



UNITED NATIONS GIRLS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

UNGEI



F O R U M

Vol. 6 No. 2 Sept 2006

Quarterly Newsletter of the ESAR Basic Education and Gender Equality Section.



Theme: Sector Wide Approaches (SWAs) in Education

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ADVANCE HUMANITY



Editorial

Volume 6, Number 2 of the UNGEI FORUM, ESAR Education Newsletter is focused on the theme of Sector wide approaches (SWAp) in Education.

Sector wide approaches have been adopted in education (and other sectors, especially health) more prevalently in Africa, especially in the Eastern and Southern Africa, than anywhere else in the world. Many countries started developing SWAp in the mid or late 1990s and many more have adopted them since. UNICEF is clearly committed to the SWAp approach and has become a very important player even if the approach is quite a challenge to us as well.

For Girls' Education and UNGEI, the new operating field of SWAp and PRSPs offers great opportunities to accelerate progress and scale up Girls' Education. We need to document lessons learned and good practises more rigorously to inform the policy level decision making and systemic change, and develop concrete tools for gender analysis, gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting.

The first article of the UNGEI FORUM gives background information on how the UNICEF capacity building on SWAp has progressed in ESAR in just a few years, from Regional Education SWAp Workshop in 2003 to developing, pilot



testing and translating the training Resource Pack in 2006. The next big steps will be the SWAp training to be conducted in French and Portuguese in Rwanda in September 2006 and eventually national level training.

In the second article, the lead SWAp consultant introduces the SWAp evaluation study and highlights some of the key lessons and challenges that emerged from it. He also gives insight on what the SWAp operating context means to Girls' Education. There is also a short summary of the Evaluation of the Role of UNICEF in Education SWAp in ESAR.

The main feature of this newsletter is an in-depth introduction to the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme and its Gender and Education Investment Programme by a Kenyan expert. The final article of this volume is by a UNICEF Education Officer who narrates a personal professional experience and major lessons from participating in SWAp process in Education.

See also the information resources that introduce interesting reading materials and internet sites.

In this issue...

ESAR and SWAp Activities	9
UNICEF, SWAp and Girls' Education.....	4
Business as Usual or Making a Difference?	5
SWAp and Girls' Education in Kenya	6
Sector-wide Approach to Programming:	
A Personal Professional Experience in	
Education in Rwanda	11
Reading Materials	14
Interesting Websites and	
Information Resources	15

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ESAR and SWAPs Activities

Aster Haregot summarizes how the UNICEF's capacity building on SWAPs has progressed in ESAR in just a few years.

By Aster Haregot, Education Advisor

Sector wide approaches (SWAPs) are increasingly prevalent in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) and UNICEF has been and remains a key player in the education sector of national plans. UNICEF has made significant contributions within SWAPs and is a highly valued partner.

Swap is a process which facilitates comprehensive, coherent and effective policy, planning and implementation focused on achieving sustainable results. It is based on the fundamental principles of national leadership and ownership. It has the potential to make development assistance more effective – enhancing partnership, coordination and integration.

In August 2003, UNICEF held a Regional Education SWAP workshop for staff and partners (Government, Development Partners and NGOs) from ten ESA countries, and also UNICEF staff from HQ and two Asian countries. The main purpose was to build capacity, share experiences and consider implications for UNICEF.

Two key initiatives originating from the 2003 workshop and from the Regional Management Team (RMT) were a) to undertake an evaluation of the role of UNICEF in education SWAPs in ESA and b) to develop a SWAP Resource Pack, to review the compliance of SWAPs with CRC and CEDAW and the extent of engagement in gender mainstreaming including partnerships for girls' education (UNGEI).

The SWAP evaluation was conducted in 2005 and finalized in March 2006. Simultaneously the SWAPs Process Resource Pack was developed and Training Workshop on the Sector Wide Approaches Resource Pack was conducted in Nairobi in June 2006 for eleven Eastern and Southern African countries, namely Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The key objectives of the training were (1) to share the study on the role of UNICEF in Education Sector Wide Approaches in Eastern and Southern Africa, (2) to offer capacity building for ESAR UNICEF Education Officers and (3) to have a greater understanding of how to embed gender issues and UNGEI in Education SWAPs.

The training workshop was facilitated by John Virtue, the lead consultant for SWAPs in ESAR. The modules were in return enriched by the discussions of the workshop participants, especially in terms of suggestions for strengthening HRBAP and including Gender Budgeting. The KESSP Kenya experience was referred to as a best practice during the workshop.

Next steps will be for UNICEF ESARO to translate the RP into French and Portuguese and to hold a joint French and Portuguese training workshop in Rwanda at the end of September 2006. This workshop will be conducted for both UNICEF staff and counterparts.



Participants at the first Training Workshop on the Sector Wide Approaches Resource Pack, 12-15 June 2006, Nairobi, Kenya.

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UNICEF, SWAps and Girls' Education

UNICEF's SWAp consultant introduces the SWAp evaluation study and highlights some of the key lessons and challenges that emerged. He also envisions what the SWAp operating context means to Girls' Education.

