

Evaluation Management Response Document

Region: ESAR

Office: Lesotho

Evaluation Year: 2019

Evaluation Title: Evaluation of Child Friendly Schools Implementation in Lesotho

Person In Charge For Follow Up to Management Response: Umasree Polepeddi

Overall response to evaluation

UNICEF Lesotho welcomes the final evaluation of the Child Friendly Schools (CFS) Implementation in Lesotho. The evaluation covered five OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability, coverage and coordination. Impact was not considered as this was covered in a recent global evaluation of CFS. CFS has been a part of the programming in UNICEF since 2006 though this evaluation was assessing the implementation of CFS in Lesotho since 2012, when CFS quality standards were developed. As shown in the evaluation, despite this long history CFS is not well integrated or implemented in Lesotho. Since the completion of this evaluation the new UNICEF global education strategy was published, which emphasises the importance of transitioning from 'Child Friendly Schools' to 'child friendly systems' in a recognition that UNICEF has been overly focused on inputs and processes and insufficiently focused on learning outcomes. UNICEF Lesotho is also shifting to a greater focus on learning and plans to use the findings of the evaluation to inform this effort. UNICEF Lesotho welcomes the final evaluation of the Child Friendly Schools (CFS) Implementation in Lesotho. The evaluation covered five OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability, coverage and coordination. Impact was not considered as this was covered in a recent global evaluation of CFS. CFS has been a part of the programming in UNICEF since 2006 though this evaluation was assessing the implementation of CFS in Lesotho since 2012, when CFS quality standards were developed. As shown in the evaluation, despite this long history CFS is not well integrated or implemented in Lesotho. Since the completion of this evaluation the new UNICEF global education strategy was published, which emphasises the importance of transitioning from 'Child Friendly Schools' to 'child friendly systems' in a recognition that UNICEF has been overly focused on inputs and processes and insufficiently focused on learning outcomes. UNICEF Lesotho is also shifting to a greater focus on learning and plans to use the findings of the evaluation to inform this effort. While the findings of the evaluation are useful to the project of building a child friendly system, most of the recommendations assume that CFS will continue to be implemented as a standalone program with increased resources. This will not be the case and UNICEF Lesotho plans to integrate key aspects of CFS as part of systems strengthening efforts and to strengthen some areas of CFS such as WASH in schools, and child protection in schools through our CSD and Child Protection programming, particularly in light of the new challenge of COVID 19. In a context where there is a shrinking fiscal space and reduction in funding for education with challenges such as COVID 19, and in light of the limited implementation of CFS at the school level, UNICEF Lesotho does not have the resources to continue to invest in CFS as a standalone programme within the MOET but will instead work with them and other partners to re-balance what has been done and learned to date and incorporate into future programming. Recommendations that will be implemented are those that relate to adjusting implementation strategy and pausing and reviewing the strategy with MoET partners. This was planned for 2020, but because of COVID 19 this has been postponed until 2021. UNICEF Lesotho agrees that the existing strategy of training principals is not effective and will instead focus on strengthening CFS principles in pre-service teacher training, and school monitoring systems through ongoing work on EMIS as well as continued focus on key pillars of CSF including HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support; safety protection and psychosocial care and support as well as WASH.

Planned Use of the Evaluation

There are three main areas in which the evaluation will be useful: 1. Adjusting the implementation strategy for CFS towards a more system level approach 2. Review of incorporation of learning environments, pedagogies and learning outcomes in pre and in-service teacher training to ensure they are in line with CFS principles 3. Development of EMIS data reporting, usage strategy for management and administrative purposes at national and district levels (incorporating key CFS pillars)

Evaluation Post

1. Adjusting the implementation strategy for CFS towards a more system level approach 2. Review of incorporation of learning environments, pedagogies and learning outcomes in pre and in-service teacher training to ensure they are in line with CFS principles 3. Development of EMIS data reporting, usage strategy for management and administrative purposes at national and district levels (incorporating key CFS pillars)

Recommendations and Actions

No.	Recommendations/Actions	Responsible Section (Action)	Responsible Person Name (Action)	Expected Completion (Action)	Mgt Response / Implementation Stage	Reason/Action Taken
1	Adjust implementation strategy, using "implementation drivers" to get CFS back on track. I.e. identify/cultivate capacity of a CFS "focal point" in each school (teacher) and district (inspector); as well as district technical & advisory committees. Use "stages of implementation" or a similar model to monitor progress & facilitate transition from one stage to the next.				Disagree	
2	Help schools analyse their needs, and resources to select CFS pillars they can pursue. Use this reality check as first step for schools to implement CFS. Tailor training of Principals/teachers to specific pillars and plan for the uptake of all 7 CFS pillars as/when feasible. Design in-service modules for each CFS pillar, so Principals and teachers are trained for specific pillars they will implement. Revisit earlier efforts that had resulted in curriculum changes and teacher manuals for CFS. Redesign training materials used for CFS in modular format with stand-alone modules for each of the 7 CFS pillars. Distribute these modules widely in schools as resource for future school-based refresher courses / peer learning. Put CFS in pre-service teacher education, so it is a routine part of initial training for all teachers.				Partially Agree	

