MANUAL

CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

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Quality education is education that works for every child and enables all children to achieve their full potential.

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INTRODUCTION

WHY A CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS MANUAL?

Schooling is the one experience that most children worldwide have in common and the most common means by which societies prepare their young for the future. On any given day, more than a billion children are in primary or secondary school: 689 million in primary school and 513 million in secondary school. They are in permanent or temporary buildings, in tents or under trees – sharing the experience of learning, developing their potential and enriching their lives. But schooling is not always a positive experience for children. It can mean shivering in cold, unheated buildings or sweltering in hot, airless ones. It can mean being forced to stand in unfurnished classrooms, being hungry, thirsty or unwell; it can also mean being frightened by the threat of punishment, humiliation, bullying or even violence at the hands of teachers and fellow pupils.

These conditions thwart learning. They are made worse when learners are without competent teachers to guide them, textbooks to learn from or exercise books to write in, or if they have textbooks of inferior quality that reinforce damaging stereotypes. Learning is further stymied when schools have no toilets, running water or electricity. It is a challenge to reach the 101 million primary-school-age

children around the world who do not attend school. But it is perhaps even more daunting to rectify the deplorable conditions endured by millions of children already in school, conditions that are antithetical to learning, children's well-being and their future livelihood.

And children face negative conditions not only in school. The home and community environment can also pose challenges that make it difficult for children to enrol in school, attend regularly, complete the final year of the cycle or achieve the prescribed level of learning. Food and water insecurity, undernutrition, parasitic infestations, unhygienic surroundings, chronic poverty, household chores, harmful traditional beliefs and practices, domestic overcrowding, gender discrimination, HIV and AIDS, domestic violence, childcare deficiencies and the increasing prevalence and severity of natural disasters related to climate change are factors that can wreak havoc with a child's right to attend and complete school. Schools must therefore focus on the whole child, which means taking into account conditions in the family or community that might be hindering his or her educational progress.

Fulfilling the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) requires not just getting all children into school, but making sure that all schools work in the best interest of the children entrusted to them. This means providing safe and protective schools that are adequately staffed with trained teachers, equipped with adequate resources and graced with appropriate conditions for learning.

Recognizing that different children face different circumstances and have different needs, such schools build on the assets that children bring from their homes and communities and also compensate for shortcomings in the home and community environment. They enable children to achieve, at a minimum, the knowledge and skills prescribed in the curriculum. They also help them develop the ability to think and reason, build self-respect and respect for others, and reach their full potential as individuals, members of their communities and citizens of the world. Child-friendly schools (CFS) embrace a multidimensional concept of quality and address the total needs of the child as a learner.

The case for a CFS manual

Various school models illustrate ways to improve the quality of education. However, it is the CFS models that have emerged as the most comprehensive in their approach and the most widespread, both in the number of countries in which they have been put into practice and the geographical distribution of those countries. Not surprisingly, CFS models vary from country to country.

As the main proponent of these CFS models, UNICEF has the responsibility of providing a coherent account of them, summarizing their main features so as to create a prototype that can serve as the basis for developing national capacities to design and implement CFS in a wide range of countries. The same prototype can also enable countries to incorporate CFS standards into their educational plans and

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realistically estimate the cost of achieving basic education for all with attention to quality standards.

It is against this background that UNICEF embarked on the preparation of this CFS manual, a practical guide that aims to:

(a) Provide an introduction to the child-friendly concept, its underlying ideology and the key principles from which the main characteristics of a child-friendly school can be derived in different contexts and circumstances.

(b) Outline, with supporting arguments, the multiple ways in which CFS models consistently contribute to quality education in a wide range of national contexts.

(c) Highlight the intrinsic value of CFS models for developing quality in any education system as:

    i.   Flexible models that offer 'pathways' to quality rather than prescribe blueprints that should be rigorously copied in all situations.

    ii.   Heuristic models that offer opportunities to move towards the quality standards through a series of cumulative improvements rather than impose an overwhelming 'one-off' or 'all-at-once' approach.

    iii.   Reforming models that require serious reflection on basic principles and issues relating to the whole child as a learner and the conditions that make for successful learning rather than unreflectively apply a number of technical inputs that are assumed to influence the quality of education.

(d) Provide practical guidance on the design, construction and maintenance of child-friendly schools as safe, welcoming environments in which children can learn, emphasizing links with the community, the influence of pedagogic considerations, cost-effectiveness and sustainability.

(e) Provide practical guidance on the operation and management of child-friendly schools, elaborating on the role of school heads, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents, communities and local and national education authorities.

(f) Provide practical guidance on classroom processes in child-friendly schools, emphasizing such key features as:

    i.   The role of teaching/learning aids and materials in creating a stimulating environment that is managed by the teacher and enriches the overall classroom experience for the learner.

    ii.   The interaction between teacher and learners, with the teacher as authority figure and facilitator of learning and the learner as active participant in a democratic process that involves mutual respect.

    iii.   The pedagogic process, which is both structured enough to facilitate measurable learning progress and flexible enough to facilitate the use of a variety of techniques for promoting achievement of learning outcomes.

(g) Highlight the importance of cultivating a sense of community in child-friendly schools by use of such features as:

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i. Daily rituals, including morning assembly that may involve prayers, a school song and/or pledges to school, community or nation.

ii. Periodic rituals marking rites of passage, such as special events for new students on opening day, a graduation ceremony for students completing school, an annual prize ceremony, thanksgiving day, founders' day or memorial day.

iii. Identity symbols, including school uniforms, sport teams and colours, a school crest or emblem.

iv. Rules and regulations that are fair, in the best interest of children, applied in a transparent, democratic manner, do not result in the humiliation or suppression of learners, do not undermine the authority of teachers and school managers and do not alienate schools from the communities they serve.

(h) Provide a 'minimum package' that offers guidance and tools for addressing environmental risks and vulnerabilities to climate change within schools and their surrounding communities. These inquiry-based activities for empowerment include participatory risk-mapping and facilities-based environmental solutions to support children and their communities in adapting to changing conditions and reducing risk through preparedness and response.

(i) Provide a rich menu of examples, from various country contexts, of actual child-friendly schools that illustrate the principles, strategies and actions of good practice.

A single manual cannot do full justice to this ambitious set of objectives. Therefore, the present manual is part of a total resource package that includes an e-learning package for capacity-building in the use of CFS models and a collection of field case studies to illustrate the state of the art in child-friendly schools in a variety of settings.

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CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 1
Purpose, scope and concept

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CHAPTER 1

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND CONCEPT

1.1   BACKGROUND

Significant progress has been made in the past decade towards fulfilling Millennium Development Goal 2 (MDG 2) – universal access and completion of primary school by 2015 – even though the related interim target of MDG 3 – gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2005 – was not achieved globally. Many countries have scored impressive gains in both enrolment and closing the gender gap in education.

Recent data show a decrease in the number of children not enrolled in school, from 94 million in 2002 to 75 million in 2006. However, far too many children who are enrolled still fail to complete their education, dropping out due to poor school quality and other factors. At any given time, the number of children attending school is far less than the number enrolled, since dropping out of school is not immediately reflected in enrolment data.

An estimated 115 million primary-school-age children were not attending school in 2002 (UNESCO-UIS & UNICEF, 2005), and around 101 million were not attending school in 2006 (UNICEF, forthcoming). In addition to poor education quality, such persistent challenges to school

attendance as child labour, HIV and AIDS, civil conflict, natural disasters, chronic environmental degradation and deepening poverty continue to threaten gains in school enrolment and completion rates in many countries.

The challenge in education is not simply to get children into school, but also to improve the overall quality of schooling and address threats to participation. If both quality and access are tackled, children who are enrolled in primary school are likely to continue, complete the full cycle, achieve expected learning outcomes and successfully transition to secondary school.

There is an organic link between access and quality that makes the latter an integral part of any strategy for achieving the education MDGs and Education for All (EFA) goals. School quality must therefore be of central interest to policymakers and practitioners concerned with the low primary education survival and completion rates in various regions of the world. In West and Central Africa, for instance, only 48.2 per cent of the children enrolled in the first grade survive to the last grade of primary school. The comparable survival rate for countries in Eastern and Southern Africa is 64.7 per cent.

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These trends have given rise to concerted efforts to tackle the issue of quality in basic education worldwide, with such agencies as UNICEF intensifying their work to address education quality more systematically. It is in this context that UNICEF's strategy and programming have evolved over time, culminating in child-friendly school (CFS) models as comprehensive ways of dealing with all factors affecting quality.

Like most reality-based innovations, the CFS models are not simply an abstract concept or a rigid methodological prescription. They represent pragmatic pathways towards quality in education that have evolved (and are still evolving), from the principle of education as a human right to a child-centered ideology that regards the best interest of the child as paramount at all times. This makes the child central to the educational process and the main beneficiary of key decisions in education. But it does not mean that CFS models are inflexible ideological blueprints. Because they are grounded in the reality of resource constraints and lack of capacity for designing and implementing ideal solutions (see Chapter 2), they adhere to the principle of 'progressive realization' of children's right to quality education.

CFS advocates are willing to negotiate priorities regarding what is in the best interest of the child and make trade-offs based on what is feasible for schools and education systems to accomplish within a given time frame, using available resources and capacities.

1.2   PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of a CFS model is to move schools and education systems progressively towards quality standards, addressing all elements that influence the well-being and rights of the child as a learner and the main beneficiary of teaching, while improving other school functions in the process. Quality standards should make it possible for all children to access school, survive from grade to grade and complete the cycle on time; they should also provide an enriched educational experience through which students can thrive, develop and achieve their full potential. To this end, CFS models are concerned with harnessing the full involvement and support of all parties in a position to facilitate children's right to a quality education. These parties, or 'duty bearers', include parents, communities, teachers, school heads, education planners and civil society groups, as well as local and national governments and their external partners. Their involvement enables schools and education systems to provide the conditions and resources necessary for achieving the quality standards CFS models envision.

As for scope, CFS models embrace a concept of quality that goes well beyond pedagogic excellence and performance outcomes. The focus is on the needs of the child as a

whole, not just on the 'school bits' that educators traditionally feel responsible for. The scope of a CFS model includes multidimensional coverage of quality and a holistic concern for the child's needs.

In pursuit of quality, therefore, CFS models cut across sectors to address the child's needs comprehensively. Within this intersectoral and holistic framework, CFS models are concerned as much with the health, safety, security, nutritional status and psychological well-being of the child as they are with teacher training and the appropriateness of the teaching methods and learning resources used for schooling. They have as much to do with promoting child participation and creating space for children to express their views and opinions as they do with helping children learn to follow rules and regulations or show deference to school authorities. Quality in these models comes not only from the efficiency of setting the school apart in a special place as a community that pursues learning, but also from the effectiveness of linking the school to a wider community from which it derives its sense of engagement with reality and confirms the relevance of its curriculum.

Against this background, quality needs to be evaluated along several dimensions, including:

(a) How well boys and girls are prepared to start and continue school;

(b) How well they are received by schools and teachers prepared to meet their needs and uphold their rights;

(c) How far their general health and well-being are addressed as an integral part of promoting learning;

(d) How safe the schools are as places for learning and how completely they provide an overall gender-sensitive environment that is conducive to learning;

(e) The extent to which schools and teachers respect the rights of children and operate in the best interest of the child;

(f) The extent to which child-centred teaching methods are embraced as good practice and standard methodology by teachers and the school;

(g) How far child participation is encouraged as standard practice in classroom interaction as well as in the broader operation and management of the school;

(h) The extent to which effort and resources are invested in creating stimulating classrooms that support active learning for all;

(i) The availability of adequate environmentally sustainable facilities, services and supplies that support the needs of the whole child and also of all children;

(j) The use of pedagogy that challenges and dismantles discrimination based on gender, ethnicity or social background

Proponents of CFS maintain that all of these factors, interacting in a dynamic and organic manner, constitute the 'packaged solution' that can be confidently described as a 'child-friendly school'.

1.3   PRECURSORS OF AN EVOLVING MODEL

The evolution of child-friendly schools travelled a practical as well as a theoretical track, and it is important to understand the combination of action and reflection that has culminated in CFS models as the standard for quality in UNICEF's work in basic education. Like other agencies, UNICEF helps countries improve the quality of the education they offer their children. Twenty years ago this assistance involved mainly interventions related to pedagogic factors such as teacher training, supply of text books and learning materials, advocacy for policies on class size and teaching methodology. This 'single-factor' approach to school quality produced improvements, but they were frequently compromised by other factors in the education setting. For instance, teacher training might have produced gains, but a lack of textbooks and materials in schools often undermined these gains. Similarly, introduction of life skills content in the curriculum, including good hygiene practices, was often compromised because many schools did not have an adequate water supply or enough toilets to produce meaningful behaviour change in learners.

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TABLE 1: EXAMPLES OF THE LIMITATIONS OF SINGLE-FACTOR INTERVENTIONS

Single-factor approach	Improvements and gains	Compromising factors
Teacher development	• Number of qualified teachers increased • Better informed teachers	• Irrelevance of curriculum to local context • Lack of materials and learning/teaching aids
Provision of textbooks	• Individual study facilitated • Academic performance boosted	• Not connected to teacher development and culturally irrelevant • Insufficient quantity of textbooks
Hygiene and life skills education	• Awareness of health and hygiene raised in children • Children empowered to participate in caring for themselves and others	• Acute lack of sanitary facilities • Acute lack of safe water for drinking and hand washing • Quality of life skills education often not gender-responsive or age-appropriate
School environment and environmental education	• More schools provided with access to water and sanitation • Renewable energy sources for electricity found • Trees and gardens planted at schools	• Lack of connection to curriculum • Facilities subject to vandalism and misuse • Lack of capacity for facilities maintenance
School as a community outreach	• Partnerships with parent-teacher associations and school governing boards forged • Young people's organizations formed	• Poor capacity development for parents and community leaders • Restricted spaces for young people to participate

Because it is concerned with the whole child and its intersectoral approach to programming for children, UNICEF works to improve water supply and gender-sensitive sanitation facilities; promote good hygiene practices; address nutritional needs through school-based interventions; increase access to energy; and address challenges posed by climate change through improvements in disaster risk reduction, preparedness and response capacity. UNICEF also supports measures that help reduce the negative impact of child labour, child trafficking and gender-based violence. These are all child protection issues that have serious implications for education.

Measures taken in school, such as providing water and sanitation, school meals and counselling, have become essential components of overall quality of education. Studies have consistently shown that they influence access, retention and completion. Links between water and sanitation in schools and school access and retention rates are well documented, for instance, as are links between school meals and access and attendance among children in disadvantaged communities. Hindsight suggests that UNICEF's shift from a single-factor approach to a package approach in promoting education quality has been a significant phase in the evolution of CFS models.

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Another important phase has been the shift from targeted to system-wide interventions in education. Addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups often means that UNICEF's work is directed towards specific communities or population groups. Such interventions, typically designed as 'projects', tend to be relatively small-scale or localized and involve innovative 'problem-solving' strategies as well as persistent investment of effort and resources to make them work for the population they aim to help. As a result, UNICEF has been able to report improvements in access, retention or learning achievement in its operational areas, which tend to perform better than the national average for gains in such quality indicators. Such narrowly focused interventions continue to be necessary in some circumstances, but they are not the most efficient way of providing quality basic education for all children.

If education systems are fully inclusive, quality education can be extended to all groups as a matter of routine. Bringing this about requires systems-level interventions. Instead of just 'doing' child-friendly schools in local communities, CFS models are 'sold' as good practice for the entire education system. Shifting to systems interventions supports change across the whole sector and helps countries set standards for quality throughout the education system. This realization has pushed UNICEF to advocate that countries adopt child-friendly schools as a comprehensive quality model in their national education plans and priorities, which in turn has raised the issue of clarity, defining what CFS is and how countries can utilize such a model.

Since there are examples of child-friendly schools in many countries, UNICEF country offices often engage in 'show-and-tell' about CFS models. Far more difficult has been the effort to formulate a definitive package, clearly defining and laying out key parameters of child-friendly schools that could be adopted as an integral part of a national education plan. The package should include cost details and variables that can be projected in any simulation model used to decide on feasible priorities for a given country.

There are two further challenges. First, it is not enough to work with national counterparts to make schools child-friendly. It is also necessary to cultivate local capacity for designing, operating and managing child-friendly schools as part of the national education system. In Kenya, for example, when free primary education was declared, UNICEF successfully advocated for the inclusion of most of its child-friendly interventions and key strategies in the new Education Sector Support Plan. It then became essential for UNICEF to shift from projects that make schools child-friendly towards helping to build Kenyan national capacity to reproduce the CFS model countrywide.

Second, a systems approach implies working more closely with other partner agencies. In this regard, UNICEF engaged with other models, such as the Escuelas Nuevas that originated from work on quality education in Colombia, as well as with other quality frameworks concerned with parts of the picture, such as Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH), which deals mainly with the health

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and nutrition aspects of CFS. With different models seeking to achieve similar outcomes in education, quality, clarity and coherence have become critical for selling CFS models as packages that countries can adopt in their national education plans and priorities.

Parallel with these programming changes on the ground, UNICEF has also been investing in theoretical reflection and concept-building related to child-friendly schools. The child-friendly school concept was first used in a systematic way by UNICEF, Save the Children and the World Health Organization in the mid-1990s, largely as the educational equivalent of the 'baby-friendly hospitals' that contributed to quality standards in health. With UNICEF's influence, the concept of child-friendly schools was soon widened beyond health and nutrition issues to include concerns with broader elements of quality in education, such as gender sensitivity, inclusiveness and human rights.

In 1995, UNICEF's Innocenti Research Centre held a workshop on the theme 'What is a child-friendly school?' that resulted in an informal summary outlining 13 Characteristics of a Rights-Based School that are essential to the CFS concept. In subsequent working papers, CFS was presented as an 'umbrella' under which the diverse activities and goals of UNICEF's work on schools might be consolidated and rationalized. While these efforts did not produce a formally accepted definition of the CFS model, the idea of '13 defining characteristics' gained currency and continues to be a reference point for the advocacy and implementation of child-friendly schools.

By early 2000, UNICEF was expanding the definition of quality for key elements of child-friendly schools. By the end of 2001, UNICEF emphasized a comprehensive and complex quality package that was nuanced to fit different country realities. This has given rise to variations on the CFS theme within the agency. A global survey of the concept and its application within UNICEF programmes reveals a mixed picture, making it difficult to sell the concept to countries or partner agencies as a coherent model for quality in education. There has been a tendency to overprescribe on child-friendly schools and to underemphasize training and capacity for using the CFS model in education systems. Despite these difficulties, steady progress has been made with the CFS model, and the number of countries in which UNICEF is using the approach increased steadily, from an estimated 33 countries in 2004 to 56 countries in 2007.

The problem, however, is that the emerging CFS models present a confusing picture. They tend to focus on 'defining characteristics', but the number of characteristics varies from as few as 6 to as many as 16 depending on the context. These models also attempt to define child-friendly schools in terms of 'key components', including pedagogy, health, gender sensitivity, community participation, inclusiveness and protection. (See Chapter 2.)

Following recent emergencies there has been an increasing emphasis on the architectural aspects – location, design and construction – of child-friendly schools. This emphasis reflects not only the need to provide physical

facilities, promote good pedagogy and gain cost-efficiency, but also the need to address environmental issues, community participation, the safety of school locations and the provision of 'safe areas' within schools. Most recently, issues of electric power (including solar, wind and other alternative sources) and Internet connectivity are being explored as part of the focus of CFS models. It is likely that, as in the earlier case of water and sanitation, these elements will also become part of CFS models in some countries.

An additional challenging dimension to CFS models is the emerging question of when and where it is appropriate to introduce CFS models. A prime example was seen in Bam (Iran) after the 2003 earthquake. Here and in similar situations, UNICEF expanded the CFS concept to encompass more holistic concerns relating to child-centred homes, child-centred communities and child-centred cities, taking up major environment, health, protection and civic issues as highlighted in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). This is significant in that it highlights the links between schools and communities in a novel sense and gives rise to several questions: Is it necessary to have a supportive environment encompassing the home, community, city and society at large for child-friendly schools to be viable? Is the process of establishing child-friendly schools also an attempt to change standards and practices in homes, communities, cities and society at large? Is it possible to 'build back better' after natural disasters or civil conflict by using child-friendly schools as springboards for change in the wider society? Can risks of

chronic environmental degradation and sudden-onset disasters be reduced through structural improvements, mapping and preparedness activities? These are critical questions for the CFS models, and they highlight links between home, school and community in a way that goes well beyond the conventional sense.

Schools can be designed, constructed and operated in any community. However, if the principles underlying CFS models are taken seriously, questions arise about the type of setting in which schools of this nature are feasible and within which they can thrive. In order to achieve its potential, a child-friendly school may require a supportive social, cultural and political environment. It can be argued that such schools are more likely to be viable and sustainable in societies that are just, democratic, peaceful and tolerant. Embracing diversity through tolerance, inclusiveness and fairness is the starting point for recognizing and facilitating the right to quality education for all children regardless of their background. When there is a social, cultural and political climate open to child participation and respect for children's rights from the level of the family up through the local community and into the wider society, it is more likely than not that a country can develop a policy framework, set national plans and priorities, and make the type of budget allocations that are supportive of child-friendly schools.

Proponents of child-friendly schools suggest that even in the poorest communities, if supportive elements are present, it is possible to make

schools child-friendly, albeit within the restrictions of available resources. On the other hand, proponents also suggest that part of the benefit of making schools child-friendly in any situation is that doing so can result in positive change in homes, communities and the wider society. Either way, child-friendly schools can be seen as a dynamic model that can bring about change not only in schools and education systems, but also in homes, communities and societies.

These considerations suggest that it is counterproductive to regard the CFS model as rigid, with a preset number of defining characteristics or key components. It needs to be understood as flexible and adaptable, driven by certain broad principles that invite dialogue and bargaining, draw on proven good practices and embrace new concerns as the reality of different situations demands. Such is the nature of the model that this manual seeks to explain and outline. It is a model of quality that has taken many twists and turns in its evolution and is richer for that process. It sets out a creative tension around child-centredness that builds on real-world experiences of what works best for children in different circumstances as well as on the theoretical ideals needed to define and promote quality in education. In this regard, a CFS model is not so much about a destination at which schools and education systems can arrive and be labelled successful. It has more to do with the pathways along which schools and education systems endeavour to travel in the quest to promote quality in education.

If the underlying ideology and key principles that drive the defining characteristics of child-friendly schools in different contexts can be harnessed into a comprehensive guideline with illustrative practical examples, the great promise of this approach to quality can be fully realized in the form of a consolidated child-friendly school model. As a tool for planning quality basic education in national systems, this model would greatly enhance the chances of achieving the EFA goals and the education MDGs. A consolidated CFS model also promises a more participatory and comprehensive approach to planning for quality education. For example:

(a) Stronger links between schools and their communities will facilitate the consultative process, a prerequisite for developing credible education sector plans that can attract external support in line with the good governance requirements of the Monterrey Consensus,[1] the Fast Track Initiative and the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development;

(b) The same stronger links will make it more likely that communities will identify with and be supportive of their schools, ultimately strengthening the process of providing quality basic education for all children;

(c) A focus on the well-being of the whole child, including attention to the different needs of different groups according to such factors as their gender, physical ability and socio-economic status, will help address disparities that stem from home and community backgrounds, creating a more level playing field for all learners to achieve their full potential through education;

(d) An emphasis on inclusiveness will enable countries to tap and harness the full potential of their human resources;

(e) A more conducive learning environment will help minimize the repetition and drop-out rates that also contribute to poor quality due to internal inefficiency within schools and education systems;

(f) Child-centred pedagogy is more likely to produce independent thinkers who can make constructive contributions to a participatory democracy and adapt to changing circumstances;

(g) Child-centred pedagogy will also enable teachers to improve their professional status as facilitators of learning, custodians of children's well-being while they are in school and authority figures in the management of links between the school and the community;

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[1] The Monterrey Consensus is a compact between developing countries and major donor countries that commits the former to demonstrating political will and good governance in providing education and other services to their population, while committing the latter to funding the financing gaps that prevent these services from reaching the population.

(h) A child-centred, gender-sensitive pedagogy is also more likely to produce school graduates who will be job creators and entrepreneurs rather than merely job seekers;

(i) A focus on the whole child will result in diverse non-educational needs of children, including checks of their health and nutrition status, being addressed through the school system, a particularly important consideration for countries with weak service delivery systems that cannot adequately reach populations across all sectors;

(j) The holistic philosophy of child-friendly schools is likely to produce a major shift in thinking concerning what schools are for and how they can influence change in the wider society through their current child, family and community links and the future activities of their graduates.

If this rich potential of child-friendly schools is to be realized, it is necessary to mount a major advocacy campaign that is evidence-based and backed by countries and major donor partners willing to invest in the child-friendly approach. In this regard, UNICEF and other partner agencies must invest in measures that:

(a) Provide a mapping of child-friendly school types, showing their range and adaptations made to the basic concept in response to different situations;

(b) Formally evaluate the impact of child-friendly schools in a wide range of country contexts;

(c) Support national capacity-building for the use of CFS models to implement quality education standards by providing training expertise and resources such as this reference manual, the e-learning package and a handbook of case studies on child-friendly schools;

(d) Support national capacity to conduct rights-based causality analysis through consultation across sectors to ensure optimal cooperation with health, environment, water, finance and other relevant ministries;

(e) Support the establishment of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that include gender-sensitive quality indicators to help countries track progress and make adjustments in the way they use CFS models to improve quality in their education systems;

(f) Help leverage financing for countries that incorporate child-friendly school standards as part of their strategy for building quality in their education systems;

(g) 'Accompany' countries that are in the process of implementing CFS models by providing useful guidelines and working closely with their nationals to set up and operate child-friendly schools in different communities.

CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 2
Dynamics of theory in practice

unicef

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CHAPTER 2

DYNAMICS OF THEORY IN PRACTICE

This chapter explores the various options for implementing child-friendly school (CFS) models. These options depend on the dynamic interaction between theory (including ideology, concepts and principles) and practice (or practicalities such as resources, capacities and opportunities). It is this interaction that determines the nature and features of child-friendly schools.

The influence of theory is highlighted when concepts and principles are interpreted in different contexts and by different practitioners to produce a variety of institutions that are identifiable as child-friendly schools. Even when institutions have been destroyed in emergencies, concepts and principles can be applied to create temporary shelters that are child-friendly learning spaces. On the other hand, the influence of practice is manifested in how available resources, existing capacity and opportunities for change produce a variety of child-friendly school types. Both theory and practice influence outcomes in the implementation of CFS models. The types of schools that result from this interactive process share enough similarities to be classified as child-friendly, yet they also exhibit important differences that help explain the dynamic and flexible nature of CFS models.

In essence, the CFS model is a pathway to quality education rather than a rigid blueprint. The application of child-friendly school concepts and principles in different countries and the impact of practical realities in determining what is feasible in these situations has given rise to guidelines for implementing CFS models. These guidelines underscore the need for flexibility in implementing the models while demonstrating the limits of variation. The main contentions to be discussed in this chapter include:

(a) Implementation is an eclectic process, since child-friendly schools are created on the basis of key principles that ultimately shape their main features. True CFS design requires the application of principles, not prescribed characteristics.

(b) The main features of a given child-friendly school result from applying certain principles to a particular setting and context. There is no fixed set of features that must be in every child-friendly school.

(c) When child-friendly school principles are applied consistently in different settings and contexts, similar, although not identical, characteristics ensue, which should

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not be mistaken for the products of a rigid recipe or blueprint.

(d) Some characteristics, such as child participation in the learning process, may be intuitively recommended for child-friendly schools, since they can be considered the inevitable, logical outcomes of applying CFS principles to almost any setting or context.

(e) Making schools child-friendly is not an 'all-or-nothing' process. It can begin with one principle and phase in others over time in a strategic sequence that fits local realities, promoting a 'progressive realization' of the CFS model.

(f) The key principles that drive the child-friendly school process are so interrelated that interpreting and implementing any one principle invariably sets off a chain reaction that leads to related principles.

(g) The role of teachers and school heads is so central to the CFS model that their training can usually be a good starting point for making schools child-friendly. Teachers and school heads do not simply work in these schools, they make schools child friendly and maintain schools' child-friendly nature.

(h) Important synergies are gained by linking key elements of the child-friendly school model. For instance, connecting teacher training to the preparation and provision of appropriate pedagogic materials makes the implementation of quality learning in the classroom more efficient.

(i) There are cost savings to be gained through economies of scale, as implementation of child-friendly school models shifts from single-school pilots to clusters of schools to district-wide, province-wide and finally sector-wide coverage.

(j) When the implementation process is driven by key principles rather than a fixed set of characteristics, it is possible to create child-friendly schools in a wide variety of contexts and circumstances.

(k) Adherence to a fixed set of characteristics can produce superficial models of child-friendly schools that create confusion, invite scepticism and trivialize the concept itself.

(l) The complexity of applying child-friendly school principles to different contexts means that as efforts move from individual pilots and demonstration models to large numbers of schools and eventually to entire school systems, each setting yields valuable lessons.

(m) A major challenge for large-scale implementation across the education sector is a lack of standards, guidelines and specifications to be used in incorporating key elements of child-friendly schools in processes that are essential to a sector-wide investment approach, such as scenario-setting, projecting and costing.

(n) For the child-friendly model to be taken seriously as an area for national investment in quality education, CFS programming requires a logical, consistent approach that can be applied in different settings.

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In 2003, a review of global efforts to implement child-friendly schools found that a wide range of conceptual interpretations had been applied, resulting in a variety of manifestations of child-friendly schools in different countries (Chabbott, 2004). This lack of coherence was attributable to the tendency to define child-friendly schools in terms of prescribed features or characteristics, which did not necessarily translate well from country to country. The review found that child-friendly schools were defined in terms of anywhere from 6 to 12 'fixed' characteristics. Most characteristics appeared desirable, although it is unclear where these characteristics originated.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was often cited to support these prescribed characteristics. The CRC was an ideological framework for child-friendly schools, but in defining the child-friendly school concept the 'real' linkages to the core principles of the CRC were not clearly established. It was therefore not evident whether such prescribed characteristics are a finite set or an expandable list, nor, if expandable, how additional characteristics for child-friendly schools would be generated. This made it difficult to treat child-friendly schools as a coherent model that could be implemented in a logical, consistent, predictable manner in different contexts.

This fundamental weakness can be addressed by means of a sound process for designing child-friendly schools based on key principles with clear origins that can be interpreted and applied in a variety of contexts to identify appropriate features or characteristics of child-friendly schools. Once these features have been determined, they can be used to develop CFS standards in a given district, province or country. In addition to being a more coherent, predictable and logical model, this approach promotes a democratic process of dialogue and consultation in the interpretation of leading principles and the setting of standards. It discourages mechanical application of a given set of fixed characteristics.

In practice, it is also possible for CFS design and implementation to begin with a specific key characteristic or feature and shift progressively to achieving the model that is ideal for that particular context. In this sense, implementation of the CFS model is an eclectic process, which becomes more grounded, logical and predictable by using standards to mainstream the model into national planning processes.

Efforts to implement child-friendly schools in different countries have undergone two distinct phases. There was an early phase during which efforts were not intended to create child-friendly schools but were designed to improve some aspect of schooling. These efforts usually predate the adoption of the child-friendly school concept by UNICEF and focused more on seizing opportunities for change than on building a fixed set of characteristics. Over time, the changed schools that resulted came to be described ex post facto as child-friendly schools.

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In the later phase, after adoption of the CFS model by UNICEF, efforts were deliberately meant to make schools child-friendly. Nevertheless, the design and implementation of child-friendly schools has been an eclectic and sometimes superficial process in both phases: What gets done first and how things proceed tend to be determined by such practicalities as what is attractive to or accepted by the national and local education authorities.

In Bangladesh, for example, the Intensive District Approach to Education for All (IDEAL) project did not begin with efforts to implement a certain number of CFS characteristics. It was a reform designed to improve the quality of learning as integral to expanding access for achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals. IDEAL began in 1996 by experimenting with multiple ways of teaching and learning, sensitizing teachers to the different ways in which children learn and helping them adapt their teaching styles accordingly. This invariably became a starting point for greater child-centredness (a CFS principle) in schools and classrooms. Over time, there appears to have been a chain reaction through which IDEAL generated new features as part of the process of strengthening quality. These included safe learning environments, community involvement in school planning and management, and assessment of learning achievement. As a result, IDEAL's structure and process of education reform created new characteristics that allowed the project's schools to be classified as child-friendly schools.

Similarly, the Programme for the Advancement of Girls' Education (PAGE) in Zambia did not begin with the intention of creating child-friendly schools but with the intent to help provide quality education for girls that would promote gender parity and empowerment. A multisectoral approach to dismantling the many barriers that prevent girls from accessing and performing in schools evolved. This entailed a variety of interventions – developing community capacity, providing learning and teaching materials, creating single-sex classrooms in math and science – designed to improve the learning environment for girls and resulted in these schools being classified as child-friendly.

In Egypt, community schools were inspired by Colombia's Escuelas Nuevas model and predate the CFS framework in UNICEF. Here too the initial intent was not to create child-friendly schools. Rather, the focus was on cultivating strong local community engagement in education (a CFS principle) in order to provide quality learning opportunities for children who did not have access to mainstream schools. Subsequently, these community schools generated additional features, such as stimulating classroom environments and learner participation, that have brought them closer to classification as child-friendly schools.

Similar efforts to provide quality learning opportunities for disadvantaged populations in West and Central Africa began in the mid-1990s with integrated approaches to strengthen community involvement. These reforms predated the launch of the CFS model by UNICEF. However, by 2001, 7 of the 24 countries in the region were engaged in reforms

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purposely designed to promote child-friendly/girl-friendly schools. These CFS initiatives included setting up multigrade community schools that make education viable in sparsely populated rural areas and creating satellite schools that make it possible for children to get an education close to home until they are old enough to transfer to regular schools farther away.

In the Eastern and Southern Africa region, more deliberate efforts to promote child-friendly schools took place in countries including Ethiopia and Kenya, where converting existing schools into child-friendly ones was a major focus of UNICEF's investment in education. These efforts centred on classroom processes and the school environment to promote more 'joyful learning', immersing children in a highly participatory learning process within a resource-rich environment guided by teachers trained to be 'friendly' facilitators. The transformations are depicted in 'before and after' photographs of classrooms and schools that show the simple measures employed to promote change, such as:

(a) Brightly painted rooms, clean floors and colourful displays on walls;

(b) Child-appropriate furniture arranged flexibly for a variety of learning approaches;

(c) Pupil activity centres or learning corners created around the classroom;

(d) Adequate water and sanitation facilities;

(e) Provision of recreation kits;

(f) Nutritious school meals.

Little systematic work has been done to evaluate the impact of these

measures on improved learning, better all-round development and other outcomes associated with child-friendly schools. However, less rigorous evidence, such as views expressed by teachers and parents and observations linked to the 'before and after' realities, suggest at least an initial upsurge in quality of education. It appears that most children thrive as learners in these new environments, and many teachers who work in them express a new sense of professional pride in what they do as facilitators of learning. These impressionistic conclusions need to be quantitatively evaluated.

Despite such positive signs, efforts to mainstream child-friendly schools into national plans and priorities in countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya have been only partially successful. Even when governments have agreed in principle to adopt child-friendly schools as a model for improving the quality of education, they have failed to include adequate programming tools for setting scenarios, making projections and costing options for incorporating child-friendly schools into the education planning process. This results from becoming bogged down on a fixed set of CFS characteristics rather than focusing on key principles that can promote a planning dialogue around the desired aspects of child-friendly schools. Such a dialogue is vital in determining the key features of child-friendly schools for a country and for setting national standards that can be used as variables in national education sector planning.

The lack of a consistent, logical approach for incorporating CFS features and standards into education sector planning has produced patchy results almost everywhere the attempt to mainstream child-friendly schools in the education system has been made.

In Azerbaijan, for instance, the Government has selected some of the prescribed CFS characteristics and rejected others. UNICEF continues to advocate for the acceptance and fuller implementation of child-friendly school characteristics, because to do otherwise would mean that child-friendly schools could become a menu of features from which governments select rather than a model based on key principles relating to what is in the best interest of children regarding their right to quality basic education.

A similar challenge exists in other countries where advocates continue to press governments to accept and implement the full set of prescribed characteristics for child-friendly schools. Some progress is being made in these countries, resulting in serious government efforts to implement some CFS elements in various categories of schools. The hope is that if governments can be persuaded to adopt a CFS policy, this patchwork of CFS elements will spread to as many schools as possible. The reality is that even with powerful advocacy and governments' willingness to adopt such a policy, the major challenge of adequate planning tools for mainstreaming the CFS model into the education sector planning process remains.

This challenge is most evident in East Asia and the Pacific. Since UNICEF first introduced the concept in the late 1990s, countries in the region have taken the lead in demonstrating the benefits of CFS models and adopting

CFS policy. In Thailand, for example, the Child-Friendly School Initiative helps schools and communities create partnerships to help track and ensure children's school participation, learning and well-being. UNICEF has provided technical support to help the Government develop standard architectural designs based on CFS principles that are expected to be used to construct new schools and renovate existing ones as part of the drive to implement a CFS policy in Thailand. These measures will undoubtedly produce benefits for quality education in that country and enhance the use of CFS models to provide quality basic education for children elsewhere.

These developments, however, fall short of systematic mainstreaming of child-friendly schools into an education system. There needs to be a more holistic approach in which specific CFS principles are used to decide on key elements and standards for child-friendly schools in a given country and on the extent to which these features will be adapted to different parts of the country or at different stages of the national implementation process. These features and standards can then be included in education planning models as an integral part of the many variables used in the national education sector planning process.

Two developments in 2007 hold promise that child-friendly schools can be successfully mainstreamed in education systems. In China, major advancements towards mainstreaming CFS as a model for implementing the Government's policy of nine years of compulsory basic education and what is termed the 'whole child' education policy have followed the successful piloting of CFS models by

UNICEF in selected schools in some of the country's most disadvantaged provinces. The Ministry of Education has set up high-level policy and technical teams to work on principles, features and standards for child-friendly schools in China, and the results of their work will be used in a pilot exercise to mainstream child-friendly schools in the education planning process of selected provinces. It will then be rolled out to other provinces throughout the country. UNICEF is committed to providing guidance and technical support to the Government in this important area.

The second development with regard to incorporating CFS elements into education sector planning models and processes has been at the global level. In joint support to countries developing credible plans for achieving the education MDGs and the EFA goals, three United Nations agencies – the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UNICEF – have decided to modify an existing education simulation model and commit to a single education simulation model (EPSSim) to support education sector planning in developing countries. UNICEF has worked with UNESCO to incorporate CFS elements into this model, ensuring that CFS principles are a visible part of policy dialogue and that CFS elements are considered in scenario-setting during the planning process. The existence of a single model also means that CFS standards can be part of the planning process and that selected CFS elements included in a sector plan can be properly analysed in terms of costs over the plan period.
(See Chapter 7.)

Key principles based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) can be used to generate the desired features, or characteristics, of child-friendly schools in particular settings. These in turn can be reviewed against the reality of available resources over a given time frame to arrive at a set of feasible standards for the design and implementation of child-friendly schools in a given country. (See Diagram.) This approach makes it easier to incorporate child-friendly schools into national planning processes and investment plans in a consistent and reliable way.

Consideration of the CFS model begins with generic key principles that are subject to interpretation. It is generally agreed that the CFS concept as introduced in the 1990s was inspired by the principles of child rights as expressed in the CRC. As the ideological foundation of child-friendly schools, the CRC gives rise to the generic or key principles that drive the process of making schools child-friendly.

1 KEY PRINCIPLES
Derived from CRC and interpreted in line with national plans and priorities to generate major desired features

2 DESIRED FEATURES
Generated from the interpretation of key principles and reviewed against reality

3 CFS STANDARDS
Based on review of desired features and the reality of available resources and expertise over a given time frame

4 GAP ANALYSIS
To reveal areas in which schools do not meet CRC-inspired goal for all children to have a quality education

The application of the CRC to education provides us with a rights-based approach, stressing that all children have a right to education – they are rights holders. Education is not a privilege that society grants to children; it is a duty that society fulfils towards all children. One of the most self-evident principles generated by the rights-based ideology is inclusiveness, which requires schools to be open and welcoming to all children without exception. The school does not just passively receive children who seek schooling but actively seeks out all eligible children for enrolment. Beyond enrolment, it also helps children stay in school and attend regularly. This means that fair, transparent and non-discriminatory rules for accessing school are necessary but not sufficient. There must also be strategies and measures in place to tackle the barriers that prevent children from taking the opportunities to participate in education.

Factors that keep children out of school include household poverty, ethnicity or minority status, orphan status, gender, remote rural location, need to work and early childhood illness caused by exposure to unsafe and unhealthy environmental conditions (such as contaminated water and indoor air pollution). Other exclusionary factors can be fostered within the school itself. Marginalization by teachers who fail to engage students in the learning and teaching process, do not speak their language, do not believe they are capable of learning or do not have the pedagogic skills to handle the diversity these children bring to the classroom prevent them from having a quality learning experience.

In some cases, the physical design and infrastructure of a school may exclude children. The design may inadvertently obstruct access and participation for children with disabilities, or the lack of separate toilet facilities may dissuade girls' participation. The way in which a school is managed or its prevailing ambience also may discourage some children from participating in the education process. When bullying is part of the school culture, for instance, or certain populations are routinely demeaned or stigmatized by school practices, some pupils will drop out.

A child-friendly school is not just a child-welcoming school but also a child-seeking school. It works to attract and retain children from different backgrounds, respects diversity and ensures non-discrimination. Some innovations that have helped make schools more inclusive are:

(a) *Local school mapping and community monitoring systems* to help track enrolment and identify children who are out of school;

(b) *Satellite schools* that ensure younger children in remote communities can go to school close to home until they are old enough to attend existing primary schools farther away;

(c) *Community schools* that provide education opportunities for children who do not have access to the existing standard schools;

(d) *Mother tongue instruction* in the early grades and multilingual/ multicultural education designed

to ease the transition from home to school and render education more relevant to minority populations;

(e) *Non-formal education programmes* that are equivalent to the formal system but have flexible schedules to cater to the learning needs of children engaged in daily or seasonal income-generating activities (working children);

(f) Special efforts to combat exclusion and stigmatization of *children affected by HIV and AIDS*;

(g) Safe spaces to facilitate children's right to education in *emergency situations*;

(h) Promoting *birth registration* and strengthening community-based *early learning opportunities* that help meet the legal requirements for enrolment and better prepare children from disadvantaged populations for schooling (school readiness);

(i) Building *partnerships* through a mix of education and non-education partners who can promote the principle of inclusion.

Efforts to put the CFS principle of inclusiveness into practice lead to clear observations. First, because child-friendly school implementation is an eclectic process, it can begin with any key CRC principle. Yet implementation of any one principle quickly generates a chain reaction, leading to other principles and factors that are important for child-friendly schools. This explains why programmes that began by implementing one key quality issue invariably generated further concerns that brought in new principles, leading inexorably towards child-friendly school status. Second, through discussion of inclusiveness it is possible to choose the most appropriate measure to solve the problem of a particular situation. Applying different solutions will mean that schools end up with different features, yet they are all addressing the issue of inclusiveness.

The principle of inclusiveness effectively enables the progression towards child-friendly school status by leading to the implementation of measures that promote access and retention of children from a wide diversity of backgrounds. So, is it enough just to get all children in school? What if children are enrolled in squalid 'boot camps' or rote learning centres that pass for schools – has their right to education been fulfilled or violated?

The rights-based approach stresses that as rights holders, children should have a say in the form and substance of their education, as should those who facilitate their rights. This is the principle of democratic participation, through which children, parents, communities, employers, political leaders and others have a role in determining the structure, content and process of education. It is only through such democratic participation that child-friendly schools can claim to be fulfilling children's right to education. This is simply a reaffirmation of good curriculum design principles, which promote 'negotiation' of the curriculum by different stakeholders, including children. However, there are important caveats in applying this principle

that have to do with the legitimate roles of different stakeholders and the place of objective expertise in determining content and other aspects of the learning/teaching process. The rigours of knowledge and the learning process cannot be trivialized in the name of democratic participation. To do so would give child-friendly schools a bad name.

In the process of negotiating the curriculum, it is generally accepted that policymakers are mandated with outlining a vision of society and the country's priorities for development. This usually has implications for the role of education and the type of education in which the country should invest. It is also accepted that parents and communities

have aspirations for their children that schools should reflect. They also expect certain benefits from investing in education, and schools should realize these benefits as fully as possible. In the same way, other stakeholders, such as employers or civic and religious leaders, normally contribute to the process of negotiating the curriculum by advocating for knowledge, skills, norms, values and behaviours that should be acquired and upheld in society.

These varied inputs by different stakeholders need to be processed and administered by professionals, such as curriculum planners, subject specialists, school managers and classroom teachers, whose main role

is to translate vision, aspiration and expectation into a viable curriculum that can be interpreted and implemented in schools. Part of this role involves safeguarding standards regarding forms of knowledge and what constitutes education. For instance, witchcraft and magic are not normally accepted as forms of knowledge for educational purposes. Similarly, exclusive use of rote learning and memorization does not count as education. Just as importantly, enforcing a particular political ideology or religious viewpoint to the exclusion of other possibilities amounts to indoctrination rather than education. These are matters that must be safeguarded by professionals who work on curriculum.

Discussing a key principle like democratic participation brings up issues of the school's accountability to various stakeholders. This discussion can be a springboard for examining links between schools and their communities on the one hand and links between schools and central or local policymakers and administrators on the other. Whatever the starting point, there is always a sense in which other key areas of concern will be brought into the discussion, to be given attention as part of the process of making schools child-friendly.

Having all children in school and establishing the democratic participation of key stakeholders in negotiating curriculum content, structure and method would represent good progress towards fulfilling children's right to a quality education. However, the participation of the adult stakeholders, many with powerful voices, could easily drown out the voices of children. This is why the CRC, with its rights-based approach to education, emphasizes the importance of safeguarding the interests of the child by making such interests central to all decision-making in education. This is the child-centred principle (See 2.4), perhaps the most important principle generated from the CRC and its rights-based ideology. It needs to be applied with caution, because the issue of what is in the best interest of the child can be contentious. Who decides what is in the best interest of the child? Is it the same as the best interest of all children, and if not, which child's interest should be given priority? Does it mean that children rule and whatever they want they should get?