By John Virtue, Consultant

In 2005, UNICEF commissioned a study on its role and effectiveness within education sector wide approaches (SWAps) in Eastern and Southern Africa, including research in seven countries. The adoption of SWAps is probably more advanced in the region than anywhere else and UNICEF is a significant player. The study highlights examples of good practice including country cases. Areas include: assisting with the development of sector plans and specific policies and strategies; facilitating inter-sectoral policy dialogue, strategy development and implementation; and supporting mainstreaming and scaling up of key strategies, often through pilot initiatives, including gender related issues.

Whilst UNICEF is strongly committed to SWAps, it is widely acknowledged, both internally and amongst external partners that SWAps present considerable challenges for UNICEF and that performance and effective engagement has been mixed. In particular, the study highlights the need to a) improve the focus of its assistance at the country level including the quality of piloting for policy development and scaling up, b) enhance the quality and relevance of policy analysis and development within sector-wide and national policy contexts, c) accelerate implementation of measures to simplify procedures in the context of UN reforms and the harmonization and alignment agenda, d) take action on a number of human resource development areas including specialist recruitment, capacity development and review of staff roles and organizational structure in respect to project management/policy work, and e) clarify the 'corporate' position in respect to SWAps and the new development and aid agenda, including revision of internal guidelines and communication/dissemination to external partners.

So what does this have to do with Girls' Education? In short, a lot, not only because SWAps are increasingly the key operating context, but more importantly because they provide significant and greater opportunities for accelerating progress in scaling up girls' education. Sector plans typically have a strong focus on gender equity objectives and outline strategies for increasing girls' access and improving the quality of girls' education. The most significant outcome has been considerable gains in access including a reduction in the gender gap. These gains are most significant in countries which

have effectively adopted SWAps, through improved prioritization and sequencing of strategies and resources for implementing girls' education policy priorities in a systemic manner.

Whilst most countries have made progress towards gender parity, significant inequities remain. Most notably, a large proportion of countries are unlikely to meet the Millennium Development Goal of gender parity. Girls' drop out and repetition rates generally remain high and furthermore, limited progress has been made in enhancing gender equality (moving beyond equity to empowerment). Overall, it is widely considered that gender initiatives have not had significant systemic impact beyond increasing enrolments.

So, how can UNGEI effectively contribute to accelerating progress in girls' education with SWAps? A key challenge is whether innovative and small scale initiatives can be taken to scale and how? A UNICEF evaluation of the Africa Girls' Education Initiative¹ concluded that there are few, if any, examples of successfully scaling up initiatives. Furthermore, a recent World Bank paper on strategies for girls' education in Africa² suggests that, despite substantial knowledge and dissemination of the importance of girls' education and the problems associated girls' participation, evidence on strategies for improvement is severely lacking. What are the implications of this?

Whilst it may be easier said than done, it will be necessary to undertake more specific and rigorous lesson learning and evaluation that can better inform policy and strategy development. The challenge with any pilot initiative is to consider how it can be taken to scale within a sector wide context and this necessitates rigorous analysis of how strategies and approaches might be sustained outside of the protected and artificial project environment. Key issues related to this include cost and sustainable financing in relation to efficiency and competing priorities, and also institutional capacities for implementing strategies.

Governments, cooperating partners and other stakeholders recognize the potential comparative advantage and expertise that the 'specialist' and leading organizations within UNGEI (e.g. UNICEF, FAWE) can

¹ UNICEF. *Changing the Lives of Girls: Evaluation of the African Girls Education Initiative*. UNICEF, New York (2004).

² *Girls' Education in Africa: What Do We Know About Strategies That Work?* World Bank, Washington (2004)

bring. They want to hear high quality evidence-based lessons relevant to policy development in the area of girls' education. It is suggested that this will require moving beyond an approach which is often characterized by, or tends towards scale implementation of targeted project initiatives with insufficient focus on policy development for more systemic change. It will also be necessary to seek a balance between time and effort spent on advocacy, much of which tends towards simplification

and re-iteration of accepted findings, with strategically focused policy analysis and development.

To conclude, the ongoing development of SWAp provides a key opportunity for scaling up girls' education - but will not guarantee it. It will be important that UNGEI takes a key role in facilitating a more strategic, coordinated and systematic approach, to ensure that the opportunity is not lost



Participants at the second SWAp Resource Pack training in French and Portuguese, 26-29 September 2006, Kigali, Rwanda.

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Business as Usual or Making a Difference?

This is an extract from the Executive Summary of the SWAp evaluation study in Eastern and Southern Africa. Detailed recommendations are outlined in the main text of the study and are summarized in its section 12. You can obtain the study from UNICEF ESARO at tvallandingham@unicef.org.

