Fund for Documentation of Good Practice in Girls’ Education and Gender Equality

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UNGEI
United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative
I. Background
The United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) is a multi-stakeholder partnership committed to improving the quality and availability of girls’ education and contributing to the empowerment of girls through transformative education. UNGEI, as a designated flagship of Education for All (EFA), strives to support governments and the international community to deliver on the gender-related EFA goals and education related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on achieving universal primary education and gender parity in primary and secondary education. With the 2015 deadline to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) fast approaching, UNGEI firmly believes that the immediate education priority should be a focus on all girls learning and achieving.

One of UNGEI’s priorities for action is the identification of evidence based solutions and the sharing of good practice in promoting girls’ education and gender equality as part of its larger knowledge management function. UNGEI aims to act as a knowledge broker to strengthen a collective understanding of effective programming for girls’ education; and provide partners and stakeholders with access to tools and good practices, and foster greater connectivity between individuals and organizations working in the field of girls’ education and gender equality. UNGEI is committed to support regional and national partnerships to identify, document, share and promote good practice.

The proposed UNGEI Fund for Documentation of Good Practice Case Studies in Girls’ Education and Gender Equality (UNGEI Good Practice Fund) is designed as a catalytic fund to strengthen the evidence base through identification of good practice at the regional and country level. It aims to document a range of proven and promising interventions that have increased educational options and opportunities for girls. These may range from increasing access to educational opportunities to those relating to gender responsive teaching and learning approaches, improved gender relations in schools and education systems, and enhanced girls’ learning and achievement, including non-cognitive measures relating to self-esteem and leadership.
II. Purpose

The purpose of the proposed fund is to:

- Provide an opportunity for good practices to be systematically documented and shared within and between countries and regions, especially those which are “lesser known” among development practitioners;
- Demonstrate the diverse ways that organizations/actors are addressing girls’ education and gender equality; and
- Enhance our understanding of what works, and encourage adaptation of good practices across countries and organizations.

III. Scoping of Good Practice

The development literature abounds with references to “good/best/promising” practice and often these terms are used interchangeably and also refer to a varied set of definitional criteria\(^1\). For the purpose of this fund, we have opted to go with the nomenclature of “good practice” with a broad definition referring to well documented and assessed programming practices that provide evidence of success/impact and which are valuable for replication, scaling up and further study. It is distinguishable from “best practice” in that it implies that there is no hierarchy of methods, and that each situation requires a different approach. However, it includes “promising practice”, those with at least preliminary evidence of effectiveness in small-scale interventions or for which there is potential for generating data that will be useful for making decisions about taking the intervention to scale and generalizing the results to diverse populations and settings.

This is meant to be a “working” definition to provide us with a flexible and inclusive framework to identify, document and learn from the multitude of actors and organizations currently working to advance girls’ education and gender equality across the globe. With a clear focus on promoting girls’ education and gender equality, the Fund is interested in a range of interventions which have made a demonstrable difference in and/or hold the promise of improving girls’ participation, learning, and empowerment at the pre-primary, primary and/or post-primary/secondary level, including non-formal and alternative modes of delivery. It may be useful to prioritize, if relevant to country context, those practices which contribute to and strengthen UNGEI’s advocacy agenda\(^2\), which includes:

- a) Enhanced focus on marginalized and excluded groups;
- b) Reduction / elimination of school-related gender-based violence;
- c) Improved learning outcomes for girls; and
- d) Increased number of girls transitioning to secondary education and post-primary opportunities.

In particular, we are interested in interventions that further broaden and deepen our understanding of girls’ education and gender equality with an enhanced focus on both equality

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\(^2\) Refer to the UNGEI Policy Advocacy Agenda [here](#).
of opportunity to and equality of treatment in education. We want to focus on interventions which help us move beyond gender parity goals, understood as equal participation of girls and boys in all forms of education based on their proportion in the relevant age groups in the population, towards gender equality in education. The latter is critical in deepening our understanding of the sensitivities of working on girls’ education within a wider understanding of other complex social issues, recognizing that all girls are not disadvantaged in the same ways; and situating it within a social relational approach where girls and boys are not seen as distinct categories, but as members of a community whose lives are interdependent, underscoring the need for a robust gender analysis to frame the interventions.

Hence, it is desirable that the identified good practice should speak to one or more of the following approaches:

- **Targeted efforts to increase access for girls from social groups that continue to be disadvantaged** because of geography, poverty, social identity or physical ability; and with particular focus on targeted and sustainable measures relating to both demand and supply factors that are integrated with the schooling system as a whole.
- **Programs to increase girls and boys learning**, with a focus on gender-responsive pedagogy and learning environments, expanding subject choices, and/or monitoring mechanisms to support measurable changes in girls’ education and gender equality.
- **Education initiatives that are designed to empower adolescent girls**, and provide competencies or assets beyond the educational basics, in areas such as critical thinking skills and human rights values. In particular with a focus on gender rights, economic competencies, and/or abilities to take action towards personal and social transformation, including self-esteem and leadership; and promote strong networks that provide peer and adult guidance and safe spaces of support.
- **Investments leading to gender-aware reforms of education systems** including gender-responsive policies and building institutional capacity to ensure that the gender perspective is mainstreamed and integrated in educational institutions and systems (including monitoring and evaluation).
- **Initiatives aiming to address the structural roots of gender inequalities**: questioning norms and social rules that construct gender identities differently and locate them unequally and its associated manifestations in education; and instigating transformative social change through equal involvement of boys and men.

