UNGEI’s vision

“A world where all girls and boys are empowered through quality education to realize their full potential and contribute to transforming societies where gender equality becomes a reality.”

Adopted at the UNGEI Global Advisory Committee Meeting
Kathmandu, Nepal
13 June 2008
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<tr>
<td>AGI</td>
<td>Adolescent Girls Multilevel Vulnerability Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANCEFA</td>
<td>Africa Network Campaign on Education for All</td>
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<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<td>ASPBAE</td>
<td>Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education</td>
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<td>Camfed</td>
<td>Campaign for Female Education</td>
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<td>CIES</td>
<td>Comparative and International Education Society</td>
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<td>CSW</td>
<td>Commission on the Status of Women</td>
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<td>DFATD</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada</td>
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<td>EAP</td>
<td>East Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>ESA</td>
<td>Eastern and Southern Africa</td>
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<td>FAWE</td>
<td>Forum of African Women Educationists</td>
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<td>GAC</td>
<td>Global Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>GID TWG</td>
<td>Gender, Inclusion and Disability Technical Working Group</td>
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<td>GEC</td>
<td>Girls’ Education Challenge</td>
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<td>GEFI</td>
<td>Global Education First Initiative</td>
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<td>Girls’ Education Movement</td>
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<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
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<td>ICPD</td>
<td>International Conference on Population and Development</td>
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<td>IDGC</td>
<td>International Day of the Girl Child</td>
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<td>IIEP</td>
<td>International Institute of Educational Planning</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>IMO</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>PAA</td>
<td>Policy Advocacy Agenda</td>
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<td>PTA</td>
<td>parent-teacher association</td>
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<td>SA</td>
<td>South Asia</td>
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<td>SAARC</td>
<td>South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation</td>
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<td>SACMEQ</td>
<td>Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality</td>
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<td>SAIEVAC</td>
<td>South Asian Initiative to Eliminate Violence against Children</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
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<td>SRGBV</td>
<td>school-related gender-based violence</td>
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<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<td>United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>WCA</td>
<td>West and Central Africa</td>
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Letter from the UNGEI Steering Committee

*We are pleased to share the Annual Report for the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) for 2013.*

The year 2013 was an important year for UNGEI. We reflected upon what our global policy priorities should be in the lead-up to 2015 and beyond. During the annual face-to-face meeting of the UNGEI Global Advisory Committee (GAC), held in New York during April 2013, we deliberated along with invited experts and endorsed our Policy Advocacy Agenda (PAA), which focuses on four key strategic priorities. These include:

- An enhanced focus on marginalized and excluded groups;
- The reduction and elimination of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV);
- Improved learning outcomes for girls; and
- Increased numbers of girls transitioning to secondary education and accessing post-primary opportunities.

The PAA has helped to provide an analytical framework as well as a strategic focus to our work. It is facilitated in no small measure by our new governance, which was agreed to by the GAC and implemented in 2013. The new governance framework, with its emphasis on flexibility and decentralized functioning, induction of new GAC members, an expanded Steering Committee, effective task teams, and empowered secretariat and regional focal points has made the partnership stronger and more agile.

Building on the recommendations of the 2013 GAC meeting, in this year’s report we have introduced a new section highlighting GAC member organizations’ key contributions in advancing UNGEI’s mandate. In addition, alongside country case studies that demonstrate the diverse ways in which UNGEI collaborates and partners at the national and sub-national levels, we have also included a section on Partnership at Work. This section is an attempt to illustrate UNGEI’s partnership approach through a focus on a key thematic issue that connects global, regional and national efforts within a coherent framework. This year’s focus is on addressing SRGBV. We hope that the additional information provided in the report better reflects our work with and through our global, regional and national partners, and also strengthens our mutual accountability across the partnership.

Some of UNGEI’s global key activities highlighted in the report include:

- Co-hosted ‘A girl’s right to live without fear’ as a side event to the 2013 Commission on the Status of Women;
- Released our statement on girls’ education and gender equality at the global consultation on post-2015 education goals in Dakar in March 2013. UNICEF and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) led the consultation and were supported by Canada and Germany;
- Joined France in leading the Global Partnership for Education’s (GPE) thematic working group on Strategic Objective 2 on girls’ education, and coordinating the development of the accompanying implementation plan;
- Helped drive a series of global and regional discussions on SRGBV, including a new strategic partnership with Education International, as well as regional events in Bangkok and Dakar to raise awareness of the issue;
- Launched the UNGEI Fund for the Documentation of Good Practice to strengthen the evidence base through identification of proven and promising interventions that have increased educational options and opportunities for girls in countries;
Active regional and country networks and partnerships were effectively supported through exchange of best practices in girls’ education, technical support, sensitization of traditional, religious and women leaders, and raising awareness on gender equality in education; and

Recorded a boom in global engagement through the UNGEI social media platform for a second consecutive year, recording a 67 per cent increase in Facebook interaction (13,000 followers) as well as marked increase in subscribers to Twitter (7,600 followers).

UNGEI regional and country networks and partnerships are active and effective across sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia (SA), and East Asia and the Pacific (EAP). Successes include:

- The Nepal Girls’ Education and Gender Equity Network successfully championed for the inclusion of free and compulsory quality education and gender equality in education in the draft Education Act;
- A Technical Working Group on Gender, Inclusion and Disability was created through a Ministerial Decree in Lao People’s Democratic Republic;
- Community engagement and ownership in the Niger were strengthened through creation and capacity-building of 16 Mothers’ Associations, 16 parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and 16 decentralized school committees across the country; and
- The ‘Tuseme’ (‘Let us speak out!’) girls clubs continue to expand and engage, habilitating more girls and young women across Eastern and Southern Africa to stay in school and go further with their education.

Despite our efforts, there is much to be done in terms of girls’ education. UNGEI was launched in 2000, when more than half of the children out of school were girls. Although progress has been made in many countries, that reality still holds true as a result of persistent barriers (including practices such as child early forced marriage) that prevent girls from accessing school or completing their education. In 2011, 57 million primary-school-age children (54 per cent of girls) were still out of schools. If recent trends continue, in sub-Saharan Africa, the poorest girls will not catch up until 2086. The world is unlikely to meet the target of universal primary education by 2015 and girls, especially those from vulnerable groups, will continue to be the most excluded.

As the discussions around the successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) pick up momentum along with urgency of intensifying efforts to meet the yet unmet MDG targets, we are working on building a strong and effective UNGEI to take forward the agenda on girls’ education and gender equality.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our partners and champions, whose support and work enable UNGEI to make a difference in girls’ education worldwide. The members of the GAC and the Steering Committee strongly believe in the power of UNGEI networks and partnerships to find innovative solutions to the barriers that girls face in accessing and completing their education.

Sincerely,

UNGEI Steering Committee Members:

Adaleide Sosseh, ANCEFA (African Network Campaign on Education for All)
Maki Hayashikawa, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
Randi Gramshaug, Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation)
Vanya Berrouet, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD)
Yona Nestel, Plan International
UNGEI: AN INTRODUCTION
UNGEI is a multi-stakeholder partnership committed to improving access to and quality of girls’ education and contributing to the empowerment of girls and women through transformative education. It includes diverse group of stakeholders, including multilateral and bilateral development partners, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), inter-governmental organizations, regional civil society organization networks, academia and youth organizations.¹

UNGEI firmly believes that the immediate education priority should be a focus on all girls learning and achieving in safe and supportive learning environments. Its overall goal is to contribute to the achievement of gender equality in education through collective advocacy, coordinated action, knowledge sharing and capacity building at the global, regional and country level. An investment in girls’ education is integral to virtually all aspects of development and economic progress and it may well provide the highest return on investment available in the developing world.

UNGEI was launched in 2000 to support the MDGs and Education for All (EFA) Framework of Action to deliver on their girls’ education and gender equality goals. The UNGEI partnership is committed to:

- **Policy impact through collective advocacy and coordinated action.** UNGEI’s current policy advocacy priorities include an enhanced focus on girls and boys belonging to marginalized and excluded groups; elimination of SRGBV, improved learning outcomes for girls, and increased transition of girls to secondary education. UNGEI has deepened and expanded its reach to establish a regional presence in Western and Central Africa (WCA), Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA), EAP and SA. Furthermore, according to a global UNICEF survey, more than 50 countries across all regions have links to UNGEI.² UNGEI also supports the GPE Strategic Objective 2 on girls’ education at the global and country level.

- **Effectiveness through knowledge exchange, sharing of evidence-based solutions, and learning.** UNGEI promotes the exchange of knowledge and experience between practitioners, policymakers and researchers. It promotes the collection and use of evidence on girls’ education and gender equality to strengthen programming and guide investments.

- **Strengthening partnerships and collaborative approaches.** UNGEI is increasingly acknowledged as the partner of choice at the global and regional level. It works actively to improve coordination among global, regional and local initiatives for greater impact. It promotes partnerships and a collaborative approach to advance girls’ education and gender equality. At the country level, it actively advocates for and facilitates civil-society involvement in education-sector policy and planning. It is committed to promoting learning between partners and building capacity for effective advocacy for girls’ education and gender equality.

The governing body of UNGEI is the **Global Advisory Committee** (GAC), which provides leadership and guidance on UNGEI’s goals and operational plans. GAC members also act as advocates and ambassadors for UNGEI in global and regional forums, as well as provide technical leadership through their participation in task teams. The Steering Committee (SC) includes five GAC members who represent the different stakeholder groups in the partnership under the leadership of a Chairperson. The SC provides leadership for the regular functioning of the partnership, along with monitoring and quality assurance functions against the planned results and outcomes. The UNGEI Secretariat plans, leads and coordinates the work of the partnership on a daily basis, and engages in coordination and

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¹ See Annex 1 for a list of UNGEI partner organizations.
² See Annex 2 for a list of countries with links to UNGEI based on UNICEF Country Office Annual Reports for 2013.
outreach activities to ensure that girls’ education and gender equality remains central to the development policy agenda.

UNICEF is the lead agency for UNGEI and also a member of the GAC. It hosts the UNGEI Secretariat. UNGEI’s Regional Focal Points provide leadership at the regional level, support country partnerships and are the bridge linking the global to the regional and country level, bringing emerging issues and critical perspectives from the field.
GOAL: UNGEI contributes to the achievement of girls’ education and gender equality through collective advocacy, coordinated action, knowledge sharing and capacity building at the global, regional and country levels.

UNGEI Outputs

- **UNGEI Action Tools**
  - UNGEI Fund for Collaboration and Capacity Development
  - UNGEI Knowledge Management Strategy
  - UNGEI Fund for Documentation of Good Practice Fund
  - UNGEI Internal Knowledge Sharing Platform

- **Policy Advocacy Agenda**
  - Enhanced Focus on Marginalized and Excluded Groups
  - Reduction/ Elimination of School-Related Gender-Based Violence
  - Improving Learning Outcomes for Girls
  - Increased Number of Girls Transitioning to Secondary Education and Accessing Post-Primary Opportunities

- **Regional Focal Points**
  - Eastern/Southern Africa – West/Central Africa – East Asia/Pacific – South Asia

- **UNGEI Secretariat**
  - Head of Secretariat
  - Technical Staff
  - Communications Staff
  - Administrative Staff

- **UNICEF**
  - Host Agency
  - Lead Agency

- **Steering Committee (SC)**
  - (up to 5 members of the GAC, including a rotating chair)

- **Global Advisory Committee (GAC)**
  - (up to a maximum of 10 organizational members)
    - Multilateral agencies, bilateral agencies, inter-governmental agencies, inter-agency networks, private sector and related foundations, civil society organizations and networks, academia

- **Governance Structure**

- **Core Funds (UNICEF)**
  - Project Funds (Various)

- **Organizational Contributions**

- **Primary Responsibilities**

- **Funding**

- **Fulfillment of Human Rights**
  - Convention on the Rights of the Child
  - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

- **Partnership**
  - Need for strategic collaboration and technical skills to raise awareness and strengthen systems for girls’ education and gender equality

- **Policy Mandate**
  - Mandate to deliver on gender-related Education for All (EFA) and education Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

- **Core Values**: Equality and Non-Discrimination, Democratic Governance, Decentralized Functioning
STRATEGIC CONTEXT
Since 2000, the world has witnessed increased access to and participation of boys and girls in primary education, and education has emerged as the millennial success story. EFA and the MDGs have been effective in mobilizing resources and guiding investments in education, including girls and boys belonging to marginalized communities. Yet progress continues to vary across regions and countries and within countries; in fact, the rate of progress has slowed considerably in the past few years.³

More than half of the 58 million out-of-school children live in sub-Saharan Africa and in conflict-affected countries. Globally, there were 31 million girls out of school in 2011, 55 per cent of whom are expected never to enrol. By 2015, many countries will still not have reached gender parity. Currently, only 60 per cent of countries have achieved parity in primary education and 38 per cent in secondary education. Among low-income countries, just 20 per cent have achieved gender parity at the primary level, 10 per cent at the lower secondary level and 8 per cent at the upper secondary level.

Gender, poverty and location continue to be the most significant factors in defining children’s participation in education. The poorest children are most likely to be out of school: children and adolescents from the poorest households are at least three times more likely to be out of school than children from the richest households. Girls are more likely to be out of school than boys among both primary and lower secondary age groups, even for girls living in the richest households. On average, if recent trends continue, universal primary completion in sub-Saharan Africa will only be achieved in 2069 for all poorest boys and in 2086 for all poorest girls.

While increased access to schooling is a necessary first step, the current ‘learning crises’ is looming large over the sector. More than one in four children in developing regions entering primary school is likely to drop out. Some 250 million children of primary school age cannot read and write. Nearly 126 million youth (aged 15 to 24) lack basic reading and writing skills; more than 60 per cent of them are young women.

Increasing primary enrolment rates in most countries are also contributing to mounted pressure on secondary education in developing countries and also come with higher costs. In most countries, as aid flows have focused more on primary education, households have been largely left to bear the cost of secondary school— from tuition fees and school uniforms to time away from employment and household chores – and this is reflected in the low transition rates for girls and boys belonging to poor and marginalized groups. This is being further exacerbated within a context of declining donor aid to

³ The statistical trends and numbers are distilled from the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/2014 and the MDG Reports for 2013 and 2014.
education. In recent years, aid to basic education fell from US$6.2 billion in 2010 to US$5.8 billion in 2011 in general; in sub-Saharan Africa it declined by 7 per cent between 2010 and 2011.

Across the educational continuum of access and learning, the most marginalized girls in particular continue to be excluded from education. Within families and communities, sociocultural values and norms persistently discriminate against girls attending and remaining in school. Even in areas where they enrol in equal numbers, girls are more likely to drop out before reaching secondary education: child marriage and early pregnancy, gender-based violence in schools and home, and the burden of domestic labour keep girls from realizing their right to education. Emerging evidence on the manifestation, magnitude and incidence of SRGBV indicates that its impact on girls’ participation and educational outcomes is far worse than acknowledged earlier. Several studies have found that violence against girls in schools is a considerable barrier to girls’ learning. It is estimated that globally at least 246 million girls and boys suffer from school-related violence every year.\(^4\)

Within the school and classrooms, barriers to girls completing their education and learning include gender disadvantages often implicit in existing curricula materials, teaching and learning processes, assessment systems, and teachers’ expectations of students combined with the lack of female teachers and effective role models. While low levels of learning are endemic, girls – especially poor rural girls – learn far less than boys, limiting their overall opportunities in life.

As we move closer to the 2015 deadline, the discussions around the successor framework to the MDGs have also picked up momentum, along with a thrust on intensifying efforts to meet the MDG targets. There is a general consensus that investing in girls is both smart economics and the right thing to do. Most proposals currently on the table retain the importance of primary schooling and educational access with gender parity, and demand a stronger focus on the quality and equality in learning as well as secondary education. For girls’ education in particular, advocates increasingly acknowledge the need for robust evidence to inform the framework and call for a multi-sectoral response that goes beyond education. There is an emerging demand to develop clear gender-equality indicators that are able to capture changes in the attitudes of women and men to violence, shifts in social norms, and experience of empowerment to monitor progress. There is a call for commitment to girls’ education and gender equality goals to be backed by adequate resources as well as institutional capacity and political will at all levels – global and national. The next couple of years are crucial to determine the priority accorded to girls’ education and gender equality, and to ensure that the recommendations are transformative enough to bring the change we want.

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UNGEI made significant progress over the past year in advancing its mandate to accelerate momentum on girls’ education and gender equality and ensure the centrality of girls’ education in the development agenda.

Highlights during the reporting period include:

Outcome 1: Policies to promote girls’ education and gender equality supported

- The members of the GAC collectively defined UNGEI’s new Policy Advocacy Agenda\(^5\) (PAA) to inform our strategic engagement and work in the run-up to 2015 and beyond. The PAA priorities include: a) enhance the focus on marginalized and excluded groups; b) reduce and eliminate SRGBV; c) improve learning outcomes for girls; and d) increase the number of girls transitioning to secondary education and accessing post-primary opportunities. In particular, we made progress in advancing the discussions on SRGBV globally as well as at the regional level.\(^6\) An important milestone was a consultation and design workshop involving leading experts on advocacy campaigns targeting gender-based violence and violence against children, including Education International, the White Ribbon Campaign, Plan International, UNICEF Stop Violence Campaign and 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. Following the workshop, UNGEI entered into a strategic partnership with Education International to raise awareness of the issue.

- UNGEI continued to engage with and leverage key initiatives and partners to promote and amplify a collective voice for girls’ education globally. Key platforms for advocacy in 2013 included the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the Dakar Global Consultation on the post-2015 goals for Education, the Learning for All Ministerial meetings, the Annual Conference of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), and the International Day of the Girl Child (IDGC), among others. Building on its Dakar Declaration in 2010, UNGEI released a statement on its vision for girls’ education and gender equality at the global consultation on post-2015 education goals.

IDGC was an important advocacy opportunity for UNGEI. In New York we partnered closely with UNICEF, the lead agency for IDGC, in organizing panel discussions and launching a social media campaign on the theme of innovating for girls’ education. Through the collective efforts of partners, the hashtag #dayofthegirl reached more than 1.9 million individuals, and more than 104 million people were reached on Twitter. Some notable influencers who took part in the social media campaign included Queen Rania, Priyanka Chopra, Melinda Gates and the Gates Foundation, and the White House. A dedicated space was also created on the UNGEI site to highlight programmes and projects by UNGEI partners on girls’ education and gender equality. At the regional level, UNGEI partnerships marked IDGC with advocacy events that have also been documented here.

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\(^5\) Please see the text box on page 19 for more information.

\(^6\) For more information on progress on the SRGBV priority, please consult the section Partnership at work: Advancing the policy agenda on SRGBV.
• Joining others in celebrating the Malala Day United Nations Youth Takeover held on 11 July 2013, UNGEI supported the participation of three youth leaders from the Gambia, Pakistan and Uganda during the events in New York. UNGEI, along with Plan International, also supported capacity building of more than 100 youth delegates through a skill-building session on grass-roots campaigning and advocacy.

• UNGEI provided leadership as co-chair of the GPE Thematic Working Group on Strategic Objective 2 on girls’ education and coordinated the development of the GPE Implementation Plan against Strategic Objective 2. UNGEI also initiated the process of developing a tool to support gender-responsive education plans.
Staying connected with UNGEI

UNGEI’s communication and knowledge sharing through its various digital platforms continues to increase in both quantity and quality – firmly placing UNGEI in the girls’ education community as a recognized knowledge centre for resources on girls’ education and gender equality.

Website

- In 2013, UNGEI renovated its web space, creating an improved user experience. Most notable is the ability to easily access all UNGEI resources (blog site, social media platforms, videos and photo galleries) from one central point.
- The UNGEI e-resource library was strengthened with more than twice as many new resources uploaded through contributions from partners. A new thematic category on gender-based violence was also added.
- Country profiles of UNGEI national partnerships and current statistics on girls’ education for countries with ties to UNGEI are also featured on the site for easy referencing.
- UNGEI Global Advisory Committee members were also featured in a short video highlighting the benefits of girls’ education and what we are collectively working to achieve through this partnership.

Podcasts

UNGEI launched a new podcast series in collaboration with Beyond School Books entitled, ‘Changing the World for Girls’. The first podcast was released at the end of year and spoke to two Brookings Institution scholars on the need to address barriers to girls’ education, such as child marriage, poverty and negative stereotypes.

Blog site

UNGEI’s blog site was also redesigned in 2013, with regular postings contributed by partners to mark international days, launch new reports, or shed light on specific issues. Highlights from 2013 include:

- ‘Getting at the Everyday Reality of Violence in Girls’ Lives’, Nora Fyles on the occasion of International Women’s Day
- ‘Child Friendly School Clubs and the Potential for Gender Equality: Notes from the field’, Chemba Raghavan, UNGEI Regional Focal Point for East Asia and the Pacific
- ‘The New Standard = All girls learning and achieving’, Joint blog by Nora Fyles (UNGEI), Yona Nestel (Plan International) and Koli Banik (Global Partnership for Education), released as a follow-up to the Learning for All Ministerial meetings in Washington, D.C., April 2013
- ‘No’ to Child Labour in Domestic Work’, Simrin Singh (Senior Specialist on Child Labour, International Labour Organization) on the occasion of the World Day Against Child Labour
- ‘We Can No Longer Wait: Now is the time for action!’, Modou Nyan UNGEI Youth Delegate from the Gambia, reflects on attending Malala Day celebrations at United Nations Headquarters in New York
- ‘After the Doors are Opened: Why teachers in rural Africa are key to girls’ success in school’, Brooke Hutchinson, Co-Director of the Campaign for Female Education (Camfed) USA, as part of the line-up of blogs to commemorate the International Day of the Girl Child

Social media

UNGEI had a very successful year in advancing global engagement through its social media platform, recording a 67 per cent increase in Facebook interaction as well as a marked increase in Twitter subscribers – more than 7,600 and 13,000 followers, respectively. UNGEI social media followers are informed of relevant campaigns, activities, events, infographics, reports and other resources on a daily basis. The platforms are rigorously used to disseminate information from UNGEI and its partners.

Mailing list

Members of the UNGEI mailing list, consisting of more than 2,400 subscribers who have signed up through UNGEI’s website, have also valued the UNGEI Updates, which are sent out on a monthly basis. These updates are short, one-page snapshots to inform users of the latest news and resources that are available online.
Outcome 2: Best practices to facilitate girls’ education and gender equality are known and institutionalized

UNGEI launched the 2013–2015 Knowledge Management Action Plan with a focus on: a) evidence generation and exchange; b) social media outreach; and c) strategic partnerships with academia and policy think tanks.

- In 2013, UNGEI developed learning briefs and working papers on SRGBV, a background paper for the 2013 EFA Global Monitoring Report on ‘Exploring the Gendered Dimensions of Teaching and Learning’, and initiated an informal working group on monitoring gender equality.

- UNGEI launched the Fund for Documentation of Good Practice in Girls’ Education and Gender Equality. Designed as a catalytic fund to strengthen the evidence base through identification of good practice in countries, the Fund aims to document a range of proven and promising interventions that have increased educational options and opportunities for girls. More than 300 applications were received. A task team of experts was formed to review and select the successful proposals to receive the documentation grant in 2014.

- UNGEI had a very successful year in advancing global engagement through its social media platform. Please see the highlights on p. 13.

- As part of its work on strengthening capacity in the global South, UNGEI collaborated with the British Association of International and Comparative Education to host a workshop for southern researchers and academics on writing successfully for academic journals on the issues of gender and education. Two workshops were organized in the United Kingdom and in Addis Ababa, and 25 participants attended from the global South.

Outcome 3: UNGEI facilitates an effective partnership for girls’ education and gender equality

- The UNGEI Governance Framework was endorsed by the GAC in 2013, which included the establishment of a five-member SC and an expanded GAC. The members of the SC for 2013–2015 include the Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA), Plan International, UNESCO, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Norad. During the first year of its operation, under the leadership of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Canada (DFATD) as the Chair, the SC has played an effective role in facilitating communication between the GAC and the Secretariat, overseeing operations on behalf of the GAC. UNGEI also launched the GAC expansion process to include new members. The nomination process is currently under way.

Two UNGEI task teams were also established during 2013. These include:
  o Global Partnership for Education Task Team: Responsible for reviewing, contributing to and endorsing the UNGEI-GPE Education Sector Plan Gender Analysis Tool, among other tasks;
  o Good Practice Fund Task Team: Responsible for the short-listing, review and selection process, and subsequent quality assurance of the Fund’s proposals.

- During the 2013 face-to-face GAC meeting in April, UNGEI’s PAA was developed in a collaborative manner. The full meeting report can be accessed on the UNGEI GAC portal here.
With the 2015 deadline for the MDGs fast approaching, UNGEI firmly believes that a critical education priority is all girls learning and achieving in order to meet the broader MDGs. An investment in girls’ education is integral to virtually all aspects of development and economic progress.

In 2013, UNGEI developed and endorsed its Policy Advocacy Agenda, setting out the priorities through to 2015, including:

- An enhanced focus on marginalized and excluded groups;
- The reduction and elimination of SRGBV;
- Improved learning outcomes for girls; and
- Increased numbers of girls transitioning to secondary education and accessing post-primary opportunities.

In order to make progress on each of the four policy priority areas, UNGEI will primarily use the following advocacy approaches to influence decision makers at the global, regional and country levels:

- **Collective advocacy**: UNGEI will participate at key events at global, regional and country levels to encourage political action, social mobilization and acceleration of support for girls’ education and gender equality.
- **Coordinated action**: UNGEI represents a diverse array of interests, from global development organizations and academic institutions to regional education bodies and local programmes. UNGEI provides a platform that allows partners to connect with one another, reach out and form regional and country-based partnerships, and maximize educational benefits for girls and young women around the world.
- **Evidence-based solutions**: UNGEI will support the development and dissemination of research that will provide evidence needed to develop policy, allocate budgets, and implement programmes in a manner to support girls achieving and learning.
- **Sharing of good practice**: UNGEI will act as a knowledge broker, providing partners and stakeholders with access to tools, good practices and experience, and allow for greater connectivity between individuals and organizations working in the field of girls’ education and gender equality.

*Please note that the PAA presented here reflects its initial structure as developed in 2013.*
UNGEI PARTNER CONTRIBUTION HIGHLIGHTS
The GAC member organizations’ policy engagement and programming are aligned with UNGEI priorities and have significantly contributed to advancing our PAA priorities. This section provides highlights of select partner contributions in 2013 against UNGEI’s strategic priorities. A more detailed report is available in Annex 3.

Enhanced focus on marginalized and excluded groups

- **Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE)** is part of an UNGEI East Asia Working Group on Marginalized and Excluded Groups that met in August 2013 in Bangkok for an Interactive Panel Discussion on ‘Education, Language and Gender Equality in Asia-Pacific’. The Working Group discussed specific situations and possible activities regarding: 1) children with disabilities; 2) linguistic minorities; 3) stateless and migrant children; and 4) children in emergencies. With support from the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning in Hamburg, ASPBAE worked with its member organizations in developing case studies to document innovative life skills programmes that empower young people to overcome the challenges posed by their socio-economic realities. Discussions are under way with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning on the publication and dissemination of these case studies.

- **Department for International Development (DFID)**, as part of its Girls’ Education Challenge (GEC) initiative, is supporting 36 new projects across the globe to ensure that girls from some of the poorest areas have an opportunity to learn and transform their lives. These projects range from scaling up interventions to new and innovative schemes using new technologies or targeting vulnerable groups such as disabled girls or itinerant communities. Some of the projects are also unique collaborations between the private sector and the Government of the United Kingdom. Discovery Communications and the Coca-Cola Company were two private-sector organizations that were successful in the first round of funding. The second round of funding was launched in April 2013 and encourages more business linkages between international companies, particularly those based in the United Kingdom.

- **World Vision** has a track record of working with marginalized and excluded groups, particularly to reduce child labour. A 2013 partnership with the United States Department of Labour in Cambodia, Ethiopia and the Philippines enabled World Vision to engage with both girls and boys who are either engaged in child labour or at risk, and provide opportunities to improve their school enrolment and retention.

Reduce and eliminate SRGBV

- **Campaign for Female Education (Camfed)** in 2013 actively advocated to improve the protection and well-being of girls in school. In Zambia, the Ministry of Education officially endorsed the national roll-out of child protection guidelines developed by Camfed. In Ghana, Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, Camfed trained more than 2,000 additional Teacher Mentors to deliver psychosocial support for vulnerable children, particularly girls, and to play a leading role in coordinating child protection at schools.

- **The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** provides support to country-level work on advancing the agenda to promote the rights of adolescent girls, including the fight against child marriage. Its global initiative, Action for Adolescent Girls, is currently active in 12 countries. This global initiative is building the health, social and economic assets of girls by providing them access to health information and services (including sexual and reproductive health), the opportunity to learn life skills, a chance for social participation and leadership, and links to formal/non-formal education and livelihoods. Girl groups meet in safe spaces led by slightly older female mentors and role models from the community.
• World Vision began working to engage men as fathers to prevent child marriage, which is a deeply embedded cultural and social norm in India. Through working with fathers, this project aims at promoting gender equality and preventing child marriage and gender-based violence. A manual that has been developed in partnership with Promundo serves as a guide for project facilitators to bring together men, their daughters and their partners to critically reflect on the cultural and gender norms that serve as obstacles to men’s participation as involved fathers and perpetuate the devaluation of women and girls.

Improve learning outcomes for girls
• DFATD, through education system strengthening and through the development and implementation of gender-sensitive teacher training, curricula, and teaching and learning materials, supports developing countries in improving the quality of education and in promoting equal access and learning achievement with a particular focus on girls.

Canada also supports the dissemination of research findings and studies carried out by its Canadian partners on girls’ education. In 2013, a panel discussion was held to commemorate the second International Day of the Girl Child with participation by Canadian partners, researchers and DFATD colleagues focused on gender equality and girls’ education, including issues around girls’ retention and performance in schools and innovative approaches to improve girls’ education and learning.

• UNICEF, in consultation with other United Nations agencies, UNGEI and civil-society partners, selected Innovating for Girls’ Education as the year’s theme. All 8 UNICEF regions actively participated in Day of the Girl Child celebrations, with 40 UNICEF country offices, regional offices and national committees reporting activities. At UNICEF headquarters, commemorative events included an advocacy event that showcased innovative approaches and good practices for improving access to and quality of girls’ education around the world, and a high-level leadership forum for enhanced commitment by global leaders.

Social media activity was vibrant, with the #dayofthegirl post reaching more than 1.9 million Facebook users. On Twitter, IDGC was mentioned more than 51,000 times, reaching more than 104 million people. Selected Goodwill Ambassadors, celebrities and donors who took part in spreading the messages on Facebook or Twitter included: Queen Rania, Priyanka Chopra, Melinda Gates and the Gates Foundation, and the White House. In addition, a crowd-sourced ThunderClap was organized for the Day, which led to a spike in traffic at 9 a.m. EST that reached close to 4 million individuals. UNICEF’s work was featured in The Guardian and Pakistan’s The Nation.

• UNESCO’s International Institute of Education (IIEP) produced a series of working papers and policy briefs focusing on gender differences in learning outcomes in sub-Saharan African countries using the results of data from the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ). In addition, IIEP supported Kenyan researchers and ministry officials to develop policy-oriented research into gender differences in learning.

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7 For additional information on IDGC activities in the field, please consult the UNGEI website.
Increased number of girls transitioning to secondary education and accessing post-primary opportunities

- **Camfed** engagement of Teacher Mentors in the selection and monitoring of girls on bursaries in lower secondary education has been acknowledged by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Malawi as a best practice. Camfed plans to scale up the intervention nationally as part of the government bursary programme.

- **UNESCO**, under the framework of its Global Partnership for Girls’ and Women’s Education, strengthened public-private partnerships to increase girls’ access to, retention and completion of secondary education in Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania. In addition, UNESCO supported eight countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mali, the Niger and the United Republic of Tanzania) to develop an inclusive, uninterrupted curriculum framework, focusing on the transition from primary to secondary school, and looking at assessment methods and gender-sensitive pedagogy.

- **World Food Programme (WFP)** reached 10 million girls through school meals programmes in 2013. In addition, recognizing that there needs to be particular motivation for girls transitioning to secondary education, WFP provided school meals to almost 75,000 secondary-school girls, a 23 per cent increase from 2012. It also provided take-home rations to more than 45,000 secondary-school girls. The Nourishing Bodies, Nourishing Minds commitment was also launched in 2013, which is a renewed partnership between UNESCO, UNICEF and WFP. This partnership focuses on improving the quality of education for the world’s most underserved children. There is a specific focus on improving the enrolment rates of girls, especially adolescent girls.
REGIONAL AND COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS
At the regional and country level, UNGEI partnerships and networks take on different forms, functions and roles which are best suited to the local contexts. UNGEI currently works in – SA, EAP, ESA and WCA. Based on an annual UNICEF survey, close to 50 countries around the world report links to UNGEI at the national level. This indicates significant growth in national platforms for girls’ education since the UNGEI evaluation in 2011.

In the EAP region, Bangkok is the regional hub for many agencies, which permits UNGEI to operate effectively at the regional level through collaborative advocacy and joint programming. Other regions tend to be more focused on supporting country partnerships and providing a platform for knowledge exchange and policy advocacy. At the country level, the nature of the partnership varies, ranging from sharing information, organizing joint activities, advocacy and communication, and at times entering into a formal partnership to further programmatic objectives.

Broadly speaking, in keeping with the outcome areas, UNGEI regional and country partnerships engage in three areas of activity related to:

- Policy advocacy to promote girls’ education and gender equality;
- Knowledge generation and sharing good practice; and
- Strengthening partnerships and building capacity for girls’ education.

This section provides a brief overview of UNGEI achievements at the regional level and also draws attention to a country in each region to illustrate national partnerships at work.

### 5.1 South Asia

The UNGEI partnership in the SA region is focused on developing partnerships at the country and district level, and even at the school level, as is the case in Nepal. Its regional priorities include increasing completion rates of basic education for girls and boys, improving transition rates to secondary schools, and strengthening access for out-of-school girls who dropped out due to being married as children or those from marginalized linguistic or ethnic groups. Key partners in the region include the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) – the major intergovernmental body in the region – and the South Asian Initiative to Eliminate Violence against Children (SAIEVAC).

Progress in girls’ education is slow in most SA countries, with gender gaps narrowing at a lower rate at both the primary and secondary levels. At the aggregate level, the gender parity index of the primary gross enrolment ratio stagnated at 0.98, while the secondary gender parity index increased slightly, from 0.91 in 2010 to 0.92 in 2011. The region continues to be home to countries with some of the lowest indicators in girls’ education due to traditional gender roles and/or conflict-affected and fragile contexts, as well as unique challenges such as caste-based exclusion. Many SA countries are also among those with the highest incidence of child marriage in the world.

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8 This figure is based on 2013 UNICEF Country Office Annual Report data.
9 The data are excerpted from the UNICEF Annual Thematic Report for 2013 based on country offices claiming an UNGEI partnership; Please see Annex 2 for the full list of countries.
Highlights for the reporting period include:

Outcome 1: Policies to promote girls’ education and gender equality

- Through a number of advocacy initiatives with its partners, UNGEI achieved important results in strengthening policy frameworks that promote girls’ education. The Pakistan Girls’ Education Initiative championed the passing of Article 25 – ‘Right to Free and Compulsory Education’ – following extensive advocacy by partners. The law makes schooling free and compulsory for children between the ages of 5 and 16, to ensure girls’ access and retention in schools and improved resource allocation for girls’ education within various education-sector plans.

- In Bhutan, a proposal to form a country partnership was agreed to by a diverse group of youth organizations and the Department of Youth and Sports.

- UNICEF, as the coordinating agency for GPE and the lead agency for the Pakistan Girls’ Education Initiative, supported the Government of Pakistan to develop a comprehensive Education Sector Plan, sector-wide capacity gap assessment and capacity development plans for the state of Balochistan. One of the key priorities agreed for the next three years is 2,000 new schools for girls, and every new school will have a local female teacher.

Outcome 2: Best practices to facilitate girls’ education and gender equality are known and institutionalized

- At the 5th South Asian Conference on Sanitation, the UNGEI partnership supported the compilation of country initiatives in water, sanitation and hygiene in schools from a gender perspective. This activity highlighted both progress and challenges, as well recommendations for enhanced school sanitation, emphasizing the need to provide separate, functional and safe water and sanitation facilities for girls. Recommendations highlighted in the conference report include strengthening support for menstrual hygiene management.

Outcome 3: UNGEI facilitates an effective partnership for girls’ education and gender equality

- With the support of UNGEI SA, countries have made significant strides in strengthening ties with national and local partners. In Nepal, the Girls’ Education and Gender Equity Network, or UNGEI Network, held the 1st National Conference of Gender Focal Points on equity in education.

- The Parliamentarians’ Initiative in Nepal is undergoing revival and expansion following delays due to political upheaval. Work is under way to provide capacity-building support to newly elected female and male parliamentarians and other political leaders to lobby and advocate for girls’ education and gender equality in education with the Ministry of Education. Please refer to the case study on the UNGEI Network in Nepal, located on the following page, for more information on its areas of focus and achievements.
The Girls’ Education and Gender Equity Network in Nepal

Context
The Government of Nepal established the Girls’ Education and Gender Equity Network in 2006 under the global UNGEI mandate, with UNICEF support and facilitation. The Gender Equity Development Section at the Ministry of Education leads on the network and technical support is provided by Educational Pages, a leading national NGO. The partnership aims to increase national budget allocation for mainstreaming equity-oriented strategies and their implementation to bring gender parity in access and completion. Children from excluded and minority groups, girl students and women teachers are core beneficiaries of this project.


Key activities and approaches
The network is engaged in two key areas of work:

- **Supporting the UNGEI Network from the national to district level**: Activities in this area focus on expanding, mobilizing and enhancing the capacity of UNGEI Network members to ensure gender equity in practice in the most vulnerable areas. The programme also aims to strengthen coordination among the partnership through a mapping of all partners working on girls’ education and the development of a common road map.

- **Engaging with policy-level actors, politicians, women leaders, networks and youth to ensure equity in education**: Work in this area aims to facilitate high-level involvement on the policy reform process. Policy-level actors such as political leaders, education focal points of political parties, educationalists, think tanks and youth leaders are among the targeted groups. Notable activities in 2013 included a Youth Conference on equity, education and employment and a Political Leaders Caucus on equity and education in the post-2015 agenda.

Key results

- A major recommendation on behalf of the UNGEI Network was included in the draft Education Act, which would ensure free and compulsory quality education and gender equality in education.

- A common road map was developed by members of the UNGEI Network to reduce duplication, share best practice, develop joint work and address gaps.

- The 1st National conference of Gender Focal Points focused on equity in education was held. Participants committed to support the implementation of the Conference Declaration and to meet annually to discuss issues surrounding equity and education at the district, regional and national levels.

Lessons learned
Based on current challenges it faces, the UNGEI Network in Nepal notes that greater coordination among actors working in the area of equity and education is needed. In addition, increased involvement of women and youth at all levels of the education sector, as well as strengthened political commitment on the issue of education, are also issues demanding greater attention.
5.2 East Asia and the Pacific

The UNGEI regional partnership in EAP continues to be a vibrant and growing network at the regional level, comprising more than 20 partners, including ActionAid, ASPBAE, Plan Asia, UNESCO and UN Women. UNGEI EAP is also increasing its involvement with girls’ education platforms in Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea. The regional partnership priorities are aligned with the global PAA.

The region has seen notable progress in narrowing the gender gap in education towards achieving gender parity. In 2011, of the 22 countries with data, 14 had achieved gender parity in primary education, and of the 19 with data on secondary education, 7 had achieved parity. However, disaggregated data indicate that significant disparities in access to education exist within countries, even where national gender parity estimates are strong. Gender disparities are more prevalent in remote and rural areas and among ethno-linguistic and other minority communities. In Cambodia, for example, while students on average receive around 6 years of education, disaggregated data show that rich urban boys receive 9.2 years, whereas poor rural girls receive only 2.7 years of education. Additionally, the region is seeing the underachievement of boys relative to girls in countries such as Fiji, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nauru, the Philippines and Thailand. The total school-age population for secondary school in the region is more than 200 million, yet only 159 million are attending school, and 52 per cent of those out-of-school children are boys.

Highlights for the reporting period include:

Outcome 1: Policies to promote girls’ education and gender equality

- As part of its work to enhance the focus on educational exclusion of marginalized groups, UNGEI EAP made a presentation to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Gender, Disability and Education Commission on Women and Children in Viet Nam. UNGEI EAP also organised a Youth Panel Discussion on Education, Language and Gender Equality at the 4th International Conference on Language and Education in Bangkok.

- UNGEI EAP advocated for the importance of increasing access to early childhood education for both boys and girls to lay a good foundation for cognitive and social learning. It facilitated a session on linking gender and early childhood development in the region at the annual Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood conference in Singapore.

- SRGBV emerged as an important focus area in 2013. In collaboration with partners, UNGEI organized a regional roundtable on the issue, bringing together representatives from 13 countries in the region, in addition to academia, civil society organizations and United Nations agencies. A regional UNGEI working group on SRGBV was launched, and a review of SRGBV in the region was also produced. For more information on UNGEI EAP’s work on SRGBV, please see the section Partnership at work: Advancing the policy agenda on SRGBV.

- The regional secretariat marked the International Day of the Girl Child by hosting a panel discussion involving senior representatives of the partner organizations. The celebrations generated considerable media interest from national radio stations.

Outcome 2: Best practices to facilitate girls’ education and gender equality are known and institutionalized

- EAP UNGEI played a key role in promoting best practices in girls’ education through studies, development of research protocols, e-Newsletters, and technical trainings. A desk review on girls, disabilities and education in the EAP region was produced. Building on UNGEI’s regional paper on the gender dimensions of the school to work transition, UNGEI EAP supported a peer review of the UNESCO-Korean Women’s Development Institute paper on Gender, Jobs and Education.

- UNGEI EAP maintains its own online presence, including web space located within the global UNGEI site as a platform to share the region’s news. UNGEI EAP contributed eight blogs to the UNGEI website, six blogs that mention UNGEI were posted on the UNICEF EAPRO blog site, and several resources were contributed by the EAP region for the UNGEI e-resource library.

- Relevant research and advocacy publications, events and opportunities were regularly promoted and disseminated via the UNGEI EAP mailing list and social media building the community of practice for girls’ education and gender equality in education in the region. Thematic newsletters were disseminated on issues of gender and disabilities and children of migrant workers.

Outcome 3: UNGEI facilitates an effective partnership for girls’ education and gender equality

- At the regional level, the UNGEI network continues to grow: Two working groups on SRGBV and marginalization were established to take forward the UNGEI policy advocacy agenda.

- As part of its commitment to strengthen national-level partnership, UNGEI EAP was instrumental in establishing the Lao People’s Democratic Republic Gender, Inclusion and Disability Technical Working Group (GID TWG). UNGEI EAP worked closely with the GID TWG, and produced a white paper entitled ‘Promoting Gender Equality in Education in Lao PDR’.

- In Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste, discussions with UNICEF colleagues and government counterparts were initiated to support a gender analysis of the child-friendly schools framework.
Building a Partnership in Lao People’s Democratic Republic

Context
Efforts to build an UNGEI partnership in Lao People’s Democratic Republic first began in November 2012, when UNGEI EAP, with the Lao Ministry of Education and Sports and the UNICEF Country Office organized a two-day capacity building workshop for members of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic Inclusive Education Centre. Workshop sessions covered regional issues of barriers to girls’ education and the specific challenges faced by the country.

Throughout 2013, UNGEI EAP continued to strengthen its partnership with the Lao Inclusive Education Network and UNICEF Lao People’s Democratic Republic, as well as provide support to further the Inclusive Education Network’s agenda on gender equality and inclusive education. With UNGEI EAP’s leadership, in collaboration with the Ministry and other partners, the GID TWG was appointed in March 2014 by Ministerial Decree. Notably, this is the very first technical working group to be formed in the region.

The GID TWG aims to strengthen gender mainstreaming in education in the country, and is Chaired by the Ministry of Education and Sports and co-Chaired by a civil society organization – currently Plan International. Although the GID TWG is housed within the Education Sector Working Group at the Ministry of Education and Sports, it was agreed that the TWG is cross-cutting across all departments and sections of the Ministry. Below are highlights from the formation of the TWG, key results thus far and plans for 2014.

Key activities and process
- The inaugural meeting of the GID TWG was held in June 2013, attended by 27 participants from the Ministry of Education and Sports and 25 participants from international organizations and development partners.
- The first GID TWG meeting was held on 25 March 2014, where the revised Terms of Reference of the TWG and Ministerial Decree on the appointment of the Technical Focal Group on Gender, Inclusion and Disability were presented.
- UNGEI EAP made an official request for the GID TWG to officially partner with UNGEI, which would help to ensure that the working group is engaged at the regional level and aligned with both local and regional priorities in gender and education.

Key results
- A White Paper was produced to highlight gender in education issues in Lao People’s Democratic Republic, the benefits of gender analyses, and to present findings from national-level UNGEI networks in Nepal and Uganda.
- A Ministerial Decree on the appointment of the GID TWG was developed and signed on 21 March 2014.

Priority action for 2014
- UNGEI EAP will continue to work with the GID TWG to ensure that its work is aligned with regional priorities as well as the UNGEI policy advocacy areas, particularly SRGBV and child marriage.
- UNGEI aims to secure an official partnership with the GID TWG in 2014, and will work to ensure that national and local partners work collaboratively on building capacity at all levels in the country.
5.3 West and Central Africa

At the regional level, UNGEI WCA currently functions as a communication network to promote and exchange knowledge on girls’ education activities. Important progress was made in 2013 in terms of forming a regional partnership with girls’ education actors. Key partners in the region include Plan West Africa, Aide et Action, the Forum of African Women Educationists (FAWE) and ANCEFA. In addition, UNGEI partnerships are active in 15 countries across the region. In some countries, strong civil society actors are not present, and therefore UNICEF plays a leadership role. In others, civil society organizations work jointly with the Ministry of Education as well as the UNICEF gender focal point.

The WCA context continues to be challenging in terms of reducing disparities on key girls’ education indicators, particularly with regard to enrolment and completion rates. In 2013, the gender parity index in primary education increased slightly, to 0.93 from 0.91, ranging from 0.75 in the Central African Republic to 1.10 in the Congo. However, this increase is due to improvement in access to education, as no significant change was observed in completion, for which the GPI stagnated at 0.88. Moreover, these national averages hide disparities within countries in conjunction with considerations of location, region and household wealth. The gender parity index remains lower at secondary levels; it is 0.82 for secondary and 0.73 for upper secondary.

Another important challenge in the region is the nearly 30 per cent of primary-school-age children that are out of school, representing 21.3 million children. More than half of these are located in Nigeria (10.5 million) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (2.9 million). Reasons for exclusion include distance to school, incomplete schools, grade repetition, direct and opportunity costs, and parental perception of the quality and safety of schools. Early marriages, early pregnancies and gender-based violence in schools are additional barriers for girls. This is further exacerbated by the onset of complex emergencies faced in the Central African Republic and Mali, and by the Sahel crisis. For instance, it was estimated that the Malian crisis affected the schooling of 800,000 children, with consequences also felt in neighbouring countries.

Highlights for the reporting period include:

Outcome 1: Policies to promote girls’ education and gender equality

- SRGBV emerged as a key policy advocacy focus area for the UNGEI WCA partnership in 2013. Under the leadership of UNICEF, UNGEI is partnering with the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Mali and the Niger, to support programme and policy interventions to address SRGBV. Two advocacy films were produced, one in Côte d’Ivoire and one in Burkina Faso, to raise awareness of the issue among key stakeholders. Please see the regional case study on SRGBV at the end of this section for an overview of key activities, approaches and results in the region.

- In Mali, the National Policy for Girls’ Education was adopted, and strategies for accelerating girls’ education were implemented to reduce gender disparities in access, retention and completion. UNGEI sub-national committees conducted advocacy and awareness campaigns, while local-level consultations were held. These consultations were developed with a Communication for Development approach, and led to the broadcast of messages through local radio channels on the removal of barriers to girls’ education and reducing gender disparities.

- In Côte d’Ivoire, UNGEI’s work around SRGBV led to the drafting and adoption of the Child Protection National Policy. Within the policy document, the education sector is formally

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12 UNESCO Institute for Statistics.
recognized as a major actor for addressing child protection issues. Direct support was also provided to the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training to strengthen the coordination of its activities in this area through the establishment of a working group on protection.

- In the Niger and Mali, strong advocacy was undertaken in order to address school quality standards. In both countries this led to the revision and adoption of Fundamental Quality Norms (Child-Friendly School Standards). These standards, which have been integrated into the National Education Sector Plan, apply to all schools across the Niger and Mali.

- In the Niger, ActionAid, FAWE, ANCEFA and UNGEI WCA organized a workshop on girl’s education advocacy, which brought together more than 30 participants. UNGEI provided technical expertise on lobbying and popular mobilization, as well as monitoring and evaluating advocacy strategies. The workshop highlighted the importance of collaboration among actors working on girls’ education, as well as the need for greater capacity among participants for evaluating the success of advocacy strategies.

- An advocacy training workshop was organized by Plan West Africa, with the participation of other UNGEI partners, including the UNGEI Regional Focal Point and representation from the GPE. The workshop was designed to strengthen skills and capacity for advocacy and lobbying, as well as policy analysis among practitioners in girls’ education from across the region. It provided an overview of key existing initiatives and advocacy opportunities around girls’ education in the region; shared a common understanding of Plan’s Because I Am a Girl campaign and fostered/reinforced collaboration between Plan offices and national coalitions. It also shared examples of best practices in advocacy and campaigning for girls’ education and gender equality.

- The International Day of the Girl Child represented a key advocacy opportunity in the region, with more than 10 countries organizing events to commemorate the Day. In addition, Plan International developed an interactive map to summarize activities organized on the Day.

Outcome 2: Best practices to facilitate girls’ education and gender equality are known and institutionalized

- UNGEI partners, primarily UNICEF, initiated several studies across the region to better understand specific barriers – demand, supply and institutional – and how they interact with each other to constrain girls in accessing schools and learning in particular socio-economic and political contexts, as well as how the analyses can help inform effective advocacy and programming at the country level. These include:

  - **Political and institutional barriers to girls’ education:** A multi-country study was undertaken in order to identify political and institutional factors that either lead to or reinforce existing barriers to girls’ education in Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, the Niger and Mauritania. The draft findings identify critical gaps in terms of political commitment, institutional coverage, pedagogical management and approach. The report provides clear evidence on institutional response for supporting girls’ education and paths to follow for national partnerships.

  - **Gender and social equity:** A regional study on was completed and provides diagnostic tools for countries to address equity issues, building evidence on linkages between intersecting dimensions of exclusion and multiple pathways to address multiple and overlapping disparities.
Outcome 3: UNGEI facilitates an effective partnership for girls’ education and gender equality

- A key outcome of the subregional workshop on SRGBV was a reaffirmation of the need for greater collaboration among actors working on girls’ education in the region. Following the workshop, UNGEI made progress in the formation of a regional partnership comprising UNICEF, Plan West Africa, Aide et Action, FAWE and ANCEFA, who expressed a firm commitment to making progress on this initiative in 2014.

- National partnerships were strengthened through the provision of technical and financial support. In Mauritania, this included a feasibility study on setting up a public-private partnership for school transportation as a way to address girl dropouts, as distance to school is being identified as a major factor affecting girls’ participation in school.
**UNGEI Partnership in the Niger**

**Background on the partnership and country context**

As noted previously, the UNGEI partnership in the Niger primarily conducts strong advocacy for the development of policies that promote girls’ education and gender equality, as well as facilitates collaborative advocacy work among girls’ education actors in the country. The UNGEI partnership also has links to joint programming efforts, led by UNICEF, that work to narrow gender gaps in education.

The Government of the Niger and its partners are working together to increase the provision of educational services for the Niger’s children. Due to disparities between rural and urban areas and between girls and boys in the education system, efforts are being made to bridge the gender gaps in terms of access, retention and completion, mainly in the rural areas. In line with these efforts, UNICEF supports the Ministry of Education to promote girls’ education through the ‘projet d’appui à la scolarisation des filles aux cycles primaire et secondaire dans les communes de convergence’. The main objective of the project is to contribute to reduce the disparities in access and retention in the primary and lower secondary levels in six targeted (Aguié, Dungass, Guidan Amoumane, Maijirgui, Tanout, Yaouri) districts hosting a total of 16 rural lower secondary schools with 1,053 girls in the Maradi and Zinder regions.

The main stakeholders of the local partnership include the Ministry of Education and its decentralized service delivery units, UNICEF, ActionAid (the implementing partner), local NGOs, local authorities and the communities benefiting from the intervention that are involved in the project’s implementation.

**Key activities and approaches**

- Social mobilization of key community actors including the decentralized school committees and the PTA in 16 schools;
- The mainstreaming of activities in favour of girls’ schooling in the action plans of the School Committees and in the development plans of the districts as well.
- Communication for Development and advocacy, training and awareness raising for women role models, religious leaders, mayors, etc., aiming at girls’ access and retention in school until the final grade of lower secondary school; these activities are followed by the signature on behalf of the community;
- Provision of scholarships to 500 girls and financial support to 500 host families; provision of 500 individual school kits to the 500 girls;
- Mentoring through the development of a mentoring framework, the networking of tutors and exchange and excursions for the 50 best performing girls; and
- Promotion of water, sanitation and hygiene in school through the construction of separated latrines for girls and boys with hand-washing disposals and water points, and teacher training.

**Key results**

- 500 girls received an individual school kit and about US$25 per trimester as a scholarship;
- 500 host families benefited from about US$50 per trimester;
- 16 Mothers’ Associations, 16 PTA and 16 decentralized school committees have been put in place and trained;
- The decentralized school committees have been supported financially and monitors the activities;
- 500 girls benefited from remedial courses. Out of 175 girls who were lagging behind, 104 improved their level, which significantly benefited their assiduity at school;
- A strong commitment of the aforementioned stakeholders around girls’ education in the 16 districts.
5.4 Eastern and Southern Africa

While there is no formal partnership agreement on a regional partnership in ESA, partners committed to and working on girls’ education and gender equality come together and collaborate for specific activities. Key regional partners include UNESCO, UNFPA, UN Women, UNICEF, FAWE, Plan International and Save the Children.

Most of the 21 countries in the region have some variation of an UNGEI platform that brings the government and civil-society partners together to promote girls’ education and gender equality in education. Depending on the country, the platform may be called UNGEI or may go by another name. Partners at the country level vary, but usually include the Ministry of Education as lead of the partnership, other ministries, and parliamentarians. Other partners include: United Nations agencies, such as UNFPA, UNESCO and UN Women; international partners, including bilateral donors and embassies; and international and national NGOs. In some cases, such as in South Africa, the private sector is an important actor.

Many countries in ESA have been making progress in achieving MDG 2 on universal primary education and steadily narrowing the gender gap in relation to MDG 3 on gender equality in education. Nevertheless, gender equality in education has not yet been achieved in the region. According to the UNICEF’s State of the World’s Children for 2013, the female adult literacy rate as a percentage of males for 2007–2011 in the ESA region was 82; and female school enrolment as a percentage of males for 2008–2011 was 96 for primary and 89 for secondary, which indicates that girls and women are disadvantaged compared with boys and men.

At the country level, gender inequality is prominent: for instance, in Eritrea, the secondary-school enrolment rate for girls is 25 per cent, compared with 32 per cent for boys. Gender inequality also affects boys in some countries; for instance, in Lesotho, secondary-school attendance rate is 62 per cent for girls, compared with 47 per cent for boys. There are a number of reasons that contribute to the gender inequality in education: poverty; poor quality and irrelevant education; lack of parents’ awareness of the importance of education, particularly for girls; gender-based violence, including lack of safety in and on the way to and from school; harmful practices such as child marriage, early pregnancy, and female genital mutilation and cutting; and lack of water and inadequate sanitation in schools.

Highlights for the reporting period include:

Outcome 1: Policies to promote girls’ education and gender equality

- At the regional level, a commemorative event for the IDGC was organized in Nairobi by UNICEF and Plan International, in partnership with UN Women, UNFPA and Save the Children. The event was attended by 200 guests, including delegates from the diplomatic missions in Nairobi, NGOs, civil society and the media. The event featured a panel discussion by prominent women leaders in the region, including the Chief Executive Officer of the National Gender and Equality Commission for Kenya, the Programme Director of Elman Peace and Human Rights Center in Somalia, the Women’s Rights Programme Manager of Graça Machel Trust in South Africa, a youth activist living with HIV/AIDS in Kenya, and the Chairperson of the Kenya chapter of FAWE. At the country level, IDGC activities were organized with UNGEI partners in Burundi, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Uganda, South Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe. These events contributed to policy advocacy efforts for girls’ education and gender equality in education.

13 UNICEF SOWC 2013.
In Ethiopia, gender-sensitive programming was mainstreamed in the Education Sector Development Plan, in which gender is recognized as a cross-cutting issue at all levels of the education system, as well as being mainstreamed in managerial and directorate processes. Furthermore, a comprehensive girls’ education and gender equality strategy was developed.

In Malawi, after noting that there had not been significant progress in closing the gender gap in upper primary, secondary and tertiary education, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology led the process to develop the National Girls’ Education Strategy to improve girls’ education through improved coordination in consultation with UNGEI, UNICEF and the Malawi Girls’ Education Network.

Outcome 2: Best practices to facilitate girls’ education and gender equality are known and institutionalized

Many significant results were achieved in terms of the building of evidence and dissemination of best practices in 2013. A UNESCO IIEP-led research study entitled ‘Stories behind Gender Differences in Student Achievement’ was initiated in Kenya and supported by UNGEI. The study used quantitative data on students’ learning achievement and qualitative information to identify factors that produce gender differences in students’ achievement.

The Government of Uganda and two UNGEI partner organizations – Population Council and UNICEF – launched the Adolescent Girls Multilevel Vulnerability Index (AGI), a global venture to capture the vulnerability of adolescent girls and enhance programming for young women and girls. The AGI was developed based on a growing recognition of the need to channel resources to vital – yet highly vulnerable and vastly underserved – populations of adolescent girls in Uganda specifically, and the ESA region in general. The AGI aims to be a summary indicator that can serve as an advocacy tool to draw attention to adolescent girls, a rigorous measure to inform decisions about policymaking and macro-level resource allocation, and an instrument for planning and monitoring progress.

In Kenya, the girls’ education partnership consisting of government ministries, local NGOs, bilateral agencies and UNICEF have worked together to support girls from the most marginalized communities through a successful scholarship programme. The girls’ education scholarship programme was initiated in the Northern Kenya region in 2006, and aims to increase access to quality secondary education for girls from arid and semi-arid land counties. After running the scholarship with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology through one secondary school cycle, the scholarship model was taken up as a foundation framework and changed to the Northern Kenya Education Trust, which has been scaled up to cover 14 nomadic counties, up from the original 3 counties. In 2013, partners continued to provide support through the scholarship programme, helping 326 girls.

Outcome 3: UNGEI facilitates an effective partnership for girls’ education and gender equality

UNGEI ESA also made a concerted effort to strengthen partnerships and provide technical expertise to country partnerships. Support was provided to Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Sudan and Zambia to undertake data analysis to further highlight gender inequalities and examine barriers and bottlenecks impeding the achievement of gender equality in education. Support was also provided to Malawi to develop, revise and review national gender strategies and education sector plans, as well as to promote mechanisms aimed to enhance coordination and partnerships.
Girls’ Club Initiatives: The ESAR experience

Background

The Girl’s Education Movement (GEM) is a child-centred, girl-led global movement of children and young people whose goal is to bring about positive social transformation in Africa by empowering girls through education. GEM was launched in August 2001 in Kampala, Uganda, at a conference attended by children and young people from throughout Africa. GEM initiatives, which often take the form of clubs, are active in in Eastern and Southern Africa.

In Uganda, in order to enhance retention and enrolment, GEM clubs were supported by UNICEF to develop children’s life skills and capacity to demand accountability from duty bearers for safe schools, quality education and retention. GEM is in 48 districts, with clubs now functional in 2,267 primary schools, bringing 4,573 children (girls 2,539, boys 2,034) back to school in 2013, a cumulative total of 14,662 (8,656 girls) out of the targeted 25,000 children by the end of 2014, with further sustainability emerging as more districts initiate and manage these activities at the beginning of each term. In addition, music, dance and drama festivals were undertaken, with 19,386 boys and girls participating at regional and national levels. The theme for this year’s festival was ‘Zero violence against children in schools’, which provided an opportunity to further sensitize school stakeholders about creating safe school environments for children. Such festivals also contribute to improving retention of children in schools.

In Rwanda, UNICEF, in partnership with FAWE and two UNGEI members, supported Tuseme (Speak Out) clubs in 54 schools across the country. The clubs consist of girls and boys from all secondary-school grades and provide an opportunity for students to come together to discuss and speak out about the challenges they face at school, as well as issues from their community, using a creative/theatre approach.

The Tuseme clubs have also been introduced in Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Since 1996, more than 80,000 students have benefited from Tuseme programmes.
PARTNERSHIP AT WORK: ADVANCING THE POLICY AGENDA ON SRGBV
Gender-based violence is a global problem that knows no geographical, cultural, social, economic, ethnic or other boundaries. It occurs across all societies, represents a violation of human rights, and is a major obstacle to the achievement of gender equality. SRGBV continues to be a serious barrier to fulfilling the right to education, especially for girls, and undermines their experience of school as a safe space for learning. UNGEI understands SRGBV as “acts or threats of sexual, physical or psychological violence occurring in or around schools and educational settings as a result of gender norms and unequal power dynamics between genders. It includes acts of bullying, sexual or verbal harassment, non-consensual touching, rape and assault. Although both girls and boys can be targets of SRGBV, girls are the most vulnerable.”

Schools and education systems have a significant role to play in the prevention of gender-based violence, such as effective policies and regulation, reporting and response mechanisms, well-supported and trained personnel, and gender-transformative teaching and learning approaches. In addition, schools also offer a unique potential to create learning environments where attitudes condoning violence in school as well as in the larger community can be changed.

While this is by no means a new issue, an increasing number of development partners are now focusing their efforts on the issue of SRGBV through research, advocacy and programming. Reducing and eliminating SRGBV is one of the four strategic priorities outlined in UNGEI’s PAA.

In 2013, UNGEI initiated efforts to improve international and regional collaboration, increase sharing of knowledge and evidence, and strengthen collective action on SRGBV both at the global and regional levels.

Global highlights

UNGEI-UNESCO Discussion Paper
The UNGEI Secretariat and UNESCO prepared a discussion paper on SRGBV in the fall of 2013, drawing primarily on a 2012 global literature review, and selected literature from French-speaking African countries.

UNGEI-EI Joint Initiative
In November 2013, UNGEI and Education International convened a group of leading experts on violence against women and girls to design a joint initiative targeting SRGBV. With the help of representatives from the White Ribbon Campaign, the 16 Days of Action Against Gender Violence Campaign, Breakthrough, Plan International and the UNICEF Stop Violence Initiative, UNGEI and Education International developed a vision and action plan for a joint initiative to support teachers in taking a lead role in ending SRGBV.

UNGEI/Education International/Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) Joint Statement
On 25 November 2013 – the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women – UNGEI, Education International and GEFI released a joint statement calling on the international community, governments, teachers’ unions and organizations, civil society, researchers, teachers and practitioners, donors and other partners to recognize and take action against SRGBV.
Regional highlights

At the regional level, EAP and WCA regional partnerships took the lead in putting the spotlight on SRGBV in their regional contexts in 2013.

**East Asia and the Pacific**

In the EAP region, school-going children are at risk of different forms of SRGBV, including corporal punishment; physical, psychosocial and sexual violence abuse; and bullying. However, the evidence is scattered and difficult to compare due to a host of factors, including the underreporting of cases. This lack of data on SRGBV, particularly on sexual violence, is partly due to cultural taboos and stigma, poor reporting mechanisms and cultural acceptance of violence.

In the Solomon Islands, 73 per cent of women in a population-based household survey reported believing that violence against women is justifiable. Of women aged 15–49, 37 per cent had been sexually abused before the age of 15 (Plan). In Papua New Guinea, female students were found to be fearful of sexual assault and violence both in and on their way to school (UNGEI). In the region, 1 in 5 females is married before the age of 18 (UNGEI).

UNGEI EAP, in collaboration with UNICEF, UNESCO, Plan and the UNiTE Campaign, organized a high-level advocacy event that brought together representatives from 13 countries in the region, academia, civil society organizations and United Nations agencies. The UNGEI-UNESCO Discussion Paper on SRGBV was featured during the event and formed the basis of an UNGEI EAP regional desk review on SRGBV.

A regional working group of interested members constituted to focus on documenting good practices in addressing SRGBV in the region and developing strategic advocacy messaging from this knowledge.

An initial draft of a concept note on SRGBV in the region, based on the recently released regional desk review was developed.

**West and Central Africa**

WCA countries increasingly identify SRGBV as a systemic factor affecting girls’ participation, retention and learning achievement in primary and secondary education. A study\(^\text{14}\) undertaken in Côte d’Ivoire demonstrated that of the teachers surveyed in four regional education districts, 48 per cent admitted that they had had sexual relations with their pupils.

At the regional level, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNICEF and the UNGEI Secretariat organized a workshop in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 19 to 21 November 2013. This event involved participants from seven countries (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, Mali, the Niger, Senegal and Togo), including Ministry of Education officials, national and regional civil society organizations, GPE representatives, and UNICEF and UNGEI Secretariat staff. The workshop aimed to highlight good practices in addressing SRGBV across the region, to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience, and to build capacity among government and non-government actors. It also focused on links between programmes and subnational initiatives with national sector plans and strategies, in a context where the GPE is aiming to enhance visibility of gender issues (including violence in school) in its Strategic Plan.

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Since 2011, with financial support by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, UNICEF has led the implementation of four programmes supporting girls’ education and the elimination of SRGBV in Burkina, Côte d’Ivoire, Mali and the Niger. More recently, with UNGEI’s technical and financial support, collaboration was strengthened between the programme countries at the regional level.

In terms of progress at the country level, in Côte d’Ivoire, policy advocacy efforts targeting child protection policy were undertaken in collaboration with the UNGEI country partnership. In addition, UNICEF continued its direct support to the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training to strengthen the coordination of its activities in this area through the establishment of a working group on protection.

In Mali, despite the onset of a complex emergency, efforts were made to identify and manage internally displaced persons who have been subject to various forms of violence; establish committees to play a proactive role preventing and managing violence-related risks; and develop and facilitate adoption of a health-centre reference map for survivors. Interventions to date have made it possible to improve the prevention, care and documentation of gender-based violence cases, and to increase understanding of the factors limiting the enrolment of girls in Mali.

In the Niger, efforts focused on supporting decentralized management on child-friendly schools; capacity building of staff to promote girls’ education; and implementation of a community-based protection programme to promote the abandonment of harmful practices against girls, including early marriage and female genital mutilation.

The Government of Burkina Faso and other implementation partners actively highlighted issues related to violence against girls in school. The Ministry of Education and Literacy reviewed guidelines for schools and education officials, with a particular emphasis on addressing the issue of violence against girls; and the Ministry of Secondary and Higher Education focused on issues of self-defence and girls’ empowerment as preventive measures to address SRGBV, as well as initiated a discussion on adolescent pregnancy as a barrier to schooling.

**Moving forward**

UNGEI believes that addressing SRGBV is a complex process and our advocacy experience in 2013 highlighted the necessity of working in partnership with different stakeholders – development partners, governments, civil society actors, education officials, teachers, families, children and youth, and communities – at the global, regional and country levels. Given that SRGBV is a key priority for UNGEI, we will continue to expand our work at these levels.

We believe that in order to be successful in addressing SRGBV, all stakeholders in their respective capacities need to confront, reflect and challenge social norms, traditional practices and cultural values that condone violence and gender discrimination in different sociocultural contexts. It also means promoting multiple initiatives, cutting across sectors, designing appropriate legal and policy mechanisms at global, regional, national and sub-national levels aimed at achieving gender equity, enhancing the status of women, and creating a social and economic environment against gender-based violence. Looking back on our work in 2013 affirmed that collective advocacy and coordinated action backed by appropriate capacity (knowledge and skilled human and financial resources) is the most effective way to move forward.
FUTURE PLANS
Going forward, UNGEI’s key priorities in 2014 include:

- Develop and operationalize an action plan to advance UNGEI’s PAA priorities;
- Expand and strengthen UNGEI’s work on SRGBV at the global, regional and country levels, including a global e-resource bank on SRGBV, the development of a strategy on engaging men and boys, and the promotion of regional initiatives and platforms;
- Provide leadership and technical support in advancing the implementation of the GPE strategic plan on girls’ education, including supporting development of gender-responsive education sector plans across a critical mass of GPE countries;
- Continue to strengthen UNGEI’s knowledge management function globally, with a focus on implementing the UNGEI Fund for Documentation of Good Practice, increasing engagement with academia – in particular in the global South – and building a relevant and current e-resource database, and strengthening the outreach and effectiveness of the UNGEI website;
- Sharing and encouraging good practice and innovations in girls’ education and gender equality through regional and country-based initiatives responsive to local agendas and contexts; and
- Develop and design the UNGEI Collaboration Fund with a focus on capacity building to support and promote networks and national platforms for girls’ education and gender equality at the country and regional levels.
Annex 1: Global Advisory Committee and Partners, 2013

A Global Advisory Committee is composed of key partners who share in the planning, decision-making, guidance and accountability of UNGEI.

**ANCEFA (African Network Campaign on Education for All)**
ANCEFA is a regional network consisting of independent coalitions or networks in 23 countries of Anglophone and Francophone Africa.

**ASPBAE (Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education)**
ASPBAE was established in 1964 by a group of adult educators, inspired by the idea of promoting adult education in the region.

**Camfed (Campaign for Female Education)**
The Campaign for Female Education (Camfed) is dedicated to fighting poverty and AIDS in rural communities in Africa by educating girls.

**Cisco**
Cisco is the global leader in networking for the Internet, dedicated to changing the way people work, live, play, and learn.

**Commonwealth Secretariat**
The Commonwealth Secretariat, established in 1965, is the main intergovernmental agency of the Commonwealth, facilitating consultation and co-operation among member governments and countries.

**DFID (Department for International Development)**
DFID, the Department for International Development, is leading the British government’s fight against world poverty. It supports long-term programmes to help tackle the underlying causes of poverty. DFID also responds to emergencies, both natural and man-made.
Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD)
One of DFATD’s main functions is to “foster sustainable international development and poverty reduction in developing countries and provide humanitarian assistance during crises”.

FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists)
The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) is a pan-African NGO founded in 1992 to promote girls’ and women’s education in sub-Saharan Africa in line with Education For All.

ILO (International Labour Organization)
The International Labour Organization is the UN specialized agency which seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights.

Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation)
The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) is a directorate under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

Plan International
Founded over 75 years ago, Plan is one of the oldest and largest children’s development organizations in the world.

Sida (Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation) - Co-Chair
The Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation, Sida, is a government agency under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Sida’s goal is to contribute to making it possible for poor people to improve their living conditions.

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
UNESCO works with national governments and development partners to achieve universal free primary education and gender equality by 2015.
UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund)
UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity.

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund)
UNICEF is the lead agency and Secretariat for UNGEI. UNICEF is the driving force that helps build a world where the rights of every child are realized.

USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development)
USAID’s work supports long-term and equitable economic growth and advances U.S. foreign policy objectives.

WFP (United Nations World Food Programme)
As the food aid arm of the UN, WFP uses its food to meet emergency needs and support economic & social development.

World Bank
The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world.

World Vision International
World Vision International is a Christian relief and development organization working for the well-being of all people, especially children.
Annex 2: List of countries with national and/or sub-national partnerships with links to UNGEI. Based on self-reporting from an annual UNICEF survey.

Red: Did not claim a partnership in the Thematic Report
Italics: Claimed a partial UNGEI partnership

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Annex 3: GAC Contributions to UNGEI Priorities

ASPBAE (Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education)
The following outlines the gender and education initiatives implemented by ASPBAE with members and regional partners in 2013:

- Panel on Education, Language and Gender Equality, during the 4th International Conference on Language and Education for All in Asia-Pacific November 6-8: ASPBAE is part of an UNGEI East Asia Working Group on Marginalized and Excluded Groups which met in August 2013 in Bangkok. The Working Group discussed specific situations and possible activities around: 1) children with disabilities 2) linguistic minorities 3) stateless and migrant children and 4) children in emergencies.

As part of the Working Group’s plan, UNGEI East Asia together with ASPBAE and Plan International jointly organized the Interactive Panel Discussion on ‘Education, Language and Gender Equality in Asia-Pacific’ during the 4th International Conference on Language and Education for All in Asia-Pacific held in Bangkok, November 6-8. ASPBAE co-facilitated the Panel. It also mobilized the participation of one of the speakers, Carol Doyanan, a youth educator from the indigenous Ayta community. Carol is a youth leader of the organization LAKAS- E-Net Philippines and a member of the ASPBAE Working Group on Youth Literacy and Life Skills.

- Gender Equality in Education Session (one full day) with 27 young adult practitioners and advocates from Asia-Pacific within the Basic Leadership and Development Course (BLDC), Yangon, Myanmar, 1–7 August 2013: Every year, ASPBAE conducts the BLDC where participants are selected from its members in 30 countries in Asia-Pacific. The 2013 BLDC focused on the youth agenda in education and had a dedicated session on “Gender Equality in Education” which focused on gender analysis in education policy, practice and organization development. The 2013 batch came out with a Statement on Education from Asia-Pacific Youth Voices with a strong gender perspective. Monitoring of how participants applied their learning from BLDC is still ongoing.

- Session on gender mainstreaming during a Regional Consultation of National Education Coalitions in the Asia Pacific, Jakarta, Indonesia, 02-06 December 2013: ASPBAE offers capacity support for education advocacy to 13 national education campaign coalitions in the Asia Pacific as part of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF). One of its priorities in the period has been to assist the national coalitions in finding more effective ways of integrating gender perspectives in all aspects of their work and functioning. This is in response to a strong observation of an external evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) effort in 2012 that, “a systematic gender-mainstreaming approach is missing within the CSEF network... the CSEF would benefit from the adoption of a more explicit organisational gender approach”.

As part of this effort, ASPBAE organized a session on gender mainstreaming with 14 coalitions and 2 new emerging partners in EFA in Asia-Pacific within a Regional Consultation of National Education Coalitions in the Asia Pacific, Jakarta, Indonesia, 02-06 December 2013. During the Regional Consultation, the national coalitions identified steps that they would initiate towards mainstreaming gender in their work. ASPBAE is monitoring progress on these currently aside from offering continued technical support.

15 See: http://www.globalpartnership.org/civil-society-education-fund)
• Documentation of Innovative life skills programs for vulnerable young women: With support from the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, Hamburg, ASPBAE worked with its member organizations in developing case studies to document innovative life skills programmes which empower young people to overcome the challenges posed by their socio-economic realities. Four of these case studies were stories of empowerment of marginalised young women from the Philippines, Bangladesh, India and Indonesia. The narratives described the education programmes and the impact that participation in these programmes have had in the lives of these young women. Discussions are underway with UIL on the publication and dissemination of these case studies.

Camfed (Campaign for Female Education)
In 2013, Camfed completed a number of activities in support of UNGEI’s Policy Advocacy Agenda priorities. Highlights from the year are organized under each of the four advocacy priority areas.

An Enhanced Focus on Marginalized and Excluded Groups:
Camfed’s bursary programme targets vulnerable and marginalised girls in rural communities. In 2013, surveys of girls in Zimbabwe and Malawi completing secondary education with bursary support provided insight into the levels of orphanhood:

- From a survey sample in Zimbabwe, 55% of young women who had completed school with Camfed support had lost their fathers and about one-fifth had lost both parents, affecting their vulnerability both economically and socially. These figures are higher than those of general students surveyed, and sit closer to the figures for girls who had dropped out of school, who are much more likely to have experienced the loss of a parent and breadwinner.

- A survey of 211 young women who completed school in Malawi with bursary support found that 42% had lost one or both parents and 18% were from a child-headed household. Only 16% said their families had enough to eat daily.

The Reduction / Elimination of School-Related Gender-Based Violence:
In 2013, Camfed made considerable progress in national advocacy to improve the protection and well-being of girls in school and to address the social, economic and sexual pressures on girls that make them vulnerable to early marriage, pregnancy, HIV infection and maternal mortality.

- In Zambia, in March 2013, the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education officially endorsed the national rollout of child protection guidelines developed by Camfed for Zambian schools.

- In Malawi, Camfed has campaigned for legislation to prohibit marriage before the age of 18. In 2013, Camfed increased the involvement of traditional leaders for advocacy for girls’ education and against child marriage, which affects half of girls in Malawi (UNICEF, 2014). Camfed’s film on child marriage, The Child Within, won the 2013 Best Documentary Award at the World Arts Film Festival.

- In Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, Camfed trained more than two thousand additional Teacher Mentors to deliver psychosocial support for vulnerable children, particularly girls, and to play a leading role in coordinating child protection at schools. In Malawi, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has cited Camfed’s engagement of Teacher Mentors in the selection and monitoring of girls on bursaries as best practice and plans to introduce Teacher Mentors for this role in a government bursary programme nationally.
Improved Learning Outcomes for Girls:
In February 2013, Camfed and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) launched a programme under DFID’s Girls’ Education Challenge initiative to improve learning for 400,000 disadvantaged children in rural areas of Zimbabwe and Tanzania. Under this programme, Camfed:

- Produced study guides in Maths, English and Science for children in under resourced rural schools and where exam failure continues to limit girls’ progress in school. Camfed collaborated with the education group Pearson and education authorities in each country to produce and distribute the guides.

- Produced the life-skills curriculum and handbook *My Better World* to prepare young people for life beyond school, covering topics including health, finances, rights and employment.

- Trained 1,965 educated young women as paraprofessionals to be Learner Guides, delivering the *My Better World* life skills curriculum, providing academic support and serving as role models for girls in schools.

Increased Number of Girls Transitioning to Secondary Education and Accessing Post-Primary Opportunities:
Camfed scaled up opportunities significantly in 2013 for girls to progress to secondary and tertiary education:

- With funding from donors including UNGEI partners (DFID and The MasterCard Foundation), Camfed provided comprehensive bursaries to more than 108,000 disadvantaged girls in rural communities in Africa, ensuring the provision of school fees, materials, social support and mentoring.

- 2,800 young women have progressed to post-secondary education through Camfed scholarships\(^\text{16}\) since the establishment of Camfed’s programme in 1993. This includes 1,791 young women supported into programmes resulting in degrees or other professional qualifications and lasting more than a year.

- In October 2013, Camfed and The MasterCard Foundation launched a 10-year programme to assist 4,000 girls through senior high school and 2,000 young women through tertiary education in Ghana, where the gross enrolment ratio of girls in upper secondary school is only 37% and just 9% at the tertiary level.\(^\text{17}\)

DFATD (Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada)
Canada’s Contribution to the Objectives of the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI)
Canada has a long-standing commitment to the Education for All and Millennium Development Goals on Education (MDGs 2 and 3) to ensure that all children and youth, especially girls, have access to quality basic education and complete their schooling. This commitment is reflected in the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD) strategy on *Securing the Future of Children and Youth*, which identifies access to quality basic education as a priority for development assistance.

\(^{16}\) Ibid.
In this regard, Canada, through its work in international development, contributes to UNGEI’s three main strategic objectives in the areas of Policy Advocacy, Capacity Development and Knowledge Management.

**Policy Advocacy:**
- Canada supports global partnerships that aim at advancing girls’ education and gender equality in global and national development agendas.
  - Since 2010, through its membership on the UNGEI Global Advisory Committee (GAC), Canada has helped advance UNGEI’s governance reform which aims, in part, to improve UNGEI’s ability to advocate for attention to girls’ education globally.
  - Canada is also supporting the efforts of the Global Partnership for Education, particularly through its active participation in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) technical reference group on girls’ education and gender, to ensure the inclusion of gender equality in national education sector plans.
- Canada sees education (and in particular the education of women and girls) as an important and catalytic component of the post-2015 agenda and as a key element for achieving all other goals. The post-2015 agenda has provided a unique opportunity to discuss global education policy, review ongoing gaps, and highlight areas requiring specific efforts to promote accessible quality education for all children, especially for girls.
  - Since 2012, Canada has actively engaged in the dialogue by co-sponsoring a UN-led Global Thematic Consultation on Education and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and participating in a range of meetings (including the May 2014 Oman Global Education for All Meeting) that focussed on the forward education agenda.
  - As chair of the UNGEI Global Advisory Committee, Canada has also supported UNGEI’s efforts to advance girls’ education in global and regional fora.
  - We will continue to advocate ensuring that gender equality and girls’ education must be central to the new development framework.

**Capacity Development:**
Through education system strengthening and through the development and implementation of gender-sensitive teacher training, curriculum, and teaching and learning materials, Canada supports developing countries in improving the quality of education and in promoting equal access and learning achievement with particular focus on girls. Canada is committed to integrating gender equality analysis and considerations into all of its international assistance decisions and development programming including its education sector policies, strategies and programming. Through this approach:

- Canada’s support to basic education programming in Afghanistan, in conjunction with the Afghan Ministry of Education, is helping to: increase girls’ enrolment in both formal and community-based schools; increase the number of available female teachers; and improve the quality of teacher training. In 2011-2012, in Afghanistan, Canada’s support helped 47,062 primary school students to graduate, 85% of whom were girls.

- In 2012 in Senegal, Canada contributed to the training of 23,862 teachers, among which 7,100 were women. All primary school-teachers are now able to apply new techniques using a competency-based approach. Since 2009, in collaboration with UNICEF, Canada has contributed to improve the learning conditions of 75,000 school children (36,000 are girls), by improving the physical environment of 451 schools, including safety and access to school feeding programs. As a result, a significant increase was witnessed in school attendance, especially for girls.
Knowledge Building and Sharing:
Knowledge building and sharing is central to advancing global efforts on girls’ education.

- Canada supports the dissemination of research findings and studies carried out by our Canadian partners on girls’ education.
  - For example, Plan International’s annual report “Because I am a girl - The State of the World’s Girls”, is presented in an annual event held at DFATD that gathers academics, practitioners and policy makers to discuss the main findings and the implications for policy and programming.
  - In 2013, a panel discussion was held to commemorate the second International Day of the Girl with participation by Canadian partners, researchers and DFATD colleagues focussed on gender equality and girls’ education, including issues around girls’ retention and performance in schools and innovative approaches to improve girls’ education and learning.

Canada has long been a champion of girls’ and women’s education and will continue to support global and national efforts to ensure that gender equality becomes a reality.

DFID (Department for International Development)
DFID’s Girls’ Education Challenge, first launched in September 2011, is an ingoing initiative that is aligned with UNGEI’s mandate and Policy Advocacy Agenda. The GEC saw significant progress in 2013, some highlights of which are presented below.

Overview of the Girls’ Education Challenge
Girls’ education is one of the four pillars of the UK Government’s Women and Girls Strategy. The £355mn Girls’ Education Challenge calls on NGOs, charities and the private sector to find better ways of getting girls in school and ensuring they receive a quality of education to transform their future.

Expected Results and Progress
The Girls’ Education Challenge will help up to one million of the world’s poorest girls to have an opportunity to improve their lives through education in 22 focus countries, leverage additional resources for girls’ education from the private sector and develop new knowledge on cost effective programming. Through this ambitious programme, 36 new programmes have been allocated funding to ensure girls from some of the poorest areas of the globe have an opportunity to learn and transform their lives. These projects range from existing programmes which are scaling up their activities, to new and innovative schemes using new technologies or targeting vulnerable groups such as disabled girls or itinerant communities. They are being implemented in many places, including conflict zones and refugee camps.

Some of these projects are unique collaborations between the private sector and the UK Government, called Strategic Partnerships. Discovery Communications and The Coca Cola Company were successful in the first round of Strategic Partnerships funding. The second round of funding was launched in April 2013 and encourages more business linkages between international companies, particularly those based in the UK.
The following UNESCO update is also organised under the four priority areas of UNGEI’s Policy Advocacy Agenda.

**An Enhanced Focus on Marginalized and Excluded Groups:**
UNESCO’s education programmes all target to benefit marginalized and excluded groups at both policy and operational project levels under its global priority for gender equality and mandate for promoting rights-based inclusive education. Of note is its enhanced and more targeted approach in supporting Member States at the policy level in promoting gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the education sector. A few examples include:

- Developed an education law and policy review framework and pilot tested it in Myanmar. This activity was part of a global initiative by UNESCO HQs to support gender mainstreaming and reinforce the gender component in the education programmes. The Guidelines were developed by UNESCO in collaboration with OIDEL and with support from UNESCO Bangkok to analyse the degree of compatibility of national legislations and policies on the right to education with international conventions and instruments on human rights in general, and gender equality and inclusive education in particular.

- Produced a mapping report on ‘girls and women’s right to education’ summarizing the specific references to the articles and paragraphs of national laws and policies on girls’ and women’s education and on the reporting on the implementation status of these references, based on the country reports submitted for the 8th consultation on CADE.

- Three sub-regional thematic groups were established in Central Asia, one of which was on gender responsive education, in an effort to strengthen national capacities in planning and management.

- In Ecuador and Colombia, UNESCO supported strengthening of national technical capacities to develop inter-sectoral policies for education with a focus on gender equality.

**The Reduction / Elimination of School-Related Gender-Based Violence:**
In 2013, UNESCO produced a global review of current issues and approaches in policy, programming and implementation responses to School Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) in English and French. The global review put forward comprehensive policy recommendations of preventing and addressing the phenomenon in and through education. Based on the findings of the study, a discussion paper was produced in collaboration with UNGEI, in English and French, and was presented and disseminated at the regional expert meetings in Bangkok (November 2013) and Ouagadougou (October 2013). Other specific efforts include:

- An Asia-Pacific Roundtable Meeting on SRGBV was held in November 2013 in Bangkok, organized in collaboration with Plan International and the UN Girls’ Education Initiative. The meeting brought together representatives from over 15 countries in the region.

- In Lebanon, a national study on SRGBV was completed and recommendations based on the findings were presented to the ministry of education.

- In DRC, a research methodology on sexual violence was developed and students and junior researchers were trained in its use.
Improved Learning Outcomes for Girls:
UNESCO IIEP produced a series of working papers and policy briefs focusing on gender differences in learning outcomes in sub-Saharan African countries using the results of SACMEQ data:

- IIEP supported Kenyan researchers and ministry officials develop policy-oriented research into gender differences in learning.

Increased Number of Girls Transitioning to Secondary Education and Accessing Post-Primary Opportunities:
Under the framework of UNESCO’s Global Partnership for Girls’ and Women’s Education and of Global Priority on Gender, UNESCO continued to support country-level projects focusing on girls’ access to and retention and completion in secondary education through private-public partnership.

- Global Partnership projects supported by private sector partners to promote girls’ access to and retention in secondary education continued in Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Senegal and Tanzania.
- UNESCO supported 8 countries (Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, Burkina) to develop an inclusive uninterrupted curriculum framework, focusing on the transition from primary to secondary, looking at mode of assessment and gender sensitive pedagogy.
- Best practices and case studies on girls’ retention to secondary Education in the Gambia and Senegal were produced.
- A project has been launched in Pakistan under the framework of the Malala Fund for Girls’ Right to Education (established in 2012), focusing on expanding access and improving quality of education for girls, particularly at the lower secondary level.

UNICEF
The International Day of the Girl Child (IDGC) was celebrated on 11 October 2013, a day designated by the United Nations for promoting the rights of girls, and addressing the unique challenges they face. As the lead agency for the Day, UNICEF, in consultation with other United Nations agencies and civil society partners, selected Innovating for Girls’ Education as the year’s theme, in recognition of the importance of fresh and creative perspectives to propel girls’ education forward and building on the momentum created by last year’s event.

All 8 regions actively participated in Day of the Girl celebrations, with 40 UNICEF country offices, regional offices and National Committees reporting activities.18 At UNICEF Headquarters, commemorative events included an advocacy event that showcased innovative approaches and good practices for improving access to and quality of girls’ education around the world, and a high-level leadership forum for enhanced commitment by global leaders. The Girl Declaration was presented during the leadership forum, capturing voices of girls regarding their space in the post-2015 agenda. Speakers included the Office of the Secretary-General; Amina Mohammed, UN Special Adviser on the Post-2015 Framework; Anthony Lake, Executive Director, UNICEF; and Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director, UN Women.

18 For additional information on IDGC activities in the field, please consult the UNGEI website: http://www.ungei.org/news/index_3449.html
Social media activity was vibrant, with the #dayofthegirl post reaching over 1.9 million Facebook users. On Twitter, IDGC was mentioned over 51,000 times, reaching over 104 million people. Selected Goodwill Ambassadors, celebrities and donors who took part in spreading the messages on Facebook or Twitter included: Queen Rania, Priyanka Chopra, The White House, and the Melinda Gates & Gates Foundation. In addition, a crowd-sourced ThunderClap was organized for the Day which led to a spike in traffic at 9am EST reaching close to 3,974,658 million individuals. Finally, UNICEF was featured on The Guardian and Pakistan’s The Nation on the Day.

UNFPA
UNFPA is a partner in the Global Education First Initiative, led by the Secretary General, which aims to make it possible for every child to be in school, to improve the quality of learning, and to foster global citizenship. Some UNFPA contributions to GEFI’s framework for action include:

- Use of major 2013 global forums such as CSW, Women Deliver, post 2015 consultations, International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) beyond 20 review, among others, to promote stronger intersectoral collaboration to address overlapping health, gender and education inequalities.

- UNFPA’s contribution to knowledge base of effective policies to accelerate progress on MDGs through the ICPD beyond 2014 review process, which deepened measures to address cross-cutting inequalities that prevent girls in general and adolescent girls in particular from education and learning.

- UNFPA’s contribution to increasing visibility of GEFI through its advocacy work, including through co-chairing the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth and Development and supporting the Special Envoy on Youth and the System-Wide Action Plan on Youth.

- Support to the country level work on advancing the agenda to promote the rights of the adolescent girls, including the fight against child marriage. UNFPA’s global initiative, Action for Adolescent Girls in 12 countries. This global initiative is building the health, social and economic assets of girls by providing them access to health information and services (including sexual and reproductive health), the opportunity to learn life skills, a chance for social participation and leadership, and links to formal/non-formal education and livelihoods. Girl groups meet in safe spaces led by slightly older female mentors and role models from the community.

With partners, UNFPA strengthens the capacity of countries on evidence-based comprehensive sexuality education, which serves as a platform for promoting human rights, gender equality, and inclusive societies. In 2013, UNFPA supported 102 counties in the design and implement comprehensive age-appropriate sexuality education programmes. In addition, the number of experts trained through UNFPA support to provide technical assistance on design, implementation, and evaluation of comprehensive sexuality education programmes increased significantly, reaching 528 in 2013.
Country Examples:

- **Malawi**: Through a joint programme on adolescent girls (UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO), girls are provided educational scholarships to stay in school. The programme also provides adolescents with sexual reproductive health and rights information and services, as well as leadership training.

- **Laos**: With technical support from UNFPA, the Ministry of Education has developed a Teachers’ Guidebook on adolescent sexual and reproductive health topics, including: 1) Birth Spacing and Contraception, 2) Pregnancy and Maternal and Child Care, 3) Families, Gender and Rights, 4) Changing during Puberty, 5) STIs/HIV/AIDS, 6) Drugs Education (for use by the Teacher Training Institutions and by the Non-Formal Education program around the country).

- **Argentina**: UNFPA provided capacity development support to the Ministry of Education in order to train 20,000 teachers to implement comprehensive sexuality education in all provinces.

- **Rwanda**: The UN system has rolled out a joint programme on education and health for communities, families and vulnerable adolescents and youth (participating agencies include: UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNAIDS and WHO). The programme aims to increase access to quality early childhood development, nutrition, education, protection and HIV prevention and treatment services for children, youth and families, as well as youth participation in decision-making processes. The programme promotes education for girls, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, through a Girls Education Campaign at the community level and through peer support workshops for 200 girls.

- **Lesotho**: With support from UNESCO, UNFPA and UNICEF, the Ministry of Education and Training revised the Life Skills Education curriculum for primary and secondary school to incorporate comprehensive sexuality education. Teachers’ guides and students’ books will be piloted in 2014, and principals and district education officers have been sensitized on life skills-based education.

**World Food Programme**

**WFP School Feeding Unit, HQ**

In November 2013, WFP’s Executive Board approved a revised School Feeding Policy. This policy emphasizes school feeding as a social protection mechanism and highlights school feeding’s important role in girl’s education. It represents WFP’s knowledge as the largest humanitarian organization implementing school feeding, which it was being done for 50 years.

School feeding is an essential tool to draw girls to the classroom and keep them returning. Families often keep their girls at home to help with housework or marry them off at a young age. A greater number of parents will consistently send their girls to school with the promise that they will receive a meal or snack. In 2013, WFP fed over 10 million girls through school meals programmes. WFP uses methods such as providing take-home rations to further motivate families. In 2013, WFP provided almost 1 million take-home rations. School feeding has been proved to increase enrolment, attendance, and punctuality and have positive effects on promotion rates. WFP recognizes that there needs to be particular motivation for girls transitioning to secondary education. In 2012, WFP provided school meals to almost 75,000 secondary school girls, a 23% increase from 2012. In addition, WFP provided take-home rations to over 45,000 secondary school girls.
During times of crises or economic hardship, girls are the first to be pulled from school. Scaling up school feeding programmes has had significant success in keeping girls in the classroom during times of duress. More than half of the countries WFP services are in emergency or protracted relief situations, and at least 38 countries where WFP school meals are present have scaled up their programmes in response to armed conflict, natural disasters, and food and financial crises.

School meals and fortified snacks help provide the calories, vitamins, and micronutrients girls need for development. School meals programmes have had positive effects on the weight and height of girls. Students receiving the proper nutrients and calories have a greater ability to concentrate and learn in school.

The Nourishing Bodies, Nourishing minds commitment was launched in 2013, which is a renewed partnership between UNESCO, UNICEF, and WFP. This partnership focuses on improving the quality of education for the world’s most underserved children. There is a specific focus on improving the enrolment rates of girls, especially adolescent girls. This year, a WFP consultant travelled to Haiti, Mozambique, Pakistan, and Niger to gather information and push forward the partnership’s progress.

**World Vision**

World Vision has been a member of UNGEI for over 6 years and is committed to the vision of empowering girls and boys through quality education to realize their full potential. We are well-aligned with several of UNGEI’s key advocacy priorities as we head into 2015 and beyond that, especially as it relates to reaching the most marginalized girls and reducing gender-based violence (e.g. child marriage).

**An Enhanced Focus on Marginalized and Excluded Groups:**

- World Vision US has a track record of working with marginalized and excluded groups, particularly to reduce child labor. Our partnership in 2013 with the US Department of Labor in countries, such as Philippines, Ethiopia and Cambodia have afforded us the opportunity to engage both girls and boys who are either engaged in child labor or at-risk in increased learning opportunities to improve enrolment and retention. Some of the key activities that attract these children who are more vulnerable are out-of-school time programming that is fun and engaging and catch-up educational activities that allow them the opportunity to re-integrate into school or reinforce their learning.

- In 2013 World Vision was one of the partners with 10x10 that debuted the feature film “Girl Rising,” that narrated the story of nine extraordinary girls and their determination to obtain education. Two girls in the film are sponsored through World Vision programs.

- World Vision Zimbabwe is a partner with DFID in the Girls’ Education Challenge, through the project Improving Girls Access through Transforming Education, a 3 year quasi-experimental design program that is tackling the biggest barriers to education access and achievement for marginalized girls in Zimbabwe. It is a large-scale program aiming to support approximately 62,000 school girls through a holistic approach that includes: a) building girls’ self-esteem, b) engaging parents and caregivers to increase understanding about the importance of education, c) improving family financial capacity, d) creating an enabling school and community environment for girls to thrive, e) addressing the long distances girls travel to school and actively involving traditional and faith leaders to promote girls’ learning.
The Reduction / Elimination of School-Related Gender-Based Violence:

- In 2013 World Vision India began working to engage men as fathers to prevent child marriage, which is a deeply embedded cultural and social norm. Through working with fathers, this project aims at promoting gender equality and preventing child marriage and gender-based violence. A manual that has been developed in partnership with Promundo, serves as a guide for project facilitators to bring together men, their daughters, and their partners to critically reflect on the cultural and gender norms that serve as obstacles to men's participation as involved fathers and perpetuate the devaluation of women and girls.