This study suggests the need for a combination of strategies to enhance the effectiveness of UNICEF's engagement in SWAp. Key recommended strategies include:

- Scaling down project implementation and improving the focus and quality of demonstration projects for policy development and scaling up
- Enhancing the quality and relevance of policy analysis and development within sector-wide and national policy contexts
- Accelerated implementation of ongoing programme simplification measures and review the potential for further simplification - in the context of UN reforms and the harmonization and alignment agenda
- Human resource management initiatives including specialist recruitment, capacity

development and review of staff roles and organizational structure in respect to project management/policy work

- Clarification of the UNICEF position on SWAp and the new development and aid agenda, including internal guidelines and communication/dissemination to external partners

It is recognised that there are factors, including organizational issues that are likely to pose considerable challenges in implementing these strategies. Not least, the nature of UNICEF's funding sources constrains the extent to which a move away from project implementation can be realized. There is limited flexibility in the use of Other Resources, and limited funding through Regular Resources, to support a shift from project implementation to policy work. It will be

important to negotiate agreements with funding partners that allow for greater flexibility in the use of Other Resources, including in some cases, 'educating' funding partners on new development and aid approaches.

Organisational incentives are primarily geared towards project management operations, including recognition and rewards related to spending and managing internal systems, as opposed engaging in external processes. Also, the requirement for attribution, visibility and 'branding' (seen as inappropriate within SWAp) is inconsistent with principles of ownership and partnership. UNICEF will need to tone down its visibility and profile raising activities, at least at the country level.

Finally, whilst many of the recommended actions are unlikely to be easy, a 'business as usual' approach is not a viable option. The fact that UNICEF recognizes many of the issues outlined in this study, and has outlined commitment and broad strategies to address them, provides a strong basis for improving its engagement. In particular, the UNICEF Medium Term Strategic Plan 2006-2009, outlines a number of important commitments which are consistent with the findings of this study and will help to guide the organisations role in SWAp and the new aid environment.



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SWAp and Girls' Education in Kenya

This article is an in-depth introduction to the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP) and its Gender and Education Investment Programme by a Kenyan SWAp expert.

By Dr. Gituro Wainaina, University of Nairobi Enterprises and Services Limited, wainainagituro@yahoo.com

Introduction

Provision of education is fundamental to the success of any Government's overall development strategy. Furthermore, education aims at enhancing the ability of individuals to preserve and utilize the environment for productive gain and sustainable livelihoods. Second, development of quality human resource is central to the attainment of national goals for industrial development. Third, the realization of universal access to basic education ensures equitable access to education for all children, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Fourth, education is necessary for the development and protection of democratic institutions and human rights.

From the foregoing, the Kenya Government at independence in 1963 recognized that education is a basic human right and a powerful tool for human resource and national development. The Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 and subsequent policy documents have reiterated the importance of education in eliminating poverty, disease and ignorance. The Government is committed to ensuring the right of every child to an education through its ratification of the convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, and hence its commitment to providing Education for All (EFA). As a result, the Government, communities, partners and other stakeholders have made substantial investment in the education sector over the years. For example, Government allocation to the sector

as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has increased from about 2 percent at independence to about 7 percent in 2006/07.

Kenya's high average economic growth rate of 6.5 percent up to the late 1980s, coupled with a vibrant Harambee spirit, led to notable achievements in the education sector with significant improvements in student enrolments and a high quality education at all levels. The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) increased from 47 percent at independence to 105.4 percent in 1989 at the primary education level; and from 2 percent to 30 percent at the secondary education level over the same period. These gains enabled the country to build a sizeable human resource base.

In 1990s, however, these achievements declined. For instance, the GER declined to 87 percent and 21 percent in 1999 for primary and secondary levels, respectively. This may be partly attributed to the declining economic growth, high cost of education and increasing poverty, currently, about 56 percent of Kenyans live below the poverty line. The decline could also in part be explained by the internal inefficiencies inherent in the management of the sector. However, with the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003, coupled with improvement in economic growth (GDP grew by 5.8 percent in 2005) the GER has risen to 102 percent in 2005, but the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) is still low at about 87 percent. Despite the high enrolments in Standard I after the introduction of FPE, recent data indicate some dropouts in Standards II, III, IV and V.

Weakness in Project Implementation

Project implementation within the Government of Kenya and in particular the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOES&T) has been poor¹. The completion rates for various projects within the Ministry have been a major challenge. Some of the challenges include:

- Tendency by institutions planning and proposing projects without the Ministry's approval, which may lead to financing difficulties in future;
- Proposal of new projects without having completed the stalled ones;
- Delays in flow of funds from development partners to the Ministry leading to some projects being left uncompleted after the planned period is over;
- Fragmentation and duplication of projects;
- Lack of coherent policy and prioritization;
- Project-driven agenda and resource allocation;
- Inadequate attention to strategic/systemic issues;

