INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF UNICEF EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Improving Access to Quality Basic Education in Myanmar (2006-2010)

Final Report

David J Clarke

16 December 2010

Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ATEO	Assistant Township Education Officer
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CCA	Child-Centred Approach
CE	Continuing Education
CFS	Child Friendly Schools
CLC	Community Learning Centre
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CP	Child Protection
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DAP	Developmentally Appropriate Practice
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DEPT	Department of Education Planning and Training
DOH	Department of Health
DMERB	Department of Myanmar Education Research Bureau
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education For All
EXCEL	Extended and Continuous Education and Learning
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
FO	Field Officer
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
HDI	Human Development Initiative
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IoE	Institute of Education
INGO	International Non-Government Organization

IT	Information Technology
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LEP	Language Enrichment Programme
LSE	Life Skills Education
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDEF	Multi-Donor Education Fund
MERB	Myanmar Education Resource Bureau
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MDA	Mid-Decade Assessment
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MLA	Monitoring Learning Achievement
NAP	National Action Programme
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NFPE	Non Formal Primary Education
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NIR	Net Intake Rate
NPA	National Plan of Action
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
QBE	Quality basic Education
SC	Save the Children
SHAPE	School-Based Healthy Living and HIV/AIDS Prevention
SHN	School Health and Nutrition
SMIS	School Management Information System
SSA	School Self Assessment
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
TEMIS	Township Education Management information System
TEO	Township Education Officer

TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UDNR	University for the Development of the National Races
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WES	Water and Environment Sanitation
WFP	World Food Programme

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF UNICEF EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Improving Access to Quality Basic Education in Myanmar (2006-2010)

Executive Summary

1.   Introduction

The main purpose of this evaluation of the UNICEF Education Programme in Myanmar 2006-2010 is to assess its performance in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and suggest any needed modifications for further programming. The evaluation report attempts to identify key lessons learned and good practices documented through delivering the project interventions, as well as to suggest future directions that would contribute to the design and development of a second phase of multi-donor support from 2011. The Terms of Reference for the evaluation are at Annex 1.

2.   Evaluation Process

2.1   Methods

The methods included a thorough document review of the UNICEF Education Programme. Based on this and the terms of reference, (See Annex 1), a conceptual framework was developed with accompanying methods involving qualitative research including for focus-group discussions and key informant interviews. A rapid situation analysis of the education sector was conducted to inform the review.

Meetings and focus group discussions were held in-country with key counterparts including UNICEF staff in Yangon and in the field; key counterparts and implementing partners (e.g. Ministry of Education and local NGOs) and various stakeholders involved in the programme (See Annex 2, for a list of persons consulted and Annex 3 for a bibliography). Discussions were held with donor representatives,

Field visits were made to a selected sample of target beneficiaries, to observe, and conduct interviews/in-depth interviews/focus group discussions with stakeholders at township and school levels (e.g. teachers, students, and members of parent teacher association). The visits were conducted in Mon State, Ayaryarwaddy and Yangon Divisions.

2.2   Limitations

The in-country review took place over a two-week period. The review process was limited in terms of access to busy stakeholders during this period. Comprehensive and reliable data on the education sector are difficult to obtain. There are significant gaps in data, especially with regard to education financing and service delivery performance. Field visits were limited to more accessible regions of Myanmar and the more remote settings were not observed. The limited time available for the review means that a dip-stick approach was taken at field level using qualitative research methods. The findings should be taken to be indicative, but every effort has been made to triangulate data using other available sources of information.

3.   The Programme

The UNICEF Education Programme is described in Section 2 of this report. The programme goal was:

To provide quality early child development and basic education for all. [1]

---

[1] MDEF Logframe 2007-2011.

The programme purpose was*:*

Increased equitable access to and outcome in quality early childhood development and basic education with extended learning opportunities for all children, especially in disadvantaged and hard to reach communities.[2]

It should be noted that primary education is the programme focus area, while basic education in Myanmar encompasses this and both lower and upper secondary education. Thus, both the goal and purpose statements are somewhat misleading.

The programme comprises three interlocking sub-projects: i) Early Childhood Development (ECD); ii) Quality Basic Education (QBE) and ii) Life Skills Education (LSE). These are reflected in the three logical framework outputs for 2007-2011:[3]

- **Output 1. Increased access to and quality of ECD programmes for 0-3 and 3-5 year olds in disadvantaged and hard to reach areas;**

- **Output 2. Increased equitable access to primary education and sustainable school improvements through the Child Friendly School (CFS) programme; and**

- **Output 3. Children and young people aged 5-18 given access to learning about protecting themselves and practicing healthy living.**

4. Key findings of the evaluation

The findings in the evaluation are organized in terms of the following criteria: relevance; coverage; effectiveness; efficiency and sustainability. These issues are addressed in separate sections of the main report.

4.1 The design of the Education Programme was highly relevant to addressing the key issues in Basic Education

The main strengths are considered to be as follows. The programme:

- Was aligned with Government Policy on Basic Education and highly valued by MoE;

- Addressed key barriers to equity in ECD and primary education;

- Addressed the poor quality of primary education;

- Attempted to builds capacity in some key functional areas of the Ministry of Education e.g the EMIS; and

- Developed models of good practice which can be taken to scale (e.g. ECD, EXCEL).

4.2 The programme had a number of critically important design limitations which need to be addressed in any subsequent phase of support for education

These include the following:

- **Inclusion of programmes targeted at 0-3 year olds**. These are not normally part of an education sector policy framework or programme. While interventions have very robust child development justification, they must be considered as on outlier in the overall

---

[2] MDEF Logframe 2007-2011.
[3] MDEF Logframe 2007-2011.

education programme strategy and more properly should be within a holistic mutli-sectoral response to supporting child development under the direction of the Ministry of Social Welfare;

- **Implemented in a context without a comprehensive sector plan.** The Education Sector lacks a clearly defined and costed 3 year-strategic plan which could have been developed with the participation of the MoE;

- **Inadequate M&E arrangements**. While there is strong importance given to M&E in the original proposal, there was a lack of a defined and consistent set of programme indicators which would be used to track progress and ensure accountability. Multiple steps were taken to address M&E during implementation. However, the arrangements put in place were too complex for UNICEF to manage and as a result a great deal of the data obtained was not analysed. There was an overreliance on a large-scale survey to measure changes in school practices without any triangulation using qualitative research methods.

- **Lack of an exit strategy.** There is no clear exit strategy to ensure that dependence on UNICEF provided school supplies does not emerge in schools and in poor households and communities.

4.3   The purpose of the programme and the 3 main outputs were achieved: however, sustainability is major issue.

- The programme increased equitable access to quality early childhood education and primary education with extended opportunities for all children, especially those in disadvantaged and hard to reach communities. This is reflected in improved ECE enrolment and primary school survival rates in targeted Townships;

- Some school improvements were achieved through Child Friendly Schools implementation;

- Access to non-formal education, including life-skills based continuing education (EXCEL) and non-formal primary education (NFPE) was increased. Models for both EXCEL and NFPE were developed.

4.4   The ECD programme achieved multiple positive impacts on both the demand and supply sides of early childhood education (ECE)

These included:

- Increased community awareness of and demand for ECE services;

- Increased participation in parental education;

- Increased participation rates in ECD/ECE. 125,000 children benefitted from ECD in 109 Townships;

- Increase in school-based ECE provision;

- Improved social and communication (life skills) and school readiness of children participating in the ECE programme;

- Increase in equity in ECE through the development and use of learning materials in minority languages, promotion of inclusive ECE and increased participation of children with disabilities;

- Increased participation of poor and disadvantaged children. It is estimated by UNICEF that 70% of children attending the ECD programme were from poor households;

- Capacity in delivering effective ECE has been strengthened, including though the setting of national Minimum Standards;

- Increased space for civil society participation through support for NGO implementation of ECD/ECE;

4.5   Delivery of quality and equitable ECD/ECE still faces important challenges

These include:

- Lack of clear MoE policy on ECE and ownership;

- ECD financing is dependent on community/household contributions;

- ECE coverage rates are still low, particularly of children in remote and disadvantaged rural areas. Much depends on NGO availability;

- Effective targeting of the most disadvantaged, vulnerable and at risk children;

- ECE teacher attrition rates are high; and

- Need for better disaggregated data on ECD (by gender/school/Township) for planning and M&E.

4.6   Programme support for primary education improved the school intake and survival rate in most schools

- Endline data showed that 62% of primary schools improved their survival rates, while 30% saw a decline. The survival rate went from 62% at baseline to 76% at endline;

- The Apparent Intake Rate (AIR) showed a significant improvement at endline (from 0.62 to 0.76)

4.7   There was no significant change in repletion rates.

- Most schools have an automatic promotion policy in Grades 1-3;

- Grade repetition is still being practised in some schools.

4.8   Capacity strengthening has taken place at Township and school levels in primary education, but needs to be more systematic and evidence-based

- Pilot programmes such as Language Enrichment Programme (LEP) and the Township Education Management Information System are promising developments but need to be rigorously evaluated before any scaling up is planned;

- In-service training has been delivered to in CFS; School Improvement Planning; Child Centred Approach (CCA);

- The quality of pre-service teacher training has been addressed only in the area of life skills education;

- Effective school management remains a challenge despite the introduction of school improvement planning, School Management Information System (SMIS) and CFS;

- No systematic capacity building needs assessment has been undertaken to improve the quality of basic education service delivery;

4.9 School environments have been improved, but many schools remain inadequate for effective teaching and learning

- School sanitation has improved through the construction of 600 latrines, the provision of potable water and resources to repair basic infrastructure (roofs in particular);

- New models of primary school construction have been piloted in Cyclone Nargis-affected areas. These schools can also function as cyclone shelters and offer a higher standard of classroom and school environment than is currently the provision in most schools;

- School infrastructure can be poor. Many schools only provide a single hall type of construction with no partitions in which all classes are taught simultaneously in the same classroom structure. This practice facilitates multi-grade teaching if teachers are absent or lacking, but is not conducive to supporting good quality teaching. Some classrooms are very dark;

- Regular school maintenance is a key issue;

- There are many multi-grade classes in rural schools. Multi-grade teaching needs to be strengthened through appropriate teacher training.

- There is a need for MoE to rethink how it provides funds for school infrastructure including the critical question of how much it contributes.

4.10 The provision of essential school supplies has supported greater equity in primary education service delivery, but targeting of additional support for the most disadvantaged children is still required

- Poverty is deeply entrenched and school levies are pervasive. The school supplies are not enough to relieve the total cost burden for poor families. It may amount to only 10%-20% of the burden that is reduced. The supplies need to be continued and possibly enhanced in terms of better targeting of exercise books and pencils to poor children;

- There is a need to explore the need for targeted school feeding and nutrition;

- Equity needs to be ensured between schools under the responsibility of the MoE and Monastic schools;

- Greater support is in the early years of learning required for speakers of languages other than Myanmar in literacy skills acquisition;

4.18 Programme interventions have had limited impact on the quality of teaching and learning

- Current interventions are having an effect on individual schools though only a limited impact on the system. Research is needed on why some schools are better able to adopt CFS principles than others;

- The wide variation between the performance of schools within a township indicates that there is a need to strengthen educational management particularly at township and school level to support the progressive adoption of CFS principles in the classroom;

- The construction of many schools in hallway arrangements militates against effective teaching and learning;

- No correlation was found between CFS interventions and learning achievement. This implies a revisiting of the CFS approach with a much stronger emphasis on school/teacher effectiveness;

- Many children experience learning difficulties at school. Mathematics and English are the subjects that were considered to be most difficult to teach and to learn. There is a need to explore how to improve teaching in learning in key subjects.

- CFS is too complex for some teachers and they find it difficult to apply it in practice. There are some large classes (40+). Classroom management is a challenge and noise levels can be high.

- In some schools there is the persistent heavy use of choral repetition and whole class activities;

- Some teachers are resistant to change;

- Teachers are not used to doing lesson plans; they prefer to read the textbook.

- SIPs tend to be narrowly focus on infrastructure, water, fencing and furniture and less concerned with school effectiveness and the quality of education in the classroom.

4.12 Community participation in primary education remains limited in scope

- Improving school-community relationships as envisaged by CFS is a low priority for most schools;

4.13 Learning outcomes were improved but they remain very low in literacy and numeracy

- Improvements were made in many schools in Myanmar language learning and literacy skills acquisition;

- Attainment levels in primary level Myanmar language and mathematics are very low;

4.18 Support for Life Skills Education in primary education has been effective

- The LSE sub-project has had a national impact at primary level through curriculum development and teacher training.

- LSE seems to be liked by students. Students are benefiting from the primary school LSE curriculum in a number of ways. It helps increase knowledge and skills that are health-related; strengthens communication skills, critical thinking and problem solving; increases cooperative and interpersonal behaviours and reduces bullying. Knowledge acquired is shared with parents. Teachers have learned how to apply child-centred teaching methods, improved their knowledge on health issues and strengthened their own life skills;

4.18 Teacher education and support in life skills education needs further strengthening

- The main challenge is ensuring that teachers are skilled and motivated to teach the subject as intended;

- Some teachers do not follow the steps in the Teachers' Guides. They may use more traditional teacher-centred methods instead. As a consequence students may not be able to practise the skills in the classroom. They lack the skills to use visual aids effectively. They have difficulty with sensitive topics such as SRH and sexuality. They may not give

LSE a high priority, even though it is a core subject. In Education Colleges, the approach that is contained in the Teachers Guides is not used.

- There is no specific LSE teacher training manual or materials. There is a lack of a specialized department for life skills education. The Teacher Training Colleges are weak at sharing their experiences with others.

- There is a need for further investments in teacher education, supervision and support for LSE within a broader framework for support to improve the quality of teacher education.

4.16   The EXCEL programme is innovative and a very promising form of continuing education.

- EXCEL manages to reach and retain one of the hardest groups to reach: out of school adolescents.

- The effects of the programme on the lives of participating children are multiple. They include increases in knowledge, self-esteem, psycho-social skills and connectedness. The programme is a blend of Continuing Education (CE), LSE and social protection.

- There is strong demand for the programme to be lengthened in duration and strengthened in terms of CE and vocational training.

- Multiple community impacts are reported, including a strengthening of social capital at village level.

4.17   The EXCEL Programme needs further development to meet expressed needs of the target group

- Demand for EXCEL exceeds supply. There are many children out of school;

- The programme content needs to be broader and include more Continuing Education and links with local vocational training opportunities;

- Some children are hungry and would benefit from targeted nutrition interventions.

4.18   The programme outcomes provide a platform for policy dialogue and strong foundation for a second phase of support to ECE and Basic Education

- It is critically important that the results of this programme, strengths and limitations be discussed with senior MoE officials as well as key policy issues concerned with equity, quality and efficiency in the basic education sub-sector.

4.19   Sustainability is in very much in question

- There is some evidence of emerging dependence of UNICEF provided supplies. School staff and parents do not wish to lose the current provision.

5.   Key Recommendations

The following strategic recommendations are made:

- Evaluate pilot interventions such as LEP and TEMIS as a matter of urgency. Develop a scaling up or revision strategy in line with the findings;

- Support MoE in developing a costed and detailed strategic plan for UBE/UPC 2012-2015;

- Develop an exit strategy for existing support to CFS schools, especially in the field of supplies and focus more strongly on sustainability;

- Continue to strengthen existing interventions in to address equity and quality in primary Education. Undertake assessments to provide better understandings of equity, quality and capacity issues;

- Systematically review the approach to CFS implementation in the light of the endline findings;

- Undertake evidence-based policy dialogue with MoE on ECD (3-5) and NFE to develop a more comprehensive sector policy framework and review the findings of this evaluation;

- Focus more on strengthening primary school effectiveness and improving learning outcomes (especially literacy and numeracy skills);

- Take a strategic approach in partnership with JICA to strengthen the quality of primary teacher pre-service education;

- Investigate ways of improving targeted interventions in ECD and primary education to better cater for the needs of the poorest families;

- Consider making further developments to the EXCEL programme to increase duration and CE/vocational skills development; and

- Develop a detailed and technically sound M&E plan as part of the next phase proposal;

- Improve the effectiveness and inclusiveness of donor coordination mechanisms for any future programme phase of support.

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF UNICEF EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Improving Access to Quality Basic Education in Myanmar (2006-2010)

Main report

Section 1

<u>**The Review Process**</u>

1.1   Purpose of the review

The main purpose of review of the UNICEF Education Programme 2006-2010 is to assess and document implementation strategies, analyse project performance against the set objectives, and identify lessons learned during implementation. The review aims to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and suggest any needed modifications for further programming. It attempts to identify key lessons learned and good practices documented through delivering the project interventions, as well as to suggest future directions that would contribute to the design and development of the second phase of Programme from 2011.

The main focus of the review concerns three key questions. These are:

i)   What worked?

ii)   What didn't work?

iii)   What are the alternative means to make the programme work better?

1.2   Framework for analysis

In line with OECD/DAC criteria for evaluating development programmes, the review investigates the following issue areas:

- Relevance (Section 3 of this report);

- Coverage (Section 4);

- Effectiveness (Section 5);

- Efficiency (Section 6); and

- Sustainability (Section 7).

The evaluation process and report writing were informed by the DAC principles for evaluating development assistance[1] and UNICEF standards for evaluation reporting. [2]

1.3   Methods

The methods included a thorough document review of the UNICEF Education Programme. Based on this and the terms of reference, (See <u>Annex 1</u>), a conceptual framework was developed with accompanying methods involving qualitative research including for focus-group discussions and key informant interviews . A rapid situation analysis of the education sector was conducted to inform the review. Meetings and focus group discussions were held in-country with key

---

[1] Development Assistance Committee (1991) Principles for evaluation of development assistance. DAC. Paris.
[2] UNICEF. (2004). UNICEF Evaluation Report Standards. UNICEF. New York.

counterparts including UNICEF staff in Yangon and in the field; key counterparts and implementing partners (e.g. Ministry of Education and local NGOs), other partners (UN, NGO), donors, and various stakeholders involved in the programme (See <u>Annex 2</u>, for a list of persons consulted and <u>Annex 3</u> for a bibliography).

Field visits were made to a selected sample of target beneficiaries, to observe, and conduct interviews/in-depth interviews/focus group discussions with stakeholders at township and school levels (e.g. teachers, students, and members of parent teacher association). The visits were conducted in Mon State, Ayaryarwaddy and Yangon Divisions.

The research undertaken on implementation of Child Friendly Schools from 2007-2009[3] proved to be extremely useful and provided valuable insights that complemented findings from routine programme monitoring.

1.4   Limitations

The in-country review took place over a two-week period. The review process was limited in terms of access to busy stakeholders during this period. Comprehensive and reliable data on the education sector are difficult to obtain. There are significant gaps in data, especially with regard to education financing and service delivery performance. Field visits were limited to more accessible regions of Myanmar and the more remote settings were not observed. The limited time available for the review means that a dip-stick approach was taken at field level using qualitative research methods. The findings should be taken to be indicative, but every effort has been made to triangulate data using other available sources of information.

---

[3] UNICEF. (2010). Progress in implementation of the child friendly schools programme in Myanmar over the three year period 2007-2009. Yangon.

Section 2

The UNICEF Education Programme

2.1   Country context

Myanmar has a population of 57.5 million, some 38% of whom are children under the age of 18.[1] Around 69% of the population lives in rural areas. [2] The country may be entering a demographic transition since the total fertility rate has recently been reported in the Fertility and Reproductive Health Survey at two births. If this is the trend, it should facilitate education planning and the achievement of Education for All (EFA).

The country is administered in 14 states and regions; only 5 of these do not have a border with a neighbouring country. These states and regions are further divided into 67 districts, which in turn are sub-divided into 325 townships. A key development issue is decentralization and the enabling of effective administration at district and township levels.

There are some 135 ethnic groups with a similar number of languages. The official language is Myanmar and English is widely used. Such linguistic diversity presents a significant challenge for ensuring efficient education service delivery and for equity as there is the risk that speakers of languages other than Myanmar will be disadvantaged in the classroom if policies are not out in place to address linguistic disadvantage.

The mainstay of the economy is agriculture, which constituted 59% of GDP in 2002 and 44% in 2007. Rural development and livelihoods are therefore important considerations when planning education development. The country has a rich natural resource base. Natural resources include oil and gas, minerals, forests and marine resources. High prices for natural gas exports have supported modest rates of economic growth.

The severe impact of Cyclone Nargis in 2008 highlights the country's increasing vulnerability to disasters due to the effects of climate change. Recovery and reconstruction will take at least 3 years. The impact has highlighted the importance of disaster preparedness and this is a new issue for the education sector. Environmental problems including deteriorating water supply and diminishing common property resources impact particularly on the poor. [3]

Myanmar is a poor country in spite of its vast natural resources. Corruption, ignorance of effective economic policy-making and international isolation have all contributed to constraining economic growth. GDP per capita stood at US$ 179 in 2003[4] and has increased to an estimated $469 in 2010. After decades of armed conflict and relative isolation from and by the international community, Myanmar is significantly lagging behind its neighbours on most socio-economic indicators on poverty, health, and education, with a Human Development Index ranking of 138 out of 182.[5] Life expectancy at birth is 61 years and 32% of children under 5 years of age are underweight.[6] Ethnic minorities in border areas may experience the most disadvantaged situations. As a consequence of these manifold and complex reasons, Myanmar's society is highly fragmented. International isolation has contributed to deprive large parts of the population from economic and social development. Economic growth is much needed to pave the way for an increase in spending on poverty reduction, health, and education. [7] However, poor quality basic service delivery with its adverse results for the improving human capital is an impediment to economic growth and the country appears to be currently locked in a cycle of poverty.

---

[1] Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development. (2009). Statistical Yearbook 2008.
[2] UNICEF. (2010). Draft Country Programme Document. Myanmar. Yangon.
[3] Dapice, D. (2003). Current economic conditions in Myanmar and options for sustainable growth. Tufts University.
[4] European Commission. (2007). The EC-Burma/Myanmar Strategy Paper. 2007-2013.
[5] UNDP. (2009). Human Development report.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Asian Development Bank. (2009). Myanmar. Asian Development Outlook. 2009. Manila

As is the case in many countries with diverse socio-economic settings, national data on poverty in Myanmar tend to mask large disparities between States and Divisions. Sub-national data are therefore critically important for informing social policy and poverty reduction strategies. Disaggregated poverty data reveal a complex and diverse picture of disadvantage across the country.

The most recent data on poverty were obtained through the integrated household living survey (2007). Among the findings were large disparities between States/Divisions regarding food poverty, as measured by the Food Poverty Headcount Index). The national rate is 10%. The highest rates were obtained in Chin State with 40% of individuals below the Food Poverty Line (i.e. with insufficient consumption expenditure to cover their food needs). This was followed by Shan North and Shan East. The lowest rates were found in Kayin (2%) followed by Yangon and Mon. The National Poverty Headcount index stands at 32% (individuals falling below the Poverty Line with insufficient consumption expenditure to meet basic food and non-food needs). Chin State again reported the highest rate (73% poor), followed by Shan East (52%) and Shan North %1%). The lowest rates were obtained in Kayin (12%) followed by Yangon (15%) and Mon (22%).

At the national level, the national expenditure share of the poorest quintile is 12%. There is relatively little variation between States/Divisions with ranges from 10.7% to 12.9%. This seems to suggest that poverty is quite evenly distributed across the country. The States/Divisions which provide the largest contributions to national poverty are Mandalay (5.7%), Ayeyarwaddy (4.2%) and Magwe (3.7%). This due to the both the prevalence of poverty and the size of the population. While Chin and Shan East are the poorest, they have relatively small populations.

Household size correlates with poverty, with poor households being systematically larger. The average household size is 5.2. The largest household sizes are to be found in Rakhine (6.0), Kachin (6.0) and Chin (5.9). The lowest are in Yangon (4.7). The highest age dependency ratios are to be found in Chin, Kayin and Rakhine. Some 18.9% of households are female-headed. This does not appear to correlate with poverty as poverty rates are very similar to male-headed households (29% and 30% respectively).

There is a strong association between poverty and i) agriculture; ii) casual labour; iii) lower quality dwellings; and iv) fewer household assets. Only 38% of households nationally have access to electricity with strong urban-rural disparities (81%:22%). Only 22% of poor households have access to electricity. The lowest rates are to be found in Bago East and Chin State. 62.6% of population have access to safe drinking water (within 1 kilometer). Access in rural areas is more problematic than in urban settings. The lowest rates are in Ayeyarwaddy (30%) and Rakhine (33.9%).

In conclusion, poverty is pervasive and multi-factorial in Myanmar. The worst affected areas appear to be Chin, Rakhine and Shan States.

2.2   The Education System

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for the education sector from primary school through to higher education, including non-formal education (NFE). Early childhood development (ECD) for children aged 0-5 is the responsibility of the Department of Social Welfare (Ministry of Social Welfare), through a complex multi-sectoral framework, which includes Early Childhood Education (ECE). The priority of welfare policy is to provide opportunities for vulnerable groups in under-served areas, rural populations and people with disabilities. The MoE is one implementing agency among several in ECE through the provision of pre-schooling for children aged 3-5 years. ECD is also implemented by local NGOs and Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs).

