

**FORMATIVE<sup>1</sup> EVALUATION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GIRLS' EDUCATION INITIATIVE (UNGEI)**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE (TORs)**

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<sup>1</sup> This evaluation is intended to be a baseline against which progress towards achieving results can be measured in the future. However, we do realize that it may not be possible to conduct a fully fledged baseline due to shortfalls in information requirements; hence an important product of the evaluation will be to identify information needs and propose a framework and/or mechanism for collecting empirical baseline data for future evaluative work. Also, given the relative paucity of evaluations of development partnerships, we anticipate new lessons in evaluating education partnerships in terms of design and scoping, evaluation processes and the actual execution of such evaluations.

## **A. BACKGROUND**

The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) is a partnership of organizations committed to gender equality in and through education by narrowing the gender gap in primary and secondary education. It also seeks to ensure that, by 2015, all children complete primary schooling, with girls and boys having equal access to free, quality education. UNGEI was launched in 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, by then United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in response to a troubling reality: Of the millions of children worldwide who were not in school, more than half were girls – a reality that continues today. Understanding that a special focus on girls would require a concerted effort by all partners, UNGEI became the EFA flagship for girls' education.

UNGEI's vision is a world where all girls and boys are empowered through quality education to realize their full potential and contribute to transforming societies where gender equality becomes a reality. In 2008, it adopted the following Mission Statement that expanded the partnership's mandate to embrace gender equality:

- UNGEI works to improve the quality and availability of girls' education in support of the gender-related Education for All goals, the second Millennium Development Goal (MDG) to achieve universal primary education, and MDG 3 to promote gender equality and empower women.
- UNGEI is committed to accelerating action on girls' education and revitalizing the broad social mobilization and high-level political action needed to ensure that every girl, as well as every boy, receives a quality education.
- UNGEI relies on a broad alliance of committed partners who are mobilized to provide direct support to countries and facilitate an enabling educational environment where girls and boys can flourish and unleash their untapped potential.
- UNGEI partners mobilize resources for targeted project interventions, country programmes and large-scale systematic interventions designed to affect the education system as a whole.
- UNGEI promotes strategies that put the needs of the most disadvantaged, including girls and women, first in education policies, plans and budgets.
- The UNGEI partnership works to remove barriers to learning, such as school fees and other education costs and violence in and around schools, and to support the continuation of education in emergency situations such as areas affected by armed conflict, natural disasters or external shocks, as well as in post-crisis and fragility contexts.
- UNGEI advocates a cross-sectoral, holistic approach, with balanced investment in education across the life cycle, addressing early childhood education and development for children of poor families, and literacy and empowerment of women and young people.
- UNGEI streamlines its efforts by strategic use of existing mechanisms such as poverty reduction strategies, sector-wide approaches, UN Development Assistance Frameworks and the Fast Track Initiative.

UNGEI is a partnership that includes organizations from the United Nations family, governments, civil society and the private sector, as well as communities and families. The initiative works at global, regional and country levels to ensure that girls receive a quality

education that prepares them to be full and active participants in their societies.

An important tool for the advancement of gender parity and equality in education, UNGEI works primarily at policy and technical levels and uses three main strategies: technical outputs and capacity development, policy dialogue and advocacy, and coordination and alignment with current aid architecture.

- *Technical outputs and capacity development* focuses on filling knowledge and information gaps by creating and sharing tools, resources and experiences, e.g. gender analysis of national sector plans endorsed under the EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI), tools and guidance on equity and inclusion, publications on child protection and M&E, good practice in girls' education, gender integration in ECD and SWAp resource packs, and gender audits.
- *Policy dialogue and advocacy.* UNGEI uses its collective voice to raise awareness of importance of girls' education and to influence policy discussions. Globally, UNGEI has engaged with EFA processes, including the Global Monitoring Report; FTI, Working Group and High-Level Group meetings; and other important spaces for promoting gender equality in education policies and budget allocations.
- *Coordination and alignment with aid architecture.* At all levels, UNGEI promotes greater aid alignment and enhanced and sustained aid allocations for girls' education and widens information base of partner organizations to ensure efficiency and avoid duplication of activities. The inclusion of many multinational and bilateral organizations promotes coordination and prioritization of girls' education.

At national level, UNGEI applies the following standard in determining if a group is a functioning part of the network:

- Terms of reference exist, formalizing the mandate, members and governance of the national (or sub-national) partnership.
- An annual work plan is developed, monitored by the national partnership and reported to the Regional Focal Point.

Note: The partnership does not have to use the acronym UNGEI in its name to be considered as part of the network.