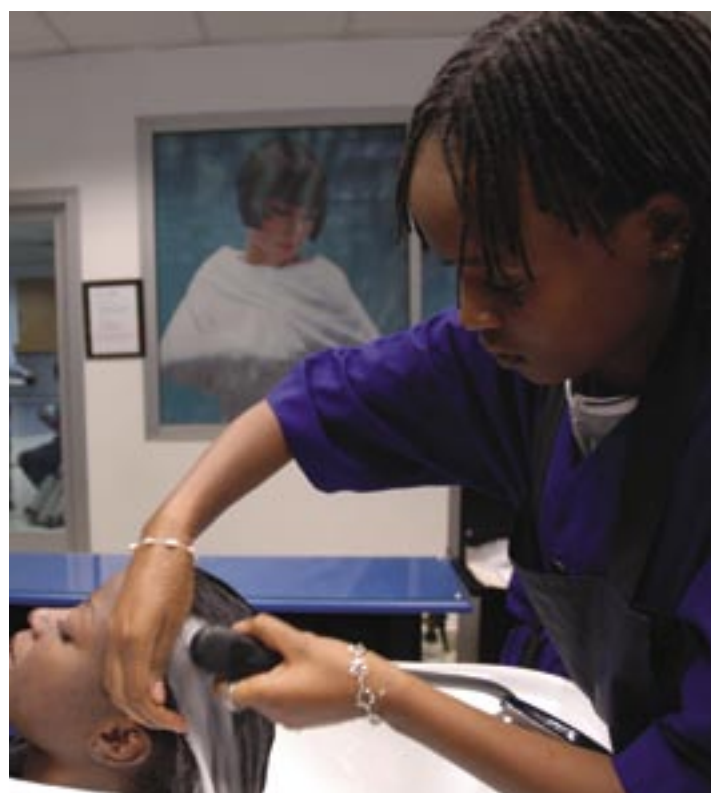
- Parallel systems failing to address local capacity;
- Fragmentation - separate PIUs and procedures, duplication and lack of overall view;
- Donor driven - own agendas, distortion of spending priorities, over designed and unsustainable projects;
- Weak impact at sectoral level - islands of excellence in a sea of failure;
- High transaction costs; and
- Weak or little long-term impact.

As a result, educational outcomes have over the years been negatively affected despite high investment in education by the Government in partnership with the various stakeholders and because of this, the education sector still faces several challenges. Some of these challenges relate to access, equity, quality, relevance, efficiency in the management of educational resources, cost and financing of education, gender and regional disparities, and teacher quality and teacher utilization.

Purpose of This Paper

From the above therefore, the purpose of this paper is to:

1. Give an overview why MOES&T has adopted Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) programme planning; and
2. Provide a synopsis of the Gender and Education Investment Programme (IP) as stipulated in Kenya Education Sector Support Programme.



¹ See various MPEs and in particular the 2006 MOES&T MPE

Why Adopt Sector Wide Approach in Education

A SWAp can be defined as all significant funding for the sector and supports a single sector policy and expenditure programme, under Government leadership, adopting common approaches across the sector and progressing towards relying on Government procedures for all funds². It is a process of engaging all stakeholders in order to attain national ownership, alignment of objectives, harmonization of procedures and approaches and offers a coherent financing arrangement. In addition, a SWAp process involves broad stakeholder consultations in designing a coherent and rationalized sector programme and establishment of strong co-ordination mechanisms among donors and between donors and the Government. A SWAp is therefore an approach to support a country-led program for a coherent sector in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

There are a number of benefits of adopting SWAp especially in the education sector. Through SWAp, 'we simply must do a better job in aligning our processes with the development priorities and institutions of our borrower countries. SWAp will help us to do this'³. Some of the benefits of adopting a SWAp include:

- Stronger country ownership and leadership;
- Coordinated and open policy dialogue for the entire 'programme' (beyond a ring-fenced 'project') – genuine partnerships;
- Scaling-up benefits by focusing on the entire program and applying common fiduciary/ safeguard standards;
- More rational and efficient resource allocation;
- Strengthening of country's capacity, systems and institutions at a feasible pace and phasing;

- Reduced fragmentation/duplication (reporting and transactions); and
- Greater focus on results (rather than on inputs or transaction controls).

As a result, we achieve greater impact on the sector as a whole leading to enhanced development impact.

However, for a sector to embrace and adopt a SWAp, there must be some qualifying criteria. There must be:

- Existence of a comprehensive sector policy framework;
- Explicit framework for partnership;
- Existence comprehensive expenditure framework of an annual sector expenditure program or Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF);
- Explicit strategy for strengthening management systems and implementation capacity; and
- Macro-economic linkages.

In 2005, MOES&T adopted SWAp. However, before adopting a SWAp, the Ministry developed a comprehensive sector policy framework through a consultative process with all stakeholders in education. In November 2003, the Ministry in partnership and collaboration with all the stakeholders in education and training organized a National Conference on Education and Training to address challenges facing the education sector. Stakeholders mandated the Ministry to develop a new policy framework and implementation strategies for the education and training sector that will ensure the provision relevant and quality education and training to all Kenyans. Based on the recommendations of the conference, several studies undertaken on the sector, Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) for wealth and employment creation and Millennium Development



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² Mick Foster, 2000, "Experience with Implementing Sector Wide Approaches", ODI

³ James Adams, OPCS Vice President, World Bank

Goals (MDGs), the Ministry developed a Sessional Paper No 1 of 2005 on a Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research. Together with Sessional Paper No 1 of 2005 and education sector review, Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) was developed. The ESSP provided vision, mission, mandate and the strategic objectives of education sector in order to address the challenges the sector was facing.