The structure of the education system and the core responsibilities of the MoE are laid down in the Basic Education Law (1973). Basic education consists of primary, middle and high schools in a 5-4-2 structure. Primary education is of 5 years duration (Grades1-5). Entry to primary school is

at age 5. However in practice there is both underage age and overage enrollment, especially in rural schools. Middle schools (lower secondary) comprise four grades (6-9). High school (upper secondary) comprises grades 10-11. A recent development has been the growth of post primary schools which extend their programme from primary to middle school. This is likely to facilitate the transition from primary to secondary school. The adoption of a continuous progression policy in 1998 significantly has reduced repetition rates in primary education. The repetition rate was estimated to be 0.5% in 2005.[8]

There are many types of school. These include: i) affiliated schools supervised by the Township Education Officer (TEO), but financed entirely by the community; ii) branch schools which are close to homes of students who reside at a distance from the school and; iii) self-help schools that are financed and run entirely by the community, especially in conflict or cease-fire zones. There are 40,679 primary schools, 6,601 post primary schools (grades 1-9), and 1.723 and 1,092 affiliated and branch middle and highs schools, respectively. There are 43 mobile schools.

The Ministry of Development of Border Areas and National Races is responsible for education and social services in the border and ceasefire areas. The Ministry of Religious Affairs (Department of Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana) runs a parallel system of monastic schools which provide the official primary and middle school curricula as well as providing education about Buddhist culture and way of life. There are an estimated 1,300 such schools, which cater primarily for poor children in the communities in which monasteries are located, including orphans and those from remote areas. Some of the boys in monastic school are novice monks. A key policy issue is equivalence between the curricula of the different streams of education and equity in terms of learning outcomes. Research is needed on the quality of learning processes and outcomes in monastic schools.

While the overwhelming majority of school-level institutions come under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, the responsibility for higher education is shared among 13 ministries (e.g. health, agriculture, forestry, defence etc). The Ministry of Science and Technology is the second most significant funder of institutions at this level. There are specialised Technology Universities and Computer Universities. Before the reorganisation of higher education in 1998, there were 38 institutions. There are now 159. This represents an expansion in the supply of higher education, an increasing concentration in science and technology and a decentralisation or dispersal of institutions.

The responsibility for technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is centred on the Ministry of Science and Technology within the Department of Technical and Vocational Education and the Department of Advanced Science and Technology. There are 26 Technical Colleges which offer course in fields such as civil engineering, electronic and electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, chemical engineering and information technology (IT). There are 9 Technical institutes and 10 handicraft schools. Other line ministries such as Industry, Construction, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Labour, Defence and Cooperatives, run their own TVET institutions. There are numerous private centres which run training courses in language, accounting, tailoring, cosmetics and hairdressing. The output of the various TVET institutions does not meet demand either quantitatively or qualitatively. Opportunities for skills training in agriculture are limited.

The provision of non-formal education (NFE) is limited in coverage and provided by local NGOs and international development organisations. NFE activities include Myanmar language teaching (MLT), adult literacy and continuing education (CE), vocational training and non-formal primary education (NFPE). There are 927 Continuing Learning Centres (CLCs) which provide ECE, NFPE, basic literacy and income generating programmes. The MoE has developed a plan of action for NFE with three phases (from 2002-2015).

---

[8] UNESCO. (2008).Asia and the Pacific Education for All (EFA) Mid-Decade Assessment. Mekong Sub-Region Synthesis Report. Bangkok.

The current school curriculum was introduced in 1998. At primary level the main subjects in the curriculum are Myanmar language, English and mathematics. At lower primary level (Grades 1-2) General Studies is also taught which includes Natural Science, Moral and Civic Education and Life Skills. At upper primary level (Grades 3-4), Basic Science and Social Science (including Geography, History, Moral And Civics Education and Life Skills) are taught. Co-curricular activities include physical education. At lower secondary level there are 6 main subjects: Myanmar, English, Mathematics, History, Geography and General Science. Co-curricular activities include Life Skills, Physical Education and Pre-Vocational Education. Higher secondary education involves three main subjects (Myanmar, English and Mathematics) and three electives (e.g. Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Economics etc).

Primary and lower secondary school teachers are trained at Education Colleges, of which there are 20, and those for upper secondary at 2 Institutes of Education (IoE). Teachers from ethnic minorities in the border areas are trained at the University for the Development of the National Races (UDNR). The majority of primary school teachers are qualified (95% is reported in the EFA National Plan of Action).[9]

Policies and programmes are reported to have been implemented to improve equity in primary education. These have included inclusive education, opening more schools in border, remote and mountainous areas and recruiting local teachers.[10] Best practices were reported to be: mobile schools; inclusive education; child-friendly schools; special classes for over-age children in primary classes; introduction of post-primary schools and; voluntary night schools for children who cannot attend during the day.

2.3. Basic Data on Education

The complete set of routine national data on education is not available. The UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Reports present very limited data on Myanmar. There are issues concerning the reliability of data. Table 1 sets out some of the key education sector indicators which are recommended by the EFA Fast Track Initiative,[11] with a strong focus on primary education.

Table 1. Selected Education Indicators

Education Indicators	Latest Data
Adult literacy rate (15-45)	94.5% (2007)* 96.5% (2005) ** 84.9% (92.1% urban: 82.1% rural)
Gross enrollment ratio (ECE)	16.9% (2006)**
Primary entrants with ECE experience	10.7% (2006) **
Gross enrollment ratio (Primary)	89.6% (2006) 89% (female)**
Goss enrollment ratio (Secondary)	Not available 39.5% (female) (2006) **
Gross enrollment ratio (Higher education)	Not available
Net enrolment ratio (Primary)	82.2%: 81.6% female (2006) **
Net intake rate (Primary)	97.65% : 97.66% female (2006) **
Primary completion rate	Not available
Primary survival rate (to Grade 5)	71.5%: 70.5% female (2006)**
Primary completion (cohort measure)	Not available
Repetition rate (primary)	Not available; 0.46% female (2006) **
Primary student learning outcomes (national standardized test results)	Not available:
Pupil-teacher ratio – PTR (primary)	30:1 (2006) **
Pupil-teacher ratio (in rural schools)	Not available
Transition rate to secondary education	Not available

*Department of Myanmar Education Research Bureau; **EFA MDA report

The available data indicate the following main issues:

---

[9] Ibid. Page 25.
[10] Ibid.
[11] EFA FTI Secretariat. (2006) Guidelines for appraisal and endorsement of the primary component of an education sector plan. Washington DC.

- Participation in ECE is low;

- Initial enrolment in primary education is almost universal;

- Drop out rates in primary education are high with a survival rate of around 70% (to grade 5);

- There are no significant gender disparities in primary education, but they do exist in secondary education;

- The national pupil-teacher ratio is lower than the international norm (40:1 is the EFA FTI benchmark). It would appear that there are sufficient teachers at this level. The main policy issues are deployment, management and classroom performance.

National data tend to obscure sub-national inequalities. It should be noted that there is considerable variation between States/Divisions in education sector performance. For example the highest NER is reported in Kachin (94.8%) and the lowest in Shan State East (61.2%), followed by Mon State (70%).[12] The highest drop-out rates in primary education are reported in Chin State (18%) followed by Kachin (14.7%), Kayin (12.6%), Magway (11.5%) and Shan State South (11.2%).[13] The highest NIR was reported in Yangon (99.5%) and the lowest in Chin (95.1%). The highest PTR was reported in Tanintharyi (38:1) and the lowest in Chin and Bago West States (20:1).

The causes of the high levels of drop out at primary level have not been adequately researched. A consequence of the Myanmar's political isolation is that analytical work which standard in most countries is lacking. With limited investment, education research has not been a priority. This represents a major hurdle to long-term educational development and needs to be addressed.

2.4 Education Financing

There is no overall education budget and the finances are fragmented. The financing of education is distributed among the 13 Ministries which run education institutions. Even within the MoE, each of the different departments has their own functionally independent budget. Data on public expenditure for education are therefore hard to obtain and estimates of levels need to be treated with caution. However, it is apparent that public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP is very low by international standards. It was estimated to be between 0.6%-1% in the previous decade, but appears to have increased to around 1.3% or more with the recent expansion of secondary and higher education. Public expenditure on primary education was reported to be 0.4% of the total in 2002.[14] Research on international norms for education system financing suggest the following:[15]

- 14-18% of GDP spent by government on education sector financing;

- 20% share of total public recurrent expenditure (in successful countries);

- 42-64% of recurrent education spending on primary education;

- 33% of total recurrent spending on primary education on items other than teacher remuneration;

---

[12] Ministry of Education. (2007) Myanmar EFA MDA Assessment Report. MoE. Yangon.
[13] Ministry of Education. (2007) Myanmar EFA MDA Assessment Report. MoE. Yangon.
[14] EFA National Action Plan. Page 57.
[15] Bruns, B. et al. (2003). A Chance for Every Child. Achieving Primary Education by 2015. The World Bank, Washington DC.

- Annual salary of primary school teachers as a multiple (the average is 3.5 for successful countries) of GDP per capita[16]

While education has a high priority in national development, the resources allocated meet only a fraction of the overall costs. Within the resources allocated for basic education, it appears that the majority share goes to primary education and then to middle and high schools in that order. This is predictable given the larger number of primary schools in the system and the recurrent costs involved. It is harder to estimate capital budget allocations and expenditures. These are likely to favour secondary and higher education. Unit costs for primary and lower secondary education are low, reflecting low salaries for teachers.

A direct consequence of the limited public allocations for education is substantial private expenditure at all levels. Without private contributions to education, the system would probably collapse. While primary education is 'fee-free' there remain direct costs which have to be met by parents to purchase uniforms, textbooks, stationery and other supplies.[17] There are also voluntary contributions to be paid which are, in effect, irregular fees. Private resources for education can be categorized into three types: i) direct private costs such as enrolment levies and examination fees; ii) household contributions such as monetary and non monetary contributions to schools (cash, in-kind and labour) which typically pay for school construction and maintenance and iii) indirect private costs which are opportunity costs such as income foregone in child work/labour from attendance at school. Household costs include children's pocket money, snacks and lunch, school uniform and bag, private tutoring, textbooks, exercise books, writing supplies and stationery. There may also be transportation costs, especially where boats are needed to get to school.

The burden of private financing of basic education falls most heavily on poor households. While there has been little research on the causes of school drop out, it seems that the direct and opportunity costs borne by poor families are probably the most important factor. Opportunity costs are another factor. Poor households rely on children to perform domestic work, collect fuel and water, care for siblings and contribute to agricultural livelihoods. Poor households are less likely to be able to cope with economic shocks in the household resulting from loss of employment, illness or death and continue to provide scarce resources for schooling. The current system of financing, therefore, significantly disadvantages the poor and is inequitable in terms of outcomes.

The cost of Education is a major reason given for non-attendance at school among children aged 5-10. Disability and distance from school are given as other important factors. Among children aged 11-15 the high cost of supplementary items is given as the main reason followed by the requirement to work. The Nargis Periodic Review found that nearly 30% of school-aged children did not attend school because of the cost burden and around 27% of children were at least a year behind their expected school level.[18] Nearly 13% were behind by at least three years.

2.5 Programme Justification

The worsening socio-economic situation over the past 20 years has resulted in a steady deterioration of social services with Education among the most deprived sectors. The Multi-Donor Proposal, Improving Access to Quality Basic Education in Myanmar,[19] was developed in response to a perceived crisis in education in the country and the need for a humanitarian response. Although Myanmar has the largest child population in South East Asia region,

---

[16] EFA FTI Secretariat. (2009). EFA FTI Indicative Framework. Washington DC.

[17] UNICEF. (2006). Ibid.
[18] Tripartite Core Group. (2009). Post-Nargis Periodic Report II.
[19] UNICEF (2006). Improving assess to quality basic education in Myanmar. 2006-2010. Yangon.

estimated at 18 million, it had one of the lowest levels of investment in basic education. The low level of Government funding has resulted in a strong reliance on community financing to support the running of schools. This requires that families outlay significant funds to support the schooling of their children. While this contributes to community involvement in education, it has the unintended effect of discriminating against poor households who are unable to afford the various costs imposed. In this policy environment, poverty is a major cause of early drop out from school.

Another key factor in the development of the proposal was the lack of government technical capacity to undertake a comprehensive situation analysis, which would inform the planning of appropriate education policies and investment measures. Myanmar's political isolation was considered to be a strong contributory factor. The decline of a previously strong education system was not only depriving generations of children from a good start in life, but was seriously impeding the capacity of families and communities to overcome chronic poverty.

The investments in education proposed in programme would be strategic. It would help to stop further decline in education quality and quantity. It would also enhance long-term development in support of national and global commitments of eradicating poverty in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

2.6 Programme design. <u>Improving Access to Quality Basic Education. 2006-2010</u>

2.6.1 Background

The programme design was based on UNICEF's prior experience in the education sector in Myanmar. The core components of Early Childhood Development (ECD), Child Friendly Schools (CFS) and Life Skills Education (LSE) had all been part of UNICEF's education programmes and had already been piloted and refined in the local context. Thus, in essence, it involved a scaling up of interventions that had already been developed and were familiar to the Ministry of Education.

CFS, which originated as a concept in the late 1990s, had already been adopted as a flagship strategy in the EFA National Action Plan 2003-2015 to improve access to the quality of basic education. LSE had been introduced through the Schools-Based Healthy Living and HIV/AIDS Prevention Education (SHAPE) project in 1998, which was focused on HIV prevention in both formal and non-formal education. SHAPE enabled the introduction of LSE as part of the core curriculum in primary education. The non-formal education component was adapted for the Extended and Continuous Education and Learning (EXCEL) project. Support for ECD had been initiated in 2000 in the areas of parenting programmes and pre-school education.

2.6.2 Programme Goal and Purpose

The overall aim in the original programme proposal was:

To increase vulnerable children's access to and retention in primary school by actively involving children who are not in primary school, especially working and minority children, and by improving the quality of service delivery in basic education especially in disadvantaged/poor and border areas.

The programme goal was:

To increase equitable access to and completion of quality basic education through improving outcomes of basic education for all children.

This was subsequently revised as:

7

To provide quality early child development and basic education for all. [20]

The programme purpose for 2007-2011 became***:***

Increased equitable access to and outcome in quality early childhood development and basic education with extended learning opportunities for all children, especially in disadvantaged and hard to reach communities.[21]

The programme would address many of the underlying causes of inequity and poor quality in ECD and basic education. These include: lack of resources, child readiness for formal education, repetition and drop out, direct cost of education, poor learning outcomes, weak school management and dysfunctional Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs).

It should be noted that in Myanmar, the definition of basic education is wider than is usual in that it includes the entire school cycle up to the completion of higher secondary education. In formal education, the main focus of the programme is on early learning (ECD and primary education). In Non-Formal Education (NFE), it is focused on providing Continuing Education (CE) for young adolescents who are school drop-outs. The inclusion of disadvantaged and hard to reach to communities indicates the importance of a targeted approach in the programme.

2.6.4   Interlocking Strategies

The original programme proposal included 13 strategies to be implemented in combination. These are summarized in Table 2 below along with their programme components.[22] This is a complex conceptualisation. It provides a clearer and more comprehensive guide to what the programme was attempting to achieve than the logical framework.   They provide a useful framework for assessing the effectiveness of programme processes and outputs/outcomes.

The strategies can be grouped in terms of equity, quality and management-related interventions. There is some overlapping. The largest number of strategies cluster around equity (1,2, 5, 9,10,11 and 12).

Table 2. Programme Strategies

Strategy	Components
1.Targeting resources to poor families	- Examine cost of schooling at the family level - Provide minimal supplies in disadvantaged townships - Comprehensive school supplies to 30% of neediest children in each school - Contribute to school maintenance costs (e.g. roofing sheets) - Support provision of water and sanitation
2.Community participation	- School self-assessment tool - School Improvement Planning - Community based ECD - PTA training - EXCEL
3.Partnership expansion	- NGOs - WFP in integrated ECD
4. Building capacity of education service providers	- CFS in Teacher Training Institutes - ECD capacity building - Schools in cease fire areas
5. Equity promotion and quality improvement of services	- Indentify quality in ECD services - LSE - CFS

---

[20] MDEF Logframe 2007-2011.
[21] MDEF Logframe 2007-2011.
[22] UNICEF (2006). Improving assess to quality basic education in Myanmar. 2006-2010. Yangon.

	Pre and in-service teacher training
6.Community mobilization and communication	• Media to support children's learning
7.Data collection and research	• Township EMIS (TEMIS) • School MIS (SMIS)
8. Advocacy for strategic change and scaling up	• Advocacy to scale up CFS and LSE
9. Service delivery to the most vulnerable children	• Piloting service delivery models for OVC/CABA, working children etc
10. Family involvement in children's learning needs	• ECD Mother Circles expansion and strengthening
11. Life cycle approach and multi-sectoral linkages	• Coordination with other UNICEF sections (WES/CP) • SHN interventions in ECD and primary education
12. Emergency preparedness and response (conflict emphasis)	• Distribution of school in a box kits and ECD kits • Training
13. Consolidation, expansion and scaling up.	• EFA National Action Plan as overall programme framework • CFS scale up • LSE scale up • ECD in ethnic areas

2.6.5 Three sub-projects and programme outputs

The programme comprises three interlocking sub-projects: i) Early Childhood Development (ECD); ii) Quality Basic Education (QBE) and ii) Life Skills Education (LSE). These are reflected in the three logical framework outputs for 2007-2011:[23]

- **Output 1. Increased access to and quality of ECD programmes for 0-3 and 3-5 year olds in disadvantaged and hard to reach areas;**

- **Output 2. Increased equitable access to primary education and sustainable school improvements through the Child Friendly School (CFS) programme; and**

- **Output 3. Children and young people aged 5-18 given access to learning about protecting themselves and practicing healthy living.**

i)   ECD. The ECD sub-project was based on the Network Project, which had proved to be a successful holistic model in the Myanmar context. ECD services were planned for two distinct age groups with a stronger focus on vulnerable children, especially those in remote and hard to reach areas. The youngest children (0-3) would receive developmentally appropriate services through *Mother Circles.* The next age group (3-5) would receive early childhood development services including education through pre-schools, which may be either community-based or school-based.

The ECD sub-project was designed to provide systematic support to families with young children to strengthen the home-to-school transition or school readiness and to promote early learning opportunities at come and in the community. The eight-week *transition curriculum* would be improved and teachers trained in facilitating school readiness. Save the Children (SCF) would be responsible for the development of this intervention and implementation shared with UNICEF.

ii)   CFS/QBE. In the Programme Proposal, the three components of the QBE project aimed to address access, quality and equity issues in the education system. The project would focus on three outcomes:

---

[23] MDEF Logframe 2007-2011.

1) Improving and expanding the Child Friendly Schools (CFS) programme;

2) Strengthening education monitoring and planning; and

3) Promoting equity in education.

The QBE sub-project is in direct response to the EFA National Action Plan. According to the plan, by 2015 all primary schools in Myanmar are to become "child friendly" to ensure the access and quality aspect of the plan.

Child-friendly schools (CFS) are a means for child rights to inform and influence classroom practice and school management. UNICEF has developed a CFS framework which is made up of 5 necessary and mutually reinforcing conditions for success. These 5 dimensions of CFS are:[24]

- Proactively inclusive;

- Academically effective and relevant;

- Healthy, safe and protective;

- Gender responsive; and

- Actively engaged with and enabling student, family and community participation.

CFS has been adapted to the Myanmar context. Process indicators have been developed for each of the above-mentioned dimensions. In total, there is a set of 33 indicators. They are distributed accordingly: i) inclusive (5); ii) effective (9); iii) healthy, safe, supportive and protective (10); iv) gender-responsive (2); and v) participation (7). There is a set of 16 core CFS indicators.

In the original proposal document, the UNICEF programme would be expanded to 80 townships covering 154 townships in total (there are 325 in total). Fifty-one townships would be in the border areas. This was subsequently reduced to 20 Townships with a further 5 added post Cyclone Nargis. The downsizing was due to lower levels of available resources than anticipated together with a realisation that the intended scale would be problematic to manage given MoE capacity constraints. The programme proposal was apparently never revised to reflect this substantial change in coverage and any implications that this might have had for delivery modalities, including M&E.

Within the selected Townships, UNICEF would provide school supplies to the neediest and most disadvantaged children and communities, assess the existing school mapping mechanism, including its ability to identify disadvantaged areas, and would implement the school management information system (SMIS) and school self-assessment (SSA) tool to strengthen school improvement plans (SIP). Families and communities would be enabled to participate through these processes including activities such as monitoring of and support to teachers, supporting children's learning at home and initiating locally appropriate learning activities, and promoting education in the community.

In line with the UNICEF Country Programme Strategy, QBE also aimed to strengthen the technical capacity of curriculum developers, educational planners, teacher educators, teachers, head-teachers, supervisors, and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members through various training programmes at different levels. A decentralized "cascade model" for training would be used, since the programme required the intensive training of a significantly large number of teachers, head-teachers, PTA members and communities, achieving a coverage of approximately 5,000 to 10,000 teachers every year.

---

[24] UNICEF (2006). Assessing Child-Friendly schools. A Guide for Programme Managers in East Asia and the Pacific, UNICEF EAPRO. Bangkok.

QBE would focus on school-aged children in disadvantaged townships where service delivery is weak. Access for excluded and deprived groups would be ensured through the promotion of the Child Friendly Schools initiative based on UNICEF's support for inclusive practices, professional management, dedicated teachers, appropriate curricula, effective interactive and child-centred learning methodologies, materials, community and parental participation and child rights principles.

iii)   LSE. Life skills education is a relatively new education response to the socialisation function of education. It perhaps best conceptualised as an approach to equipping young people with the personal and interpersonal competencies that they will need to meet and overcome the various challenges they will face in every day life.

The key educational issue is how to operationalise the approach effectively and ensure that it delivers the intended psychosocial skills. This requires viewing life skills education as an innovation in curriculum development and drawing on the lessons learned from best practice in the field to develop effective implementation in the classroom. It should be borne in mind that curriculum innovation is an especially challenging area of educational change and many interventions fail because the risks were underestimated.

Life skills education has been applied to a wide range of social issues, but probably the main response area internationally has been HIV preventive education. Life skills education programmes have been developed in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean region, South and South East Asia. As a result a large corpus of data on the process and outcomes of such programmes is now available and continues to grow. These data reveal a wide range of implementation difficulties, many of which reflect the poor quality of education that being delivered. Despite the significant difficulties being encountered, there are grounds for optimism. It appears that life skills education for HIV can be effective in increasing knowledge, changing attitudes and even modifying behaviours. Effectiveness is not achieved in all cases and a great deal seems to depend on the development of programmes according to what is being called the 'characteristics of effective programmes,[25] 17 of which which have been derived from analysis of international research findings. Critical factors for success seem to be teacher preparation, motivation and support. This is not surprising given this is generic to curriculum development and delivery. The importance of putting in place robust monitoring and evaluation arrangements for life skills education cannot be overestimated. Without this, it is problematic and may even be impossible to determine programme coverage or effectiveness. Another critical factor is developing effective monitoring and evaluation arrangements, including assessment of learning outcomes. This is an area that Ministries of Education seem to find especially difficult.

The programme proposal states that Life Skills-Based Education is an element of quality education. Life skills education strengthens educational processes by using participatory and gender-sensitive teaching and learning methods. Participatory methods allow all participants (including the facilitator) equal opportunities to listen to, and learn from, each other and can appeal to different learning styles. They include self-guided and experiential learning (learning by doing), and are based on the natural processes by which children acquire knowledge, attitudes, skills and ultimately behaviours.

The life skills sub-project includes two main areas of intervention. The first is to expand life skills education in primary and secondary schools. The second is the expansion of the EXCEL programme. A strong partnership with the community is a prerequisite to starting the programme

---

[25] Kirby, D et al. (2006). The effectiveness of sex education and HIV education interventions in schools in developing countries. In Ross, D et al (Eds). 2006. Preventing HIV/AIDS in young people: a systematic review of the evidence from developing countries. WHO. Geneva

as the community will manage and run the programme with support from the NGO.   In addition, capacity of several NGOs was being built to implement the EXCEL model in their target areas in remote and hard-to-reach areas. In order to increase children's access to information, a literacy component had been added to the life skills programme to increase literacy skills and to give them a second chance education.

EXCEL was described as being committed to promoting expanded learning opportunities for in and out of school children and young people to: (a) acquire basic education where they have not received it; (b) continue to learn, with attention to life skills and developing safe behaviours, and preparation for adult roles so that they will be able to face the many new potential violations of their rights and risks to their well-being, of which HIV is one of the most critical; and (c) participate in society and contribute to its development. In addition, in partnership with the Child Protection section and its partners, UNICEF would support the non-formal education activities of local partners to increase the access of the most vulnerable children to school.

2.6.6   The Multi-Donor Education Fund

The UNICEF Education programme has had two main-funding streams. The first is through UNICEF resources and the second through the Multi-Donor Education Fund (MDEF) which has been supported by AusAID, the European Commission (EC), DFID, and the governments of Denmark and Norway. The division of the programme budget is as follows:

UNICEF

- National training of trainer workshops (ECD/LSE/QBE)

- Township level workshops (ECD/LSE/QBE);

- Township Education management system (TEMIS);

MDEF

- ECD kits and supplies;

- Essential Learning package for all children (QBE);

- Basic supplies for schools, teachers and Township Education Offices;

- Replenishment supply costs for children and schools;

- LSE supplies;

- Pre-school and school repair costs;

- Water and sanitation;

- Education scholarships for ethnic groups;

- M&E costs;

- Transportation costs of supplies;

- NGO grants (ECD/LSE);

- UNICEF international staff costs; and

- Local office running costs.

The allocation of financial responsibility can be divided into two main areas: i) capacity building of MoE (UNICEF) and ii) supplies for education service delivery (MDEF). NGO participation was funded under the MDEF.

In effect, the UNICEF Education Programme was supported by a donor consortium. However, this appears to have been loosely arranged with no formal agreements between the consortium and UNICEF. Agreements with UNICEF were arranged on an individual basis. There was a common approach to progress reporting and a programme logical framework developed with strong donor participation to guide M&E.