These and other controversies are part of the discussion of this principle, and it can be argued that even children themselves may not always know what is in their best interest, especially at a young age. They need to take certain judgements and decisions on trust from parents, teachers and others who have an obligation as well as the authority to safeguard their welfare. Even so, it is always important to promote child participation as one of the features of the child-centred principle and to include children's views in the process of negotiating the curriculum and other aspects of a child-friendly school. For example, young children can express their views through drawing and playing games relating to CFS components. It is also possible to obtain the views of children by engaging them in open discussion on such issues as discipline.

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Because the principle of child-centredness is so critical to child-friendly schools, it deserves special attention. Child participation has already been briefly discussed as one of the features of this principle. The aspect in which child participation matters most is in the classroom process of learning and teaching. Learning is central to education and, in line with the child-centred principle, the child as learner is central to the process of teaching and learning. In other words, the classroom process should not be one in which children are passive recipients of knowledge dispensed by a sole authority, the teacher. Rather it should be an interactive process in which children are active participants in observing, exploring, listening, reasoning, questioning and 'coming to know'. This is at the heart of the classroom process in all child-friendly school models, and it is critical for teachers to be well trained in this pedagogy.

Children are active agents in constant discovery of the world around them. Every day brings new learning opportunities and experiences, while every place is a new learning environment to explore, starting with the home and the local community. There is always new knowledge to be gained, and there are always new skills to master, new facts to learn, new emotions to experience, new ideas to explore, new puzzles to ponder and new ways to understand.

For children, many situations represent an unknown challenge that they must make sense of as they listen, act, react, reflect and interact with others through a process that is guided and facilitated by the teacher. Ideally, children will be able to do all this in a manner that will not harm them but will instead stimulate, motivate, encourage and reward them as learners trying to make sense of their surroundings. The implication is that to assist the continuous development of children in a constantly changing world, every learning experience and every learning

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environment should place children at the centre as active agents of their own learning process, allowing them to develop to their full potential with appropriate guidance and an informed freedom of choice.

For children to develop their full potential, schools must provide learning opportunities that help develop children's abilities to think and reason, build up their self-respect and respect for others, and think ahead and plan their future. Sadly, the environment in which many children develop is not always conducive to even basic learning, let alone skills acquisition. Too often, it is a harsh, uncaring environment that can be detrimental to the emotional, social and physical health and well-being of the child.

Whether a school or an informal learning space, environment plays a significant role in the development of children's potential. It is in recognition of the importance of the environment that delegates to the World Education Forum, held in Dakar in 2000, pledged to "create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning."

The environment for learning is a critical feature of child-friendly school

Learning to live together

Learning to be

Learning to do

Learning to know

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models. But it is also important from a child-centred perspective to consider what children bring to this environment and how this environment should cater to other aspects of a child's well-being in order to support learning. In other words, while excellence in learning through active participation is the ultimate goal, consideration of the whole child and his or her well-being is also crucial. Many children start school poorly prepared for learning because they have not had appropriate early child development (ECD) care and support. Also, for children who are malnourished or infested with worms or suffering from repeated bouts of malaria or other illnesses, learning will be difficult.

The environment in a child-friendly school must respond to these challenges, many of which can be met by applying the principle of child centredness through:

Starting with the child. Consider each child holistically and coherently, embracing the particular characteristics every child contributes to the rich diversity of the school. Every child's developmental and learning needs should be considered throughout the life cycle, and every child's ability, health and nutritional status, as well as any discriminatory pressure they may be subjected to because of their gender, race, ethnicity or other factor, should be acknowledged. This approach enables all children to access, participate in and profit fully from learning opportunities. Additional efforts and resources are required to allow child-friendly schools to take such a holistic and coherent approach from early child development to basic primary education and beyond, but they are cost-effective in that they

ensure that investments in such areas as teacher training or provision of textbooks are not undermined by a lack of attention to other crucial areas required for the child to take advantage of what is offered. Child-friendly approaches may appear to cost more in the short term, but they are much more efficient investments in the long term because they provide savings by addressing problems of low or delayed enrolment, increased absenteeism, repetition and dropout due to such issues as basic health, nutrition and safety.

Healthy for children. Schools alone cannot guarantee children's health, but they should not make their health worse. Unsanitary and unsafe learning environments result in injury and illness. Girls abandoning or being withdrawn from schools that fail to provide separate toilets is just one example of how environmental factors can undermine student participation in education. Providing safe water and appropriate sanitation facilities are basic first steps in the creation of a healthy, child-friendly learning environment. Other important elements include establishing and enforcing rules to make the learning environment free from drugs, alcohol and tobacco, eliminating exposure to hazardous materials, providing sufficient numbers of ergonomically designed benches and chairs and adequate lighting, allowing opportunities for physical exercise and recreation, and ensuring that first-aid equipment is properly maintained and readily available. Such a healthy environment provides an appropriate venue for school feeding and other health-related interventions like deworming, micronutrient supplementation and malaria prevention.

Safe for children. The physical learning environment must be able to accommodate all children in the community in safe locations with access to energy for school electricity, an especially important consideration in rural locations that are off the grid. The environment needs to be designed to meet the basic needs of children. Schools need to provide access to clean water for drinking and hand washing and take gender into account by providing separate and private restrooms for boys and girls and, if applicable, secure dormitory accommodations. Schools must identify and eliminate causes of injury in school buildings and on school grounds, ensure that emergency response equipment is properly maintained and readily available, establish emergency procedures and practise emergency response. Child-friendliness can be further promoted through children's involvement in activities that make the school cleaner, prettier and more environmentally sustainable, including planting vegetable gardens, trees or flowers, painting walls or removing debris from school grounds.

Protective of children. When the school environment is perceived as unwelcoming or threatening, attendance suffers. In general, a child-friendly, protective environment is not only conducive to learning, but also to play and healthy interaction. Harassment and antisocial behaviour cannot be allowed; abuse, bullying or sexual exploitation must be confronted. Child protection and safety in homes has a direct impact on children's capacity to attend class and to learn, and children must also feel safe as they travel from their homes to school. Interventions to address these situations include

training teachers and parents in non-violent discipline, as well as establishing and enforcing codes of conduct that protect children from sexual harassment, abuse, violence, bullying, physical punishment, stigma and discrimination. Special attention should be given to orphans and children made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS. In situations with high levels of violence, counselling and mediation programmes and persons should be identified.

Work can be richly rewarding for those charged with the responsibility of implementing a CFS policy in the education system. The main purpose of such work should be not only to increase the learning effectiveness, efficiency and reach of education systems but more fundamentally to enable all children to realize their right to learn. It should also be about expanding the focus of attention beyond formal schooling into broader environments and spaces where all sorts of learning takes place, especially in times of crisis. Ideally, it is also about making connections between the school, the home and the wider environment through a holistic, child-centred approach.

But to date, UNICEF and its national partners have not fully utilized this ideal approach. A mixed picture emerges from efforts to implement and mainstream child-friendly schools. On the one hand, there is little doubt that many of these efforts have improved the quality of education and helped set new standards for the well-being of children in schools. On the other, it is also clear that the process and outcome of implementing CFS models have been patchy in most places, far from being mainstreamed in education systems.

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A final issue worth considering is the extent to which child-friendly school models are feasible in a policy environment that is not child-friendly. It may be that child-friendly education policies are a requirement to guarantee success in the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for all children. These would provide a framework for regulating provision of and access to education in a transparent and equitable manner, and would also provide a rationale for increased investments to address safety, protection, health and nutrition issues as part of the process of making schools child-friendly.

At the national level, child-friendly education policies may include promotion of fee-free enrolment, promotion of the use of local languages in schools, requirements to include disabled children in regular schools, provisions for pregnant girls to complete their education, regulations that prohibit corporeal punishment and regulations allowing HIV-infected and -affected children to attend school and continue learning. For such policies to be pragmatic, they need to be linked to other sectors and broadly collaborative with various stakeholders in health, environment, infrastructure and other areas. Most importantly, such national policies should be the basis for ensuring that child-friendly approaches receive a proportion of the national budget adequate to run the new system, covering appropriate teacher salaries and teacher support measures as well as investments in training, materials provision and other requirements.

At the community level, there may also be a need for supportive policies and practices so that local resources can be mobilized in support of child-friendly schools. Additionally, policies must advocate and support children's rights and CRC principles. In dealing with rights, such issues as nutrition, health, violence prevention and discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity or class must be considered by the local community.

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2.5.1 Broad overview of trends

In a number of countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, the concept of Global Education has been integrated into the CFS approach, preschool activities have been emphasized in some programmes, and community-based education management information systems have been utilized to locate and reach disadvantaged and excluded children. Global Education is also promoted in the Middle East and North Africa as a means of improving quality and incorporating key CFS elements such as child rights, children's participation in democratic processes and interactive learning. The community school model piloted in Egypt and extended to a number of other countries incorporates all major components of child-friendly schools, with a special emphasis on gender equity, teaching processes and community participation.

In India, in the aftermath of the Gujarat earthquake, the CFS concept has been applied in emergencies as a framework for the reconstruction and restoration of primary education. In Afghanistan, reopened schools are used to deliver a wide range of services, and community support and involvement has been critical. And in Latin America and the Caribbean, where inclusive quality education for all is a key goal, the CFS framework has been used in a number of countries – Bolivia, Colombia, Guyana, Honduras and Nicaragua – sometimes building on or associating with earlier initiatives such as the Escuelas Nuevas, which

began in Colombia and spread to other countries in the region.

The East Asia and the Pacific region has been developing and applying the CFS framework since it was first introduced in the 1990s, producing various manifestations. In Indonesia, for example, training in what the country calls Active, Joyful and Effective Learning is a principal activity. In the Philippines, schools are part of a wider framework of child-friendly families, communities, provinces and the country as a whole.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, national standards exist to promote child-friendly and gender-sensitive school environments in a number of countries. And schools that are healthy, safe and protective are looked to as means of support for children and families affected by HIV and AIDS. In both African regions, child-friendly and girl-friendly initiatives are clearly linked. In West Africa, girl-friendly school models have been implemented in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Nigeria and Senegal, and a child-friendly/girl-friendly school manual has been developed.

2.5.2 Specific country examples

■ **Malawi: Intersectoral partnerships for child-friendly schools**

The Malawian child-friendly school model stresses the importance of intersectoral partnerships. UNICEF and the World Food Programme work in partnership with the Government,

non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations to provide quality primary education. The collaboration encompasses teacher training on child-friendly methods, school feeding for both boys and girls attending primary day schools, and take-home rations for girls and orphans. Schools are also provided with furniture, teaching materials and water and sanitation facilities, along with life skills training, deworming services and micronutrient supplementation.

■ **Nigeria: Gender components of child-friendly schools within diverse realities**

The Child-Friendly School Initiative was launched in Nigeria in 2002, with the goal of creating 600 child-friendly schools by 2007. Initial CFS interventions were planned for the six northern states where the overall level of enrolment is lowest and the gender gap highest. While gender equity was a key dimension in the CFS model from the outset, greater success was achieved in the overall enrolment rate in child-friendly schools than in reducing the gender gap. From 2002 to 2004, the African Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI) focused on interventions to attract and retain girls in school, addressing structural constraints at the policy level, not least the shortage of female teachers in rural schools in the north, where they are particularly needed as role models. Lessons learned from AGEI were scaled up with the launch of a national Strategy for the Acceleration of Girls' Education in Nigeria (SAGEN), the development of a common strategy to support girls' education (SAGEN+) and the launch of a US$48 million Girls' Education Project (GEP), a Government of Nigeria-United Kingdom Department

for International Development-UNICEF partnership.

Prospects for closing the gender gap now appear to be improved, as the GEP has leveraged increased complementary funds from the six selected states. However, serious concerns remain about the overall quality of schooling in Nigeria, with the question 'What about the boys?' being increasingly raised and a growing reverse gender gap in the south in favour of girls. To address this imbalance, the focus in the south is on overall school quality and a broader approach to gender. CFS principles remain at the core of the Nigeria-UNICEF country programme, with different emphases in different geographical and cultural areas coupled with a diversified resource mobilization strategy to enable scaling up on quality Education for All nationally and girls' education in the north.

■ **The Philippines: Multiple components of child-friendly schools**

Effectiveness.
Child-friendly schools in the Philippines aim to enhance school effectiveness through capacity-building activities that enable teachers and school heads to have a better understanding of child development, which is critical if they are to apply appropriate teaching practices and foster more meaningful relationships with students and their families.

Protection.
Child-friendly schools have succeeded in transforming the norm in classroom discipline from one that condones verbal and physical abuse to one that calls for a 'shoutless and stickless'

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a socio-economic, academic, health and nutrition profile that enables the teacher to know the child better and understand his or her strengths and barriers to learning. It also permits the teacher to identify children at risk (non-readers, absentees and potential dropouts, physically and sexually abused children, students with learning disabilities and attention deficits) and intervene appropriately. In metropolitan cities, child-friendly schools work with community councils to identify out-of-school children and bring them back to school.

■ Mongolia: Policy support

In order to establish and maintain child-friendly learning environments, Mongolia adopted a national policy aimed at improving the quality of education and the implementation of child rights. The policy provides support to all stakeholders from the national to the sub-national level and underscores the collective commitment to children by policymakers, school managers, teachers, parents and communities. The CFS training programme is integrated into the curriculum of national teacher-training colleges, as well as in-service teacher training and distant learning programmes. Additionally, basic education monitoring and management systems include CFS indicators.

2.5.3 Child-friendly spaces in emergencies and their aftermath

Child-friendly spaces/environments (CFS/E) have been developed as a rights-based approach to guaranteeing children's rights to survival, development, participation and protection in situations of crisis or instability. The CFS/E initiative offers an integrated approach to promoting

form of discipline. Also through CFS, a school protocol was developed for identification, reporting and referral of cases of abuse, violence and exploitation. This was approved for all schools by the Department of Education.

Community involvement.
As one of its most important tasks and part of how it defines itself, the child-friendly school engages in genuine partnerships with families and communities. This has raised awareness of the importance of education and generated better understanding of the constraints faced by principals and teachers, resulting in an improved school-community relationship. Schools that are successful in this area take pride in being truly schools of their communities.

Inclusion.
Child-friendly schools seek out and assist at-risk children through the Student Tracking System, which monitors and tracks individual children. The system puts together relevant information about the child to create

physical and emotional security, social and cognitive development, and health and nutritional status. At the operational level, child-friendly schools and environments attempt to integrate primary and fundamental health, primary education, childcare and psychosocial development services into a protective environment that is both family-focused and community-based. Centres set up as part of the CFS/E approach provide a safe, caring space where children can engage in structured recreational and educational activities and have access to basic primary health and nutrition services. The centres have programmes geared to preschool children, primary-school-age children, youth and parents. Minimum standards have been established to ensure that sufficient space and equipment are provided.

In the face of a global environment altered by climate change, desertification and the degradation of natural resources, as well as conflict situations and their devastation, rapid restoration of learning in emergency situations and their aftermath is crucial. Education interventions aim to establish safe environments for learning, recreation and psychosocial support; play a dual role in rehabilitation, or restoring a sense of normalcy and healing in children's lives, and prevention; and contribute to values of peace, tolerance and respect for human rights. Safe learning spaces established in emergency situations also offer a gathering place for children and their families where other programmatic services can be implemented. Such learning spaces need to become protected environments where pupils and teachers have the opportunity to build resilience, heal and engage in self-expression. Play, sports, storytelling and other recreational activities are critical elements.

Child-friendly spaces/environments have been established in a number of countries affected by armed conflict or natural disasters. First launched in Kosovo in 2000, the child-friendly spaces initiative provided basic services to large numbers of Kosovan refugee children and women. Preventive maternal-child health and psychosocial services, pre- and primary school education, and recreation were provided within one identifiable site, which also served as a space for the protection of children and their caregivers. Since then, the concept has been adapted to respond to emergency conditions in Angola, Colombia, El Salvador, Liberia, Timor-Leste, Turkey and the North Caucasus region.

■ **Albania:** The CFS/E initiative was designed as an innovative community-oriented, integrated services strategy in response to the influx of Kosovan refugees. It incorporated educational, recreational, health and psychosocial facilities – normally in tents – run by non-governmental organization partners and child professionals from within the refugee community. Lessons learned have served as the basis for the development of subsequent approaches in other contexts

■ **North Caucasus:** An assessment of the education system in the city of Grozny revealed that up to one third of school buildings were destroyed in the Chechen conflicts. Children attended classes in alternative premises, normally without the most basic equipment, and in the absence of electricity and functioning stoves the situation for preschool age children was even worse. The child-friendly school/environment approach integrated active learning and recreation with elements related to child protection, child rights, mine awareness, psychosocial and

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healing activities, and HIV and AIDS, addressing both camp-based schools and mainstream schools that had large displaced populations. The approach helped re-centre the education strategy around child protection activities that moved families and communities from emergencies into reconstruction. Special efforts also focused on preschool populations in well-organized centres with indoor and outdoor playing spaces and equipment.

■ **Gujarat:** In the aftermath of the massive earthquake that struck in 2001, a major effort was made to get children back into school as quickly as possible so as to reinstitute learning and re-establish some normalcy in their lives. Multiple stakeholders were enlisted in this effort, including non-governmental organizations that mobilized communities to create tent schools. The child-friendly spaces strategy helped provide a haven for children and ensured that they were able to resume normal activities. Nearly 2,300 schools were established in temporary shelters, facilitating access for nearly 400,000 children across 17 worst-affected blocks and preventing the loss of an academic year. Moreover, psychosocial interventions in primary schools proved so successful that the Government decided to include them as part of pre-service teacher training. School reconstruction emphasized safety standards and equity, with quality improvement a key aim.

2.5.4 Child-friendly learning spaces outside school

The promotion of other child-friendly learning spaces, environments and opportunities goes beyond a response during emergency and crisis situations. These efforts should be an overall strategy to expand all children's and adolescents' right to learning and participation outside the school environment, taking advantage of all possible opportunities available to children and youth. These spaces or environments should be seen as a 'critical reinforcement' to the formal learning process while expanding opportunities to strengthen additional life skills building and participatory initiatives.

Other opportunities include sports and recreational activities, journalism (print and radio), school tutoring, debate clubs, health education, job-skills training and community activities. These are often undertaken after school, during vacation periods or as part of weekend initiatives and can expand the notion of child-friendly learning spaces.

2.5.5 Linkages between child-friendly schools and early child development

Building on the life cycle perspective and recognizing the importance of the early years, child-friendly approaches should extend to the preschool years as a way to enhance the scope, equity and quality of early interventions. This in turn contributes to improved developmental readiness among children, timely entry into school and better learning outcomes. Moreover, child-friendly approaches in both early child development and lower primary grades can ease the transition from home to school and help build linkages between families, community-based service providers, and teachers and other school officials.

TABLE 2.1

EARLY CHILDHOOD YEARS	CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS AND LEARNING SPACES			
	Home setting	**Community setting**	**School setting**	**System/policy**
0–3	Caring (health, nutrition, hygiene, water, sanitation), stimulating, interactive, gender-sensitive; availability of appropriate play and reading materials. Smoke-free indoor environment.	Health, hygiene, nutrition, water, sanitation, social welfare services. Access to energy for cooking, community gardens for food. Parenting programmes.	Child-to-child programmes teaching schoolchildren how to care for and play with their young siblings.	Basic services system and policies that support families and communities.
3–5	Caring (health, nutrition, hygiene, water, sanitation), stimulating, interactive, gender-sensitive; availability of appropriate play and reading materials. Smoke-free indoor environment.	Community-based quality childcare centres. Early learning in safe, protective, stimulating settings. Access to energy for cooking, community gardens for food.	Supports early learning programmes in the community by providing professional guidance, training and criteria. Safe, healthy environment with access to water, sanitation, food, energy.	Basic services for promoting and maintaining community-based early child development centres.
5–6	Caring (health, nutrition, hygiene, water, sanitation), stimulating, interactive, gender-sensitive, promoting child's developmental preparedness for school; availability of play and reading materials. Smoke-free indoor environment.	Safe, protective centre-based group learning opportunities. Prepares children for schooling. Ensures that children are free from disease, undernutrition, abuse and exploitation.	Supports or provides group learning spaces. Collaborates with community and parents to create quality early learning centres. Safe, healthy environment with access to water, sanitation, food, energy.	Establishes and maintains group learning opportunities for children to start school physically, emotionally, cognitively ready.
6–8	Caring (health, nutrition, hygiene, water, sanitation), stimulating, interactive, gender-sensitive. Encourages learning; collaborates with teachers; participates in school events; availability of play and reading materials. Free of labour that prevents child from attending school. Smoke-free indoor environment.	Proximity provides safe route to school. Protective; ensures that children are physically, emotionally, cognitively ready for school and that all attend. After-school programmes for children at risk of dropping out, faltering, repeating. Engages children in environmental activities.	Ready to receive the child and attend to individual needs. Ensures that child is physically, emotionally, cognitively ready for school. Partners with parents to prepare children for smooth transition to school. Relevant curriculum, teaching and learning processes.	–

■ **Bangladesh:** The people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts are among the most disadvantaged in the country with regard to access to health and education facilities. Hence, an integrated child development project was developed to provide them with learning opportunities. Multigrade centres, called Para Centres (community centres), were established to serve children from 3 to 5 years of age. Selected community women were trained in child-centred teaching and learning processes to work in the centres, and an existing learning package was modified for children from 4 to 6 years of age (although even younger children often go to the centres). Para Centres are also used as a one-stop delivery point for other services to children. They disseminate messages on sanitation, hygiene and early child development directly to families and assist them in the installation of appropriate water sources and the building of sanitary latrines. In addition, Para Centres are used as outreach sites for immunization and distribution of vitamin A for children, health services for pregnant women and newborns, and birth registration. Caregiver education provides information on child protection and includes messages about the creation of safe and secure environments for children and equal care for girls and boys.

Early child development activities can also be built into child-friendly spaces during emergencies in an effort to support young children's emotional well-being and learning potential during natural disasters, humanitarian crises and transition. Examples include Afghanistan, where toys were distributed to young children for therapeutic play, and Liberia, where child-friendly spaces serve as the entry point for implementation of early childcare and development activities.

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CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 3
Location, design and construction

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LOCATION, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Construction projects provide ample ways to play a strong role in the overall plan: ensuring community participation in the process; ensuring adherence to child-friendly principles in building design and construction; and ensuring that the end results contribute to realizing goals for children and women. [Education agencies] that decide to engage in construction, therefore, must go beyond the mere 'bricks and mortar' aspects, and also take into account 'software' aspects in the planning. These include the maintenance and use of facilities, the quality of services, how the community is mobilized, the extent and nature of community participation. All of these should be determinants of success for [agency-assisted] construction projects. In short, whether or not to engage in construction is a programmatic decision.

Extract adapted from Construction Guidance Note (Draft), UNICEF, Programme Division, October 2006

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Child-friendly schools are not architectural phantoms from a strange place. They are schools with attributes typically associated with good schools in many countries. However, they have additional elements that complement and reinforce the principles and practices of the child-friendly approach to education.

This chapter examines the planning and design of new spaces and environments for child-friendly schools and sets out quality planning standards for improving existing schools and temporary structures used as schools. It focuses on location, design, construction, operation and maintenance of new child-friendly schools and the important factors for renovating and adjusting existing schools to make them child-friendly. The approach centres on the child, the main user of these learning spaces and environments, with the understanding that family and community participation is fundamental for best results. In this regard, the main objectives in child-friendly school planning are:

• Attract students (increase access);

• Improve attendance rates;

• Improve retention and completion rates;

• Improve learning achievement;

- Provide safe, inclusive, welcoming environments for all children;

- Provide enabling learning environments, including accommodating children with physical and mental/learning disabilities;

- Build a sense of community within the school (institutional ethos);

- Involve parents and the community (support and participation);

- Cultivate harmony between the school and its community;

- Harmonize buildings, school grounds and environment as children interact with them.

3.1.1 General approach and key considerations

A structure for learning (school) and its immediate environment (school grounds) must offer basic minimum standards to encourage and facilitate the main objectives of a child-friendly school. These have much in common with any good school; therefore the child-friendly school needs to be conceived as an improvement on the basics of existing good schools. A child-friendly school also must respond to the environmental and cultural context of its location. A universal, standardized approach does not respond to the unique characteristics of a place and culture and could result in detachment and alienation of the community.

School marks an important early milestone in the child's lifelong journey of intellectual and psychosocial development. Therefore, an understanding of the child's own culture and environment should have

prominence in design considerations for a child-friendly school. This will help reinforce the child's self-identity and promote a sense of belonging to a place and group.

When their architecture is a reflection of the community, culture, natural environment and the family, schools are more than just shells or physical structures. When a school is envisioned and created with the child at its centre and supported by the family and the community, the physical structures become interactive places to learn and teach – places where teachers facilitate and manage the learning process and students learn and explore new possibilities that match their abilities and potential. The school becomes an integrated, holistic system that retro feeds itself from the surrounding elements, giving it an identity. It is this dimension that promotes community ownership of schools and gives schools a sense of belonging to the communities they serve. This dimension is one of the most essential considerations for the design of child-friendly schools.

Schools must be anchored in the reality of their location in terms of culture, environment and links to families and the community. But if that were all, schools would be parochial places antithetical to learning that is grounded in the total heritage of human knowledge. Schools are not simply a means of learning about local reality; they are also the gateways to the legacy of human endeavours and possibilities.

School architecture should promote harmony with local reality while also incorporating the best external influences. A remote, rural school,

for instance, should conform to its environment but also take advantage of such innovations as modern hygiene practices, popular games and sports, and technology. Similarly, a school can reflect the local authoritative hierarchy and a culture of respect for elders, while also promoting such values as children's participation in their learning process and giving them a voice in the school as a whole. The architecture of the child-friendly school can promote both harmony with the local environment and openness to the benefits of external influences. This is an important challenge in the architecture and design of any good school, particularly so for child-friendly schools.

3.1.2 Basic elements for a good school

The basic planning and design requirements that make for a good school are the foundation on which further elements can be added to turn them into child-friendly schools. The challenge in many countries goes beyond simply designing and building new schools that are child friendly to renovating and converting existing schools into child-friendly schools. The extent of this latter challenge depends on what already exists and whether they are actually 'good' schools. Table 3.1 summarizes basic planning and design standards related to a good school.

3.1.3 Additional elements for a child-friendly school

Theoretical considerations and practical experience have generated

additional elements that make the difference between a 'good' school and a 'child-friendly' school. Many major catastrophes have provided opportunities to create new school systems based on CFS principles from the ashes of old school systems.

In Bam (Iran), for example, the community, families and students worked together on a school design project to 'build back better' after the 2001 earthquake. In examples from African countries, new approaches were implemented not only to design schools but also to achieve active community participation in the creation, design and construction of an environmentally sound child-friendly school.

The possibilities for design of child-friendly schools vary among countries and areas. In some cases, there will be extensive parent and community involvement in all aspects of location, design, construction and maintenance; the focus could be on using local building materials and the skills of community artisans. In other cases, the issue might be conforming to sophisticated building codes and materials standards as well as providing for high-level technical supervision of building contractors. In all cases, the issue is to apply CFS principles in order to create a child-friendly school. (See Table 3.2.)

There are three elements in child development that are essential for child-friendly school design – safety, health and nutrition. These three must be adequately addressed if the school is to become an inclusive, holistic learning landscape that provides a safe, enabling learning environment where children can thrive.

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TABLE 3.1: BASIC PLANNING AND DESIGN STANDARDS FOR EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Structure	The building is to be structurally stable, weatherproof according to local environmental conditions, climatically comfortable, easily exited in case of emergency and well integrated with the environmental and cultural context.
Administrative offices	Separate space for faculty/administrative personnel gives privacy to students and teachers and maximizes the use of classroom space, enabling staff to work separately from students. Proximity between classrooms and administrative offices is recommended to monitor students' activities and create 'safety through transparency'.
Safe water	Fresh potable water should be available to students within the school. Proper plumbing infrastructure allows for the distribution of safe water. If such a setup is not possible, a borehole/well should be included in the school compound. This can be augmented with a rainwater catchment system in the roof as appropriate.
Hygiene facilities	A separate space should be provided with water and soap or other cleaning agent for children to wash their hands.
Toilets/latrines	Separate toilets or latrines should be available for girls and boys. Privacy, cleanliness and safety are major considerations when planning location and design of facilities.
Light, air, sun, dust, glare, reflection, humidity, noise and odour	Classrooms need good fresh-air circulation to avoid heat and excessive humidity. To ensure adequate daylight, a minimum of 20 per cent of the classroom floor area should be window area. Electricity or another means of power is needed to provide light and to operate equipment. Classrooms must be sufficiently shaded from direct sunlight, glare (direct light) and reflection (indirect light). Schools should not be located close to sources of excessive noise (traffic, railways, industries, informal sector activities) or excessive pollution or odours (waste belts, abattoirs). When this is not possible, design measures should be used to minimize the impact of these problems.
Colour	Materials and finishes should be the light, natural colours of the materials themselves, selected in harmony with warm natural hues as accents (reds, oranges, maroons, ochres and linen/khaki/off-whites) dictated by local, cultural preferences. For example, timber may be finished using clear varnish to preserve the natural beauty and warmth of the material. Or brighter accents can be used for play corners, decks, corridors and furniture. Learning spaces should be light and relaxed in colour, not gloomy, dull or dark.
Power (electric or alternative)	The school should have a power source to provide light, connectivity for communication equipment (computers, radios, television) and other appliances (refrigerators, stoves). Alternative sources of energy (solar, wind and biogas) can be integrated into the design of schools where appropriate.
Safety provisions	Fire prevention and emergency evacuation plans must be part of the design process and built into the school programme. Combustible materials should not be used for structural purposes unless treated to resist fire. Construction materials should be free of components or elements that can be hazardous to children. When construction is finished, school sites should be free of all fluid, solid and gaseous wastes. Schools should not be located close to industrial or other hazards.
Health provisions	At a minimum, schools should have a first-aid kit or medicine cabinet for basic emergencies or accidents. Proximity to a clinic enables health personnel to visit the school periodically and permits children to be taken to the clinic for treatment of health problems. This proximity is accomplished in many developing countries through clustering the main social service facilities in the same location.
Library	A designated space where books and learning resources are available in a proper reading environment is central to learning and teaching activities. The library or resource room needs to be strategically located within the school for easy access, but away from noisy areas for a greater degree of quiet.
Landscaping	School grounds form an integrated, holistic unity with school buildings and their users, but in conventional school planning they are often neglected. Trees are vital for filtering sun, dust and noise and for beautifying the school. Indigenous trees, shrubs and flowers should be planted in the school compound along with edible plants meant to teach children food production and conservation. Trees also have a softening and calming effect on the learning environment and its users. Planning the school landscaping is a good way to involve children in the realization of a child-friendly school.

TABLE 3.2: ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS FOR A CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOL

Flexible spaces	Flexible spaces increase child participation in class and allow teachers to provide a more dynamic environment for learning and teaching. Such spaces provide opportunities for group activities, areas for manual projects and easy access to open spaces. Individual classrooms or other facilities that create outdoor space between structures give students a chance to be in open areas when in transit between classes. Classrooms should be accessible for all children; ramps and wide doorways should be provided for less mobile children.
School library and resource room	In child-friendly schools, the library and resource room is likely to have some connection to the local community. Where it is feasible and in line with school practice, these facilities should be located and designed so they are accessible to the community. In other cases, skilled and knowledgeable persons in the community may be considered resources for learning about local culture, history and handicrafts.
Bathrooms	Teachers need to have separate facilities for men and women. For pupils, designated separate bathrooms for boys and girls within or close to the classrooms are the most practical and safest arrangement. These facilities can also be designed and located so that they are shared among clusters of classrooms to protect younger children.
Relaxation rooms close to learning areas	At the nursery and lower-elementary level, rooms where children can relax are appropriate in the design of child-friendly schools. In general, homelike elements next to learning spaces provide a friendly, inviting atmosphere for this age group.
Individual spaces	Along with flexible learning spaces for large and small groups (project-based learning/teamwork), individual learning spaces should also be provided, since individual children have their own learning styles and some will need space to be on their own at times to study or reflect.
Open spaces	Easy access to open spaces from classrooms allows children to be in close contact with their environment and to engage in physical activities. Open spaces can be designed as play yards for sports, school gardens and orchards, decks or verandas for outdoor learning activities, open performance spaces, wide corridors and courtyards, trellises, canopies, shaded pavilions, niches, alcoves, play lofts and enclosed backyards. In typical child-friendly schools, the community would be allowed to use some of these spaces after school hours for town meetings, local gatherings and other events.
Kitchen	Space for school meal preparation should be designed and provided with equipment and furniture that ensure food is kept fresh and away from flies and other pests that undermine food quality.
Clinic	Where there is a campus or cluster of social services, having the school near a clinic provides students with general health services and allows for the care of children in need of permanent monitoring of health conditions. Such a health facility would normally serve the entire community, either after school or by providing separate access for school and community patients. This basic link provides a connection between school, community and the family, revolving around the child's well-being.
Protective	The protective element of child-friendly school design has two main aspects: • To counteract bullying and abuse, teachers and parents must be trained in non-violent, child-based discipline strategies and interventions. This means no beatings, canings or other humiliating forms of punishment. Designing classrooms and other spaces so that activities are readily visible from the outside can deter child abuse. • Depending on location and context, the enclosure and boundaries of schools can vary in form and function. The goal is to find a balance where a fence can provide protection to the child from outside elements (such as traffic, animals), can define boundaries to keep children within the school and can also serve to section off an area for gardening and orchards.

Learning is at the heart of schooling, and anything that facilitates learning should be at the core of school design. This inherent principle gives rise to key elements in the design of schools. For instance, it is obvious that healthy children learn better than sick ones, and that children are particularly vulnerable to illnesses in hostile environments. School design should include health protection, which allows children to be at their best. Designated hand-washing areas and first-aid kits, for instance, are important aspects of child-friendly schools.

School design must be in tune with children's normal developmental stages. Children learn differently at different stages of development. For instance, younger children do not have the same skills, knowledge and ability to learn complex concepts as older children. Developmental differences are important not only in the design of child-friendly schools, but also in the selection of teaching/learning materials, the creation of learning/ teaching spaces and the selection of school furniture.

There are many other factors that influence a school's physical design, such as local environmental and climatic conditions, building materials, level and availability of local human capacity, resources and priorities. In the same way that the CFS model itself is not a blueprint, there is no blueprint for the design of child-friendly schools, but there are guidelines that illustrate how child-friendly principles help generate standards for high quality in a variety of circumstances.

Experience with child-friendly schools suggests that school sizes should ideally be kept to a maximum of 60 to 75 children in preschool, 200 to 400 in elementary school and 600 to 800 in secondary school. Research shows that, compared to large schools (more than 2,000), small schools (100 to 150 children) offer children greater opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities and sports and

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to exercise leadership roles, critical elements of a child-friendly school.

Improved school facilities and up-to-date technology are widely recognized to enhance learning, boost students' and teachers' morale, increase motivation, modernize educational methods (interactive self-learning) and enable teachers to focus on facilitating learning rather than on confronting problems caused by dated systems. However, these facilities and modern technology can only bring about improvements if there is also quality teaching, effective management and an encouraging environment for children to engage with such technology. In this regard, experience with child-friendly schools has highlighted the importance of buildings that encourage flexible, participatory approaches and enable innovative learning and teaching methodologies through multiple opportunities for learning, both indoors and outdoors.

3.2.1 Classrooms

- **Size and space:** Classrooms can vary in size and serve different functions, with children moving from one to another for different purposes. Instead of being single-purpose spaces, they can allow for a number of different activities, such as reading, research, group work and art. Direct access to the outdoors from the classroom enables children to make better use of the outdoors as a learning resource, but there should be one or more intermediate spaces (e.g., corridors) that link the outdoors with the indoor learning environment. In that way, there will be a range of learning spaces gradually changing in character – and multiple learning opportunities.

- **Safety**: Transparency in school design, so people can look inside the classroom and other school units, can protect children from abuse by teachers or older students, particularly during after-school hours. (See Chapter 5.)

- **Mobile furniture:** In child-friendly schools, mobile furniture replaces benches or desks that may have been bolted to the floor. The designer needs to consider the children's age group, so chairs and desks fit the students' sizes comfortably. When seats are movable, children can work alone or in groups. Chairs or stools are easier to move around than benches.

- **Children's home base:** Storage facilities in or near the classroom for children's class projects, artwork, bags and coats are necessary. Students need to have private, lockable storage areas to keep their belongings – even if just a tiny space.

- **National and international standards:** Classrooms need blackboards and, in the lowest grades, child-height rails for hanging students' work and posters. The range and expense of these vary widely. It is best to utilize local material and community maintenance. National and international standards exist and should be followed. A blackboard and teacher's desk in front of the classroom encourages a focus on the teacher as the resource for learning. If the teacher can move about, giving assistance to groups or individual students, children will be more actively involved.

Before design begins, it is important to know a country's existing building regulations. In some countries, the government may not have highly

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defined regulations, or the regulations in use may not reflect current quality standards to protect against potential disasters, such as floods, hurricanes and earthquakes, or against hazardous conditions or toxic building materials and finishes. In that case, the planner should recommend the adoption of international standards for given hazardous profiles. Often a country adopts well-accepted building codes that may neither conform to the international codes nor be adequately enforced. The project must adopt on-the-ground standards and practices and ensure that the codes are enforced.

A child-friendly school should be innovative enough to offer ministries and communities a new opportunity to improve education quality. But innovations in space, form and shape, construction methods and building materials are sometimes resisted by the people completing the work. The resistance may be from contractors and materials suppliers who are unfamiliar with a technique or have not previously worked with the material, or it may originate in the Ministry of Education, the school's hierarchy or the construction inspection agencies.

This resistance can be a particularly serious issue if the ministry's pre-existing schools have recently failed during a natural disaster. These catastrophes can reveal that the school board and local contractors did not comply with proper quality precautions, constituting a possible case of fraud. In such a supercharged atmosphere, the presentation of innovative designs to an embattled ministry and construction industry may be undermined by negative publicity.

These situations call for careful, patient presentations as well as relationships

built on trust. Innovations need to have tangible value. A full-scale model for testing or certification of quality by a well-respected institution may be needed to gain local approval, which is a crucial first step. Without this approval, construction will likely be delayed because of the community's misgivings about quality and risks. These delays can be costly, can damage the contractor's relationships and create negative impressions with funding partners. For this reason, the final architectural design, technical working drawings and construction details, which include all innovative design decisions, must be reviewed and officially approved before contracts are approved and construction begins.

3.2.2 Facilities

- **Toilets, water for hand washing and drinking:** Children and teachers need gender-separated toilets and water for hand washing and consumption. School toilets that provide privacy and facilitate menstrual hygiene (personal hygiene rooms) must be at a safe location and maintained in a non-discriminatory way. For adolescent girls and female teachers, washing places must be provided with enough water and privacy to wash and dry cloths and rags used during menstruation. Mechanisms to provide or replace cloths, pads or sanitary products for menstruation at school are also helpful.

- **Water recycling:** Water used for hand washing should be recycled and used to water the orchards and vegetable gardens. Human and animal waste could be utilized in the production of compost. The type of solutions should correspond to local conditions and be accepted by the communities.

- **Hygienic area for food vendors and school kitchen:** Food and nutrition are integral elements in educational programmes and in many ways as important as the school pedagogy. A separate area for a kitchen and the storage of food should be planned from the beginning. Bringing food and drink from outside the premises should be discouraged, because food brought from home or sold at kiosks/shops may not have been prepared hygienically or preserved according to acceptable health standards.

- **Storage of medicine:** A designated space should be set aside to properly store medicine. A refrigerated space may be required depending on the types of medications.

- **Health clinic:** A doctor's office integrated with the school layout can function as a school clinic and community health centre. Like nutritional status, children's health is crucial to the learning process.

- **IT centre and library:** An information technology centre should be equipped with computers, Internet connection and anything else that would allow students and the community to benefit from access to the World Wide Web.

- **Laboratory:** A separate classroom or an area within the classroom can serve as a basic laboratory for the study of natural sciences. Core areas for a small science cluster (physics/biology/chemistry) for both lower and upper primary and secondary schools should include such elements as teacher space, display space, charts, an emergency shower, outside biology court (potted plants, flowers, animals), storage space for equipment, well-ventilated storage space for toxic and acidic waste, a preparation room for lab experiments, and clean-up

space with sink and water taps. The lab needs adequate natural cross ventilation and solar shading.

3.2.3 Outdoor spaces

- **Recreational space:** Ideally, every schoolyard should contain enough space for locally popular sports, games and extra-curricular activities (drama, singing, dancing) and for school eco-gardens, orchards and farms/woodlots. Children should be involved in laying out the games area since they understand the requirements. When space constraints make organized sports impossible, it is important to try to find alternative spaces within the community. Often the space available at the school site is limited, and administrators may be driven to maximize the classroom space at the expense of adequate open spaces for children to play. The designer and project team need to be sensitive to these competing priorities, yet emphasize the importance of recreation in the overall performance of the school. Sometimes the child-friendly school replaces damaged or destroyed classrooms. In these instances, the designer and project team need to balance the urgency of returning children to class with the need to remove waste and create spaces for recreation. A small budget for waste removal, land clearance and landscaping by the local community can reap large rewards. The school does not consist of buildings alone, but also of the school grounds, which for much of the year are just as important to learning as the buildings themselves.

- **School grounds and food production:** Children can be encouraged to help raise vegetables, fruits, domestic animals and fish, and the school

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grounds can be used to help them learn effective methods of food production and conservation (making jams, chutneys, etc.). When choosing the foods to produce, it is important to create a culturally relevant experience. The production should be done in close consultation with the community. This will help avoid the potential to exploit children for school income-generating activities. Apart from the potential for food production, indigenous shrubs, plants and trees on the school grounds create learning opportunities and beautify the environment.

- **Fencing:** Planning should take into consideration the need for and type of fencing around a school. Often in rural settings, the school will need to be physically separated from the rest of the community in order to create a child-friendly space and maintain that space differently from the rest of the environment. The fence and gates are also important to protect the property during non-school hours. In the case of school gardens, the fence protects the garden from pilferage and animal pests.

- **Multifunction open-air stage:** When possible, an outdoor stage can serve as a classroom and performance space for certain classes or school activities. Such a space can also function as a meeting place for community activities after school hours since schools are sometimes the only places for communities to gather. Events may include graduation, opening of the school year and important holidays that parents, teachers and students celebrate at school.

Most child-friendly schools/spaces are in tropical (warm/humid) or arid (dry/hot) environments. Here, the use of outdoor spaces for teaching is common and should be included in the design. Often the school year will include several months during which study within walled classrooms is impractical because of high humidity or stifling heat. The same school year, however, will have months when using enclosed classrooms is necessary. In these cases, the design should include verandas or covered shade enclosures that enable the teacher and students to move easily from enclosed rooms to open spaces.

3.3.1 School size and location

The size of schools, where they are placed and the way they are arranged influence learning and how children relate to one another, adults and the community. Studies show that children prefer variety, flexibility and ease of maintenance in schools and learning spaces. In addition, children often state a preference for green spaces that include flowers, shrubs and trees – the latter as filters of sun, dust and noise and for shaded outdoor lunches, outdoor learning and beauty. Traditional school planning rarely considers these issues in the planning and design phases.

Schools and school grounds should be an integral part of the learning process. Buildings are not merely

shelters; they also serve as tools for learning and teaching. The size of each school and the layout and organization of the learning spaces and environments should be based on physical and curricular needs. Above all, spaces should be well defined, well proportioned, fit for multiple learning activities and integrated with outdoor spaces and environments.

DIAGRAM 1: SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT
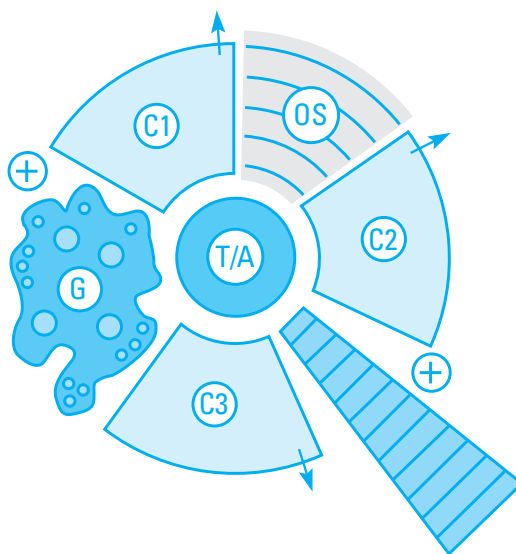
C	Classroom
T/A	Teachers/administration
+	Intermediate spaces
G	Garden
OS	Open stage

Decisions about school locations must involve community members, including students, teachers and community leaders, along with government representatives from water and sanitation, health, parks and recreation, and social welfare. Locations should protect children from safety, health and environmental hazards, such as flooding, excessive

noise, odour, dust, waste belts, fuel depots, small- and large-scale industries, traffic, crime and vandalism. A central location also promotes a sense of ownership among children and community members.

The school should ideally be within walking distance for all children. When children need to use transportation to get to school, the cost increases and poor children are likely to be excluded. Distance is also a major factor in girls' attendance. In an effort to enrol more children, the government of Uttar Pradesh, India, adopted a walking distance of 1.5 kilometres as the norm for schools in the plains and 1 kilometre in mountainous areas. A study in Egypt (Lone, 1996) showed 30 per cent enrolment for girls when schools were 3 or more kilometres from the children's homes and more than 70 per cent when they were within 1 kilometre of home.

The location of child-friendly schools is important for the safe and proper functioning of facilities. The school should be located where people live, either in the village or settlement it serves or close to it. This will make interaction between school personnel, children and parents easier and

provide a greater chance to foster teamwork. Child-friendly schools/ spaces must signal that teaching and learning are valued by the community.

3.3.2 Mobility

Schools do not have to be permanent structures. They can follow children in mobile communities. New schools can be designed to be quickly dismantled and moved with nomadic families to new locations.

The telecommunication revolution has spread globally, and countries with rich access to telecommunications have seen a rapid growth in virtual learning communities. Distance learning and cyber-schools and spaces are providing teachers and children in remote areas with access to resources previously unavailable. In Sierra Leone, for instance, teachers use the Internet to request assessment materials from international colleagues.