To build on the success of FPE, the Ministry realized that it was critical to undertake a sector-wide development programme to ensure that other sub-sectors are strengthened alongside primary. Through a SWAp process, the Government, development partners and other stakeholders in education developed KESSP. The KESSP was developed around six thematic areas that were identified by Ministry and other stakeholders as essential in order to enhance access, equity and improve quality and relevance of education. Within each of these thematic areas, 23 investment programmes have been developed focusing on the sector as a whole and fits within the broader framework of national policy framework as set out in the ERS and the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 On a Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research. The implementation of KESSP is designed to be in line with MTEF and annual budget cycle. It is intended to 'operationalize' the budget for prioritized programmes, which when accomplished will ensure that the goals and objectives spelt out in the policy documents are attained.

The overall aim of MOES&T's SWAp is to develop and secure funding for KESSP, which will be the basis upon which the Government, individuals, communities, the private sector, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and development partners, will jointly support the education sector during the period 2005/06 to 2009/10. Through SWAp, duplication and inefficient use of resources, which often occur when many projects and programmes are implemented without adequate co-ordination and a clear long-term and sector-wide development strategy, will be significantly reduced. This will ensure that the scarce resources are invested in programmes that will deliver equitable and quality education and training to all Kenyans.

Gender and Education Investment Programme

Equal access of girls and boys to primary and secondary education has been identified as a key measure of progress towards gender equality. The Kenya Government, being a signatory to major international conventions and agreements on human rights and gender equality, has therefore committed itself to pursuing



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gender equality in all aspects of development and putting in place measures to redress the existing inequalities. Although the introduction of FPE in 2003 has created greater opportunities for boys and girls to enrol in schools, gender disparities are still observed, particularly in Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASALs), rural areas and urban slums, and generally in performance and transition rates. Disparities have also persisted in secondary and higher levels of education. The realization of the girls and women's empowerment through education has been impeded by a number of factors such as cultural and religious attitudes and practices, infrastructural, inadequate policy guidelines, poverty, HIV/AIDS, community awareness as well as lack of adequate female role models especially in the rural areas and male role models in the urban schools.

In 2003, MOES&T developed a gender and education policy to provide a framework for planning and implementation of gender responsive education sector programmes. The policy highlights key gender concerns in education such as disparities in enrolment, retention, and transition rates, negative socio-cultural practices and attitudes, which inhibit girls' access, learning environments that are not conducive to girls, stereotyping in learning materials and in class teaching, drop out of girls due to pregnancy and early marriages, among other issues. The policy recognizes gender equality as central to the achievement of EFA and proposes a number of strategies to address gender concerns in education. These include making the learning environment conducive to both boys and girls, promoting gender sensitive curricula, strengthening the capacity of both parents and education personnel at all levels to address gender issues, and making monitoring and evaluation systems more sensitive to gender issues.

In order to address the gender issues the MOES&T, in partnership with related Government Ministries/ Departments, development partners, stakeholders and civil society, has made efforts to improve the state of girls and women through the various strategic interventions. For example, the first two years, 2005 to 2007, forums will be organized to facilitate discussion, development, finalization and dissemination of the policy. Mass media will be used to inform the Kenyan public about the policy and its implications for girls and women's education. The implementation of the policy will be monitored through gender audits, with a scorecard produced and disseminated each year to provide feedback to the public.



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At the same time, MOES&T proposes to address the social and physical constraint that girls face in accessing education within the next five years (2005 – 2010). Investments will be made in mobilizing the support of communities, developing/improving girl-friendly boarding facilities, motivation and empowerment of girls to stay in school and addressing issues of drug abuse, child labour, etc, that reduce participation for both girls and boys. School feeding will be used as an important strategy for improving girls' enrolment in schools. In addition, the Ministry will develop a gender-friendly environment where girls, and boys, in some communities, participate and perform well in education with particular focus on mathematics, science and technical subjects. The MOES&T will therefore invest in teacher training for gender responsive and child centred and interactive training, operational research and innovative teaching methodologies based on the child's environment and developing and using low cost or no cost teaching materials. All these initiatives will cost the Government and other partners KShs 483.9 between 2005/06 and 2009/10.

Challenges in the Implementation of KESSP

The KESSP is in the second year of implementation and over this period, it has faced and faces some challenges. However, some of these challenges are being and will be addressed as the implementation of the programme progresses. Some of the challenges include:

- Strong political will, leadership and financial commitment;
- Capacity especially at the school and district levels;
- Nurturing partnerships with civil society and private sector;
- Effective planning, coordination and accountability frameworks;
- Clear sector policy and financial frameworks;
- Strong partnership between government and agencies;
- NGOs reluctance for financial partnership with the Ministry;
- Active participation of NGOs and the private sector;
- Focus on achieving EFA/MDGs, with a clear focus on quality of education;
- Maintaining discipline and focus on educational outcomes;
- Flexibility in financial modalities;
- Plan for post-primary education and training;
- Support of basic education, especially by development partners at expense of higher education;
- Joint Review Missions – some development partners are still on 'our project';
- Selecting priorities and deciding trade-offs;
- Selecting performance indicators; and
- Monitoring, evaluation and progress reporting and learning from experience.

