

Hundred and sixty-sixth Session

166 EX/10
PARIS, 27 January 2003
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Item 3.2.4 of the provisional agenda

**PROPOSAL FOR THE DISSOLUTION OF THE
UNESCO/UNICEF JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

SUMMARY

This document describes briefly the purpose and functioning of the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education, established in 1989 (131 EX/Decision 5.2.7). Bearing in mind 165 EX/Decision 3.2.2, in which the Executive Board authorized the Joint Committee to discuss its future at its eighth meeting on 25 November 2002, the Executive Board is requested to consider the dissolution of the Committee in the light of alternative collaborative mechanisms that have developed since its establishment in 1989.

Decision proposed: paragraph 10.

1. The UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education was established in 1989 through convergent decisions of the Executive Boards of UNESCO and UNICEF to act as a source of strategic recommendations concerning collaboration between the two organizations. A cooperative agreement signed in 1991 by the Director-General of UNESCO and the Executive Director of UNICEF was renewed in the Framework Agreement on Collaboration between UNESCO and UNICEF in 1999. Document 131 EX/Decision 5.2.7 of the Executive Board of UNESCO, which establishes the Committee and sets its terms of reference, is annexed for information (Annex I).

2. The Joint Committee is composed of six representatives from each of the two Executive Boards and is led by the Executive Heads of the respective agencies. In principle, it meets biennially. In addition, annual inter-secretariat meetings are held at the Headquarters of one or the other organization in order to review the progress of collaborative activities, set priorities and draw

up work plans for the year ahead, identify new challenges and prepare for upcoming Committee meetings.

3. At its 165th session, the Executive Board of UNESCO elected Cuba, Japan, Oman, the Russian Federation, Swaziland and the United Kingdom as its representatives on the Committee. It authorized the Committee to discuss its future in the light of alternative positive collaborative arrangements between the two organizations at its eighth meeting held at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 25 November 2002, and to make recommendations thereon, subject to a similar decision adopted by the UNICEF Executive Board.

4. Following the recommendations of the seventh meeting of the Committee held in February 1999 at UNICEF Headquarters, New York, the eighth meeting addressed two core areas of collaboration at the international, regional and national levels with specific focus on results, impacts and major challenges ahead: education for all and girls' education. The background document, *Report on collaboration between UNESCO and UNICEF in the areas of education for all and girls' education*, prepared for the meeting is annexed for information (Annex II).

5. The report outlines the changing nature of cooperation between UNESCO and UNICEF since the beginning of the formalized collaboration in 1989. It highlights a range of new, more broad-based and dynamic collaborative mechanisms being used by both organizations. These date back, firstly, to the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 (convened in Jomtien by UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank) and to the International Consultative Forum on Education for All that was set up to guide and monitor follow-up action on the Jomtien Declaration. The Forum provided a platform for collaboration amongst all EFA stakeholders at a time of growing emphasis on better coordination to increase synergy, avoid duplication of efforts and reduce the service burden on countries. A range of concrete products was produced for taking stock of progress on EFA at the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000.

6. Secondly, a new phase of collaboration emerged that in part resulted from the mandates obtained by UNESCO and UNICEF at Dakar, namely, to coordinate/lead work on EFA and girls' education respectively. This new phase relies on mechanisms that make constructive use of the comparative advantages of each organization in a new spirit of partnership and cooperation that reflects the prevailing international trend in development work. Besides EFA and girls' education, these mechanisms also relate to cross-sectoral issues and concerns affecting these areas. Examples are amply provided in the annexed background document.

7. In addition to the intensified collaboration through more broad-based, dynamic mechanisms, collaboration has been facilitated through strengthened interactions between the two Executive Heads and at the leadership level of the education sectors of the two organizations. Future challenges must increasingly be addressed collaboratively by the two organizations at the stage of planning national programme priorities and strategies, including making investment decisions. This would be reflected in the common country assessments, the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, poverty reduction strategy papers and sector-wide approach programmes that have become the internationally recognized policy frameworks for collaboration among United Nations agencies and their partners.

8. Having discussed the *Report on collaboration between UNESCO and UNICEF in the areas of education for all and girls' education* at its eighth meeting, the Joint Committee on Education agreed that the collaboration between the two organizations has been solidified at international, regional and national levels in areas of mutual interest and in response to comparative strengths. While the Committee was undoubtedly of strategic importance in initiating collaboration and

ensuring that early obstacles were removed, the current range of mechanisms amply fulfil this purpose, thus rendering the mandate of the Committee obsolete. (See Annex III.)

9. At its first regular session held from 13 to 17 January 2003, the Executive Board of UNICEF adopted the following decision: “The Executive Board agrees with the recommendation of the Joint Committee on Education, as contained in the report on its eighth meeting, that the Committee be discontinued, and requests the UNICEF Secretariat to work with the UNESCO Secretariat to propose how to strengthen coordination within existing structures”.