Section 3

Review Findings: Relevance

3.1 Assessing Relevance

The DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance suggest the following criterion for assessing relevance: *the extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.*

In evaluating the relevance of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *To what extent are the objectives of the programme still valid?*
- *Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?*
- *Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the intended impacts and effects?*

The relevance of the programme can be considered in a number of dimensions. Those selected for this review are relevance to:

- Country policy;

- Country needs;

- Stakeholder needs.

These are investigated below and finally reviewed against the questions raised above.

3.2. Relevance to policy

Current development objectives are provided by the 30-Year Long Term Education Development Plan and the EFA National Action Plan, with the latter giving the most detailed directions. The programme is very closely aligned with the EFA National Plan of Action (NAP). All of the six strategies for the NAP are addressed through the programme interventions (See Table 3 below). The main focus of attention appears to be on the first strategy regarding the scaling up of child-friendly schools. However, all strategies are strongly addressed with the exception of non-formal education, much of which lies outside the remit of the programme.

National policy on early childhood development (ECD) and primary education are described in the situation assessment (See Annex 3). The Child Law (1993) of Myanmar establishes the responsibility for ECD[1] of children aged 0-5 under the Department of Social Welfare. It is the focal point for the implementation of ECD activities. ECD aims at nurturing children below the age of 5, physically, socially, mentally and spiritually. ECD is provided though a range of settings including centre-based and community based approaches. There are also private sector providers. There are two tiers of ECD service delivery. The first caters for the 0-3 age group and the second the 3-5 age group. Only the latter is included within the EFA National Plan of Action. The former is less of an education service and more of a holistic child development approach.

The main documents of reference for Basic Education are the Education for All National Plan of Action[2] and the EFA Mid Decade Assessment Report.[3] The fundamentals of education policy are set out in the Basic Education Law of 1973. Primary education is free from fees and is

---

[1] ECD is referred to as ECCE in Myanmar
[2] Union of Mynamar. (2003) Education for All. National Action Plan. Yangon.
[3] Ministry of Education. (2007) Myanmar EFA MDA Assessment Report. MoE. Yangon.

compulsory. The Education Law of 2000, which provides for compulsory primary education, is not enforced.[4] In practice, primary education is neither free nor compulsory.

It should be noted that the EFA NAP lacks clearly articulated strategies for improving the quality and equity of education service delivery. With regard to qualitative improvement of teaching and learning, the main policy intervention is the implementation of CFS. While the CFS approach includes effectiveness as one of the core strategies and provides an entry point for the introduction of child-centred pedagogy, it is multi-dimensional and would likely require complementary interventions to improve quality at system level in policy areas such as teacher education and deployment, student assessment and school inspection. The experience gained in implementing the MDEF can be used for strategic policy dialogue relating to strengthening the abovementioned areas of education sector development for a second phase of support.

Table 3. EFA NAP Strategy and UNICEF Education Programme activities

EFA NPA Strategy	UNICEF Education Programme activities	Relevance to EFA strategies	Areas for further attention
1. Developing and expanding Child-Friendly Schools (CFS)	Support for improvements to school infrastructure Provision of water and sanitation Provision of teaching and learning materials Promotion of inclusiveness; gender equality; school effectiveness; healthy school environments and community participation. Promotion of child centred-approach to teaching and learning CFS training for school management Training of teachers in CFS principles; Support for life skills education Monitoring of schools in terms of CFS indicators and baseline data	High	School management and leadership training School inspection Teacher education and deployment Multi-grade teaching Student assessment system Review of CFS framework
2. Making Basic Education more accessible to children	Support for ECD Pilot programme on NFPE Support for monastic schools Promotion of inclusive education through CFS Support for schools in remote areas	High	Better data required on out of school children School mapping at Township level Preparation of case studies to inform policy dialogue Inclusive/special needs education Alternative delivery modes e.g. NFPE
3. Increasing retention and completion rates in schools	School readiness promoted through ECD	High	Targeted interventions for the poorest students/households

---

[4] UNESCO. (2008).Asia and the Pacific Education for All (EFA) Mid-Decade Assessment. Mekong Sub-Region Synthesis Report. Bangkok.

	Provision of free textbooks and stationery to primary school students		Support for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC)
	Piloting of language enrichment programme (LEP)		School health and nutrition
	Support for improving school effectiveness through CFS		
	Disaster risk reduction (DRR) in education		
4. Assisting children (aged 0-5) to develop to their fullest potential through Early Childhood Development (ECD)	Support for awareness raising on ECD;	High	ECD policy
			ECD database
	Support for expansion of community based and school-based ECD		Targeted support for ECD/ECE
	Support for parental education		
	Capacity building of ECD providers		
	Promotion of ECD quality		
	Development of ECD standards		
5. Enhancing literacy and continuing education through non-formal education (NFE)	Support for Continuing Education (CE) through EXCEL Programme	Moderate	Need for establishment of NFE Department in MoE
			Expansion of support for literacy
			Linkages between CE and income generation/micro-credit and vocational training
			Stronger focus on literacy skills in primary education
6. Modernising management and EMIS	Support for piloting of SMIS and TEMIS	High	EMIS development
			School inspection
	Support for school management training		Teacher deployment
			Multi-grade teaching
			Student assessment system
			Evaluation of TEMIS pilot and review of SMIS.

3.3   Relevance to country needs

The strong relevance of the UNICEF Education programme to existing national policy on education has been noted above. This section examines the extent to which existing policy and programme interventions adequately address the fundamental development needs and priority issues of the sector.

A rapid situation analysis of the education sector has identified the following critical issues for improving the performance of the sector as a whole and primary education in particular (See Annex 3). This is summarised below in terms of the key issues identified. The programme interventions which address these issues are described below with a review to assessing their relevance to need. The issues are organised in terms of the following categories:

3

- Education sector management;

- Sub-sectoral analysis (ECD, primary education, non formal education).

A. **Education sector management**

Issue 1. **Data and information management**. Among the significant development challenges is the management of data. Official data generally lack timeliness, reliability, and comparability. They are limited by weaknesses in human and financial capacity and institutions. Strengthening such resources would allow the authorities greater economic assessment capabilities to serve as a base for enhanced policy making.

The MoE has limited capacity and resources for data collection and analysis.[5] Understandings of modern M&E approaches are limited as a result of the country's isolation. The Educational Management Information System (EMIS) needs to be strengthened and made more functional. It is a set of data collection systems which is labour intensive, inefficient, one-way, error prone, incomplete and fails to meet the management or planning needs of the Ministry of Education.[6] Data do not support education management decision-making. Beyond the EMIS, there has been very little education research and analytical work to help inform policy-making and to ensure that planning is evidence-based.

Response 1. **Piloting the Township Education Management Information System (TEMIS)**

The Education Research and Monitoring component was designed to be cross-cutting, promoting the need for reliable data and information for all three projects. The assessment of the EMIS in 2005 recommended that the central level EMIS should have integrated sub-systems that would allow for a two-way information flow within and between levels of administration (Township, State/Division, and National). It was suggested that the process begin at the township level using the Township Education Management Information System (TEMIS). The School Management Information System (SMIS) would be part of the TEMIS. TEMIS would hold detailed data on every school, student and teacher in the township, together with learning achievement and budget data. Schools capacity will be improved in collecting data that would support the TEMIS. Monthly reports could be established to cover such areas as: school infrastructure, school income and expenditure, student enrolment by age, grade and sex, student attendance, transfer and drop outs, and teachers by age, qualifications and experience.

The EMIS needs assessment report also recommended that implementation of TEMIS and SMIS to be undertaken in a phased manner to monitor closely the operations of that system for one year before committing to full implementation.[7]

The proposed TEMIS piloting in 3 selected Townships and the concurrent development of the School Management Information System (SMIS) can be considered to be potentially important contributions to the strengthening of the national EMIS. A great deal hinges on the outcomes of the piloting process and the subsequent scaling up of the development. The current pilot sub-project only covers around 1% of the total number of townships.

Issue 2. **Educational Planning.** Education planning lags behind other countries in the region as a result of the country's isolation. The MoE lacks a medium-term costed strategy for the sector (3-5 years) including the development of Basic Education. In South East Asia, Lao PDR and Vietnam have prepared and are implementing such strategies, which have been endorsed by the EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI). Strategic and operational planning needs to be strengthened at decentralised levels in the education sector and in key areas such as teacher education.

---

[5] Union of Myanmar. (2003) Education for All. National Action Plan. (Page 11) Yangon.
[6] UNICEF, (2005). Report on the Myanmar Education Management System Needs Analysis Study. Yangon.
[7] UNICEF. (2005). Report on the Myanmar Education Management Information System Needs Analysis Study. Yangon.

Response 2. MDEF programme planning. The Annual Work Plan (AWP) for the programme presented an opportunity to involve MoE staff in participatory planning. At the school level, school improvement plans (SIPs) were planned as a means of improving school-community participation and improving the quality of education.

B.   Sub-Sectoral Analysis

i)   Early Childhood Development (ECD)

Issue 1. Low coverage rates for ECD services. Rates of participation in ECD are low by regional and international standards. The EFA Plan of Action sets two modest targets for the expansion of ECD coverage:

   i)   Increasing the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) for ECD programmes for 3-5 year olds from 10% in 2002 to 15% in 2005, 20% in 2010 and 25% in 2015; and

   ii)   The percentage of Grade 1 primary entrants with ECD experience was 8% in 2002 and would increase to 10%, 15% and 20 % by 2005, 2010 and 2015 respectively.

Since 2000-1 there has been an increase in the number of schools that offer pre-primary education (Early Childhood Education) for the 3-5 year cohort form 354 to 1,311 schools in 2005-6.[8] In the same year there were also 1,656 community based ECD centres catering for the same target population.[9] The number of centres for 0-3 year olds is beyond the purview of EFA reporting and target setting. The key issues are summarised in Box 1 below.

Response 1. Acceleration of resource delivery to ECD programmes and support to increase the number of school-based pre-schools. This would involve a multi-faceted approach to improve services for young children and their families. Awareness, advocacy and networking were planned to facilitate a common vision between communities and schools and to promote community based pre-schools for 3-5 year olds. There would be technical assistance and capacity building training for school administrators, teachers, community leaders and parents. Implementation would include support for partnerships with 5 NGOs: Karuna, Kayin Baptist Convention, Kachin Baptist Convention, Pinnya Tazaung and Yinthway Foundation. An important issue is how an enabling environment can be put in place at the Township level. Reliance on NGO delivery risks a supply-driven approach.

Issue 2. Current provision of ECD services, especially school-based ECE, is inequitable and mainly benefits urban children. Rates of coverage are lowest in the border States and divisions.[10] International research evidence suggests that while all children benefit from good quality ECE, a critical feature of effective ECE is a focus on the most disadvantaged children.[11] Research on effectiveness factors identifies two important issues: classroom structure (e.g. child-staff ratios, supportive services, staff characteristics) and classroom dynamics (e.g. positive teacher and child behaviours, effective teacher-child interactions, stability and continuity).[12] Supporting factors have been identified: i) teacher education, ii) in-service training, iii) experience, continuity and compensation, iv) experienced and trained supervisors and directors, v) community partnerships, and vi) safe and appropriate physical space.[13]

Response 2. The ECD sub-project would be implemented in target areas where poverty and lack of access to social services are high. The sub-project would focus on reaching vulnerable children and ensuring their holistic development and smooth transition to primary

---

[8] Ministry of Education. (2007) Myanmar EFA MDA Assessment Report. MoE. Yangon.
[9] Ministry of Education. (2007) Myanmar EFA MDA Assessment Report. MoE. Yangon.
[10] Ministry of Education. (2007) Myanmar EFA MDA Assessment Report. MoE. Yangon.
[11] World Vision. (2010). Supporting the education rights of children with disabilities: the Fast Track Initiative and Early Childhood Care and Education. World Vision UK. London.
[12] M. Young (Ed). 2000. From early childhood to human development. World Bank. Washington DC.
[13] Ibid.

school through the partner NGOs that were working in the hard-to-reach and ethnic areas, through community mother circles and school-based pre-schools (Government and Monastic schools) in child friendly schools focusing on the rural and border areas. A potential constraint is that areas where there is a lack of social services may also present difficulties for establishing pre-schools. For example, there may be no local NGO presence.

Issue 3. The quality of ECD services is poor. ECD quality is constrained by factors such as overcrowding and the lack of appropriate teaching methods.[14] Challenges to the quality of ECD/ECE provision include lack of resources for teaching and learning, large class sizes in some pre-schools, lack of learning corners, limited opportunities for facilitator training and continuous professional development (CPD). There was a lack of formal standards for ECE.

UNESCO provides a conceptual framework for ECE which includes provision of health care, immunization, feeding and nutrition, supporting new parents though information and parenting education, creating a safe environment for young children to play and socialise with their peers, compensating for disadvantage and fostering the resilience of vulnerable children and promoting school readiness and preparation for primary school.[15]

Response 3. Capacity building in ECD. Through a capacity building initiative to be carried out mainly by a partner NGO, community-based early childhood workers and teachers in hard-to-reach and ethnic areas would receive training that includes approaches to a bilingual programme, where children would be exposed to both their mother tongue and Myanmar language through songs, story books, and developmental activities from an early age. This way, when they entered school, they would be more familiar with the Myanmar language and be better equipped to participate in class. Capacity building workshops would be held at national level (Training of Trainers) and at Township level.

The programme approach is consistent with the UNESCO framework for ECD/ECE. It includes the provision of essential supplies for the setting up and running of ECD centres as well as a box library and children's books. Funds were also to be allocated for the construction and repair of pre-school facilities. A key issue is sustainability of this approach and how it can be taken forward without UNICEF support.

Box 1. Key issues in ECD

Key issues in ECD

- **Barriers to access.** Since 1998, schools have been able to open pre-school or early childhood classes. This is contingent on their being able to provide sufficient classroom space and teachers. Thus, to be able to operate ECD classes, schools and their communities have had to generate the resources required.[16] This has resulted in many lacking appropariate learning materials and supplies. The level of a mother's education was identified as a key variable in ECD participation. Children whose mothers had completed secondary education were 7 times more likely to participate in ECD than children whose mothers had not completed primary school[17].

- **Quality of service delivery.** The MDEF proposal draws attention to the issue of ECD quality, highlighting issues of overcrowding and the lack of appropriate teaching methods.[18] Challenges to the quality of ECD/ECE provision include lack of resources for teaching and learning, large class sizes in some pre-schools, lack of learning corners, limited opportunities for facilitator training and continuous professional development (CPD). There is a lack of formal standards for ECE.

- **Equity.** The MDEF proposal indicates that ECD services may not be reaching the poorest and most vulnerable. There are low levels of coverage. Demand creation is needed as many parents are unaware of the benefits of ECD services. More than half of pre-schools are located in urban and per-urban areas.[19] There are barriers to access for disadvantaged groups. ECD facilitators need training in caring for children with disabilities. It is

---

[14] UNICEF. (2006) Improving access to quality basic education in Myanmar. 2006-2010. Yangon.
[15] UNESCO. (2006) Strong foundations. Early childhood care and education. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007. Paris.
[16] UNICEF. (2006) Improving access to quality basic education in Myanmar. 2006-2010. Yangon.
[17] UNICEF. (2006) Improving access to quality basic education in Myanmar. 2006-2010. Yangon.
[18] UNICEF. (2006) Improving access to quality basic education in Myanmar. 2006-2010. Yangon.
[19] MoE. (2007). EFA Mid-Decade Assessment Report. Yangon.

difficult to provide ECD services to children in remote communities. There are no criteria for identifying disadvantaged children or mechanisms for targeting disadvantaged populations for ECD services.

- **Health and Nutrition.** There is a need for an integrated package which includes nutrition and de-worming as well as access to clean water and sanitation.

- **Coordination.** There is a lack of coordination among the different providers of ECD.

- **Data.** Data collection on ECD needs to be strengthened. Data on the unreached are weak. This includes gathering data disaggregated by region, sex, rural/urban setting, disability, economic quintile and language/national groups. Ministry of Education data do not include the ECD services provided by faith-based organisations, such as monasteries and churches.[20]

- **Financing.** The current approach to ECD financing, which includes the payment of fees, is a barrier to the participation of children from poor households.

ii).   The Quality of Primary Education

Issue 1.   **Quality of teacher education.** The quality of pre-service teacher education is constrained by multiple factors which include: a lack of teacher educators with suitable qualifications and training skills, insufficient instructional time, lack of supervision of teaching practice, inadequate concept acquisition with an emphasis on rote learning, traditional modes of training emphasising the transmission of knowledge rather than skills building, an overcrowded curriculum, little attention to field realities such as multi-grade schools, lack of linkages with schools, lack of professional development opportunities for teacher educators, lack of resources and poor institutional facilities.[21] A child-centred approach (CCA) is promoted, but not practiced.[22] About half of primary schools are multi-grade schools with teachers being responsible for teaching more than 1 grade at a time. Teachers are not adequately prepared for multi-grade teaching which requires special skills.

Response 1.   The programme would strengthen teacher education through a range of interventions including the promotion of CCA through CFS training: the integration of CFS methods into teacher training colleges; CFS training through a cascade model of in-service training implemented at national level (Training of Trainers) and subsequently at the Township level. Teacher training would also be provided in conjunction with the life skills education (LSE) sub-project. LSE would be integrated in initial training curriculum in the Teacher training colleges. In-service training would also take place on a cascade basis similar to that for CFS.

A risk in the approach is that the approach to improving the quality of teacher training might not be sufficiently comprehensive. There also needs to be linkages between training and professional supervision in the school and by the inspectorate.

Issue 2.   **Teacher supply.** Teacher training institutions have had insufficient institutional capacity to meet the needs of the sector. Teacher attrition has been reportedly high. The prevalence of multi-grade schools is a manifestation of shortages in teacher supply.

Response 2.   **CFS/SMIS and TEMIS.** There was no specific intervention to address teacher supply issues. These would be indirectly addressed through interventions to improve the quality of basic education (CFS) and strengthen the EMIS for planning and management purposes (SMIS and TEMIS).

Issue 3.   **Quality of school infrastructure.** At primary level, the quality of primary school infrastructure is a critical issue, particularly in relation to maintenance and the need for

---

[20] UNICEF. (2006) Improving access to quality basic education in Myanmar. 2006-2010. Yangon.
[21] JICA. (2004). Development study for the improvement of quality and access of basic education in the Union of Myanmar. Yangon.
[22] Redden, E. (2007). Myanmar Teacher Education Review. Mission report. Yangon.

renovation. Space for learning may be inadequate or lacking in partitions resulting in several teachers having to share the same room for classroom teaching. Schools may lack clean water and basic sanitation. Schools may lack separate latrines for girls. The strong reliance on community financing means that poorer communities experience difficulty in ensuring the quality of school infrastructure and facilities. Essential improvements may be delayed while the community identifies sources of funding. Some school grants are available from the MoE, but their allocation is not predictable.

Response 3. **Support for school repairs and water/sanitation.** The QBE sub-project included budget allocations for school repairs (e.g. provision of roofing sheets, cement, nails and partitions). Water and sanitation facilities would be improved in selected schools.

Supplies for roofing sheets and water and sanitation facilities would not apply to all schools in a township, costing of these items was done separately based on the average number of schools requiring these items.

A key issue is whether the allocations for school maintenance and repair are sufficient to make an impact on the learning environment. This is unlikely given the nature of the package proposed which is likely to be only enough to ensure that schools are able to maintain their service delivery and to reduce the burden of community contributions for school upkeep.

Issue 4. **The quality of the curriculum.** The current curriculum and the associated teaching and learning resources have not been assessed for content quality or gender stereotyping. The curriculum is biased towards speakers of Myanmar language. No policy provision has been made for bilingual education or the use of other languages in instruction.

Response 4. **Support for curriculum development.** The programme includes a number of curriculum-related interventions. The main support comes through the LSE sub-project with the development of the LSE curriculum (Social Studies) at primary level. The LEP pilot is an important intervention which has significant implications for the development of early grade reading and writing skills. The provision of supplementary readers is also a supportive measure for literacy skills acquisition.

A key issue is whether the programme focuses sufficiently on the effective implementation of key subjects in the curriculum and the acquisition of associated competencies. In particular, the teaching and learning of literacy skills (reading and writing) and mathematics appear to be under-represented in the programme.

Issue 5. **Assessment practices.** There is a need to build expertise in assessment. Currently there are no standardized tests before grade 11. Learning is assessed at school level (school-based assessment) through very regular testing (monthly). The focus of testing is memorization of textbooks and lesson content. Assessment is content rather than skills-based. It is likely that such testing significantly drives the teaching and learning process in most classrooms.

Response 5. The programme included no interventions that would support the reform of assessment procedures. This is a weak area in the approach.

Iii) **Equity in primary education**

Issue 6. **Early drop out.** There are low levels of retention and completion in basic education. Internal efficiency in primary education has been low. In 2001/2, it was estimated that 45% of children who had enrolled failed to complete grade 4.[23] The highest rate of drop out was at the end of Grade 1 (19.4%).

---

[23] ADB. (2003). Education Sector Review. Draft Report. Manila

Migration is a prominent cause of school drop out. This may be seasonal migration associated with rural livelihoods or permanent. Such mobility disrupts schooling and reentry may be problematic. The provision of educational access in remote settings is a difficult challenge when communications are poor, transport infrastructure is lacking and communities are small and isolated. Such problems may also vary seasonally on account of flood or drought. Typically, there are problems encountered in deploying and retaining teachers in remote school locations. The MoE provides incentives in the form of rice and housing. However, teacher attrition and high turnover in remote areas is an important issue concerning educational quality and equity.

Response 6. Pro-poor interventions: school supplies.

ECD. By increasing access to early development and learning opportunities, the ECD sub-project would increase primary school enrolment and retention. It would help parents broaden their aspirations for their children and provide better support for them at school. Linkages with health and nutrition interventions such as feeding programmes and distribution of multi-vitamins and de-worming tablets were planned to increase children's success in school.

The ECD sub-project would include monitoring the impact of the programme on school retention and achievement in child-friendly schools. Through the Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) process, UNICEF would be able to monitor and compare the learning achievement of children in grades 3 and 5 who attended an ECD programme with those who did not. The 2006 MLA of 200 schools would provide UNICEF with the necessary baseline information to monitor the progress of the children from pre-school to child friendly schools.

QBE. With increased funding in the MDEF, UNICEF planned to provide all children in the most disadvantaged townships with minimum school supplies (text books, exercise books and pencils). All children in targeted schools would receive textbooks since this is essential for supporting children's learning. In addition, 70% of all targeted school children would receive the "minimal" or basic school supplies while 30% of the neediest children would receive the comprehensive set of materials. All schools in the selected township would be eligible for receiving school supplies (teaching aids, equipment), and all teachers would receive the basic Teachers' Kit. Through this process, the most disadvantaged and poor children would be selected and be given the "comprehensive" supplies throughout the school year for a three-year period.

The programme would also provide support to all monastic schools in selected Townships. These schools provide basic education to some of the poorest children. UNICEF would also support the training of monastic schoolteachers and provision of supplies to these schools.

UNICEF would work in selected border area townships covering all the schools in these areas. In addition to working with DEPT and DBE 2, UNICEF would also work with the Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department (NATALA) who would be facilitating many of the CFS activities in the border area schools. The Ministry of Border Affairs had been involved in the planning of the education programme, and would be facilitating the implementation of the CFS in border areas including the LEP, but would not have any technical input into the programming. The Ministry of Border Areas would also support distribution of supplies to the schools at the township level and monitor the implementation of the CFS programme.

Issue 7. Transition to Secondary Education. The equitable expansion of secondary education remains a significant policy issue. Demand for places currently exceeds supply. Primary schools have been extending the range of Grades on offer to include middle schooling, which is a credible strategy in the circumstances. In effect, this is lengthening the duration of the primary cycle and potentially reduces vulnerability to drop out in the transition to grade 5. A costed strategic plan for the managed expansion of Basic Education is urgently needed.

Response 7. Promoting school survival through CFS. The programme included no direct interventions to support the transition form primary to secondary education. The CFS approach was intended to support school survival, reduce drop out and thus improve the transition rate.

Issue 8. **School Health and Nutrition (SHN).** In 2003, the percentage of underweight children under 5 was 31.8% with 7% with severe acute malnutrition. More recent data are lacking. Estimated HIV prevalence among the general population has declined form 0.95% in 2000 to 0.61% in 2009. General HIV knowledge among young people has reached more than 90%, but comprehensive knowledge lags behind at 37%. Children living with or affected by HIV may be discriminated against in the education system due to social stigma. There are significant disparities in access to health services. 65% of the population has access to primary health care (within 1 hour's walking distance), with urban populations having much better access than rural. The lowest rates are to be found in Chin (36%) and Rakhine (48.%). Most rural health centres are not open to in-patients. Poor households have lower rates of access to health services and worse health outcomes.

Response 8. **SHN through LSE**. LSE would provide the vehicle for health education and HIV/SRH education in particular. Nutritional supplementation would be provided in ECD programmes. This however, falls short of a comprehensive SHN approach which appears to be needed in view of the health and nutritional status of young children in particular.

Issue 9. **Gender Inequality.** In some areas, there are cultural factors which favour the education of boys. These are reported in Chin and Rakhine states, in particular. Gender stereotypes may still be present in some school textbooks.

Response 9. **Gender equality and CFS.** Gender equality in school would be promoted through the CFS approach. Gender is a separate dimension of the CFS approach. This, however, falls short of a comprehensive approach to gender in education.