Conclusion

Kenya can be seen being at the stage of 'flexible' SWAp as opposed to a 'full' SWAp - a full SWAp implies common systems and partnerships are well developed and hence change from project to direct budget support. Although a coherent sector strategic framework that has been led and developed by the Ministry under the support of several stakeholders exists, it is at the early development of a SWAp. To support this process, development partners have indicated financial support through pooled (basket) account. However, there is need for all development partners to align their processes with the development priorities and institutions of client countries and SWAps will this. The SWAp gives the opportunity to respond to client demand, to align processes with the client's as well as broadening the focus to whole sector programmes and hence scale up the impact of the development which should lead to a global partnership that works towards a world free of poverty.

Sector-wide Approach to Programming: A Personal Professional Experience in Education in Rwanda

A UNICEF Education Officer narrates her personal professional experience and major lessons from participating in SWAp process in Education in Rwanda from 2002 to 2004.

By Cecilia Baldeh, Education Officer, UNICEF Zimbabwe

This article is an attempt to document some key lessons from my experience in participating in a SWAP process in education in the new Rwanda from 2002 to 2004. First, investments of large amounts of money would not yield any significant benefits for children if government capacity to plan, lead and implement is lacking. Secondly, SWAP did not reduce transaction costs for me in the two years that I was involved, nor did it seem to do so for government counterparts. Investing in capacity strengthening for effective engagement in SWAP is important. The ESAR effort to develop a SWAP Resource Pack and to train EPOs in SWAP was long overdue. Third, UNICEF will be more effective in a SWAP environment if it has a realistic focus on a few key results pursued at scale supported by in-depth policy knowledge on those few key result areas. Making UNDAF work can facilitate a smoother transition from agency-specific projects to more broad-based partnerships. Fourth, maintaining macro-policy presence is crucial but is even more rewarding when policy development can be systematically informed by reality. So investing in more effective decentralised information and data systems and documenting and sharing good practices during critical policy making moments can be important in helping partners make informed policy decisions on a regular basis.

My introduction to SWAP came about through a series of visits to UNICEF Kigali by a DFID education adviser who was based in the UK. Each time the adviser visited us we discussed the overall situation of children and women and the situation of education in particular. Reports were shared and for an agency like UNICEF with a strong fundraising strategy, disappointments were experienced each time the visitor came, talked and left with no funding for UNICEF assisted programmes. Finally one day I asked the question:

Are there any opportunities for funding UNICEF-assisted programmes from DFID?

“Well we are only exploring the feasibility of investing in education sector reform” he responded. This exploration

took months to complete but in the end, the donor indicated interest to support the Ministry of Education “in a major way”. This was communicated to UNICEF in one of the UNICEF/MOESC programme review meetings. I then began in my mind to assess the implications of this support and how UNICEF could best contribute to the reform process. At this time, we had been developing the EFA Plan which from all indications ran the risk of being sidelined by the development of an Education Sector Support Plan. Safeguarding the EFA Plan and ensuring that the substance of the ESSP was drawn from the EFA Plan became a major pre-occupation for the members of the EFA Steering Committee which included UNICEF.

I had never been involved in a SWAP process before. Therefore the first thing I did was to browse the UNICEF INTRANET for official guidelines. However, the guidelines were inadequate for the practical questions I had on the nature and process of multi-partner engagements; on the different aid modalities; what to expect from the donors who would be engaging through budget support and at the same time aggressively mobilizing all others to pool resources for the ESSP; what changes to make on our cooperation with government and at what stage of the cycle; whether to scale down projects to match RR or to continue to talk about and attempt scaling up of school and community-based initiatives in order to use these to inform policy.

Many questions remained unanswered. So to keep UNICEF engaged in the SWAP process, I relied on my professional competence in education policy and programming and what we were learning from the field. One step at a time, I provided inputs whenever and wherever they were needed by SWAP partners. This was more of a survival strategy than functioning from an educated position on SWAP. However, we survived as some key elements gave us a comparative edge: a) having contributed both financially and technically to the EFA Planning process and being aligned to sector priorities; b) a good knowledge of the education system, an appreciation of government capacities and

the situation of education in general. But effective engagement in SWAP needs more than a survival strategy. After my SWAP training earlier this year, I came away thinking that had we been properly trained or oriented on SWAP in 2002, we would have been more effective in making the contributions we made.

One of the justifications for the SWAP process is that it can reduce transaction costs for government. While this may be true in the long-term, my experience is that it is not the case in the short and medium term. As I learned by doing while balancing between SWAP and project management, I felt I was learning something

new. I saw SWAP as an opportunity to scale up and achieve greater impact of UNICEF-assisted programmes. But in hindsight, I think we could have been more effective partners had we fully anticipated the costs both in terms of time and financial resources. The ESAR capacity development activities will strengthen UNICEF participation in SWAP processes.

In Rwanda, government could have benefited from a capacity development project which could have easily prepared them to fully own and drive the SWAP process. But this was not entirely the case. The capacity development project funded by the lead donor represented a lost opportunity to prepare the Ministry of Education's policy makers and planners for their leadership roles in SWAP. It would have been helpful if the capacity development project included a pre-SWAP capacity assessment supported by a capacity development strategy relevant to the needs of the



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education sector leadership, (among others) particularly in policy analysis, strategic thinking and how to lead SWAP processes.