3.3.3 Assessment of topographical risk

Land conditions (such as bearing capacity, landslide risk, slope of terrain), water levels, the amount and intensity of annual rainfall and the potential impact of local winds on school structures should be carefully evaluated prior to selecting the location. A thorough study of microclimatic conditions (bioclimatic analysis) is fundamental to understanding the environment and the basis for good tropical design that addresses children's and teachers'

comfort. Anti-seismic design in areas prone to earthquakes and hurricane-proof design in areas with extreme winds, tsunamis and natural disasters must also be weighed.

DIAGRAM 2A: FOOTING FOR TIMBER POST
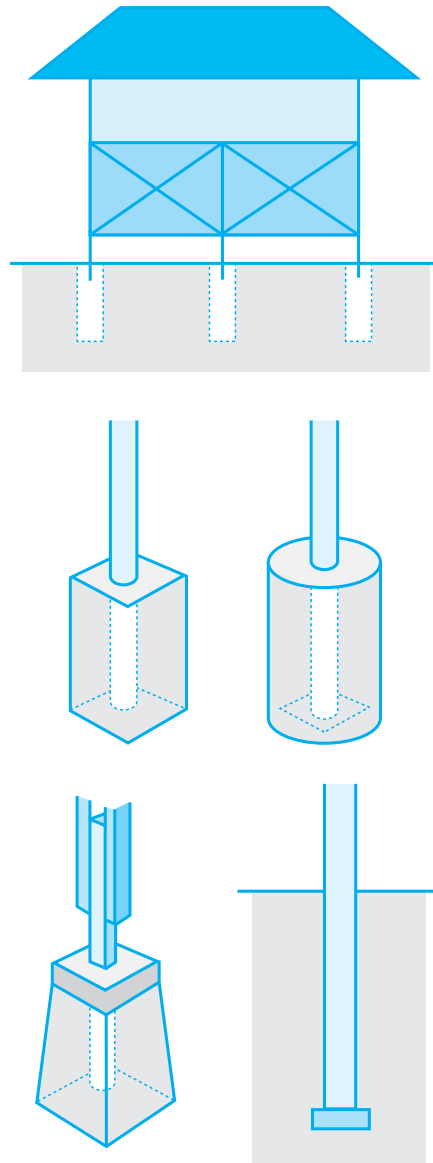
NOTE: The softer the ground, the deeper the post should be placed to withstand wind and movement.

DIAGRAM 2B: CONCRETE FOOTING DETAILS

Washer

Wood plate

Concrete block core at every anchor location

20 cm

Anchor bolts in concrete floor slab, 20 cm deep

3.4   ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS IN DESIGN

3.4.1 Clustering

Clustering small buildings around gathering areas can effectively create variety and levels of intimacy in learning spaces, where rooms can move from public to semi-private spaces or from group to individual spaces.

3.4.2 Dwellings

In certain settings, teachers' houses of adequate quality, function and size may be offered, depending on policy and resources. The importance of providing teacher housing should not be ignored, because it may enhance the sense of ownership and social control. Additionally, it can ensure that the teaching staff are available on school premises at all times, which is especially important during the rainy season when many roads are inaccessible in some areas.

3.4.3 Landscaping

Of the many costs of building a child-friendly school, landscaping is likely to be among the lowest, yet it has one of the greatest influences on school

ELEMENT	STANDARD/NORM
Compound wall	The compound wall must cover the school area and be strong enough to keep out intrusions or threats (e.g., from cattle).
Toilet	Two toilets separated by gender and two urinals per 250 children.
Safe drinking water	Three litres per child per day.
Facilities for hand washing	Specific area with water and soap. Recycling water should be part of the overall design.
Play area	A clear, level area for sports that can accommodate at least one class per session. Sports equipment is recommended.
Gardens	A designated area for plants, fruits and vegetables. The harvest will be used for the midday meal. Children should participate in the maintenance and recording of vegetable yield to promote a sense of ownership.
Garbage disposal	A designated area for garbage disposal and a compost system; dustbins and brooms are needed. Children must participate in cleaning and maintaining the classroom.

[1] SWASTHH stands for School Water and Sanitation towards Health and Hygiene.

aesthetics. While most agree that 'good' landscaping is of high value, the actual design, plant selection, garden preparation and maintenance are not simple or straightforward. In India, for instance, the rebuilding period after the Gujarat emergency in 2001 was the first time that local agricultural institutions were consulted for design

guidance, and the community was involved with plant stock selection, planting and maintenance. Generally, the plant stock should be local and known to the community. This is another opportunity to enhance a sense of community ownership. Creative landscaping has a relatively low cost but a high impact on the appearance of the final child-friendly school.

3.4.4 Hygiene, sanitation, water

It seems obvious that facilities for children require different dimensions than those for adults. Nevertheless, 'adult-size' designs are too often used for schools, and even where these are adapted, the changes are usually minimal. Important details are overlooked, and the fact that children have different physical abilities than adults tends to be ignored. In the design of child-friendly schools, child-sized adaptations of toilet seats, urinals, taps, doorknobs, locks and handrails are crucial. Equally important is adapting to physical abilities by considering the weight of doors and toilet covers, the strength needed to open taps and fetch water. In schools with a large age spread in the student body, separate facilities for younger children, older children and teachers are recommended. When the same facilities are used by different age groups, special provisions can be made to allow smaller children to make use of the facilities, such as a step in front of the toilet seat or an additional seat cover with a smaller hole.

Additionally, special adaptations for disabled schoolchildren must be incorporated into the design and the location of water and sanitation

facilities. Too often, the needs of children with disabilities are ignored or simply forgotten.

When dealing with hygiene, sanitation and water, it is also important that the facilities be accessible, which will encourage hygienic behaviour and reduce the spread of diseases at school. Too often being 'hygienic' is so complex, because of bad design, that many children fail to practise good hygiene. Therefore, water and sanitation facilities should be simple and easy to use.

Construction needs that will ensure ample, accessible water and sanitation capacity should be calculated not just on the basis of the total number of students, but also on other factors, such as the school timetable, ratio of girls to boys, projected growth of the school population and other developments. For instance, in early childhood centres and lower primary schools (up to age 8 or 9) sharing of toilets by boys and girls may be possible.

Natural lighting and ventilation of toilets are important for cleanliness and removal of bad odours. There should be enough light to inspect for cleanliness; therefore, the use of natural light is recommended, in combination with light colours for the interior. To ensure proper ventilation, at least two openings are needed. Young children appreciate small openings at eye level. An opening in the door allows a teacher to move the latch from the outside if a child accidentally gets locked in.

Finding the right location requires looking at different practical, *environmental and cultural aspects*. In some Islamic countries, for instance,

women are not to be seen when entering a toilet. At the same time, young women are afraid of being harassed or assaulted in secluded areas. This requires balancing different considerations, setting priorities and participatory decision-making. Design can become difficult when these aspects conflict and different users have different preferences. Even a well-designed facility risks not being used if its location has been poorly considered.

3.4.5 Early childcare facilities

A key component of the continuum between child-friendly schools and local communities is linking the care of younger children who are not yet in school with these schools. When early childcare is located within or near the school, older children who are attending school can leave their younger siblings at the centre. This frees older siblings to attend school and ensures that the younger children are not brought into already overcrowded first-year classrooms. In emergencies, these centres can provide parents and siblings with an opportunity to be involved in activities outside the crisis, reducing their depression and despair. Because young children provide moments of pleasure and joy that bring back a sense of normalcy, they are a source of healing for many families.

Essential considerations in creating early childcare facilities include:

Separate facilities: Early childcare centres need not be official buildings, but should be dedicated, protected spaces. They need plenty of light and air, and should include smaller-sized toilets, a cooking space and storage for supplies and materials. They need

to be free of hazardous objects and protected from the elements.

Caregivers based on ratio and age: Supervision is critical for keeping children safe and engaged in age-appropriate activities. The ratio of children to caregiver depends on their age, the facility and the country's resources. However, there should be no more than 20 children per caregiver in the 4- to 6-year-old range, 10 per caregiver for the 2- to 3-year-old range and 4 per caregiver for infants.

Space: A childcare centre needs to be sufficiently large to give each child space to move and explore. Children in these age ranges do not have to be seated in chairs, but could instead have mats to sit on, materials to learn from and room to play on their own or in small groups. An early learning environment involves a combination of teacher-directed and child-directed activities.

Research has shown that well-functioning early childhood centres are not just scaled-down elementary schools or simply open play spaces. Early childhood centres must incorporate specific design elements to achieve a safe, enjoyable developmental and learning environment. For instance, the centres should allow from 4.5 to 5.5 square metres of space per child, with a minimum of 3.8 metres per child. A larger classroom improves programmatic flexibility, provides space so children can engage in concurrent quiet and active play, and decreases aggressive behaviour.

Classrooms need to be spatially differentiated. Activity areas can be separated by physical objects like movable partitions, open shelves, cabinets and plants; or by visual signs

such as different flooring materials, wall textures or colours; or by changes in lights or ceiling or floor height. Such separate, well-defined boundaries support social interaction, encourage exploratory behaviour and prevent interruption of ongoing play. In general, the classroom should have at least four distinct activity zones:

- **Gross motor skill zone.** Toddlers and preschool-age children need space where they can dance, climb, jump and move things about. The area should be large enough to accommodate structures, such as a slide or tunnel, and open enough to allow for riding and push-and-pull toys.

- **Dramatic-play zone.** Make-believe and imagination are important for pre-kindergarteners. Providing props, such as kitchen appliances, living room furniture or a theatre area, encourages such play. While the dramatic-play zone should be adjacent to the gross motor skill zone to allow for easy movement between the two, a clear division between the spaces should be visible to promote a sense of semi-private space.

- **Arts and crafts zone.** This is the 'wet' area of the room, where children can experiment with sand, water, paint, paste and other messy materials. The arts and crafts zone should be next to a water source, such as a sink and gooseneck faucet, and have a washable floor. Good lighting is also important.

- **Quiet zone.** Young children need personal space that permits interaction with an adult caregiver and provides an area for solitary play, looking at books or simply resting. The quiet zone should have carpeting, comfortable chairs and

pillows, a low bookshelf for books and stuffed toys, and a space (out of reach of toddlers) for objects such as plants or an aquarium.

Safety: With young children, safety is a major concern. A group that includes older children (6 years old and above) needs to be carefully managed or the young children will be overshadowed and left out. Teachers and caregivers must be sure that children do not have sharp objects to play with, that there are no dangerous places nearby and that there are no contaminants in the area. Food needs to be served directly after cooking, not kept for long periods of time.

3.4.6 Emergency situations

In the past, UNICEF built schools or advocated school designs in emergency-prone areas that did not always withstand calamity: Schools often collapsed following earthquakes or floods, and those that did survive failed to provide adequate shelter. UNICEF now advocates a range of innovative designs based on 'disaster risk reduction' for child-friendly environments, while at the same time respecting existing customs and practices. In the Philippines, for instance, schools rebuilt after typhoons now have more durable design and construction elements. These schools have also been designed to provide temporary shelter for adults in an emergency, while allowing for school activities to continue at certain times of the day.

While radical innovation may be rejected by local communities or governments, lockstep adherence to existing designs that no longer work is counter to creating schools

that can endure emergencies. Since UNICEF inputs are generally a small portion of the total rehabilitation and reconstruction effort, the agency should strive to offer practical, affordable and innovative designs for educational facilities that governments and communities will want to adopt on a national scale.

Schools as emergency shelters: Sometimes child-friendly schools must go beyond education, acting as shelters or gathering places during emergencies. This is particularly common in hurricane-, earthquake- and flood-prone locations. Schools are often the strongest buildings in the community, and they can be designed to accommodate multiple functions, serving as shelters and classrooms at the same time. It is crucial to understand the importance of *establishing a minimum set of standards for schools*, especially when their main educational function can be affected by other events and situations.

The dual-function model can reduce the amount of time children are forced to be out of school. Many children spend months, even years, out of school when their classrooms are being used as shelters. Regardless of whether an emergency situation exists, all designs should consider the specific emergency profile of a given locale. Some locations are flood prone, others susceptible to drought, earthquakes or hurricanes; still others have been engaged in long-term civil or military conflict. Many locations have multiple-risk profiles, and a design that is good for some conditions may be disastrous if used in the presence of others – for example, using

lightweight prefab materials made for earthquake conditions in a high-wind zone. During the process of defining the hazard profile, it is important to define these conditions in such a way that they can be fully and objectively evaluated by architects, suppliers and contractors. If the hazard profile is particularly high risk, then the designs will need to be independently evaluated for compliance with the profile. In the case of post-emergency reconstruction, construction designs should be professionally reviewed by independent, qualified institutions to confirm their safety. These evaluations

DIAGRAM 3: TYPICAL CLASSROOM CROSS SECTION
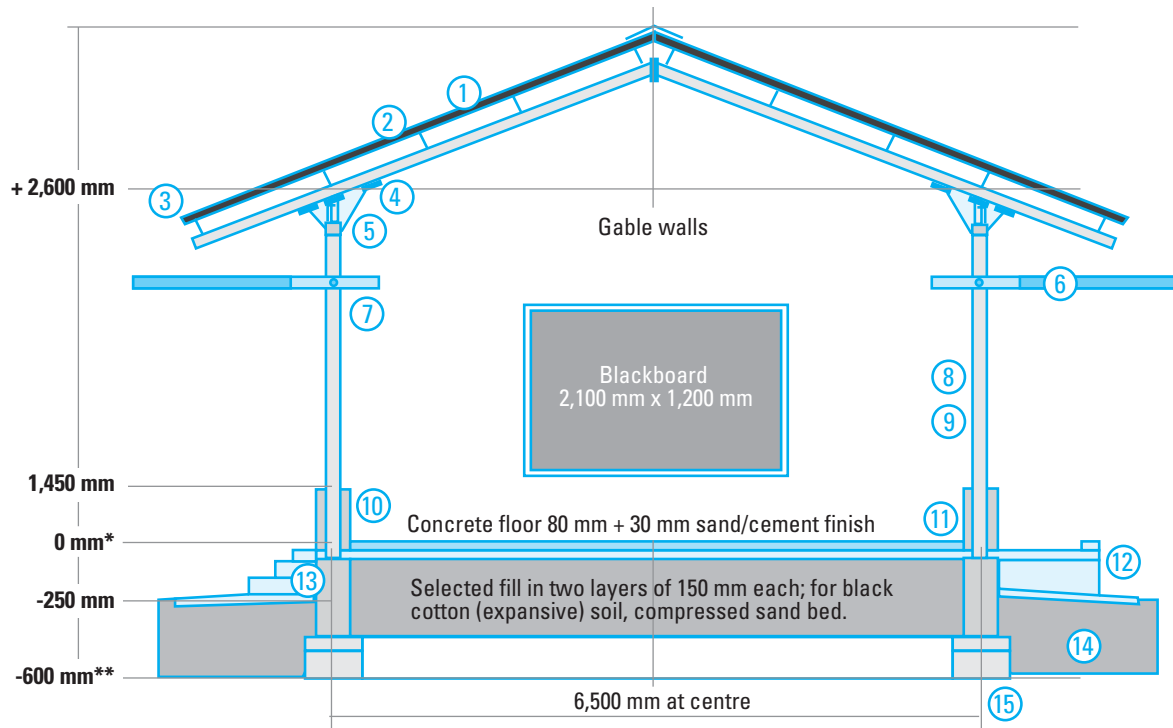
KEY:

1. Galvanized corrugated steel sheets and ridge, gauge 28.0
2. IPE 140 beam truss (slope 22 degrees) with Z-beam purlins
3. Overhang, 900 mm
4. Truss and column are bolted with M12 bolts
5. Wall plate, UPE 140
6. Steel louvre windows, 2,020x2,020 mm (including frame), pivotal at 300 mm from top
7. Light well, 600x1,900 mm, provides light when louvres are closed
8. Steel pipe, 20 mm
9. Column, steel pipe 125 mm or IPE 140 anchored to foundation
10. Stabilized block bench or fired brick with hardwood top, up to 450 mm
11. Tie beam, UPE 140
12. Ramp
13. Anti-termite barrier
14. Large stone foundation with mortar mix 1:4, or stabilized soil block up to 250 mm above field
15. Drainage, cement tile, 600x600x50 mm, with gravel, 1,200 width, 300 mm depth

* Finished floor
** Depth depends on depth of hard core

are available from numerous engineering universities. Meeting the hazard profile is an important benchmark with the government and local communities and can assure that the child-friendly school will survive the hazards it faces.

Campuses and compounds: The need for complex, integrated services for children in emergencies has given rise to new ways of thinking about security, schooling and even housing. Innovative designs, often building upon local knowledge and skills, place services for children at the centre of the community within protective circles.

In Malawi, for instance, the complex problems created by HIV and AIDS required innovative solutions. Thus, schools and recreation spaces were placed in the same compound as medical services, and housing for

teachers and orphans with HIV or AIDS was situated close to the school campus. Vegetable gardens and trees were planted nearby. In the campus model, the perimeter is open. Spaces are designed to be highly visible so that community members can take responsibility for each other's security. The campus boundaries are additionally secured by fencing and a guard.

The central focus on children's return to normal routines such as schooling also encourages adults to look beyond the tragedies of the moment to the protection of their children. There is an urgent need to integrate the government's emergency preparedness with child policies. For example, child-friendly safe learning spaces can morph into child-friendly schools and child-friendly communities. Early childcare centres and nurseries can sprout within the same school grounds as the child-

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MALAWI: PERMANENT SCHOOL IN MPHUNGA

Schools in Malawi are usually constructed from locally burned bricks, corrugated sheets and wooden beams supporting roofs of corrugated sheets. Such construction leads to environmental problems. The technology used for burning bricks is primitive, causing over-consumption of wood and increased deforestation. Roof beams, even if treated, are soon damaged by termites. Classrooms are too hot, with temperatures reaching 40 degrees Celsius. They are suitable neither as learning spaces for children nor as working places for teachers. Education quality is deteriorating.

UNICEF, in collaboration with Norwegian Authorities, chose an innovative technology based on the use of heavy-duty aluminium structure as a load-bearing construction for roofs and walls. Local grass was used for thatched roofs and walls were made of cement-reinforced mud blocks. Such a combination of traditional and modern materials resulted in well-functioning educational facilities, respecting the Malawian building tradition. Nine classrooms, nine dwellings for teachers, a health clinic, a doctors' office and voluntary testing centre, and kitchens for school feeding were built, as well as latrines and water points. Construction of one classroom unit of 50 square metres cost about US$4,700. The project resulted in a cool, well-ventilated and properly lit child-friendly school.

friendly school. Safe learning spaces can reduce the costs of providing the next generation with access to needed knowledge and skills.

The child-friendly strategy has been developing through local and international partnerships during emergencies over the past decade. Built on a human-rights approach that affirms the value of individual children's lives, the child-friendly approach expands existing support networks and resources for children – families, neighbours, governments and donors. It places a high value on the quality of the relationships within these social networks.

Emergency and education professionals have learned that the most important resource for the protection of children and of a nation's human infrastructure is the commitment that adults bring to the process. Parents in relocation camps are often the first to start their own schools and learning spaces to help restore a sense of normalcy, before government or international aid arrives. Aid agencies and governments can often work more rapidly and effectively if they build on local knowledge and relationships instead of importing more generic programmes packaged internationally.

ZAMBIA: EDUSPORT SCHOOL

The Kicking AIDS Out (KAO) centre in a rural district north of Lusaka was initiated by the EduSport Foundation, a Zambian non-governmental organization, in June 2005. The EduSport Foundation promotes education through sport, especially football, as a tool through which physical activities, information and education can contribute to HIV and AIDS prevention, particularly among children and young people in rural areas.

The first stage of the KAO centre consists of four classrooms and a teacher's house, totalling 220 square metres. The centre will provide education, dormitories for orphans without relatives, management, health services with a voluntary testing centre, water and sanitation, and food and medicine storage. The innovative approach focuses on food production and skills training meant to provide not only nutrition for students, but also a source of income to cover operational costs. Sports grounds are an important part of the project. The EduSport Foundation plans to establish 10 similar centres throughout Zambia.

The local community was involved in the project and responsible for implementing its first stage. The construction took about four weeks. Local materials, such as grass for thatching and mud blocks for walls, were used. The load-bearing structures for walls and roofs are aluminium; the floors are concrete slab. The construction cost of a classroom (50 square metres) was US$4,700. The centre, to be developed in stages and in accordance with funding, is a child-friendly school model, offering safe care to orphans. The community will be responsible for the centre's operation with support from the EduSport Foundation.

Access road

Sports ground
(volleyball, basketball)

Fruit farm

Gardening

Sports ground (games)

7 6 1 2 4 5

8

9

3 School courtyard
(games)

8

8 8 8 3 3 3 3

15

Access road

12 11 14 14 10 13 13 16

14 14 17

Technical core
(water, electrical power) 18

19

Animal husbandry

Sports ground
(football, athletics)

KEY:
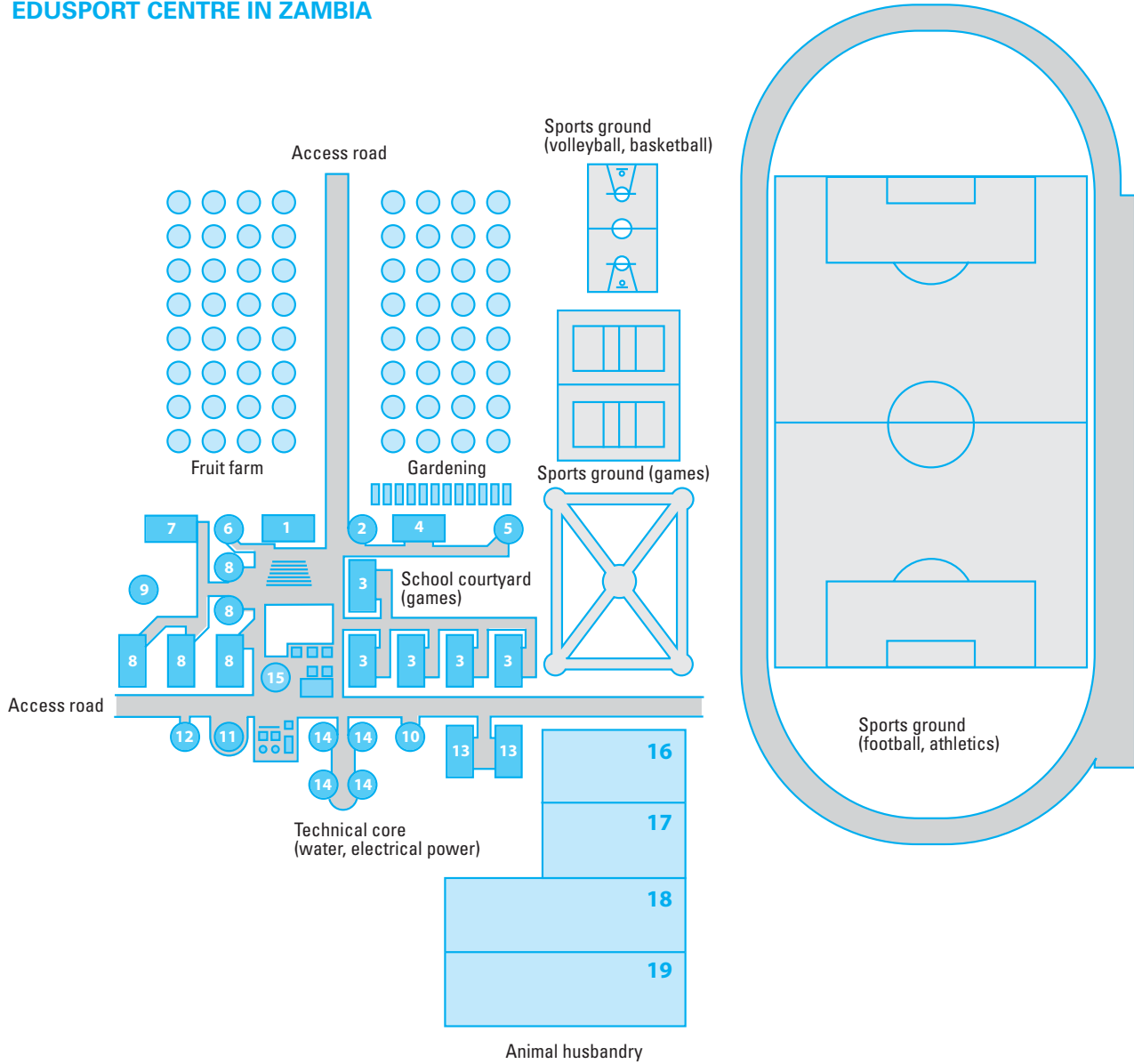
1. Management
2. Security guard technical service
3. Classrooms
4. Skills training
5. Teacher's house
6. Voluntary testing and counselling
7. Ward
8. Accommodations (students)
9. Guest house
10. Staff house

11. Sanitation (staff)
12. Medicine storage
13. Food storage
14. Sanitation (students)
15. Kitchen
16. Chicken run
17. Rabbits
18. Goats
19. Pigs

INDIA: AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE

A massive earthquake struck the Indian state of Gujarat on 26 January 2001. The earthquake registered 7.9 on the Richter scale, according to the United States Geological Survey, killing at least 17,000 people and leaving more than 700,000 homeless. Early estimates valued the total damage at approximately US$1.2 billion. More than 12,000 schools, 800 *anganwadis* (early childcare centres) and many health institutions were severely damaged.

In addition to physical and material damage, the earthquake's devastation directly affected nearly 3 million children and 2.5 million women. As many as 1,000 students were killed in the city of Bhuj alone. An estimated 200,000 children enrolled in the schools in Kutch district were affected, and nearly 800 schools were damaged. According to the Indian Office for Disasters, the situation called for community-based care for the entire region, especially for the vulnerable.

The Gujarat earthquake occurred in a region where the frequency and intensity of earthquakes were well documented (Zone V on the national and international measurement scales), as were risks for cyclonic winds up to 150 kph, drought and flash flooding. It was important to know these risks before undertaking the reconstruction process, because such risks dramatically affect design requirements and the cost and complexity of construction.

For example, many sites in the Gujarat reconstruction required high plinth construction due to flash flooding. Also, it should not be assumed that the particular emergency condition being addressed presents the most difficult design or engineering challenge: In Gujarat, the additional strength needed to comply with Zone V earthquake resistance was not as difficult or as costly as compliance with the wind-load factors required for cyclonic winds up to 150kph.

UNICEF supported the construction of the schools, using the occasion as an opportunity to demonstrate the concept of child-friendly spaces. The first buildings were designed to be cyclone and earthquake resistant, highlighting the importance of safe, secure learning environments. Equity issues were also important. Some of the new features introduced included ramps for the physically challenged, separate toilets for boys and girls, drinking-water facilities, fencing, and school furniture for students and teachers. Children were engaged in planting trees and growing school gardens wherever possible. Schools were also used to demonstrate water conservation.

All told, 169 schools, consisting of 610 classrooms, were built using child-friendly learning space designs. The new infrastructure showed a positive impact on both enrolment and attendance. The review team identified these schools as useful models to demonstrate child-friendly spaces with separate toilets for boys and girls, school gardens, play areas and potable water.

3.5.1 Gender

Just as it is in other parts of society, gender discrimination is pervasive in schools and learning spaces. In many cases, discrimination is related to cultural beliefs and traditions. Sometimes it is caused by failure to recognize problems and needs. Although it has been stated that adolescent girls drop out of school because they lack separate facilities, so far, none of these claims have been supported by studies or quantitative evidence. What has been shown is that inappropriate provisions for school hygiene, sanitation and water do affect adolescent schoolgirls' absenteeism (a first step towards dropping out of school) and their sustained interest in schooling.

3.5.2 Access for the disabled

For the approximately one in five of the world's poorest people who are disabled, access to basic services is a daily struggle. The concept of access for the disabled is often unknown in rural or poor urban school/learning space settings. Wheelchair access ramps in a child-friendly school may be the first acknowledgement of the existence of disabled children in the community and of their right to attend school. With only small adjustments (for example, a ramp) schools can be made accessible for these children. There also should be wider doors (1,000 millimetres) and adequate corridor space in which to manoeuvre a wheelchair; plinths or doorsteps obstructing entrance to classrooms and offices should be avoided.

Obstructions should also be eliminated from the school grounds. The sports and extra-curricular areas, shaded outdoor lunch and learning spaces and school gardens should be made handicapped-accessible. Circulation paths and routes must be accessible to everyone, and their surfaces should be maintained regularly, especially during the rainy season. The design needs to follow established norms for accessibility while being sensitive to overall aesthetics, all of which usually adds a small amount to the final cost. Design considerations are not enough, however: Teachers and other school personnel must be reminded of their responsibilities to disabled children.

3.5.3 Climate

Analysis of the microclimatic aspects of a site will influence the design (form, shape, mass, colours, order), the orientation of buildings and the choice of building technologies, construction details and materials for the school, and the layout and organization of the learning spaces.

A study in Bam (Iran), for instance, found that its harsh bioclimatic conditions – a dry-hot zone with regular strong, dust-laden winds and temperatures reaching up to 50 degrees Celsius – called for specific design guidelines for child-friendly environments that included orienting buildings along the east-west axis, heavy external and internal walls, use of water and plants to produce humidity, utilization of north winds for air circulation and cooling in summer, and use of verandas, porches, trellises,

and trees to produce comfortable, shaded places for children.

3.5.4 Cost of infrastructure

Putting non-governmental organizations or village education committees in charge of school construction promotes community participation and also reduces cost. Reliance on 'community contribution of labour for construction' shifts the social cost to communities and reduces the financial outlays of donor and government. But reducing costs does not necessarily translate into good results. In Sierra Leone, for instance, the costs of a child-friendly pavilion loft classroom were extensively reduced due to the large community-input component. The cost went from around US$10,000 or US$12,000 for a conventional classroom of 54 square metres to an average of US$5,000 for the child-friendly classroom of an average 100 square metres of learning space including play/learning

DIAGRAM 5:

Plan 1: Existing classroom

Stairs
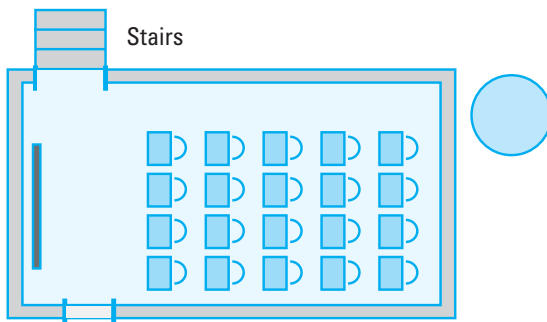
BASIC IMPROVEMENTS

- Easy exit provided by the second door
- Better cross ventilation by adding windows and wall openings
- Deck for outdoor activities
- Garden
- Separate toilets for boys and girls
- Multi-activity classroom
- Veranda for shaded area

Plan 2: Improved classroom

Veranda

Bio-fence

Ramp

Garden

Outlook deck

Toilets

decks and loft (micro-library). But the buildings were never finished – a stark reminder that shifting social cost does not necessarily reduce or eliminate the cost. It further underscores the importance of overall management. No matter how well a school is designed and built, it will not function smoothly if it is not well managed and maintained.

Planning must also adequately budget for the cost of maintenance. Once the child-friendly school is completed, its regular cleaning and maintenance can involve children. Sweeping, yard work and other chores can be part of the daily schedule and can involve even young children. When the school has active relationships with parents and other community members, many of the larger maintenance and repair

tasks, such as repainting, can be done by adults with help from the children. Allocation of funds for the ongoing upkeep of the school should be decided by the democratically elected school board.

Construction budget: School construction costs should normally be determined by the basic standards for the design, labour costs and the cost of materials for the child-friendly school (Dierkx, 2003). But these cost factors can vary greatly depending on circumstances. The abundance of and access to local materials and local building skills can encourage strong community involvement if the culture of community participation is well rooted. On the other hand, the reality of poor infrastructure (roads, communication), lack of security,

absence of local building skills and materials, and a limited history of community participation may result in a monopoly for certain construction firms, especially when there is a demand for construction work by the government and the international development community. As a result, such locally 'overheated' construction markets spawn inflated prices for school construction. If this inflation exists, it may be wise to wait until the construction market has relaxed and prices have stabilized. It may also be useful to explore partnerships with non-governmental organizations and not-for-profit organizations that provide construction services.

Maintenance budget: Governments have neglected budgeting for maintenance costs in the past, resulting in the need to replace classrooms faster than their expected design life. Relying just on the community can be problematic, since the cost of effective

LOCATION

The location of schools or any new extensions within the school compound must be a conscious design exercise that takes into account different aspects of the basic planning process. The movement of the sun, direction of the wind, soil capacity, proximity to the seashore or riverbank, existence of a water source and questions of accessibility are just some of the important factors to be considered in designing and building a school.

The photograph shows a relatively new toilet facility at Ban Thalaenok School in the south of Thailand. The facility was designed in Bangkok without a proper site survey. There was no site visit to determine existing conditions and identify the best location for the new toilets in relation to the rest of the school. As a result, the toilets were built next to a steep staircase that leads to the canteen. They are completely inaccessible because of the grade difference.

The person in the photograph is a 41-year-old teacher trying to climb to urinals meant for 5- to 11-year-old primary students. The toilets, never used, stand as a testament to a missed opportunity to improve children's lives.

© UNICEF/2007/Vasquez

maintenance is often out of reach for many communities. When deciding on construction standards, materials' durability should be the key factor. Government budgets for classroom construction should include financing for maintenance throughout the life of the school building. However, a 'culture of maintenance' is not yet fully rooted in many nations and needs to be strengthened at all school levels. For example, cleaning and maintaining the school grounds and buildings before things break down or the grounds become inaccessible or polluted (flooding, soil-erosion, solid and fluid waste) prevents damage and the extra cost of dealing with preventable problems. This type of preventive maintenance is just as important as the periodic or scheduled maintenance over the life of a building.

CONSTRUCTION

In a natural disaster, victims usually deal with both the forces of nature and the damage left in their wake. Homes, hospitals and schools can be destroyed by earthquakes, tsunamis and cyclones. Therefore, school reconstruction must be guided by prevention rather than response. Reducing risk in emergencies can save hundreds, even thousands, of children. Schools that are structurally sound can also serve as shelters for the entire community.

Cyclone Nargis, which struck Myanmar in May 2008, had devastating consequences. More than 140,000 people were killed or missing. Women, especially, were the cyclone's victims, ravaging the stability of the social network.

Many of the devastated schools showed signs of poor maintenance or of negligent supervision during their construction. Yet, in many schools, rafters, trusses and concrete foundations were found intact. These 'parts' had been built to specifications, but the interconnection of the parts was weak: Rafters were not properly connected to the brick walls with metal straps, or wood connections were done improperly. Wood posts that were not treated for humidity and water damage were rotten, further weakening the connection of the superstructure and foundation. These pictures show intact rafters blown away and badly maintained wood posts still attached to the foundation.

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DESIGN

Designing a school goes beyond planning a building with four walls, windows and a door. A school must be adapted to the specific conditions of the local community and the geographical characteristics of the site; it must be concerned with the local economy and projections of demographic growth.

Primary schools in Myanmar, which have five grades, use a multigrade system within the classroom. A school may have one big classroom for all five grades and only three teachers, all conducting classes simultaneously. When building new classrooms, the challenge in Myanmar was to provide separate spaces for the students while minimizing the walking distance for teachers between classrooms. Five separate classrooms were not feasible, and one classroom was inadequate.

The new classroom design provides two separate spaces with a 'nucleus' to accommodate two teachers. (See diagram below.) For now, one teacher can supervise two grades with separate entrances and a reading corner, allowing for reduced noise levels. A primary school could have three of these structures with three teachers. If the Government increases faculty hiring, the schools would be ready to receive two more teachers and achieve the optimum ratio of one teacher per grade.

Classroom
264 square feet

Veranda

Stairs

Books

Nucleus

Books

Stairs

Veranda

Classroom
264 square feet
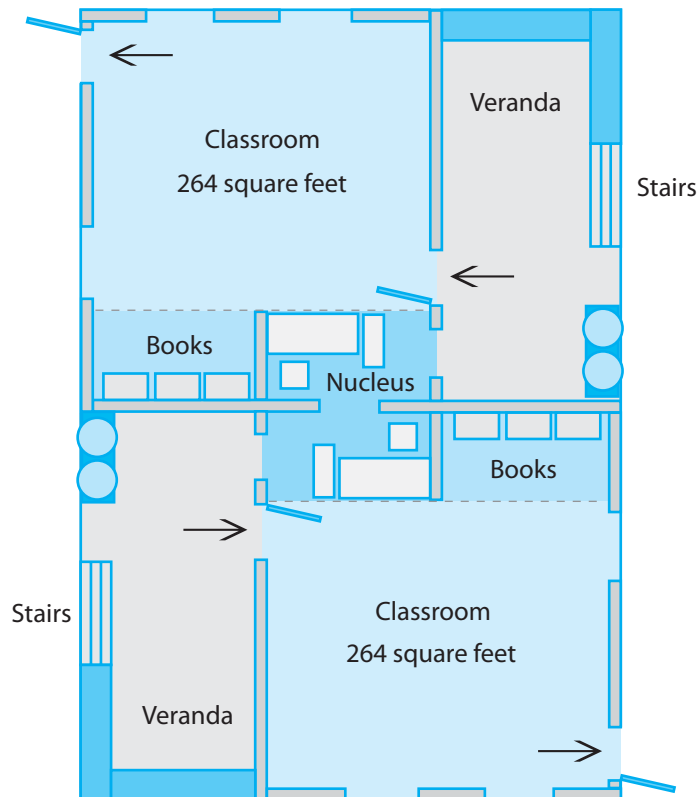
3.6.1 Users

Active involvement of users is essential in all phases of the design process. In most countries, standardized designs for schools reduce costs and control quality. Using them can be a good solution, but applying a standard design too rigidly can actually drive up costs. In general, when properly coached and guided, potential users are able to assess their existing practices and find solutions for their own needs. Their involvement during the design stage will lead to better solutions and increase acceptance of these solutions.

3.6.2 Gender needs

Besides having different physical needs than boys and men, women and girls may have different roles in society and thus different points of view and knowledge. When women and girls are not adequately involved in school planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance, their opinions and needs may not be identified and included. Girls and boys, female and male teachers, and mothers and fathers must be equally represented during decision-making activities. The school environment is a model of the community as a whole and is therefore the place where children learn about gender roles and cooperation between women and men.

3.6.3 Partners

The child-friendly school project team must meet multiple expectations, including those of the donor, partner, government counterpart, ministry of education, representatives of the construction trades and community leaders. Community expectations are likely to be the least articulated in the planning and discussions that lead to a final design. This can result in critical errors.

Consulting by convenience may overlook design needs. Child-friendly school/spaces may be built where there are no pre-existing schools or where previous schools have had restricted enrolments that have denied entry to minority subgroups. It is therefore essential for the project team to know the full complement of communities being served and, to the extent possible, address their expectations of their new school. This is a time-consuming step that is easily overlooked in the rush to show progress to donors and governments. It is a step, however, that can make the difference between community ownership with excellent outcomes and complete rejection of a costly investment.

The CFS ideal is to see that all children are equitably offered high-quality education. This cannot be accomplished simply by completing smart-looking new schools. The slow process of meeting and understanding community issues is a wise investment, one that reaps other benefits. As a school site is approaching completion, for instance, the risks of theft and vandalism dramatically increase. Providing 24-hour security to multiple remote sites is generally impossible, but if the local community has been consulted and is in agreement with the project, it may provide site protection gratis.

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SCHOOLS WITH A TWIST: TAKING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TO CHILDREN IN RURAL SIERRA LEONE

In Sierra Leone, an estimated 375,000 school-age children, mostly girls, live in poor, remote communities with no access to educational facilities. The country's brutal civil war destroyed much of the education infrastructure. Moreover, the end of the war sparked such a surge in school enrolment, especially among over age children, that there is no room for younger ones.

To address the needs of younger children who cannot walk long distances, a strategy was developed to take schools to children in their own communities over a four-year period. A partnership – composed of UNICEF; the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; the Global Movement for Children coalition in Sierra Leone (GMC-Sierra Leone); and the communities themselves – agreed to support low-cost, child-friendly school facilities that would quickly get rural children into school.

The first phase established 410 community schools designed for grades 1 to 3. These children would then be mainstreamed into larger primary schools as they grew older and could walk longer distances.

UNICEF supported the design of an elegant facility – a simple one-classroom, integrated, multipurpose pavilion that incorporates various activities from formal learning for children and adults to community theatre. It features two activity decks and a loft that serves as an office and micro library. Once all materials are

on site, it takes seven to eight weeks to construct one school at a cost of just over US$5,000. Each entity in the partnership makes a contribution: Communities provide manual labour and local materials (sand, stones and bush sticks); parents ensure that children enrol and attend school; the education ministry recruits and pays teachers; and GMC coalition members pay for skilled labour and mobilize communities. UNICEF provides the overall coordination, contributes construction materials, trains teachers and supplies educational materials.

The community school initiative is an innovative, low-cost, sustainable approach to education that makes use of a broad partnership and high-level community involvement. "This is a new thing that has come to our community," said Chief Sullay Turay, the head of Rorinka community, Bombali District. "Our little children can now attend school without waiting until they are 10 years old to be able to walk to the nearest school. Indeed, this is development."

This initiative has proved that partnerships do work and that even poor communities can be effectively engaged in developing education opportunities for their children. In post-conflict countries like Sierra Leone, taking affordable and sustainable schools to children is one step in helping the country meet its commitment to the Millennium Development Goal of having all children complete a full course of primary education by 2015.

Source: UNICEF Country Office Sierra Leone 2005 Annual Report.

3.7.1 Low cost

New materials and technologies combined with appropriate traditional technologies often are the best architectural and technical solutions for school construction given the local climate, culture and socio-economic circumstances. Technology choices made by governmental policymakers and decision makers are often based on their perception of 'what development is and what it is not'. However, they often lack knowledge of the immediate and longer-term implications of a specific 'technology package' choice. For example, a high-tech solution implies building materials and methods that are usually not found nearby and are often costly. It also implies that foreign expertise and contractors must be hired, which adds to the costs. It usually means that maintenance or 'spare parts' are not known or not easily available, and that further drives up costs. Often a blend of technologies, selected by the child-friendly school team and the ministerial school planning unit, offers the most effective solution. This blend will vary according to the country and the specific case, and will be one of the most influential factors in the final cost.

3.7.2 Multidisciplinary teams

The child-friendly schools programme must explore the formation of multidisciplinary, self-reliant teams that could be deployed on short notice and cover the whole breadth of the sector-wide education approach (SWAP). In emergency education programming, such as after a tsunami or earthquake, a three-track modality could be followed, each with a specific timeline:

1. Rapid multidisciplinary response team – short cycle, from three weeks to three months, with various experts from education, health, child protection, water and sanitation, environmental planning and community planning, as well as an economist, architect, engineer or logistics expert;

2. Midterm multidisciplinary response team – longer term, from 3 to 24 months, with experts drawn from UN agencies to enhance inter-agency cooperation;

3. Long-term implementation – after 24 months, elements of child-friendly schools that are to be sustained in post-emergency programming can be integrated into programmes.

The multidisciplinary teams ensure that planning, development and implementation of child-friendly school interventions are holistic and harmonize educational, social, cultural, economical, technological, safety, health and environmental aspects.

3.7.3   Provision of land for schools

In areas where there has never been a school, it will be difficult to obtain a centrally located plot of land that allows for the common location

of a school, early childcare centres, sport areas and a close community connection. In some cases, local governments will allocate the least desirable land for school construction. In these cases, it is imperative to obtain an environmental study of the land to determine the presence of hazardous materials.

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3.7.4 Schools in general community improvement projects

When development banks or other major financers undertake projects to improve communities, schools are often left out because they fall under the responsibility of the education ministry and other ministries are not authorized to undertake projects within the school compound. Removing these boundaries would allow schools to be part of major improvement projects that generally fall into other areas, such as water and sanitation, road improvement and electrical supply.

3.7.5 Coordination

Donor agencies and organizations should reach a common agreement on cost recovery and community participation for school construction. Questions arise, such as: Are communities required to provide unskilled labour and transportation of supplies, or will all work be subcontracted? Must the community provide the land for school construction, or must the organization buy it? Does the community arrange and pay for school toilets and water supply? These questions are relevant in all programme settings but especially in emergency situations.

CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 4
School and community

unicef

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SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

Ambohitnibe, Madagascar, 26 March 2007 – In the middle of an isolated community, an hour's walk from the nearest road, there is a primary school that is setting the standard for child-friendly education in Madagascar.

In the past five years, enrolment at the Ambohitnibe School has gone from 155 to 207, graduation rates have almost doubled and drop-out rates have been reduced sharply. The reason for this success? A contract signed between parents, teachers, school administrators, local community members and students to keep children in a quality school.

Since the contract was signed, parents committed to their children's education have renovated the school building, opened up a canteen, constructed solar panels for hot water and provided learning tools to help students with arithmetic. Soon, the parents will begin work on a library and football field.

Source: <www.unicef.org/infobycountry/madagascar_39221.html>

4.1   SCHOOL-COMMUNITY LINKS

How child-friendly schools are linked to their communities is critical. Schools are communities unto themselves and child-friendly schools in particular promote a strong sense of community. But schools do not exist in isolation. They reside within the communities they serve and must cultivate relationships with them. In addition to the immediate community, usually a geographical catchment area, schools also can have links with a more diffuse community, such as former students and alumni associations, youth groups such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, faith-based organizations or language groups associated with the school.

The links between schools and their communities can vary in pattern and intensity. At one extreme are schools that simply have a physical presence. They are not linked with, dependent on or accountable to their communities in any serious sense. Other schools, especially child-friendly schools, are organically linked in multiple ways. It is essential to understand the basis of this rich linkage.

In emergency situations where schools have been destroyed, community links can be major factors in restoring normalcy and rebuilding education. These relationships are bridges that can help communities create safe,

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child-friendly learning spaces during emergencies, and the creation of such spaces helps communities recover more quickly from catastrophe.

What follows is an analysis of the interactive nature of the school as a community and its linkage to the larger community around it. The analysis highlights ways in which schools can reach out to their communities and draw them into their world.

Learning does not begin when children walk through the school doors nor does it end when they exit for the day. It takes place all the time and everywhere, throughout life. There is a pedagogic dimension to the links between schools and homes and localities. Children bring to school their family and community beliefs, practices, knowledge, expectations and behaviours. Similarly, when they return from school they bring back to their homes and communities new forms of knowledge, practices, behaviours, attitudes and skills. Children are engaged in a continuous, dynamic process of bridging the world of school and the world of home and community. They learn from both worlds, facilitated by teachers, family members, neighbors and others. Linking schools and communities is widely recognized as good pedagogic practice.