2.0	Review of incorporation of learning environments, pedagogies and learning outcomes in pre and in-service teacher training to ensure they are in line with CFS principles	UNICEF,	Trine Petersen	6/29/2021	Cancelled	<p>The recommendations were not implemented due to insufficient funding. However, in collaboration with the Child Protection (CP) team at UNICEF Lesotho Country Office (LCO), efforts are now underway to develop a comprehensive proposal for a Safe Schools initiative. This initiative aims to incorporate key pillars of the Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) framework, ensuring a holistic approach to school safety and child protection. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is currently revising its inspection tools. This revision process is being guided by the principles of the CFS framework, ensuring that the tools extend beyond mere facilities and attendance checks. The new tools will adopt a more comprehensive lens, focusing on creating an environment that supports the overall well-being and development of children in schools.</p>
2.0	Develop online materials for CSF and upload onto Learning Passport	UNICEF	Trine Petersen	6/29/2021	Cancelled	<p>The recommendations were not implemented initially due to insufficient funding. However, in collaboration with the Child Protection (CP) team at UNICEF Lesotho Country Office (LCO), efforts are now underway to develop a comprehensive proposal for a Safe Schools initiative. This initiative aims to incorporate key pillars of the Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) framework, ensuring a holistic approach to school safety and child protection. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is currently revising its inspection tools. This revision process is being guided by the principles of the CFS framework, ensuring that the tools extend beyond mere facilities and attendance checks. The new tools will adopt a more comprehensive lens, focusing on creating an environment that supports the overall well-being and development of children in schools.</p>

2.0	National launch of CFS materials on Learning Passport	UNICEF	Trine Petersen	7/30/2021	Cancelled	The recommendations were not implemented initially due to insufficient funding. However, in collaboration with the Child Protection (CP) team at UNICEF Lesotho Country Office (LCO), efforts are now underway to develop a comprehensive proposal for a Safe Schools initiative. This initiative aims to incorporate key pillars of the Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) framework, ensuring a holistic approach to school safety and child protection. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is currently revising its inspection tools. This revision process is being guided by the principles of the CFS framework, ensuring that the tools extend beyond mere facilities and attendance checks. The new tools will adopt a more comprehensive lens, focusing on creating an environment that supports the overall well-being and development of children in schools.
3	Fund pre-service teacher training with one-off support to integrate CFS elements into the curriculum at Lesotho College of Education. Continue to fund in-service CFS training workshops based on the specific CFS pillar(s) that a school plans to implement at the time. Set up (with partners) a financing window for innovations like CFS; adding M.5 to the current M.20 per capita grant to schools.				Disagree	
4	Review/revise toolkits to include CFS baselines/targets with broad assessment scores for M&E. Agree realistic inspection/M&E schedule for District Inspectors, reflecting commitment of District Offices to deliver quality results on time to HQ (and UNICEF) Agree/invest in accountability system for inspectors to upload reports from electronic tablets to designated sites a timely manner				Partially Agree	
4.0	Development of EMIS data reporting, usage strategy for management and administrative purposes at national and district levels (incorporating key CFS pillars)	UNICEF	Trine Petersen	6/29/2021	Completed	Kindly note that EMIS consider some relevant information from CFS pillars (such as availability of inclusive WASH facilities), but not all.
5	Encourage school-to-school peer exchange on CFS success and organise annual competitions on implementing CFS. Offer Prizes that include training for capacity building to serve as peer trainers for CFS in a cluster of schools. Design advocacy campaign to accompany CFS implementation and build on current enthusiasm manifested in schools/districts across Lesotho. Tout improvements attributed to CFS in local/social media and mount campaign to target the private sector and agencies for support to schools doing CFS. Commission concept notes and discussion papers to highlight the connections and contributions of CFS to the ESSP and NSDP. Share these with officials working on policy for information/advocacy. Use advocacy campaign to build on enthusiasm for CFS and plan annual "show & Tell" workshops for inspectors to present reports.				Disagree	
6	Develop criteria for identifying competent leaders in schools and provide appropriate incentives (promotion/confirmation) that motivates them to continue with enthusiastic pursuit of CFS. Make annual cash award to an outstanding Principal in every district for "excellence" in CFS implementation Provide training to help schools use CFS to support other areas of need. Allocating age-appropriate tasks to learners (hand washing, clean compound, school meals) can lead to play-based learning and social/emotional learning. Use "stages of implementation" to develop a new monitoring and inspection model aligned to the CFS elements already built into the inspection template. Establish milestones to mark the successful transition from one stage of implementation to the next; and train Inspectors in the use of this new monitoring and inspection model for CFS.				Disagree	

7	Facilitate inclusion of CFS in secondary schools by investing in program design and roll-out of revised secondary curriculum.	Disagree	
8	Facilitate better coordination of education investments to build synergy and enhance efficiency / effectiveness of support from the development partners.	Disagree	