When the lead donor indicated interest in supporting the education sector, we had just completed drafting the EFA Plan and a review of the girls' education project being funded through the AGEI. With the new proposal to go sector-wide, we needed to harmonize and align existing projects within the emerging sector-wide framework. We needed to ensure that the Norwegian funded Girls' education project, (which was actually part of a five-year Africa-wide programme) continues but as an integral component and aligned to the EFA Plan and subsequently the multi-donor funded Education Sector Strategic Plan. The first challenge I faced in seeking this harmonization was the misguided view that Girls' Education was not a priority because there was now gender parity in enrolment. Even where the gender gaps in completion and performance persisted, the lead donor felt it was no longer necessary to invest in gender disparity reduction. This was to change later with a change of internal policy but not without a loss of time, resources and energy.

On the issue of harmonization and predictability of resources, there were resources coming in for example from UNICEF OR, from the World Bank and from other bilateral donors that were not captured in the overall SWAP envelope in the education sector as some of the donors retained project-based or parallel bilateral financing arrangements. The ESSP was only pegged to confirmed resources and did not take account of unanticipated/unpredictable resources such as those that were expected to come from UNICEF/OR or from the WB poverty reduction strategy credit. This meant that UNICEF could only indicate RR and confirmed OR resources, making it difficult to convince anyone that we

could support a comprehensive and scaled up response in any given sub-component on a sector-wide basis. At the time, pooling was not an option. UNICEF OR needs to be more predictable. Being focused on a few key strategic results supported at scale with strong technical skills and knowledge base on child rights issues should help us retain a seat on the policy table.

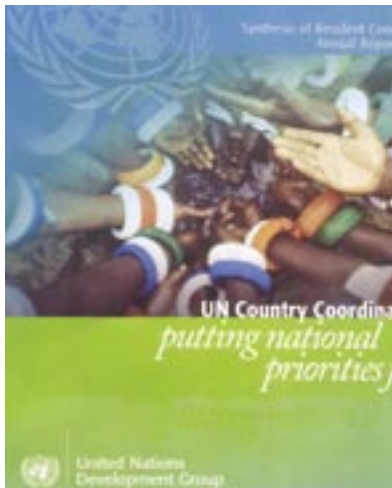
The first donor meeting to define our partnership principles and overall coordination /partnership framework was for me the first attempt by the donors to level the playing field, to accept that different partners are guided by their own organizational policies and therefore need to negotiate and build a consensus around issues that contradicted their organizational policies and procedures. However, while we were able to agree broadly on the parameters of our cooperation, making these agreements work needed policy changes which were not possible immediately. For example, while the project-based cash advance financing modality (of UNICEF) was accepted as one of the financing options, it was not favoured. The preferred option was a pooling modality for which we had guidance not to pool because of the need for accountability to donors. The irony was that the same donors who provided OR were the same ones calling for financing modalities that made it impracticable for UNICEF to be an effective partner within a SWAP framework.

In conclusion, I would argue that UNICEF ESAR is now better prepared to support its EPOs through the evaluation, SWAP Resource Pack and the SWAP training started in 2006. The global SWAP guidelines should be informed by the outcomes of the evaluation. Education Project Officers should be re-named Education Officers to do away with the stigma associated with "projects".

Reading Materials

By Teija Vallandingham

1. *Synthesis of Resident Coordinator Annual Reports 2005. UN Country Coordination: putting national priorities first. United Nations Development Group.*

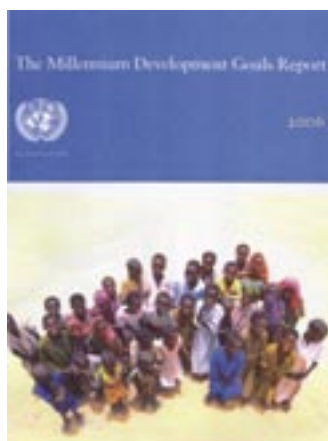


The Synthesis of the Resident Coordinator Annual Reports 2005 is now available. Learn what UNCTs have been doing to align their efforts to national development priorities and results including the MDGs. Download your own copy from: <http://www.undg.org/index.cfm>

The synthesis report is drawn from the 2005 Resident Coordinator Annual Reports which are prepared by UN Country Teams (UNCTs) under the leadership of Resident Coordinator. It focuses on the work UNCTs are doing together in the coordination of operational development activities.

2. *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2006.*

The new Millennium Development Goals Report 2006 has been released. The report presents the latest assessment on how far UN Member States have come, and how far they have to go in reaching the MDGs, in each of the world's regions. It is based on a master set of data compiled by an Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals Indicators led by the UN Secretariat's Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Learn more and subscribe to the MDGNet News Update through: <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=269274>, and <http://www.undg.org/content.cfm?id=80>



3. *Finland and the Human Rights-Based Approach to Development. Final Report. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. Ramboll. March 2006.*

Retrieve from: www.ramboll-finnconsult.fi/images/hrb_study_report.pdf

This report supports the implementation of the new development policy, a rights-based approach that the Government of Finland adapted in 2004. The study aims to review and analyze what implications the rights-based approach has for the Finnish development cooperation. The study involved two case studies in projects in Nicaragua and Ethiopia and used both field work and desk studies on policy, programme planning and evaluation documents as a method.