There is an economic dimension to these links as well. A wide range of costs is involved in the provision and uptake of education, and these costs are borne by various parties. Unit cost (per pupil) is based on the amortized cost of facilities, furniture and equipment, teachers' salaries, operational overheads, learning and teaching supplies, transport, school fees, uniforms and other services,

such as school meals. There are also opportunity costs to families, because children are not available to perform household chores or engage in income-generating activities.

Viable school financing depends on the links between schools and homes and communities to determine how these costs are shared. At one extreme, as is the case with self-help schools, all costs may be borne by homes and communities. (See Box, page 3.) Sometimes governments support community efforts by financing teachers' salaries. At still other times, governments, central or local, bear all the costs, with opportunity costs borne by homes. School officials tap into these different funding sources in order to operate viable, sustainable education programmes, and in the course of operations, they may seek supplementary funding from governments or levy additional charges on pupils' families or communities to meet additional costs. In all cases, viable, sustainable school financing depends on a healthy link between schools and the communities that they serve.

A third sense in which schools are linked to homes and communities is the sociopolitical or developmental dimension. In highly centralized political systems, government control of schools is usually strong, with minimum community involvement beyond contributing local resources. Schools serve primarily to achieve national development goals, such as cultivating human resources for economic growth, modernizing society or instituting cultural change. Teachers and school authorities are accountable to a central ministry rather than to their communities.

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Decentralized political systems call for reduced school oversight by the central government and for strong local control and active community involvement. Teachers and school authorities are likely to be accountable to their local communities, and while there may be some emphasis on contributing to broad national goals, the school's focus will have more to do with local realities and aspirations.

School-community links generally are based on a combination of pedagogic, economic and socio-economic dimensions. Many good schools have a strong link to the communities they serve, influenced by one or more of these factors. For child-friendly schools, these are also important factors. But there is a more fundamental sense in which child-friendly schools are linked with communities – the child's right to quality basic education. Therefore, school and community links are not optional. They are a defining imperative of the child-friendly school.

KENYA: *HARAMBEE* SCHOOLS

Community financing has been a prominent aspect of Kenya's educational system, dating back to the *harambee* schools. *Harambee* means 'let us pull together'. During the colonial era, local communities established these independent schools. Their independence stemmed from local community support in contrast to the support of the colonial government or local missionaries, the two groups then most responsible for educational development.

In the early post-independence period faith-based organizations, eager to quench the thirst for education and put their imprint on the *harambee* movement, encouraged local communities to continue to raise funds for schools. With support from local dignitaries, the *harambee* movement developed a distinct political character, as local politicians curried favour with their constituents by funding new schools and sustaining existing ones. As a result, failure or success of the *harambee* schools depended not on religious groups' sponsorship but instead on local politicians' skills in attracting local and international funding.

Source: Mwiria, K. 'Kenya's Harambee Secondary School Movement: The contradictions of public policy', *Comparative Education Review*, 1999

A rights-based approach to education means that governments are the ultimate duty bearers, with a responsibility to ensure access to quality basic education for all children. However, parents and communities are 'first-line' duty bearers, responsible for accessing available opportunities for their children and for supporting quality education in their community. Parents and communities have a duty to lobby their government for schools that can provide quality education for their children. In the absence of such government provision, parents and communities still have a duty to their children and need to establish schools that can provide quality education. This is the essence of community schools.

Even where the government provides schools, communities that feel alienated or judge these schools to not be in the best interest of their children may decide to establish more appropriate schools. This is why ethnic, religious or language minorities sometimes set up schools they believe are more suitable. Instead of creating separate schools, however, they can try to change existing schools to better address their children's needs.

When a rights-based approach to education is taken seriously, as with child-friendly schools, parents and communities must be closely involved in all aspects of the school and must be prepared to support it by shouldering the fair and reasonable costs required to promote quality education. Parents should have a vested interest in what schools offer and in the outcomes of the education process for their children and communities. In turn, schools have an obligation to be sensitive to the communities they serve, to care for and protect the children entrusted to them, and to be accountable to the local community in their governance and management. School boards and parent-teacher committees are the governance and management mechanisms through which this linkage and accountability are manifested.

While learning takes place all the time and everywhere, schools are specially designated institutions dedicated to the purpose of learning. They represent societies' efforts to concentrate resources and skills for quality education within a prescribed curriculum that includes effective, efficient teaching and learning modalities. Some basic characteristics of schools as learning communities are highlighted in Table 4.1 below. These characteristics provide an operational framework for understanding schools as learning communities and are the skeleton on which other aspects of community life are built. The extent to which schools become true learning communities depends on the richness of additional elements.

TABLE 4.1: BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL AS A LEARNING COMMUNITY

Characteristics	Outline of basic characteristics
Location specific	There is a specifically prescribed place or location (school) in which the learning/teaching process is designated to occur.
Time bound	Learners and teachers assemble at the location at designated times and stay for prescribed time periods (day/term/year) for learning to take place.
Time structured	School day is structured into periods in which different subjects or curriculum areas are covered. School year is structured into terms, with a prescribed number of weeks.
Learner structured	Learners are usually grouped by age (cohorts) and channelled into levels, classes or grades that correspond to age and the prescribed learning for that age group.
Programme structured	Prescribed learning is structured into subjects or disciplines that are taught separately and that together constitute a programme for a given grade, level or education cycle.
Prescribed learning	Curriculum reflects national goals and priorities, possibly open to regional/local/community variations, and involves set standards evaluated through tests and examinations.
Sequenced learning	Curriculum is sequenced so that objectives are achieved at one level before learners progress to the next level.
Specialist staffing	Staffing consists of qualified, trained professionals (teachers) with knowledge of the subject matter, pedagogic skills, etc.
Specialist resources	Standard furniture and equipment are unique to schools and part of defining characteristics (desks, blackboard, etc.).

The school community includes children of different age groups (cohorts), teachers, the school head and non-teaching staff. Roles, responsibilities, rules and procedures govern how a school functions. These relate not only to learning, but also to the safety, security and well-being of the learners, the status and authority of the teachers and school head, the relationship between learners and teachers, and the scope of the links with outside parties such as the community or government ministry. Over time, schools generate norms, values and standards that become part of the school culture and contribute to its traditions and institutional ethos, giving it a unique character as a community.

A first layer of institutional character is a school's reputation for promoting learning as its core function. This reputation may come from a track record of excellent examination results or a history of success in preparing students for the next level of education. Some schools may choose to focus on a niche academic area, such as mathematics or social studies. Other schools may build a reputation on consistently taking in children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds and helping them become successful learners.

Additionally, many schools develop a reputation for a second layer of institutional character by cultivating such attributes as being a safe, reliable place for children to learn, a champion of sports, a place for building young people's morals and character, a beautiful, well-kept institution with modern facilities, or a place where children are treated fairly and properly cared for. Child-friendly schools usually develop a reputation for being inclusive. They admit children from different backgrounds and treat them all fairly, regardless of their status, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender or disability.

Aside from a school's reputation, there are basic forms of behaviour that define the school as a community, such as the rituals and routines children and teachers engage in (prayers in the morning, flag-raising, singing the school song or serving a midday meal) and the common rules and values to which everyone subscribes. Over time, schools cultivate an ethos or 'organizational ambience' that gives further depth to the sense of community. A school with a good ethos is usually characterized by student and teacher cohesion, high expectations of students, positive teacher attitudes toward students, a stress on rewards and consistent, shared values, norms and standards. Such schools are more likely to develop students who perform well academically, have self-discipline and high attendance records than schools with a poor ethos, which tend to create opposite student behaviours.

In a sense, all these characteristics and attributes are 'fenced' within the school as a community and help determine a way of life within the school boundaries. For instance, children may behave negatively outside of school, but clearly understand that such behaviour will not be tolerated in school. The child-friendly school fences in positive attributes and fences out negative qualities, much the same way it fences in safety and protection and fences out risks and dangers.

However, since the child-friendly school exists in and serves the wider community, the attributes cultivated within the school will also influence that wider community. For instance, children who bring to school disrespectful or violent behaviour learned at home will hopefully replace that behaviour with the more positive conduct promoted within the school, adopting such values as non-confrontation and peaceful negotiation. In the process, they will help change the negative behaviours in their homes.

Transmitting school attributes into the larger community is not always simple for child-friendly schools. In some areas, issues of discipline may be conditioned by community values and practices that regard corporal punishment as desirable for building character and self-discipline. In contrast, child-friendly schools believe that discipline is necessary to help children learn correct behaviours and to maintain classroom order, but their key attributes are nonviolent discipline and protecting the rights of children. Within child-friendly schools, teachers learn appropriate, respectful approaches to discipline through in-service training and mentoring by the school head, and they implement effective discipline that respects children's rights and contributes to a positive learning environment. (See Chapter 6 on classroom discipline.) As children learn and succeed in school in the absence of corporal punishment, parents will come to accept the school's approach and may gradually shift their thinking.

4.2.1 Role of the school head

A sense of community within child-friendly schools is cultivated by the school head, whose leadership determines whether a school takes a child-friendly path or not. The school head's decisions and style are excellent barometers of a school's child-friendliness.

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Adherence to admissions rules that are fair and transparent can help ensure the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds. Similarly, mentoring and support by the school head for the appropriate training and continuous professional development of teachers raise classroom standards and foster improvement in teaching methods. Adequate planning by the school head, with appropriate involvement of teachers, learners, parents and the community, can raise curriculum standards and help the school meet learning achievement goals and successfully implement other important policy directives or targets.

The school head must respond to increasing student diversity, including issues of gender, disability and cultural background, must manage partnerships and networks with other schools and the wider community, and must work closely with government agencies and other organizations that serve children. In addition, the school head must be able to adjust the internal workings of the school to cope with rapid changes and developments in technology, school financing, school size and teachers' conditions of service.

The school head serves as a custodian of child-friendly school values and is a mentor, supporting the staff's professional development and helping to cultivate the most appropriate behaviours and teaching practices. As a leader and team builder, the school head guides the school as an institution and plays a pivotal role in creating and maintaining its ethos. The school ethos and character are considered so important that many institutions recruit alumni or teachers who previously taught there to become the school head.

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In a child-friendly school, the school head is a friendly, accessible person who encourages students' participation in school life and promotes links between the school community, parents and the wider community. Under the school head's direction, the school also provides a protective environment where children are free of corporal punishment, violence, gender stereotypes, bullying and stigma.

The head of a child-friendly school will also ensure that the school is managed in a fair, equitable and transparent manner. School rules and regulations will be just, clear, available to all and applied in an open manner in all cases. Student participation will be encouraged, as appropriate, in various aspects of school life, including the application of fair rules and regulations.

Evidence suggests that school heads who become successful leaders concentrate their efforts on four broad goals:

1. **Promote powerful learning-teaching processes that facilitate educational achievement for all children.** This occurs when school leadership sets realistic, but high expectations for both children and teachers, in the classroom and throughout the school, and provides various ways for them to pursue learning through the active participation of the learner and the reflective guidance of the teacher. The school leadership can make or break this type of transformative pedagogy by the goals that are set and the resources that are made available. More importantly, the school head needs to encourage teachers and learners to confront obstacles that affect progress, seek out available guidance and make the most creative use of limited resources.

2. **Cultivate a strong sense of community that embraces all who are part of the school.** The school head is the driving force that shapes the character of the institution and its ethos. He or she is the prime gatekeeper of the school's traditions and reputation. Maintaining the school culture requires a management style that encourages the entire school community to share the common values and rules that support good practices within the school. In a child-friendly school, the ethos is rooted in the rights of children and staff to fair and equal opportunities and treatment within the school community.

   The school head must address threats to this sense of fair and equal treatment, because failure to do so will undermine the school's community spirit. The school head's style must reinforce the tradition and culture of the school through such actions as giving daily or weekly talks to the whole school, emphasizing care and respect for the school grounds and surrounding environment, encouraging extracurricular activities and strengthening rituals by, for instance, selecting a school song or holding a founder's day or a thanksgiving parade.

3. **Value and expand the proportion of children's social capital.** Children are not empty vessels to be filled with information, but young people with personalities, names and knowledge to share. The new knowledge they acquire in school builds on their learning from home and the community. Children's participation in the classroom and school is facilitated by school leaders who invest in children's capabilities. (See box, page 11.)

4. **Cherish and encourage the development of families' educational cultures.** A culture of learning is important throughout the life cycle of a child, from early childhood through all levels of education. In poor, rural communities, many parents are illiterate and the school leadership has to reach out to them to help them benefit from and encourage their children's schooling.

4.2.2 Role of the teacher

Teachers are pivotal to effective and efficient learning. They are vital, along with the school head, to promoting a sense of community within the school and to building links to the wider community. A school and its pupils benefit most when teachers are committed to cultivating a learning community with a strong sense of belonging and caring among all children and adults.

Unlike the school head, who manages the entire school, teachers facilitate learning, handle the classroom and help their students transfer what they have learned in the classroom to non-school settings. They also work with the school head in laying a solid foundation and providing a model of a better future for all. Successful teachers in child-friendly schools strive to improve their performance, take advantage of learning opportunities, create new connections and promote collaboration among teachers.

4.3 THE SCHOOL IN THE COMMUNITY

There are many ways in which the community can be drawn into the school, beginning with community involvement in the initial decision-making on the design, building (or renovating) and maintenance of school buildings and grounds, to ongoing transparency, accountability and participation in management and decision-making. Additionally, parent-teacher associations (PTAs), by allowing the participation of and communication with parents, create openness that encourages parents to track their children's progress.

School heads and teachers assume the critical role in building school-community links by reaching out to the community and drawing it in. But parents, other community members and children themselves have crucial parts to play as well.

4.3.1 Role of school heads and teachers together

School heads provide school leadership and must initiate the support and involvement of family and community. The more willing they are to recruit parents and community members for school tasks, to listen to their views and share decision-making, the more likely school-family partnerships are to take hold. Management and administrative support can be provided to carry out school programmes through district or local authorities' budgets, materials, space, equipment or staff.

School managers are instrumental in making sure that teachers receive the professional development they need to be engaged in family and community involvement. Ensuring that all school

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staff acquire the necessary skills for working with parents and families is critical to effective partnerships.

The school district, cluster or education system should offer professional development for teachers on:

- Collaborating with parents, families and communities;

- Family dynamics and non-traditional family structures;

- Communication between the school, family and the community;

- Reducing barriers to family and community involvement in school;

- Environmental education for sustainable development, including access to water for drinking and washing, clean household energy, food security;

- Appreciating and working with diverse cultures.

The school governing bodies or PTAs should help identify volunteers who can help teachers and other school staff develop sensitivity to students' families and the community. This can be accomplished, for instance, by having

KENYA: CHILD-SEEKING AND PARTICIPATORY SCHOOLS

Even with Kenya's declaration of free primary education in 2003, some 1.7 million children and adolescents are still out of school. Building on the principles of child participation, a 'child-to-child' census was designed to seek out children not in school, determine why they were out of school and bring them back in. Schoolchildren and their teachers were trained to go into their neighbourhoods to ask children why they were out of school. The most frequent answers to these surveys were poverty, lack of school uniforms, domestic work and distance from school. Solutions were discussed and, through community dialogue and support, some 7,000 of the 9,000 out-of-school children in one of the three pilot districts – half of them girls – were brought back into school. This approach highlighted the power and potential of children's participation to such an extent that it has been included within the national education sector plan.

volunteers take teachers on community walks that introduce them to the neighbourhood and their pupils' lives outside school.

Another possible approach is to involve school staff and pupils in participatory action research. This may include small teams of teachers and students who meet monthly to study school-family-community relationships, discuss the challenges and opportunities that arise in involving families and the community in the school and devise interventions to build active community participation. Kenya and Uganda have conducted child-to-child surveys using this approach.

Once the groundwork has been laid and there is two-way communication between the school and the family and community, schools can establish partnerships by creating an action team committed to developing a comprehensive family-community involvement programme. Members of the team bring their own perspective, experience and skills to the initiative. The action team is responsible for a baseline study – developing goal statements, identifying strategies to meet the goals, establishing implementation plans and using evaluation tools.

Strengthening teacher capacity in the area of family-community collaboration can be supported by providing teachers with incentives to engage in these relationships.

4.3.2　Role of families and caregivers

A child-friendly school is a family-friendly school. It builds relationships with parents and caregivers who have primary responsibility for the well-being of children at all stages of their development. An informed, caring family can be the most stable,

reliable and unconditionally supportive agent for learning, so the engagement of families in the promotion and strengthening of children's learning can be among the most effective and lasting of interventions. This is particularly critical in the case of families made vulnerable by poverty, disease, conflict, lack of water, fuel or other resources, or by domestic violence; in families in isolated communities not reached by limited government services; and in ethnically marginalized or excluded families (EAPRO, 2005).

Parents who feel positive about school and are involved in its life are likely to be the best advocates for the school's values, policies and practices at home, whether by encouraging homework, promoting anti-harassment or supporting cooperation with others. Where there is no contact between home and school, problems in the child's life may go unrecognized by the school and will not be properly addressed. Even in underprivileged families, high levels of parental

UGANDA: COMMUNITY-BASED CHILD REGISTRATION

In rural Uganda, investing in a community-based birth registration (CBR) system provided effective tools for monitoring various children's rights, including enrolment in early childhood care activities and primary schools. The system places emphasis on registering children from poor and marginalized households and children living in child-headed and female-headed households. These children are then issued birth registration cards that ensure their enrolment in primary school at the appropriate time. With this low-cost intervention, more than 500,000 children were registered in just two years.

support and a positive school climate foster self-confidence and self-esteem.

Families and caregivers have particular roles to play in preparing their children for a child-friendly school and supporting and providing guidance to the school. In a child-friendly school:

• Parents and households have regular, meaningful two-way communication with the school;

• Parents have an integral role in assisting school learning;

• Parents are full partners in decision-making about education outcomes for their children;

• Parents are welcome in the school and their support for children's learning is sought.

Often families and households do not feel empowered to take on these roles, nor are schools prepared to support them. Therefore, it is important to involve families in their children's education and establish community-school links at the earliest stages. Families are children's first teachers and have a critical role to play in preparing them for school. Early childhood is a time of developmental leaps; it provides the greatest opportunity for change, but too often it is the time when services are fewest. Parenting styles and the number of resources available for children will either help young children develop the skills, attitudes and behaviours required to flourish in a school community or thwart their abilities to actively participate.

An effective way to prepare parents and caregivers to nurture school-family connections is for communities to develop and organize early childhood centres. Through their involvement, parents begin to understand how to manage a centre and participate in the centre's decision-making. In such community-based centres, families learn essential skills and their attitudes change as they see first hand how their participation can make a difference. The early childhood centres are not only important in readying young children for school, but also in preparing families, particularly women, for their role with schools. (See Box, page 14.)

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NIGERIA: UNICEF AND PARTNERS CREATE A MODEL CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOL

Model Primary School in New Owerri, Nigeria, is a bold testimony that initiatives to make schools child-friendly can succeed. Before 2000, it was a neglected primary school with buildings in various states of dilapidation and a population not very different from those of schools in similar conditions. The school's turnaround began in 2002, when it was classified by UNICEF as child-friendly. Since then, a vigorous partnership between UNICEF, the Imo State Primary Education Board and the school's PTA has blossomed, making all aspects of the school welcoming to children.

A large compound provides ample playing space for the school's 1,136 pupils. Girls outnumber boys, with girls' enrolment at 53 per cent and boys' at 47 per cent. The students are spread over 52 classes, each with one assigned teacher. Twelve other staff members perform various roles in the school. Demands for admission continue unabated, as the school is the first choice of many in the community. But only 16 classrooms are currently available, and the large student population has stretched the school's facilities.

School and community work hand in hand

The key strength of the school is its active PTA, which is involved in many of the ongoing projects, including construction of 10 new classrooms. It also helped beef up security in the school by installing burglar-proofing on doors. The PTA takes its role seriously. According to P. M. Okoro, the association's vice-chairman, the

group meets three times each term and other times as needed.

Sir Sam Iheakama, second vice-chairman of the PTA, points out that the World Bank Estate where the school is located is a community unto its own, where residents share common, strong sentiments about their children's education. He reports that PTA meetings are always well attended, with over 80 parents at each meeting. According to Iheakama, the community has a positive view of the Model Primary School and "parents all wish their children should pass through this school."

Improving water and sanitation

The PTA has improved personal hygiene among the pupils by providing washbasins and stands for each of the school's 16 classrooms, as well as soap and toilet paper rolls for the latrines.

Model Primary School has a full complement of ventilated improved pit latrines for both boys and girls. The water supply is adequate; the State Primary Education Board provided two water drums that are constantly refilled. During break time, excited pupils, their plastic cups and bowls in hand, run to fetch drinking water from the handpump-equipped borehole provided by UNICEF in collaboration with the State Rural Water Supply Agency. The borehole, a key component of making the school child-friendly, benefits more than the pupils and teachers in the school. Since it is the most regular source of water in the vicinity, the World Bank Estate also depends on the borehole

for its water supply. Community members have praised its usefulness and have expressed their appreciation to the school staff, especially the headmistress.

Some 1,360 titles are housed in the school's well-stocked library, many of them provided by UNICEF. A full-time librarian trained in library management for primary schools oversees the collection.

"UNICEF's presence is manifesting in our school," says Eugenia Chima, the school's current headmistress. She noted that in efforts to make it child-friendly, the school had received desks, chairs, books, library equipment, sanitation materials, a borehole, early childhood care, first-aid kits and other items. She said that running the school has changed her life: "The whole community calls me 'blessed mummy' because of the school. Even if I retire now, I feel fulfilled."

A good start through reading and play

Some 120 children are enrolled in the school's early childcare section. Here, the emphasis is on psychosocial stimulation of the youngsters, who play and learn in an environment filled with pictures and toys. Emelia Onyekwere is the section's head teacher. Along with four other teachers, she leads her charges in classes that include singing, dancing, body movement and observation, especially of the age-appropriate objects located indoors and outside the classroom. Three out of five school days, the PTA provides midday meals for pupils in the early childcare section. For some of these children, this is a rare opportunity to eat a nutritious meal, and with their teachers' help, they also learn how to eat properly.

Source: <www.ungei.org/infobycountry/nigeria_321.html>

Strengthening links:

- The school has a PTA that meets and communicates regularly, and involves parents from all backgrounds (not just the elite);

- The PTA has a plan of action coordinated with school authorities to develop, implement and monitor annual school plans;

- The school promotes parents' participation in discussions and decision-making on school policies and activities;

- The school utilizes various communication tools to reach out to parents;

- The school provides information to parents on its reforms, policies, goals;

- The school invites parents to discuss concerns about their children and provides regular opportunities for them to inform

school authorities about events at home or in the community;

- In case of illiterate parents or those who are not speakers of the majority language, the school provides oral messages or translates communications into parents' language;

- The school hosts events that involve children and families, such as inviting parents for an evening of music, drama or poetry reading that demonstrates the lessons their children are learning;

- The school provides the space for environmental and community gardens where PTA members can support food security;

- The school head may present awards to children or teachers – such as best attendance, most improved, special helper, star of the month, sports awards – at an event involving the community.

GHANA: CELEBRATING CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS WITH PARENTS

At Zangum School in the northern region of Ghana, the head teacher realized that the parents of his students had little understanding of what their children were learning in school. To help them understand their children's education process, he organized an afternoon each semester to celebrate the students' achievements.

The activities at these afternoons varied from the younger children's reciting the alphabet, singing songs or acting out a drama to teach malaria prevention, to older students' reading poems or stories that they had written while other children translated them into their parents' language. The head teacher used these events not only to recognize achievement, but also to highlight important messages regarding the school, and the events were highly anticipated by the community, the students and the teachers. Through these activities, parents, many of whom had never been to school themselves, discovered what their children were learning, the value of their children's education and how they could support it. Discipline in the school improved, and attendance and participation in the PTA grew.

GHANA: THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN PTAS

Kparigu, a remote rural village in Ghana, had regular PTA meetings that were well attended by fathers but rarely by mothers. The headmaster was concerned about the lack of women's involvement and especially wanted to ensure that girls' issues were well represented. Therefore, he made a point of talking with the mothers on his walks around town, at the market and at church, always subtly bringing up the subject of involvement in the PTA. In the course of these discussions, he learned that most women had not been to school, so they thought they would not be able to contribute. They also thought the PTA was 'men's business'.

Talking about these concerns on a one-to-one basis and later at a PTA meeting, he found out the biggest stumbling block for women was the timing of the meetings. The headmaster generally held the meetings in late afternoon, when the sun was not too hot but it was not yet dark, but this, he learned, was the women's busiest time of day, when they return from market and prepare evening meals. The headmaster changed to a suggested time: "Fridays right after prayers because both Muslims and Christians don't go to farm on those days and it is before cooking begins."

Engaging the community women and changing to a more suitable time for them allowed the women gradually to become a much stronger presence in the PTA. They enriched the dialogue not only on gender issues but also on a range of topics affecting all children.

4.3.3   Role of education bodies and other local authorities

Child-friendly schools promote broad-based alliances among communities, local governments, civil society and the private sector. With the need for a cross-sectoral perspective, different actors must be fully appreciated and accommodated to ensure that the child-friendly school concept is implemented.

Local school authorities have obligations and responsibilities towards schools in their municipalities. It is their duty to provide resources and funding for teachers and administrators, to provide quality learning materials and to monitor school planning and progress. Both local and national education authorities monitor the performance of specific schools.

The local education authorities are responsible for supervision of teachers, school managers and headmasters/headmistresses and for the allocation of learning spaces, tools and instruments. They are accountable to the community for resource allocation. In decentralized government systems, community members, parents and children have greater opportunities to participate in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating child-friendly education activities and governance.

A child-friendly school is an integral part of the community and proactively reaches out to it, both seeking its support in improving child-friendliness and in turn supporting community development. Such interlinkage is especially important in areas mired in poverty.

Learning takes place in a variety of circumstances in the child's wider environment – at home, after school, in religious institutions and in interactions with other community members. (See Box, this page.) Child-friendly schools are sensitive to the knowledge, values and traditions students bring from the larger community; at the same time, children acquire new knowledge and skills that they take back into the community. The school can extend its outreach by sending children home with take-home messages that convey information on the importance of hygiene, HIV and AIDS prevention, environmental sustainability and other topics. In this way, the school contributes to community development.

Establishing such a dialogue gives the community a sense of school ownership, so that the school is not seen as something outside the community. This dialogue across boundaries is what distinguishes child-friendly schools from other schools. They often become oases for the wider community, sometimes providing the only space for town or village meetings and festivities. These links anchor the school as a supportive, attentive and relevant community institution.

BRAZIL: NEIGHBOURHOOD AS SCHOOL PROJECTS

A new concept of education has been developed in Vila Madalena, a small district in Brazil's largest city, São Paulo. Known as 'Neighbourhood as School', it is conducted by a non-governmental organization, Cidade Escola Aprendiz, which since 1997 has been turning squares, alleys, cinemas, ateliers, cultural centres and theatres into classrooms.

The Neighbourhood as School, an extension of formal school education, aims to expand learning spaces in the community, creating a pedagogic laboratory in which learning is knowing oneself and socially intervening in the community through communication, art and sports.

The success of the Neighbourhood as School concept is driven by a partnership among schools, families, public authorities, entrepreneurs, associations, craftspeople, non-governmental organizations and volunteers – indispensable powers in community education. Everybody educates; everybody learns at qualification centres, so the experience helps educators and social leaders nourish the learning systems.

Child-friendly schools reach out beyond their confines, seeking partnerships with other actors who contribute to the school's effective implementation of all aspects of child-friendliness. These include health care and social welfare professionals and institutions that contribute to child health and nutrition. Child-friendly schools need

accommodate different communities (various religions, races or political affiliations). The sense of solidarity and shared identity created by building ethos and teaching peaceful coexistence, negotiation, nonviolence and care for the environment can influence larger-scale nation-building.

Strengthening school outreach:

- School sets up a specific plan for school-community collaboration;

- School sends messages regularly to parents and school committee members on school activities and children's progress;

- School and community establish parent-teacher-community associations that meet regularly;

- School encourages students to participate in community activities;

- Parents and community participate in school improvement projects;

- School invites other local agencies (ministries), the private sector,

these partnerships, as they often lack the resources necessary to provide all the elements to be fully child-friendly.

The child-friendly school's outreach can go beyond the geographical community. Many schools

GHANA: STUDENTS TEACHING COMMUNITIES TO PREVENT MALARIA

In Kparigu, in the northern region of Ghana, children in the senior primary classes completed a module on malaria prevention. As part of their lesson, they were encouraged to inform their families and the community about their project as it progressed. This project combined skills from their science, art, music, woodworking and life skills classes. The children developed and enacted a play for younger children and family members about the life cycle of a mosquito and transmission of malaria. They went into the community and identified sources of standing water. Using techniques learned at school, they created proper drainage and minimized sources of standing water.

The community was extremely interested. When the adults saw the children out in the community, they asked about the project and how it would reduce the incidence of malaria. Enthusiasm was high, and community members joined in the efforts and continued to implement the strategies long after the event. As a result, standing-water sources in the community have been significantly reduced, contributing to the control of malaria. The community learned in a concrete, relevant way how children's education contributes to the well-being of all.

community leaders and parents to participate in planning and school management;

- School networks with community to increase school access for excluded children, especially girls, domestic workers, children with disabilities and minority children;

- School engages community in volunteer programmes (facility and environment maintenance) and recruits people with special knowledge and skills as classroom resources;

- Teacher assigns homework (take-home messages) that requires

children to interact with their parents;

- School partners with local private sector, non-governmental and community-based organizations to assist schools and families;

- School health and nutrition programmes are planned and implemented jointly with health and social welfare workers, teachers, parents and others;

- Students are taught songs and poems with health and safety messages and are encouraged to share them with their younger siblings and family members.

UGANDA: CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED BY THE GIRLS' EDUCATION MOVEMENT

Girls' Education Movement (GEM) members are active in child-to-child methods for reaching out to non-enrolled children. Using proceeds from their income-generating activities, GEM members purchase learning materials for needy pupils, a pragmatic approach to addressing retention. GEM clubs also promote girl-friendly practices and develop ways to bring out-of-school girls back to class, such as purchasing sanitary towels for them. GEM members also engage community members, strengthening school-community partnerships and interaction.

MEXICO: INCLUSION OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Child-friendly schools have been promoted since 2000 in Chiapas and Yucatan, Mexican states characterized by large indigenous populations and high rates of marginalization. Child-friendly schools are critical in generating participation among children, teachers and parents and in achieving sustainable development in the context of indigenous culture. Child-friendly schools improve learning through intercultural and bilingual teaching, active involvement by students, families and community, and civic education based on democratic values, respect for diversity and promotion of equity, cooperation and participation. They also work towards a healthy, clean and friendly school environment. A parallel initiative, Community Participative Learning, promotes civic education and activities where families and communities learn about children's rights in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner and are encouraged to participate in the organization of community life around the school. Similar efforts under the All Children in School initiative seek to ensure basic quality education for all boys and girls. As a result, schools have higher student achievement, better trained and more motivated teachers, an improved school environment that includes toilets and water facilities, increased community participation in education and a heightened sense of cultural identity, which contributes to higher self-esteem.

Child-friendly learning spaces are often, but not always, established in situations of emergency and crisis to compensate for the lack of adequate, safe and supportive learning environments. In chronic emergency and rehabilitation situations, they can play an important role in providing basic social services, representing points of continuity and stability.

Besides functioning as learning spaces, child-friendly areas may also serve as a place for play and stimulation, recreation and life skills activities, and for cultural and sports events. During a crisis, children need psychosocial support, counseling and safe places where they can participate in learning and recreation to regain stability in their lives. The child-friendly spaces seek to provide children with this normalcy through regular activities necessary for their development.

In all circumstances, child-friendly spaces call for the increased participation of children, parents and communities in decision-making about children's education, recreation and play. These spaces also can serve as community centres that strengthen adults' coping skills and provide a venue for feeding, health care and distribution of relief and rehabilitation items.

4.5.1 Organizing learning opportunities

Child-friendly learning spaces are essential during emergencies and other situations where children fall outside formal school settings. Although governments and education authorities are obligated to provide learning

opportunities for all children, parents, families and communities often take a greater role in developing learning spaces during emergencies.

Local authorities are usually responsible for identifying such spaces; however their establishment and operation are more likely to fall to parents and the local community. Although their focus is on learning, child-friendly spaces may include integrated social services, such as health, nutrition and social welfare. Learning may also take place in local houses where children come together for complementary or after-school activities that are school-related but more voluntary in purpose, content and application.

Local community participation, often through civil society organizations, is key to the success of learning in child-friendly spaces, because it is usually parents and community volunteers who take the initiative to operate the learning activities offered in these spaces. Also, because these are alternative learning spaces, for children who fall outside formal, mainstream institutions, it is often necessary to mobilize children to participate. To effectively integrate marginalized children, learning spaces need to be trusted by the community, and those in charge have to have the know-how to engage in effective social mobilization and communication with young people.

Community contributions to child-friendly spaces, such as tools, equipment, land and direct teaching or administration, are essential to foster a sense of belonging and ownership by children and their families. Like the formal school system, child-

educational centres combining libraries and Internet access, part of the city's Lighthouses of Knowledge project, are located next to schools to bridge learning between the formal school system, the local community and families.

Strategic steps:

- Identify spaces within the community where learning can take place;

- Involve the school management and PTA in the selection process;

- Create and implement alternative learning programmes for all children, including those out of school, through outreach and collaboration with non-governmental and faith-based organizations;

- Develop and introduce life skills, HIV and AIDS prevention programmes and ways to adapt to changing environments through formal and complementary education activities for children in and out of school;

- Identify meeting places where out-of-school children can be mobilized for inclusion in both formal and non-formal learning activities;

- Utilize existing resources and identify new resources inside and outside the community;

- Collaborate with the private sector to equip alternative and complementary learning spaces;

- Join forces with sports, leisure and cultural organizations;

- Identify community members and volunteers with the skill and time to support learning activities in child-friendly spaces.

friendly spaces must be safe, healthy, protective and inclusive. The education system must oversee these informal spaces to ensure that they meet all requirements.

Alternative spaces for learning can be set up just about anywhere, in churches, mosques, temples, community halls, rooms within the community chief's office, libraries, a compound, allocated land, an unused room in a private house, even a boat. In the Maldives, for instance, madrasas were used for learning activities other than reading the Koran when it was agreed that children also need to read other literature and learn about the world outside their communities.

In Nicaragua and Iran, mobile libraries represent not only opportunities for children to learn but for their families and the larger community as well. In Curitiba, Brazil, lighthouse-shaped

The changes recommended to make learning environments child-friendly imply a substantial change in accountabilities, monitoring systems, training, curriculum, school admission practices, the structure and content of schools and early child centres, and the role of families and civil societies. Unless these changes are backed by strong policy commitments and specific means of accountability, they will not occur and children's rights will not be realized. Therefore, political support at the highest level is required for this standard of schooling. To ensure viability, child-friendly schools must be evidence-based, supported by a system of continual monitoring, evaluation, feedback and advocacy. (See Chapter 8.)

Many developing countries implement child-friendly schools through an accelerated process of school reform. The entire school community works collaboratively towards a shared purpose by meeting, talking and learning from each other's experiences.

4.7   SUPERVISION AND OVERSIGHT

Approaching education and learning from a CFS perspective requires a different form of supervision and management of schools and learning activities. Few education systems, especially in developing countries, have effective supervision and performance appraisal systems for teachers and administrators, and implementation of such systems is almost always under constraints.

The introduction of the child-friendly education and learning framework therefore provides an opportunity to review and change the way teachers and administrators are supervised and managed. It also provides an opportunity to establish and strengthen the monitoring and oversight systems and mechanisms to improve accountability for resource allocation and utilization.

VILLAGE EDUCATION COMMITTEES: ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE COMMUNITY

In many communities, oversight for education and teacher quality falls to the Village Education Committee, which may have different functions and different levels of responsibility depending on the community. Important roles include monitoring children within the community, assessing the quality of education, identifying rights abuses and locating children who are not in school. However, the power vested in the group and who is represented on it make a major difference in its functioning. The committees monitor schools and serve as a forum for parents' and children's decision-making.

Family and community involvement in the monitoring of learning activities is crucial in a child-friendly learning model and must be integrated into the model from its inception. Governing bodies at all levels must be invited to discuss how the child-friendly school will be regulated. Children's voices must be included via open forums throughout the process to strengthen their influence and participation. Hotlines and other forms of reporting systems should to be formulated and agreed upon.

Strategic steps:

- Review education management systems to determine how education is perceived and managed;

- Establish a code of conduct for teachers and child-friendly education managers and a community monitoring system for appraisal and reporting;

- Develop a child-centred management system that builds on the principles of child-friendly education and children's rights;

- Establish an effective, transparent feedback system on resource allocation and utilization with opportunities for community input through the PTA;

- Develop a hotline or other method for reporting abuse and exploitation of students.

EGYPT: THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL

In the rural hamlets of Upper Egypt, where primary schools were previously non-existent and girls were particularly deprived, community schools have been established as a means of providing children with a quality education. Modelled after the BRAC experience in Bangladesh, the schools are located in the communities and are free, with no hidden costs. Local ownership is a key feature, with communities donating space, ensuring that children come to class and managing the schools through a local education committee in each hamlet.

Young women with intermediate degrees are recruited locally and trained as facilitators to provide quality education through interactive techniques and locally relevant educational content, including health, the environment, agriculture and local history. Graduates of community schools are eligible to take the government schools' standardized exams at the end of grades 3 and 6.

The project serves as a catalyst for development and, given the emphasis on girls and the involvement of women facilitators, for change in gender roles and expectations. Lessons learned from the quality components of the community school model are being mainstreamed through the Girls' Education Initiative and the model itself is being extended through the establishment of additional girl-friendly schools.

CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 5
Schools as protective environments

unicef

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CHAPTER 5

SCHOOLS AS PROTECTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

More than 50 per cent of children who die in earthquakes each year die inside their school buildings.

• In Pakistan, more than 17,000 children attending early morning classes perished when their school buildings collapsed following the earthquake in late 2005.

• In developed countries, local schools and hospitals are typically designed to ensure survivability and are designated as safe shelter for affected community members.

It is neither expensive nor technically difficult to structurally improve most school buildings.

• The estimated average cost per school ranges between $1,000 and $1,500, assuming use of local labour and materials and low-cost design options.

Source: *Safe at School Campaign, Disaster Resource Network, an initiative of the World Economic Forum.*

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Millions of children attend schools that are reasonably safe most of the time. But schools in most developing countries fail to protect children from the consequences of natural disasters and accidents. At a time of increasingly unsafe environments, and as scientists predict with relative certainty that climate change will increase both the severity and prevalence of natural disasters, schools that cannot withstand catastrophes are unacceptable.

The problem, however, is not only with natural disasters and accidents.

There are many ways in which schools fail to protect the children entrusted to their care. The sources of risk and danger are many and complex. There are cases of children, especially girls, burned alive in boarding schools where doors are 'securely locked', ostensibly to protect them. In some countries, children risk being kidnapped for ransom or, in what is becoming a disturbing pattern among the youth population, caught up in gang-related violence. Schools are sometimes targets for violent attacks during civil conflicts, putting children at risk of kidnapping and

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forced recruitment as child soldiers, labourers or sex slaves.

The *UN Study on Violence against Children* reveals that children worldwide are at risk of violence in and around the school. The threats range from rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and physical beatings to verbal abuse, bullying, taunting, stereotyping and other forms of humiliation. At times, teachers, school authorities and peers are the perpetrators of such abuse.

Sometimes schools fail to protect children from exposure to health hazards, such as pollution, toxic substances, noise and fumes, or may place them in unhygienic environments that compromise their health. Schools may be remiss by not adequately predicting, preventing and preparing for threats to children's health and safety in the face of a rapidly changing environment.

In child-friendly schools, attention should be given to these key elements:

- **Prediction:** School authorities need to foresee imminent risk or possible dangers that could affect children within the school, its vicinity or the wider community. These may range from seasonal influenza to more dangerous potential pandemics such as avian flu, or vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever, which are emerging in colder climates as temperatures rise. They may be dangers posed by impending extreme weather or the school's proximity to hazardous sites. In some countries, political tension brings the risk of violence in the community. Schools that

are tuned into these developments can gauge when it is time to take preventive measures. When the school community takes its responsibility to prepare seriously, forward-thinking attention can bring about appropriate preventive measures.

- **Prevention:** School authorities should take precautionary measures to avert risks to children's health and safety. Giving flu shots and other vaccines to all children at the right time helps prevent serious illness. Designated traffic crossing points for children can prevent vehicle accidents. Community mapping of environmental risks and vulnerabilities to natural disasters can head off potential calamities. And using proper hand-washing procedures and following other health practices prevents the spread of disease. In the same way, prohibiting weapons in schools, providing appropriate supervision of play areas and designing classrooms so that activities within them can be easily observed from outside are ways to help prevent bullying, assaults and abuse in and around schools. Fencing off areas of potential danger, such as swimming pools or water wells, and clearing or spraying areas of stagnant water where mosquitoes can breed are all prevention measures that the school community can invest in to protect children and staff.

- **Preparedness:** Schools must have resources and procedures in place to deal swiftly and decisively with specific dangers to children's health and safety. Warning systems, from a simple school bell to more sophisticated tools

such as text messages, can allow schools to alert students, families and school personnel to a danger or emergency. Training teachers and students in simple first-aid skills, installing fire extinguishers and emergency lighting, scheduling evacuation drills and creating designated assembly points, safe areas and ways of calling for assistance can help prepare the school community to respond to accidents and emergencies.

Child-friendly schools normally have clear policies, plans, measures and budgets to address these elements.

They should review procedures constantly to make sure they keep up with any changes in the school or wider community.

This chapter details protection issues and the safety dimension of child-friendly schools. It explores expectations and realities of schools in promoting the emotional, psychological and physical well-being of children. Threat categories and risk assessments are identified as a basis for reviewing strategies and interventions to make schools healthy, safe and protective for children.

5.2   THE RIGHT TO LEARN IN SAFE, HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) spells out the obligations of governments to facilitate children's right to learn in a safe and secure environment, whether a conventional school or a designated learning space in an emergency. The CRC specifically calls on all States Parties to take appropriate measures to ensure protection of children from all forms of violence, injury, abuse and neglect, to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the dignity of the child and to ensure children's right to the best possible health care. (See Box, page 4.)

Child-friendly schools and learning spaces should embrace these principles and standards in creating a learning environment where children are free from fear, anxiety, danger, disease, exploitation, harm or injury. They need to create a healthy, safe

and protective environment through the provision of school-based health, nutrition, water and sanitation services, and codes of conduct against violence.

5.2.1   Healthy environments

Child protection in school starts with a healthy child. Good health and proper nutrition are prerequisites for effective learning. Research shows that healthy, well-nourished children learn better, and school health and nutrition programming is recognized as a means of improving children's nutritional status, learning achievement and general well-being. Even short-term hunger can adversely affect a child's ability to learn. Deficiencies of iodine or iron have been shown to reduce children's cognitive and motor skills and even their IQ. Similarly, worm infestation causes anaemia

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CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO HEALTHY, SAFE AND PROTECTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Article 2	Education must be provided without discrimination on any grounds.
Article 19	States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. Protective measures should include prevention and identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment.
Article 24	States Parties recognize the rights of children to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and agree to take appropriate measures to ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children, to combat disease and malnutrition, to provide adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution, to ensure that parents and children are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents.
Article 28	States Parties are obliged to take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity.
Article 29	States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential; (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations; ... (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin; (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.
Article 37	States Parties shall ensure that children are not subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

and poor physical, intellectual and cognitive development, resulting in a detrimental effect on students' educational performance. Good health at school age yields long-term health benefits, reduces repetition rates and increases educational attainment.

Children are exposed to many physical and physiological threats that jeopardize their health and safety in school besides poor nutrition. Malaria, waterborne diseases, parasitic infestations (worms are a major cause of undernutrition in school-age children), diarrhoea, cholera, dehydration and HIV and AIDS are just some of the physiological risks to children. There are also physical risks that threaten health and safety, such as traffic injuries incurred en route to and from school, lacerations, fractures and other injuries during play, drowning, physical violence (corporal punishment, assaults, etc.) and sexual violence.

Child-friendly schools and learning spaces mitigate these problems by creating a healthy school environment

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that provides access to safe water for drinking, proper hygiene and sanitation facilities; by implementing life skills-based health, hygiene and environmental education; and by providing health and nutrition services as an integral part of schooling. School buildings must be free of hazards such as lead, asbestos or indoor air pollution, and the school compound and classrooms should be kept clean and free of harmful waste material. Separate toilet facilities should be provided for girls and boys (giving girls the privacy they require), along with sufficient water for hand washing in appropriate facilities. These are all important aspects of what child-friendly schools and learning spaces should offer as part of a safe, protective environment for learning.

Maintaining a culture of clean, healthy and safe environments means that school heads and teachers should be committed to programmes that involve children in maintaining sanitary hand-washing and drinking-water facilities and toilets. Typically, school heads and teachers work together with children to prepare and carry out a plan for monitoring and keeping up the facilities and helping children stay clean and healthy. In this regard, preventive maintenance should be adopted as a way to set standards and reduce costs, which tend to be higher when repairing and replacing parts. Prevention involves tasks as simple as oiling squeaky doors before the hinges fail, patching minor cracks in slabs before they become big faults in the wall, fixing leaking taps before they become flood hazards, changing parts in the water well pump before the whole system fails, painting regularly to protect the durability of buildings, scrubbing and cleaning regularly to prevent the build-up of grime and
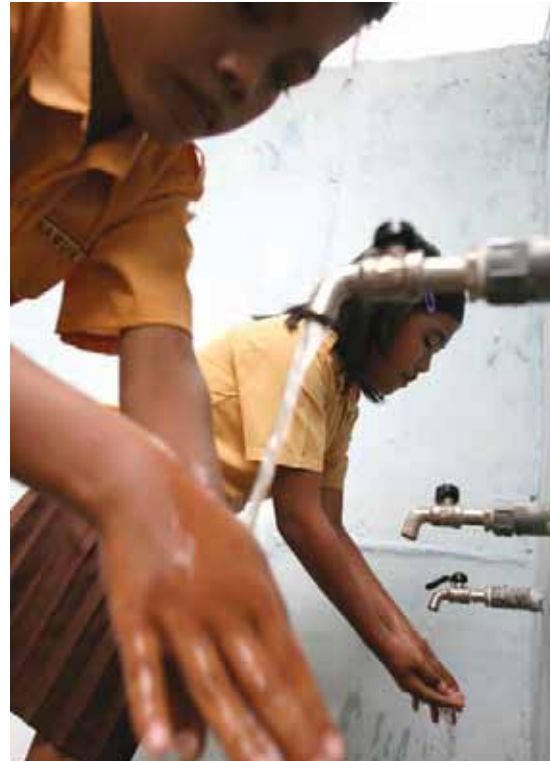
waste in school facilities, and planting trees to provide shade and soil security. (See Chapter 3.)

To support a protective learning environment and accomplish a maintenance scheme, school heads and teachers can encourage children to start healthy environment clubs, where they organize maintenance tasks, set up competitions around these tasks and promote safe water, sanitation and 'healthy schools and healthy homes' messages.

Child-friendly schools and learning spaces typically address malnutrition through 'food for education' – providing in-school meals or snacks and take-home rations for vulnerable children, orphans and girls. These strategies encourage parents to send children to school regularly, and they may also encourage communities to prepare and serve meals and support

NICARAGUA: WATER AND SANITATION IN CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

In Nicaragua, where 80 per cent of primary schools lack satisfactory water supplies and adequate sanitation facilities and where educational quality is poor, the Healthy and Friendly Schools Initiative is an integrated approach to school sanitation and hygiene education. The initiative aims to improve the school environment by addressing health, school hygiene, environmental sanitation and human rights in a comprehensive way linked to quality learning. It is based on the idea that schools can help transform families and communities by promoting positive practices among pupils during their formative years. Participating schools have new hand-washing facilities and chlorinated water, as well as appropriate sanitary units separated by both age and gender. There are smaller seats or toilets for preschool children, urinals for boys and one latrine adapted for children with disabilities. Life skills education and hygiene promotion have contributed to improved knowledge and the beginning of behavioural change. The initiative intends to ensure long-term sustainability by combining education, promotion of suitable hygienic practices and improvements in school infrastructure – all with the active participation of the educational community, the surrounding community and the children.

school garden projects. In addition, they promote nutrition education for students, with instruction on cooking methods, menu preparation, use of local foods and balanced diets. This not only provides children with good nutrition in the short term, but also helps them develop the attitudes, knowledge and values they need to make appropriate dietary decisions throughout their lives.

Child-friendly schools support school-based deworming programmes, usually as an integral part of a more comprehensive school health programme. The Essential Package, partnered by UNICEF and the World Food Programme, and the Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH) framework, launched by UNICEF, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Bank and World Health Organization in 2000, are good examples of such health programmes.

Their key elements include:

- Health policies in school that advocate and facilitate the teachers' role in promoting good health practices and helping to make schools healthy learning environments;

- Adequate sanitation and access to safe water to reduce disease, worm transmission and waterborne illnesses in the school environment;

- Skills-based health education that promotes good hygiene, avoidance of disease, prevention of worm infection and other illnesses;

- Basic health and nutrition services that include school meals and deworming.

In some countries, child-friendly schools provide a prevocational orientation by establishing school gardens or laboratories near

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or around the school so that students can engage in small-scale animal husbandry, fish farming, bee-keeping, fruit tree cultivation and staple food production. Such endeavours can provide prevocational agricultural knowledge and skills related to food production and environmental protection, as well as offer more immediate nutritional support for children (World Food Programme & UNICEF, 2005). In this time of chronic droughts and food shortages, it is important for children and their families to understand and, where possible, support locally grown food.

5.2.2 Safe and protective environments

The physical environment of a school or learning space, including its surrounding neighbourhood, is crucial to children's safety and security. To increase school safety, fences should be built to protect children from harmful outside influences, such as drug peddling, sexual harassment or physical violence. Constant supervision of the school and schoolyard is usually necessary. Expansive schoolyards with many large buildings or unprotected areas may need additional staff or other security measures, such as emergency notification or alarm systems that can alert students and teachers to an ongoing emergency.

The journey to and from school is another potential source of danger. Child-friendly schools typically identify safe ways for children to travel to school and back, such as

secure walking paths in remote rural areas or protected streets in urban centres when walking to school is feasible. Parents may volunteer to help children cross busy streets in the vicinity of urban schools. Where distance is a problem, children should be provided with safe transportation, such as an organized school bus service or fare-exempt travel on public buses that go past the school. In remote locations where children live long distances from school or face risks in their school journey, such as crossing streams or rivers or risking physical attacks (particularly against girls), child-friendly schools can work with the community to arrange for students to travel together (safety in numbers) or be accompanied by responsible adults (escort pooling).

For child-friendly schools to be safe, protective learning environments, they need to deal with more than the obvious issues of physical danger and health risks. Attention should also be given to the children's emotional, psychological and physical well-being, protecting them from verbal and emotional abuse and the trauma of sexual harassment, racial discrimination, ethnic prejudice or intrusiveness by teachers and peers (Attig & Hopkins, 2006). Schools that are child-friendly must protect students from the psychological harm that can result from various kinds of punishment perpetrated by peers or by teachers, including verbal abuse, name-calling and other forms of humiliation. School authorities must also appreciate that children can be affected by prejudice and biases that result in isolation and exclusion by their peers. In countries prone to

An older school building in the Rubingo Primary School complex in Rwanda (top). The bottom photo shows a new CFS building in the same complex.

internecine violence or environmental risks, children may face the threat of another debilitating form of trauma – the persistent sense of imminent emergency.

Child-friendly schools greatly reduce or eliminate common physical threats and other types of violence found in and around schools and learning spaces, such as corporal punishment by teachers, student-on-student violence, gang fights, bullying, sexual attacks, other forms of gender-based violence and school attacks by external groups. (See Box, page 10.)

Violence and abuse may occur as a teacher-on-student phenomenon, as with corporal punishment, or as a student-on-student phenomenon or even a student-on-teacher phenomenon. In many instances, the forms of violence overlap. It is important to understand and recognize these links.

Some forms of violence may be 'hidden' and need to be exposed. Sexual assaults, rape and verbal or physical harassment of girls, for instance, are often minimized or dismissed with comments such as "boys will be boys." Other forms of violence, including corporal punishment, may be locally accepted by families and society at large, making them difficult to confront in child-friendly schools. Unless these forms of violence are challenged, children's welfare and their rights will be compromised.

Child-friendly schools need to work with parents and local communities to prevent violence. There must be clear, transparently enforced policies and procedures and firm interventions to protect children from physical harm and verbal, physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Schools must educate parents and local communities in order to eliminate acquiescence to or tolerance of violence against children. Child protection and safety can be extended to homes and communities, reinforcing the accepted codes of conduct adopted by schools. Special attention must be given to children who are particularly at risk, such as orphans, children with disabilities and children made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS. Additionally, schools

and communities must be alert to highly traumatic situations, such as civil conflict, in which children may require special counselling and psychosocial care.

Girls and boys need to speak freely about protection concerns that affect them or others. In child-friendly schools, teachers and principals should make a point of listening to children's anxieties about violence in their lives. Together, adults and children should set up systems to generate solutions to violent environments. A system may be as simple as a box in school where children can leave anonymous notes about abuse at home or violence at school, or it may be a more formal complaint mechanism. The point is that authorities in child-friendly schools should be proactive in identifying child abuse and neglect and should be prepared to act in accordance with national child protection legislation and procedures, including mandatory reporting to the police or other legal bodies.

The role of the school in regard to serious child protection issues is not to investigate them but to recognize situations needing attention and refer them to the appropriate child service agencies. Child-friendly schools should be prepared to identify, refer and assess children in need, including those who have suffered, are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. The schools should have procedures in place to ensure quick professional responses to disclosures or suspicions regarding harm to a child.

FORMS OF VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Corporal punishment refers to beatings, canings, whippings and other forms of physical punishment used by teachers and managers. Few countries have banned corporal punishment outright, and there are still many countries where corporal punishment is a regular part of schooling.

Both girls and boys are subjected to various forms of sexual violence in and around schools. The violent acts can be perpetrated by teachers or school administrators or, in other instances, by students (mostly male) against female students and sometimes even against teachers. Gender violence also includes harassment and abuse based on heterosexism and homophobia.

Bullying refers to the repeated negative actions of one or more students against another. It can include taunting, teasing and other forms of verbal abuse, physical violence and other harmful actions, and can also be expressed through new technologies – cyberbullying, for example.

While some forms of gang violence may also be categorized as bullying, the main differences between the two are the structural features of organized gangs and their use of weapons. Gangs and gang conflict may be located within a school or between schools, or they may exist outside schools but have a major impact on what happens inside schools by way of drug use, drug trafficking, extortion, gang rape and so on.

School as a 'target' refers to the ways that the school itself might attract such forms of violence as arson, vandalism and destruction of teachers' property, and how it features in less common forms of violence, such as spree shootings, hostage-taking by terrorists and kidnappings.

Source: United Nations, *UN Study on Violence against Children*, New York, 2006.

5.3   CHILDREN AT SPECIAL RISK

While all children may be exposed to threats to their security and well-being in and around school, some are at particular risk. The most vulnerable groups include children with special needs, disabilities or health impairments; those affected by abuse, discrimination, exploitation, war or natural disaster; orphans and children affected by HIV and AIDS; minority children; those in remote, rural areas or urban slums; and girls.

Children who face a combination of these factors are at an even higher risk of discrimination and physical and psychological violence, exploitation and abuse (United Nations, 2006).

Child-friendly schools pay particular attention to these groups, promoting inclusiveness and developing special measures to ensure that children's rights to health, safety and

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protection are fulfilled. Child-friendly schools and learning spaces rely on the community to help identify these children and bring them to school. To better address their needs once they are in school, teachers must be trained in specific educational methodologies and disability assessment tools. Additionally, the school must provide teaching and learning aids, supportive services such as counselling, and training in social and psychological parenting; must encourage community participation in planning, implementation and monitoring; and must sensitize communities, parents and children to the rights and needs of children with disabilities and the benefits of inclusive education.

Child-friendly schools must also be sensitive to how gender differences put children at risk. In general, girls and boys are threatened differently. For example, research suggests that boys are more likely to suffer from corporal punishment, while girls are more likely to be victims of sexual violence.

Schools need to focus on a growing phenomenon, the risk faced by children affected by or infected with HIV. These children, together with the category referred to as 'orphans and vulnerable children' , are often subjected to stigmatization and discrimination due to lack of knowledge about the disease among teachers, parents and other children. They are often excluded from school and, if in school, can be subjected to harsh treatment that may cause psychological and physical trauma. School authorities need to work closely with parents and communities to protect orphans and other vulnerable children in and around school and within the community.

Child-friendly school principles and practices provide a unique opportunity to identify and respond to the psychosocial needs of children orphaned by AIDS and other children in especially difficult circumstances. Using data on students' family situations, health, personal environment and learning achievements as tracked by the school-based information system, schools can tailor support measures to meet the needs of specific students.

Special measures to protect orphans and other vulnerable children include:

- Teacher training in counselling, building self-esteem and helping children deal with death;

- Life skills camps for orphans and guardians to foster communication, especially through art therapy;

- Collaboration in planning for the child's future;

- Peer-helping and counselling programmes;

- Livelihood skills training incorporated into the curriculum to support orphans' income-generating skills;

- Drug and sexual abuse resistance training;

- After-school interest clubs (Life Skills Development Foundation, 2000).

These types of psychosocial support measures have proved successful in integrating orphans and vulnerable children into the school community, resulting in improved mental health, reduced behaviour problems and drop-out rates and higher completion rates (Attig & Hopkins, 2006).

One of the first steps towards creating a safe, healthy and protective school environment is to conduct a systematic assessment of the extent to which girls, boys, teachers and staff feel safe and secure at school and at home. The school must evaluate current and potential threats to the children's physical and psychological well-being.

Assessment questions about healthy, safe and protective learning environments include:

1. What are the physical risks to girls and boys as they travel to and from school and while they are in school? What harm might they encounter in the school structure or from other schoolchildren?

2. What are physiological threats that may affect children's learning? Hunger? Communicable illnesses or childhood diseases? Dehydration or frostbite? HIV and AIDS?

3. What are the psychological risks faced by girls and boys in school? Bullying? Sexual violence? Discrimination? Conflict or natural disaster?

4. What are the environmental risks to the health and well-being of children and their families? Deforested terrain prone to floods? Drought? Lack of fuel for cooking? Air pollution? Unsafe, polluted drinking water?

5. Do children spend their time in activities that put them at risk of exploitation or harm?

As answers emerge, the school can determine its 'risk index', which involves understanding:

*   How a community and society define risks, violence and threats to vulnerable children;

*   Different forms of violence that are present;

*   Ways in which a school needs to develop its protective environment, such as where school personnel and communities must watch for child abductions or where road accidents are likely to occur.

Schools need to develop strategies that mitigate these risks and reflect the demands and concerns of the wider community, so that protection extends beyond the risks faced within the school alone. The assessment helps determine how much is being invested and how much more needs to be invested to make the school a safe, protective environment for all children and staff. Links with families and the community are critical in this phase.

Table 5.1 illustrates the physical, physiological and psychological risks children may face, interventions that schools can develop and the cost of implementing them. Such a table can systematically assess the risks associated with the school environment and how that environment may impact on a child's success in school. It can also compare the intervention costs and, in an environment of scarce resources (people, time, finances, etc.), set priorities for comprehensively dealing with actual and potential threats or risks to children. The list is by no means complete. Each school must thoroughly assess its risks, its environment and its school population to determine and develop appropriate interventions.

TABLE 5.1: ASSESSMENT OF RISKS, INTERVENTIONS AND COSTS IN A CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOL

Risk	School intervention	Cost
Physical		
Traffic injuries or fatalities en route to school or home	• Teach traffic safety • Assign older children or adults to accompany younger children through traffic • Build barriers between recreation and traffic areas	Minimal except for fencing, which can be expensive
Lacerations or other injuries	• Ensure that corners of furniture are rounded and well sanded, especially for younger children • Ensure that furniture is sturdy and well maintained • Keep school grounds clean, paying special attention to hazards such as broken glass, needles, blades (instruct younger children to request assistance from an adult to remove such items) • Make first aid available in the school (train teachers in basic response) • Prepare a map of environmental risks and an evacuation strategy to be used in the case of a sudden onset natural disaster	No direct costs
Drowning	• Properly cover all wells • Closely supervise or erect barriers to ditches or bodies of water deeper than 10 centimetres near schools • Teach swimming and water safety with consideration for flood-related drowning	Minimal (purchase and installation of barriers)
Violence (beating, hitting, weapons injuries, etc.)	• Advance institutional ethos of zero tolerance of violence • Establish and implement policies against corporal punishment; support alternative forms of discipline • Establish and implement rules with consequences regarding pupil-to-pupil violence • Engage law enforcement personnel as needed • Hold dialogues in the school to empower children to protect themselves • Provide adult supervision during break periods and intervene as necessary in children's arguments	Minimal (prevention is cheaper than treatment)
Sexual violence	• Develop transparent physical environment (children visible in classrooms and around school) • Establish and enforce policy of zero tolerance of teacher-to-child sexual violence • Empower children, especially adolescent girls, to identify and reduce risks and report incidents • Evaluate whether distance or remoteness of school facilities (water, school garden, latrines) puts children at risk	Minimal
Abduction	• Establish appropriate procedures (all adults register upon entering schools, etc.)	–

Risk	School intervention	Cost
Physiological		
Malaria (acquired at school or impacting attendance)	• Eliminate standing water in school grounds and surrounding area • Educate children on malaria prevention, such as use of insecticide-treated mosquito nets (collaborate with public health officials to increase supply of mosquito nets to children and their families) • Teach children and teachers to recognize malaria symptoms and seek early treatment • Engage children in community education to reduce standing water, increase use of insecticide-treated mosquito nets.	Minimal
Hunger and undernutrition	• Monitor children at risk • Establish school feeding programmes, organize regular checks by health workers for malnutrition • Support school gardens	Free, if organized through partner and supported by the community
Common childhood diseases	• Collaborate with health sector to ensure complete immunization coverage for all children in school	–
Worms, diarrhoea, cholera (diseases spread through faecal-oral transmission)	• Provide a source of safe drinking water • Provide sex-segregated latrines • Teach and encourage good hand-washing practices • Provide water for washing near the latrines • Provide a sanitary location for food preparation and distribution • Educate children regarding disease prevention	Establishment of water and sanitation facilities, maintenance costs
Acute respiratory illnes	• Provide access to clean energy for cooking in homes and schools (smokeless or solar stoves)	–
Dehydration	• Provide a source of potable water • Teach water hygiene • Educate teachers on ways to identify symptoms early and how to respond to fainting, seizures, etc.	–
HIV and AIDS	• Develop collaborations to ensure that the special needs of children with HIV and AIDS are met • Provide safe storage area for medications	–

Risk	School intervention	Cost
Psychological		
Trauma of sexual violence	• Ensure that physical injuries are dealt with • Provide counselling and support • Protect confidentiality • Empower children through prevention • Remove risks (such as the presence of a perpetrator in the school) • Develop mechanisms for reporting incidents and deal with complaints effectively to instill confidence in the process • Enforce zero tolerance rules	–
Bullying (can also be a physical risk)	• Provide counselling to deal with children's damaged self-esteem and feelings of fear and humiliation • Establish anti-bullying programmes, if appropriate • Provide adult supervision before and after school and at breaks • Enforce rules with regard to treatment of peers	–
Trauma caused by an emergency, conflict or forced migration due to climate change	• Assess children for effects (such as loss of concentration, change in achievement levels, frequent distracting thoughts) • Reduce risks to children and build their sense of security in their environment • Develop counselling programmes with professional counsellors • Train teachers to identify and support children at risk	–
Prejudice or exclusion	• Support ethos of inclusion and respect • Encourage dialogue regarding differences and develop understanding • Build teachers' capacity to identify equity issues • Develop mechanisms for reporting incidents and deal with complaints effectively to instil confidence in the process	–

5.4.1 Mapping safe spaces

Unlike school mapping, which determines if there are enough schools for pupils in a community (see Chapter 8), mapping safe spaces enables a school community to assess the violence children may experience in and around school. Girls' and boys' participation in violence prevention and mapping safe spaces should be at the core of a child-friendly school's protective environment. When boys, girls and young people map out safe and unsafe environments, there is often a difference between what girls, boys and young people perceive as safe space.

After the 'risk index' is completed, the most at-risk groups accounted for and interventions decided, a child-friendly school needs to develop an emergency preparedness plan. Such plans may be more elaborate for schools in earthquake or flood zones, but all child-friendly schools need a plan so that everyone in the school will know what to do in case of a health threat or other emergency.

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SOUTH AFRICA: SAFETY AND RISK FACTOR RESEARCH

In 2004, UNICEF and the Limpopo Department of Education (LDoE) contracted the University of Pretoria to conduct research in Limpopo (South Africa) that examined issues related to safety and threats for learners at the foundational (Grades R through 3), intermediate (Grades 4 through 7) and senior (Grades 8 through 12) phases.

The research was to provide baseline data and potential strategies for longer-term school-based and community-based programmes to develop child-friendly schools and schools as 'centres for care and support' in Limpopo. The study also was to identify environmental (school, family, community) and individual risk factors that threaten healthy development of the individual, and the protective factors perceived to be essential in supporting and building resilience. The research was to ultimately promote learners' healthy development. The protective factors could focus on learners while the environmental and individual risk factors could simultaneously be examined and alleviated.

Three districts in the province – Bohlabela, Sekhukhune and Vhembe - were selected as research sites by the LDoE based on data related to poverty, location and number of learners. Schools within the districts were selected to participate.

Learners were selected through random sampling. Their ages ranged from 3 to 21 years. In all, 2,391 children participated, 1,200 girls and 1,191 boys. Community forums, composed of various stakeholders involved in safety and children's issues, were conducted in two phases.

The survey's overall findings indicated that the respondents felt safe at home (87 per cent), at school (86 per cent) and in the classroom (85 per cent). Fewer learners felt safe on the playground (66 per cent) or on their way to school (61 per cent). This generally matched the results from open-ended questions, which found that the children from Grades R through 12 in all three districts felt that the community had the most to offer with respect to safety and

assets for children, followed by the family and school. However, school was also seen as having the most potential danger to safety.

All learners in the three districts mentioned specific ways to improve their safety. Mentioned most frequently was facilitation of learning in schools, followed by individual emotional aspects, and availability of structure and channels for involvement in the community and schools. Facilitation of learning included providing environments conducive to teaching and learning; engaging and well-trained teachers; schools that encourage community and family involvement, offer extramural activities and life skills programmes, and are characterized by an academic climate of high expectations as well as mentorship and mutual respect.

Overall, the most common theme regarding threats to safety was the exposure to and threat of crime. On a community level, and reaffirmed by the community forums in the three districts, this sub-theme signals awareness of high crime levels and such acts as murder and kidnapping. In terms of the family system, the sub-theme referred to active encouragement of criminal behaviour and a fear of crime and exposure to weapons. The lack of future orientation, poor role models, sexual behaviour, and HIV and AIDS were identified with the least frequency by the children as threats to their safety.

HIV and AIDS and sexual behaviour were hardly mentioned by the learners, both boys and girls. It was interpreted from participant responses that HIV and AIDS are still too stigmatized to discuss openly. In this regard, participants identified the family as being a risk factor and related sub-themes documented the effects of the pandemic on the family: discrimination and labelling, related chores (unsafe, too many, burdensome), emotional neglect (insufficient care or love, rejection), absentee or uninterested parents, and a lack of supervision and protection.

Community forums also emphasized individual, school and community factors. The community forums, in the second phase, helped identify possible strategies to create conducive and safe environments for children/learners.

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Conclusion and recommendations

The findings suggest that there is value in the creation of child-friendly schools and schools as centres of care and support for children. This is especially relevant in the current context, where children indicated that the home and family are not always a place of safety. Rather, the community and schools were seen to provide protection. However, schools have to first deal with the numerous threats that children feel in order to be effective as protective places. Based on the findings, the following practical arrangements are suggested:

- Strengthen intersectoral community forums that were established as part of this research to further the recommendations and develop safety plans for children and schools;

- Fast-track the infrastructure development for schools, especially in those areas that affect security, such as school fencing and repair of broken windows;

- Organize pickup points where children can be picked up and taken home at the end of the day, and organize safe transport or walking clubs so that children can walk home in groups rather than alone;

- Ensure that there is adequate teaching staff at school at all times, for example, one or two teachers to supervise children during breaks and on the playgrounds;

- Ensure that teachers know who is authorized to pick up the child, ensuring that the learner is only allowed to leave the school premises with a specified adult;

- Train guidance counselors and teachers to be able to provide psychosocial support and referrals for children at risk.

Because children identified the importance of community, various stakeholders (members of non-governmental and community-based organizations, community leaders and others) should be trained on early identification of children and households in distress and where to make referrals for such families or children;

Extension of an integrated plan for early child development to the intermediate and senior phases should be considered. (Feasibility should be examined in terms of required resources, financial and human, to determine if it is practical).

Because children relied heavily on positive interpersonal skills and traits as coping and safety themes, communication skills should be taught through a 'life orientation' part of the new curriculum. There is a need to fast-track the training of teachers on 'life orientation' or, in the interim, allow non-governmental organizations to provide such teaching.

In Sekhukhune and Vhembe, especially at the senior grades, children feel less safe on the school premises. There is the need for future research to determine the factors contributing to these feelings and to devise ways of addressing these concerns and making the schools safer for the learners, both boys and girls

Failure to mention HIV and AIDS directly is also a matter of concern. Children, even those in the higher grades, did not acknowledge HIV and AIDS as a threat. With current figures indicating that young people – especially girls – are most at risk and the fastest growing proportion of the population infected with HIV, this must be addressed urgently. Students' not directly referring to HIV and AIDS implies that there is not a welcoming environment for those in crisis to feel comfortable discussing problems, such as being infected with HIV or having a sick parent at home, with teachers. One of the purposes of life skills is to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS and responsible sexual behaviour for young people; given that 'life orientation' is now mandatory and a key learning area, it needs to be re-examined to ensure that it is meeting its objectives.

The need for integrated HIV-awareness campaigns, including dealing with stigma and discrimination and providing appropriate messages and improving teachers' expertise in discussing issues related to HIV and AIDS (for example, without judgements), is clear. This means that teachers need to confront their own biases about HIV and AIDS. This can result from ongoing HIV training and interventions for educators as well as from creating an environment conducive for teachers to seek assistance if and when they need it themselves.

Source: Construction of Safety and Risk Factors by Learners in the Limpopo Province, 2006.

5.5.1 Legal frameworks

An important guarantor of a healthy, safe and protective environment is the legislative framework that guarantees children's rights to quality education and protection. The CRC, along with many other international instruments, offers guidance to governments on legislative and policy reform needed to ensure children's rights to health, protection and well-being.

Strategies and interventions to shore up healthy, safe and protective environments begin with a review of existing legislation to make certain that all forms of physical and psychological violence against children in school and at home are prohibited and that suitable mechanisms for recourse and complaint by children and parents are in place. The legislation needs to guarantee children's rights to health and development.

Where adequate legal provisions exist, assessment of how rigorously they are being implemented is required. If the assessment shows a

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SETTING SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS IN SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

111. Bearing in mind that all children must be able to learn free from violence, that schools should be safe and child friendly and curricula should be rights based, and also that schools provide an environment in which attitudes that condone violence can be changed and non-violent values and behaviour learned, I recommend that States:

 (a) Encourage schools to adopt and implement codes of conduct applicable to all staff and students that confront all forms of violence, taking into account gender-based stereotypes and behaviour and other forms of discrimination;

(b) Ensure that school principals and teachers use non-violent teaching and learning strategies and adopt classroom management and disciplinary measures that are not based on fear, threats, humiliation or physical force;

(c) Prevent and reduce violence in schools through specific programmes which address the whole school environment including through encouraging the building of skills such as non-violent approaches to conflict resolution, implementing anti-bullying policies and promoting respect for all members of the school community;

(d) Ensure that curricula, teaching processes and other practices are in full conformity with the provisions and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, free from references actively or passively promoting violence and discrimination in any of its manifestations.

Source: United Nations, *UN Study on Violence against Children*, New York, 2006.

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failure of adequate legal provisions, strong advocacy to incorporate child protection into legislation is necessary.

The *UN Study on Violence against Children* offers concrete recommendations in this regard. It calls on countries to strengthen national and local commitments to end violence, enact legislation that prohibits all forms of violence, prioritize prevention through policies and programmes that address risk factors, promote non-violent values and awareness, build capacity of those who care for children through such mechanisms as codes of conduct, ensure child participation, create accessible reporting systems and address gender dimensions of violence.

One way to ensure that a government's legislation reflects its commitment to realizing the rights of children as expressed in the CRC is through the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Each year, this body reports on the progress of countries in upholding their obligations to protect children.

5.5.2 Policy frameworks and setting standards

Child-friendly schools are dependent on national, regional and school-level policy frameworks and standards to institutionalize healthy, safe and secure measures. Policies and standards should provide essential services for children, including school health programmes, micronutrient supplementation, deworming, vaccinations, school-feeding initiatives, and HIV and AIDS care and support. In many developing countries, services and social institutions, including the family, hospitals and health centres, and water and sanitation infrastructures, are under siege from poverty, political conflict, natural disasters and the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Therefore schools are forced to step up when other institutions cannot.

Some governments have introduced Learning Plus, an initiative that has expanded school functions to include social services delivery to children. This entails collaboration among government ministries, such as health, social welfare, water, local government and lands, women's affairs and justice, in systematically assessing risks to children's health, safety and security in and around schools. In countries such as Lesotho, Rwanda, Swaziland and Zambia, Learning Plus is part of child-friendly schools because it is understood that providing essential social services for children through schools is critical to learning.

At this juncture, it has become clear that effective policies are the backbone of legislation that guarantees children's right to quality education. Although the CRC has been almost universally ratified, the effective protection of children against violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination is not yet a reality in many places. Despite improved legislation, often policies and government practices do not change significantly. Countries need to strengthen policies and institutional frameworks and set standards for education quality that include specific guidance on health, safety and security (hygiene and sanitation, first aid, safety of school furniture and equipment, protection from violence). In addition, policies

need to be in place to guarantee the right to education to children with disabilities. These policies need to be developed with full participation of all stakeholders – communities, parents and both children and adults with disabilities – and should include international best practices and local values and realities (UNICEF EAPRO, 2003).

Child-friendly schools do not exist in a vacuum, but rather in the context of local, district and national education systems and other sectors and ministries such as health and justice. To support schools, education systems need to develop policies and set standards that support the dimensions

of a child-friendly school. They must establish the policies needed to ensure that buildings are safe and clean, employ a fair ratio of female and male teachers, and enforce codes of teacher conduct. The education system should also institute school guidelines for safety and security that are known by all stakeholders and enforced by school management. Standard practices should also be established and used by teachers so that children can speak up freely and safely if they are aware of violence.

Beyond the education system, state laws and government administrative rules that criminalize abuse of students and support prosecution of violators

must be utilized.[1] Policies should proactively address suspected abuse, sexual harassment, violence and bullying, as well as guarantee that pregnant schoolgirls and young mothers can continue their education. At the national level, media attention and civil society can help by publicizing child protection issues and contributing to a broader understanding of child protection in society.

In creating healthy, safe and protective environments, governments need to coordinate efforts through a sector-wide approach, ensuring integrated government policy. Life skills education for HIV prevention, for instance, should be included in wider education sector plans and become firmly rooted in the official curriculum and related teacher training. This could be done within a support framework that, alongside life skills education, addresses issues of children affected by HIV and AIDS, care and support interventions including protection, counselling and treatment, and solid workplace policies that ensure that teachers and other staff are able to take care of their own lives and those of the children and young people in their care.

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[1] The six elements of UNICEF's Protective Environments Framework are a governmental commitment to fulfilling protection rights; legislation and enforcement; attitudes, traditions, customs, behaviour and practices; open discussion of, and engagement with, child protection issues; community capacity; and children's life skills, knowledge and participation. How protectively these elements function and how they interact differ from one society to another and may vary in relation to different types of abuse. Programmatic, policy and advocacy approaches need to be tailored accordingly.

**PHILIPPINES: AN UNRULY SCHOOL BLOSSOMS
INTO A CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOL**

When Faviolito Alberca became principal of Cebu City Central School (CCC) in 2002, the public school was a place to avoid. Rowdy gang wars rocked dirty, smelly classrooms that housed more than 6,000 students. Faculty and students lacked discipline, and tardiness, petty squabbles and poor learning were common. Parents who had escorted their children to school roamed the corridors freely, even after classes had begun. Gossip and shouting matches among parents were common. Principals did not last; there had been three in just two years.

Instead of quitting, Mr. Alberca took immediate steps to rectify the situation. Guided by the vision of a 'child-friendly school', he led the school in developing an improvement plan that set specific goals, policies, standards and actions. The plan was regularly monitored to achieve consistent day-to-day performance results from teachers, parents, pupils and other school personnel.

After a profile of the student body, including information on their families and home circumstances, showed stark poverty, with more than 80 per cent of parents impoverished, jobless or engaged in marginal work and unable to take on school activities, CCC went an extra mile. Believing that impoverished parents meant malnourished children who perform poorly in school, the school initiated skills-training courses for parents. Teachers helped some parents find jobs. Other parents were hired by the school to repair broken windows, paint and fix plumbing, using their new skills.

News travels fast in densely populated communities. Central's concern for the poorest was quickly noted. And the poorest families reciprocated by supporting the school wholeheartedly. They provided free labour, fixed and cleaned the surroundings, supported their children, helped teachers and raised resources for the school. They are also the proudest when declaring that CCC is now comparable to a quality private school.

Adapted from 'Grime, Cloth Slippers and Hope', Mercado, J., *Sun Star, Mindanao Bulletin, Gold Star Daily, Zambaonga Scribe, Visayan Daily Star*, Visayas (Philippines), 1 March 2005.

5.6   SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

In protective environments, the school ethos and culture should enable teachers to organize and manage their classrooms in ways that encourage children to participate in the learning and teaching process. For instance, certain successful mother-tongue literacy programmes used in Africa have been structured in ways that allow teachers and students to interact on a daily basis, even in large classes. School managers and parents are trained to support and reinforce this approach from a management and governance perspective. Where there is meaningful child participation and teacher engagement in support of the learning process, there tends to be less violence in schools.

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Children and teachers in Malawi reported that as their teachers learned to do continuous assessment and regularly involve students in monitoring learning progress, the teachers felt proud of their teaching and refrained from using corporal punishment in the classroom (Miske, 2003).

Children's membership on school committees and participation in school government or parliaments, anti-drug and crime prevention campaigns, or after-school activities including sports and the arts produced alternative forms of discipline and contributed to a violence-free learning environment.

5.6.1 Teachers' roles and responsibilities

In child-friendly schools, teachers should strive for relevant and child-centred teaching and learning. First,

teachers must learn about healthy, safe environments and in turn teach key concepts to children. School heads should organize the schools, and teachers should organize their classes to support a clean, healthy, protective environment for learning. For this to work as efficiently as possible, each classroom should do a risk assessment and prepare and maintain a disaggregated register of students, teachers and key community partners. Teachers should note orphans and other vulnerable children, in particular. A similar register or database should be compiled and kept at the national level.

Preservice and in-service training should be offered to teachers on life skills, child-centred and participatory teaching methods, peer education and ways to promote gender-sensitivity in classrooms. This may involve such simple strategies as teachers asking students to keep track of how many times the teacher calls on girls or

boys during a lesson to ensure equal opportunities for students to participate. In Kenya, for instance, where the Government initiated a nationwide policy endorsing child-friendly schools and free primary education, the child-friendly approach includes teacher training in child rights and protection. In South Africa, the Nelson Mandela Foundation supports the child-friendly school approach and focuses on preventing violence and fostering a creative learning environment.

Teachers and other school personnel need to be educated on the many forms of violence and ways to assess violence in and around schools. With such training and preparedness, teachers will recognize early signs of domestic violence through children's behaviour changes or physical injuries. Because of their regular contact with children, teachers are often the first persons to whom children will disclose abuse and exploitation. Teachers can help report and refer such cases in order to prevent further abuse and provide necessary health care or psychosocial support. Early warning signs of violence and abuse may include absences, disappearances or dropping out of school.

Most teachers show the girls and boys in their classes the same protective care they show their own children or siblings. But there are cases of teachers harassing girls or boys and violating children's rights. Schools must have a zero tolerance policy for such harassment or violence by teachers against girls or boys. Policies should be in place and enforced so that teachers who violate children will be prosecuted and expelled from teaching, not simply transferred to another school as occurs in some countries.

FEMALE CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Most teachers in schools for refugees in Guinea and Sierra Leone are men, as few women have completed higher teacher education. To address concerns of gender violence against girls in the schools, the International Rescue Committee recruited and trained female classroom assistants to work alongside male teachers in some refugee school classrooms in these countries. An evaluation of this pilot project found that the presence of the classroom assistants led to significant decreases in pregnancies and dropouts and increases in girls' attendance and academic achievement. In addition, girls – and boys, too – reported that they felt more comfortable in their classrooms. The students also said they were pleased that the classroom assistants were reaching out beyond schools and following up in homes.

Source: The International Rescue Committee, *Classroom Assistant Professional Development Training Manual*, July 2003.

5.6.2 Children's participation

Active participation is important for children, teachers and the community in child-friendly schools. For children, participation may involve peer learning, various other child-to-child initiatives, school clubs (health or sport clubs), student government or children's school parliaments. Such activities can help children shape the teaching-learning process and encourage them to take home and share messages on good practices related to health, safety, nutrition and so forth.

How children spend their time in and out of school is important in determining their safety and protection. Rather than allowing unstructured time to possibly result in negative or dangerous behaviour, children's free time in school can be spent on constructive activities. Children and teachers can routinely take 'safety walks' around the school during free time to see what needs to be fixed and cleaned. They can do their part in maintaining and improving the school environment.

Worldwide, governments define the standard time for teaching specific primary-level material at "usually 850–1,000 instructional hours or 180–220 days per school year." In poor countries, however, teaching time is often lower because of a "40 per cent loss in instructional time and reduced learning outcomes" due to overcrowded conditions and split shifts (Abadzi, 2007). In Latin America, studies have shown that public school students received between 550 and 800 hours of class time compared to an estimated 1,000 hours for private school students, and also that the content was "not connected to the reality of the students" (Portillo, 1999). A simple calculation reveals that in the best cases, only an estimated 11 per cent of a primary schoolchild's life involves school-based learning. This translates into children having a significant amount of additional hours for other learning and participatory activities.[2]

ETHIOPIA: GIRLS' EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Communities in Ethiopia have established Girls' Education Advisory Committees (GEACs) to increase girls' access to education of a high standard. GEACs have organized girls' clubs that are safe places for girls to talk, where they are encouraged to speak about problems of harassment and abuse and to report those problems to the committees. Other GEAC activities include disciplinary committees to hold teachers accountable, 'police' to protect girls on their way to and from school, separate latrines for girls, promoting the use of female teachers, training boys and girls on how to treat each other respectfully, counselling girls and enlisting religious and clan leaders to stop abductions and child marriages.

As a result, in one primary school, 217 girls were added to the rolls in 2003 and the drop-out rate of girls fell from 57 per cent to 19 per cent.

Source: World Report on Violence against Children, United Nations, 2006.

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[2] This calculation is a rough estimate based on dividing the estimated number of instructional hours per year by the total number of hours in a year.

At the most basic level, children need to be free to speak about child protection concerns that affect them or others. Teachers and school personnel need to listen to girls and boys to be aware of the violence they experience. Systems must be set up that take children's voices into account and involve girls and boys in developing remedies to violent or potentially violent environments. Children should learn how to protect themselves and be involved in formulating appropriate school rules and disciplinary measures for infractions, including alternatives to corporal punishment.

For children to be less vulnerable, girls and boys need to know their right to be free from abuse and need to be warned of the dangers of trafficking, sexual exploitation and other threats to their safety. A child who knows about these risks will less likely fall victim to abuse.

Beyond the school level, child-friendly schools can influence decision-making and be agents of change within society. In a protective environment, teachers and children are free to discuss issues of child marriage or child labour and thus contribute to changes in norms and practices regarding violence and child abuse. Schools can have an impact on gender relationships in the society by ensuring that schools are safe and that girls have good

role models, such as senior female teachers and female head teachers.

During a humanitarian crisis, the social and political context is likely to be threatened or destroyed. Innovative strategies are needed in these circumstances to guide and support adolescents in contributing to community life and the protection of younger children. Young people (10 to 24 years old) and their organizations should be considered key partners during crisis and post-crisis times. In Colombia, the Return to Happiness programme invites adolescents to provide psychosocial support to younger children through play therapy. Colombian refugee communities across the border in Panama have also implemented the project in child-friendly spaces inside the camps. (See Box, page 27.)

Participation of children and adolescents in school and community life is the most effective way to develop their potential and increase their protection, especially during times of conflict and crisis. Young people need the opportunity to express themselves and contribute their opinions and ideas to the social dialogue. This builds self-esteem and helps them find their role in the community. Further, children and adolescents infuse the social agenda with creativity, energy and resourcefulness.

COLOMBIA: RETURN TO HAPPINESS

In the mid-1990s, in the context of the prolonged civil war that was tearing the country apart and causing massive population displacements, the Return to Happiness programme was introduced in Colombia to provide urgent psychological support to children affected by violence. A crucial component enabled families and communities to take part in the recovery process. Adolescent volunteers, supervised by teachers, were central to this endeavour. Young volunteers were trained in 'play therapy' and taught how to encourage the trust and hope of younger children through games, art, puppetry, song and storytelling. A 'knapsack of dreams' was prepared that included handmade materials, such as rag dolls, puppets, wooden toys, books and songs. Parents, teachers, church volunteers, health workers and community leaders assisted as supervisors or trainers. The programme enriched children's lives and created safer, more supportive families and communities, even in the midst of war.

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MALI: CHILD PARTICIPATION THROUGH CHILDREN'S GOVERNMENTS

A major challenge for primary schools in Mali is access. In 2004–2005, the gross enrolment rate was 73 per cent, with a 21 point gap between girls and boys. Completing the school cycle is also an uphill climb. A poor, rural girl, for instance, has a 17 per cent chance of completing Grade 6. A third challenge is reinforcing classroom knowledge and life skills, since 75 per cent of Mali's teachers are contract employees with minimal training and whose teaching methods remain traditional and non-engaging.

For children, other issues are important as well: improving school conditions, especially in areas of hygiene, health and protection; learning about and practising equality between boys and girls; lowering the absentee and drop-out rates. Anchoring life skills, such as taking initiative, personal responsibility, helping others, self-esteem and citizenship, is also important.

Child government helps provide concrete responses to these challenges by enabling children to take active roles in the life and management of their schools. After a two-month training course on child rights, child-friendly and girl-friendly schools, children analyse their school. They choose areas in need of attention, form committees for each identified problem area and elect ministers, half of whom are girls. The committees are made up of students from all grades, and each committee develops its own set of activities and puts it into practice. The child government meets regularly with teaching staff and frequently with the parent association. A new child government is formed every year.

Child government is a teaching tool. Children's participation through role playing promotes change in living conditions and behaviours in school. The student government is a learning exercise on such interdisciplinary issues as education, health and protection; with teachers' support, students are the actors and decision makers. Regional teams of school counsellors train teachers in the schools, who in turn train their students. A child government guide adapted for children was provided to students and teachers. By October 2005, 1,500 out of approximately 7,000 schools in Mali had a child government. Today, it has become a nationally approved strategy of the Ministry of Education.

In May and June 2005, an evaluation of child governments in 45 schools found that there was gender parity in general, but that tasks were conducted and tested in an unequal manner. In the child government context, children were easily capable of expressing themselves. Enabling girls to make their voices heard and take on more responsibility has had a positive effect on the psychology and behaviour of all children. Students developed new competencies, in particular relating to health and hygiene (managing drinking water and washing hands, for example) as well as in educational and school support activities. These attitudes reinforced student groups and also facilitated communication between students and teachers.

Several areas were found to be needing improvement. Child government initiatives were not correctly or sufficiently implemented by teachers within the curriculum to reinforce students' learning and life skills. Teachers and school staff together needed to become more involved in students' initiatives so that they could provide teaching and technical support to the students. Training also needed to be redirected to focus on pedagogic aspects and the role of the teacher.

Despite these shortcomings, child governments have allowed children to become aware of their rights and learn that these rights have practical implications for themselves, their schools and their communities.

5.6.3 Protective aspects of the curriculum

The curriculum in a child-friendly school must be well designed and well implemented. The children entering the school should be confident that they will acquire basic tools for learning and a range of knowledge and skills in various subjects that enables them to know about, participate in and contribute to their community and society. The skills-building curriculum should include critical information on nutrition and health, water and sanitation, environmental education for sustainable development, climate change adaptation and ways to deal with HIV and AIDS. Students should also participate in peace education within a non-discriminatory school culture.

A curriculum dedicated to Learning Plus helps countries tackle major challenges such as HIV and AIDS. (See Box below.) Interventions for prevention, protection, care and support of children in schools require various government ministries to

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LESOTHO: FOCUS ON HIV AND AIDS, SCALING UP AND INTERSECTORAL COOPERATION

The development of child-friendly schools in Lesotho is undertaken within a broader vision of access and completion of quality education for all children. The overall goal is to break the cycle of deprivation, poverty, discrimination and exclusion. With adult HIV-prevalence at almost 30 per cent, HIV and AIDS awareness is of particular importance, especially for children and young adults, who make up the highest proportion of new infections. Therefore, mainstreaming HIV and AIDS awareness, life skills and protection issues within schools and learning opportunities is a specific feature of the child-friendly school framework in Lesotho. Important efforts for scaling up these activities are under way. The National Curriculum and Development Centre is reviewing and revising the national curriculum to ensure it is HIV- and AIDS-responsive, gender-sensitive and life skills-based, and it is collaborating with the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to formulate a comprehensive, holistic school health policy.

work together to ensure that children have access to essential services.

Life skills curricula enable children to develop listening and speaking skills, communication and negotiation skills, assertiveness and empathy. They learn self-protection, ways to recognize perilous situations, cope with and solve problems, make decisions and develop self-awareness and self-esteem.

When life skills include human rights education, children come to understand the nature of basic rights as set forth in the CRC and to apply human rights standards to real situations, from interpersonal to global levels. Children begin to think critically, grappling with dilemmas presented when people's rights come into conflict, such as in disputes caused by safe water scarcity or other environmental problems. Two other life skills components with implications for the curriculum and human rights are non-discriminatory education and peace education.

Non-discriminatory education challenges children's stereotypes of groups of people based on gender, race, ethnicity, disability and other characteristics. It aims to prevent children from stigmatizing particular groups and end the pernicious effects of stigmatization on those ostracized groups. For example, if children from one ethnic group hear that children from another group are dirty or lazy, they may believe the rumours without questioning. Additionally, marginalized groups may internalize the stereotypes.

In non-discriminatory education, children confront stereotypes as they learn to understand, accept and appreciate cultural, class, gender and ability differences. They learn to ask questions about the knowledge passed on to them by books, the media, adults and other children. For example, if a science or mathematics textbook shows mostly pictures of men, children will learn to ask routinely, "Where are the women?" They will learn to challenge the false belief that girls and women cannot perform well in mathematics and science or that boys cannot do certain handicrafts. Finally, teachers and students openly explore issues of discrimination and the denial of human rights in the context of the underlying power structures that create inequality within a society.

In peace education, girls and boys learn how to avoid conflict and how to mediate and resolve conflicts. They learn to understand and challenge images of others as 'the enemy' presented in books, television and other media. Students begin to examine the causes of conflict, the relative merits of cooperation and competition and the place of trust within positive interpersonal relationships. The peace education curriculum pays attention to interpersonal violence, such as child abuse, bullying and harassment, which typically involve both direct and indirect violence including psychological violence.

Peace-building and conflict-resolution skills can be relevant and useful when such resources as water, food and household energy are scarce. Additionally, peace education provides information about telephone hotlines, medical care and other services for victims of abuse, and about the risks of exploitation and trafficking.

Since the school day is short and topics are many, teachers and those

who set national curriculum timetables must find ways to integrate these essential life skills into the curriculum along with health, nutrition, peace-building and non-discrimination. Time must be set aside for specific lessons in these areas.

In emergency situations, standard curriculum practices may be disrupted and key teaching and learning materials may be lost. In conflict or post-conflict situations, the curriculum may no longer appear acceptable or relevant for the changing circumstances. This frequently creates an opportunity to develop a different curriculum, better adapted to the new situation and local needs. In constructing this new curriculum, the emergency situation is considered. A curriculum that integrates healing activities, such as dance, storytelling and music, not only affects children's ability to learn but also their capacity to heal and recover from the post-traumatic stress of being a victim or perpetrator of violence. Throughout an emergency, it is important for teachers and community workers to organize recreational opportunities for children.

BATIK PAINTING IN THAILAND: A LIFE RESTORED THROUGH ART

After narrowly escaping death in the tsunami that struck his home on Thailand's Phi Phi Island on 26 December 2004, Songklod took solace in batik painting, a healing form of art in which the bright colors he splashes on the cloth canvases help blot out bad memories.

"I was depressed after the tsunami about losing my house and seeing my parents lose their jobs," says Songklod, a shy 14-year-old. "Batik painting helps cheer me up, calm me down and improve my concentration."

UNICEF and the Thailand Ministry of Education's Non-Formal Education Department introduced batik painting to promote psychosocial recovery for children at the Nong Kok temporary shelter, home to more than 70 households from the island.

The batik centre has slowly grown into a small community business from which children can earn income to help their families. Paintings made at the centre are sold for 100 to 1,000 baht (US$2.50 to US$25).

Naturally talented, Songklod is one of the centre's most promising painters. He is pleased that he can earn money to help his family while his father looks for work. The money also makes it possible for him to go to school, which his family could not afford before the tsunami.

"It's so good to go back to school where I have friends and can practice drawing and painting during the art class. My art teacher always gives me tips and new techniques to improve my painting skills," he says.

When asked about his plans, the usually reticent Songklod eagerly explains: "I want to continue doing batik painting. I really enjoy it. And I hope one day to open a batik shop in Krabi." In the meantime, he enjoys going to school and painting batik – two opportunities that came his way after the tsunami.

Source: Rodraksa, Natthinee, *Building Back Better,* UNICEF, 2005.

5.6.4 Partnerships with the community

All stakeholders are needed to support and sustain a protective environment. The relationship between the school and the community is reciprocal. For instance, child-friendly school students bring lessons of daily care and health, hygiene and environmental education to their families and communities. Families and communities in turn provide financial and other support to maintain and repair the school facilities. Teachers, parents and community members are actively involved in the planning and implementation of educational monitoring and evaluation via parent-teacher associations and other groups. In child-friendly schools, families and community members participate in school activities, after-school programmes and curricula preparation.

One challenge in developing a child-friendly school is violence prevention. Violence as defined by some families, communities and countries is considered acceptable behaviour in other areas. For example, corporal punishment – beatings, canings, other physical punishment – has been banned in some countries, while many countries still consider it to be an essential part of school discipline.

By bringing girls, boys, families, teachers and community members into the discussions, child protection issues – such as corporal punishment, sexual abuse, early marriage, child

labour and other forms of exploitation – can be brought to the fore. Schools can influence attitudes and behaviours and can help break the silence around sensitive topics. By advocating for child rights and protection, school officials, teachers, parents and children can become catalysts for positive change in the lives of individual children, in communities and within society as a whole.

Child-friendly schools work with families, communities, and medical and legal professionals to support children in need of special protection and help parents understand and respect children's rights. At the community level, health workers, teachers, police, social workers and others must be equipped with the skills and knowledge required to identify and respond to child protection problems.

5.6.5 Monitoring and evaluation in protective environments

A healthy, safe, protective environment for children requires an effective monitoring system that tracks children's health and health care, monitors school safety records, registers the incidence and nature of child abuse and has informed and strategic responses. The monitoring and evaluation system is more effective when it is participatory and locally based. Schools can monitor children's absence or disappearance from school and can intervene early if, for instance, a child enters the labour force. Schools can specifically monitor girls' attendance and drop-out rates, which often are influenced by child marriage or female genital mutilation/cutting.

PHILIPPINES: MONITORING PUPILS THROUGH STUDENT PROFILES

In Francisco Benitez Elementary School, a public school in a poor, congested community in the heart of the Tondo district of Manila, teachers are constantly concerned about students who are absent, at risk of failing, involved in gang wars or unruly, rebellious and disruptive in behaviour. Student profiling, an innovative activity that is part of the child-friendly school approach, revealed to teachers that the students encountering difficulties often came from families facing extreme poverty and other difficult situations. Moreover, most of the students who were frequently absent and at risk of failing worked in the evening as vendors and scavengers. Likewise, they found that a number of the children having problems in school were victims of sexual abuse and exploitation.

With this knowledge came an understanding and resolve to work with parents, communities, social workers and lawyers to help children at risk. As a result, child abuse cases were filed in court; abused children were referred to social workers for psychosocial counselling; and working students were placed in afternoon sessions and provided with tutorial classes so they were able to complete the school year and move on to the next higher grade. Teachers, on the other hand, became more sensitive and responsive to students manifesting attitudinal and behavioural problems. One teacher commented, "Now I know that there is no such thing as a problem child – only a child with a problem."

For further details, see <www.unicef.org/teachers/forum/0302.htm>.

In emergency situations, the government, UNICEF and other agencies monitor educational activities run by governments and non-governmental organizations as implementing partners. Monitoring and evaluation may involve working with partners to develop simple ways of collecting and updating data on children in and out of school or identifying teachers and other resources who can contribute to the re-establishment and further development of primary and secondary education. Soon after classes are up and running, partners review how programme interventions are progressing and identify areas for improvement.

Normal monitoring criteria may not apply in an emergency. Class sizes can be exceptionally large and lessons may not be given in a traditional classroom setting. But children learn, and monitoring continues to be important for both education quality and community-building around the educational process.

5.7   CHILD-FRIENDLY EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES

Violence is an overwhelming psychosocial blow to children and families. The social, psychological, moral and emotional losses suffered, the unrelenting fear of loss and the actual death of parents and caregivers can be as damaging as not having sufficient food, water and health care. One of the most urgent tasks when conflicts loom is finding ways to protect children. Protection in this sense means not only defending children against physical aggression, but also ensuring that their full range of rights and needs is respected and fulfilled.

The strategy UNICEF and its partners use to ease trauma and bolster children's well-being in unstable conditions is to establish safe and protective learning environments. In an emergency, the child-friendly space approach offers a protective environment by engaging various sectors and charging them with the main objective of providing children with protection and access to basic services. Based on the whole-child approach of the CRC, child-friendly spaces integrate all the components that contribute to the protection and fulfilment of a child's rights.

The child-friendly space approach integrates health services, primary education, childcare, nutrition, psychosocial development, environmental education and structured recreation in a protective environment that is both family-focused and community-based. (See diagram, page 35.) The centres have programmes for preschool children, primary-school-age children, youth and parents.

A key to the success of the child-friendly space approach is that children, their families and their communities are all partners in planning camp and community

TURKEY: RESPONSE TO A CATASTROPHE

In response to the massive earthquake that struck the Marmara region of Turkey in 1999, the child-friendly school/environment initiative was developed as an integrated package including health and nutrition, hygiene, water and sanitation services, early childcare and mother support, primary education and recreation activities, and psychosocial support and youth activities. A set of minimum standards was established based on average tent camp populations. Education components included temporary tent facilities, educational kits and materials, including special needs kits, teacher-support activities and psychosocial training support. Early childhood activities and youth activities were also included. The reactivation of the school system emerged as an effective channel for other relief activities, with the school system used to distribute nutritional supplements, offer psychosocial support, and help register and locate survivors.

EXAMPLE OF CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACES[3]

Primary school

Mother support

Play area

Water point

Preschool

Psychosocial support

Primary health care

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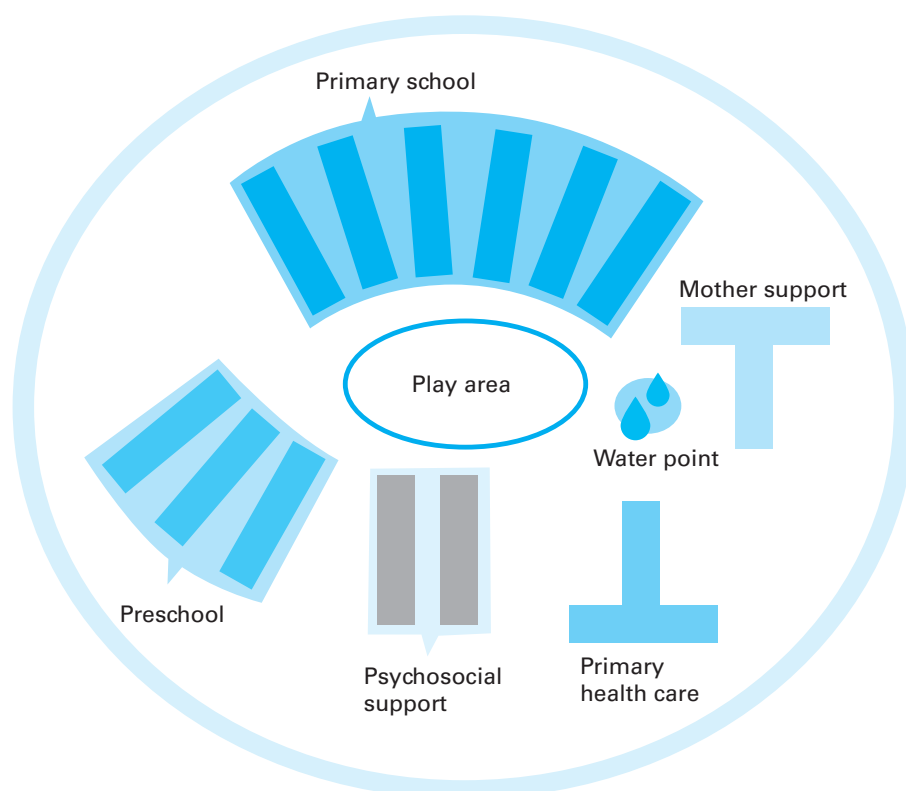
[3] Minimum standards per 1,500 population: primary schooling space, 300 square metres; preschool space, 150 square metres; primary-health-care space, 110 square metres; mother support space, 110 square metres; psychosocial support space, 110 square metres.

activities, so planning itself becomes a healing activity. Child-friendly spaces also focus on empowering families and communities worn down physically and emotionally by armed conflicts or natural disasters and facing increased poverty. Identifying and training teachers from within the displaced population motivates refugee and displaced communities to be committed to child protection, especially for children without family support. Those living without caregivers are then integrated into communities instead of being placed in institutional care.

Although most children will never have to live through a natural or human-made disaster, all schools need to have emergency preparedness plans. As schools develop such plans, child-friendly dimensions must be in the forefront.

IRAN: BAM EARTHQUAKE

On 26 December 2003, a devastating earthquake killed 30 per cent of Bam district's 32,443 schoolchildren and 33 per cent of their 3,400 teachers. The earthquake destroyed 67 of 131 schools, and many of those remaining were damaged beyond repair. The Ministry of Education, UNICEF and partner organizations responded by setting up temporary learning spaces and supporting the reopening of schools and recreational activities. They provided learning and teaching materials, recreational items, school office equipment and school furniture, mobile libraries, psychosocial support for teachers, psychoeducation and group counselling for children, teacher training on how to use new items and librarian training. To support the resumption of quality education, they introduced the child-friendly school concept and established community services. Library books for primary and lower secondary school were reviewed, and a catalogue of culturally appropriate and relevant books was developed. Special emphasis was given to girls, who are more likely victims of sexual violence, abuse and economic exploitation. (Education is not perceived as a priority for girls when urgent basic needs must be met. In fact, forced and early marriage is sometimes seen as a way of protecting girls, and they often cannot voice their fear and insecurity or share their hopes and feelings.) As a result of these interventions, 14,949 primary and lower secondary schoolchildren registered and resumed school in the 2004 school year.

CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 6
Learners, teachers and school managers

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LEARNERS, TEACHERS AND SCHOOL MANAGERS

Can China create schools that foster openness, flexibility and innovation? And what happens to China if it does?

Even as American educators seek to emulate Asian pedagogy – a test-centered ethos and a rigorous focus on math, science and engineering – Chinese educators are trying to blend a Western emphasis on critical thinking, versatility and leadership into their own traditions. To put it another way, in the … style typical of official Chinese directives (as well as of educationese the world over), the nation's schools must strive "to build citizens' character in an all-round way, gear their efforts to each and every student, give full scope to students' ideological, moral, cultural and scientific potentials and raise their labor skills and physical and psychological aptitudes, achieve vibrant student development and run themselves with distinction."

Source: Hulbert, Ann, 'Re-education', *The New York Times Magazine*, 1 April 2007.

6.1   SCHOOL REFORM AND LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT

During their early and formative years, children spend half their waking hours in school. It is therefore reasonable to expect that schools and teachers will help forge students' development and destinies. Countries invest heavily in schools as the key institution for shaping the lives of the young and preparing them for future roles in homes, communities and society at large. Much is expected of schools, especially in terms of enabling children to achieve their potential through mastery of the learning prescribed in the curriculum.

The school is not the only determinant of how children develop, what they learn, how much they learn and what becomes their ultimate destiny. Innate abilities, socio-economic factors relating to home and community background, and information and knowledge in the popular culture play a key role in children's lives. Links between schools and communities are critical for optimizing the school's influence on the child's development and achievements.

The school's main contribution rests on the total learning experience it provides for children. A wide range of planned and unplanned activities is involved, usually defined as the formal curriculum and the 'hidden' curriculum. The specific ways in

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which schools are expected to make a contribution will be established by the teaching and learning process that takes place in the classroom as well as 'outdoor' activities organized as part of the curriculum. In fact, the interactive classroom process has the greatest influence in determining learning outcomes because education is most of all about engaging young minds.

Over time, schools and education systems develop distinctive teaching and learning styles, which may be based on learning theories, philosophies of learning rooted in the culture or simply practices that have evolved through eclectic teaching and learning methods. The predominant pedagogy usually influences education from primary school to university, and determines the kind of successful learner produced by the education system. In every system, good schools tend to excel in the predominant style of teaching and learning, while taking into account the requirements of different subject areas. For instance, teaching mathematics will be different from teaching literature; teaching science will be different from teaching religious studies.

In general, the predominant style of teaching and learning defines what constitutes success. At one extreme, successful learners may be those who excel at formulating arguments, assembling evidence, exercising judgement, expressing opinions, exploring creativity, showing tolerance, making innovative decisions and developing a balanced approach to life. At the other extreme, successful learners may be those who are good at following rules, conforming to conventions,

applying formulas, memorizing facts, correcting mistakes and managing time. All of these can count as successful learning, as long as learners master much of what is prescribed in the curriculum.

The predominant means of measuring learning achievement helps determine teaching and learning styles as well as the culture of schools and education systems. In some systems, there is a predominance of multiple-choice testing, frequent tests and continuous assessment, while others focus on major examinations at the end of a grade or cycle and use test formats that involve technical problem-solving, essays and comprehension exercises. Learning assessment systems may also emphasize and reward individual efforts or teamwork through different categories of projects and assignments. Most schools and education systems will use a combination of these means of testing learning achievement, but there will be a predominant testing mode that learners must master if they are to be successful.

At an early stage of their education, children quickly learn the importance of the predominant style and the significance of the main testing modes that are used to determine learning achievement. Initiation into this culture can take place, for instance, when children begin to understand that self-expression is discouraged in favour of rote memorization; when answers are known only to the teacher; when there is only one right way of doing things; when conformity is rewarded and creativity is punished; and when labels of 'stupid' or 'clever' are applied to young children.

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In a child-friendly school, the style of teaching and learning will be centred on what is best for the learner. It will be geared towards bringing out the best in each learner as he or she strives to master the prescribed knowledge, skills and attitudes in the curriculum. Child-friendly schools will encourage the use of different teaching and learning methods appropriate for the children and the subject matter. This promotes multiple paths to knowledge and skills acquisition.

To facilitate multiple learning pathways, teachers will need to be reflective practitioners who:

• Strive to understand why some children do not do as well as others;

• Use different techniques and strategies to get children to learn and succeed;

• Operate on the basis that children can follow different learning paths to achieve success.

Teachers need training and support to accomplish this. Teachers as reflective practitioners are troubled when only half the class gets test questions right after a lesson, so they explore alternative teaching methods to help the failing half of the class raise their scores. As such, pedagogy in a child-friendly school will be based on such facts as:

• Children learn by exploring and expressing opinions just as much as they do by memorizing facts and following set rules;

• Children need to challenge other opinions in the process of learning just as much as they need to take certain facts on trust from those who know better;

• Children need the freedom to use their inner resources to solve problems just as much as they need guidance in making the best use of their natural talents as learners.

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Such principles will guide the range of teaching and learning styles employed by the teacher as a reflective practitioner operating in a child-friendly classroom. The broad focus is on the best interest of the child and how to bring out the best in every child.

Learning is an individual process dependent as much on what a child brings to it as on what a teacher does to facilitate it. The nature of this process will vary with the age and developmental stage of the child, among other factors. For instance, in the early years of school young children do not have the same 'readiness' in terms of skills, knowledge and ability to learn complex concepts as older children or adults. Children learn differently at this stage, and research indicates that, for the most part, learning occurs through structured play. Learning is also affected by language and culture, especially if the curriculum is based on a language and culture alien to the learner. Research makes clear that children learn best in the early years when taught in their own language; so schools often must adopt multilingual policies for children from different ethnic or language backgrounds.

The research literature also shows that children learn better when they are motivated and encouraged to participate in classroom activities. Therefore, class size needs to be manageable for a teacher to give adequate attention to motivating each child. Motivation can come from the physical environment in which learning takes place, the facilitating efforts of the teacher and the activities and processes among the learners in the classroom. The interest shown in

children's education and well-being by parents, local communities and the nation at large also can inspire students' motivation to learn. A child-friendly school in itself attracts and motivates children, brightening up their lives and inspiring them with the desire to learn (UNICEF, 1999).

A child-friendly classroom or learning space is many things. It is not only friendly and welcoming for the child, but also conducive to learning, safe for all, gender-responsive and fully inclusive. It provides opportunities for girls and boys alike, regardless of their background, enabling all to participate equitably in the learning process. In such schools, as far as possible and appropriate, the focus is on allowing learners to experiment with ideas and discover answers to promote the 'joy of learning' that comes from self-discovery. In much the same way, these schools encourage and facilitate the 'joy of teaching' that comes from applying professional skills and reflective methods to help all children achieve in the learning process.

Experiences in different countries show that child-friendly schools provide motivation for teachers, who, through the schools, are introduced to appropriate pedagogy for the first time. As they operate in stimulating classrooms and use new techniques to improve learning achievement for their students, these teachers become infused with a new sense of pride in their own professional competence. And as the schoolchildren display a new confidence and an increased interest in learning, their teachers are better able to win the respect and trust of parents and local communities. Such professional rewards and recognition can be just

as important to teachers as issues of salary and conditions of service. It has also been observed in several countries that teachers who have been introduced to child-friendly pedagogy often serve as ambassadors for the model. They motivate other teachers to become more reflective in their work and more concerned with the general welfare and improved learning achievements of all their students.

The teacher's role is the key to achieving results in child-friendly schools and learning spaces. Therefore, the required training and support to prepare teachers for this important role must be a priority. Attention also should be given to teachers' rights and responsibilities as well as their accountability and general conditions of professional service. For teachers to play the critical role expected of them, the classroom design and layout should be right for them and should provide and organize teaching and learning materials and activities appropriately. These elements contribute significantly to the overall classroom management necessary for quality teaching and learning.

Whatever teachers do in a child-friendly school, they need to focus on child participation and consciously strive for children's empowerment as an outcome of the learning process. Combining the right classroom conditions and processes with the expertise of trained teachers and a supply of pedagogic materials constitutes the critical child-friendly school package.

The challenge that countries face is not only to plan for new child-friendly schools, but also to make existing schools more child-friendly in order to boost education quality throughout the system. The range of problems encountered in refurbishing an existing school may include unattractive classrooms, inappropriate teaching-learning methods, inadequate teaching-learning materials, unsafe school grounds, absence of effective and sustainable teacher support systems and poor teacher motivation. These factors erode education quality and contribute to high drop-out rates and low levels of learning achievement. School reform to improve quality therefore requires effective strategies for the investment of resources and support of key stakeholders.

Education reform based on the child-friendly school model makes it possible to:

* Implement innovative classroom practices that greatly improve learning outcomes;

* Encourage the involvement, cooperation and participation of children, teachers, school heads and parents in the reform process;

* Cultivate incentives for improving the quality of education based on favourable working conditions that serve to motivate teachers, students and the community.

These working assumptions of the child-friendly school model are conditions for success in the sense that they need to be factored into education reform plans as 'risks'. In other words, if the assumptions do not hold in practice, results from investing in child-friendly schools will be less than expected. The child-friendly reform process needs to avoid generating false expectations like those that have occurred in earlier education

investments. For instance, it was assumed previously that if countries simply invested in constructing schools and providing teachers and materials, quality education for all would blossom. But it takes more than supply-side provisions to achieve such results, and more attention needs to be given to the demand-side barriers that keep children out of school, even when schools and teachers are available.

The key assumptions about success in child-friendly schools are fairly cautious and based on widely accepted norms about human behaviour. They include expectations about how children and their parents are likely to behave, such as:

- Based on their innate abilities and instincts, all children wish to learn and will do so if their natural curiosity is encouraged and strengthened;

- Parents who can afford the costs will send their children to school regularly if they trust the school to teach and care for them;

- Children will willingly attend school on a regular basis if they find the teaching-learning process enjoyable, stimulating, inspiring and attractive;

- Children and their parents will develop confidence in schools if the children are making progress with learning;

- Communities will generally support teachers and identify with schools (local ownership) if children are learning, teachers are committed to facilitating learning and the school is responsive to the concerns of the local community.

6.2   PREPARING TEACHERS

Teachers are central to school reform. Thus, the success of implementing child-friendly models in the context of reform will depend on the calibre of teachers within the system. In many developing countries, a high percentage of teachers lack the requisite level of education and training needed to rise to the challenge of school reform. Moreover, for many reasons, the morale and motivation of teachers in these countries may be low. If school reform is to succeed, it will be critical to establish well-designed training and mentoring programmes that build competencies, strengthen capacity and improve the morale of teachers. This will include high-quality preservice and in-service training for teachers enabling them

to operate effectively within the challenging rights-based, child-centred and interactive pedagogy that is at the heart of the child-friendly school model.

Investing in this type of training must be a two-pronged approach: focusing on in-service training for existing teachers, preferably at the school level; and building new capacity through preservice training for those wishing to join the teaching profession. In addition, strong teacher mentoring by school heads will be essential for success. For many countries, this would require a revitalization and restructuring of teacher training. Such restructuring would not only improve professional competencies, but also encourage

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changes in career structures, accreditation policy and promotion criteria in recognition of competencies gained through in-service training. Both preservice and in-service training should be designed to integrate child-centred pedagogy with content area knowledge and subject specialization.

To date, systems reform efforts have been limited, making in-service training the main mode for preparing teachers and school heads for child-friendly schools. The lessons learned from this experience indicate that in-service training needs to be continuous and localized to produce results. It also must tap into the resources that teachers bring to the training process. Teachers have enormous reserves of knowledge and experience that often remain untapped in conventional training programmes. In-service training should build confidence, skills and new strategies and help identify problems that teachers face in embracing change. Every child-friendly school initiative to date has involved developing and implementing in-service teacher training programmes with a variety of delivery models. These initiatives have produced a wealth of training guides, modules, checklists and other support materials.

So far, successful in-service training has taken the form of short workshops, combined with increased opportunities for teachers to regularly share good practices and deal with professional problems. This approach enables teachers to assist, train and support each other on a regular basis and benefit from the professional and personal support available from formal training centres, especially vital for teachers in remote locations. Teachers who participate in these mutual support schemes take ownership of the process and understand the issues and constraints they need to address. Eventually they are able to monitor, evaluate and implement the measures needed to improve their own classroom practice. Based on experiences in several countries, it is critical for this reciprocal approach to be understood, valued and supported by head teachers and education administrators. The reform process requires budgeting of the necessary funds and an allocation of time for these types of exercises.

For many countries, such an intensive, comprehensive approach to training and support implies major reform in teacher education policies and practice. Current policy and practice often fail to transform classroom processes. And if changes are not made in training patterns, school-level investments may not yield the best results for child-friendly schools. To

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contribute effectively to changes in classroom practices, teacher education pedagogy should not only stress the theory that underpins child-centred learning, but also be grounded in practical methodologies that have been successfully classroom-tested. In-service training for teachers and school heads is also important for bolstering their capacities for school development and planning, as the child-friendly school is likely to be different from most other existing schools.

Reform that seeks to make schools child-friendly system-wide will

IN-SERVICE TRAINING: TEACHER-CENTRED TRAINING FOR CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

In Ethiopia and Kenya, a five-day in-service teacher training programme was developed with unique organizational, methodological and content features. Additionally, the programme set out to improve quality by varying the customary training hierarchy with questions of 'who trains?' and 'how will the training be conducted?' This innovative training was based on the following principles:

- The training programme must be stimulating, inspiring, motivating and exciting for teachers and trainers;

- For maximum impact, the training programme preferably should be residential, with minimum distractions;

- The training should bring about a change in teachers' perceptions and orientation in a way that enables them to put what they have learned into immediate practice;

- Teachers should be given 'take-away' resource packs that they can use in their classrooms;

- Teachers should be given suggested, rather than prescriptive, guidelines that can subsequently be adapted to their classroom and school situations and supported through continuous training at the cluster level;

- The training programme should be activity-based and highly participatory, as well as helpful and friendly (non-threatening), so that teachers feel confident enough to share experiences, learn from mistakes, express doubts and voice shortcomings without fear of ridicule;

- The training process should involve some behavioural objectives, including self-discipline, role modelling, respecting each others' views, punctuality, cooperation, equitable treatment and gender sensitivity;

- The training programme should use enthusiasm as 'shock therapy' to help teachers rapidly replace any inertia, cynicism or 'non-action syndrome' that might defeat promising innovations;

- Teachers should finish the course feeling confident and satisfied not only that they have learned a great deal, but that it is feasible to put what they have learned into practice in their classrooms;

- Trainers should include experienced, practicing teachers who are familiar with a variety of teacher training techniques and are able to articulate how these techniques can be made effective in schools;

- Trainers should be enthusiastic about child-friendly school models and capable of generating excitement and interest in the teacher trainees, who need to observe and hear inspiring trainers to be motivated.

succeed only to the extent that it is possible to build a critical mass of trained, committed teachers, education managers and teacher educators. Universities and teacher training institutions must take the lead in school reform processes. For child-friendly school models to be sustained at the education-system level, they have to be an integral part of preservice teacher education programmes, and several countries have started this process. However, the main challenge is not with preservice training, but in designing appropriate in-service programmes that prepare current teachers for the demands and challenges of the highly innovative, child-friendly school models.

Experiences with these models in countries that have begun to integrate them in preservice teacher education, such as Ethiopia, Kenya and Vanuatu, have underscored that teachers' behaviour change must be 'institutionalized' at both the classroom and the school level for successful reform. Only when such changes are routinely part of everyday practice in the classroom and throughout the school will there be a positive impact on the education system in terms of access, quality and learning achievement. In short, this type of reform requires sustained, long-term support to transform classroom practice.

Support measures that have proved to be effective include:

- Building capacity and strengthening the role of field-level education supervisors as resource persons who follow up

with teachers in their schools or at the school cluster level;

- Enhancing the capacities of head teachers as mentors and 'catalysts for change' at the school and community levels;

- Helping teachers develop self-confidence in their professional competence and become increasingly autonomous as capable child-friendly school practitioners.

Experience to date suggests that school-based, on-the-job training and support are most appropriate for building teacher competencies and maintaining momentum around the change process in classrooms and schools. In providing such training, it is essential for teachers and head teachers to be treated as professionals with a stake in developing their school and their own practice. Purely technical

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INDIA: TEACHER EMPOWERMENT PROJECTS

Experience from India has shown that timely involvement of teachers can enhance the process of education reform. The Teacher Empowerment Projects in Madhaya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh in the 1990s included high teacher participation at early stages. As a result, the Primary Teachers' Association assumed a leadership role and helped motivate teachers to fully support child-friendly school innovations introduced by the Education Department with UNICEF support. This type of partnership between teachers' unions and associations, which goes beyond issues of salary and conditions of service, has helped to successfully implement innovations such as child-friendly schools.

training programmes tend to treat teachers and head teachers simply as practitioners who lack the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the innovations that have been designed by others. Major changes are required in the mindset of those who plan the new type of in-service teacher training programmes. If these new programmes are to work and improve education quality, there must be a close relationship and understanding between the teachers and teacher educators. In such countries as Ethiopia and Kenya, the core trainers providing in-service training include both teachers and teacher educators. They work closely together, demonstrate mutual respect as professionals and understand the need to communicate and cooperate with each other. (See Box, page 8.)

Teachers' motivation and commitment are as much a part of the reform process as their knowledge and technical competencies. Salaries and

ETHIOPIA: VOLUNTARY SERVICE OVERSEAS AND NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS PROGRAMME

The Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) programme was introduced throughout Ethiopia in 2004–2005. A VSO mentor in the school welcomes the new teacher, orients him or her and works with the newly qualified teacher and other school staff involved in planning, subject knowledge and other programme activities. They form a small team to work on simple, practical classroom-based assignments and share good practices with others in the school community. This is graded and monitored by the head teacher and the local administrators, and at the end of the period, the newly qualified teacher is given a certificate of competence. The programme design allows this managed professional development programme to extend throughout the school.

"It is very interesting that I have learned so much from this programme for a new teacher," said Mulatu Waktole, a teacher in Assosa Primary School for 13 years.

NIGERIA: VSO AND SCIENCE EDUCATION

A VSO science teacher in Nigeria had been running a series of practical regional workshops for science teachers. By the end of the programme, more than 40 science lessons had been developed, along with descriptions of how to turn discarded objects into simple science materials and equipment. The volunteer approached the area's Regional Education Officer, who was impressed with the quality of the initiative and ultimately requested UNICEF support. UNICEF agreed to have the lesson plans published as a book, *Junior Science 1*. The book was then distributed to schools throughout the region, where it was welcomed by teachers and children – some of whom had never had an opportunity to engage in practical science before. This initiative continues to develop, and *Junior Science 4* will be published soon.

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conditions of service are major factors in teacher motivation and commitment, and these need to be carefully addressed. However, other important factors besides pay and conditions affect teachers' morale and motivation. Many of these are critical for the child-friendly model to succeed.

How much are teachers included in planning reform as opposed to simply being asked to implement it? Research suggests that practitioners will implement innovations if they believe in them and are committed to the promised outcomes. Involving practitioners during the planning process is one of the most effective ways of getting them to believe in and commit to reform. Without this, teachers tend to perceive innovations such as child-friendly schools as just added work, often with little or no additional compensation or reduction in their existing workload. On the other hand, when teachers feel that they have taken part in planning a reform and that their views have been taken into account, they will have a stake in its successful implementation.

External support to education under the Monterrey Consensus requires credible plans arrived at through a participatory process. In reality, most plans are purely technical exercises involving little or no participation by key stakeholders. Analysis of education sector plans developed in many countries as part of the sector-wide approach process shows negligible teacher involvement. The exceptions tend to be in matters of salary and conditions of service, rather than in the technical and professional aspects of the

proposed changes in these plans. In order to win teacher support for implementing child-friendly school models, countries need to mount major advocacy campaigns and consultation processes around the reform.

Another key factor that affects teachers' commitment to change is the extent to which their professionalism is recognized and utilized in the process of building capacity for reform. Most teachers have knowledge and skills that will help others adapt to change when they are shared. Usually, a simple appraisal will identify teachers' knowledge and skills and, at the same time, pinpoint their areas of weakness. Teachers can agree to a systematic plan to correct these weaknesses and develop practical programmes to improve what they do well in order to support change in the classroom. These simple programmes can address many of the day-to-day difficulties that teachers encounter in their work, while creating a sense of professional pride in the collaborative efforts used to support child-friendly achievements in the classroom. There are many talented practicing teachers who can be role models for other teachers and, if they are good communicators, also effective trainers. Although this in-service approach may appear intensive and burdensome for teachers, it reaps significant gains. (See Boxes below.)

One of the most effective ways of promoting intensive, localized and continuous teacher training is through school clusters, small networks of allied schools that encourage professional development

among teachers and allow for sharing resources, facilities and experiences. Typically, four to six schools in the same area form a cluster, enabling teachers to arrange in-service training programmes. In many developing countries, most teachers live and work in isolated locations and require regular, timely support to improve their classroom and school practices. Establishing a support system such as school clusters or a resource centre that serves several schools enables teachers to build on what they have learned in more formal training programmes. Without this ongoing support, the initial enthusiasm for change can drop rapidly.

The main objective of school clusters is to improve the quality of the learning-teaching process in the classroom. This involves the cooperation, active involvement and full participation of all facilitators and teachers in the cluster so that teachers receive the ongoing support needed to upgrade their pedagogic skills and professional competencies. Clusters also can help increase the enrolment, attendance and learning achievements of student in the cluster schools and mobilize local community participation in planning and managing primary education. By establishing and strengthening linkages among district education offices, divisional education offices, teacher training colleges and primary and secondary schools, they can also improve the quality of learning-teaching practices. School clusters in Kenya go further by assuming a holistic approach that integrates early childhood education with formal primary and non-formal education.

In practice, the most important advantages of school clusters include

GUYANA: TEACHER LEARNING CIRCLES

In Guyana, teacher absenteeism is high, classes are large, and volunteers are essential. The country's strategy of 'learning circles' (or 'school clusters', as they are called in Ethiopia and Kenya) is a simple method of in-service training whereby teachers in a school or cluster of schools periodically discuss emerging issues and processes related to children's learning. They come together to share information, experiences and successes in their quest to become efficient, effective and confident teachers, and to develop common goals and vision.

providing opportunities for teachers to participate in continuous in-service training without travelling long distances and facilitating the use of needs-based, demand-driven teacher training based on the 'teacher teach teacher' school-based in-service training model. Clusters also improve school management practices through school collaborations.

In Ethiopia and Kenya, school clusters were shown to be sustainable by modifying the roles of education department supervisors and teacher training institutes and colleges. The education departments provided encouragement and support, while teacher training institutes and colleges gave ongoing technical guidance through cluster-learning resource centres, using schools' feedback on the implementation of this innovative approach. Further, in Ethiopia, Kenya and many Asian countries, periodic training sessions organized at cluster-

learning resource centres led to progressive improvement of overall classroom practice.

In western Ethiopia, UNICEF and Voluntary Service Overseas developed school clusters that delivered training programmes and workshops simultaneously to school cluster coordinators, head teachers and local administrators. All involved received clear guidance on how the development of each stage would progress and at the same time were able to understand and develop their different but complementary roles and functions within the system. While attitude change can be slow, continuous interactive on-the-job education, especially at the school or cluster level, can be an inexpensive, culturally appropriate and effective way of introducing new teaching

styles to both trained and untrained, inexperienced teachers. With minimal variation, this interactive teacher training can be extended to community groups and to volunteers in emergency situations.

School clusters or learning resource centres work well if schools are located close enough to each other or to the resource centre. Realistically, teachers have many other responsibilities outside the school and cannot be expected to travel hours or even days to the next school. In those situations, school-based training and development may be the only realistic option, unless there are investments in modern information-communication technologies so teachers can have regular exchanges with their peers through the Internet.

MEXICO: CHILD PARTICIPATION IN THE ESCUELA AMIGA PROJECT

The Escuela Amiga project in Mexico promotes quality education for indigenous girls and boys through child-friendly learning environments. Children's participation is emphasized as part of citizenship and democracy education, based on the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The project developed a guide for teachers and education managers that includes checklists on constructing a school work plan and monitoring and evaluating progress towards child-friendliness.

Project indicators for child participation include:

- School has informational material on the CRC;

- Child rights are taught at every class level;

- There is concrete evidence that unequal classroom participation between girls and boys is diminished;

- School 'societies' with established after-school activities exist, with equitable participation of girls and boys;

- Children's opinions are heard and taken into account;

- A positive climate for the resolution of conflicts has been created.

Source: United Nations Children's Fund, *Proyecto Escuela Amiga: Guía para maestros y autoridades escolares,* UNICEF, Mexico, 2002.

School heads play an important role in raising their schools' teaching and learning standards to ensure high achievement for all pupils. Yet in developing countries, most school heads have heavy workloads linked to increasingly complex, varied tasks for which they are responsible but poorly trained to handle. These school heads often are drowning in bureaucratic procedures and directives from national and district education authorities. Often there is a lack of clarity regarding which policies and tasks are mandatory and which are optional.

Child-friendly innovations provide an opportunity to tackle school leadership challenges. If education ministries support school heads by overhauling outdated school regulations and providing better guidance on whether policies are compulsory or advisory, school heads are in a better position to limit their involvement with bureaucracy and focus instead on facilitating change in classroom practice, school management and links with the community. Further, school heads need to be empowered, supported and trained to serve as managers and mentors for school reform.

In child-friendly schools, the heads are custodians of change and managers of innovation. They lead the school planning process, secure necessary resources, facilitate essential training for teachers and build constructive links with the local community. In managing the process of change, the school head must lead, guide and inspire teachers – who are the main thrust behind classroom change in child-friendly schools.

The school head must have adequate qualifications, training and experience to cope with challenges and win the respect and support of teachers, pupils and the local community. The school head needs to use these credentials to exercise authority in a positive manner, not simply rule by bureaucratic force. While ultimate responsibility for crucial decisions rests with school heads, they must consult with and involve teachers, pupils and the local community in decision-making. Similarly, they must manage school resources transparently, in order to inspire confidence and persuade teachers, pupils and local communities to use limited resources judiciously.

The school head's management style helps determine teachers' motivation and commitment to child-friendly standards. Securing appropriate salary levels and conditions of service, for instance, allows teachers to feel that their welfare matters in the school. Additionally, the head should provide training opportunities for all teachers and help organize ongoing training and support at the school or cluster level. Most of all, the school head should be a mentor to teachers, leading by example in the use of child-friendly pedagogy, being accessible as a confidant and adviser to all teachers and helping to solve problems that arise in classrooms or in the local community.

In addition to these aspects of school management, the school head serves as the school's main public relations officer. The image of the school, its traditions and ethos, must be carefully cultivated in line with child-friendly standards. The school head needs to maintain rituals and activities that help project the correct image. These could be school celebrations, sporting events, cultural performances or charitable events, or establishing school clubs that support the local community. In the same way, the school head needs to nurture links with the local community. A child-friendly school will not only seek to win community support, but will also reciprocate that support where appropriate and show sensitivity to the communities' aspirations and challenges. In some of the most disadvantaged communities, child-friendly schools take on even greater roles in the lives of children and their communities. (See Box, page 15.)

School reform that seeks to raise quality through child-friendly principles requires national standards that will guide schools and school heads as they implement the change process. Each country will develop its own standards in this regard, but there are some broad guidelines for school heads. (See Box, page 15.)

LEARNING PLUS: CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS PROVIDE MORE THAN LEARNING

My school is in a poor region of the country. The poverty is made worse by the growing number of adults dying from AIDS. In my school, I have many children who are orphans. These children either live with their grandmothers, other relatives or by themselves. They live in poverty and come to school hungry and psychologically traumatized. That is why the school is collaborating with the Ministry of Education, other government ministries, the university and the community to address these challenges.

The Ministry of Education officials and the university are developing my capacities and those of the senior staff to provide psychosocial support for the most vulnerable children. As a result, the deputy school head keeps a notebook to record all the orphans in the school and all cases of our schoolchildren's being victims of sexual harassment, rape and abuse in and around the schools. She and other senior teachers work with the Department of Social Welfare to ensure that orphans have birth registration forms. For those who do not, the Department comes to the school to register them. The community works with us to raise funds and provide children with school feeding. Some mothers run a café once a week, and community members come to the school to buy lunch. We also work with the Ministry of Health to deworm children and work with the Ministry of Water Affairs to ensure that the school has clean water.

Extracts from interview with a school head.

LEADERSHIP GUIDELINES FOR CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

School leadership should focus on the rights of children, the best interest of teachers and the expectations of parents and the community.

The key objective of school leadership is to raise the learning achievement level of each child and the collective achievement of the student body.

The head should be a qualified teacher, a professional with relevant knowledge, skills, vision and versatility to inspire, lead and adapt to change.

Leadership functions can be distributed among senior staff to engender a sense of participation and motivate staff to commit to the process of change.

Wider skill sets should be developed, such as expertise in finance, human resources, children's rights and programme management.

School heads need to adopt a democratic style of authority to win the support and commitment of teachers, pupils and the local community.

School heads must lead by example, as problem solvers, trusted confidants to teachers and the main public relations officer who projects the school's image.

School heads need to be able to identify areas of practice requiring improvement and those where positive trends can be capitalized on.

6.4   ORGANIZING CLASSROOMS AND LEARNING SPACES

School heads and teachers need to create a favourable environment in order to make schools more child-friendly. This environment begins with a well-designed and well-constructed school that is safe for children and teachers, with secure classrooms, functional spaces and open areas. Just as important, however, are child-friendly equipment and supplies that promote learning. The goal is to create stimulating classrooms where children are inspired to learn and teachers have a range of skills and tools to successfully engage them in the learning process. These classrooms often have learning corners, and teachers typically produce and use a wide range of high-quality, low-cost teaching aids.

In many countries, a stimulating classroom is prepared by a trained teacher with the help of other teachers and the pupils. Classrooms can be made stimulating in a variety of ways depending on the context. It is possible to have stimulating classrooms even where resources are limited or the education system is impoverished. However, this requires teachers' commitment and enthusiasm and strong support from the school head and the local community.

In many developing countries, the challenge of making classrooms stimulating is compounded by the problem of overcrowded space, especially as policies to boost enrolment begin to gain success. Kenya, Malawi, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania experienced huge increases in enrolment when school fees were

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MAGDA'S FIRST DAY IN A STIMULATING CLASSROOM AT A CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOL

What will Magda see when she gets to her school? Before she and Leila, her 'big sister', come around the last bend, Magda hears children shouting and laughing as they kick a ball around the swept area in front of the school. Leila takes Magda into a classroom where many first graders are sitting on floor mats. While fairly crowded, they are sitting comfortably and writing in their exercise books. Some are looking up at the colourful posters, charts, alphabets, numerals and story outlines on the walls. Magda is fascinated that some children her age are drawing pictures on the little chalkboards all around the classroom. The whole classroom is vibrant with wall blackboards, pocket boards, learning corners and a host of teaching aids.

Magda is a little nervous, this being her first day in school and first time in a classroom. She is relieved when the teacher, Mrs. Haba, smiles at her, says her name and introduces her to the class. The whole class claps their hands and Mpho, the girl standing next to Magda, offers her a space next to her on the mat to sit. When Leila comes to get Magda at the end of the school day, she finds her with a group of classmates, busy drawing on their little chalkboards and having a lot of fun.

When she returns home, Magda tells her mother about her exciting first day in school. Magda is delighted and says to her mother, "I love my school. I would like to go to school every day."

abolished and education was declared free; about 1.3 million additional children enrolled in Kenya in 2003, stretching the already limited infrastructure and resources. Even in these conditions, teachers can use innovative ways to maximize classroom or school space – for instance, by using walls and floors creatively to make teaching-learning processes in the early grades interesting and exciting.

So much is possible with simple resources and a great deal of imagination. In Ethiopia, India and Kenya, for instance, ordinary classrooms have blossomed into stimulating classrooms through the use of pocket boards with word cards, picture cards and numerical cards; wall boards painted with indigenous ink; alphabets, numerals and mat signs; cut-outs and story outlines on walls; and low-cost or no-cost

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CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS MANUAL

teaching aids in learning corners. Optimal use of locally available resources is encouraged as a way to make classrooms stimulating. The basic cost of converting an average Kenyan Standard One classroom into a stimulating classroom is only US$25, a modest amount that most schools and communities can afford.

Child-friendly schools involve the principle of progressive realization. For example, purpose-designed desks and chairs and other customized furniture and equipment should be part of the stimulating classroom. However, if this is not feasible, the environment can still be true to child-friendly principles, philosophy and standards. In many developing countries, children in primary schools have to sit on dirty floors or under trees due to shortages of furniture or classroom space. Pupils and their parents can work with teachers and school heads to transform drab classrooms into stimulating environments.

Child-friendly schools in Ethiopia and Kenya adopted the progressive realization principle to change existing schools. Floors were made smooth and clean with layers of plaster and floor paint, and because customized desks and chairs were not affordable, children were given clean, brightly coloured floor mats that they could sit on after removing their shoes. This not only provided a pleasant and clean classroom environment, but also gave the children, teachers and parents an understanding of the importance of hygiene and cleanliness, even in an environment with little or no

IRAN: BUILDING BACK BETTER IN BAM

In December 2003, an earthquake levelled 67 schools in the city of Bam, and most of those remaining were damaged beyond repair. A month later, schools were officially reopened in an effort to return to normalcy for children. First, classes were held in the open air, then in tents and containers. 'Mobile' education and recreation were provided, a tracking system for out-of-school children was established, tools for data collection, management and analysis were created, and learning spaces were linked to early childhood development centres and non-formal education and recreation centres. Advocacy and technical support were generated for a national school design review with the goal of promoting healthy and safe girl-friendly environments incorporating water and sanitation facilities, playgrounds and sports areas, and involving children and the community in school design and construction. Interventions to improve learning quality included advocacy for girl-friendly schools as a package at the policy and school level; teacher support including psychosocial services, extra-curricular courses (psychosocial education, life skills, hygiene education); educational and recreational materials review; participatory, child-centred and gender-sensitive teaching methods; children's participation in schools (clubs, school governance); enhanced community involvement in planning, management, and monitoring and evaluating educational activities (school management); implementation of catch-up classes; and school environments and learning materials to meet the needs of disabled children.

resources for customized furniture. Sitting on the floor enables young children, especially those in the early grades, to feel at home and engage comfortably in such activities as playing games, cutting, pasting, drawing and creating art.

The principle of progressive realization can be an essential innovation of school reform when re-establishing schools and education systems after a disaster or crisis. In the aftermath of the earthquake in Bam (Iran), there was an opportunity to 'build back better' with improved schools and learning spaces based on child-friendly standards. The recovery and reconstruction process involved the progressive introduction of child-friendly features and standards over time, resulting in a successful reform process. The reconstruction allowed interventions to be initiated for children both in and out of school and also demonstrated the importance of learning materials for classroom and learning space.

Whatever furniture, equipment and teaching aids are available, promoting learning depends on how the teacher organizes and manages the teaching-learning process. A child-friendly classroom is a learning community, and teachers are the primary organizers of the atmosphere. Much will depend on how teachers interpret child-centred pedagogy in their classrooms. Learning is not just about individual comprehension and skills acquisition; it is also about constructing knowledge with others. Group activities and the sense of a learning community are important for child-friendly schools. A child-friendly classroom includes individualized, gender-sensitive instruction together with active, cooperative, democratic group learning activities that are respectful of the rights of each child.

When this approach works, it provides structured content and makes use of quality materials and resources. It enhances a teacher's capacity, morale, commitment and professional status.

ETHIOPIA: CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

Our Classroom Golden Rules:

We want our classroom to be clean and tidy.
We want everybody to look after our books, cards and other materials.
We want everybody to talk quietly, including our teachers.
We want everybody to try to do their best work.
We want everybody to be kind and friendly to each other.
We want everybody to help each other and share.
We want everybody to keep their hands to themselves.
We want everybody to be safe in the school and playground.
Every so often children need to sit and discuss these again.

Source: Gambella Primary School, Ethiopia.

It promotes quality learning outcomes not only by helping children learn what is prescribed in the curriculum, but also by defining what they need to learn in order to become independent learners (learning how to learn). In this regard, child-friendly schools encourage children's active participation in numerous activities related to quality education, such as having children set their own code of conduct for the classroom and the school. (See Box Ethiopia: Children's participation.)

6.5   PEDAGOGIC MATERIALS

The success of child-friendly schools depends on the quality of pedagogic materials. Many primary schools in developing countries suffer from acute shortages of teaching and learning materials. Progress in this area is mainly interpreted as improving the ratio of textbooks to pupils, as research has linked textbook availability to gains in learning achievement. The child-friendly school model, however, is not dependent on textbooks alone, especially in the early years of schooling. The ability of teachers to create appropriate teaching-learning aids, often from low-cost, locally available materials, bolsters success. The approach also assumes that teachers will involve children in helping to produce learning materials, and that students' schoolwork will be posted on school walls for instructional purposes and to instil a sense of pride.

In Ethiopia, India and Kenya, teachers consider pocket boards and wall blackboards to be innovative, low-cost and useful tools. The blackboards mounted around the room and used by children help teachers monitor learners' progress and identify students who may require personalized attention and assistance. These boards also help teachers recognize pupils

LOW-COST LEARNING MATERIALS

Making teaching-learning materials from low-cost materials was not new to many teachers, who apparently learned this in their teacher training institutes. However, they never had considered it useful practice in the real classroom. They did not realize the potential applications until they were introduced to the requirements of child-friendly school models.

Source: Child and Learning-Friendly Environment in Primary Schools: A documentation of the process, UNICEF Ethiopia, 2002.

who grasp concepts faster and can be encouraged to assist their slower peers. Using small blackboards allows learners to make mistakes and correct them without having a permanent record of failure, unlike errors made in their exercise books. Children can therefore go through a process of confidence-building while learning that failure is not permanent but simply part and parcel of the learning process.

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"Many of us who were trained years ago find it hard to imagine how the chalkboard concept can be effectively modified and used by pupils as a learning aid. I am referring to the new methodology, where every child has a wall board to work on. We would find it hard to believe that one can spend less than 100 Kenya shillings (US$1.25) to paint the inside of an entire classroom and thus create enough writing spaces (wall boards) for as may as 50 Class One pupils and their teacher."

– Professor Karega Mutahi, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, Kenya

"At first the preparation of teaching aids looked very tough. But once they have been developed, teaching became very easy and enjoyable."
*– Leah Asego,
Teacher at Ayani Primary School,
Nairobi, Kenya*

The pocket board is made of an inexpensive cotton fabric 3 metres long and 1.5 metres wide. It has about 235 pockets measuring 12 centimetres by 14 centimetres. The board can be used to teach various concepts in all subject areas by using picture or word flash cards. The pocket board is convenient because it is portable, easy to make and promotes teacher-learner interaction in class. The pocket board can be used to teach some 200 concepts of primary-level mathematics, science and language, and it is an effective testing tool. It can be made from paper, cardboard, sacks, mats or any large sheet of strong material.

Every teacher needs adequate amounts of good quality teaching aids, in addition to textbooks, as a precondition for promoting quality education in child-friendly schools. These teaching aids should be relevant to the syllabus and properly used. Teachers can produce high-quality teaching aids, but they may need time and space to prepare them. Teachers must be willing to put in the additional time to make the teaching aids and

must be committed to using locally available materials.

In Ethiopia, Kenya and many East and South Asian countries, teachers use polystyrene packing material, packing boxes, tin cans, bottle tops, pebbles, flowers, leaves and inexpensive, easily obtained materials to make pocket boards, flash cards, big books, charts and models illustrating textbook lessons. By calling on their ingenuity, teachers' latent talents are revealed and they develop new confidence and pride in their professional competencies. Moreover, production of innovative, low-cost teaching aids from locally available resources requires wider, more regular consultation among teachers within the school and clusters. This builds team spirit and forges closer working relationships in support of child-friendly school models.

As we move up the education system, the need for more formal teaching-learning aids becomes more important. To ensure that children receive quality education at higher levels of the primary school and into secondary education, basic instructional materials and supplies need to be available for all children and teachers. Too often, there is a lack of basic teaching aids and learning materials, yet without them, teachers are hard-pressed to transform their classrooms into stimulating environments or to maximize their students' participation in the learning process. Education systems need to ensure that schools, teachers and children have access to these materials in a reliable and sustained manner.

The nature and cost of materials depend on curriculum requirements – not only on prescribed curriculum content, but also on the curriculum's appropriateness, on whether teachers can implement such a curriculum and its feasibility in terms of available resources. Teachers seeking to utilize child-friendly principles need to interpret and adapt the curriculum to reflect these principles.

The curriculum may inadvertently project prejudice and discrimination towards girls, children affected by HIV and AIDS or children with diverse backgrounds and abilities. Existing textbook material may portray children living on the streets as pickpockets, or working children may be depicted as uneducated even though they may have strengths such as excellent survival skills. Likewise, children with disabilities may be considered 'slow' even though many have impeccable social skills. In a child-friendly school, these prejudices must be challenged through supplementary pedagogic materials purchased or developed by teachers and other experts engaged in promoting child-friendly models.

Inclusiveness is a major child-friendly school principle and must be reflected in the nature and quality of learning-teaching materials. The school must embrace diversity and nurture children with different backgrounds and abilities. The pedagogic materials need to be relevant to all children's learning needs and abilities; they must be culturally appropriate and value social diversity. Only then will they benefit all children.

Pedagogic materials are only part of what is required for child-friendly schools to work. Another necessary component is participatory learning-teaching methods, which give teachers various techniques to help different learners and allow them to explore alternative forms of discipline.

In many countries, classrooms are dominated by teachers engaged in 'rote learning' education methods and 'teacher-centred' approaches, which are antithetical to child-friendly principles. Part of the challenge of training teachers is to win them over to child-centred approaches characterized by inquiry, discovery, mastery and the application of such concepts as students' acquisition of knowledge. Reform should move schools away from strongly 'didactic' teaching methods to methods that are more interactive and 'learner-friendly'.

Child-centered, interactive methodologies make learning enjoyable and exciting to students and improve their retention, participation and performance. These approaches create open learning environments characterized by group cooperation and positive competition among learners. This new methodology changes the role of the teacher from the 'fountain of all knowledge' and a feared authority figure to a 'facilitator of learning'

and one who listens to students. Teachers encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning so the motivation to learn comes from within rather than being imposed from outside.

Teachers are expected to work jointly with learners to create a scholarly environment beneficial to both. Activity-based learning makes classroom control easier and improves discipline. Teachers can be trained to prepare learner-friendly lessons with thematic approaches for more holistic learning. Teachers who utilize learner-friendly approaches increasingly report a new sense of job satisfaction and talk about the 'joy of teaching'. These approaches have also boosted teacher attendance and punctuality, encouraged greater attentiveness, interest and responsiveness, and inspired greater participation of children, especially girls, in learning activities. This in turn has increased children's motivation, resulting in behaviour change and the 'joy of learning'.

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School reforms based on child-friendly principles still have room for improvement, although there is little doubt that classroom interaction by all children, especially girls, has greatly improved. Children are acknowledged by name and given personal value in this interactive process. In some schools, children wear name tags and girls are classroom monitors. Where schools have adopted such innovations and their benefits have been noted, communities have felt more involved in their children's education. In some areas in Ethiopia, parents came to observe and saw their children's names written on the blackboards, and this improved teaching-learning processes. With increased practical support for the schools, the communities built cluster resource centres to ensure a sustainable teacher support system. Parents also became active in school management, with more women involved in school activities.

If child-friendly schools are to succeed as part of general school reform, they must embrace other innovations that are critical for success. One of these is multigrade teaching to make small schools (especially in rural, remote areas) viable for extending quality education to all children. Research has shown that full participation in small rural or isolated communities occurs when schools are located close to the community in both geographical and cultural terms. In practice, however, the population of children may be too small to sustain the number of teachers required to serve each grade over the full primary cycle. If schools cannot afford a teacher for each grade, they need multigrade teaching in which one teacher can facilitate learning for children at different grade levels within the same classroom or school space.

6.6.1 Lessons learned from multigrade teaching

Multigrade teaching means teaching children of different ages, grades and abilities in the same group. It is the most appropriate way of reaching students from grades one to four when remoteness and low population undermine the viability of normal school practices.

Multigrade schools can be found in hard-to-reach locations in Sri Lanka, and they are common in parts of Malaysia, serving people who are disadvantaged, such as the Malay and Chinese schools in small villages and settlements. The same is true in Mongolia. In countries such as Colombia and Zambia, multigrade teaching is recognized by governments as an effective initiative for teacher educators and teacher trainees at the national level. (See Box below.)

MONGOLIA: MULTIGRADE TEACHING

In hard-to-reach areas in remote rural communities, children attend boarding schools. However, parents are reluctant to send young children away from home, so they enrol them in multigrade schools. The teachers who run these schools are trained in methodologies and class organization developed to work with children of different ages and different abilities in one class. After Grade 4, some children enrol in formal primary school in district boarding schools, while others join non-formal education in the community to later be allowed to return to formal school or obtain certification of primary education.

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Lessons have been learned from experiences with multigrade schools in Lesotho, Mexico, Peru, Sri Lanka, Western Samoa and Zambia. First, multigrade teaching is more common than previously realized. Schools with more primary grades than teachers must organize learning along multigrade lines some of the time. Too few ministries of education, curriculum developers and teacher education institutions factor this reality into their plans and programming. Textbooks on curricula and teaching methods, teacher guides and education pedagogy in colleges and universities do not incorporate enough of the knowledge, skills and values required for teachers to apply multigrade teaching methodologies successfully (Little, 1995).

There are several elements in the multigrade strategy that are also found in child-friendly school models. These include teacher training in the design, reproduction and distribution of large numbers of pedagogic materials (teacher-made and self-study materials), peer and small group learning, procedures for evaluating learning improvement and achievement, and forms of internal school and classroom organization establishing routines centred on students rather than teachers.

6.6.2   Classroom discipline and management practices

Like any other model of quality education, child-friendly schools include systems for discipline and order. These schools encourage rules and regulations, but also emphasize that they must be in the best interest of children and applied in a fair, transparent manner. Classrooms and learning spaces should be safe

places for children to learn. In child-friendly schools, teachers need to have the skills to apply alternative forms of discipline instead of falling back on corporal punishment and other forms of physical and verbal abuse. Teachers should be made aware of the emotional and psychological damage these practices can do to children. For example, threats or promises of rewards to girls in exchange for sexual favours are intolerable. Teachers also need to understand why violent forms of discipline such as corporal punishment are harmful to children. (See Chapter 5.)

Teachers require training in constructive discipline practices to promote orderly and fair conditions for learning in classrooms and learning spaces. School managers, teachers and other school personnel also need training and support in human rights education that fully recognizes the importance of tolerance and peaceful conflict resolution and the significance of child participation. Ensuring that teachers' rights are respected is the first step towards ensuring respect for children's rights. This mutual respect requires teachers to reach out to children in an affable manner while maintaining dignity and respect as authority figures in the classroom.

Child-friendly schools encourage a pedagogic approach that emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge, development of abilities and understanding of concepts in a holistic manner. The approach offers teachers latitude to plan interactive sessions in varied settings and to continuously assess the quality and effects of their interventions in the classroom. In a child-friendly classroom or learning space, the

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teacher is the mentor, the facilitator of learning and the coordinator of all learning activities. Creativity, openness, flexibility, tolerance, good leadership and organizational skills become the avenues through which effective learning-teaching is maintained. Classroom management that enhances learning is child-centred and promotes active learning. The teacher's role must be to observe, discuss, probe, extend ideas and engage children in meaningful, positive learning experiences.

6.7   CURRICULUM

Many developing countries have a national curriculum that serves as the blueprint for consistent learning and teaching standards in schools throughout the system. There is usually some flexibility for schools to implement the national curriculum to fit with their particular strengths and challenges and for schools to introduce other activities that extend the learning experience for the pupils.

Generally, the national curriculum:

*   Delineates the most important knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that every child has a right to learn;

*   Provides a flexible government framework to teachers to ensure that all schoolchildren learn in a balanced, manageable way, while stretching to challenge students and meet their diverse needs;

*   Sets standards that measure children's progress in each subject to help teachers monitor achievement and plan to help students do even better.

The national curriculum shown below defines a child's progress in broad key stages. Schools and learning spaces are usually given some leeway to organize teaching within this framework in a manner that best suits the reality of the children in their care. The schools create their own plans, term by term and year by year. At the end of key stages 1, 2, 3 and 4, a child may take a national test. At the end of key stage 4, the national final examinations determine eligibility for the next stage of education.

KEY STAGES AND NATIONAL CURRICULUM LEVELS

AGE	STAGE	YEARS	TESTS
4–5	Foundation (Early Childhood Education)		
6–9	Key stage 1 (Lower Primary School)	1– 4	Year 4 national tests
10–13	Key stage 2 (Upper Primary)	5–7	Year 7 national tests
14–16	Key stage 3 (Junior Secondary School)	8–10	Years 9 or 10 national tests
17–18	Key stage 4 (Senior Secondary School)	11–12	Year 12 national tests

At the classroom level, it is the teachers' responsibility, with support from the school head, government authorities and parents, to ensure that children learn at or above the educational standards for all primary schoolchildren in literacy, numeracy and life skills. There is flexibility in how this may be achieved. Most successful literacy teaching is interactive, with children encouraged and expected to contribute. Several developing countries are implementing effective methods for teaching literacy in the mother tongue. A case in point is the Breakthrough to Literacy (BTL)

programme in Uganda. (See Box below.)

The BTL approach is also used in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi and the Limpopo Province in South Africa and has yielded good results. The United Kingdom Department for International Development (DIFD) is funding BTL in both Lesotho and Malawi. In Botswana, BTL is funded by the Government and has been expanded nationwide. The major drawback of the approach is that it ends at the lower primary school level. When the children reach the upper

UGANDA: BREAKTHROUGH TO LITERACY

In May 2001, Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports and its partners, UNICEF, the Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo, and the National Curriculum Development Centre, began a pilot project to teach local languages, using the Breakthrough to Literacy (BTL) methodology. Originally developed to teach functional literacy skills to learners in their first language, BLT brings the language used in the home into the classroom. The approach helps children recognize words they are accustomed to hearing and speaking when they see them translated into a written code; it then helps them read and write the language themselves.

The learning environment in a BTL classroom is organized into social and ability groups, which perform interactive tasks in a relaxed and stimulating atmosphere. BTL Uganda aims to develop functional literacy skills in young learners, so that 85 per cent of both girls and boys are able to read and write in local languages by the end of Primary 3 (P3). It promotes other important features of the

education landscape in Uganda, such as establishing child-friendly learning in all lower primary schools and learning centres, and ensuring that learners demonstrate proficiency in at least three selected life skills by the end of P3.

The BTL methodology has been a resounding success, in terms both of increasing reading proficiency in the pilot schools and promoting several aspects of child-friendly learning environments. The mean score for all BTL learners, including those who failed to attain the required reading proficiency, was 50.7 per cent compared to 26.0 per cent for the non-BTL group. Compared to their grade cohort, the BTL learners have outperformed the non-BTL Primary 2 (P2s) by more than 40 percentage points (50.7 per cent BTL compared to 10.2 per cent non-BTL). The non-BTL learners are most deficient in reading comprehension, the most important skill for future learning. The BTL methodology was found to work equally well with boys and girls (mean of 50.9 per cent and 50.6 per cent, respectively) (Letshabo, 2002).

primary level, they are confronted for the first time by the harsh realities of didactic and teacher-centred learning-teaching methods. The governments in these six countries need to organize a subregional seminar on BTL to discuss the challenges, especially those concerning costs and the scaling up of the initiative, lessons learned and good practices.

Child-centred curriculum planning and development combined with interactive and participatory teaching-learning approaches increase opportunities for children to work together and share their knowledge

SOUTH AFRICA: ONE TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE

I teach Grade 1 in a rural school in South Africa. I have a class of 40 six- and seven-year-olds – 25 girls and 15 boys. In the life skills education class today, I was teaching them about personal hygiene and reading a story about the hospital. The short story had lovely pictures, but several worrying gender stereotypes. The pictures of doctors were men and those of teachers were men. The people queuing to see the doctor were women; and all parents holding babies were women.

After reading them the story, I organized the children to perform a simple, short role play, showing parents with a sick child in the doctor's room and the doctor with a nurse examining the child and giving an injection. One group of pupils were directed to select a boy as a nurse and a girl as a doctor and the other group selected a girl as a nurse and a boy as a doctor. The pupils had great fun doing the role play. At first, the girls were too shy to play doctors and the boys were reluctant to play nurses. But with encouragement, they did. I often use role play to break stereotypes and stigma – and it works.

and educational experiences. Curriculum content in the areas of numeracy, literacy and life skills education must be gender-sensitive and participatory. (See Box, this page.)

The increased attention that child-friendly schools give to the development of curricular activities, such as lesson planning and preparation, and use of teaching aids and classroom management, has contributed to an increasing confidence, motivation and ownership of the teaching process.

Child-friendly schools and learning spaces encourage the development and application of principles of curriculum and pedagogy that promote peace, human rights and non-violence. Curriculum content should include children's rights, human rights and peace education within the framework of communication strategies that are developed by and for young people. Teachers should be given relevant preservice and in-service education in ways that are participatory and democratic.

The transition to constructive and positive pedagogic methods may be extremely difficult for teachers who themselves were taught with authoritarian and didactic approaches. Ways must be found to overcome those autocratic barriers to more progressive, democratic pedagogic practices, which may also play a role in reducing and ultimately eliminating school violence. Student and community participation is also vital to child-friendly curriculum development. The preparation of class activities can demand more time than 'chalk and talk' methods, but the benefits outweigh the workload.

CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

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CHAPTER 7

COSTS AND BENEFITS

What are the costs associated with child-friendly schools, and how do they differ from costs typically linked to schools in a given country context? What are the benefits and added value offered by child-friendly schools, and how do they compare with the levels of investment required to generate such benefits? These critical questions can help a country determine if it will use a child-friendly school model to improve the quality of education in its school system.

7.1 'COSTING' THE ELEMENTS

Costs and benefits of implementing a child-friendly school policy are often the deal makers or breakers. Estimating costs will be based on what key elements are required to make schools child-friendly in a particular country. This depends on how broadly the government intends to implement child-friendly schools and how comprehensive a model it decides to adopt.

Starting from the child rights principles that underpin CFS models, the desired characteristics for child-friendly schools in a country can be determined through a consultative process or by a representative team of stakeholders mandated to execute this task. The list of characteristics can be grouped into categories, which will make the planning process more manageable. Some of the desired characteristics can be grouped, for example, under safety, security and well-being. (See Chapter 5.) Other characteristics can be placed within the area of curriculum content and pedagogic style (see Chapter 6), or location, design, infrastructure

and services. (See Chapter 3.) Other characteristics can be grouped under community characteristics, both school as a community and school as part of the community it serves. (See Chapter 4.)

Grouping desired characteristics makes it possible for planners to ask additional questions rather than be restricted to the characteristics generated from basic CFS principles. These include such questions as: Are all aspects of safety, security and the well-being of learners covered? Are some characteristics under curriculum content feasible for a system with a centrally determined curriculum?

After identifying, generating and grouping desired child-friendly school characteristics, the next step is to set standards – both national and local – for these characteristics. This is where quantifying child-friendly school elements begins to take shape. For instance, a desired characteristic may be spacious classrooms where children can move around, work in small groups

or display their work, rather than cramped classrooms where children sit in fixed rows, facing the blackboard and listening to the teacher. Setting standards then requires specifying the minimum floor space (square feet per child) required for a child-friendly classroom.

In the same way, 'playtime' standards could be set according to guidelines on how much school time (hours or periods per week) should be devoted to recreational activities. Similarly, standards can be set for staffing by determining the basic courses (in-service and pre-service) required for teachers to become 'child-friendly-school trained' or by recommending a ratio of pupils to each 'child-friendly-school-trained' teacher. In all cases, setting standards is not meant to establish a rigid blueprint for implementation but to provide a quantifiable basis for estimating the costs of making schools child-friendly in a given education system.

Once child-friendly school standards have been set, the next step is to use these as the main variables in determining the cost of making schools child-friendly over a given period of time. Planning for child-friendly schools in this way may focus on all schools in general or in some order of priority, perhaps focusing on the most dysfunctional schools first. It may also concentrate on only particular categories of schools as a matter of policy, such as rural schools or schools in minority communities. Whatever the policy or focus, these desired characteristics and standards provide the basis for estimating costs. The plan could be about specific milestones, such as a goal that 20 per cent of schools become child-friendly annually, or about a long-term goal, e.g., all schools will be child-friendly in five years.

In general, there are three basic requirements for estimating the cost of making schools child-friendly:

• Data on the current state of the main variables;

• Monetary values that can be readily assigned to these variables;

• Projections of data and monetary values for future child-friendly school scenarios.

Typically, data on the condition of the main variables can be obtained through school surveys, situation analyses, research studies, desk reviews of well maintained records in ministries of education and other sources. For efficiency, data should be grouped by appropriate categories for the main variables. In looking at child-friendly school design and infrastructure, for instance, once the physical state of existing schools has been catalogued, the child-friendly school standards set for this variable can be used to gauge the design and infrastructure of existing schools. Analysis is more efficient when these schools are grouped based on whether they require major reconstruction and full-scale refurbishment, require modest reconstruction and partial refurbishment, or require minor refurbishment and upgrading. The number and percentage of schools requiring these different treatments, together with the estimated unit cost for each treatment category, provide a useful estimate of the total cost for making all schools child-friendly in terms of design and infrastructure.

Likewise, data on the teaching force can be used to determine the number and percentage of teachers who require major training in child-friendly school methodologies, require training in some aspects only or just require

a brief refresher course. This data, together with the estimates of what it costs to provide a teacher with training (unit cost) in each of these categories, can then be used to provide a picture of the total costs of having all existing teachers qualified by becoming certified or recognized as child-friendly-school trained.

Monetary values can be readily assigned to variables when there are standard ways of determining unit costs for use in total cost estimates. In some cases, this is fairly routine because unit costs can easily be obtained from existing practices in education. This is the case with school construction and refurbishment. It is relatively easy to estimate the unit cost for a child-friendly classroom (per square foot) by using available cost data on materials and type of contract, e.g., community labour or a commercial contractor, and adjusting these figures for child-friendly school features and modifications. In the same way, the cost of training each teacher (unit cost) through various types of courses can be estimated from records or simple calculations. These unit costs can then be adjusted if necessary to take into account child-friendly school requirements in the training course.

The main problem with costing child-friendly school elements arises in cases where it is not straightforward to assign monetary values to the variable(s) in question. This is the case with some characteristics relating to school-community links. It is not clear how to assign monetary values to these links; thus, the use of proxies may be necessary. What does it cost, for example, to set up and maintain a vibrant parent-teacher association, including training school committee members and sensitizing teachers to the school's accountability to the community it serves? Does this cost

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vary with the number of pupils (unit cost per pupil), or does cost vary with size and type of school (cost per school or different categories of schools)?

The issue is further complicated by the fact that part of the cost associated with this kind of link may also be embedded in other areas, such as design, infrastructure and services. This would be the case if schools are deliberately constructed to provide space for community activities and supplementary services, such as use of the school's classrooms for adult literacy classes, access to the sports field for community events, use of the school borehole for water supply to the community or involvement of parents in preparing school meals for the children. Despite the complications and difficulties involved in assigning monetary values to these elements, it is important that they are given full consideration during planning, and that unit costs are estimated through proxies when necessary. Often it is the less tangible elements, such as links between schools and their communities, that determine the extent to which schools can be considered child-friendly.

Once the necessary data sets and unit costs have been developed, some projections that reflect a future child-friendly school scenario should be

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formulated. This is important because child-friendly schools cannot be implemented instantaneously, and data and unit costs are subject to change over time, as are changes in enrolment, staffing and currency value. Expanding enrolment will increase the cost of those elements that are dependent on the number of pupils, just as additional schools to accommodate this expansion will increase the costs of elements that are dependent on the number of schools. Existing teachers and school managers will retire or leave the profession and need to be replaced by new teachers, just as the cost of providing training for these teachers and learning materials in schools will also change over time. As thoroughly and accurately as possible, all probabilities must be factored into cost projections for making all schools child-friendly over a given time period.

7.1.1 Policy simulation and costing

Simulation models are conventional ways of using data on the existing system, along with unit costs, to make projections and calculate total costs. These models can be used for different purposes and can readily be adapted to cost estimates for implementing a child-friendly school policy. Simulation is used to understand the behaviour of the education system when certain key variables and conditions change in value. In this sense, simulation models can be used for advocacy by showing how the education system would behave if certain policy changes are implemented versus if such changes are not implemented. This is essential for evaluating such major policy changes as 'making all schools child-friendly'. They may also be critical in negotiations with interest groups – for instance, with teachers' unions eager to understand the impact of policy on teachers.

Simulation models can show how learners, schools and the education process would change as child-friendly school elements are implemented. For instance, while there may be additional costs involved in changing the system, there also are likely to be gains in efficiency, school governance and community benefits. Strengthening those factors will most likely improve overall quality and outcomes of education.

Apart from advocacy with the various stakeholders whose support is vital for establishing and implementing a child-friendly school policy, simulations can be used to assess the feasibility of the policy itself in terms of overall resource implications (finance, human resources, etc.). Through this type of exercise, it is possible to make critical decisions on the scale and scope of child-friendly school implementation that will be affordable and sustainable for a country. Officials can review the quality parameters, for example, and adjust them in line with the principle of progressive realization. (See Chapter 6.) A country can then accomplish what is affordable now while aiming for higher quality standards in the future. A simulation exercise can identify and apply ways of reducing costs without compromising basic child-friendly school principles. This is helpful in both policymaking and design of implementation strategies for making schools child-friendly.

The Education Policy and Strategy Simulation Model (EPSSim) is a UNESCO-designed tool with a UNICEF-supported module for costing child-friendly schools. It is generic and can be adapted to country-specific national education systems. It captures the full needs of the education sector, covers all subsectors from pre-primary through higher education, including non-formal schooling, and includes costing of

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critical demand-side interventions, such as HIV and AIDS impact and response, and teacher training. EPSSim has clear categories of inputs, coverage and interventions, is gender-disaggregated and separates public and private coverage.

The model estimates year-to-year needs in terms of teachers and staff, learning materials, classrooms, facilities and training required to achieve national goals and policies; it projects the cost implications (divided between recurrent and capital costs); and it estimates the resource availability of the education sector and financial gaps while accounting for domestic revenue and household and donor contributions.

In this 'demographic' model, educational needs are the decision variables. The three stages are: (a) collection and input of baseline data, (b) setting policy goals, targets and options, and (c) projection of results. The model uses an Excel spreadsheet with separate parallel columns for input of baseline data and targets for each category. Projections are displayed on the remainder of columns. (See Table 7.1 below.) Formulas are already in place, so the user only has to fill in the yellow cells and the model makes calculations automatically.

Depending on the country, further adaptation of these formulas may be necessary. Once the country's budgetary framework data are entered, the model calculates the resource gaps. It also generates concurrent scenarios to compare results and guide policy dialogue and decision-making that can strike a sustainable balance between projected resource requirements (teachers, materials, classrooms) and feasibility and affordability. Policy options can be changed to immediately see the potential impact of both quality and costs in order to assess policy decisions and make necessary adjustments.

The tool can be used at all stages of strategic planning, from sector analysis to policy formulation, action planning and monitoring. It allows for informed, evidence-based policy dialogue and negotiations with ministries of finance, donors, partners, civil society, teachers' unions and so forth.

TABLE 7.1

7.2.1 Programme design and policy

In addition to serving as a costing tool, EPSSim can play a role in policy formulation and programme design. As countries endeavour to make their schools child-friendly, EPSSim will help them narrow the gap between policy decisions and likely results; revise their education plans and policies and make necessary adjustments; design long-term strategies and accurately cost their sector plans to estimate funding gaps; and weigh policy options and allocate resources in response to child-friendly school requirements.

The EPSSim model includes a section on child-friendly schools. This section is linked to the rest of the model, so targets are drawn from the system as a whole. The model contains a list of quantifiable options for child-friendly school features that can enable countries to identify the resource needs of schools, as well as the actions necessary to create enabling and protective environments. The tool can serve as an expanding checklist or guideline of key features based on national child-friendly school standards and can generate the estimated costs involved in implementing such standards.

In general, child-friendly school interventions in the model are divided into the following categories:

- Safety, security and well-being of learners and teachers;

- Schools as a community and schools in the community;

- Child-friendly curriculum (content, teaching, learning methods);

- Infrastructure and design (facilities, equipment, resources).

Under each category, countries can select from various items that make schools more child-friendly to determine the resource requirements and gaps. This exercise can help ministries of education determine such requirements as the number of schools to include health care, school feeding, counselling, safe water, trained staff for emergency preparedness, protective school spaces, gender-sensitive curricula, flexible furniture, new latrines and playgrounds in annual incremental needs.

7.2.2   Use of simulation models for costing

Once the difficult-to-quantify resources such as safe environments have been estimated on the basis of proxies, other elements such as skilled staff, materials and infrastructure are more readily calculated, and the total requirements can then be fully 'costed'. In each case, under the targeted number of schools or students to be covered, unit costs are applied as a means of estimating the resource requirements and funding gaps over a specified number of years.

Using infrastructure, for instance, the status of existing schools is entered first (expressed as the percentage of schools that need to be refurbished), then targets are set in terms of the percentage of these schools to be converted to child-friendly school standards during the programme period. The projected needs based on the percentage of facilities to be reconstructed, along with the input of unit costs, determine the resource requirements and gaps.

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TABLE 7.2A: RESOURCE PROJECTION

Child-friendly content, teaching and learning methods (gender-responsive and age-appropriate)	
Students	**Unit costs**
Students having access to gender-sensitive and relevant textbooks	$3.00 <= per pupil unit cost
Students having access to hygiene, HIV pevention, preventive health life skills programmes	$7.00 <= per pupil unit cost $7.00 <= per pupil unit cost
Students having access to curriculum on life skills for peacebuilding, environmental protection, etc.	$3.00 <= per pupil unit cost
Students having access to curriculum on emergency prevention, preparedness and response	$40.00 <= per pupil unit cost
Teacher students with additional teacher training for child-centred pedagogy	
Staff	
Teachers receiving in-service training on child-centred pedagogy	$50.00 <= per teacher unit cost
Teachers using instructional/teaching materials on child-centred pedagogy	$10.00 <= per teacher unit cost

TABLE 7.2B: SERVICES PROJECTION

	CFS START YEAR	POLICY OBJECTIVES			PROJECTION RESULTS			
	2007/ 2008	Target/ options	Number of years	Annual increment	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011
Safety, security and well-being								
Students								
% having access to health checks (vaccination, deworming, monitoring adherence to medication, etc.)	10%	30%	10	2.0%	10%	12%	14%	16%
% receiving health kits	10%	40%	10	3.0%	10%	13%	16%	19%
% receiving proper nutrition (including school meals)	5%	60%	10	5.5%	5%	11%	16%	22%
% having access to counselling (violence, disabilities, HIV and AIDS, orphanhood, etc.)	5%	60%	10	5.5%	5%	11%	16%	22%
% receiving training in emergency preparedness and prevention	0%	60%	10	6.0%	0%	6%	12%	18%
% having access to safe transportation	2%	25%	10	2.3%	2%	4%	7%	9%

Costing related to safety, security and the school population's well-being can be done in a similar manner. Under this category, the resource requirements related to the safety, security and well-being of students, teachers and other school staff can be projected. Safety and security elements would include access to health care, nutrition, emergency preparedness, non-violence in schools and safe transportation. Tables 7.2A and 7.2B provide an overview of some items that can be projected in relation to students. Once the number of students in the system is determined, unit costs are entered to calculate overall costs for this category. Countries may decide to include a certain number of these items in their policies or add others to adapt it to their context and needs.

7.2.3 Other issues in costing

There are special considerations for estimating additional costs and benefits related to mainstreaming child-friendly schools in the education system. Some child-friendly school elements may not be readily quantifiable for cost purposes yet need to be part of mainstreaming.

Institutional ethos is one such complex element, as it involves maintaining, strengthening or changing the rituals, routines, norms, values and activities that shape the everyday character of the school as an institution and learning community. How this is done varies from school to school. But for mainstreaming purposes, it may be best to amalgamate ethos by school type, such as religious, private, community or government. It then becomes a matter of estimating costs for key components. These may include extra-curricular activities, space and facilities for daily assembly, facilities and equipment for major sporting events, grants to cover annual festivities and school anniversaries, joint activities with the local community, or events

and anniversaries involving the community of past students.

Once a complex element like institutional ethos is broken down into components, it becomes possible to quantify and cost the mainstreaming requirements for this aspect of child-friendly schools. Some of these costs will be provided for in the education budget, while others will be met by local communities, associations of past students or other outside organizations.

By using a suite of simulation models, it should be possible to interpret such complex child-friendly school elements and then review their cost implications. Setting standards in this way enables planners to specify what every school ultimately requires, linked to an appropriate target ratio, such as per pupil, classroom or school. The goal is to guide policymaking and then help translate policy into practice through projections based on feasible child-friendly scenarios that can be implemented over an agreed-upon period of time. A country may decide to make all of its schools child-friendly over a plan period, with clear standards as to how comprehensively the child-friendly school principles are applied. It may decide to make some categories of schools (e.g., in poor rural areas) child-friendly during the plan period, while expecting schools in affluent communities to take on the process of becoming child-friendly through their own efforts. Whatever the policy decision, successful implementation would depend on national capacity as well as the level of resources required in relation to available budgets and external financial assistance. In all, quantifying, costing and projecting key variables for making schools child-friendly will be critical. Education planners will therefore be central in all efforts to develop and implement child-friendly school policies.

8

CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 8
Monitoring and evaluating

unicef

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CHAPTER 8

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

As with any major innovation, UNICEF's experiences with child-friendly schools and learning spaces raise questions about monitoring and evaluating performance. Why do child-friendly schools/learning spaces need to be monitored and evaluated? How should they be monitored and evaluated? What exactly needs to be monitored and evaluated? Who should be involved in the process, and what are their respective roles? Who needs to know what and for what purpose?

8.1   WHY MONITOR AND EVALUATE?

The objectives of monitoring and evaluation vary, depending on the type of programme or project. Generally, the purpose is to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme and its efficacy in relationship to the original expectations. Monitoring and evaluation also depend on who is the end user and what are the expectations of the endeavour. An end user may simply be interested in knowing if the programme delivers on its objectives. In some cases, they may also wish to assess the cost of achieving these objectives and whether the resources invested could have been put to better use. Other times, they are interested in measuring the programme's impact beyond simply achieving a set of prescribed objectives.

Although monitoring and evaluation are usually linked, it is important to distinguish their purposes. Monitoring is a more immediate and continuous process meant to keep things on track and ensure that the right inputs are included for successful implementation

of a model. For a child-friendly school (CFS) programme, monitoring is usually undertaken by project managers within education ministries and implementing partners who collect school, community and student-related data. The purposes of monitoring include:

*   Recording and reporting child-friendly school and learning space activities, inputs, processes and outputs;

*   Tracking progress on CFS interventions to inform ongoing activity;

*   Providing evidence of progress for advocacy and mobilization.

A key feature of child-friendly schools is the active and meaningful participation of students and community members, along with teachers, school administrators, supervisors, inspectors and education system officials, in the monitoring process.

Based on this outline of monitoring and evaluation, it can be argued that a comprehensive approach to monitoring and evaluating child-friendly schools and learning spaces should be able to assess their effectiveness and efficiency at different levels – from the global (multi-country) to the national and subnational levels to the school, classroom and individual learner. With carefully designed multiple objectives for different levels, a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation should be able to:

• Provide evidence for advocacy, national policy dialogue, standard-setting, accountability within the public domain, scaling up, mainstreaming and replication;

• Provide evidence to major investors in education (governments, development partners) that the CFS model is an effective, efficient, equitable way to ensure quality basic education for all children, under all circumstances, in a manner that is relevant, affordable and sustainable;

• Help establish national standards, criteria and indicators for rights-based education;

• Provide information for evidence-based decision-making that is predicated on agreed-upon national standards;

• Glean information on the costs and benefits of the CFS model as well as the trade-offs to promote sound investment in the best interest of the child in terms of education, development and the well-being of the 'whole' child;

• Provide information to development partners and education ministries about impact, outcomes and progress in relationship to child-friendly school and learning space objectives to help them make informed decisions about the programmes;

• Measure the impact of CFS programmes on national education systems;

• Signal ways to improve efficiency for better management and help ensure that money, time, staff and equipment invested in CFS activities are appropriate and optimal in terms of achieving outputs and outcomes;

• Inspire, empower, enable and mobilize schools, their communities and other stakeholders to create a common vision and to actively participate in an ongoing process of child-friendly school improvement;

• Track and assess individual children ('putting a face' on each child) in terms of inclusion, health, development, protection, learning barriers, learning achievement and special needs.

In general, the child-friendly school and learning space model should be monitored and evaluated to provide ministries of education the necessary evidence to assess its effectiveness and efficiency in helping achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA) targets. The success of child-friendly schools would therefore be measured by their ability to support the stated objectives of these internationally endorsed educational goals. (See Box: Millennium Development Goals and Education for All.)

8.2.1 Assessing effectiveness, efficiency and equity

Specific targets and indicators that measure the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of the CFS model are crucial. This assessment needs to generate evidence that will allow stakeholders to measure whether the model provides affordable and sustainable quality basic education. The evidence obtained from measuring CFS model indicators is used to complement information derived from monitoring progress towards the standard educational MDGs and EFA targets and indicators. Analysis of this evidence can explain why and how a child-friendly school and learning space package helps achieve MDG and EFA objectives, as well as how it influences the whole education system from the child to the classroom to the school and beyond.

8.2.2 Outcome-level evaluation and indicators

Outcome evaluation measures whether and to what extent objectives

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KEY QUESTION

If the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All is to provide affordable, sustainable quality basic education for all children under all circumstances, do child-friendly schools and learning spaces offer the most appropriate response?

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND EDUCATION FOR ALL

The MDGs include the educational goal to achieve universal primary education (the target for 2015 is to ensure that all boys and girls complete primary school); and goals on poverty and hunger, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases, environmental sustainability and partnerships for development. These can all be influenced by education.

The EFA targets include: ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality (goal 2); ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes (goal 3); eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality (goal 5); improve all aspects of the quality of education and ensure excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (goal 6).

EFA has established 18 indicators to measure attainment of these goals.

have been achieved, what concrete changes have resulted from CFS inputs and processes, and whether interventions have been able to influence the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of students, school staff, community members and education system officials. Outcome indicators may include information on changes in enrolment, repetition and drop-out rates for boys and girls. Under the CFS framework, assessment tools on outcome indicators must cover additional aspects including child-friendly criteria and the enabling environment (the optimal conditions for children's learning, cognitive, social and psychological development).

- Effectiveness is determined by comparing the actual results against the targets. Outcome evaluations of child-friendly schools could use standard MDG/EFA indicators to show that the model delivers on what it promises: quality basic education for all children.

- Cost-effectiveness determines the cost required for a package designed to produce a set of agreed-upon outcomes in one school. This information is especially valuable in designing 'follow-on' initiatives to take child-friendly schools and learning spaces to scale.

- Equity refers to non-discriminatory access and outcomes for children regardless of their sex, ethnic group, caste, religion, socio-economic status, geographical location or risk group. Outcome evaluation looks at such disparities as enrolment, absenteeism and drop-out rates from the programme to the school level. Information on disparities is fed into decision-making processes at the programme and policy level. It also informs the school self-assessment process for identifying causes and formulating actions to be incorporated into plans to improve the school's child-friendliness.

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR OUTCOME EVALUATION OF CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS AND LEARNING SPACES

What do administrators, teachers, students and parents think of the policies to improve the school's physical environment?

Is there an improved sense of community within the school as a result of CFS measures?

Has the health status of the students, school staff and community improved?

Has life skills-based health education fostered the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and skills needed to adopt healthy behaviours or create conducive conditions for health?

Does the school have an adequate number of separate toilets for boys and girls that are regularly used, well cleaned and have access to water?

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Child-friendly school models are the means to support a dynamic, constantly evolving improvement in overall education quality. Therefore, it would be inadequate and inappropriate to simply apply a set of standard monitoring and evaluation techniques to assess the model. Monitoring and evaluation should also be a means of driving forward the dynamic process of change while keeping track of progress in effectiveness, efficiency and impact.

Schools as institutions should be engaged with the monitoring and evaluation process, not only to provide answers to authorities but also to improve their own practice. Teachers, pupils and school administrators should be fully engaged in the process, not simply involved in filling out questionnaires or being interviewed. Monitoring and evaluation should take full account of their roles as principal actors who need to learn from their own practices in order to reflect and make changes that improve those practices. This approach yields vast benefits for the CFS model, those implementing it, those who are the main beneficiaries and those who are investing resources to mainstream the model. These aspects need to be explored and highlighted so that countries do not just adopt standard monitoring and evaluation techniques as a means of making decisions and investing in the model.

8.3.1 Monitoring and evaluation to support organizational learning

In the context of child-friendly schools, it can be argued that the fundamental rationale and most critical reason for engaging in monitoring and evaluation is to enable implementing organizations to gauge progress and determine whether the innovation is working as expected. This is significant because innovations are often judged to have failed when in fact they simply have not been properly implemented or given a chance to work.

Schools as implementing organizations need to know if they are putting in place all the elements necessary to become child-friendly. In this way, they can also lay the foundation for assessing at various stages whether the expected results are being achieved. Thus, schools are identified as learning organizations that improve on their practice through monitoring and evaluation as implementation takes place. This helps keep innovations on track and allows for corrective measures to be taken in a timely manner. Also, when schools operate in this way they become self-renewing organizations that can constantly improve the quality of their practice if given the right tools and resources.

An early assessment at the school level is central to guiding this type of monitoring and evaluation – required for self-improvement – as well as a more rigorous evaluation at prescribed stages (midterm, end) of the project/programme cycle. This assessment takes stock of the initial situation in the school. Progress then can be gauged going forward, and at some point in the future, outputs and outcomes of the CFS model can be properly evaluated.

Monitoring progress during the implementation process (formative evaluation) requires answering such questions as: How fully do key actors understand the main elements of child-friendly schools? How extensively are learners, teachers and school heads included in the process of change? Are the necessary technical guidance and full range of resources available for implementing the CFS model? How fully does the community support the change process? What are the barriers to CFS implementation, and how can they be addressed?

All these questions need to be assessed in the formative evaluation through appropriate indicators and other documented evidence to establish a baseline or starting point against which the school can measure progress over time. This assessment process then becomes the means by which all members of the school community – inside and outside the school walls – can progressively determine how closely schools are realizing their vision of what child-friendliness means and refine that vision as they proceed.

Evaluating progress towards child-friendliness as a form of organizational learning means that all school dimensions and actions must be open to review by school heads, teachers, pupils, parents and community leaders. Every aspect needs to be considered and reviewed through the lens of child-friendliness and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which underpins the CFS model (Bernard, 1999).

Each school, however, has its own institutional ethos or school culture that will determine its organizational learning style. The processes, methods, tools and indicators used

to monitor and evaluate self-learning need to be flexible and responsive to the school culture as well as local community conditions. These factors determine how much time and other resources, as well as the necessary authority, will be available to support self-learning through monitoring and evaluation. Schools have a vested interest in monitoring and formative evaluations to determine if they are moving along the right path and whether CFS as an innovation is being given a reasonable chance for successful implementation.

8.3.2 Schools as self-improving organizations

Successful child-friendly schools are by definition self-improving because quality improvements cannot be imposed from the outside. Despite the critical importance of this type of monitoring and evaluation for organizational learning and self-renewal, the reality is that schools often do not have the means or inclination to engage in monitoring and evaluation. School personnel are more accustomed to a process in which they complete questionnaires and answer questions for those who do monitoring and evaluation 'professionally' (researchers and evaluators).

Monitoring and evaluation tends to be done on schools rather than by schools or with schools. They are not seen as research organizations, and teachers are not regarded as trained researchers. The prevailing view is that schools and teachers should not be involved with monitoring and evaluation beyond filling out questionnaires, answering interview questions and opening up their practice to observation.

On this basis, schools must rely on directives, advice and suggestions from others on how to improve their practice. This approach does not provide the necessary motivation, incentive or means for schools to take responsibility and be accountable for improving education quality. It is also inimical to progress for CFS models, which by definition involve an ongoing process of change and improvement along a quality pathway.

For CFS models to be successfully implemented on a sustainable basis, schools must have the means as well as the incentives to monitor their own progress and learn from the process in order to take the action necessary to keep implementation on track. For this to happen, child-friendly schools need to borrow from the experience and lessons of a range of school-based programmes related to monitoring, evaluation and research for organizational improvement.

Programmes and projects that promote schools as self-improving organizations have been widely documented. Many countries have tried various versions of 'school improvement programmes' that involve schools in designing development plans in consultation with their communities, alumni groups or the ministry of education. Institutional development goals are negotiated, resources are secured, and the school generally monitors progress of implementation and evaluates the outcomes at specified stages in the implementation process.

Where school improvement programmes are linked to the CFS model, monitoring and evaluation within the school should lead to progress at the individual, organizational and community levels

as strengths, weaknesses and areas of improvement are identified. The school's CFS development plan should be informed by school-level evaluations to ensure that a culture of continuous improvement is generated and sustained. To achieve this, a climate of trust and transparency needs to be established in which key stakeholders buy into the concept of evidence-based planning. This is a challenge in countries where there is a perceived benefit to distorting data, not least because education funding is often on a per capita basis and districts and schools may receive additional resources if they inflate enrolment figures.

Another type of programme from which child-friendly schools could learn is the 'school accountability' programme. These involve schools assessing their own progress in delivering results that meet the expectations of different stakeholders to whom they are accountable. Stakeholders include education ministries, parents, communities, pupils, religious bodies, employers and teachers' unions. Schools that adopt this approach operate proactively, engaging with diverse stakeholders and negotiating the expectations that schools should strive to meet and how they can be made more accountable.

School accountability is a progressive and demanding approach to school improvement and is only viable if the school head and teachers are sufficiently skilled, motivated and empowered through their relationship with stakeholders. Ministries of education need to trust, support and encourage schools that adopt this approach rather than simply impose an inspectorate regime that dictates standards and demands conformity. Such schools also need support and

technical links with universities and teacher education institutions from which they can receive guidance and training to design and implement a credible school accountability approach to institutional development.

8.3.3 Teachers as reflective practitioners

Teachers play a pivotal role in the process of promoting change within their own classrooms as well as in schools and education systems generally. The success of child-friendly schools will depend to a large extent on the teachers involved. Qualifications and experience are very important in this regard, but more significantly, the pedagogic style practised by teachers will need to be child-centred to address classroom learning and school-based practices that put the best interest of children at the centre of all decision-making processes. Much of what is required to encourage teachers who can successfully implement CFS models can be achieved through education and training. But critical elements of this teacher profile can best be acquired through a mentoring process and a self-renewing practice that learns from reflection and correction. This is where genuine involvement of teachers in the monitoring and evaluation process can be beneficial for child-friendly schools.

When a teacher operates as a reflective practitioner she or he takes stock regularly and routinely of the classroom process and its outcomes: What went right, what went wrong? Why do some of the learners still not grasp the lesson, why are some

children so disinterested in what is going on? And how can I make things better? Teachers who are reflective practitioners understand that their role is not to act as a fount of knowledge, dispensing information and skills that pupils simply have to absorb successfully.

Reflective practitioners are teachers who recognize that at the heart of good practice is the role of being a good facilitator of learning. This is about engaging minds and initiating learners into a world of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values about which they are intrinsically curious and that is part of their heritage as human beings. Teachers all over the world successfully perform this miracle daily in their classrooms, using a combination of knowledge of subject, pedagogic skills and an abiding passion for bringing out the best in each learner entrusted to their care.

One of the ways in which the role of the teacher as a reflective practitioner has been strengthened during recent years is by engaging teachers in 'action research'. This can be distinguished from the more esoteric and rigorous research processes that deal with issues of correlation and causality, while developing evidence for certainty in the field of knowledge building and theory construction. Action research is concerned with a heuristic understanding of practice and with building knowledge as a basis for changing practice and taking action in real-world situations.

In Africa and Asia, versions of Collaborative Action Research in Education (CARE) have been used successfully to engage teachers

and school managers as genuine partners in monitoring, evaluation and research exercises. In this regard, great value has been attached to the unique experience and insight teachers bring to such exercises. Most teachers experience a professional transformation through their involvement with action research and go on to become more reflective in their own classroom practices. They tend to seek professional knowledge more routinely through available training programmes, engage more often with their peers on issues of good practice and develop a self-interrogating approach to facilitating learning in their school. Promoting this approach to monitoring and evaluation provides evidence for making decisions about CFS models, and it yields benefits in terms of professional development for teachers and school heads.

8.4 THE LEARNER AS THE FOCUS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

An essential monitoring feature of CFS programmes is a school-based management information system that ideally tracks individual children from pre-enrolment through completion and transition to the next level of education. In East and Central Asia, for instance, more than 10 countries now use computerized, Microsoft Excel systems based on a prototype developed in Thailand. These systems – which can also be used on calculators – maintain individual student learning profiles and early warning information on child learning that identify individual strengths, weaknesses, talents, abilities and learning difficulties. Students' learning is tracked, and special needs, issues of protection, or causes of faltering are identified. Based on this information, appropriate proactive school, family or community interventions are developed to mitigate learning obstacles. The expectation is that children will learn and, if they do not, that their problems will be quickly and accurately identified and acted upon.

These systems differ from traditional, standardized information systems. The traditional educational management information systems, or EMIS, use data sets identified and analysed by central-level decision makers for planning and policymaking to maintain education system quality. CFS child-tracking systems use data sets identified and analysed by schools and communities based on local conditions and used for local-level action to improve child learning. These are known as learning management information systems, or LMIS.

LMIS generate computerized or non-computerized 'files' containing information compiled throughout a child's school career on:

- Academic performance (grades, attendance);

- Physical conditions (health, nutrition);

- Family background and local factors that may affect child learning.

8.4.1 Creating a learning management system: Case study from Thailand

The development of an LMIS can be streamlined by setting up clearly defined steps. Thailand's learning management system is a solid example of what goes into the process (Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University, Thailand, n.d.).

Step 1 – Educational assessment

- Teachers and children collect student educational scores from every term the student has been enrolled, using data from existing records.

- These scores are recorded as a class educational profile (spreadsheet) with numerical scores converted into letter grades (A, B, C, D) on a curve for easier reading.

- Teachers then identify children who fail temporarily, sporadically or chronically.

Step 2 – Individual and family assessment

Along with the educational profile, teachers and students create two more spreadsheets: an absenteeism, health and nutrition profile and a family background profile. The family background profile contains information collected through a two-page survey, with all results encoded to ensure confidentiality.

Schools may develop their own family indicators based on local circumstances. Some indicators on the family background profile include: parental mortality, education levels and migration status; primary and secondary parental occupations and monthly income; land ownership; family disruption issues (widowhood, divorce with no remarriage, separation); number of preschool children in the family; number of primary and secondary students and what school(s) they attend; number of uneducated family members; main child caregiver; other members of the household and total household size; and participation in village development committees. These indicators are closely related to child protection issues.

Step 3 – Analysis

Using the three profiles – educational; absenteeism, health and nutrition; and family background – teachers identify children who have failed and determine what could be causing this failure. The most common reasons for student failure are:

- Low parental education;

- Parental occupation (no secondary occupation);

- High level of land ownership;

- Low average monthly income;

- Parental migration, especially fathers;

- Poor nutritional status;

- Poor health;

- High absenteeism.

Step 4 – Action

Depending on the child learning factors, teachers work with family and community members to initiate

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family and community development activities, school improvement programmes or a combination of the two in order to improve the children's learning environment. These activities may include:

- Establishing regular parent-teacher meetings to discuss student progress and guide school activity planning;

- Increasing children's access to and retention in primary and secondary schools through such mechanisms as scholarships or improved home-school transportation;

- Upgrading teachers' skills in conducting action research within classrooms;

- Implementing peer-to-peer and participatory learning programmes;

- Promoting life skills development;

- Establishing day care and vocational training centres;

- Improving school lunch quality;

- Improving water supply and sanitation facilities;

- Providing access to energy and enhancing the physical environment through such initiatives as tree planting, school gardens and solid waste management;

- Addressing the conditions of orphans and children with special needs.

Step 5 – Monitoring and evaluation

The process should establish school- and system-wide cut-off points of inadequate child learning and associated factors such as failure rates and nutritional status. It also should set new goals, identify appropriate interventions, and determine roles and responsibilities for the school, parents, community and other stakeholders.

In monitoring individual students, the school management information system (SMIS) tracks changes in child learning and associated factors over time. This includes monitoring within the term through use of a portfolio (authentic assessment) as well as term-by-term and year-by-year throughout the child's educational career.

In evaluating the school and education system, an accountable reporting scheme is created and implemented. Through case studies and other documentation, schools record not only their quantitative achievements but also how these results were accomplished.

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PHILIPPINES: PUTTING A FACE TO EACH NAME

One strategy that helps schools seek out and assist hard-to-reach, at-risk and faltering children is the Student Tracking System. The system is being piloted in 2,000 of the more than 3,500 child-friendly schools in the Philippines. Below are excerpts from an interview with Mrs. Erlinda J. Valdez, the principal of F. Benitez Elementary School, one of the pilot schools (UNICEF, 2002 – Teachers Talking).

1. What is the Student Tracking System?

The Student Tracking System is a system of organizing important data about learners – their academic performance, physical and mental cognition and their social background. It puts together a comprehensive view of the 'whole' child that allows teachers and administrators to understand the total environment in which children are learning. In summary, it puts a face and memory to each name. The system is also an early warning that will identify children who need special attention, are at risk of being abused, or are at risk of faltering and leaving school. It is a system that determines the pattern and frequency of poor learning and identifies children who need immediate assistance.

2. When and how did you start implementing the system?

It all started in May 2001, when I and two of my colleagues from this school were trained on the system. The training equipped us with the skills and knowledge to create, use and apply the system in our school, using the computer-based model.

When we came back from the training, we oriented all teachers on the system, advocated to parents and asked for their support, particularly in completing the family background questionnaire for each

of their children enrolled in school. To validate some questionable entries, we conducted interviews with students, other family members and community leaders. While the data gathering for family background information was ongoing, our school nurse was also doing health and nutrition monitoring for all students – after which, all teachers were asked to construct the learning profiles of each student, dating as far back as their first year in the school.

The teachers in charge summarized all the data and, together with the grade chairman, jointly identified learning falterers. Falterers were classified into three categories: chronic – those who consistently failed; sporadic – those who alternately pass and fail; and temporary – those who failed once but had no history of failure. Records of falterers (who were lovingly called 'stars', short for 'students at risk') were analysed. Conclusions of the analysis became the basis for the interventions rendered to the children. The school is now completing a research study entitled 'Faltering at F. Benitez Elementary School: Causes, effects and possible solutions', which we hope will guide our future interventions.

3. What benefits do you get from implementing the Student Tracking System?

Our experience with the system is still very new, but we are seeing positive behavioural changes among our teachers. Teachers, by their own testimonies and as observed by their peers and students, have become more patient and understanding of students who falter, miss or misbehave in class. In the past, they considered falterers and absentees as problem students; now they see them as students with problems. They have also come to know more of their students – their family background and their special circumstances. This, we believe, is a major step in genuinely helping students at risk.

We also have noticed closer teacher-student relationships now. Some students with special problems confide in their teachers and run to the school for refuge and consolation when their own families fail to give them the attention and care they need. Finally, the system has helped us define our school's research agenda for the next years. Since our school's goal is to provide quality elementary education to our students, it is incumbent upon us to find ways to make this into reality, to find causes of and address high levels of absenteeism, dropouts and underachievement. And the system is showing us how – it has given us a tool to find out the whys of the problems so we can address the 'hows'.

4. How did you motivate overworked teachers to support the system?

When we first introduced the system to our teachers, they had mixed reactions. Some were supportive, but many were indifferent, sceptical and unimpressed. So we advocated to them, emphasizing the potential benefits of the system to them and to their students. We also ensured that their support of the system translated into additional points in their performance evaluation. Furthermore, we made it a school undertaking to conduct the research study 'Faltering at F. Benitez Elementary School: Causes, effects and possible solutions', which generated funds for the school.

5. What were the challenges you faced in implementing the Student Tracking System?

The challenges we faced in starting the system can be categorized into three:

a. Generating support from teachers – At first, this was hard, as a number of teachers were disinterested and unconcerned. But through a creative combination of persuasion and recognition of their contribution, we were able to generate support from them.

b. Getting correct information from parents – There were many questions in the family background profile that were 'sensitive spots' for parents, for example, educational attainment and family income. To get correct information from parents, we had to befriend them first, assist them in completing the questionnaires and validate the information gathered by interviewing their children.

c. Overlapping of reports – The school system requires many reports from the schools and, more often than not, schools are burdened in preparing these reports. We are, therefore, exploring ways to integrate all these databases and reports so that less time and effort is spent in preparing all of them.

6. What are the lessons learned and the future direction?

• A better understanding of the students' family background has much to do with improving academic achievement.

• Knowing the child fully helps in educating him or her well.

• The key to teachers' support is proper acknowledgement and recognition of their efforts.

In the next months, we intend to continue to use and strengthen the system and complete our study on student faltering. We also plan to conduct workshops, where all teachers will jointly identify systematic ways of addressing factors of faltering, absenteeism and dropouts. In the meantime, we will also help advocate for the expansion of this initiative to all schools in the Division of Manila.

Source: <www.unicef.org/teachers/forum/0302.htm>.

At the macro level, those who facilitate and advocate for child-friendly schools must generate evidence that supports further investments in scaling up and mainstreaming the CFS model into education systems. Such evidence helps persuade governments and other partners to support the necessary investment and be committed to using the CFS model as a means of improving the quality of education. The type of evidence required comes mainly from monitoring and evaluation exercises. In this regard, two points must be emphasized: Adherence to technical evaluation standards is critical to ensure the credibility of presented evidence. And the evaluation must be done by specialists who are largely at 'arm's length' from the groups involved in designing, implementing and advocating for the CFS models. These measures enhance the value of the evidence in terms of objectivity and adherence to technical standards.

The accepted criteria of reliability, validity and generalizability are essential in the design of monitoring and evaluation tools and studies. The cost of such evaluations and studies competes with the demand for teaching and learning resources; therefore it is important to use existing data gathering and planning processes as much as possible. This reduces costs and encourages monitoring and evaluation as part of the process of mainstreaming CFS models.

A wide range of data sources is used to monitor and evaluate child-friendly schools and spaces in support of scaling up and mainstreaming. For standard survey techniques typically used in evaluation, the existing education system statistics are a good source of data for core indicators such as EFA gauges. In evaluating CFS models, however, it is critical that child-friendly school principles and issues are fully incorporated into the design of the evaluation. Credible monitoring and evaluation involve in-depth probing at the school, community and local government levels to tease out the variables that influence changes attributable to the implementation of the CFS model. In addition to quantitative data from the education system and other sources, there should be extensive use of an assortment of qualitative data and factors – including process and causal factors – which will need to be identified and explored as part of the evaluation.

Process evaluation assesses the extent to which planned outputs were produced on schedule, the efficiency of resource management in achieving these planned outputs and how well the interventions have been implemented by schools. It also identifies key factors that hinder or promote implementation. Process evaluation of child-friendly schools often includes indicators that assess children's, communities' and teachers' participation in decision-making. Indicators that focus on processes can examine whether student clubs or student councils have been formed or whether parent-teacher associations meet regularly and what role they play in school development plans. Process indicators also can assess classroom practices, methodologies and use of child-centred learning activities.

In general, there needs to be a judicious balance of quantitative and qualitative data. Depending on the information sought, a variety of tools can be used – including individual interviews, focus group discussions, questionnaires, classroom observation and document analysis. Checklists often provide answers to the 'what', 'how many' or 'how often' questions, whereas the key 'why' questions that explain causality may require more open-ended approaches. 'Yes or no' questions are of limited use because they do not measure progress. Likert scales are more useful. (See Box: UNICEF East Asia and Pacific regional indicators, right.)

The above scale allows for the measurement of progress over time and encourages school authorities to keep toilets clean and provide a sufficient number of toilets for girls. An additional question is required, however, to establish the actual number of toilets provided by sex and the student-toilet ratio.

UNICEF EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONAL INDICATORS: TOILET FACILITIES

5	Separate facilities used by each sex and regularly kept clean
4	Separate facilities used by each sex but not kept clean
3	Same facilities used by both sexes and regularly kept clean
2	Same facilities used by both sexes and not kept clean
1	No toilet facilities

Qualitative data strengthen and enrich the overall quality of evidence provided by the evaluation exercise. This gives greater insight for making decisions on mainstreaming and helps address the more nuanced constraints that may affect mainstreaming of child-friendly schools. Although readily available quantitative data from official statistics are attractive sources for any CFS evaluation, it should be kept in mind that there are risks in some contexts concerning the reliability of

official statistics. Besides, numbers do not often tell the whole story for complex models such as CFS.

Any credible CFS evaluation should also make use of case studies of good practices, especially if they can be replicated at the classroom and school levels in a variety of contexts. Similarly, case studies about child-friendly schools' positive effect on individual children can be powerful and descriptive evidence to enrich an evaluation. In general, case studies are good at anchoring evaluations through illustrative slices of reality. This may be just as important as the most sophisticated statistical analysis when it comes to convincing decision makers about the benefits of the CFS model.

In measuring the impact of child-friendly schools, qualitative data such as pupil and parental attitudes should preferably be quantified through use of standard instruments such as the Likert scale for measuring attitudinal and affective changes. Studies also need to go beyond the school level to assess why children are not coming

to school and to disaggregate data according to such criteria as ethnicity, class and gender. Child-to-child censuses recently supported by UNICEF in such countries as Kenya and Uganda are good examples of utilizing community demographics and situations to better understand school issues. Data from other sectors, including health records from local public health centres, can also be used to gauge the impact of the schools on key MDG health indicators.

Longitudinal data would typically be required to measure change over time and assess the impact of implementing CFS models. Alternately, comparative data can be used for this purpose by selecting a sample of child-friendly schools and a control group of schools from similar socio-economic, ethnic and geographical settings in order to measure the impact of CFS models. This was done in Nigeria's 2004 CFS-baseline study, which revealed that child-friendly schools were more popular than regular schools when compared to those in the control sample.

Monitoring the financial outlay for child-friendly schools is critical for accountability, transparency and equity. Audit chains can be developed to track inputs throughout the system. For example, an audit chain could follow textbook purchases to the hands of students. As it tracks the textbooks' journey, it could assess whether the textbooks have reached girls or marginalized children and how effectively teachers use the texts. Such 'end-user' auditing occurs in Kenya

and Uganda through the Books in the Hands of Children campaign. In Uganda, school budgets are posted on the walls to ensure accountability to communities. This type of monitoring helps ensure that resources invested in CFS are in fact being used as intended.

Innovations often fail not because investments are inadequate but because the resources are not used in the intended manner to achieve the desired outcomes. Measuring the cost

of CFS is also crucial for demonstrating the financial feasibility of scaling up child-friendly schooling as a rights-based approach to quality education for all. The Essential Learning Package

that UNICEF recently launched will be an important tool for 'costing' the minimum learning package for child-friendly schooling.

Tracking the outcomes of child-friendly schools and learning spaces and their progressive movement towards the child-friendly 'ideal' is an ongoing challenge. Country case reviews of CFS initiatives have produced relatively few examples where output and outcome results have been reported or evaluated. It is far more common to see reports primarily showing activities completed and inputs provided.

Monitoring and evaluation of CFS models have tended to yield patchy evidence to support them. There are many examples of useful and interesting evidence that show promise in terms of advocacy. But for the most part, CFS projects have not tailored their design, baselines or monitoring systems and indicators in terms of the generic CFS framework and its core principles as a dynamic 'package'.

Since the CFS model has shifted from a rigid blueprint of set characteristics or key dimensions, aspects of the 'ideal' can now be identified and detailed through a common format with a degree of built-in flexibility. Inputs, activities and results can be labelled as belonging to one or another of the core principles of the CFS framework. They can then be reported in a way that would help compile results. This would provide a clearer picture of the status of implementation at the country, regional and global levels.

In general, however, few projects are being managed in a way that allows them to report on their progress in creating schools that embody the CFS conceptual framework and in realizing the benefits that accrue from such programmes. This situation has arisen across all regions for much the same interrelated reasons:

- Projects have tended to implement child-friendly schools progressively (in some cases, almost on an ad hoc basis) in terms of dimensions that most readily fit with or build upon existing programmes and local priorities. It appears that none of the projects began on a comprehensive child-friendly, school-oriented basis. Although it makes programmatic sense to build on the 'readiness' of existing partnerships, funding resources, expertise and a proven track record, this approach has made tracking progress of the child-friendly school as a whole concept difficult.

- Few projects developed school-tailored baseline measures with respect to the status of all CFS dimensions, either separately, as a whole, or in terms of how these dimensions related to local education systems, partner communities, schools and families.

- Projects have reported activities and results according to the specific

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strategies and elements of their own CFS programmes rather than the 'ideal package'. In some cases, the resulting pictures are detailed descriptions of the separate child-friendly school strands. They are less informative as snapshots of whether or how these strands weave together to become more than the sum of their parts – something anticipated by the idea of the child-friendly school as an integrated conceptual and action framework.

While child-friendly school and learning space projects are evolving and likely improving in terms of reach and effectiveness, the nature and impact of this evolution are not fully evident due to a lack of good monitoring and evaluation. Furthermore, the dearth of evidence from cost-benefit analysis is a significant constraint to the successful advocacy and fund-raising that are needed to take child-friendly schools and learning spaces to scale.

8.7.1 Child-friendly schools and learning spaces evaluation examples

The child-friendly school initiative in Nigeria: The 'Federal Government of Nigeria-UNICEF Mid-Term Review' (2004) noted that 286 primary schools nationwide had been accorded child-friendly status. Various field reports also detailed the effects of CFS on enrolment and retention. UNICEF Nigeria, however, required more data on processes and pupils' achievement in child-friendly schools, the overall impact of these schools, and a clearer overview of inputs and activities in support of child-friendly schools.

Consequently, a baseline study of classroom interaction patterns, community participation, school inspection and supervision, attitudes towards education – especially girls' education – and school planning and management was designed and implemented. The baseline study assessed the impact of past interventions and provided a starting point for future impact studies.

The baseline assessment utilized a range of studies employing both qualitative and quantitative methods. Selection was by random stratified sample, ensuring that the schools' communities had similar profiles for such factors as urban-rural mix.

The evaluation assessed the impact of the CFS initiative in terms of:

- Outcomes – enrolment, primary one intake, gender gap, drop-out rates, repetition, completion, learning outcomes and enrolment in early childhood centres;

- Processes and relationships – the quality of interaction between pupils and pupils, pupils and teachers, teachers and supervisors and inspectors, and the school and the community as well as attitudes and interaction patterns;

- Classroom interaction – discourse analysis and timeline analysis to measure the quality of interaction in a subsample of the school, using video and direct data observation as a data-gathering process.

Viet Nam's Child-Friendly Learning Environment project: A major emphasis is placed on development and application of the Community-

based Monitoring and Programme Assessment System (COMPAS). Addressing three priority areas of the project – monitoring and evaluation, school-based management and school-community partnership – COMPAS is a project-wide data collection system aimed at creating a centralized database. It is expected to be used on a regular basis to guide project implementation in Viet Nam.

COMPAS is being developed and promoted as a mechanism and a forum that:

- Introduces and advocates child rights and child-friendly schools;

- Enables school self-assessment and planning;

- Provides data that will complement provincial, district and local planning;

- Tracks children, particularly girls and poor children;

- Creates enabling conditions to further development of the child-friendly learning environment;

- Converges with key interventions and generates stronger community participation;

- Assists principals in managing the school in more effective, participatory ways.

COMPAS includes baseline surveys that are conducted in 200 schools twice annually, at the beginning and end of each academic year. It supports training for local officials in survey techniques and use of data in decision-making and management. COMPAS is intended to work as a forward-moving cycle: advocacy and data collection training -> field

collection of data -> analysis -> school action planning -> child-friendly learning environment implementation -> further 'assessment of progress' data collection. The analysis is used both formatively at the local level for school improvement and as input for the central database of Viet Nam's Ministry of Education and Training for planning and resource allocation.

The Philippines' Child-Friendly School System project: In 2003, the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication, the Philippines' Department of Education and UNICEF undertook case studies to document best practices in CFS implementation. Using observation and interviews written as relatively unanalysed vignettes, the case studies provide a different and interesting perspective on the project outcomes – a 'window' on what users and beneficiaries believe child-friendly concepts and practices have produced (Lopez, 2003).

The case studies are grouped in the following areas:

- Making it work – CFS system implementation;

- Liking school and staying – students;

- From teacher with love – teachers;

- Leading by example – administrators;

- Building together – community;

- For the children's sake – student tracking.

To achieve consensus on a rights-based approach to quality education, the CFS concept needs to be mainstreamed in government monitoring and evaluation. This requires all stakeholders to agree upon the criteria for assessing the child-friendliness of the learning environment. The stakeholders include pupils, parents and caregivers, communities, school heads and teachers, religious and traditional leaders, government officials at all levels, development partners and civil society organizations. Each group has a role in the monitoring and evaluation process.

Education governance structures vary from country to country and depend on the number of tiers in each government system. Tiers may include national, district and local government, the community and the school itself. Federal systems may have an additional tier, and some countries have provincial levels above districts. Involving too many tiers may slow down or confuse the monitoring and evaluation process. Decentralization effectively places greater emphasis on monitoring and evaluating at the school and local government levels, with the central government playing more of a role in quality control and overall coordination.

A coherent monitoring system should link these various administrative levels and involve all stakeholders to some extent. Some of the stakeholders are more likely to be involved in the self-assessment process, including local non-governmental and community-based organizations, religious organizations, traditional leaders, communities and parents, local supervisors and inspectors, head teachers, teachers, instructors, caregivers and pupils. External and self-assessment criteria should be linked, but local priorities need to be reflected in self-assessment exercises and externally driven surveys.

Table 8.1 suggests potential roles for those who may be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of education, according to CFS criteria and approaches.

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TABLE 8.1

STAKEHOLDER	ROLE	PURPOSE	REMARKS
The ministry of education (MOE) and its directorates, including planning, examination boards, inspectorate and key parastatals.	MOE should be central to the whole process of monitoring and evaluation (M&E).	Ensure linkage between M&E of child-friendly schools (CFS) and mainstream data on schools, early childhood development and non-formal education centres.	Capacity development may be required. State, district and local government authority (LGA) levels are involved. Focus: Policy and data analysis for sector.
Other ministries, such as water supply, environment, health, women's affairs, social welfare and finance.	Advisory, through intersectoral committees.	Ensure that health, water, sanitation, energy and gender are given due prominence, and provide a minimum package for reducing risk and adapting to climate change.	Other ministries could assist in overall design and oversight of the M&E process at different levels in the system and in the actual M&E process at LGA level.
Academic institutions, teacher training institutions and consultancy agencies.	Technical support to ensure quality M&E and research.	Ensure quality and linkage between M&E and training of teachers and government officials.	Mainstream systems, such as local universities and teacher training colleges, should be involved as much as possible.
Major international development partners in education.	Could be represented in an overall steering committee or in agreement on key indicators and reporting systems.	Ensure consensus around overall M&E design and approach, especially for selected key indicators.	UNICEF may or may not take lead. Linked to overall education management information system (EMIS) and quality assurance. Field-based development partners may be directly involved at different levels.
International non-governmental organizations (NGOs), large national NGOs with field networks, local NGOs and community-based organizations, and the private sector.	Could be represented in an overall steering committee or in agreement on key indicators and reporting systems.	Ensure consensus around key criteria and indicators.	Involved at all levels, including international NGOs and large national NGOs, ensuring linkage with field-based NGOs and community-based organizations and supporting advocacy.
Local government officials.	Monitoring schools according to agreed-upon CFS principles, including efficient utilization of funding.	Ensure that effective information is gathered and analysed at this level.	Some LGAs have inspectorate or supervisor systems as well as EMIS.

Religious organizations.	Consultative or monitoring and advocacy – they need to share CFS principles, which also need to reflect their beliefs.	Ensure that children understand and embrace common ethics and values and demonstrate mutual respect for fellow students and their community in line with local norms and customs.	Involving such bodies is critical in countries where their support is required in achieving Education for All (EFA), for example, Muslim clerics in Pakistan and Northern Nigeria.
Traditional leaders.	Consultative or monitoring and advocacy– they need to share CFS principles, which also need to reflect their beliefs.	Ensure cultural fit between school, community and local environment.	Traditional leaders may have as great an influence in some systems as the government and can be key agents in achieving EFA.
Communities and parents.	Active participants in school M&E at the community and school levels.	Ensure transparency, accountability, ownership and sustainability.	Through involvement in village or community and school committees. May include parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and Mothers' Clubs.
Head teachers, teachers, non-formal education instructors, caregivers.	Keeping class and school/centre records on education, health, age and other indicators.	Ensure effective information-gathering and use at school level.	Effective EMIS depends on adequate information gathering at the school/ centre level, as does successful school planning.
Pupils.	Consultation and monitoring, including mapping out-of-school children and input into M&E criteria.	Ensure that CFS criteria are generated by pupils.	Pupils can be involved in school committees or parallel structures and in clubs where M&E is part of the function.

8.9 OTHER ISSUES ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF CFS MODELS

In general, monitoring and evaluation encompass a wide range of issues; CFS models spur even more. The emphasis of monitoring and evaluation exercises is not only to provide evidence for decision makers but also to help schools and reflective practitioners improve, and to benefit learners. Additionally, monitoring and evaluation must be integral parts of any CFS programme from the onset, rather than tagged elements on as an afterthought. If CFS is being mainstreamed, then monitoring and evaluation should be fully integrated into existing education system processes, rather than being treated as a separate or one-off exercise divorced from the rest of the system. Timing is also important. Monitoring should start early and be included strategically and thoughtfully throughout the stages

of the programme cycle. The review of these and other key issues is an essential part of capacity-building for child-friendly schools.

8.9.1 How should monitoring and evaluation be built into overall project design?

Monitoring and evaluation procedures should be clearly delineated in the overall project design, the Education Sector Plan (if the child-friendly school is integrated within the plan) and at the various levels being monitored or evaluated – school, community, and local and national governments. A logical framework approach, or an adaptation, that clearly links objectives, key indicators and means of verification (the how) and identifies each partner's role should be used. This avoids duplication and ensures that child-friendly schools fit within the overall government policy and planning structures.

8.9.2 When should monitoring and evaluation occur?

Monitoring should be ongoing and involve all stakeholders. Evaluations should be carried out according to agreed-upon cycles, both in mainstream government systems such as annual censuses or biannual panel inspection visits and in agreed project memoranda of understanding when child-friendly schools are supported through specific projects.

Impact evaluations that assess changes attributable to child-friendly schools should allow reasonable time between implementation and assessment. Interventions and processes may not take effect immediately. Teacher training, for example, will take a while before it influences teacher behaviour, and that in turn means learning outcomes will not be affected immediately. A period of at least two years between baseline and impact studies is normally advisable. The principal baseline can be complemented, however, by rapid appraisal baselines at the individual school level, thereby ensuring that each school has its own baseline to assist in drawing up the school development plan.

Monitoring occurs at various levels, from the global (using EFA targets) to the state and other government levels, the community, school, classroom and individual child. The quality of the school's record-keeping should be considered an essential element of the child-friendly learning environment. Effective, inclusive school management committees are indispensable to ensure the community's involvement in planning and monitoring school activities.

8.9.3 Why are baselines important, and what should they measure?

One of the problems in 'selling' the concept of child-friendly schools to development partners and governments has been the absence of baseline and impact data that demonstrate the effectiveness of activities and inputs on learning processes and outcomes. Baseline data can be provided by governments through such tools as EMIS, national surveys (including education sector analyses), inspection reports and documents such as budgets and expenditure accounts at all governmental levels. This data

> In Kenya, schools receive a cheque directly from the Government for textbooks, and school textbook management committees manage and monitor procurement and utilization.

should be complemented by more specific data on key CFS indicators related to processes, relationships and outcomes. A critical outcome that must be measured is the impact of the school on students' competencies and skills, including literacy, numeracy and life skills. Mainstream instruments can be used, such as those included in Monitoring Learning Achievement surveys.

An important element in child-friendly schools is pupil participation in classrooms (measured through classroom interaction analysis) and in decision-making. The impact of child-friendly schools on the attitudes and behaviours of pupils, their families and communities in regard to such issues as health, sanitation and gender also needs to be measured. This involves studies within the school and community that measure child-friendly schools' influence on ensuring that messages pass from child to child and from child to family and community.

8.9.4 Empowering communities and other stakeholders

In child-friendly schools, community-based monitoring and evaluation is an integral part of the process. Therefore, building the community's

capacity to participate in the process is essential. To achieve this, training can be linked to broader skills development through participative appraisal approaches. Using well-tried methods such as Reflect, which combines needs analysis with literacy development, can bolster the community's capacity to monitor and evaluate. Communities then become partners in gathering, analysis and use of data as they inform school development plans.

> Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda have incorporated standard Monitoring Learning Achievement tools into their baselines.

Evaluation and monitoring must be presented to communities in a comprehensible manner if they are to participate meaningfully in the process. Capacity development is also critical for teachers, school heads and government officials. In the case of teachers and other professionals, training in action research is essential if they are to develop as reflective practitioners attuned to the needs of their students. Similarly, children may keep introspective diaries and receive training in basic research methods. The Girls Education Movement in Uganda, for example, provided training for young children in basic research skills. Excellent examples of community involvement in monitoring and evaluation are found in Malawi, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, where community participation was integral in data gathering on early childhood issues and tracking orphans within the community.

8.9.5 Gauging the impact on the education system as a whole

The impact of replicating and mainstreaming CFS initiatives on government systems should be measured. Data can be used to help governments recognize the merits of child-friendly school integration into mainstream policymaking and planning.

If child-friendly school status is awarded on the basis of a school attaining certain child-friendly benchmarks, motivation for improvement will be enhanced. On a more local level, the influence of child-friendly schools on nearby schools should also be measured when the cluster model is employed. The impact of the school on education in the local government authority can also be gauged. Additionally, progress towards sustainability needs to be monitored. UNICEF should have 'phase-out' strategies for all schools it supports where child-friendly learning environments will be sustained in the medium and long term after external support has ended.

The data gathered on schools should be included in an overall database such as DevInfo, which encompasses a wide range of development indicators. In this way, connections can be made between the information generated by the education sector and data from other sectors. This is crucial for measuring progress towards related MDGs.

8.10 THE WAY FORWARD

Effective monitoring and evaluation are necessary to improve schools and make them more child-friendly. There needs to be tangible evidence that schools will provide all children with quality education and that students will acquire relevant skills and competences that enable them to exercise their full rights in society. Involving all major partners at the national and district levels helps build consensus. School and community involvement in the process increases transparency, accountability and community ownership of the school. Additionally, evaluations need to reach beyond the school to map obstacles to enrolment and attendance such as the effects of poverty, discrimination or HIV and AIDS.

The monitoring and evaluation process needs to be rigorous and be trusted to generate reliable data that can be made accessible through solid database management. Too often data are gathered but not effectively disseminated or utilized. The focus needs to include progress monitoring and process assessment as schools evolve over time from using CFS principles to identifying dynamic strategies that routinely lead to child-friendly school improvements.

In the final analysis, however, two key questions will be posed to child-friendly schools regarding their contribution to quality, rights-based education for all: How effective are child-friendly schools? And what will they cost? These are the challenges to those responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of child-friendly schools.

CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 9
Mainstreaming child-friendly concepts

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CHAPTER 9

MAINSTREAMING CHILD-FRIENDLY CONCEPTS

Once the child-friendly school model is successfully implemented in a number of schools in a country, the next step is to work with the government to make all schools child-friendly over an agreed time frame. There are two related ways to do this: (a) scaling up child-friendly school implementation throughout the country, and (b) mainstreaming child-friendly schools within the education system. Although these two processes are strongly interrelated, there are significant differences.

9.1.1 Scaling up

Scaling up involves a systematic, often rapid replication of the CFS model so that within a given period all schools can be identified as child-friendly. This can be done through the 'big bang' approach, which uses major investments over a short time span to make all schools child-friendly. For instance, a large-scale project for training all teachers and school managers in child-friendly school methods, coupled with extensive school construction, renovation and supply of pedagogic materials, can be used to create the necessary CFS features in facilities across the country.

This 'big bang' scaling-up approach works best where sufficient financial resources are available and the model to be replicated has a high degree of certainty, with a finite set of well defined characteristics that vary little from case to case. In this scenario, it becomes a

relatively simple matter of building or renovating schools, training teachers and supplying learning materials on a scale that covers the whole country. The rationale behind this approach is that the education system has already established child-friendly schools in a way that makes large-scale replication feasible and straightforward.

Although the broader, short-term approach is definitive and efficient, the limited flexibility it offers can result in costly errors if the replicated features do not work well for some schools or are not in line with conditions in a particular district. An alternative way to scale up child-friendly schools is through the 'roll-out' process: The CFS model is gradually replicated from one location to a manageable set of other locations and then to a further set of locations until the whole country is covered.

The roll-out approach is most appropriate where there is limited financing in the short term and some degree of uncertainty about what works best. This is especially true when the model to be replicated is based on key principles or on a set of hypotheses that may lead to varying characteristics and features in a specific context. Successful implementation in a set of schools in one district, for example, can be followed by efforts to replicate them in a number of schools in another district. The idea is to learn from the experience of the first district, using what has worked and avoiding what may have gone wrong, while also putting in place

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new variations of CFS features in line with particularities of the new district.

This heuristic approach to scaling up may appear to be slower and less efficient, but it allows for applying lessons learned and making changes to improve the model as it is rolled out to more schools. It also avoids costly errors, which is especially important when available resources are limited.

9.1.2   Mainstreaming

Another approach to making all schools in a country child-friendly is to mainstream the CFS model. This is not just about scaling up, but it is related. Mainstreaming infuses key elements of the model into all aspects of the education system, including the processes and parameters that shape the system. This means that planning, implementation, financing, staffing, management, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of education in the country will intrinsically embrace the CFS model.

Mainstreaming therefore involves a 'systems approach' rather than a 'project approach', which is typically used for scaling up. The systems approach is usually done through simulation modelling that allows for building a range of scenarios with CFS variables to show how the education system would operate and what it would cost to have CFS features in

all schools. It also allows for national standards to be set in key areas to guide practice and help determine the budget required for implementation across the education system within a given time frame.

The advantage offered by mainstreaming is that it promotes sustainability. The model becomes an integral part of the education system rather than a project that needs to be fully integrated into the system later as it takes hold in schools and districts.

UNICEF recommends that partner countries choose either the mainstreaming approach or scaling up through a 'big bang' or a 'roll-out' strategy based on a number of factors:

- The extent to which key child-friendly school elements or full CFS models have already taken root across the country's education system;

- How adaptable the education system is to innovation in general;

- The availability of adequate and predictable resources that schools can use in flexible ways to implement change and improvement;

- What best fits the requirements to make innovative models like child-friendly schools take root and become a sustainable part of education throughout the country.

What is most significant about mainstreaming as distinct from scaling up is that it infuses key CFS elements into the process of planning and investing in an education system as a whole. Again, this is usually done

through the use of simulation models. There are various simulation models available for planning, and, in general, they are used to better understand how a system behaves as variables are changed. They can be used to 'try out'

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trade-offs between critical factors to help prescribe appropriate national standards and decide on optimum balances between cost and quality of education for all learners.

Simulation models are especially useful for understanding the impact of policy decisions on performance, cost and outcomes of the system. To support governments and partners in mainstreaming child-friendly schools, policy simulation models and costing tools can be used to assess the resource implications of various policy options in the face of budget constraints. They can also project alternative and feasible CFS development scenarios that will help determine the best options for a given country.

UNICEF promotes the use of the EPSSim model. (See Chapter 7.) The EPSSim tool can utilize a checklist or guidelines generated by countries as part of the process of setting national CFS standards and strategies. China, for example, has developed such a checklist around four categories of CFS principles and is using this to set national standards for child-friendly schools. (See Box, page 4.)

Through the use of simulation modelling, it is possible to show the impact of decisions at the consultation stage, when key stakeholders use CFS principles to generate desirable characteristics for child-friendly schools. This can promote a healthy dialogue and generate a balanced approach between the ideals of CFS and the practicalities of what can be afforded over a given time frame. Once broad standards have been set for elements in the four categories, simulation modelling can be used to explore specifics to be implemented in order to make all schools child-friendly.

Although the EPSSim model is more than adequate for mainstreaming child-

friendly schools in education systems, UNICEF appreciates a country's need to utilize many other models in planning for education development. These could be models recommended by a key donor or models that planners in the country are already familiar with. In these circumstances, it is important to ensure that mainstreaming of child-friendly schools does not impose demands by requiring major changes in the simulation model already in use. One way to avoid this is to provide countries with a common suite of models they can use as standard tools for different purposes in planning for education development.

In an effort to provide countries with appropriate models, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF and the World Bank have convened a working group of experts in education modelling to review current models and use their key elements to design a collection of interconnected models for country use. Through this eclectic approach, it is anticipated that partners can better engage countries to explore policy options, formulate scenarios and project implications for costs and results of various policies and strategies, including mainstreaming child-friendly schools.

The path to child-friendly schools may vary, but the goal is the same: to ensure that all children have access to quality education and are nurtured in a child-friendly environment where they can develop their full potential. This is central to the education-related MDGs and the EFA goals. It is therefore important to advocate for mainstreaming or scaling-up of the child-friendly school model as a 'one-stop' shop for designing and implementing quality education for all.

CHINA DEVELOPS NATIONAL CFS STANDARDS

"All-rounded development of all children" and the flourishing of creative human potential

Successful piloting of the child-friendly school model in 1,000 schools in China informed the Government's decision to use the CFS approach as its model for improving the quality of primary and secondary education in implementing its new governance measures.
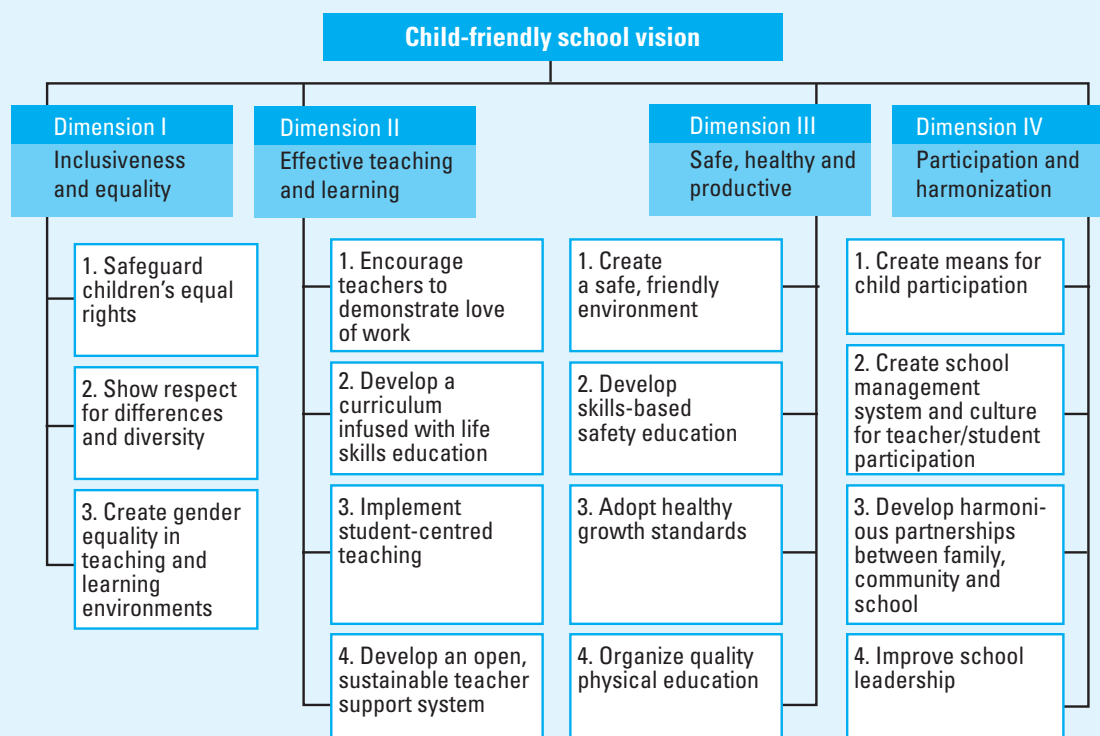
Supported by UNICEF, the Ministry of Education set out to develop national standards on school quality and learners' achievements in late 2006. The standards' framework integrated the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the country's development goal in basic education defined in its 'law of nine-year compulsory education' and the priorities of four departments of the Ministry of Education. With technical support from the China National Institute for Educational Research and Beijing Normal University, the Ministry of Education led 16 technical groups through the preparations. The collaborative effort by a multitude of stakeholders, with

technical support from UNICEF, resulted in the completion of standards in 2008. They will be tested in at least six provinces in 2008 and will be promoted in more provinces and schools beginning in 2009.

The vision, purpose and scope of the Chinese National Standards for child-friendly schools are contained in the opening paragraph of the final document:

"The ultimate aim of CFS in China is the all-rounded development of all children and the full flowering of creative human potentials of each pupil. Children at Chinese CFS will learn to learn, with motivation and capability of learning well; they will learn to do, developing problem-solving, knowledge-application and life/social skills; they will learn to be, developing human competencies, respecting teachers, parents, peers and others, and building moral characters and psychological as well as physical health; and they will learn to live together, pursuing cooperative learning, ready for helping others, and working with others in team spirit. In sum, Chinese CFS pupils shall be enabled to develop in an all rounded way, in ethical, intellectual, physical, aesthetical and life-skills dimensions."

A FRAMEWORK OF NATIONAL CFS STANDARDS

Child-friendly school vision

Dimension I
Inclusiveness and equality

1. Safeguard children's equal rights
2. Show respect for differences and diversity
3. Create gender equality in teaching and learning environments

Dimension II
Effective teaching and learning

1. Encourage teachers to demonstrate love of work
2. Develop a curriculum infused with life skills education
3. Implement student-centred teaching
4. Develop an open, sustainable teacher support system

Dimension III
Safe, healthy and productive

1. Create a safe, friendly environment
2. Develop skills-based safety education
3. Adopt healthy growth standards
4. Organize quality physical education

Dimension IV
Participation and harmonization

1. Create means for child participation
2. Create school management system and culture for teacher/student participation
3. Develop harmonious partnerships between family, community and school
4. Improve school leadership

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