Issue 10. **Ethnicity and language of instruction**. In multi-lingual countries the issue of mother tongue and language of instruction in schools is a key area of policy. The importance of mother tongue use during early years in schools is well evidenced with children acquiring literacy skills easier and learning better in their first language (L1). The importance of a national lingua franca is also recognized, primarily for nation building purposes. The issues include whether to adopt bilingual education in the early years and means of developing communication skills in the official language of instruction if it is a second (L2) or other language.

Myanmar is the official language of the country and the medium of instruction. The speakers of the 100 or more other local languages face the challenge of becoming literate in a new language before they are literate in their mother tongue. The script may also be different. Lack of fluency in Myanmar is likely to be a significant barrier to early learning and to educational exclusion. However, bilingual education for minorities is not MoE policy. That several languages may be spoken in the same community and classrooms is a practical obstacle to this approach in some settings.

UNESCO recommends a progression of language learning in multi-lingual education.[24] This starts with children who are just beginning school and the oral use of the first language (L1) for teaching and learning to build competence and confidence. Reading and writing are introduced in L1. The official language (L2) is introduced orally but learning in L1is continued. Subsequently reading and writing are introduced in L2 and competencies are strengthened in both languages.

Response 10. **The Language Enrichment Programme (LEP).** This is a pilot project. UNICEF had prior to the MDEF supported the Ministry of Education in the development of a Language Enrichment Programme (LEP) in schools, and with preschools through the provision of children's story books in Myanmar language. Selected children's books would be translated in three languages namely Shan, Pa-O and Kachin and printed in a bilingual form (Myanmar/other language). All the books however, would be translated in 5 languages (Karen (Sakaw), Pa-O,

---

[24] UNESCO (2007). Advocacy kit for promoting multilingual education: Including the excluded. Policymakers booklet. UNESCO APPEAL. Bangkok.

Kachin, Mon, and Shan) in a "book/VCD" format, which tell the story in the child's language. This approach would expose the children to Myanmar language through L2 at an early age and help create an environment where the children's L1 is respected and acknowledged. This also would increase their coping skills when entering school and getting exposed to the new language of instruction. This initiative would help boost children's confidence and put them on a more equal footing with Myanmar speaking children. In collaboration with *the NGO Cetana,* UNICEF would print and distribute multi-lingual dictionaries (Karen-English-Myanmar and Kachin-English-Myanmar) to the schools in ethnic minority areas where the books could be used effectively by the teachers and the children.

The evaluation of the LEP and its impact on learning outcomes is a critically important step in the programme. The results need to be presented to the MoE in line with policy advocacy on effective learning in a multi-lingual environment.

Issue 11. **Disability.** There are few data on education and children with disabilities. Disability is likely to a cause of non-enrolment and drop out.

Response 11. **Inclusive Education.** Children with disabilities would be supported through the CFS approach to enroll and participate in mainstream school activities.

Issue 12. **Conflict and post conflict areas.** Providing education for displaced populations is one of the most challenging areas of service delivery. Children may attend ad hoc schools with few if any resources. Children without birth registration who have been resettled need this for Household Registration and endorsement from the Village Peace and Development Council. In the ceasefire areas different organisations have set up their own school systems (e.g. the Karen national union and Kachin Independence Organisation). Church-based organisations provide a significant number of teachers and learning materials in these areas.

Response 12. **Working in selected Townships.** UNICEF would work in selected border area townships covering all the schools in these areas. In addition to working with DEPT and DBE 2, UNICEF would also work with the Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department (NATALA) who would be facilitating many of the CFS activities in the border area schools. The Ministry of Border Affairs had been involved in the planning of the education programme, and would be facilitating the implementation of the CFS in border areas including the LEP, but would not have any technical input into the programming. The Ministry of Border Areas would also support distribution of supplies to the schools at the township level and monitor the implementation of the CFS programme.

Issue 13. **Vulnerability to Natural Disaster.** Cyclone Nargis has dramatically illuminated the issue of vulnerability to disaster and the attendant impact on access to school. Climate change is likely to exacerbate vulnerability to natural disaster in Myanmar. The country is also earthquake prone.

Response 13. **Schools in a box.** UNICEF would include Provision for emergency schools in a box for emergency use.

iii) **Non Formal Education**

Issue 14. **Providing alternative education for out of school children.** The high rates of drop out from primary school and low rates of participation in secondary education mean that there are large numbers of children who are out of school and unable to obtain skills and qualification for the livelihoods. Many such children are involved in unskilled and low paid work with little opportunity of escape from poverty. There is a need for non formal education services to provide second chance education for those out of school either to reintegrate them into formal education or to provide them with an equivalent education.

Response 14. Expansion of the EXCEL programme. A strong partnership with the community is a prerequisite to starting the programme as the community will manage and run the programme with support from the selected NGO. The capacity of several NGOs had been built to implement the EXCEL model in their target areas in remote and hard-to-reach areas. In order to increase children's access to information, a literacy component had been added to the life skills programme to increase literacy skills and to give them a second chance education.

EXCEL was described as being committed to promoting expanded learning opportunities for out of school children to: (a) acquire basic education where they have not received it; (b) continue to learn, with attention to life skills and developing safe behaviours, and preparation for adult roles so that they will be able to face the many new potential violations of their rights and risks to their well-being, of which HIV is one of the most critical; and (c) participate in society and contribute to its development. In addition, in partnership with the Child Protection section and its partners, UNICEF would support the non-formal education activities of local partners to increase the access of the most vulnerable children to school.

A key issue is how EXCEL is aligned with MoE policy and programmes for Continuing Education and NFPE.

3.4 Relevance to stakeholder needs

A rapid stakeholder analysis was undertaken to inform programme beneficiary perspectives. The original UNICEF proposal did not include a stakeholder analysis, which is a commonly used tool to inform programme design. A stakeholder is any entity with a declared or conceivable interest or stake in a policy concern.[25] The range of stakeholders relevant to consider for analysis varies according to the complexity of the reform area targeted and the type of reform proposed and, where the stakeholders are not organised, the incentive to include them. Stakeholders can be of any form, size and capacity. They can be individuals, organizations, or unorganized groups. In most cases, stakeholders fall into one or more of the following categories: international actors (e.g. donors), national or political actors (e.g. legislators, governors), public sector agencies, interest groups (e.g. unions, medical associations), commercial/private for-profit, nonprofit organizations (NGOs, foundations), civil society members, and users/consumers. Four major attributes are important for Stakeholder Analysis: the stakeholders' position on the reform issue, the level of influence (power) they hold, the level of interest they have in the specific reform, and the group/coalition to which they belong or can reasonably be associated with. These attributes are identified through various data collection methods, including participatory research with the actual stakeholders directly.

The main findings of the stakeholder consultations are presented in Table 4 below. They are based on very limited samples and the results should be considered as indicative and illuminative data.

What is very clear from discussions with stakeholders is that the programme is valued. For MoE staff at all levels, the training programmed are appreciated and considered to be important. For children, opportunities to play and the provision of supplies are important. Supplies are also highly valued by school and Township Education Office staff. It was not possible to consult senior MoE staff during the 2-week evaluation process. A donor pre-appraisal mission was being conducted in-country concurrent to the evaluation and they were given priority access.

Table 4. Key MDEF Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Power	Relevance to programme
MoE Policy makers	High	Not consulted in evaluation process

---

[25] Accessed from World Bank Website. www. worldbank.org. (14.8.2010)

MoE technical staff	Medium	Highly relevant to EFA NAP implementation
		Most concerned with QBE sub-project
		LEP and TEMIS pilots
		Continuation of supplies and training
TEO/ATEO	Medium	Training highly appreciated
		Joint monitoring
		Provision of supplies (but increases workload)
		TEMIS
		Concerned with ECD, QBE and LSE/NFE
		UNICEF field presence
Headteachers	Medium	SSA/SIP supports school development
		Supplies
		Training
Teachers	Low	Training
		Provision of supplies and teachers kits
Trainers	Low	Training
PTA members	Low	Training
Parents	Low	Supplies and affordability of children's education
		Parental education (ECD)
NGOs	Low	Financial support for programme activities
		Training/capacity building
		UNICEF field presence
Children (ECD)	Zero	Supplies (games)
		Child friendly ECD
Children (Primary school)	Zero	Supplies (textbooks, exercise books, pencils)
		School bags
		Child friendly schools
Children (out of school)	Zero	Learning process
		Opportunity to learn/practise life skills
		Supplies

EXCEL Committee	Low	Training
		Community role
Development partners/donors	High	Unavailable during in-country evaluation process

3.5   Conclusions

It is clear that the UNICEF programme is highly valued by all stakeholder groups that were consulted. This is because it is felt that the interventions meet immediate practical needs of households, schools and the basic education system. There is general agreement that the current programme of support to schools should if possible continue, with at most minor modifications. Two components stand out in terms of the frequency with which they are mentioned by stakeholders: ECD/school supplies and training. It is also important to note the value that is attached to UNICEF's field presence and partnership activities.

3.5.1   To what extent are the objectives of the programme still valid?

Purpose: ***Increased equitable access to and outcome in quality early childhood development and basic education with extended learning opportunities for all children, especially in disadvantaged and hard to reach communities.***[26]

The original programme purpose remains partially valid. This is partly due to problems in the purpose statement. First, it should be noted that while access is an issue in ECD it is a much lower priority issue in primary education. Second, the programme has focused on primary education rather than basic education which covers the entire school system up to the end of senior secondary education. Third, *increased outcome* is far from precise. It presumably includes retention and survival, attendance and learning outcomes. Finally, the poverty focus needs further attention, since it is the poorest and most disadvantaged children who need to be assisted. Targeting the community is necessary, but insufficient to ensure that children most in need receive relevant policy support. It should be noted that the purpose also focuses on supply side issues in education and neglects the demand side.

Output 1. Increased access to and quality of ECD programmes for 0-3 and 3-5 year olds in disadvantaged and hard to reach areas.

This objective remains valid. However, the priority for education support should be on the 3-5 year age group and early childhood education (ECE).

Output 2. Increased equitable access to primary education and sustainable school improvements through the Child Friendly School (CFS) programme; and

The fundamental issues in primary education are equity and quality reflected in retention rates and learning outcomes. The critical question is whether the set of interventions designed to improve the Child Friendliness of schools is sufficient to bring about sustainable change in improving equity and quality in teaching and learning. This issue will be discussed further in Section 5.

Output 3. Children and young people aged 5-18 given access to learning about protecting themselves and practicing healthy living.

This objective also remains valid. However, it only covers what might be called life-skills based

---

[26] MDEF Logframe 2007-2011.

health education, with a strong focus on HIV prevention. There is a need to increase the scope of non-formal education (NFE) to develop alternative modalities of service delivery for school drop-outs and an appropriate policy framework to support this.

3.5.2 Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the overall purpose and the attainment of its objectives?

In summary, the activities and outputs can be considered to be consistent with the overall purpose of the programme and the attainment of its objectives (outputs).

3.5.3 Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the intended impacts and effects?

In summary, the activities and outputs can be considered to be consistent with the intended impacts and effects of the programme as designed.

Section 4

<u>Review Findings: Coverage</u>

### 4.1	Measuring coverage

Measuring coverage is process of assessing the extent to which a target group, population or set of institutions has access to or is benefitting from an intervention. This is usually measured in terms of the quantity of the target group benefiting divided by the overall number in the population. It is therefore a quantitative measure rather than qualitative. Quality can be included in what can be called 'effective coverage' in which the quantity of the target population meeting agreed standard s of service delivery is expressed as a percentage of the total target population. This is a much more complex form of assessment.

The issue of programme coverage is important, particularly from the perspective of the adequacy of scale of interventions. In the absence of the denominator, statistics of target groups that have been reached (e.g. total number of children educated) have very limited meaningfulness and are little more than a big number. Coverage data can be used to assess whether resources were optimally used to attain sufficient coverage of target groups and institutions. However, these are not easy questions to answer in a context such as Myanmar where social and education data may not be available or reliable.

Coverage can be measured in terms of target populations or institutions. In the education sector the most obvious unit of coverage is the school. This is the most practical unit of measurement for most interventions, especially when demographic data on school age populations and EMIS data on enrolment may be unavailable or unreliable.

### 4.2	Programme coverage targets

Very few coverage targets were established in the revised programme logical framework (2008). Purely quantitative targets were provided instead (e.g. number of children receiving essential supplies and learning materials). The coverage targets are as follows:

- ECD: no coverage targets were set;

- Primary education (QBE/CFS): no coverage targets were set;

- LSE: *percentage of basic education schools implementing National primary and secondary life skills curriculum.*

### 4.3	Programme component coverage results

### a).	School supplies.

All primary schools in the 25 Townships received the basic school supplies, which represents 100% achievement of the target. This amounts to 3,955 schools, 139 of which are monastic schools. The coverage rate of primary schools is around 10%. Given that the selected Townships are mostly in border and remote areas, it can be assumed that more than 10% of the total population of poor and disadvantaged children has been reached. However, this is a rather blunt and inefficient method of targeting the poorest.

### b).	CFS schools

All primary schools in the 25 Townships (a total of 3,955 schools) were supported through various interventions to become more child-friendly. The coverage rate is the same as for the provision of supplies, around 10% of primary schools. This represents a sizeable proportion of the primary school stock.

c). Primary teachers and PTA members trained

A total of 26,471 teachers in the 3,955 schools were trained in CCA and CFS. This amounts to an average of close to 7 teachers (6.7) for each school. What is not clear is the extent to which all relevant teaching and administrative staff in a given school have been trained. This suggests the importance on focusing on the school as a unit of coverage rather than the total stock of teachers. In the case of PTA members trained, it is difficult to assess how many schools have been covered as the unit of measurement is the total number of PTA members trained. The available data indicate that a total of 5 PTA members for each school have been trained.

d). Life skills education (LSE)

The primary LSE curriculum is now taught in all primary schools, representing 100% coverage at this level. This is a substantial achievement, which is probably the highest coverage rate in Asia at this level. The integration of LSE into the initial teacher training curriculum means that 100% of trainees are receiving LSE training. Work at the secondary level is ongoing.

e). NFE LSE training

It is not possible to provide a coverage estimate for the EXCEL programme, as the number of out of school children in the target population is not known has achieved. Almost 43,000 children benefitted from the programme. This is a substantial achievement. However, the implementation of EXCEL clearly shows that there is substantial number of out of school children who can be reached and retained by the model of CE/NFE on offer.

f). Box library coverage

The original target of 100% of primary schools provided with a box library has almost been reached. Some 88% of schools have received box libraries. This intervention extends well beyond the geographical remit of the 25 target Townships.

4.4 ECD coverage

It is important to try to establish coverage data for all major types of ECD services e.g. ECD for 0-3 year olds (Mother Circles); community based ECE and school based ECE (3-5). There has been insufficient disaggregation of statistical data on ECD services. It is for example difficult to establish how many new ECD centres have been established and sustained. This signals the importance of establishing an ECD database. Some possible ECD coverage measures are provided in Table 5 below.

Table. 5. Coverage and ECD

Coverage target	Result	Comment
% of children aged 0-3 participating in mother circles	18,930 children participated in Mother Circles	Very low coverage of overall target population, (even the sub population of vulnerable children).
% of children aged 3-5 participating in pre-school ECD (ECE)	99,385 children participating in both community and school based ECD.	The total number of children participating in ECD (3-5) was 256,357 in 2007.[1] The number of children benefitting from UNICEF Programme ECD approximates to 39% of those enrolled in ECE.

---

[1] Ministry of Education. (2007) Myanmar EFA MDA Assessment Report. MoE. Yangon.

% of Mother Circles (MC) receiving support from UNICEF	Coverage data not available	Total number of MCs not known

It is likely that UNICEF provides support to the majority of MCs |
| % of community-based pre-schools receiving support from UNICEF | Coverage data not available | Total number of community based pre-schools was 5755 in 2007[2] |
| % of school-based pre-schools receiving support from UNICEF | Coverage data not available | 1773 MoE pre-schools in 2007[3] |

4.5   QBE/CFS coverage

Coverage issues in primary education are relatively straight forward, once the unit of the school has been selected. See Table 6 below for exemplification. End of programme results indicate that around 10% of primary schools were covered; 14% of teachers and 11% of primary school students.

Table 6. Coverage and QBE

Coverage target	Result	Comment
Coverage of schools receiving CFS support	Total of 3,955 schools are supported for CFS	Total number of schools was 39,401 in 2009[4] (10% of schools)
Coverage of schools in remote and border areas	Data not available	Better data disaggregation is required
Coverage of training among stock of serving teachers	Total of 26,471 teachers trained in CFS/CCA	Total of 180,205 primary school teachers in 2009[5] (Around 14% of teachers)
Coverage of students enrolled in primary school	575,000 provided with supplies	5,187,021 enrolled in 2005/6[6] (Around 11%)
Coverage of PTA members trained	19,875 PTA members trained

(49% of target PTA members) | Total number not known

This could be measured at the school level |

4.6   LSE and coverage

LSE-related coverage issues are illustrated in Table 7 below. The school is the main unit of coverage. Data on LSE implementation and training can be included within the mainstream EMIS.

Table 7. Coverage and LSE

Coverage target	Result	Comment
Coverage of schools that are teaching	100% at primary level	UNGASS on HIV and AIDS core

---

[2] Ministry of Education. (2007) Myanmar EFA MDA Assessment Report. MoE. Yangon.
[3] Ministry of Education. (2007) Myanmar EFA MDA Assessment Report. MoE. Yangon.
[4] See Annex 3.
[5] See Annex 3.
[6] Ministry of Education. (2007) Myanmar EFA MDA Assessment Report. MoE. Yangon.

LSE		indicator
Coverage of training among stock of serving teachers who teach LSE	Data not available	EMIS can track LSE training at school level
Coverage of students enrolled in primary school	100%	The school is the optimum unit of coverage
Coverage of LSE training for teacher trainees	100% among initial teacher trainees	Included in UNGASS on HIV and AIDS reporting
Coverage of out of school population	Data not available	Disaggregated ata on out of school children need to be obtained

4.7. Conclusions

Increasing the coverage of ECD is quite problematic in the current policy environment and problems with data. The UNICEF programme strategy of supporting a range of ECD interventions is appropriate, though the focus should be on developing models for policy change and scaling up, rather than achieving large-scale coverage. Good models have been developed and demand for ECD is increasing, as is an understanding of its importance for human resource development. Strategies for identifying beneficiaries have been established. This constitutes work in progress. It is clear that it is very difficult to target the poorest families and problematic without addressing all existing cost barriers, both direct and indirect. There is scope for innovative pilot projects to trial ways of providing more targeted assistance particularly to remote communities, perhaps involving social funds.

The end of programme coverage in primary education was 3,955 schools with more 575,000 children in 25 townships, including monastic schools. This coverage represents roughly 10% of primary schools in Myanmar. This is a significant proportion of the total number of schools and children attending them. It is certainly sufficient to demonstrate the power of any programme results. They key question to be considered is how to maintain positive impacts in those schools, yet at the same time expanding coverage towards 100%. This will require policy dialogue with the MoE.

The basic coverage of life skills education (LSE) is easy to estimate since the programme now covers all schools and all children attending them, since it is part of the core curriculum. The level of coverage of interventions is fully appropriate. What is harder to determine might be termed 'effective coverage', in other words how many schools are teaching the subject as intended, with trained teachers and achieving stated learning objectives. It is clear from the available evidence that many schools are not yet effectively delivering LSE. It is therefore necessary to develop the capacity of the MoE at all levels to determine whether the curriculum is being effectively delivered, for LSE or indeed any subject. This is work in progress and needs to include the development of the EMIS (TEMIS/SMIS). It can be safely concluded that for LSE in the UNICEF programme the approach to coverage was optimal.

The coverage rates for EXCEL are also difficult to calculate, as there is no reliable database on out of school children. The programme is well designed and appropriate strategies for identifying beneficiaries have been established. It is clear that coverage under the UNICEF programme is sufficient to demonstrate the effectiveness of the model and to highlight the importance of developing NFE capacity in MoE at all levels.

Section 5

Review Findings: Effectiveness

5.1. Assessing effectiveness

The DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance suggest the following criterion for assessing programme effectiveness: *A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.*

In evaluating the effectiveness of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- *To what extent were the objectives achieved / are likely to be achieved?*
- *What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?*

The framework for assessing effectiveness is provided by the UNICEF proposal document strategies (See Table 8 below) and the revised logical framework. Quantitative data are provided by the baseline and endline CFS surveys as well as from routine M&E.

The results from the CFS endline survey provide important findings about the effectiveness of the QBE interventions.[1] However, they raise as many questions as they answer. It is regrettable that there was no qualitative research undertaken to triangulate the findings and to provide better understandings of the effectiveness of programme processes. There are also issues concerning the technical merit of some of the CFS indicators e.g. the extent to which they are measurable; whether they measure what they purport to measure etc.

The main objective of the 2007 Child Friendly School (CFS) baseline study was to assess each school's degree of Child Friendliness on a number of dimensions in such a manner as would allow for future monitoring to reveal movements of each school along each dimension. A further major objective was to relate Child Friendliness to outcomes such as learning achievement, and enrolment and survival to grade 5. The 2009 endline study was designed to measure progress at school and township levels in implementation of the CFS programme as revealed by movements of schools along the five dimensions and 33 indicators of child friendliness and by changes in access and participation rates and in learning achievement. The base line and endline studies employed the same methodology covering instruments, administrative procedures, data analysis and quality control processes.

For the baseline study 1000 primary schools located in 20 townships were selected. For the endline study, a sample of 500 schools was randomly drawn from the original 1000 schools. The number of schools selected for follow up in each township was proportional to the total number of primary schools in the township. The conceptual framework was represented by more than 2,000 questions spread over five instruments. This is a complex approach and one that is difficult to transfer to a Ministry of Education to include within routine performance monitoring operations. It should also be noted that any change in practice would be assessed through self-reporting responding to the questionnaire, without any objective measure or triangulation and that this imposes limits on the reliability of the data obtained.

5.2 Effectiveness in targeting resources to poor families

---

[1] UNICEF. (2010). Progress in implementation of the child-friendly schools programme in Myanmar over the three year period from 2007-2009. Yangon.

Within the UNICEF Education Programme there is a strong emphasis on addressing equity and quality issues in a pro-poor framework of action. Targeting resources to poor families is an important intervention in the context of disadvantage arising from inability to meet direct and indirect costs associated with primary school participation. There is clear evidence that cost barriers to education are a significant and probably the most important cause of early drop out. An indicator of successful intervention would therefore be increases in school retention rates, although there are confounding variables which may make attribution problematic. This outcome appears to have been achieved. The preliminary results of the CFS end-line survey show significant improvements in survival rates to grade 5.

The UNICEF programme has in effect provided the equivalent of a cash transfer to both primary schools and households through the provision of essential learning materials, school supplies, school roofing materials and water and sanitation facilities. As a result the cost burden should have been reduced households, thus making participation in primary education more affordable. The consequence of the effectiveness of this strategy are the reported increases in enrolment, attendance and completion, and this may be especially marked among children of poor households. A key issue for further research is whether the supplies provided are sufficient to make a significant difference in the cost being levied by schools at the household level. It is therefore important to know the full range of charges being levied. Another is whether the supplies are being distributed as intended and not for example being sold or used to levy fees. In this regard, there is very little evidence of misuse of supplies and the monitoring regime is effective.

It is concluded that the strategy of targeting resources to poor families is reasonably effective. However, research is required on the impact of the supplies at the household level to confirm this finding. In practice, resources were targeted at schools rather than households with the assumption that this would benefit the poor. This appears to be a reasonable solution since most families, though not all, in the locations selected can be assessed as poor in line with national poverty data (See Annex 4). However, it should be noted that this is not the most effective or efficient targeting mechanism and there is a need to explore targeting of additional resources to the poorest families.

5.3   Effectiveness in equity promotion

Models for the improving the equitable delivery of quality ECD, primary education and LSE have been developed and are available for scaling up. The multiple interlocking strategies which have been adopted in this programme appear to be working. The reform of the education sector is a long-term endeavour and a further period of support is much needed to continue the work and scale up interventions.

The main equity-related strategy is to target resources at poor and disadvantaged Townships and through this mechanism all families and communities. However, equity is also promoted through pro-poor targeted ECD, CFS (gender, inclusion and disability), the LEP pilot (language related inequity) and the EXCEL Programme (Continuing Education for out of school children). There is a strong focus on working in remote settings including mountainous and border areas. The overall approach is relevant to addressing inequity in the education system and is considered to be reasonably effective in the current context of educational development. What is lacking is a coherent conceptualisation of inequity in the education system for strategy development and policy dialogue. This could have been addressed in the planned Education Sector Review, which unfortunately did not take place. The EFA FTI Guidelines on Equity and Inclusion[2] could be used to conduct a series of workshops with key MoE stakeholders on tackling such issues.

---

[2] EFA FTI Secretariat and UNGEI. (2010). Equity and Inclusion in Education. A guide to support education sector plan preparation and appraisal. Washington DC.

5.3.1 Equity in Early Childhood Development (ECD)

While ECD is clearly needed especially by poor children, there is limited ownership in the Education Sector, since responsibility falls under the DSW. MoE lacks clear policy, a budget and institutional capacity to provide ECE service delivery. The weaknesses in education financing mean that ECE must be either community or donor-financed at present. It is questionable whether the inclusion of ECD for children aged 0-3 is relevant to education sector development as it is highly unlikely that this will ever be included in education sector policy framework. It is more appropriate to focus on ECD for children aged 3-5 since this can be included in a pre-school policy framework.