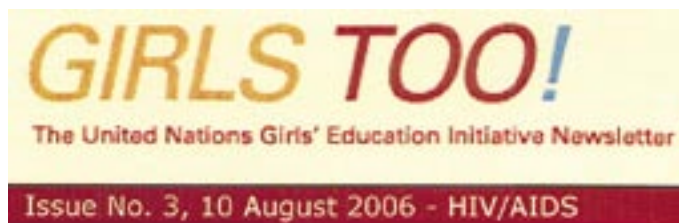
Some of the findings are:

- Development should deliberately comply and advance human rights principles. This requires that strategies, methodologies and styles of development work are based on and advance human rights principles. It is not enough to work on a relevant thematic area or sector, as Finland's experiences in Ethiopia and Nicaragua inform, but there is need to focus on the key duties that should be performed in relation to key manifestations and causes. The finding is that new and trendy modalities of aid such as SWAps and DBS are not conceptually human rights-based. HRBA as a broad strategy demands capacity development at all levels of society, on both the supply and demand sides of human rights enjoyment.
- In terms of development policy, there is enough in the country's development and human rights policies to make its development cooperation demonstrably human rights-based. Also, the HRBA insists on the performance of duties at all societal levels and therefore effective decentralization is central to realization of well being through this approach.
- The new aid modalities that are not human rights-based present an opportunity to influence shifts towards the HRBA for other development cooperation partners. The dilemma of how to facilitate the human rights-based approach in new funding modalities such as DBS and SWAps can be turned into a challenge for change, and done e.g. through multilateral arrangements and participation.

Interesting Websites and Information Resources

By Teija Vallandingham

1. GIRLS TOO! The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative Newsletter.



GIRLS TOO! is a monthly electronic newsletter sent by the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). The newsletter delivers news on progress in achieving Education For All goals, features partners' profiles, highlights partners' activities and informs about upcoming events.

GIRLS TOO! is part of a broader initiative of GirlsEd-Net, an online knowledge network that aims to facilitate dialogue and information sharing among UNGEI partners and those working on girls' education.

To read the latest newsletters or sign up to receive them, visit:

http://www.ungei.org/listserve/index_903.html

2. OECD Websites. Building Partnerships for Progress.



http://www.oecd.org/document/15/0,2340,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html

http://www.oecd.org/department/0,2688,en_2649_3236398_1_1_1_1,00.html

On these websites one can easily find latest information and recently published reading material on Aid Effectiveness and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in several languages.

3. Convention on the Rights of the Child Web pages on the UNICEF Website.

<http://www.unicef.org/crc/index.html>

This site on Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is part of the UNICEF website. It is an exclusive source of practical information on the Convention. The site focuses on UNICEF's mission to advocate for protection of children's rights, and includes information on the history of the CRC, its two optional protocols, the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, a broad range of initiatives in relation to ratifying and implementing the CRC, and links to other relevant websites.

4. A new UNICEF intranet site: Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls

The new "Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls" intranet site has been launched.

Access to the site can either be from the intranet Home Page (<http://www.intranet.unicef.org>), where it is listed under "Updates and Ongoing Priorities", or from the Programming Home Page, at <http://www.intranet.unicef.org/pd/genderequality.nsf>.

The site will facilitate access and exchange of information on policies, programme, partnerships and advocacy that produce results for gender equality. It also provides updated information regarding current global debates on gender equality issues within and outside the UN, as well as on UNICEF's contribution to UN inter-agency work. The site can be used to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in policy and programme development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Events Calendar, late 2006

1. CFS Schools for Africa Capacity Development Workshop II; Maputo, Mozambique; August 21-24, 2006
2. The Regional Education Emergency Training; Kampala, Uganda; September 12-15, 2006
3. Education SWAPs Resource Pack Training in French & Portuguese; Kigali, Rwanda; September 26-29, 2006

Staff on the Move

1. ESARO has a new Regional Education Advisor, Dr. Yumiko Yokozeki who will be aboard soon.
2. Margarita Focas Litch has joined the Madagascar Office as an EPO.
3. Yeshi Haile has joined the Kenya CO as a Project Officer, Education and is the acting Head of Education.
4. A.K.M. Kamaluddin, the Head of Education, Kenya CO has retired.
5. Akihiro Fushimi from Ghana CO has joined the ESARO Education Team as a Project Officer, Schools for Africa.
6. Nadi Albino has moved from Lesotho CO to the South Africa CO as an Education Officer.
7. Bernard Batidzirai is the acting Head of Education in Lesotho CO.
8. Tomoko Shibuya, Asst. Education Programme Officer (JPO) is working in the Burundi CO.
9. Yuko Kusamichi has joined the Swaziland team as a JPO.
10. Botswana CO has a new Asst. Programme Officer, Education: Othata Obed Batsetswe.

Coming out Soon:

