following the crisis. However, the interventions did not adequately assess the available resources at state and local levels, nor did they sufficiently address education quality.</p>	<p>UNICEF-supported interventions were partially responsive to the national context, capacities, and available resources. Over time, the alignment among intervention design, the context, and girls' needs improved, but the design of the interventions did not adequately assess the available resources at state and local levels, nor did the interventions sufficiently address educational quality.</p>	
<p><b>4.3 Internal logic:</b> What are the underlying theories of change (explicit or inferred) behind girls' education programmes in respective country, and how have these changed over time?</p>	<p>During the evaluation period, the underlying theories of change were not made explicit, and no staff members directly involved in planning demonstrated awareness or knowledge on any developed theories of change.</p>	<p>The underlying theories of change became more explicit over the evaluation period.</p>	

	Mozambique	Sudan	Pakistan
	Government partners had low capacity to analyse, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate girls' education programmes and interventions. However, some of government counterparts' understanding about girls' rights to education and gender equality could be traced to work they had done with UNICEF staff during the evaluation period.	UNICEF provided capacity building training to government partners and NGOs, but it was inconclusive as to the extent of contribution it made to national capacity and education interventions.	There is adequate evidence that UNICEF has contributed to developing the capacity of government partners in gender and education. However, it is not clear to what extent the training has integrated these capacities to ensure that where needed girls are explicitly targeted to improve their education outcomes.
	Different components of UNICEF's programming were more informed by gender analysis than others throughout the evaluation period. Few of the school system-based components introduced within the CFS approach, however, responded particularly to the situation facing girls and the barriers to education they encountered.	UNICEF Sudan's girls' education programming was informed by situational, needs response, and the identification of barriers to girls' education. The extent that these strategies and analysis fed into programmatic design is mixed. Situational analysis and barriers were incorporated, but it is also less clear how gender analysis fed into the programmatic design.	UNICEF Pakistan conducted gender and situation analyses in 2012 and 2013. Staff in the Country Office appeared to have developed a strong evidence-based understanding of who is most marginalised, how, where and with what effects on their education. But there is little evidence available explaining how the findings from these analyses were used to inform the design and delivery of UNICEF's programmes.
	UNICEF-supported interventions were partially responsive to national context, capacities, and available resources. This meant that efforts to promote equity centered around poverty rather than gender, primarily. However, many of the barriers that are most gender-related begin to address girls at slightly later ages.	There is strong evidence that UNICEF supported interventions were responsive to national context, capacities and available resources. UNICEF changed its programming to be responsive to contextual changes and when the program was causing tensions, as in the case of oversubscribing schools, they made adjustments.	There is strong evidence demonstrating that, during the evaluation period, UNICEF Pakistan focused on responding to a challenging series of natural humanitarian disasters by diverting resources to relief interventions, but nevertheless continued to tackle girls' education needs. While this was responsive to this context and these situations, girls' education was not at the forefront of the CO's programming during the evaluation period. Although UNICEF's programming priorities changed during this period, it did not constrain its activities focused on developing a shared understanding with partners, capacity development of government partners and influencing policy around girls' education.
	The underlying inferred theories of change behind UNICEF basic education and gender equality programming, CFS, was that a holistic and general approach to quality would improve access, quality and governance simultaneously. Apart from the criteria for selecting schools for support, gender equity and equality did not figure prominently in the theory of change.	There is no evidence that the Sudan CO had articulated theories of change around girls' education programmes. The strongest evidence for a theory of change was when staff spoke of combining efforts with other UN agencies or campaigns in order to reinforce their efforts.	There is little evidence of an explicit underlying theory or theories of change behind UNICEF's girls' education programming in Pakistan. Instead, programming design and delivery decisions seem to be driven by output and outcome targets linked to particular programmes.

Summary of Case Study Findings (cont'd)

Evaluation Question	Côte d'Ivoire	Nigeria	
<p><b>4.4 Clarity of results statements:</b> How well were the expected outputs and outcomes of UNICEF's targeted activities in girls' education defined? To what extent were UNICEF's objectives intended results realized?</p>	<p>The document review found that outputs and outcomes were measurable throughout the period, with a tendency to increase in number over time. While outputs in general were met, UNICEF outcomes were often not fully met.</p>	<p>At a programmatic level, the outputs and outcomes of girls' education interventions in Nigeria, were too abstract to be useful or measurable.</p>	
<p><b>4.5 Complementarity:</b> To what extent did UNICEF girls' education programmes complement programmes by other stakeholders (at global, regional and country levels)?</p>	<p>Recognising the government's central role in education service delivery, and UNICEF's support to its efforts, there is some evidence suggesting that UNICEF's approaches are complementary both in targeted education interventions and cross-sectoral initiatives.</p> <p>UNICEF-supported girls' education interventions were frequently complemented by programmes of other global and local stakeholders. There was stronger complementarity with government-provided programming than with that of other international development partners.</p>	<p>Some components of UNICEF's girls' education programmes complemented government-provided programming and other DFID programming, but overlapped with programmes of other stakeholders on the ground.</p>	
<p><b>4.6 Cross-sectoral arrangements:</b> In what ways was girls' education programming carried out within cross-sectoral arrangements (with Health, Nutrition, WASH, HIV/AIDS, Social Policy, etc.) and with what results? What efficiencies, capacities, and/or gaps, if any, were filled by taking a cross-sectoral approach?</p>	<p>UNICEF CO's support to girls' education in Côte d'Ivoire has been conceived as a multi-sectoral engagement, both in its theoretical outline and its implementation.</p>	<p>Collaboration between the education programme team and other CO programme teams on activities aimed at improving gender equality and other education outcomes for girls varied in frequency and intensity. Where it was sustained, efficiencies were both reported and observable.</p>	
<p><b>4.7 Positive or negative unintended consequences:</b> Were there any positive or negative unintended consequences in girls' education and gender mainstreaming work, and how were negative consequences mitigated?</p>	<p>During the evaluation period, anecdotal evidence suggests there were some negative unintended consequences of girls' education and gender mainstreaming efforts. Some of these have been addressed and others are unresolved</p>	<p>During the evaluation period, anecdotal evidence suggests there were both positive and negative unintended consequences in girls' education and gender mainstreaming. Some of these have been addressed and others are unresolved.</p>	

	Mozambique	Sudan	Pakistan
	The expected and outputs and outcomes from the CFS Initiative were defined to varying degrees over the evaluation period. When they were defined, only a few were found to have limited data to support the claim they had been realized.	The result statements were found to be weak and did not have strong logical statements about how change would occur.	At the programme level, outcome statements were vague and therefore difficult to measure. There is little reported evidence of achievement against outcomes, but UNICEF did report against quantifiable output indicators.
	UNICEF Mozambique participated in the education sector SWAp coordination mechanism. At field level, UNICEF was aware of the work of other. There were other international development partners but there was a low level of direct coordination among them and with the government partners.	UNICEF girls' education programmes frequently complemented programmes by other global initiatives and the GoS. There was strong evidence of UNICEF's girls' education program complementarity with the MoE. There was evidence of a lack of clarity and complementarity of UNICEF's programming and how it matched with other donors and NGOs.	We found strong evidence that UNICEF Pakistan worked closely with stakeholders, both government and non-government, and particularly with other UN agencies to ensure complementarity in girls' education initiatives.
	During the evaluation period, the education team carried out their girls' education programming in collaboration with other programming sections within the country office. The education section's strongest collaboration on school-level interventions was with the WASH section, while child protection was a strong partner in the Zero Tolerance Campaign.	There is strong evidence that there were cross-collaborations between girls' education programming and other streams such as WASH, health, etc. The coordination was seen by respondents overall as a positive result, but opportunities were opportunistic until the involvement of C4D campaigns in 2013.	UNICEF Pakistan has taken multiple cross-sectoral approaches to girls' education programming, particularly in the areas of menstrual hygiene and the provision of WASH facilities, which evaluation evidence showed had a significant impact on girls' attendance at school. The desk review of the CO Annual Report found no information about the results of these cross-sectoral interventions.
	There were few unintended consequences of girls' education interventions during the evaluation period that were articulated consistently across stakeholder groups.	During the evaluation period, anecdotal evidence suggests there were both positive and negative unintended consequences in girls' education for UNICEF. Some of these negative consequences have been addressed and mitigated such as the C4D campaigning for girls' enrolment. Others remain unresolved, such as tensions arising from site selection made by the MoE.	The evaluation found no evidence of unintended consequence (neither positive nor negative) of girls' education initiatives, but found evidence of unintended consequences impacting girls' education. There was no evidence to suggest that UNICEF has a systematic approach to measuring or reporting unintended effects or consequences.

Summary of Case Study Findings (cont'd)

Evaluation Question	Côte d'Ivoire	Nigeria	
<p><b>4.8 Effectiveness:</b> What type of education programme interventions and activities (advocacy, policy dialogue, capacity development) have effectively contributed to supporting the achievement of education parity outcomes for girls, and gender parity in education outcomes?</p>	<p>A combination of upstream and downstream (crisis response) interventions and strategies appear to support the achievement of gender parity and other education outcomes for girls. However, UNICEF's programme targets were incompatible with the programme-specific and annual reporting timeframes, which created unrealistic expectations for programme effectiveness.</p>	<p>A combination of upstream and downstream interventions and strategies appear to support the achievement of gender parity and other education outcomes for girls. However, UNICEF's programme targets were incompatible with the programme-specific and annual reporting timeframes which created unrealistic expectations for programme effectiveness.</p>	
<p><b>4.9 Scalability, sustainability:</b> To what extent have UNICEF supported interventions been scalable and/or sustainable?</p>	<p>During the evaluation period, some UNICEF-supported interventions, particularly policies and approaches, were scaled up and others showed promise for scaling, while some were still at piloting stage. Independent of the potential for scaling, there was little evidence that the interventions could be sustained by government alone.</p>	<p>Some UNICEF-supported interventions, particularly policies, were scaled and others showed promise for scaling. Independent of the potential for scaling, there was inconclusive evidence that the interventions could be sustained by government.</p>	
<b>Gender Mainstreaming</b>			
<p><b>5.1 Effectiveness:</b> Were UNICEF's approaches to gender mainstreaming in education in the time period effective in achieving the expected results?</p>	<p>Overall, the evidence is mixed. While there appear to have been important improvements in awareness and capacity (especially since the 2016 audit), the period preceding (2009-2015) was characterized by limited capacities, limited understanding of the very concept of gender (beyond targeted programming for girls' education), and limited institutional transfer of knowledge.</p>	<p>Within UNICEF and among external stakeholders, there was no shared understanding of what gender mainstreaming is, how to use it fully, or what successful gender mainstreaming looks like. Many mainstreaming interventions had little effect on gender equality or girls' education outcomes. One key gain during the evaluation period, however, was the successful strengthening of education management and information systems.</p>	
<p><b>5.2 Lessons learned:</b> What lessons has UNICEF learned about the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming and targeted approaches during the period of the MTSP (2009-2013), and to what extent were these incorporated into the Strategic Plan (2014-17), and Gender Action Plan?</p>	<p>UNICEF Côte D'Ivoire CO incorporated some of the lessons learned into successive programme cycles. On a macro-level, neither the situation nor girls' needs changed significantly over the evaluation period. As a result, changes at country level were only slightly different, but more focused on explicit advocacy efforts across the MTSP and SP periods.</p>	<p>Within UNICEF, the strongest notion of gender mainstreaming related to the collection and use of disaggregated data and the need for having strong education management and information systems. Those systems and the use of disaggregated data to inform girls' education programming improved over the evaluation period.</p>	

	Mozambique	Sudan	Pakistan
	<p>Of the interventions within the CFS approach designed to achieve gender parity in education outcomes, the most effective was the cross-sectoral collaboration with WASH. Overall, effectiveness of the initiative was low and most of the school system-based CFS components were discontinued.</p>	<p>UNICEF employed a number of interventions and activities to support education achievement and parity for girls. They supported C4D campaigns, provided supplies (materials, backpacks, and uniforms), promoted child friendly schools, led on teacher training, and helped created groups such as PTAs to support governance and enrolment of girls at schools. But there is little evidence, apart from anecdotally, about their effectiveness.</p>	<p>UNICEF Pakistan has delivered upstream and downstream interventions, supporting national and provincial education sector strategies, plans and programmes to promote girls' education. While there is a lot of evidence about the different types of girls' education programme interventions and activities, there is little reported evidence about their effectiveness apart from largely anecdotal evidence.</p>
	<p>The CFS approach and its constituent school-based interventions were not sustainable as a whole. Some elements of the programme were incorporated into the subsequent programming and have been scaled up nationally. However, gender is not a focus in that iteration.</p>	<p>UNICEF's interventions were largely found to be unsustainable. GoS's lack of spending on education led to a reliance on UNICEF financially and technically. Further, there was evidence that the interventions could not be sustained by government or NGOs, if UNICEF's support was withdrawn. There was little scaling up of initiatives. This was attributed to a lack of financial commitment by the GoS.</p>	<p>Overall, there is adequate evidence of the sustainability of UNICEF interventions, within the context and scale of those interventions. However, due to the size of the target population, sustainability and scaling-up are likely to remain a challenge and dependent on government resources and commitment, with considerable variance across provinces.</p>
	<p>The gender mainstreaming interventions that were most effective were the social mobilization and awareness raising for girls' rights through the Zero Tolerance campaign. The expected results of these interventions were not named at outset.</p>	<p>There is little evidence that UNICEF successfully mainstreamed gender into their education programs. CO Staff had inconsistent knowledge of gender and gender mainstreaming definitions, and knowledge on how to carry out gender mainstreaming in programming. Additionally, examples given of gender mainstreaming were inconsistent and weak. Lack of capacity (amongst MoE and CO staff) and usage of guidance was seen to inhibit achievement of gender mainstreaming.</p>	<p>From 2009 to 2015 there was a strong focus on girls' education in UNICEF programming in Pakistan, but gender mainstreaming was not, and still is not, particularly evident in girls' education programming.</p>
	<p>UNICEF Mozambique learned several lessons about the effectiveness of mainstreaming and targeted approaches at country level and incorporated those lessons into the design of interventions in the second Country Programme cycle and in post-2015 programming.</p>	<p>There evidence that UNICEF changed its programming to reflect lesson learning, especially to address the needs of the changing context. But there was not enough evidence to understand to what extent lessons were incorporated into on gender mainstreaming and its plans.</p>	<p>The evaluation found no evidence that UNICEF Pakistan CO learned from targeted approaches to gender mainstreaming during the MTSP that were subsequently incorporated into the Strategic Plan 2014 -17.</p>

# APPENDIX I: DESK REVIEW OF NESPS FOR CASE STUDY COUNTRIES

Gender-related references in NESPs 2009-2015 for 5 case study countries	<b>Mozambique</b> <i>Republic of Mozambique Ministry of Education – Education Strategic Plan (2012-2016)</i>	<b>Pakistan</b> <i>National Education Policy 2009 Ministry of Education Government of Pakistan (2009)</i>	<b>Côte d'Ivoire</b> <i>Plan d'Actions A Moyen Terme – PAMT Secteur Education / Formation (2012-2014)</i>	<b>Sudan</b> <i>Interim Basic Education Strategy Republic of Sudan Ministry of General Education (2012)</i>	<b>Nigeria</b> <i>Federal Ministry of Education 4-Year Strategic Plan Development Education Sector (2011-2015)</i>
<b>Global priorities:</b>					
CRC	0	0	0	0	0
CEDAW	0	0	0	0	0
Beijing Platform for Action	0	0	0	0	0
MDGs	2 mentions (1)	2 mentions	0	3 mentions	2 mentions
SDGs	0	0	0	0	0
EFA		14 mentions	0	10 mentions	1 mention
<b>National priorities:</b>					
UNICEF	5 mentions – footnotes & references only (1)	0	5 mentions	8 mentions	1 mention
Joint Sector Reviews	0	0	0	2 mentions	0
Situation Analysis	0	0	0	1 mention	0
Gender audits	0	0	0	0	0
Girls' education	0	0	Data disaggregated by sex	3 mentions	0
Gender analysis	0	0	0	0	0
Gender	52 mentions	8 mentions	0	16 mentions	0
Girls	NA	12 mentions	6 mentions to girls.		3 mention p.21, p26



## **PHOTO CREDITS**

**Page xvi:**

© UNICEF/UN0208027/DEJONGH

**Page 20:**

© UNICEF/UN0158305/Jean/Handicap International

**Page 33:**

© UNICEF/UN056313/Gilbertson VII Photo

**Page 92:**

© UNICEF/UN0486/Zaidi

**Page 105:**

© UNICEF/UN0231861/Njiokiktjien VII Photo