A baseline study on ECD was carried out in 2007. This found that only 17% of children aged 3-5 had access to ECD services. Most of these are in urban areas. Only 2% of schools in the CFS baseline study had pre-school classes. In 2008, UNICEF and MoE conducted a needs assessment for ECD in especially disadvantaged areas such as Northern Rakhine State. This identified new locations where school-based ECD could be established.[3]

By end of the programme, 16.25% of children in grade 1 of primary school had ECD experience in the selected Townships. There was considerable variation across the townships in rates of ECD participation. For example in Hpakan Township, almost 60% of primary one children had ECD experience while in Maungdaw, Buthidaung (Rakhine) and Kutkai, the rate was under 5%. Rates above 30% were obtained in Waing Maw (Kachin), Mudon (Mon) and Pinelubu (Sagiang). Some 160,184 children had participated in ECD programmes overall as a result of the intervention. Disaggregated data are not available on these children and it is therefore not possible to make any useful conclusions on the poverty focus of ECD programming.

5.3.2 Equity and Child Friendly Schools (CFS)

The essential learning supplies are highly valued and reportedly contribute to improved equity in primary education. Interviews with Township Education Officers consistently mentioned that the Essential Learning Package supplies have increased timely enrolment and retention. This was corroborated in the schools visited during this review. Without the supplies in the past, poorer parents would enroll their children late or not at all. The impact appears to be clear from the number of children in the supported schools that has increased each year.

The textbooks, exercise books, pencils and bags are highly valued by the children. The one-off provision of teachers' kits has helped their motivation. The provision of better quality textbooks and storybooks has helped improve the quality of teaching and learning. Many classrooms are more attractive learning environments as a result of supplies and CFS training.

The average transition rate from primary school to middle school (junior secondary) was 79.85%. This is slightly higher than the MoE national average (77.32%). Since the Townships are selected from disadvantaged areas, this suggests that the inputs from the Education Programme have likely been effective in increasing transition rates. 5 Townships recorded <75% transition rate. These were in Buthidaung (Rakhine), Namtu (Shan North), Maungdaw (Rakhine), Pauk (Magwe) and Htantabin (Yangon).

The conceptualization of Child Friendly Schools was reviewed, revised and adopted by MoE. The revised criteria were used as the basis for conducting the baseline study in selected schools in the 20 Townships where CFS was being introduced.[4] Five additional CFS Townships were added following the impact of Cyclone Nargis.[5]

The CFS endline assessment recorded the following outcomes against output indicators:

---

[3] UNICEF ((2008). Multi-Donor Mid-Year Progress Report. January-June 2008.
[4] MoE, DSW and UNICEF. (2008). Comprehensive Quality Education Programme. Mid-Term Review Report. 2006-2008.
[5] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.

Apparent Intake Rate (AIR).

- The AIR showed significant improvement at endline over baseline (0.62 to 0.76). Overall 46% of school improved and 44% declined.

Repetition Rate

- No significant change in repetition rate was observed. Overall 26% of school increased their repetition rate and 9% decreased. Most schools have an automatic promotion policy in grades 1-3.

Primary School Survival Rate

- A significant improvement in the survival rate was observed. Over, 62% of schools improved their survival rates and 30% decreased. The best performing Townships were Thabeikkyin, Hpakant and Rtaheduang. The worst performing were Yebyu and Shadaw.

The latter result is the most significant since, the programme sought to address the causes of early drop out. It seems to have been successful, with the majority of schools recording an improvement in the survival rate. However, since performance declined in almost a third of schools, this must be considered to be partial effectiveness. What is not know is the extent to which the poorest children were retained or why some schools were successful and others not in improving the survival rate.

The main findings concerned with the CFS dimensions of inclusiveness and gender are presented below:[6]

Inclusiveness

In the baseline survey, 75% of the schools conducted annual enrolment campaigns designed to encourage out of school children to enroll. 72% had population data for their catchment area. Only 10% of schools reported having children with disabilities or learning difficulties in their enrolment. 43% of the schools did not exempt poor families from the payment of school fees and 58% did not provide other forms of assistance. Almost all schools maintained records of student attendance. There are only 15 school-based pre-schools identified in the sample, reflecting the low priority accorded to ECE.

The endline survey results for the 5 CFS indicators relating to inclusion were disappointing. (See Table 5 below) This may have been in part a consequence of the research design. More than 60% of schools showed either no significant or a small positive change. 40% showed a small negative change. Results from indicator 4 (see Table 8 below) contributed to this result. Township results were marked in terms of diversity rather than consistency among schools. Further research is required to account for the wide variation in performance between schools, but it is likely that a key factor will be school leadership and management.

It is interesting to note that improvements were reported in classroom teaching in most Townships with teachers reportedly using content, language and strategies in their teaching that helped all students to learn regardless of their background or ability (Indicator 1). There appears to be no objective measure of this change, however. In the absence of any metrics, it is possible to conclude that this result possibly indicates a change in attitude of teachers towards their students.

It is not altogether surprising that it was found that few schools provided support to poor families to send their children to school and exempted them from various school fees (Indicator 2). The abolition of all direct costs can only be brought about by increased Government allocations to

---

[6] UNICEF. (2008). Baseline of 1,000 schools in the child friendly schools programme in Myanmar in 2007. Volume 3.

schools and a resultant decline in the need for community financing. It also requires strict enforcement of the Education law on the provision of fee-free primary education, but this appears to be beyond the current capacity of the State.

The fact that at the end of the programme most schools do not have a master list all school age children in the community, whether enrolled or not is very disappointing and requires some explanation (Indicator 3). Without such data, it is clearly problematic for the MoE to assess whether all school age children are enrolled or not or to plan for the efficient running of schools. The final CFS report mentions that there is a lack of clarity about the boundaries of school catchment areas. Without formal clarification from the MoE on these, it is difficult for schools to undertake school censuses. The lack of reliable data for ensuring that all children are enrolled in school is a serious systemic shortcoming and one that potentially undermines the effectiveness of the SMIS and EMIS as a whole.

The data show a decline in every township in schools conducting regular campaigns to encourage parents to enroll all school-age children (Indicator 4). There is a directive from MoE requiring all schools to conduct enrolment campaigns at the beginning of the new school year. It appears that compliance with such directives is weakening and that the management of the system is becoming even less effective.

Endline data show that 12 of the 20 Townships recorded improvements in putting in place school mechanisms to check regular attendance and pay appropriate home visits by teachers when necessary to improve attendance (Indicator 5). This appears to be a notable achievement. Whether this can be sustained is in question as performance in 8 Townships actually declined, although 3 marginally so. Further research is required to identify why some schools recorded improvements in addressing attendance and others declined in performance.

Regular programme monitoring showed that monthly attendance data across the Townships was lowest in grade 1 in 2009/10. The overall attendance rate for girls is better than for boys. Attendance rates are seasonally affected. In Loilem (Shan south), the lowest attendance rates are in October. At all levels attendance was greater than 75% and in most greater than 85%.

Table 8. CFS Indicator results from the Endline survey on Inclusion (CFS Dimension 1)

Indicator	Result
Indicator 1. *Teachers use content, language and strategies in their teaching that help all students to learn regardless of their background or ability.*	13 of the 20 Townships showed improvement, 2 very considerably (Waingmau and Namsan). One declined markedly (Buthidaung). There are wide variations recorded in school performance in some Townships (e.g. Namtu and Tachileck).
Indicator 2. *The school provides support to poor families to send their children to school and are exempted from various school fees.*	45% of schools in the lowest category are located in three Townships (Lolien, Pauk and Pinlebu). Only 4 Townships have schools ranked in the top category.
Indicator 3. **The school has a master list of all school age children in the community, whether enrolled or not.**	The data show no difference between baseline and end line. Most schools do not have a master list. There is a lack of clarity about the boundaries of school catchment areas. Without formal clarification from the MoE, it is difficult for schools to undertake school censuses.
Indicator 4. *The school conducts regular campaigns to encourage parents to enroll all school- age children.*	The data show a decline in every township. There is a directive from MoE requiring all schools to conduct enrolment campaigns at the beginning of the new school year.
Indicator 5. *The school has a mechanism to check regular attendance and pay appropriate home visits by teachers when necessary to improve attendance.*	Data show that 12 of the 20 Townships recorded improvements, while 8 declined, 3 marginally so.

It is disappointing to note that there are no data available at the end of the programme to indicate any improvements in the enrolment and retention as a result of QBE interventions of children with disabilities, children from linguistic minorities, children in remote and conflict affected areas, children from migrant families and children living with or affected by HIV and AIDS. This may be due to the difficulty in obtaining reliable disaggregated data and undertaking social research in Myanmar. However, it does signal the importance of increasing attention on inclusive education, revisiting the CFS indicators to address whether these are the most useful to measure inclusion and putting in place more robust M&E arrangements to track progress in inclusion at the school and Township level in particular.

Gender equality

Gender parity in primary education was achieved across the 25 Townships with an average gender parity index of 0.96. There was a slight decrease from 2008/9 to 2009/10 in favour of girls. The gap had widened most in Maungdaw (Rakhine) with the gender parity index at 0.68.

In the baseline survey, there was little evidence of direct gender based discrimination or disparities in enrolment, repetition, drop out and survival. It was found that the majority of teachers tend to favour boys in their classroom practices. At endline, most schools had improved on the gender dimension of CFS (See Table 9). Nearly 80% showed either a small or moderate positive improvement. The outcome is driven by large improvements in indicator 6. A caveat needs to be recorded however, as it is surprising that results for Indicator 7 are not more consistent with those for Indicator 6.

What is not revealed by these data are the areas where gender equality is an issue in teaching and learning and where barriers to equality persist. The 2 CFS indicators are not sufficient to provide much of a window on gendered practices in primary education. However, they appear to indicate that the trend is broadly positive with some variation between schools as was recorded in the case of inclusive education practices.

Table 9. CFS Indicator results from the Endline survey on Gender (CFS Dimension 2)

Indicator	Result
Indicator 6. *The school provides all students, boys and girls, equal access to and opportunities for participation in all school activities.*	All townships registered improvement and there was substantial consistency within Townships.
Indicator 7. *Cooperative group learning methods are used and girls and boys are encouraged to work and play together.*	Seven Townships showed minor improvements. Most Townships had declined in performance (13 out of 20).

The pilot Language Enrichment Programme (LEP) looks promising and seems to be having an impact. LEP has been piloted from 2007 in 296 primary schools in 3 Townships in Mon, Shan and Kachin States. Materials have been developed for Grades 1-3. Materials were being prepared for Grades 4 and 5. Regular monitoring is carried out by the LEP team. Findings indicate that the LEP activities and materials support greater interaction among teachers and students. [7] The pilot now needs to be evaluated.

5.4 Effectiveness in quality improvement of services

The improvement of the quality of education service delivery at primary level is an essential complementary strategy to the interventions described above to improve equity. The selected

---

[7] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.

programme vehicles for this are Early Childhood Development (ECD), Child Friendly Schools (CFS), SMIS/TEMIS and Life Skills Education (LSE). Whether these are sufficiently comprehensive in scope to bring about significant qualitative change is a key issue and monitoring of outcomes needs to be improved. The barriers to improving educational quality are not well evidenced and there is a need for more analytical work. It is highly likely that factors which influence teacher classroom performance are critically important for learning outcomes. These go beyond the quality teacher training and include school effectiveness and instructional management, analysis of incentives (financial and non-financial) to perform a professional job and continuous professional development (CPD). The low levels of education financing have a predictable impact on quality of service delivery. In short, a strategic approach is required which is informed by evidence, and which leads to policy dialogue to bring about change.

5.4.1 ECD and quality

Monitoring visits to 84 school-based ECD centres in 15 Townships in 8 States and Divisions found that enrolment at that level (3-5 years of age) was only 26%. 53% of the ECD facilitators had received training. Only 26% of the centres had a separate classroom and 47% an outdoor play area for ECD. Only 23% had separate latrines and 74% had clean drinking water. 80% of the centres were using UNICEF ECD supplies, but only 60% had proper record keeping procedures for these.[8] In 2009, monitoring and supervision visits, using the Minimum Standards by DEPT and DBE in 145 school-based ECE centres found that 50% needed urgent attention to improve the quality of service delivery. [9]

A couple of impact studies were commissioned. The first study researched ECD in 80 selected communities in 9 townships[10] and the second in 5 Townships[11]. Selected findings include that ECD was provided free of charge in poor communities; there was a lack of parental awareness about ECD and ECE centres are now enrolling some children with disabilities.

Mother circles (Children aged 0-3).

In community-based Mother Circles, the caregivers have good knowledge of families and their situation. Access is free and easy. People know each other. Children feel at home. Caregivers develop time management and record keeping skills. There is social recognition and community trust and a safe and secure environment.

The children gained weight, had. A better health status and malnutrition was addressed. Personal hygiene improved. There were impacts on caregiving practices and parenting. They became more patient and gentle with children, with more attention to hygiene and a better understanding of how children learn. There was more interest in their development. There was a lessening of the parental care burden, which was helpful for poor families who are working. The programme contributed to community strengthening and capacity building.

There were challenges identified. Homes were not totally safe. There was a lack of space. Sustainability was an issue with dependency on UNICEF. The programme was not reaching the poorest families. Delivering parental education was problematic because of time constraints. There was a lack of technical training for caregivers and a lack of parental awareness. Demand continued among parents for teaching basic reading and writing. Turnover of Circle Leaders was high and morale of caregivers was low.

Pre-primary school (children aged 3-5)

---

[8] UNICEF. (2008). Multi-donor Annual Report. January-December 2007.
[9] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.
[10] Thein Lwin (2009). Evaluation of IECD program jointly implemented by Pyannyatazaung Organisation and 80 selected communities in nine townships. (2000-2008). Yangon.
[11] Thein Lwin (2010). Evaluation of ECD program jointly implemented by Pyannyatazaung Organisation and 15 selected communities in five townships. (2009-2010). Yangon.

Facilitators are change agents in the community. A changed outlook of other primary school teachers on holistic development of the child was reported by stakeholders during focus group discussions. The carefully selected and trained Facilitators are reported to be committed, creative and child-friendly.

The classroom arrangements are attractive and decorated in the ECD centres. There are learning corners. Children learn better. There is language skills development. Children are more polite. They develop communication skills, self-help skills, listening skills (e.g. to stories) and problem solving skills. ECD aids their cognitive development.

ECD promotes school readiness and helps the transition to primary school. Children are happy to go and no longer cry and are no longer frightened. ECD helps enrolment at correct age. Teachers no longer use fear-based techniques for classroom control. ECD improves parental and community participation. Children are friendly with teachers. There is social recognition and community trust.

Key challenges include: the turnover of facilitators and the key role of head teachers in school based ECE. Their interest and support are essential, but they are very busy people. Capacity building is needed at field level for NGOs and in M&E. Most ECD facilitators (Pre-school) were not receiving salary as agreed (less) or regularly. There were wide variations in salary. Provision of lunch is a major issue. Community representatives were not always chosen according to selection criteria. Training design is overcrowded and needs more field-based training. Sustainability is an issue.

ECD Minimum Standards have been field-tested and all centres are using them. A Thematic Working Group (TWG) has been established on ECD. The 18 Children's storybooks in local languages in box library are highly valued. Mention was made of the book concerning disability. The MoE is beginning to take on ownership of pre-school education, however it is struggling with primary education and ECD is still perceived as an additional burden. NGOs are critically important for ECD implementation.

As part of the EFA Mid-Decade Assessment, the Ministry of Education conducted an assessment of ECD programmes and their impact on children's development and success in primary school. The 'Most Significant Change' methodology was used for qualitative research. Three key results were reported. First participating children were more confident, outspoken and less afraid of strangers. Second, children were more willing to share with others. Third, they were more polite to others. Community awareness of the importance of ECD was significantly increased in participating communities.[12]

ECD is reportedly having a significant impact on the participating children. They develop social and communication skills, confidence and are ready for school. They learn to play by themselves and with others. ECD also helps promote hygiene. Parenting education is considered to be successful. Demand for ECD spreads from village to village as awareness is raised. UNICEF training and support is considered to be important. Most ECD Centres which have been supported are reported to be inclusive and accept children with disabilities. ECD is particularly helpful for school readiness of children with disabilities. It also helps with early diagnosis of disability. The bilingual materials also help school readiness. It is estimated that 70% of children who attend ECD are disadvantaged. ECD builds on village social capital and in the process of implementation further strengthens it. The ECD Committee values its training and considered to be important for programme effectiveness.

Key ECD Outputs

a)   Minimum ECD Quality Standards

---

[12] MoE, DSW and UNICEF. (2008). Comprehensive Quality Education Programme. Mid-Term Review Report. 2006-2008.

An important contribution to quality is the publication of minimum quality standards for ECD.[13] Core indicators are provided for the pre-school environment, learning corners where children learn through play, caregivers, children, parent and community participation and management. The indicators emphasise inclusion, creativity, child-centred learning and life skills development through play, games and group activities. The format is attractive. Each indicator is exemplified with well-selected photographs taken in pre-schools. It is likely to be a valuable resource for not only for standard-setting, but also for training, pre-school management and community engagement. They need to be kept under regular review.

The Minimum ECD Quality Standards are being used by ECD teachers and Management Committees for the monitoring and supervision of ECD services.[14] 1,120 pre-school teachers and 286 education officials were trained to use the Standards.

b)   Story books

13 Children's storybooks were translated into 6 minority languages (Pa-O, Mon, Shan, Lahu, Kachin and Kayin). They were used in ECD Centres and in parenting education sessions.[15]

5.4.2   CFS and quality education

The CFS approach is wide ranging in scope. It has been locally adapted and there appears to be strong ownership of the concept. The 5 dimensions and 33 indicators provide for a spectrum of issues and actions to be considered in improving school performance. There is a clear risk that a large number of indicators will tend to crowd out prioritisation. From a quality perspective, the CFS dimension of Effectiveness (3) is the most relevant and should arguably be the first priority for interventions. Nine indicators have been selected to measure school effectiveness. They include ECD, SMIS and elements of a Child-Centred Approach (CCA) to teaching and learning. The UNICEF programme approach has the merit of being highly child-focused. However, this has resulted in the omission of key areas for school effectiveness such as school leadership, teacher effectiveness and instructional management. It is recommended that a stronger emphasis be placed on supporting improvements in school effectiveness through the CFS approach and also through the development of complementary activities to strengthen school leadership, management and accountability.

How the CFS framework is used is of critical importance to bringing about change at school level. It can be used as a diagnostic tool; for school planning; for monitoring and evaluation; and for teacher training. There is the risk that it will be used for purposes beyond its technical merit. The support for School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and School-Self Assessment (SSA) processes is clearly relevant and important for improving school effectiveness. These need to be informed by CFS principles, but should also be broader in scope and include critically important issues such as teacher effectiveness and learning outcomes, which are currently not included. The SSA and SIP need to be kept under regular review and refined in the light of analysis of practice.

MoE stakeholders commented that CFS is a concept which most teachers are able to understand. Children are reported to be happy in schools where CFS has been embraced. Teaching and learning are improved. Classroom observation undertaken during this evaluation revealed that some teachers clearly love their children and CFS capitalises on this. Teachers are reportedly friendlier towards their students as a result of CFS training. The children are more active in class. There is less corporal punishment and sticks are no longer used in the schools visited.

School supplies and CFS inputs are currently coterminous. The two are seen as interlinked. It is hard to envisage CFS development without the provision of the supplies to improve school

[13] UNICEF. (2009). Core indicators for minimum quality standards for ECD. Yangon.
[14] UNICEF. (2010). Early Childhood Development. 2006-2010. Powerpoint presentation.
[15] UNICEF. (2010). Early Childhood Development. 2006-2010. Powerpoint presentation.

environments and teaching and learning. In effect the provision of supplies can be seen as an informal conditional input for the implementation of CFS.

Routine programme monitoring suggests that teaching and learning are becoming more participatory. 86% of children reported in 2008/9 that they were able to ask questions directly to teachers and teachers devoted enough time to assist them individually (an improvement of 30% on 2007/8). Improving trends are observed with teachers helping students in difficulty, involving students in discussions, moving around the classroom and using open-ended questions. Students also report greater use of group work and engagement in game/play learning activity. More student work is being displayed on classroom walls.

The introduction of CFS is having an impact on the way schools are managed. Through CFS, the Child-Centred Approach (CCA) has supported the introduction of group work and increased teacher-student interaction. More individualized student attention from teachers is also reported. Group work can provide the teacher with space for working with individual students. The teacher training that is being provided is greatly appreciated. Teachers have a range of training opportunities: e.g. CFS, LEP, SIP, LSE and PTA training. Teachers particularly appreciate the CFS and LSE training, and in particular the practical approach that is taken. It has helped improve their understanding of child development.

All monastic schools are involved in focus Townships. This helps to ensure that some of the poorest students who attend these schools are not further marginalised. The CFS approach is valued in these schools. There is a need for more specialized support to the Monastic schools which include specific targets and reporting mechanisms.

The CFS endline survey showed disappointing results overall on school effectiveness. 40% of the schools registered either a small or moderate positive change, while more than 40% showed a small or moderate negative change (See Table 10). Overall there was no improvement in this dimension of CFS. It is conjectured that teachers find it difficult to implement CFS teaching methods in crowded classrooms or 'hall' type schools. Improvements in teaching may be constrained by lack of funding for school infrastructure.

All Townships registered improvements in school coordination with communities to promote organized early learning opportunities for pre-school children (Indicator 8). It would be useful to know how this translates into expansion of ECE service delivery and any increase in enrolment rates in ECE.

The endline results regarding SMIS operation and performance are troubling (Indicator 9). No difference was observed between baseline and endline data. This needs further investigation to identify the reasons for the lack of progress. It was observed that most schools need to improve their SMIS. There are no population data so schools cannot compute GER/NER. Data are not maintained and trends in enrolment cannot be computed. Since SMIS data are uploaded to the Township level, this risks jeopardising the effectiveness of programme investments to improve the TEMIS. The current performance EMIS needs to be reviewed holistically as part of the evaluation of the TEMIS.

Headteachers consulted during the evaluation process reported that the SSA/SIP process is useful for school development. It has helped clarify school development objectives and increased the participation of parents and children. The SIP can also be helpful in mobilising funds. For example, funds were received to construct latrines in 24 schools.

Considerable variation between schools was found in developing lessons with child-centred learning activities and adapted to link contents with local needs and culture (Indicator 10). Half of the schools improved and half declined in performance. The greatest decline was observed in Hpakant, Mudon and Wangmau. More disappointing results were also obtained for indicator 15 (teachers facilitate participatory learning using a variety of interactive methodologies). Only 5 of the 20 Townships showed an improvement at endline with considerable improvements in Mudon,

Namtu and Nyaungdon. There is wide variation within Townships. Data suggest that most teachers continue to rely on rote learning methods. Further research is required to provide a better understanding of why some schools are able to make improvements and some are not, as well as why some schools have declined significantly in performance. This indicates the urgent need for a follow up study on school effectiveness involving both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

All Townships declined in their performance on indicator 11. This concerns ensuring that all students have an opportunity to choose activities of their own interest that are free from the stress of competition and examinations. There were marked variations within Townships. Hpakant, Kutkai, Shadaw and Tachilek all declined to a marked degree. It is not possible to explain this trend with the available data. It is entirely possible that current testing procedures (school-based end of chapter tests) drive teaching and learning as well as contributing to stress and a competitive environment. The current assessment system may actually be contributing to a decline in achievement and to inequitable outcomes, privileging those with most time to memorise the course textbooks. There needs to be a comprehensive review of the assessment system at all levels to ensure that is performing its core educational purposes e.g. evaluating the effectiveness of instruction; finding out what an individual student has achieved in terms of what they can do and know.[16] It should not be functioning as an instrument of social control.

Data for Indicator 12 (All children are encouraged to express their views, ideas and feelings) show no difference between baseline and endline data. Schools did not perform well at baseline. The data suggest that either CFS training is not yet effective in this area and/or improvements need to be made in school management. Better monitoring of CFS uptake is required and the identification of the factors which lead to progress in implementing CFS principles.

The results are very mixed. Data for Indicator 13 are more positive. This concerns feedback about students' work or behaviour being accompanied by positive comments about achievement and suggestions for improvement. Performance improved in 16 out of the 20 Townships. Namtu and Mudon improved markedly, while Hpakant declined substantially. Again, there is substantial diversity in each Township.

The results for Indicator 14 are disappointing. This concerns ensuring that each classroom has learning corners with learning materials easily accessible for all children. The data show no difference between baseline and end line. While 80% of schools have some form of library, very few have any kind of learning corner. Most classrooms are reportedly crowded with little potential for establishing learning corners. This area of intervention needs to be re-assessed in the light of the endline finding.

The CFS baseline study revealed the very widespread use of corporal punishment. 62% of teachers told their students that they would be beaten if they did not perform well in a test and 82% of students reported being beaten if they had done something wrong. More than 40% of teachers reported having to use the cane more than once a week. 55% of students claimed they have been the victim of physical bullying. At endline, 13 of the 20 Townships registered an improvement on Indicator 16 (Teachers practise positive, non-aggressive and alternative discipline). However, it is still the case that 50% of schools use physical punishment, though with reduced frequency. Routine programme monitoring indicated declining rates of teachers using corporal punishment were reported from 2007/8 to 2008/9. Increased rates of students being bullied by fellow students were reported. This may reflect greater sensitivity to the issue or increases in violence at schools.

Table 10. CFS Indicator results from the Endline survey on Effectiveness (CFS Dimension 3)

---

[16] Hill, P. (2010). Examination Systems. Asia-Pacific Secondary Education System Review Series No 1. UNESCO. Bangkok.

Indicator	Result
Indicator 8. *The school coordinates with communities to promote organized early learning opportunities for pre-school children.*	All Townships registered improvement on Indicator 8 data. The greatest improvements were found in Buthidaung, Maungdaw, Pauk and Pinlebu and the lowest in Hpakant.
Indicator 9. *The school has and uses a school management information system (SMIS) to monitor learning, support individual needs of students and for external reporting.*	There is no difference between baseline and endline data. Most schools need to improve their SMIS. There are no population data so schools cannot compute GER/NER. Data are not maintained and cannot compute trends in enrolment.
Indicator 10. *Most lessons are developed with child-centred learning activities and adapted to link contents with local needs and culture.*	Half of the schools improved and half declined in performance. The greatest decline was observed in Hpakant, Mudon and Wangmau.
Indicator 11. *All students have an opportunity to choose activities of their own interest that are free from the stress of competition and examinations.*	All Townships declined in their performance. There are marked variations within Townships. Hpakant, Kutkai, Shadaw and Tachilek all declined to a marked degree.
Indicator 12. *All children are encouraged to express their views, ideas and feelings.*	The data show no difference between baseline and endline data. Schools did not perform well at baseline. The data suggest that CFS training is not yet effective in this area.
Indicator 13. *Feedback about students' work or behaviour is accompanied by positive comments about achievement and suggestions for improvement.*	Performance improved in 16 out of the 20 Townships. Namtu and Mudon improved markedly, while Hpakant declined substantially. There is substantial diversity in each Township.
Indicator 14. *Each classroom has learning corners with learning materials easily accessible for all children.*	The data show no difference between baseline and end line. 80% of schools have some form of library. Very few have any kind of learning corner. Most classrooms are reportedly crowded with little potential for establishing learning corners.
Indicator 15. **Teachers facilitate participatory learning using a variety of interactive methodologies.**	5 of the 20 Townships showed an improvement at endline. Improvements in Mudon, Namtu and Nyaungdon were considerable. There is wide variation within Townships. Data suggest that most teachers continue to rely on rote learning methods**.**
Indicator 16. *Teachers practise positive, non-aggressive and alternative discipline*	13 of the 20 Townships registered an improvement at endline. However, it is still the case that 50% of schools use physical punishment, though with reduced frequency.

5.4.3   Learning Outcomes

Currently there are no standardized achievement tests that can be used to help assess progress in improving learning outcomes at a systemic level. The Myanmar Language Learning Achievement test, which was administered as part of the CFS Baseline study, revealed that performance in Myanmar language at grade 5 correlated very highly with performance in tests for mathematics, science and social science. Performance in the language test positively correlated with teacher attendance and negatively correlated with repetition. It was found that fewer than 25% of students had achieved a minimum level of competency.[17] As part of the endline survey process, learning achievements in Myanmar language and mathematics for Grade 5 students were assessed again. The key findings from the endline tests are as follows:

Myanmar language

- All townships but one (Yebyu) performed better on endline than baseline;

---

[17] UNICEF. (2008). Baseline of 1,000 schools in the child friendly schools programme in Myanmar in 2007. Volume 1.

- Language learning improved in 72% of schools;

- Kutkai and Shadow performed at a significantly higher level;

- Both boys and girls performed better on endline than baseline;

- Boys improved to a greater degree than girls, but girls did better than boys in 12 Townships;

- There were substantial variations between schools within Townships;

- The average level of learning achievement is far from satisfactory. The majority of students would have failed if 50% was the pass mark;

- No correlation was found between improvement in language learning and CFS implementation at school level.

Mathematics

- The test was too difficult for most students even though it was based on the curriculum;

- Only 21% of students achieved at least 50% of the competencies;

- 50% of students had an ability level to answer only 8 of the 40 questions;

- Myanmar language and mathematics scores were found to be significantly correlated; and

- Very few students will be adequately prepared for secondary school level mathematics.

5.4.4 School Health

A key indicator of school effectiveness is whether the school environment is healthy and supportive for learning. The CFS indicators include 10 indicators in all to measure progress in the dimension 4 (Healthy School). This is the largest number of indicators for any CFS dimension, which suggest that this is a high priority.

Nearly 90% of schools registered a small or moderate positive change between baseline and endline (See Table 11). However, these improvements have been driven by changes in data regarding indicators 22 and 26.

Indicator 22 concerns School having and enforcing policies against bullying, abuse, neglect, physical punishment, violence, sexual harassment and substance abuse. All Townships made modest improvements, especially Namtu, Shadaw and Thabeikkyn. Improvements were made in most schools in most Townships. Bullying is a problem in most schools. Regarding Indicator 26 (The school ensures and establishes an enabling environment for all children to apply lifeskills to develop healthy habits and safe behaviour), there is improvement at endline in every Township. This change is usually large.

The positive change reported seems to be mainly due to the improvement in cleanliness of the latrines. Nearly 600 latrines were constructed in partnership to improve school sanitation. The student to latrine ratio was 1:54 in 2009/10, up from 1:69 in 2007/8. Significant improvements were recorded in 3 Townships (Rathidaung, Maungdaw and Bauthidaung in Rakhine) where over 400 latrines were put in place. Overall, the percentage of schools with separate latrine facilities for girls had risen from just over 40% in 2007/8 to nearly 90% in 2009/10. To improve the availability of potable water at school, ceramic water filters were distributed. In 2009/10 74% of the supported schools had access to clean water, up from 65% in 2007/8.

Data on the other 8 indicators revealed no significant change. It is suggested that substantial infrastructure investment is required to bring about changes in school health. It is also important for MoE to develop a clear and comprehensive School Health and Nutrition (SHN) policy and ensure that steps are taken to disseminate it to all schools and put in place arrangements for implementation including M&E to track progress. The need for this is also suggested by the fact that 72% of students had a health check in 2007, but most were not receiving iron or vitamin supplements in school.

Programme support for school infrastructure is too small in scale to make a major difference to learning environments. The provision of roofing sheets, water/sanitation and playground equipment are highly valued by school staff and children. Following Cycle Nargis UNICEF has supported the construction of school/cyclone shelters. 3 innovative models have been built. They can be considered as model schools. The Hmaw Bi Primary School in Kungyangon Township stands out in its local environment. Children like the design of the facilities. Classrooms are light, compact and well laid out. They like the playground and its equipment.

Table 11. CFS Indicator results from the Endline survey on Healthy Schools (CFS Dimension 4)

Indicator	Result
Indicator 17. *Adequate clean and safe drinking water is always available for all students and school personnel.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 18. *Clean and well maintained toilets and hand washing facilities are available for every 50 students of each sex and teachers*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 19. *The school in collaboration with the Health department provides micro-nutrient supplements, annual health screening examination of students and ensure safe, hygienic and healthy food catching habits.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 20. *The school has and implements policies to provide a safe physical environment with protection from physical and biological risk.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 21. *School waste is properly disposed and school acts top prevent breeding of mosquitoes and other disease vectors on or near school grounds.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 22. *School has and enforces policies against bullying, abuse, neglect, physical punishment, violence, sexual harassment and substance abuse.*	All Townships made modest improvements, especially Namtu, Shadaw and Thabeikkyn. Improvements were made in most schools in most Townships. Bullying is a problem in most schools.
Indicator 23. *All students know where to go in school to get psychosocial support when needed.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 24. *The school coordinates with the community and local authorities in a child protection network to ensure safety and protection of students.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 25. *The school implements lifeskills based health education including prevention of risk behaviours of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 26. *The school ensures and establishes an enabling environment for all children to apply lifeskills to develop healthy habits and safe behaviours*	There is improvement at endline in every Township. This change is usually large. The positive change seems to be mainly due to the improvement in cleanliness of the latrines.

5.4.5 LSE and quality education

Life skills education (LSE) has a relatively long development history in Myanmar. As a result the country probably has the highest LSE coverage rate in primary education in the region. This is a major achievement. The original impetus to introduce LSE came from the perceived need to educate children about HIV and AIDS. The reduced rate of HIV prevalence may in part be attributable to the levels of knowledge and skills resulting from LSE. The declining rate of HIV prevalence means that LSE needs to have a broader focus on health risks and these should be age-appropriate. The primary life skills curriculum is broad-based, but needs to be kept under regular review to ensure that the content is relevant for the context. At secondary level, there needs to be a strong focus on gender issues and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) as part of preparation for adulthood. There need to be stronger linkages between CFS, which includes school health issues as part of the dimension of Health School, and LSE. One way of accomplishing this would be to support the development of a comprehensive School Health and Nutrition (SHN) Policy and Strategy with MoE based on current practices and going beyond these in scope.

The aim of the UNICEF Education Programme is to achieve national coverage by the end of 2009 following the revision of the primary level life skills curriculum. This is part of national core curriculum and compulsory. Three phases of activity were planned to accomplish this. Each phase included the printing and distribution of students' textbooks and Teachers' Guides, training of trainers, training of life skills teachers and monitoring of the implementation of the curriculum. By 2008, 34,525 or 85% of primary schools were implementing the life skills curriculum and 39,146 in 2010. A total of 92,653 teachers and 375 TEOs and associated staff had been trained.[18] A total of 1,369 primary level monastic schools were also implementing the curriculum. By 2010, 105,146 teachers had been trained (70%) through in-service teacher training that was conducted at the District/Township level.[19] National coverage of the programme has in effect been achieved.[20]

Primary level life skills education was integrated into the curriculum of 23 Education Colleges involving a focus on child-centred teaching methods. Teacher trainees also receive 13.5 hours of peer education, in which life skills education is delivered.

A small scale comparative study of the life skills curriculum (unrevised and revised in project and non-project Townships schools) showed consistently higher levels of knowledge in 5 key life skills areas. These are social skills, emotional intelligence, healthy living, disease and drug prevention and environment.

The secondary curriculum was reviewed by the MoE Education Life Skills Task Force with the support of an international consultant. . Based on a survey undertaken in 2006 in 20 secondary schools in 14 Townships, 120 lessons were developed in 7 thematic areas for each grade at secondary level in 2007. By 2009 the new curriculum framework for Grade 7 had been revised and approved. 26 draft lessons were in the process of pre-testing and editing. Those for Grade 6 had already been finalised.[21] Teachers' guides and student books were being prepared for Grades 7 and 8.

Students are benefiting from the LSE curriculum in a number of ways. It helps increase knowledge and skills that are health-related; strengthens communication skills, critical thinking and problem solving; increases cooperative and interpersonal behaviours and reduces bullying. Knowledge acquired is shared with parents. Teachers have learned how to apply child-centred teaching methods, improved their knowledge on health issues and strengthened their own life skills.

---

[18] MoE, DSW and UNICEF. (2008). Comprehensive Quality Education Programme. Mid-Term Review Report. 2006-2008.
[19] UNICEF. (2010). Life skills-based education and HIV prevention in Myanmar. Briefing Power Point.
[20] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.
[21] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.

With Life Skills Education, there are a number of challenges which relate to the capacity of teachers to use a child-centred approach. Some teachers do not follow the steps in the Teachers' Guides. They may use more traditional teacher-centred methods instead. As a consequence students may not be able to practise the skills in the classroom. They lack the skills to use visual aids effectively. They have difficulty with sensitive topics such as SRH and sexuality. They may not give LSE a high priority, even though it is a core subject. In Education Colleges, the approach that is contained in the Teachers Guides is not used. There is no specific LSE teacher training manual or materials. There is a lack of a specialized department for life skills education. The Teacher Training Colleges are weak at sharing their experiences with others.

5.4.6 EXCEL

The EXCEL programme was started in 2005. It is implemented through local NGOs in partnership with MoE. A target of 50,000 children and young people who had participated in EXCEL was set to be achieved by 2010. 7,700 out of school children participated in the EXCEL programme in 2007. By 2008, a total of 38,147 children had participated (77% of the target).[22] A total of new 795 facilitators had been trained for 3 phases since 2006. In 2008-9, 98% of the 18,099 children attending EXCEL programmes completed all three phases.[23]

EXCEL is very popular among the participants. The selected participants reported that the sessions are interesting and participation in the programme makes them happy. They particularly like discussions activities, songs and games. It increases their knowledge on health issues and HIV and develops decision-making and interpersonal/communication skills. They are proud to be involved in the programme. They also expressed sadness that their programme cycle was over and wanted to continue their education.

It uses a youth-centred pedagogy. It reportedly leads to behaviour change in various ways. Students reported that it had made them more hygienic and helpful to their parents. It reduces some risk behaviours and increases communication skills and knowledge about HIV and AIDS, which is shared with community. Community members were happy with the programme and pleased that there was something for those who were out of school. The programme is inclusive and children with disability are able to participate. It builds social connectedness among the out of school population. It is therefore a form of social protection for vulnerable young people. The various incentives provided by the programme are effective in attracting and retaining the target group. EXCEL builds on local social capital. The EXCEL Committee is very important for the effective running of the programme. The facilitators report that they are proud to work for the children in the local area. They value the training and the fact that it takes place in Yangon which is an additional incentive. It builds their life skills and communication skills with young people through the mentoring process. Working with vulnerable populations strengthens their interest in social work.

An impact evaluation of the EXCEL programme using the Most Significant Change Approach found the following impacts:[24]

- Reported reduction in health-risk behaviours (e.g. sex, smoking, alcohol and drug consumption etc);

- Increased knowledge of health issues e.g. avian influenza;

- Improved personal hygiene practices;

- Improved relationships in the family;

---

[22] MoE, DSW and UNICEF. (2008). Comprehensive Quality Education Programme. Mid-Term Review Report. 2006-2008.
[23] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.
[24] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.

- Improved communication skills; and

- Improved decision-making processes.

Demand for EXCEL. Demand for EXCEL exceeds supply. There are many children out of school. A few children are illiterate. The programme is not able to help them acquire functional literacy skills.

EXCEL programme duration. The EXCEL programme is too short. One parent asked 'Is that all there is or us?' Parents wanted their children to escape from their lives of poverty. Children want to continue. Needs to be broader and include more Continuing Education and links with vocational training. Some children are hungry and would benefit from targeted nutrition interventions.

5.5 Effectiveness in enhancing community participation

Community participation has been effectively strengthened in ECD, primary education and NFE. This is important for improving school-community relationships. It can enhance accountability of service delivery, promote school responsiveness to the particular circumstances of families and children and strengthen social capital. Community participation is a strong element of CFS and constitute a separate dimension. A key issue is meaningful community participation in school operations and this appears to be taking place. The SSA and SIP process have reportedly increased community participation. Large numbers of PTA members have been trained and mobilized resulting in a reported increase in PTA activity and support. Community-based ECD has also increased community participation in child development and education. EXCEL also mobilizes the community to support the programme.

The School Self-Assessment (SSA) and School Improvement Plan (SIP) involve a participatory process to support the involvement of parents and children in school-level decision-making. The first target of 1,000 schools was not met and a total of approximately 900 underwent the SSA/SIP processes.[25] It was reported in the Mid-Term review that this had increased community participation and a sense of ownership in the school. Support was needed to assist the implementation of SIPs. SIPs currently tend to focus on school infrastructure rather than school effectiveness, which suggest that the approach needs to be reviewed and revised.

In the CFS baseline survey, 75% of schools reported that they have a School Council. 80% of parents report that they have no contact with the school. Very small numbers of parents attended the School council or PTA. Only 47% of students said that they discussed school matters with their parents. 90% of schools reported that they do not keep records of student performance and 85% did not keep a record of disciplinary decisions and actions. Most schools were only loosely connected with the communities they serve.

PTA training is valued by its members. It results in members knowing more about children. They learn about ECD, CFS and LSE. PTA members reportedly participate more in school following training.

At CFA endline, most schools showed no significant change for the community dimension indicators (See Table 12). Where change occurred, it was invariably negative. The inference is drawn that most Townships and schools do not give a high priority to community aspects of CFS.

Table 12. CFS Indicator results from the Endline survey on Community (CFS Dimension 5)

Indicator	Result
Indicator 27. *The school promotes active participation in school activities through school assemblies, class*	No significant change between baseline and endline

---

[25] MoE, DSW and UNICEF. (2008). Comprehensive Quality Education Programme. Mid-Term Review Report. 2006-2008.

assemblies and school council.	data.
Indicator 28. *Students have an opportunity to play a key role to organize and facilitate the daily activities in school.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 29. *The school provides opportunity for children to come and discuss with teachers and to express their opinion about school and issues faced in their education.*	Data showed negative change for all but 4 Townships.
Indicator 30. *Parents and community provide opportunities for the children to express their opinion and views.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 31. *The school promotes regular exchange of information and discussion between teachers and parents for the attendance and performance of the children.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 32. *The school promotes parents' participation in school activities.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.
Indicator 33. *The school promotes parents' participation in decision-making and in implementing education activities through School-Self Assessment and School Improvement Planning and PTA work plans.*	No significant change between baseline and endline data.

More analytical work is needed to provide better understandings how the school and community participate and the range of challenges and opportunities which exist to strengthen participation.

5.6 Effectiveness in capacity building of education sector providers

There has been a high volume of training for a range of stakeholders which has been effective in increasing motivation, increasing knowledge and developing skills. There is still a need to consolidate especially in primary education and the implementation of CCA across the curriculum and including LSE.

The critical weakness of the UNICEF Education Programme approach to supporting capacity development in the MoE is that there has been very limited analytical work in this area. There is a lack of data on capacity issues. There has been no systematic assessment of capacity shortcomings, bottlenecks and technical gaps. The EFA FTI tool for assessing MoE capacity[26] could be used to support a series of workshops with key MoE stakeholders on identifying key capacity constraints and opportunities for capacity building and strengthening. There has been little focus on monitoring the impact of training on classroom performance.

Capacity building at all levels of the education sector is critical for sector development and the sustainability of MDEF interventions. The UNICEF programme approach includes a substantial number of capacity strengthening activities. These involve a considerable amount of training, the development of standards and, crucially, the improvement of the EMIS to improve planning and monitoring.

The lack of MoE institutional capacity in ECD and NFE is a significant obstacle to capacity building. It is recommended that support be considered to assist MoE in creating a NFE Department.

TEMIS and SMIS are two interlocking components designed to upgrade the EMIS. TEMIS is currently being piloted in three Townships.[27] They are based on an EMIS needs analysis carried out in 2005.[28] The system was designed informed by a needs analysis of the EMIS supported by

---

[26] EFA FTI Secretariat. (2008). Guidelines for Capacity Development in the Education Sector. Washington DC.
[27] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.
[28] UNICEF. (2005). Report on the Myanmar Education Management information System Needs Analysis Study.

UNICEF in 2005.[29] By 2009, data on 115,000 students and 3,000 teachers had been entered in the database. TEMIS is now able to generate monthly, quarterly and annual reports on township, cluster or individual schools concerning learning achievement, teacher and student attendance. Capacity building training was undertaken with 143 Township Education Officials and head teachers from Htantabin, which is one of the pilot sites. In Bogalay, the latest pilot site. 1,300 education officials, head teachers and teachers were trained in data collection and reporting.[30]

TEMIS is designed to include data on physical access to education; enrolment, retention and physical facilities. It will also include data on quality: learning achievement, completion and transition rates, pupil-teacher ratios, teacher certification and deployment. It will be able to support the analysis of trends in the Township as a whole and in individual schools.[31]

School-level data collection is processed in SMIS. There are multiple forms to be completed for data gathering. A SMIS Manual has been developed to assist this process.[32] The set of forms includes the main identification form; the catchment form; school performance, furniture and library form; staff profile form; teacher class assignment form; student admission form. Reports to the Township for TEMIS would be on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis.

There are concerns that the SMIS and TEMIS might be too complex to operationalise on a national scale. Monitoring data on the TEMIS pilot are unavailable and it is therefore difficult to make an evidence based judgement. What is required is an independent assessment by an EMIS specialist who has considerable experience in this field in resource-poor education systems. The efficiency of the current model needs to be assessed as well as its current uses. And its effectiveness in meeting those needs. On the basis of this assessment, revisions can be made along with the development of a strategy for further piloting and/or a national implementation.

TEMIS involves a considerable amount of data collection and analysis. It should be borne in mind that in an EMIS the higher the level of detail and quantity of information there is to use, the lower the level of decision-making, i.e., close to the school unit. The quantity of data required decreases as the level of decision-making goes up, the information becoming more aggregated and synthesized, integrating all available data.

5.7 Effectiveness in data collection and research

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a key area for any large-scale programme. Robust M&E arrangements are needed to ensure accountability, to track progress and to obtain evidence for policy dialogue and future programme planning. It is good practice to develop a detailed M&E plan for any complex programme. This was not available in the original UNICEF Education Programme proposal.

A Field Plan for monitoring the QBE sub-project was developed by UNICEF in 2008.[33] This sets out 4 main monitoring strategies. These are:

- **Continuous routine school-level monitoring.** This was to be conducted with a control group of 420 primary schools and school support on supply distribution by Education FOs and FMs. There are no time series data available from this control group. It appears that such data analysis was beyond the capacity of the UNICEF office. This represents a wasted opportunity to assess the impact of CFS on school practices.

- **Continuous spot-check**. This level of monitoring would involve a random sample of primary schools outside the control group mainly by Education FOs to cross check

[29] UNICEF. (2005). Report on the Myanmar Education Management Information System Needs Analysis Study. Yangon.
[30] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.
[31] UNICEF. Analytical framework for TEMIS data of Nyaungone Township.
[32] UNICEF (2007). SMIS Manual.
[33] UNICEF. (2008) UNICEF Field Monitoring Plan for the Comprehensive Quality Education Programme.

validity of data and follow up implementation of agreed recommendations. As with the routine school level monitoring no consolidated data are available.

- **Comprehensive periodic monitoring**. Twice a year comprehensive school level monitoring would be conducted in the control group of 420 schools by Education FOs and FMs. No consolidated data are available.

- **Township level monitoring and capacity building**. This would be undertaken by Education FOs and FMs to follow implementation of agreed recommendations and address issues arising from previous visits. This process was clearly taking place and may have taken priority with a view to supporting the efficient management of the programme. There is no consolidated documentation.

It is clear that the M&E arrangements have underperformed. Data obtained from routine monitoring should have provided some of the core data for assessing the programme implementation. This appears not to have been the case. The approach may have been too ambitious considering the limited human resources available for data collation and analysis in the context of large and complex programme.

A Comprehensive School Monitoring Checklist (76 items/questions) was developed for M&E. It is long and complex. It seeks to obtain a wide range of data including statistics on enrolment and retention; children with disability, students with ECD experience; teacher qualifications; school infrastructure; school management and administration; protective environment; supplies and CFS training. It covers much of the ground that would be expected in a SMIS/EMIS. It would probably take many hours to complete in each individual school. But its utility in tracking programme progress is limited. What would have been more usual would have been a format that is more closely linked to programme inputs and their impacts. A more user-friendly format would have been desirable. It is simply too comprehensive for the purpose of routine monitoring. The questions are coded for statistical analysis.

A Comprehensive Classroom Monitoring Checklist (20 questions) and a Comprehensive Child Monitoring Checklist (20 questions) were also prepared by UNICEF. These cover the gamut of what might be encountered in a classroom visit. They includes classroom observation; child centred teaching; use of supplies; school health; child protection and child participation. As with the tool described above, the questions are coded for statistical analysis. Both tools are more useful for research purposes than practical management-related M&E. There are too many categories and too many questions, some of which are difficult to answer (e.g. How often is bullying taking place in school) and two many yes/no questions. There is no room for qualitative observation data. Neither form is really fit for purpose and would be very complex to complete and yet the data obtained would have limited utility. Neither is informed by evidence of good practice in school or lesson observation.

Other Comprehensive Monitoring tools in the UNICEF M&E toolkit are:

- Comprehensive Life Skills Monitoring Checklist (9 questions);

- Comprehensive ECD Monitoring Checklist (15 questions);

- Comprehensive Community Monitoring Checklist (32 questions)

All of these suffer from the above-mentioned limitations. The approach is quantitative rather than qualitative and yet the data do not align with baseline data or programme core indicators.

A baseline study of 1,000 schools in 20 Townships was undertaken in 2007 to provide a means of monitoring impact of CFS and the results were published in mid-2008.[34] This involved a research

---

[34] UNICEF. (2008). Baseline of 1,000 schools in the child friendly schools programme in Myanmar in 2007. Volume 1.

design in which more than 2,000 questions investigating the 5 dimensions and 33 indicators of Child Friendly Schools were used to obtain data. Five different instruments were used. They were questionnaires for the school (824 items); teachers (303 items); students (161 items); and the community (173 items). In addition there was a school checklist (618 items). The responses were given on a 5-point scale, from low to high. In total 39 scales were developed covering the CFS dimensions, indicators and one overall dimension. Each school is located on all of these. A Myanmar language test was also administered to grade 5 students.

The baseline was undertaken to provide a measure against which future investments can be assessed. The findings are expected to be valuable for policy, planning and project management purposes. It was found that student attendance is positively correlated with teacher attendance. School survival is positively correlated with health, community, student attendance, teacher attendance and promotion.

It should be noted that the approach to monitoring CFS in the baseline study is not readily transferable to the MoE. It is too complex for routine M&E purposes. It should be seen as a research adjunct to regular field-based M&E. It may not be necessary to undertake a further study on this basis. There is a need to undertake qualitative research on CFS in selected schools to triangulate the findings and to obtain more ethnographic data.

Quantitative and qualitative monitoring of teacher training

Annual teacher training on CFS concepts and methods was undertaken. In 2006, 3,474 teachers were trained for consolidation in previous programme Townships. In 2007, 5,405 teachers in the 20 focus Townships and 5,092 teachers in the previous Townships were trained. In 2008, 5,848 teachers in schools in the 20 Townships and 2,430 in 5 Nargis-affected Township schools were trained. Programme monitoring showed the following impacts:[35]

- Better use of seating arrangements so that children are able to work more interactively in groups;

- Increased use of learning materials often displayed on classroom walls;

- Increased display of children's work in classrooms; and

- Increased child participation in classroom activities.