10. The Executive Board is therefore invited to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 165 EX/Decision 3.2.2, in which it authorized the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education to discuss its future at its eighth meeting in the light of alternative positive collaborative arrangements between the two organizations and to make recommendations thereon, subject to a similar resolution adopted by the UNICEF Executive Board,
2. Having examined document 166 EX/10,
3. Bearing in mind the discussion and recommendation of the Committee on 25 November 2002 (Annex II of document 165 EX/10), and in view also of the decision taken by the UNICEF Executive Board at its first regular session 2003, 15 January 2003;
4. Decides therefore to dissolve the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education.

ANNEX I

131 EX/DECISION 5.2.7 – ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT UNESCO/UNICEF COMMITTEE TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON EDUCATION (131 EX/39 AND 131 EX/48)

The Executive Board,

1. Convinced that in view of the close relationship between UNESCO and UNICEF a regular high-level exchange of views on strategies, approaches, and new challenges in areas of mutual interest to the two organizations would be beneficial,
2. Having been informed of resolution 1989/17 adopted by the UNICEF Executive Board at its 1989 session, by which it called for the establishment of a joint committee to make recommendations on education,
3. Believing that the meetings of such a consultative committee, if held at two-yearly intervals to coincide with meetings of the Boards of one or the other organization, would have minimal financial implications for UNESCO,
4. Decides to accept UNICEF's invitation to establish a joint UNESCO/UNICEF committee to make recommendations on education, the terms of reference of which are annexed to the present decision;
5. Also decides to appoint, at its 133rd session, six members to serve on the committee;
6. Further decides to review the form of this cooperation after two years, taking into account the experience gained.

Terms of reference of the joint UNESCO/UNICEF Committee to make recommendations on education

1. The Committee shall consist of 12 members, six serving Members from the Executive Board of UNESCO and six from the Executive Board of UNICEF, designated by their respective Boards.
2. The Committee, the functions of which are purely consultative, will work within the educational policy directions as defined by the General Conference of UNESCO.
3. The recommendations of the Committee, to be addressed to the Executive Boards of UNESCO and UNICEF, will relate to fields of action common to the two organizations, and will draw the attention of the two Executive Boards to new challenges and important trends in those areas.
4. Through its recommendations, the Committee will endeavour to improve and expand the cooperation between UNESCO and UNICEF.
5. The Committee will hold regular meetings every two years, to coincide with meetings of the Boards of one or the other organization; special meetings at intervals in between may be held as required. The first regular meeting will be held in 1990.
6. The Committee will be served by a joint secretariat formed of UNESCO and UNICEF staff.
7. The costs of Committee meetings will be borne jointly by UNESCO and UNICEF.

ANNEX II

JCE
8 November 2002
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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**MEETING OF THE UNESCO-UNICEF
JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

Paris, 25 November 2002

**Report on collaboration between UNESCO and UNICEF
in the areas of education for all and girls' education**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Joint Committee on Education (JCE) was established in 1989 through convergent decisions of the Executive Boards of UNICEF and UNESCO. A cooperative agreement between the two organizations was signed in 1991 and renewed in a Framework Agreement in 1999. The JCE makes strategic recommendations on collaboration to both Executive Boards. At its seventh and most recent meeting in New York in 1999, the JCE recommended that the eighth meeting in Paris should focus on two areas of collaboration: (i) education for all; and (ii) girls' education. Emphasis should be on the results and impacts of collaborative efforts and the major challenges that lie ahead.

This report outlines the changing dynamics of cooperation between UNICEF and UNESCO in these two areas. It highlights new collaborative mechanisms being used by both organizations and explores the implications of this trend for the future of the JCE. On this basis the report invites the Committee to carefully consider the costs and benefits of continuing with the JCE in a context where regular collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO is increasingly facilitated through more broad-based and dynamic mechanisms. The recommendation of the Committee on this matter will be carried forward to the forthcoming meetings of the Executive Boards of the two organizations.

2. COLLABORATION IN THE AREA OF EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA)

The nature of EFA collaboration between UNESCO and UNICEF has been guided in part by recommendations of the JCE, but it has increasingly been shaped by the new reality of inter-agency cooperation that now characterizes work in the education sector at all levels.

(a) International level

(i) Nature of collaboration

Intensive international collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO dates back to the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, convened in Jomtien by UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank. It continued on a regular basis after 1990, as UNFPA joined the convening four agencies in setting up the International Consultative Forum on Education for All to guide and monitor follow-up action on the Jomtien Declaration. This consultative forum embraced a number of bilateral agencies, civil society organizations and developing country representatives. It provided a platform for collaboration amongst all EFA stakeholders, at a time of growing emphasis on better coordination to increase synergy, avoid duplication of efforts and reduce the service burden on countries. Within the broad framework of this forum, UNICEF and UNESCO worked closely with other partners to design and implement critical processes that resulted in focused action at regional and national levels. Such action in turn ensured a range of concrete products for taking stock of progress on EFA at the Dakar World Forum on Education for All in 2000.