UNGEI Regional Focal Points (RFPs) in East Asia and the Pacific, Eastern and Southern Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and West and Central Africa based in UNICEF regional offices facilitate the coordination of girls' education strategies and interventions at regional (in some cases) and country levels. Country-level partnerships operate in over 40 countries<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, India, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia.

The UNGEI Global Advisory Committee<sup>3</sup> consists of key organizations who share planning, decision-making, guidance and accountability for the entire partnership. Two partners co-chair the committee on a rotational basis (current co-chairs are Sida and ASPBAE), with UNICEF serving as the lead agency and secretariat.

The most recent evaluation work involving UNGEI was its selection as a case study in the UNICEF evaluation of its involvement in global programme partnerships in 2008. This evaluation found UNGEI to be a vibrant partnership that is contributing to more effective and focused policy reform, scaling up of activities, and technical support to countries. The UNGEI partnership provides UNICEF with a mechanism to influence changes in respect of gender and other disparities in the Education sector. However, as in the case of other global partnerships, the UNICEF evaluation revealed weaknesses in translating strategies into action at country level.

The following countries were selected to participate in the present evaluation: Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Nepal, Nigeria and Uganda. Given the need to include at least one regional partnership and the fact that most countries in East Asia-Pacific do not have traditional partnerships, the regional partnership in that region was selected. The following criteria apply to all partnerships participating in the evaluation:

- at least one country per region where the partnership is active, i.e. East Asia-Pacific, East and Southern Africa, Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and West and Central Africa;
- one French-speaking country;
- one regional partnership;
- A mature partnership is present that has functioned for at least three years; and,
- willingness and capacity of the UNICEF country/regional office to host the evaluation, i.e. availability of Education and M&E staff, ability to absorb most in-country costs in Country Programme budget.

## **B. OBJECTIVES OF THE BASELINE EVALUATION AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS/CRITERIA**

As UNGEI evolved over a period of years from a loose advocacy network to a more formal global partnership using more defined strategies, a baseline was not established in 2000. Therefore, this self evaluation will be formative in nature and will serve as a baseline against which future evaluative work can be done.

The evaluation's objectives are to explore the extent to which the UNGEI partnership is achieving its intended outcomes at the country level, and the extent to which the global efforts are contributing to the effectiveness and efficiency of the UNGEI partnership. The

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<sup>3</sup> Current partners at the global level include: AED (Academy for Educational Development), ANCEFA (African Network Campaign on Education for All), ASPBAE (Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education), Camfed (Campaign for Female Education), CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), Gsco Systems, Inc., The Commonwealth Secretariat, Danida (Danish International Development Agency), DFID (The UK Department for International Development), FAWE (The Forum for African Women Educationalists), ILO (International Labour Organization), Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation), Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development), World Food Program, World Bank and World Vision International.

evaluation will be anchored on the proposed monitoring and evaluation framework, which highlights the following outcomes<sup>4</sup>:

1. policies that promote girls' education and gender equality are in existence;
2. best practices in facilitating girls' education and gender equality are known and institutionalized; and,
3. UNGEI facilitates an effective partnership for girls' education and gender equality.

The formative evaluation will help UNGEI to:

- define the key elements that make a strong partnership for girls' education;
- validate outcomes to be achieved in each country in order to move forward the girls' education and gender equality agenda in education;
- collect empirical baseline data in the countries and regional partnerships; participating in the evaluation, against which progress in future evaluative work can be measured;
- map the status of UNGEI partnerships in all countries (currently estimated at over 40) and regions (currently five); and,
- map the governance structure and administrative components of the UNGEI partnership at the global level.

Indicative evaluations questions follow below. These will be discussed and finalized at the orientation and planning workshop, held at global level for the entire evaluation, and will be answered during the evaluation.

### ***Outcome 1 – Policies promote girls' education and gender equality***

#### ***Country partnerships:***

- a. What does the UNGEI partnership at the country level look like? (This is a more in-depth description of the country partnership, formed from desk review and in-country, also answering the questions of whether there are TORs for the partnership, whether there is an annual work plan, and the process that is typically undertaken to come up with an annual work plan for the partnership.)
- b. Is there agreement among partners about the proposed UNGEI results framework?
- c. Does the UNGEI coordination mechanism and activities of partners at the country level contribute to national **policies** promoting girls' education and gender equality?
- d. What constitutes the full UNGEI country-level partnership)? This macro-level mapping of the partnership will ask the following questions for the national partnerships not participating in the exercise: Is there a formalized partnership with TOR? Is there an agreed annual work plan (AWP)? If so, (a) describe the partnership's main activities and (b) are the AWP results reported annually to the UNGEI Regional Focal Point?

#### ***Regional and global partnership:***

- e. What are some indicative activities and/or results that have been achieved to influence the development of policies that promote girls' education and gender equality in each country?
- f. What constitutes the partnership at regional level in the five regions (EAP, SA, MENA, ESA, and WCA) where the UNGEI operates?

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<sup>4</sup> One of the objectives of this evaluation is to validate the outcomes. Hence the understanding is that they will remain in draft form until they are finalized at the conclusion of the evaluation.

- g. Is there agreement among regional and country-level partners about the proposed UNGEI results framework?

***Outcome 2 – Best practices in facilitating girls’ education and gender equality are known and institutionalized***

*Country partnerships:*

- a. Does the country partnership have access to best knowledge, policies, and practices in facilitating girls’ education and gender equality from sources attributable to the partnership?
- b. What effort has the partnership made to ensure that this knowledge is applied?

*Regional and global partnership:*

- c. What effort has the UNGEI regional and global coordination mechanism made to facilitate access to best knowledge, policies, and practices in facilitating girls’ education and gender equality?

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

*Country partnerships:*

- a. What is the added value of UNGEI (i.e., what are some of your achievements that were made possible as a result of working under the partnership)?
- b. Does the country coordination mechanism promote measuring and achieving results?
- c. Does the country coordination mechanism work in a manner that enhances the effectiveness of UNGEI?

*Regional and global partnership:*

- d. Does the regional/global coordination mechanism promote measuring and achieving results?
- e. Does the regional/global coordination mechanism (e.g. UNGEI Secretariat, GAC, Working Groups, Regional Focal Points, etc.) work in a manner that enhances the effectiveness of UNGEI?

**C. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION**

This exercise is a self-evaluation<sup>5</sup> to be executed in up to six countries (including at least one French-speaking country) spanning four regions, one regional partnership, and the global partnership. The evaluation will cover how effective the institutional engagement of key UNGEI partners has been at the country, regional and global levels. We anticipate using a common framework and methodology in each location in order to acquire a shared understanding of ways to strengthen the partnerships within a country or regional setting. We also hope that lessons from the sample countries/region, including the methodology and processes to undertake a good baseline evaluation study, will be relevant to the majority of countries and regions with UNGEI partnerships.

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<sup>5</sup> This is an evaluation that it is intended for the purpose of learning, rather than accountability. Secondly, the evaluation management arrangements do not aim for a high level of independence at the country level. Ideally, the M&E Officer will be the primary manager, but the situation in the country may be such that the programme officer (Education) is the only person available to manage the consultant.

**Activities included and excluded from analysis.** The self-evaluation study will examine only activities/results that have been undertaken or achieved through collaborative effort by the formal partnership. Activities related to one or two partners only and take place outside the UNGEI partnership arrangement, e.g. an international organization funding an activity implemented by the ministry of education or a local NGO, will be excluded from the evaluation.

**Attribution and contribution.** While the evaluation will seek to determine if UNGEI has added value to country-level results in girls' education, it is often difficult to attribute results to only one source of inputs, actions, or actors in a field where there are multiple actors and inputs. Therefore, to the extent possible, the evaluation will seek to outline UNGEI's contribution to overall results through a contribution analysis.

#### **D. METHODOLOGY**

**Sample:** The evaluation will collect data from a sample of all stakeholders, hence a sampling framework that reflects a range of activities, stakeholders and will be developed for each country.

**Design and data collection methods:** The evaluation study will be mainly a mixed-method study which seeks to describe the baseline for UNGEI work and judge it against evaluation criteria. Data will be collected from multiple sources: a formal desk review, interviews of key/elite informants, interviews and/or focus groups of important groups of beneficiaries, self-administered surveys, and direct observations of activities with beneficiaries wherever possible. Where opportunity occurs, the evaluation methodology should also examine the possibility of doing a comparison to organizations working in gender in the education sector but not participating in the partnership, and/or interview them to determine their perceptions. The evaluation will also conduct a secondary analysis of existing data.

- **Formal Desk Review:** The desk review will be used as an important tool to assemble evidence of activities or outputs, as well as to determine if the necessary record-keeping and documentation is being carried out. UNGEI focal points in each country will avail key documents for a systematic desk review. These will include UNGEI programme documents, gender audits of sector plans, gender curriculum and/or textbook reviews, presentations and reports of capacity-building workshops, and instructional manuals. In addition, the UNICEF Evaluation Office will provide the consultants with a copy of the UNGEI desk review from a recent evaluation of UNICEF global programme partnership.
- **Data Collection:** Primary data – to be collected through interviews and focus groups, self-administered surveys, and direct observations – will add to the existing knowledge about the activities, and will be used to gauge perceptions of stakeholders of their interactions with the partnership and the utility of the interventions. This will include a mapping exercise that will cover all country and regional partnerships in the UNGEI network and will detail their members, mechanisms and activities, etc., as well as the role of the Regional Focal Points.

## E. EVALUATION RESPONSIBILITIES AND MANAGEMENT

The UNGEI global evaluation will be supported by:

- a national consultant in each participating country and regional location;
- An international consultant at global level, supervised from the UNICEF Evaluation Office in New York; and,
- reference groups at all levels.

**Reference Group:** A reference group for the UNGEI evaluation will be established in each participating partnership, comprising up to seven members each. The global reference group will be made up of a representative of the UNICEF Evaluation Office, members of the UNGEI Global Advisory Committee's Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group and the head of the UNGEI Secretariat. Participating national and regional partnerships will determine the composition of their respective reference groups, ensuring appropriate representation from the partnership's constituencies.

The Reference Group Chair is responsible for oversight of evaluation activities, while members will advise on the following:

- Consultant's terms of reference and work plan, including any adjustments required at inception or other phases
- Approval of all evaluation products, including the final report
- Decision on a post-evaluation management response, action plan and dissemination strategy, and a consideration of how the evaluation findings are to be utilized.

**National/regional consultant (N/RC)** in each participating country/region (for participating regional partnership only) will be responsible for the professional conduct of the evaluation in accordance with the terms of reference, the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation<sup>6</sup> and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation<sup>7</sup>. Each consultant will be contracted by the respective UNICEF Office to perform the following tasks:

- assist in setting up reference group for stakeholders in consultation with UNGEI focal points and/or UNICEF education officers;
- customize, review and validate data collection tools, (questionnaires, interview questions and protocols);
- supervise data collection and data processing;
- design and facilitate consultative workshops and meetings;
- prepare of country reports - draft and final reports, and develop PowerPoint presentations; and,
- ensure that the evaluation manager is regularly informed of the progress of the evaluation and possible causes of delays and issues to resolve.

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=22](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=22)

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.unevaluation.org/documentdownload?doc\\_id=100&file\\_id=547](http://www.unevaluation.org/documentdownload?doc_id=100&file_id=547)

Countries and regions will support the self-evaluation with the financial resources stipulated in Section G of the present TOR, and provide support to arrange for meetings, write letters of introduction and/or accompany consultants to meetings where necessary. The evaluation will be managed by the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer in the UNICEF country/regional office, who will provide overall guidance and contribute directly to its quality assurance activities.

**The international lead evaluator (ILE)**, contracted by the UNICEF Evaluation Office, will be responsible for leading the evaluation efforts from a global perspective. Specifically, he/she will be responsible for:

- facilitating the orientation and planning workshop for national consultants and participating countries' focal points;
- reviewing data collection tools, including questionnaires, interview questions and protocols used at the country level;
- undertaking up to two quality assurance missions during data collection in up to two participating countries;
- reviewing country reports - draft and final reports;
- collecting additional data at the regional level and ensuring that regional and global perspective are represented in the global report;
- ensuring that the evaluation manager (Evaluation Specialist in New York) is regularly informed of the progress of the evaluation, possible causes of delay and issues to resolve.

The **Evaluation Specialist (Education)** in the UNICEF Evaluation Office in New York will manage the work of the international consultant, provide overall guidance to the evaluation and contribute directly to its quality assurance activities.

The proposed UNGEI Results Framework is in attached.

## **F. EVALUATION PROCESSES AND PRODUCTS**

Evaluation consultants, national/regional consultants (N/RCs) and the international lead evaluator (ILE) are each responsible for the following activities and productions:

- Materials for the orientation and planning workshop and facilitating the workshop (ILE)
- Overall inception report, including finding and synthesis of the desk review, revised evaluation methodology, outline for the evaluation report, revised evaluation work plan (ILE)
- Country inception reports, including revised evaluation methodology for their country, outline for the evaluation report, revised evaluation work plan (N/RCs)
- Draft evaluation reports, both country reports and the overall synthesis report (ILE and N/RCs)
- Dissemination workshop to consider initial evaluation results (ILE and N/RCs)
- PowerPoint files for the presentation of final reports (ILE and N/RCs)
- Final Evaluation Reports, according to the UNICEF House Style and UNICEF standards for evaluation reports (ILE and N/RCs)

**Evaluation Planning Workshop:** An orientation and planning workshop will be convened to develop a common and agreed approach to the evaluation. Workshop participants will include the following;

- national consultants (evaluators from the participating countries);
- UNGEI focal points from each country;
- country monitoring and evaluation experts where possible;
- the international lead evaluator;
- GAC representatives (members of the Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group), the evaluation manager.