In 2009, two types of CFS teacher training workshops were held. One was for the refresher training focusing on Myanmar language and mathematics of 3,650 teachers who had attended training in 2007 and one for 10days initial training of 1,480 teachers. In Nargis-affected Townships, some 2,770 teachers were trained.[36]

Little progress was made in integrating CFS in the curricula of Education Colleges. Two areas of teaching practice were identified in the Mid-Term Review that are highly resistant to change. The first is the use of rote memorization for learning and for preparing for assessment. The second is the use of corporal punishment in class as a means of discipline.

Monitoring of the impact of school supplies

In the 20 Townships, enrolment increased from 352,460 children in 2006 to 385, 299 in 2007 and 413,162 in 2008.[37] In some schools it was reported that the increase in enrolment had pressure on school classroom space with the unintended consequence that the school-based pre-school had to be closed.

---

[35] MoE, DSW and UNICEF. (2008). Comprehensive Quality Education Programme. Mid-Term Review Report. 2006-2008.
[36] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.
[37] MoE, DSW and UNICEF. (2008). Comprehensive Quality Education Programme. Mid-Term Review Report. 2006-2008.

In conflict affected areas (Kokang and Wa) essential learning packages were distributed to approximately 42,000 children in Government and monastic schools. In addition, approximately 1,020 community and monastic teachers had been trained in child centred teaching and learning methods.[38]

Considerable time was spent by UNICEF Field Staff on supply monitoring and risk mitigation. Supplies mostly reached schools in time for opening, coinciding with enrolment. Some reports were made that some head teachers used the supplies to secure financial contributions from parents. [39] A flier was published by UNICEF and MoE informing the target communities about the supply component being free of charge and should not be sold or bought (2007). This was distributed in NRS. Same message printed on children's exercise books. Supply risks were managed effectively.

5.8   Effectiveness in advocacy for strategic change and scaling up

There has been no discernable impact with regard to policy dialogue, advocacy and scaling up. A more strategic approach is required to build on the results of this phase. A time-bound advocacy strategy needs to be developed which has specific outcomes to be achieved.

5.9   Emergency Preparedness

Cycle Nargis struck in May 2008. Around 140,000 people were killed or remain missing in Ayeyarwady and Yangon Divisions. It had a severe impact on education. It damaged 4,106 schools representing about 57% of the total number of schools in the affected areas. Of these, 1,255 totally collapsed.

UNICEF's emergency response to the humanitarian emergency targeted 2,000 schools (i.e. at least 50 % of the affected primary schools) in 17 townships (7 in Ayeryarwady Division and 10 in Yangon Division). This involved establishing 1,000 Temporary Safe Learning Spaces (TSLS) in locations where schools had collapsed. Roofing sheets and tarpaulin were provided for school renovation and repair. Essential Learning Packages (ELP), school kits and teachers' kits were distributed to the 2,000 primary schools. Water and sanitation facilities were distributed to the 1,000 targeted schools. 3,000 selected primary school teachers were trained to provide psychosocial care and support through CFS training. For younger children, ECD kits were provided to 400 affected ECD centres. The EXCEL programme was re-established in the affected townships and the NFE programme expanded.

A total of 2,740 primary schools were revitalised through UNICEF emergency support. Some 410,000 children benefited. A total of 923 TSLS were provided on a demand basis. Some headmasters did not submit a request partly out of fear of losing out in receiving a permanent structure. 965 schools received roofing sheets for rehabilitation and repair.

MoE requested UNICEF to build some model schools which could be used for demonstration purposes in school construction. Three different designs were used, suitable for different environments. These include school-cum-cyclone shelters. Type A (100 students) can shelter 650 people; Type B (250 students) up to 1,000. These cyclone and earthquake resistant primary schools include 6 classrooms (2 for grade 1), a teachers' room, small library, playground with swings, see-saw etc, water and sanitation (1:15 toilets). The fence would be provided by the community. A total of 37 model schools were built.

---

[38] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.
[39] UNICEF. (2009) MDEF Annual Report. January-June 2009.

Supplies were an important part of the emergency response. 311,793 essential learning packages were distributed in 2,379 schools. 2,430 teachers were trained in CFS and child-centred teaching and learning.

UNICEF provided support to 343 ECD centres (for children aged 3-5). 45 of these were school based and 289 community based implemented through local NGO partners (KBC, Metta Development Association, Yinthway Foundation). 29 were 'big tents.' 90 facilitators were trained. 26 temporary learning shelters were provided to support the EXCEL programme, 2,754 EXCEL kits were distributed. 86 monitors and facilitators were trained.

5.10   Conclusions

5.10.1   To what extent were the objectives achieved / are likely to be achieved?

Because of the way in which the programme outputs have been defined, they will be achieved as will the purpose itself. All of these simply an increase in equitable access to ECD/primary school/life skills education. This has taken place unambiguously in ECD and LSE. In primary education, the result has been an increase in retention rather than enrolment.

An attempt to summarise the findings on effectiveness is presented in table 13 below. Most of the programme strategies are considered to be partially effective. This implies that more investment is required in these areas to ensure they are fully effective. This has implications for both the coverage and sustainability of these interventions

Table 13. UNICEF Programme Strategies and results

Strategy	Components	Result	Effectiveness
1.Targeting resources to poor families	- Examine cost of schooling at the family level - Provide minimal supplies in disadvantaged townships - Contribute to school maintenance costs (e.g. roofing sheets) - Support provision of water and sanitation	Increases in primary school enrolment and retention reported School infrastructure and classroom environment improved in targeted schools Greater equity in school environment as a result of supplies Lack of clarity as to how the poorest are benefitting and whether better targeting is possible	Partially effective
2.Community participation	- School self-assessment tool - School Improvement Planning - Community based ECD - PTA training - EXCEL	Increased community participation reported through SSA/SIP process and PTA training EXCEL and ECD both build on existing local social capital and strengthen it No significant change in CFS community dimension rates at endline	Partially effective
3.Partnership expansion	- NGOs - WFP in integrated ECD	Partnership has been modestly expanded.	Partially effective

| | | Partnership arrangements have worked well where UNICEF is the donor

The partnership concept has fallen short of what was envisaged in the MDEF proposal. UN partnerships in particular appear to have been weak. At the sectoral level there is need for a SWAp-like arrangement. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4. Building capacity of education service providers | • CFS in Teacher Training Institutes
 • ECD capacity building
 • Schools in cease fire areas | A considerable amount of capacity building training has taken place in the absence of sectoral capacity building plan;

CFS is Education Colleges needs further support within a broad framework for developing teacher education and improving school management

ECD capacity building has taken place particularly with NGOs, MoE and targeted schools. Sustainability is a major issue. | Partially effective |
| 5. Equity promotion and quality improvement of services | • Indentify quality in ECD services
 • LSE
 • CFS
 • Pre and in-service teacher training | Equity promotion has been a major component of the Programme

Quality standards have been agreed for CFS and ECD. These need to be kept under review. | Partially Effective |
| 6.Community mobilization and communication | • Media to support children's learning | Community mobilisation has been a key element of all 3 sub-projects.

Mobilising the poorest households remains a challenge. | Partially effective |
| 7.Data collection and research | • Township EMIS (TEMIS)
 • School MIS (SMIS) | Considerable amount of effort has gone into data collection. The benefits of this for management purposes seems limited at present

TEMIS and SMIS need to be independently evaluated and a strategy developed for scaling up

More analytical work is required on basic education development, including financing | Partially effective |
| 8. Advocacy for strategic | • Advocacy to scale up CFS and LSE | Results are far from clear. | Not effective |

change and scaling up		An advocacy strategy needs to be developed.	
9. Service delivery to the most vulnerable children	• Piloting service delivery models for OVC/CABA, working children etc	Models for service delivery have only been developed in the form of NFE (EXCEL and NFPE) No models have been developed for especially vulnerable children such as OVC/CABA, working children etc	Partially effective
10. Family involvement in children's learning needs	• ECD Mother Circles expansion and strengthening	Thus has taken place through ECD parenting education. This needs to be reviewed, revised and strategy developed to take it to scale.	Effective
11. Life cycle approach and multi-sectoral linkages	• Coordination with other UNICEF sections (WES/CP) • SHN interventions in ECD and primary education	Coordination with WES seems to have been effective. That with CP needs to be strengthened. SHN interventions appear to have been effective. There is need for a sector strategy on SHN to be developed.	Partially effective
12. Emergency preparedness and response (conflict emphasis)	• Distribution of school in a box kits and ECD kits • Training	DRR work appears to be effective. There are many players post-Nargis. DRR needs to be included in LSE. School models developed post Nargis are potentially useful for policy dialogue	Effective
13. Consolidation, expansion and scaling up.	• EFA National Action Plan as overall programme framework • CFS scale up • LSE scale up • ECD in ethnic areas	Scaling up has taken place within the framework of the MDEF programme. There is still a need to develop national scaling up strategies for CFS and ECD	Not effective

5.10.2 What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

The barriers to implementation need further analysis before any subsequent phase of support is agreed. The main issues appear to be:

- Lack of clear and detailed policy for improving equity and learning outcomes in ECD, primary and basic education;
- Lack of medium term expenditure framework (MTEF) for basic education and three year action plan;
- The large variation between schools in effectively implementing CFS principles suggest that there are significant school level variables that have not been adequately addressed so far. These may include: school leadership; instructional management and supervision; assessment practices and inspectorate support;
- There has been very limited capacity building in pre-service teacher education;

- Important pilot projects remain to be evaluated e.g. LEP and TEMIS;
- The SSA and SIP processes appear not to have been effective. They need to be assessed in relation to improving school effectiveness;
- M&E arrangements have been too cumbersome and too heavily reliant on endline research. There has been insufficient qualitative research into teaching and learning;
- Engagement with the curriculum and its implementation has been very limited (LSE only). There is a need to strengthen the teaching of reading, writing and numeracy in the early years;
- Current MoE policy on the language of instruction appears to disadvantage speakers of other languages in the early years of learning;
- CFS appears to be inadequate to deliver system wide change on its own. The strategy for improving equity and quality in primary education therefore needs to be revisited with MoE;
- Current targeting modalities are rather crude. There is a need to develop better targeted interventions in ECD and primary education to support the poorest and most disadvantaged children;
- NGO involvement is limited, especially in primary education. Policy space needs to be given to allow NGOs to operate here.

Section 6

Review Findings: Efficiency

6.1 Assessing Efficiency

The DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance suggest the following criterion for assessing programme efficiency: *Efficiency measures the outputs - qualitative and quantitative - in relation to the inputs.* It is an economic term which signifies that the aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted. When evaluating the efficiency of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- Were activities cost-efficient?
- Were objectives achieved on time?
- Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?

6.2 Cost Efficiency

It is difficult to assess efficiency without access to MoE costings for supplies and their unit costs. The unit costs for ELP supplies have been estimated by UNICEF at $5 per child. This is not on the high side of such costings. There may be scope for efficiency savings but these are unlikely to be great. What is required is an assessment of how these resources might be better targeted at the poorest children.

Because of data deficiencies it is difficult to estimate the coverage of vulnerable children by the programme. The selection of focus Townships is an imperfect targeting mechanism, but it can be seen as a stage in developing a more refined targeting approach. In the context, it was probably the best approach available. Data on poverty show that it is pervasive and that most areas have significant populations of poor families. The selection of remote and border areas for implementation was an appropriate targeting strategy, although the operational environment is more difficult. In practice a mix of settings, representative of Myanmar's diversity, was required to demonstrate the effectiveness of the interventions. It is judged that the level of coverage was about right to achieve impact on the system.

The unit cost for the teachers' kit is estimated at $22 per teacher. This is much higher than for students. There may be scope for efficiency savings or for changes to the contents of the kit. None of the kit contents are resources that might directly assist the teacher in improving professional performance.

The use of resources/supplies has been very carefully monitored during the Programme. There appears to be little scope for misuse or for unnecessary items to be supplied. The provision of supplies to schools has probably increased their efficiency.

Budget items which need further scrutiny to ensure optimal cost efficiency when a second phase of support is prepared include the following items:

- School repair kits;

- Teacher's kits

- Capacity building workshops and follow up activities; and

- M&E arrangements.

6.3 Achieving objectives on time

Supplies and training appear generally to have been delivered in a timely manner. It is recommended that a more systematic approach to capacity building is taken in any future phase of funding in order to ensure that training resources are properly targeted at key institutions such as training colleges and schools within the framework of a capacity building plan.

A number of areas appear not to have been undertaken or completed in the most efficient manner. These include:

- Evaluation of pilot projects (LEP and TEMIS in particular);

- Revision of programme document and logical framework; and

- Analysis of regular programme monitoring data from selected schools.

The operating conditions in Myanmar undoubtedly have had an effect on efficient programme implementation. These include delays or refusal in obtaining permission to travel for UNICEF staff and consultants. Transportation can pose significant challenges. Cyclone Nargis had a significant impact on programme implementation, both negative and positive. It brought activities to a halt and yet offered opportunities to develop new models of school construction (School-cum- cyclone shelter)

6.4 Efficient implementation

UNICEF's field presence is seen as a major strength and a source of support to Township Education Offices as well as partner NGOs. The Field Officers undertake regular monitoring and provide support to the teachers. The joint monitoring process in the 3 sub-projects is considered to be working well.

Focus group discussion groups held at the TEO level showed that UNICEF is regarded to be an efficient partner (See Box 6 below).

Box 1. Views from the Township Education Office

UNICEF Education Programme Strengths

- The basic school supplies really benefit the free primary education system. Textbooks, stationery and other education supplies not only help the teaching learning process, but also promote free primary education

- Most poor schools have become safe learning spaces by receiving roofing sheets.

- By receiving school and office supplies and sporting materials, schools and office become better functioning. It also gives a great opportunity for the children to play more.

- Support such as ceramic water filters, toilets and sporting materials, helps improve the health of children and facilitates healthy habits from the very beginning.

- Due to the training, we gained teaching methodologies that brought us abreast of international developments. In addition, it improved the teaching and learning quality of teachers and children.

- The Language Enrichment Programme facilitates the children in border areas to improve Myanmar Language. It helps children to be able speak Myanmar Language and they pay more attention to it.

- By receiving CFS teacher training, the teaching quality of teachers has improved.

- The activities driven by SSA/SIP mobilize community participation and affect the implementation of school development. Parents become more interested in education and they involved and gave more support.

- The PTA project accelerated development in education.

- The ECD project supported school readiness in primary education.

- Due to the establishment of TEMIS (Township Education Management Information System), the education management of TEO (Township Education Office) and schools has improved.

	NFPE (Non Formal Primary Education) and EXCEL project gives an opportunity to out of school children to regain school education. It also provides the knowledge on health education and life skills.

There are some key concerns expressed with regard to programme management (See box 7). These include:

- **Monitoring and evaluation**. There are constraints with the current approach to supervision monitoring and supervision. The number of schools that can be visited is limited due to remoteness and transportation issues. Programme monitoring is over-complex. Data collection is cumbersome and exceeds capacity to analyse it.

- **Exit strategy.** There is a lack of exit strategy. Stakeholders want a slow exit or preferably no exit. What can be sustained/afforded needs to be better assessed for sustainability.

- **Storage**. Concern was raised about storage of supplies at Township Education Offices, which lack the capacity for this task.

Box 7. Views from the Township Education Office

UNICEF Programme Challenges
- Supply process involves a storage problem at the Township Education Office
- Lack of continuity of trained teachers in border areas due to frequent transfer
- Insufficient supervision and poor communication occurred in highland areas due to difficult access
- There is some difficulty in supply distribution as it takes time and energy
- Although teaching methodologies are well received, a constraint in applying is that the classrooms cannot be organized well due to the majority of schools being of the hall type with limited space
- As for schools with fewer teachers, CFS teaching methodologies cannot be fully applied due to all teachers having to follow monthly lessons plans to be completed in time
- There is a challenge for poor children in learning due to their parents' extreme poverty.
- Transport costs provided for basic supplies are less than the actual cost.
- There are still some constraints in school inspection and supervision due to poor communication and difficult access to schools in some remote area

6.5 Did the programme help MoE improve the efficiency of Education service delivery?

The programme resulted in limited impact on improving the efficiency of primary education. No significant change in repetition rate was observed at the endline. Overall 26% of school increased their repetition rate and 9% decreased. Most schools have an automatic promotion policy in grades 1-3.

The adoption of a continuous progression policy in 1998 significantly has reduced repetition rates in primary education. The repetition rate was estimated to be 0.5% in 2005.[1] Progression is not automatic, however, and steps need to be taken to ensure that children are not held back and put at risk of dropping out. Learning difficulties need to be addressed through individualised instruction and remedial teaching where it is identified as necessary. The current policy on promotion should be reviewed. At present, the promotion of a student depends on the results of chapter-end tests and marks obtained in the Comprehensive Personal Record (CPR). No tests are set in grades 1 and 2 of primary school. Box 7 below sets out the elements for the CPR at

---

[1] UNESCO. (2008).Asia and the Pacific Education for All (EFA) Mid-Decade Assessment. Mekong Sub-Region Synthesis Report. Bangkok.

primary and secondary levels. To be promoted to the next level, students must obtain at least 40% in both academic and school activities. There is a strong element of social control in the CPR elements and these may not be pro-poor in that children from disadvantaged households may find some of the CPR elements more difficult to fulfill than for some of their peers. The administration by schools of regular content-based tests which rely on memorisation and the implementation of the CPR may well systematically undermine steps taken towards developing child-friendly schools and significantly contribute to early drop out.

Box 1. CPR elements

Primary level CPR

- 75% school attendance:

- Sitting regularly the chapter-end tests;

- Abiding by school rules and regulations and not indulging in social crimes;

- Fulfilling obligations to school, teachers, parents and the community and taking care of younger students;

- Growing trees, plants and making the school environ verdant and green;

- Giving assistance in parents' livelihoods;

- Participation in sports and physical activities;

- Participating in aesthetic education such as involvement in literary activities, music, singing, dancing and painting;

- Keeping oneself neat and tidy.

Secondary level CPR (additional elements)

- Participating in the development tasks of the local community and State;

- Offering voluntary service for community work;

- Participating in the activities of teams, clubs and associations of the school and social activities such as the Red Cross.

However, a significant improvement in the survival rate was observed. Over, 62% of schools improved their survival rates and 30% decreased. The best performing Townships were Thabeikkyin, Hpakant and Rtaheduang. The worst performing were Yebyu and Shadaw. It is recommended that consideration be made as to how future interventions might improve the efficiency of basic education in terms of student flow, and learning outcomes.

6.6   Efficient coordination. The MDEF Donor coordination arrangements

The donor coordination mechanism for the MDEF appears to have improved during the programme's implementation. The issues presented below were obtained from donor representatives. They shed some light on programme efficiency. There remains a need to formalize arrangements within any subsequent phase of donor support.

Strengths

The reported main strengths of the MDEF arrangements are as follows:

- Establishment of good working relations;

- Improving organizational practices including preparations for meetings and sharing of draft documents;

- Improved relations between donors and the UNICEF Head of Education;

- Agreement on a programme logical framework;

- A good combination of formal and informal meetings.

Challenges

The reported challenges and limitations include:

- Poorly presented reporting (data lacking structure and analysis);

- Understanding where the programme is working well and where it is not;

- Honesty and openness about programme shortcomings;

- Lack of follow to meetings and confirmation about next steps;

- Donors often feel that their concerns have not been properly addressed**.**

Lessons Learned

Among the lessons learned are the following:

- The need for a consistent performance framework at the outset of the programme and agreed reporting structure;

- Ensure that the requisite technical expertise to operate it is in place at the start;

- Ensure openness and honesty in dialogue about programme performance at all times;

- Ensure all meeting action points are clearly followed up; and

- Donor coordination and leadership is critically important to provide UNICEF with clear guidance.

Recommendations

i)   Develop clear terms of reference (TORs) for the donor group/consortium;

ii)   Employ a combination of formal and informal meetings;

iii)   Ensure as far as possible that there is a unified approach to donor support and participation;

iv)   Plan in the longer run for an inclusive sector-wide approach.

6.7   Conclusions

It proved to be challenging to undertake a more comprehensive assessment of programme efficiency during the evaluation process. It remains an area where more needs to be known. It is therefore recommended that efficiency be included in the terms of reference for the design of Phase 2 support.

Overall, it appears that most of the inputs were delivered in a timely manner, in the circumstances. The main challenge is ensuring cost effectiveness when designing interventions that can bring about sustainable changes in teaching and learning in ECD and primary education in the maximum number of schools and centres.

Section 7

Review Findings: Sustainability

7.1   Assessing sustainability

According to The DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance sustainability is concerned with *measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.* Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable.

When evaluating the sustainability of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent did the benefits of a programme or project continue after donor funding ceased?

- What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?

7.2   Findings

There is very little sustainability in the current programme. This is a major concern. There is no exit strategy. A further phase of support is required to work towards sustainability. This needs to be strategized within a planning framework for improving equity and quality in ECD and primary education.

7.2.1   To what extent did the benefits of a programme or project continue after donor funding ceased?

It is too early to identify what is sustainable and what is not. The outputs that are most likely to be sustained are:

- ECD Minimum standards, early learning resources and approach to ECD management;
- CFS framework;
- School water and sanitation provision;
- LSE curriculum and learning materials; and
- EXCEL model.

Since the programme benefits varied considerably across Townships and schools, especially in QBE/CFS, it is far from clear under what circumstances can interventions be successfully adopted and sustained. This requires further investigation.

There has been no change in MoE financing arrangements for ECD and primary education. Schools which have been receiving UNICEF supplies remain largely dependent on them if poor children are to receive free basic school supplies.

7.2.2   What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?

This remains largely unknown.

7.3   Conclusion

Sustainability needs to built into the design of Phase 2 of support right from the beginning. It needs to be mainstreamed as a concept. MoE must give undertakings to sustain given interventions. This will involve some discussion about reform to school financing.

Section 8

Conclusions and Discussion

8.1   Introduction

There is broad consensus among the various stakeholders consulted in the review process on the relevance, strengths, benefits and limitations of the package of UNICEF support for Education. It is clear that the three sub-projects (ECD, Quality Basic Education) and Life Skills Education (LSE) are all valued and are contributing to development in the sector, especially in improving equity and quality. The key activities had mostly been piloted and refined to meet the needs of the Mynamar context before the programme began. The supplies component had been carefully selected and there is no evidence that any components were unnecessary.

The programme has in effect begun what needs to be a long-term commitment to developing the education sector in Myanmar to ensure that all children are able to benefit from a Basic Education. The results in all areas are fragile and a further phase of funding is required to work towards sustainability. It is important that the key interventions are used for evidence-based policy dialogue with the Government.

The implementation of the programme has been largely faithful to the original proposal. The major departures from the original design are in the scale of the intervention in primary schools. The programme massively reduced the number of schools and children to be targeted. This is was an appropriate decision simply from a management perspective. The other was to target the entire school population in the selected Townships and not to include an element for 30% of the neediest children in schools.

Assessing programme results has been informed by the detailed programme strategy for M&E as well as drawing on regular progress reports and additional studies. The six monthly and annual progress reports are presented in narrative format with very limited data sets. There is a lack of consistency in the presentation of progress data, which makes it difficult to track developments over time. The reports are long and lack a strong focus on results. Nevertheless they are the key source of information for understanding that the programme has achieved. The impact of Cyclone Nargis on planned activities and the resulting response is also a complicating factor. There are additional Cyclone Nargis-related reports. Of particular importance are the CFS baseline and endline studies carried out through comprehensive surveys of selected schools. These are key adjuncts for programme M&E and in effect the only means of assessing change brought about by the programme.

There have been several efforts to develop a logical framework to capture results, resulting in the development of a series of frameworks which are discrepant in terms of content and indicators. Unusually, even the programme goal statements are different in the various logical frameworks. This is indicative of a serious problem and a lack of technical grounding in monitoring education sector development. The various logical frameworks were not used to structure the regular UNICEF Programme Reports.

8.2   Main conclusions

The programme has been evaluated in terms of relevance, coverage, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The main conclusions are summarized below:

- The programme objectives and strategies are highly relevant to the achievement of Education for All (EFA) and universal primary education completion (UPC) in Myanmar:

- The original programme purpose remains partially valid. This is because the main issue in primary education is not access, but completion and learning outcomes (equity, efficiency and quality);

- The programme purpose was achieved. This is because it required only *an increase* in access and outcome in quality ECD and primary education, especially for disadvantaged and hard to reach communities, contexts where the programme was mainly operational;

- Issues of coverage in ECD and primary education reform have not received sufficient attention;

- The programme covered around 10% of primary schools with CFS-related interventions, a significant proportion of the total stock of primary schools in which to achieve demonstration effects;

- 1005 of primary schools are implementing life skills education in primary education (100% coverage). The LSE project has been well-implemented;

- The main demonstration effect achieved was the significant increase in retention rates in CFS schools (from 62% at baseline to 76% at endline). No comparison was made with non-intervention schools;

- Many other dimensions of CFS showed great variation between schools. This indicates that school management and leadership issues need to be addressed more systematically;

- The end of programme assessment indicates that CFS alone is insufficient to bring about changes in management, teaching and learning and community participation in all schools;

- Learning outcomes were improved in Myanmar language in 72% of schools but with low levels of attainment recorded (the majority of students would have failed the standardized test if 50% had been the pass mark);

- Learning outcomes in mathematics were very low. Only 21% of students achieved at least 50% of the competencies;

- Progress in improving the healthiness of schools was weak with the most significant achievements in the area of water and sanitation and implementation of policies against bullying and violence;

- Most schools showed no change with regard to community participation. This is not a priority for most Townships and schools;

- Limited capacity building was undertaken. Pilot projects for the EMIS development (TEMIS) and literacy skills in primary education (LEP) need to be evaluated;

- Programme M&E arrangements were indequate;

- Most programme strategies were partially effective and require further investment to be fully effective;

- Efficiency in programme implementation was difficult to assess and more investment in this area is required in the future. In particular consideration needs top be given to improved targeting modalities; better donor coordination arrangements; M&E on process and cost effectiveness in relation to some of the inputs e.g. teachers' kits;

- Sustainability remains a major issue. Very little appears to be sustainable given the important of ongoing UNICEF provided supplies and training to schools. It is critically important that an exit strategy be developed.