Following Dakar a new phase of collaboration emerged, with more dynamic mechanisms that make constructive use of the comparative advantages of each organization. This new phase resulted in part from the mandates obtained by UNESCO and UNICEF at Dakar, to lead/coordinate work on EFA and girls' education respectively. It is also the result of both agencies exercising their comparative advantage in a new spirit of partnership and cooperation that reflects the prevailing international trend in development work. The new mechanisms through which both organizations now collaborate relate to EFA and girls' education as well as cross-sectoral issues and concerns affecting these areas. These new mechanisms for collaboration at the international level include:

- The *Working Group on Education for All*, led by UNESCO. This is an informal professional forum through which key agencies address EFA issues at a global level;
- The *United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)* led by UNICEF. This is a mechanism through which agencies and civil society work to stimulate/coordinate action on girls' education, in line with gender parity goals (MDG/EFA);
- The *EFA High-Level Group (HLG)*, serviced by UNESCO. This global review body enables heads of governments to mobilize political commitment as well as technical and financial resources in line with commitments made in Dakar;
- The *Fast Track Initiative (FTI)* led by the World Bank. This is a partnership that works on strategies for selected countries to achieve sector-wide changes that would advance achievement of EFA goals in a short time frame;
- The *Inter-agency Task Team on HIV/AIDS and Education* convened by UNESCO. This is an action platform for addressing the threat posed to education and the EFA goals by the debilitating impact of HIV/AIDS on education systems;
- The *Inter-agency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE)* run by a steering group composed among others of UNICEF and UNESCO. This provides a mechanism through which agencies can pool knowledge and set up standards for addressing threats posed to education and EFA goals by emergencies;
- The movement for *Accelerating Progress on Girls' Education* led by UNICEF. This is an emerging movement that enables a wide coalition of agencies and civil society groups to work on intersectoral strategies for selected countries to achieve robust and sustainable outcomes in the area of girls' education;
- The emerging network on *Literacy in the Framework of the United Nations Literacy Decade: Education for All*, led by UNESCO. This brings agencies together to work on the United Nations literacy decade at the global level;
- The inter-agency group on *Teachers and Quality Education* led by UNICEF. This is a technical working group that stimulates and coordinates international action on quality issues and the teaching profession.

Given this wide and growing range of international mechanisms that are now available for UNICEF and UNESCO to collaborate with each other and with other partners, it is clear that there is a need for consolidation. Against this reality, it is critical to carefully consider whether there is any additional value to be gained by continuing with the JCE.

(ii) Specific results and impact

International collaboration between UNESCO and UNICEF on EFA resulted in the ad hoc technical advisory group that worked with the EFA forum secretariat to produce general and technical guidelines for the EFA 2000 assessment. The guidelines included 18 core EFA indicators that helped countries assess their situation in basic education, a range of thematic studies and evaluations of learning achievement.

(b) Regional level

(i) Nature of collaboration

Regional collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO has been strengthened on a routine basis, mainly through their respective regional offices. The main focus has been on capacity-building for countries in the region through joint activities and sharing of experiences. There is also an emphasis on coordination of efforts and consolidation of knowledge to produce a coherent regional contribution to global initiatives such as EFA. The Regional Technical Advisory Groups (RTAGs) established prior to the Dakar EFA forum, have become the most formalized regional partnership mechanism in support of EFA. These technical groups assist countries in the region with strategies and techniques for advocacy, research, report preparation and development of national EFA plans.

Both UNESCO and UNICEF also work closely with existing regional bodies, providing them with technical support and training for capacity-building, in line with priorities set out by the political leadership in the region. In addition to these formal structures there are less formalized platforms that provide the two organizations with the opportunity to collaborate. Foremost of these is the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), which operates as a partnership between African Ministers of Education and development agencies that seek to promote education and development in Africa. Both UNESCO and UNICEF are key players in ADEA. In this capacity, they provide knowledge and expertise through membership of various working groups set up to execute ADEA programmes in Africa. UNESCO (IIEP) also houses ADEA's secretariat.