The planning workshop is expected to agree on the methodology, including the sampling frame for each country, a set of evaluation tools with necessary customization to each country, a template for training country evaluation teams, and a tentative workplan that reflects all evaluation activities for country teams and for the international lead evaluator.

**Inception Report:** The Inception report, detailing evaluation activities for each country and global level activities, will be used to confirm a common understanding between the evaluation commissioners and consultants, of the purpose, objectives, scope, methodology and timeline, of the evaluation. The inception report will present preliminary findings from the desk review and present the revised TOR, work and travel plans, methodology, proposed interview lists, visits to and within each country, and structure for the final report. The inception report will be 15-20 pages, including the TOR and work plan, and will be presented at a formal meeting of the in-country reference group or global reference group.

**Evaluation Report:** The final evaluation report will include:

1. Concrete examples of how national policies promote girls' education and gender equality as a result of UNGEI inputs
2. Examples of best practices in facilitating girls' education and gender equality and proposals of how they can be popularized and institutionalized
3. An assessment of how UNGEI facilitates an effective partnership for girls' education and gender equality in participating countries/region
4. The revised and validated draft of the monitoring and evaluation framework, with documentation of activities undertaken in each country to validate it.
5. Clear, evidence-based conclusions and recommendations to be considered by the GAC.

The evaluation report will not exceed 80 pages, including the executive summary and appendixes. Appendixes will include the TOR, description of methodology, list of background materials used, list of people interviewed, PowerPoint presentations, and workshop materials.

At the conclusion of the evaluation the GAC will examine the recommendations and issue a management response which will commit UNGEI to the stipulated actions, the results of which will be used to strengthen the partnership and enhance engagement of partners at all levels. The report will be a public document. It will be disseminated to all partners and all UNICEF country programmes that have a girls' education component, and also be available on the UNGEI website.

**Desired Competencies for evaluation consultants:** Evaluation consultants must each offer the following demonstrated experience, knowledge and competencies:

1. Significant knowledge and experience of evaluation concepts and approaches;
2. Good knowledge in gender in the Education Sector, and experience with evaluation conducted from a gender-based perspective
3. Good knowledge of national programmes, INGOs and NGOs and partnership principles
4. Facilitation skills, particularly design of stakeholder consultations exercises;
5. Strong quantitative and qualitative data collection skills;
6. Strong quantitative and qualitative data analysis skills;
7. Excellent language and communication skills in English;
8. Demonstrated report writing skills, in English;
9. Computer literacy in Word, Excel and PowerPoint;

The international lead evaluator must have experience of working cross-culturally in development, and demonstrated capacity in managing evaluation teams.

## 6. PROPOSED RESOURCE COMMITMENTS

It is anticipated that the resource commitments would as follows:

*For country partnerships:*

- 43 person days for a national consultant in each country
- 22 person days for a UNICEF official (for recruiting, facilitation for, and managing national consultants). Some duties can be assigned to an UNGEI partner.
- Travel costs for one international mission and 6 days DSA for national consultant (consultation workshop)
- Travel costs for one international mission and 6 days DSA for UNICEF/UNGEI official and UNICEF M&E Special (consultation workshop)
- Travel costs for one international mission and 6 days' DSA for government counterpart (consultation workshop)

*Global/ regional component:*

- 90 person days for an international consultant and 45 person days for the regional consultant
- Travel costs for up to four international missions and 24 days DSA for international consultant (consultation workshop; regional office, and 2 country offices if need arises).

## 7. PROPOSED WORK PLAN AND TIMELINE

1. **Tentative Schedule:** A tentative schedule for major evaluation activities, and expected timeline is as follows:

<b><u>Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Deadline</u></b>
Finalizing contracts for all consultants	15 December, 2010
Preparations for consultation workshop	10 January, 2011
Convening consultation workshop	16-20 January, 2011
Submit/present inception reports to UNICEF	14 March, 2010
Data collection, analysis and other field activities	29 April, 2011
Submit first draft of country reports	13 May, 2011
Submit first draft of synthesis report	30 May, 2011
Submit final country reports	15 June, 2011
Submit final report	30 June, 2011