8.2.1 What worked?

In summary, the main successes of the programme appear to be:

- The UNICEF and Township Education Office/MoE partnership;
- Community-based and School-based ECD service delivery;
- Provision of school supplies and CFS training;
- Improvements in Myanmar language learning through LEP and ECD;
- Primary life skills education curriculum development; and
- EXCEL.

8.2 What didn't work so well?

In summary, the areas where more investment is needed include:

- Strategy for Universal Basic Education (UBE)/Universal Primary Completion (UPC);
- M&E arrangements which have not yet adequately supported evidence-based advocacy;
- School effectiveness and the slow uptake of CCA in the classroom;
- CFS training and follow up (given the lack of consistent change in school uptake of CFS principles);
- Improvements in mathematics teaching and learning; and
- A lack of a systemic approach to improve Teacher Education and capacity building more generally.

8.3 Stakeholder perceptions

The programme is well regarded by local level stakeholders. See Table 14 below

Table 14. Outcomes reported by key stakeholders

Stakeholder	Benefits
TEO/ATEO	High quality materials provided a sense of ownership and equality among students
	Teachers morale was boosted by provision of the various kits (teacher/family) and repair of staff houses
	CFS/psychosocial training very useful for teachers
	Drop-outs reduced and attendance increased
	Costs reduced for poor families
	Networking among focal points improved (TEO/INGO/NGO/UNICEF/communities)
Head teachers	Improvements in enrolment and attendance (ELP assisted)

	Better relationships between school and community/parents
	Parents do not have to worry about cost of learning materials
	More awareness of hygiene
	Tool kit helped school independence (minor repairs)
Parents and community	New hope
	Improvement in monthly test scores of children (especially Myanmar language and mathematics)
	School nutrition programme valued (all children received, not only ECD)
	Concern about loss of UNICEF support
	Children love school
Students	Backpacks popular
	Supplies have a very significant value (exercise books, textbooks , recreation kit)
	Good quality exercise books

8.4   Key Results

Table 14 below presents a summary of the main outcomes together with recommendations for future action.

Table 14. Summary of issues, outcomes and recommendations

Issue	Outcome	Recommendation
Data and information management	Limited. SMIS and TEMIS piloted	Evaluate the TEMIS (and SMIS) pilot project Involve MoE in policy dialogue on the findings and prepare scale up strategy
Educational Planning	None	Support MoE in preparing strategic plan for Basic Education up to 2015 Ensure next MDEF phase is in the form of a medium term plan
Low coverage rates for ECD services	Increased participation in ECD in both 0-3 and 3-5 year groups	Continue strategic support to ECD for 0-3 year olds but ensure that a clear strategy for targeting the most vulnerable communities is put in place Strengthen support for school based ECD closely aligned to CFS interventions
Current provision of ECD services, especially school-based ECE, is inequitable and mainly benefits urban children	ECD centres have been established in poor communities in line with selection criteria	Prepare a strategic plan with DSW, MoE and NGOs to expand ECD services targeting the most vulnerable
The quality of ECD services is poor	Standards for ECD introduced and implemented. ECD staff trained. Qualitative improvements observed in	Provide support for the continued implementation of the Quality Standards in ECD

	MDEF supported ECD centres.	
Quality of teacher education	LSE integrated into initial teacher training curriculum Cascade based in-service training delivered at Township level in CFS and CCA Some reported improvements in teaching and learning	There a a need to develop a strategic approach to improve the quality of teacher education in primary education
Teacher supply.	No impact	Strengthen the EMIS through scaling up the TEMIS/SMIS
Quality of school infrastructure	Improved school environments in targeted schools Improved access to water and sanitation in primary schools	A strategic approach to improving the school infrastructure
The quality of the curriculum	Improvements through LSE in primary school curriculum Pilot of LEP	Support for curriculum development in early grade reading and mathematics
Learning outcomes	Language learning improved in 72% of schools Little impact on mathematics skills acquisition Substantial variations in performance within Townships	Focus on improving school effectiveness, especially in instructional management Support for curriculum development in early grade reading and mathematics
Assessment practices	No impact	Review of assessment practices Review of regional practices in assessment at primary and junior secondary school levels
Early drop out	Reduced rates of drop out and increased attendance due to provision of school supplies and CFS implementation	Continue package of school supplies and CFS in targeted Townships Policy dialogue with MoE on scaling up/education financing issues
Transition to Secondary Education.	No reported impact	Continue package of school supplies and CFS in targeted Townships Policy dialogue with MoE on scaling up/education financing issues
School Health and Nutrition (SHN)	Improved knowledge and skills through LSE Improved nutritional status through ECD feeding programmes	Support MoE to develop policy on SHN and capacity to implement it Targeted school feeding
Gender Inequality.	No reported impact	Develop a more comprehensive framework for addressing gender issues in primary education
Ethnicity and language of instruction.	LEP impacts	Evaluate LEP pilot and use findings for policy dialogue with MoE and develop scale up plan.

		Policy dialogue on MLE including review of education policies in Greater Mekong Sub-Region on language of instruction
Disability.	Increased inclusion of children with physical disabilities	Comprehensive assessment of the education of children with disabilities Continued support for inclusive education within CFS framework
Conflict and post conflict areas	Improved primary school quality in selected Townships	Continue to target post conflict areas
Vulnerability to Natural Disaster.	Post cyclone response effective	Include DRR in CFS
Providing alternative education for out of school children.	Expanded opportunities for out of school children through EXCEL and NFPE	Continue to support EXCEL and deepen the programme Advocate for specialised NFE department within MoE

8.5 Results and the logical framework (LFA) indicators

The indicators selected for measuring programme outcomes are presented in Table 10 below. The shortcomings in M&E have been described earlier. Weaknesses are also manifest in indicator selection, few of which have technical merit. Some of these indicators are very hard to measure on a routine basis, if at all. Some are many cumulative totals, not expressed as a rate so that trends can be explored. The key indicator is the primary school survival rate and the data are positive. The indicators provide a very limited window for tracking the progress of the programme and assessing its outputs/outcomes as contributions to the achievement of strategic objectives.

Table 10. LFA Indicators

Indicator	Baseline	Endline	Comment
GER in programme township primary schools	Not available	Not available	GER needs to be collected annually, however, there are difficulties in calculating GER due to weaknesses in census data
Survival rate to grade 5	62%	76%	Significant improvement
Proportion of grade 5 who have reached minimum competence in Myanmar language	Not available	Not available	MoE has not set minimum competence standards
Number of children who have attended ECD services in attended townships (cumulative)	83,137	160,184	Indicator has little technical merit
Proportion of targeted ECD centres complying with quality standards jointly developed by MoE, UNICEF, NGOs and INGOs	Not available	Not available	No mechanism for monitoring ECD standards
Number of care givers, parents and community members who have been made familiar with the benefits of ECD/ECE (cumulative)	29,970	81,300	Indicator has little technical merit
Number of children who have received essential supplies and learning materials (cumulative)	500,000	Not available	Indicator has little technical merit
Percentage of children attending primary schools that fulfil 50% of CFS criteria	31%	Not available	No mechanism for routine monitoring of CFS standards Indicator has little technical merit
Number of out of school children who have participated in NFPE in targeted areas	0	3,418	It is very important to evaluate the NFPE pilot as an intervention
Number of children benefitting from LEP with local language teachers	30,000	50,250	It is very important to evaluate the LEP pilot as an intervention
Precentage of basic education schools implementing national primary and secondary	41%	100%	It is important to monitor effective implementation and learning outcomes

life skills curriculum			
Number of children who have benefitted from EXCEL activities (cumulative)	19,610	73,500	Indicator has little technical merit

8.6 Some lessons learned

- Inadequate Government resource allocation to education remains a root cause of poor sector performance;

- The provision of supplies appears to make a difference in terms of equity at school level as reflected in improved school survival rates;

- While 10% of primary schools is a substantial fraction of the sub-sector, it is in itself insufficient to bring about change at the system-level using current interventions;

- Greater focus is needed on demonstration projects/interventions and using the evidence gained from evaluations of piloting for policy dialogue and change;

- Targeting the most vulnerable groups remains a challenge;

- Capacity constraints in Government and NGOs remain an ongoing challenge to sectoral development.

- There continues to be a critical lack of reliable data for planning;

- It is concluded that there could have been a more clearly worked out strategic approach to bring about change in the sector and this should be attempted in the design of any subsequent phase of the programme.

- It is important for the Government of Myanmar to examine options that can bring about improved levels of its financing for Basic Education and a reduction in the dependence on community financing.

8.7 Future directions as proposed by stakeholders

The following are the various recommendations made by key stakeholders :

ECD.

- Use NGOs to reach the poorest. Innovative means of funding are required e.g. social funds. Continue to support school-based ECD. MoE to help provide facilities and staff.

- Parenting education needs strengthening. Revise the modules to make them simpler.

QBE/CFS.

- Improve the quality of Basic Education. MoE would like an expansion of programme support in order to scale up CFS;

- Continue to address equity. Continue provision of supplies. Look for ways to reduce costs. Increase the numbers of exercise books and pencils supplied to schools. Identify excluded groups;

- Decouple provision of supplies from scaling up CFS;

- Strengthen links with child protection and the CRC;

- More investment in CCA pedagogy training and supervision is required;

- Strengthen teacher education;

- Address school health and nutrition more systematically. Consider developing Health Promoting Schools

- Develop the school cluster approach including cluster-based training. The clusters currently exist more on paper than in action. They now need to become operational.

- Strengthen school management. Consider school-based monitoring.

- Review TEMIS/SMIS;

- Evaluate the LEP pilot and develop a strategy to take the programme to scale.

- Review school infrastructure standards, including the development of minimum standards;

- Ensure a stronger focus on literacy and numeracy. Consider strengthening the teaching of reading and writing skills in early grades as well as the assessment of these skills

- Strengthen evidence-based policy dialogue. Provide MoE with policy options based on programme intervention results.

- Undertake the Basic Education Review with a view to assisting MoE to develop a detailed Strategic Plan for UBE to 2015.

NFPE

- Help establish a Department of NFE in MoE. There is a need to develop a NFE training institution or centre. This could be with a local NGO.

EXCEL

The EXCEL curriculum needs to be revised and made more flexible so that it can cater to local needs. It needs to be longer in duration with more attention to functional literacy skills development and linked with vocational skills training, micro-credit and income generating activities. Participants suggested provision for improving English language skills, training in mechanics and tailoring. Some children want to be re-enter formal education and mechanisms for this need to be developed. Some want more books to read and a library. Prepare a case study. Hold a national EXCEL Conference.Children recommend that EXCEL could also be adapted for their parents. They recommend that more out of school children be given the opportunity to join the EXCEL progarmme.

LSE

Strengthen LSE monitoring including the capacity of UNICEF FOs in LSE. Provide refresher training for primary teachers. Provide support for developing the secondary curriculum and training for secondary school LSE teachers. Support capacity building in the Colleges of Education. Help set up a separate department for LSE.

Box 3. Views from the Township Education Office

Future Directions
- There should be an upgrading programme for remote areas   - For all schools to be child friendly, the programme should be scaled up and implemented based on school families-wise and cluster-wise approach

> - Apart from supporting school supplies and technical assistance, it is recommended to expand parenting education.
> - PTA training should be continued as annual basis
> - For all schools to be child friendly and to achieve 5 dimensions in future, it is required to carry out project implementation based on the schools in successful CFS townships
> - Find effective ways for better technical assistance and provision of supplies.
> - Review the quality of performance of schools in order to fill the gaps for better implementation
> - Continue to provide technical assistance on ECD since ECD is cost effective and a highly beneficial educational activity.

8.7 Areas for policy dialogue and the development of a subsequent MDEF phase of support

The following policy issues and options need to be considered for policy dialogue with MoE in preparing for any further development assistance.

a) Universal Access

Planning for universal access to basic education requires that the supply of education resources meet the learning requirements of the total child population. This entails that schools, classrooms, teachers and learning materials are available in sufficient quality throughout the country.

The following policy issues and options need to be considered:

- **Using demographic data for planning.** Education planners need to be able to forecast school enrolment figures based on population projections. One purpose is to estimate total educational costs and the funding required. National figures will suffice. However for implementation of the sector plan, it is necessary to know how school enrolments are distributed across the country and sub-national or local data are needed.[1]

- **Using school mapping to determine school locations.** In order to ensure that schools are located where they are most needed in response to changing demographics, school mapping techniques can be used to plot where new schools should be built and existing schools expanded.

- **Making cost-effective use of existing school resources**. This may include double-shift schools or classrooms, strengthening performance in multi-grade schools and a focus on an efficient class size. The FTI Appraisal Guidelines recommend a pupil-teacher ratio of 40:1.

- **Researching barriers to access**. This involves research into the specific reasons children are unable to enroll. This is strongly linked to equity issues. It is desirable to have baseline data which can be used to track progress in universalising educational access.

- **Developing system infrastructure**. The efficient functioning of the supply of education requires central and district level administrative offices, quality teacher training institutions, education resource centres, school cluster arrangements, effective use of IT, etc.

- **Strengthening system management**. This involves improving the EMIS, undertaking school mapping; reviewing the role, selection and training of school heads; and controlling teacher absenteeism. The TEMIS pilot is of critical importance.

b) Equity

---

[1] Chau, T. (2003). Demographic aspects of educational planning. UNESCO IIEP. Fundamentals of educational planning No 72. Paris.

Universal basic education cannot be achieved without identifying and addressing educational disadvantage. If equity is not actively pursued as a policy goal, there is a risk the education system will be elitist in function, privileging better-off children and neglecting the more vulnerable, resulting in inefficient and unfair educational processes and outcomes. Equity is often subsumed under access (e.g. equitable access), but this ignores that equity issues are cross-cutting and are also integral to considerations of quality and sectoral capacity. Equity is closely linked to inclusion. Inclusive education attempts to be more equitable by not excluding specific populations such as children with disabilities.

In order to address equity, the following policy options are identified:

- **Undertaking an equity assessment.** The FTI has published a guide to support more equitable education sector plan preparation and revision.[2] This can be used to raise awareness in civil society as well as the education sector itself on equity issues.

- **Researching barriers to education survival/completion**. Barriers to school participation need to be researched and documented. These may include social factors such as poverty, migration, ethnicity and gender: health factors such as poor nutrition, malaria and parasites; infrastructural such as lack of transportation; economic factors such as demand for child work/labour. Sectoral factors may include a lack of appropriate school facilities for children with disabilities; a lack of basic education supply and lack of safety at school for vulnerable children.

- **Responding to remoteness**. There is a widely acknowledged problem of running schools in small isolated communities. There tend to be multi-grade schools in these contexts and this requires specialised teacher training. Issues include school construction and maintenance, school supplies, teacher deployment and school management. Policy options include special incentives for teachers (financial and non-financial) in remote postings and recruitment from the community.

- **Monitoring data on equity**. It is important for the Ministry of Education to monitor equity in the education system. Data need to be disaggregated by geographical region and gender to enable trends to be identified. Student flow indicators are important means of tracking inequity in enrolment, repetition and completion rates.

- **Addressing the impact of household poverty on demand for education.** The minimum objective is to ensure that no child is excluded from schooling on account of inability to pay. The recommended policy action is to abolish school fees and related costs. These include not only tuition fees but also the costs of textbooks, supplies, uniforms, parent-teacher association (PTA) contributions, sports, transportation and contributions to teachers' salaries.[3] In some cases the opportunity costs of the child's contribution to family income may need to be met through mechanisms such as conditional cash transfers.

- **Identifying the demand and supply sides of addressing gender inequality.** There needs to be a comprehensive gender analysis of the education sector performance to inform policy and planning. Demand side interventions may include advocacy and community awareness. Targeted interventions, such as scholarships for girls may be necessary in some contexts. Supply-side interventions may include in-service teacher training in gender and education issues; positive action for female teacher recruitment; implementation of sexual harassment policies in schools; separate latrines for girls; elimination of gender bias and stereotyping in school textbooks.

---

[2] FTI Secretariat. (2010). Equity and Inclusion in education. A guide to support education sector plan preparation, revision and appraisal. Washington DC.
[3] The World Bank and UNICEF. (2009). Six steps to abolishing schools fees. Operational guide. Washington. DC.

- **Developing a strategy for educating children with disabilities.** A strategic approach needs to be informed by a comprehensive situation analysis of the various forms of disability to identify issues of inclusion and special needs education. Careful planning is required to create inclusive classrooms. Both demand and supply sides need to be addressed.

- **Targeting disadvantaged children for early childhood education (ECE).** ECE can help increase equity through promoting school readiness among disadvantaged children. Efforts should be made to ensure that children with disabilities have access to inclusive ECE.[4]

- **Ensuring language policy is appropriate.** In multi-lingual contexts, language policy that specifies an official language of instruction can have exclusionary effects for minorities. Education in a language which is not the mother tongue typically presents significant problems for learning and the acquisition of literacy, especially in the early years of schooling. Research is needed into the actual deficits resulting from language policy and targeted interventions devised to address them. Bilingual education is one strategy that can be used in the early years of schooling. The LEP has important policy implications.

- **Promoting child health in schools.** Ill health and hunger are most common among the poor. These conditions have negative consequences for education, reducing the time children spend at school and impairing their learning in class. Malaria and worm infections may reduce enrollment and increase absenteeism, while hunger and anemia may affect cognition and learning. The pain associated with tooth decay, and the diarrhea and respiratory disease associated with poor hygiene, may affect both attendance and learning. The infrastructure of the educational system can often offer a cost-effective system for health delivery to children. School health programmes optimise the benefits of the education already being offered to poor children and can be an important intervention to promote equity. They are often remarkably low in cost, for example, deworming and iron supplements cost less than a dollar per child per year. Among the complex set of conditions required for a child to learn well, improved health and nutrition may be one of the simplest and cheapest to achieve.[5]

c) Quality

There is no single agreed definition of educational quality. There is however a strong degree of consensus that it involves outcomes such as literacy, numeracy, life skills, and values and is dependent on enabling inputs such as teaching methods, learning time, assessment, learning materials, physical infrastructure and facilities, human resources (teachers, head teachers, supervisors, administrators) and school governance. To these can be added learner characteristics such as school readiness, health and motivation.[6] The concept of quality is therefore broad and multi-factorial. To be useful operationally, it needs to be more clearly defined in terms of constituent parts such as teacher and school effectiveness

- **Understanding the constraints on quality.** In order to improve the quality of education it is essential to have a baseline from which to identify strengths, gaps and barriers to learning. Baseline data are also necessary for tracking progress. Thematic areas for such research include teacher effectiveness, school effectiveness and learning outcomes,

---

[4] World Vision. (2010). Supporting the education rights of children with disabilities: the fats track initiative and early childhood care and education. World Vision UK.
[5] Bundy, D. (2010). Health, equity and education for all. How school health and school feeding programs are leveling the playing field. The World Bank. Washington DC.
[6] UNESCO. (2004). Education for All. The quality imperative. EFA Global Monitoring report. 2005. Paris.

- **Improving the quality of teachers and teaching**. This includes student centred teaching methods; continuous professional development for teachers in content areas and pedagogical skills; developing teacher networks and resource centres; incentives to reward teaching performance and an emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills with clear learning goals for students.

- **Improving infrastructure and supplies**. Education facilities are recognized to be an important factor in quality education. It is important to establish infrastructure standards and means of planning school building and essential maintenance. The lessons learned from the MDEF need to be discussed in policy dialogue with MoE.

- **Improving the quality of instructional materials**. This includes curriculum development to improve relevance and the use of local teaching materials.

- **Tightening accountability mechanisms**. This includes simple school monitoring and reporting systems; periodic assessment of student learning outcomes; greater community and parental involvement in school affairs.

- **Strengthening student assessment.** Assessment has many purposes including describing students' learning; identifying and diagnosing learning problems; motivating students by providing targets; and for certification and selection processes. Assessment information can also be used to evaluate schools and education systems in order to improve the quality of education. A focus on student attainment requires that appropriate assessment procedures be put in place. These include national standardized testing and school-based assessment. [7]

d) Capacity

Capacity includes a broad range of education sector functions, including policy formulation, planning and resource allocation, management of service delivery, monitoring and evaluation.

- **Undertaking a capacity assessment**. The FTI Secretariat with the support of GTZ has published guidelines for undertaking a capacity assessment for developing the education sector.[8] This is intended to support the preparation of a capacity development strategy based on a capacity gap analysis. A monitoring and evaluation mechanism is recommended for the capacity development process. Areas to assess include teacher recruitment, support and development; data for management/EMIS; procurement and contracting systems; administration and management and school-level capacity.

- **Strengthening key functions of the education sector**. A strategy is required to strengthen systemic capacity including human resource capacity; material and procurement capacity; management capacity; financial capacity; monitoring and evaluation capacity.

- **Decentralising education management**. It is critically important for large and diverse countries such as Myanmar to establish an effective means of decentralizing management of education to provincial and school levels. Authority for decision-making can be transferred at several levels e.g. mission; operations; personnel and finance.[9] It is important to build national consensus on the purposes of decentralization in the education sector, analyse the obstacles and develop strategies to overcome them,

---

[7] Kellaghan, T and Greaney, V. (2001) Using assessment to improve the quality of education. UNESCO IIEP. Fundamentals of educational planning No 71. Paris.
[8] FTI Secretariat. (2008). Guidelines for capacity building in the education sector. Washington DC.
[9] McGinn, N and Walsh, T. (1999) Decentralisation of education; why, when, what and how? UNESCO IIEP. Fundamentals of educational planning No 64. Paris.

provide adequate training to the participants and develop a monitoring system to track progress and impacts. [10]

- **Strengthening teacher education capacity.** This includes policy development; curriculum development for initial training with a strong emphasis on professional skills acquisition; linkages with in-service training and continuous professional development; teacher training college strategic planning and reform; school-based training; performance monitoring; and modes of assessment.[11] A focus on improving teacher effectiveness needs to take into consideration classroom environment, climate, culture and organisation and management. Particular attention needs to be given to teacher-student communication and to enhancing student learning. [12]

- **Strengthening the capacity of schools**. The aim is to improve school effectiveness. Processes may include leadership training, strengthening parental involvement, school policy capacity building, school-based management, school self-assessment, and the identification of quality indicators to monitor progress.[13] This should involve building on the 5 dimensions of 'child–friendly schools (inclusive; academically effective; healthy, safe and protective; gender-responsive and engaged with student, family and community). UNICEF has developed a tool for assessing achievement and tracking progress which could be applied in Myanmar.[14]

- **Community participation.** Community participation is a critical success factor that is identified in research on effective development programmes. It will likely be a critical issue in education sector development, including school effectiveness and learning outcomes.

---

[10] Fiske, E. (1996) Decentralisation of education. Politics and consensus. The World Bank. Washington DC.

[11] Lewin, K. and Stuart, J. (2003). Researching teacher education: new perspectives on practice, performance and policy. Multi-site teacher education research project (MUSTER). DFID. Researching the Issues. 49a. London.

[12] Anderson, L. (2004). Increasing teacher effectiveness. UNESCO IIEP. Fundamentals of educational planning No 79. Paris.

[13] Scheerens, J. (2000). Improving school effectiveness. UNESCO IIEP. Fundamentals of educational planning No 68. Paris.

[14] UNICEF. ((2006). Assessing child friendly schools. A guide for progarmme managers in East Asia and the Pacific. EAPRO. Bangkok.

Section 9

Recommendations

9.1   Key recommendations

The following strategic recommendations are made:

- Evaluate pilot interventions such as LEP and TEMIS as a matter of urgency. Develop a scaling up or revision strategy in line with the findings;

- Support MoE in developing a costed and detailed strategic plan for UBE/UPC 2012-2015;

- Develop an exit strategy for existing support to CFS schools, especially in the field of supplies and focus more strongly on sustainability;

- Continue to strengthen existing interventions in to address equity and quality in primary Education. Undertake assessments to provide better understandings of equity, quality and capacity issues;

- Systematically review the approach to CFS implementation in the light of the endline findings;

- Undertake evidence-based policy dialogue with MoE on ECD (3-5) and NFE to develop a more comprehensive sector policy framework and review the findings of this evaluation;

- Focus more on strengthening primary school effectiveness and improving learning outcomes (especially literacy and numeracy skills);

- Take a strategic approach in partnership with JICA to strengthen the quality of primary teacher pre-service education;

- Investigate ways of improving targeted interventions in ECD and primary education to better cater for the needs of the poorest families;

- Consider making further developments to the EXCEL programme to increase duration and CE/vocational skills development; and

- Develop a detailed and technically sound M&E plan as part of the next phase proposal;

- Improve the effectiveness and inclusiveness of donor coordination mechanisms for any future programme phase of support.