(ii) Specific results and impact

In the early stages, the achievements of RTAGs included mobilization and establishment of national EFA assessment groups, inter-agency working groups, organization of capacity-building and mobilization activities, monitoring of country assessments and preparation of regional synthesis reports. Through the RTAGs, UNESCO and UNICEF made major contributions to a range of intense regional and subregional consultations. These consultations provided key inputs to the global forum meetings in Paris (1991), New Delhi (1993) and Amman (1996), that preceded the Dakar meeting in 2000. Both organizations also played a key role, through their regional offices, in the effective dissemination of the resulting EFA documentation. Examples of achievements in various regions involving collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO include:

- In *East and Southeast Asia*, UNESCO and UNICEF collaborate through such bodies as the subregional EFA forum and the United Nations Inter-agency Thematic Working Group. Through such collaboration, both organizations have facilitated meetings of national EFA coordinators. These meetings have in turn served as a strong catalyst for both agencies to intensify their collaboration;
- Through effective collaboration in this region UNICEF and UNESCO have also contributed to data collection, data analysis, capacity-building and development of national EFA action plans. Working together, UNESCO and UNICEF have developed a data base on the progress of EFA planning in the subregion, as well as a database on 21 EFA indicators including maps, charts, and datasheets of the whole Asia-Pacific region in the "ChildInfo" software format. The two organizations also cooperated in the development and assessment of EFA indicators during the experts' meeting in Beijing in 2001 and in the meeting of the Asia-Pacific Regional Forum for Lifelong Learning held in Thailand in September 2001;

- In *Latin America and the Caribbean*, UNICEF and UNESCO have been collaborating closely after the establishment of the Regional EFA Inter-agency Coordination Group in February 2001. UNICEF has been strongly supportive of UNESCO's EFA coordination and the only agency that has made financial contributions to EFA activities at the regional level. The two agencies co-organized the First Collective Consultation of Non-Governmental Organizations on Education for All in Latin America (23-24 August, 2001, Santiago), bringing together leading NGOs, United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations. Both agencies signed an agreement in June 2002 to launch a TV education campaign in support of EFA on local, national, and international television channels;
- In the *Arab States Region*, UNESCO and UNICEF collaborate through ARABEFA, the regional mechanism for EFA follow-up. Collaboration includes having UNICEF act as the United Nations focal point and coordinator for the EFA follow-up in countries where UNESCO offices do not exist. It also includes sharing the decision-making process and arrangements for regional workshops. ARABEFA has held four thematic regional EFA workshops, with UNESCO leading two (Quality Education, and Literacy and Adult Education) and UNICEF the other two (ECCE and Girls Education);
- In *sub-Saharan Africa*, partnership agreements ensure collaboration in preparation of EFA plans. UNESCO and UNICEF have contributed to development of EFA plans through thematic studies related to the six Dakar goals, workshops on planning and management of education and seminars on evaluation of the plans. They have also helped with awareness-raising and dissemination of information on the Dakar goals, as well as support for the national EFA coordinators to participate in national and subregional EFA forums;
- In this region also, both agencies have worked together to create a forum of African education parliamentarians. They also facilitated a critical EFA meeting of Ministers of Education of the Economic Cooperation of West Africa (ECOWAS), and the meeting of non-governmental organizations held in Malawi in preparation of MINEDAF VIII. The two organizations also work closely with PANAPRESS to strengthen media focus on EFA in the region.

(c) Country level

(i) Nature of collaboration

At the national level, UNESCO and UNICEF offices were instrumental in the formation of EFA committees, supporting EFA country studies and innovations on the ground and establishing coordination groups. After Dakar, these areas of work have continued to be supported with most attention provided for EFA planning and supporting studies. The focus is now on helping countries to develop credible EFA plans as well as to continue with implementation of a range of interventions to promote increased access to quality basic education.

(ii) Specific results and impact

The following are selected examples of the type of collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO that takes place in a large number of countries in all regions:

- In Cambodia UNICEF and UNESCO have provided support for training in situation analysis, programme planning, programme review and appraisal, as well as for the consultation process to develop a national EFA plan (2003-2015). Support is being

provided in the context of Cambodia's five-year Education Sector Support Programme (ESSP) and the formulation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Support is also being provided by both agencies for Cambodia's integration into the fast-track initiative;

- In China, UNESCO and UNICEF supported the first EFA workshop organized by the Ministry of Education to define EFA priority interventions and prepare a concept paper for an EFA strategy framework;
- In Indonesia, UNICEF and UNESCO have worked closely with the Ministry of Education to plan interventions in support of EFA and help make maximum use of the external assistance. Both agencies have developed provincial pilot projects on EFA planning to enhance government understanding of provincial planning issues;
- In Myanmar, UNESCO and UNICEF are collaborating in the finalization of the national EFA action plan drafted by the Ministry of Education. Support is mainly in the areas of access and quality, non-formal education, early childhood care and education, and education management and EMIS;
- In the People's Democratic Republic of Lao, both agencies assisted the Ministry of Education (MOE) in its first nationwide literacy survey, developed by the MOE on the basis of the EFA 2000 Assessment. The results of the survey are expected to contribute to the EFA plan preparation;
- In Chile, Ecuador and Guatemala inter-agency groups, encompassing UNESCO, UNICEF and other United Nations and multi- and bilateral agencies, have been established to develop consolidated proposals to the ministries of education on EFA;
- Brazil and Chile have also set up the Inter-agency Theme Group on Education for All. Coordinated by UNICEF, UNESCO and other participating institutions this group has organized seminars and publications in order to push forward the process of developing national education plans in collaboration with other stakeholders;
- Cameroon and Chad have successfully completed their national EFA action plans with assistance from regional mechanisms that include UNICEF and UNESCO;
- UNICEF and UNESCO facilitated a workshop for EFA coordinators in the Gambia to incorporate education for a culture of peace into national EFA plans. This resulted in the preparation of a multi-country project in this area for the Gambia, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau;
- Support has been provided to a number of States in the Arab Region to prepare their EFA action plans and undertake related studies. Countries assisted include Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, the Palestinian Autonomous Territories and Yemen.

3. COLLABORATION IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

At its seventh meeting in New York in 1999, the Joint Committee for Education recommended that:

“Both agencies should continue to place high priority on collaboration in the area of girls’ education, building on the knowledge and experience gained over the past decade, and directing efforts particularly to systematic changes to ensure sustainability and impact”.

Based on the mandate received at the EFA Forum in Dakar, UNICEF has taken the lead in setting into operation the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI). Partly as a result of this mandate but also in keeping with its areas of comparative advantage, UNICEF now has girls’ education as one of five organizational priorities on which its programmes will focus over the period 2002-2005.

(a) International level

(i) Nature of collaboration

Collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO in the area of girls’ education is based on the complementary nature of the approach and comparative advantage of each agency. In the case of UNICEF, girls’ education provides an entry point for addressing the major barriers that restrict access, completion and performance in education for both boys and girls. It is an approach based on education as a human right in recognition of the fact that, in most situations, girls and women are worse affected by these barriers than boys and men. Since the barriers in question are often outside the education sector, this approach makes use of UNICEF’s strength as an organization that works in a wide range of sectors. UNICEF seeks to use its focus on girls’ education as a means of leveraging progress on education for all and on the Millennium Development Goals.

In the case of UNESCO, girls’ education is regarded as an integral part of education for all and the approach adopted is based on a gender perspective and targets not only girls, but also adult women, men and boys. It stresses an expanded vision of basic education based on learner-centred lifelong learning. The focus is on policy development and standard setting, as well as on activities relating to guidance and counselling, gender-sensitive teacher training and production of literacy material for women. UNESCO has also been involved in helping countries prepare EFA national plans that are gender sensitive.

(ii) Specific activities, results and impact

Both UNICEF and UNESCO have contributed substantially to girls’ education through their respective education programme activities, through cross-sectoral initiatives and as partners in inter-agency networks or groups such as the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI). Collaboration has been mainly through UNGEI, but other mechanisms are beginning to emerge. Examples of activities, results and impact include:

- Development of guidelines and supportive documents for use in girls’ education, such as the United Nations’ Guidance Note on Girls’ Education, the UNGEI training modules on girls’ education and the (draft) *Technical Booklet on Girls’ Education*;
- Establishment of an inter-agency task force through which different agencies have produced agreed documentation for girls’ education, e.g. UNESCO has produced a conceptual and strategic framework, *Gender Equality in Basic Education: Strategic Framework*, in support of UNGEI.
- Designation of girls’ education as a flagship programme within the EFA strategy to set into operation the Dakar Framework of Action;

- Focus on girls' education as an area for reporting on EFA by the global monitoring team based at UNESCO;
- Engaging with civil society organizations as an integral part of UNGEI in order to promote the importance of girls' education, develop strategies and coordinate action by different stakeholders in this area of work;
- Production of advocacy materials by UNICEF including an "education update" to which UNESCO has regularly contributed;
- Advocacy at international events by senior officials of both organizations such as:
 - UNICEF advocated for girls' education at the first spouses' forum on girls' education during the September 2001 United Nations General Assembly;
 - Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF, presided a senior management group meeting on girls' education in May 2002 in which Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, stressed the importance of girls' and women's education in the context of EFA;
- At the May 2002 United Nations' Special Session on Children, a session was jointly sponsored by UNESCO and UNICEF on EFA: Achieving Gender Parity, which was chaired by John Daniel, Assistant Director-General of UNESCO;
- UNICEF also organized sessions on ensuring quality basic education, HIV/AIDS and education and quality early childhood care and education.

(b) Collaboration at the regional and national levels

At regional and country level, collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO on girls' education is still in the early stages of development. This functions mainly through the respective regional and country offices in relation to work on EFA, but there are also some specific activities and initiatives that concentrate on girls' education. For example:

- In Africa, UNICEF works on girls' education in 34 countries through the African Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI). Efforts are made to involve UNESCO in this initiative wherever there is a UNESCO office;
- In May 2002, the regional offices of the United Nations agencies based in Bangkok established a regional UNGEI inter-agency forum;
- In Africa, UNESCO Dakar and UNICEF developed a website within the framework of UNGEI in order to heighten the importance of girls' education and women's education amongst policy-makers;
- A subregional network of EFA gender focal points was created in the ECOWAS subregion to assist countries in preparing gender responsive national EFA plans;
- Jointly with the Royal Government of Morocco, UNICEF organized the Summit of African First Ladies (Marrakesh, 20-22 April 2001). In a round table discussion, the Deputy Assistant Director-General for Education of UNESCO proposed solutions for improving the conditions of educating girls;

- A United Nations Joint Programme on Girls' Education was launched in Egypt, after the establishment of a "Compact" agreement between Egypt and the United Nations;
- UNESCO and UNICEF jointly organized the ARAB-EFA Regional Thematic Workshop on Girls' Education in Cairo, 10-12 June 2002, which aimed at providing technical support to EFA country focal points in planning for girls' education as a thematic programme priority in education for all (EFA) national action plans;
- UNESCO Beirut has prepared a document on the role of universities and civil society in non-formal education for girls in response to UNGEI and the Dakar goals on gender parity and equality;
- At the request of UNESCO, UNICEF facilitated a tour to East Africa for Asian specialists to study and build on the experiences in advocacy for girls' education, of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE);
- In Bangladesh, UNESCO and UNICEF are jointly taking the lead role in girls' education on behalf of the United Nations system;
- In Cambodia, reduction of gender disparities is part of the different education plans formulated by the Ministry of Education, assisted by UNESCO and UNICEF. The two organizations have also supported the development of a communication strategy that has highlighted the importance of education of girls and led to a number of significant policy changes that have affected the enrolment rates of girls;
- Also in Cambodia, the two organizations are helping to review the school curriculum from a gender perspective, piloting the provision of scholarships for female students at lower secondary level, supporting affirmative actions to increase the proportion of female teachers and, supporting collection and reporting of gender-disaggregated school data.

4. FUTURE OF THE JCE

Collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO has progressed significantly since the JCE was first set up. The mechanisms for collaboration at international, regional and national levels have increased significantly due to developments relating to the EFA goals and the Millennium Development Goals. The summary details provided above indicate that there are still issues to be addressed, especially in terms of the results and strategic impact of collaboration at national level. This suggests that there are two significant areas in which both organizations need to make a breakthrough if their collaboration is to result in the maximum benefit at international, regional and national levels.

(a) Addressing future challenges collaboratively

The first significant area is that of addressing future challenges collaboratively. At the moment neither organization reviews the strengths and complementary features of the other in the process of developing its programme priorities and strategies. If some degree of collaborative effort is exercised at this programme planning stage it should be possible to ensure greater synergy, avoid duplication of efforts and signal the most sensible roles and responsibilities in a collaborative partnership. This is all the more urgent in view of current United Nations reforms that require a common country assessment (CCA) as part of the work of United Nations agencies at the national level. Critical areas that will have to be given priority in the process of planning programmes at the country level include:

- UNICEF's new global strategy for accelerating progress on girls' education;
- The United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) commencing 1 January 2003, coordinated by UNESCO, for which women's literacy will be a key component;
- Ensuring that gender is a central concern in the planning and implementation of the fast-track initiative.

It is clear that existing mechanisms are more than adequate to facilitate the type of approach that would enable both agencies to address future challenges collaboratively. Education of girls remains a major challenge internationally and in all regions, except for Latin America and the Caribbean. In Africa, the issue is particularly related to rural areas. Successful achievement of the gender goal will require synergy in programme efforts as well as joint mobilization of resources. In Asia, the challenge of gender equality will be further addressed through the regional gender network and the United Nations Inter-agency Thematic Working Group on the Girls' Education Initiative. There is no requirement for new mechanisms to facilitate collaboration. Rather it seems necessary to rationalize and make selective use of those mechanisms that have already been created.

(b) Influencing Investment Priorities

The second area of weakness revealed by the summary report above is that collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO has not had a major impact on the investment priorities in education for countries and their development partners. In most countries, more than 90% of total investments in the education sector come from national resources. External resources in the form of grants and loans make up most of the rest. Hence in terms of the actual financial input made by UNICEF and UNESCO the impact is likely to be marginal unless it is used strategically to influence decisions on investment priorities generally. Increasingly however, investment decisions regarding national and external resources are made round the table at meetings concerning Sector-Wide Approach Programmes (SWAP), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and other sector investment at which, to date, neither UNICEF nor UNESCO has had a significant presence. Both organizations should clearly define what they could bring to the table in these meetings and then work collaboratively to ensure that they influence investment decisions in favour of priority areas such as:

- Maintaining strong commitment to the full Dakar agenda and its importance for achieving poverty reduction and development (as opposed to focusing on the two education Millennium Goals only);
- Working with other partners to ensure that planning processes are successfully finalized and the financing needed for their implementation is secured;
- Heighten the focus (and resource flow) on HIV/AIDS in Africa as well as in Asia;
- Heighten the focus on countries in conflict and crisis;
- Explore avenues for more intersectoral work that benefits education;
- Continue the work on improved EFA indicators;
- Continue support for adequate monitoring, evaluation and reporting on progress on all six Dakar goals.

(c) Revisiting the Joint Committee on Education (JCE)

The collaboration between UNESCO and UNICEF began in 1989. It intensified during the 1990s as the organizations worked together on a number of specific areas of mutual interest such as inclusive education for disabled children, basic education for women and girls, improvement of educational data and indicators, and education in emergency situations. Since 1999, collaboration has increased at the international, regional and national levels in the areas of education for all and girls' education. This increase in collaboration has been facilitated by the creation of new mechanisms that include a wide range of agencies and operate in more dynamic ways to create synergy from efforts of individual agencies. Significantly also, formal and informal collaboration has been strengthened between the two Executive Heads and at the leadership level of the education sectors of the two organizations. The organizations are also increasingly aware that their work should be based on a results-oriented approach with assessments of impact of their mutual collaboration at country, regional and international levels.

Collaborative work in the areas of education for all and girls' education has relied on national, regional and international mechanisms through which partnership arrangements have been facilitated. UNESCO and UNICEF have participated and collaborated actively through these mechanisms. Since Dakar, the Working Group on Education for All, the High-Level Group and UNGEI provide regular meeting points for the two organizations at the international level. At the regional and national levels similar forums and mechanisms have been established that include UNICEF and UNESCO. Action on EFA and girls' education takes place through all these mechanisms.

It seems, therefore, that collaboration has been solidified, takes place at international, regional and national levels, in areas of mutual interest and in response to comparative strengths. The UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education undoubtedly served its purpose in initiating this collaboration and in ensuring that early obstacles were removed and the organizations moved forward in a consolidated manner. Now, given the current range of mechanisms through which collaboration at all levels can be facilitated, the Committee may have completed its mission. With education for all and girls' education firmly on the international agenda and at the heart of the work of the two organizations, the area of collaboration is already clearly defined. Partnership will continue to be strengthened as the organizations address remaining areas of weakness. This will require improved coordination and coherence as key ingredients of inter-agency collaboration.

On the basis of this report, representatives at the eighth meeting of the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education held in Paris on 25 November 2002, may wish to recommend to their respective Executive Boards as follows:

That having duly fulfilled its mandate, the Committee should be considered for dissolution at the forthcoming meetings of the Executive Boards of the two organizations.

ANNEX III

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Joint Committee on Education

Report on the eighth meeting held in Paris on 25 November 2002

Summary

The present report contains the recommendations of the eighth meeting of the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education of the Executive Boards of UNICEF and UNESCO, which was held in Paris on 25 November 2002.

Introduction

1. In his introductory remarks, the outgoing chairperson of the Joint Committee on Education (JCE), H.E. Mr David Stanton (UNESCO), said that the last meeting, hosted by UNICEF in New York in June 1999, had focused on girls' education; early childhood care and education; Africa; educational data and statistics; and the need to elaborate a framework to facilitate collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO.
2. The meeting elected H.E. Mr Crispin Grey-Johnson (UNICEF) as chairperson, and Mr Stanton (UNESCO) and Ms. Margareta Husen (UNICEF) as rapporteurs.
3. In his opening remarks, the Chairperson said that girls' education is fundamental to development and recalled the commitments made by Governments, agencies and development partners during global conferences to keep girls' education high on their agendas.
4. The Executive Director of UNICEF said that quality education, particularly for girls, was increasingly recognized as an essential prerequisite of any global anti-poverty strategy and therefore was a key to empowerment. She said that the Education for All (EFA) movement, launched at the World Conference on Education for All, held at Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, had brought the two organizations closer in terms of collaborative work and had given rise to new mechanisms for inter-agency coordination, including the current United Nations reform process. As a result, both organizations had been able to define better their comparative advantages in the field of education.
5. The Director-General of UNESCO said that there was considerable strength and added value to be derived from the unity of purpose of the two organizations collaborating in the areas where their mandates converged. A main concern, however, was how to strengthen collaboration at the field level, especially because UNESCO did not have a large field presence.