As we are well aware, certain outcomes, especially those related to institution and capacity-building and social change require a longer time horizon and hence we are also looking at identifying and documenting those practices which show the promise, if not demonstration, of contributing to the change in the long run.
IV. Criteria for Identifying Good Practice

The objective of the Fund is to identify and document good practices that have achieved outcomes for girls’ education and gender equality or hold the promise to achieve the same. In particular, this includes interventions that are not extensively documented already or are being implemented in a very different context and have the potential to provide new lessons.

Good practice in girls’ education and gender equality in this collection will be selected and prioritized based on selection criteria that will include the following:

1. **Relevance**: The good practice demonstrates a socio-culturally sensitive and economically appropriate response to the context and challenge of education delivery in a specific context as well as the identified needs and priorities of the target population.

2. **Gender analysis**: The good practice design and implementation reflects systematically on the linkages between gender relations and the issue to be addressed in education, with a focus on social norms, practices or beliefs and rules, policies or procedures that influence the options, opportunities and achievement of girls and boys and women and men in society.

3. **Monitoring and evaluation**: The good practice includes the presence and use of an effective M&E system which is able to demonstrate: a) impact on the intended group or system or organization of the intervention in measurable terms; or b) at least offer preliminary evidence of the effectiveness of the intervention; & or c) demonstrate potential for generating data based on the extent to which the intervention is effectively monitored and evaluated to assess performance and impact.

4. **Efficiency and cost-effectiveness**: The good practice indicates an efficient and effective use of resources in its implementation, and demonstrates the link between activities and results, actual or expected, in the lives of girls, women and or related to systems being strengthened.

5. **Participation and partnership orientation**: The good practice demonstrates a broader participatory and collaborative approach, involving a range of actors (civil society, private sector, and government, etc.) as well as girls and boys and men and women equally in leadership positions.

6. **Sustainability**: The good practice demonstrates elements of sustainability, including leveraging funds for continuation, securing policy adoption of an intervention or approach, or building capacity of actors to integrate the initiative into existing systems of service delivery -- whether government, academia, civil society, schools, communities or other - to ensure continued institutional and financial support.

7. **Replication**: Given similar conditions and circumstances, the good practice has the potential to be replicated in different contexts, within countries or outside.

8. **Lessons learned**: The good practice should facilitate learning and generating lessons that are relevant for dissemination and transfer in other contexts. It should be able to

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3 The criteria is informed by those outlined in the Commonwealth Secretariat guidelines for the submission of the Good Practice Award in Education, 2012 accessed here; & UN Women’s resources on good practice in gender mainstreaming which can be accessed here.
reflect and identify conditions that facilitated success, potential constraints in moving forward, and or provide additional knowledge that can inform broader thinking about girls’ education and gender equality.

While assessing interventions against the outlined criteria, the degree of rigor of each criterion will depend on whether it is identifying a proven or a promising good practice. Hence the criteria are defined flexibly and should be viewed as a set of suggestions against which to assess the appropriate level of rigor required on an individual case basis – initially through self-assessment and later through in-depth analyses.

V. Application and Submission Guidelines

5.1 Geographical Scope:
- The fund is meant to promote learning and exchange and hence is expected to include all regions and countries, with particular focus on the global South.

5.2 Eligibility Criteria:
- Organizations (not individuals), including education ministries at the national and sub-national level, schools, and national civil society organizations implementing programmes are eligible to apply as main applicants for the Fund.
- Organizations that are eligible to apply may use the funds to identify individual consultants to develop the case study on the good practice.
- Research Institutes and universities, national and international, are also eligible to apply, provided there is an understanding with the implementing organization on the documentation.

5.3 Application Process and Timeline:
- The deadline for the submission of the application is 30th November 2013. The application should be submitted using the accompanying Application Template. The proposals should be submitted to the UNGEI Secretariat at: modochjato@unicef.org
- Proposals should provide a brief justification of why the Good Practice is line with the criteria and propose a preliminary budget for documentation of the case study as required in attached application template (See accompanying Word Document for the Application Template).
- It is important to highlight that the grant only covers the costs related to the documentation of the intervention and does not include costs associated with the implementation of the intervention.
- The application review process will consist of the following:
  - A first pre-screening of applications will be done by the UNGEI Secretariat in order to verify that the applications are in line with the requirements stated in the present call for proposal;
– Proposals will be assessed and selected by an assessment team comprising of select members of the UNGEI Global Advisory Committee (GAC); and
– Care will be taken to ensure that that there is adequate geographical representation among the grant recipients.

- During the application review process, applicants may be contacted to provide further clarifications and to discuss some aspects of their proposals, if required.
- Selected organizations will be informed before 30th January 2014.
- The grants are expected to be utilized and case studies completed within 6 months of the receipt of funds.

VI. Good Practice Case Study Format
In keeping with UNGEI’s varied audience, which includes bi-lateral and multi-lateral development partners, academics, government, and Civil Society Organizations at the global, regional, and country level, the case studies should use an accessible writing style.

Submissions will be accepted in English or French.

The final submission should include:

1. **Written Case Study** – approximately 18-20 pages long excluding annexes; and
2. A **2-4 pages analytical overview** of each case study using a standard template to summarize the core elements of good practice.

In case organizations would like to complement the written documentation with an innovative video format, the Fund is open to such experimentation.

Case studies are expected to balance information and details related to the good practice with sound analysis to create a knowledge base. The good practices should demonstrate “what works” and also “what makes strategies work” in particular contexts, and what this could mean in other contexts.

The case studies may be based on secondary review of data and/or supplemented by primary data collection involving small surveys, focus group discussions, and interviews according to the need and context. The different research documentation and methodological approaches will need to be factored into the estimated costs in the proposal.

Case study guidelines and a common template for the analytical review will be shared with the grant recipient at a later date to support the final submission.