Ongoing coordination: EFA and girls' education

6. Following the recommendations of the seventh meeting of JCE, held in February 1999 at UNICEF Headquarters, New York, the eighth meeting addressed collaboration in the two core areas of EFA and girls' education at the international, regional and national levels, focusing on results, impacts and major challenges ahead.
7. The JCE had before it a **background report** (*Collaboration between UNESCO and UNICEF in the Areas of Education for All and Girls' Education*, copies available in English and French upon

request) which outlined the changing nature of cooperation between UNESCO and UNICEF since the beginning of their formal collaboration in 1989. The report highlighted a range of new, more broad-based and dynamic collaborative mechanisms being used by both organizations. These began with the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 (convened in Jomtien by the United Nations Development Programme, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank) and the International Consultative Forum on Education for All, which was established to guide and monitor follow-up to the Jomtien Declaration. The Forum provided a platform for collaboration between all EFA stakeholders at a time of growing emphasis on better coordination to increase synergy, avoid duplication of efforts and reduce the service burden on countries. The Forum produced a range of concrete products used to take stock of progress on EFA at the World Education Forum, held in Dakar, Senegal in 2000.

8. A second new phase of collaboration emerged in part from the mandates given to UNESCO and UNICEF at Dakar, namely to coordinate work on EFA and girls' education respectively. This new phase relies on mechanisms that use the comparative advantages of each organization in a partnership which reflects the prevailing international trend in development work. In addition to EFA and girls' education, these mechanisms relate to cross-sectoral issues which affect these areas.

9. In addition to the more broad-based, dynamic mechanisms, collaboration has been facilitated through strengthened interactions between the two Executive Heads and between the education sections of UNESCO and UNICEF. Future challenges increasingly must be addressed collaboratively at the stage of planning national programme priorities and strategies, including making investment decisions. This would be reflected in Common Country Assessments (CCAs), the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), poverty reduction strategies and sector-wide approaches, which have become the internationally recognized policy frameworks for collaboration between United Nations agencies and their partners.

10. The JCE **discussions** focused on the changing dynamics of cooperation between UNICEF and UNESCO in the areas of EFA and girls' education, and on new coordination mechanisms and their implications for the future of the JCE. The members recognized that regular collaboration between UNICEF and UNESCO was increasingly facilitated through more broad-based and dynamic mechanisms and by new forms of inter-agency coordination at the international, regional and country levels.

11. The Committee had extensive discussions on opportunities for strengthening collaboration in the field of data through the UNESCO Institute for Statistics; the linkages between countries that are part of the World Bank's EFA Fast-Track Initiative and the 25 countries where UNICEF has accelerated interventions; the importance of equal education for boys and girls; education and HIV/AIDS; early childhood education; countries in conflict; and the need for country-level collaboration.

12. Having discussed the report on *Collaboration between UNESCO and UNICEF in the Areas of Education for All and Girls' Education* at its eighth meeting, the JCE agreed that the collaboration between the two organizations has been solidified at international, regional and national levels in areas of mutual interest and in response to comparative strengths. Members further agreed that while the Joint Committee was undoubtedly of strategic importance in initiating collaboration and ensuring that early obstacles were removed, the current range of mechanisms fulfilled this purpose, thus rendering the mandate of the Committee obsolete.

Future collaboration

13. At present, neither organization reviews the other's strengths and complementary features when developing its programme priorities and strategies. If there is some collaboration at this stage of programme planning, in the context of the CCA, it should be possible to ensure greater synergy, avoid duplication of effort and signal the most sensible roles and responsibilities of each agency. Critical priority areas include the new UNICEF global strategy for accelerating progress on girls' education; the United Nations International Literacy Decade 2003-2012, to be coordinated by UNESCO and which will include women's literacy as a key component; and ensuring that gender is central in the planning and implementation of the Fast-Track Initiative.

14. There were diverging arguments concerning dissolution of the JCE. One of the strong arguments in favour was the pace with which developments are moving and the resulting need for mechanisms that can respond more effectively to events. This point was exemplified by the fact that the last meeting was held before the Dakar Forum. Specific mention was made also of meetings of the "Group of Eight" industrialized countries and the Fast-Track Initiative as other collaborative mechanisms.

Recommendation

15. Based on this discussion, the JCE decided that it had fulfilled its original mandate and should be discontinued, noting the institutional arrangements which ensure coordination and collaboration between UNESCO and UNICEF. These include the Dakar follow-up process at the global level, such regional arrangements as the conferences of Ministers of Education of African Member States, sponsored by UNESCO, and such country-level processes as the UNDAF and poverty-reduction strategies. The JCE also noted that UNICEF had participated with the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in supporting and benefiting from the work of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

16. Accordingly, the JCE agreed to recommend to the Executive Boards of UNESCO and UNICEF that the JCE be discontinued and asked the Secretariats of both agencies to propose how to strengthen coordination within existing structures.