

Hundred and sixtieth Session

160 EX/9

PARIS, 22 September 2000

Original: English

Item 3.2.2 of the provisional agenda

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNESCO/UNICEF
JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

SUMMARY

In accordance with 159 EX/Decision 3.1.1 the Director-General submits this document to clarify the terms of the “Framework Agreement between UNESCO and UNICEF on collaboration in the Field of Education” of 9 February 1999 with respect to issues identified in 157 EX/Decision 3.2.1, and further to recent consultations between both organizations.

Decision required: paragraph 10.

1. Following 157 EX/Decision 3.2.1, paragraph 6, the Director-General had informed the Board in document 159 EX/INF.3, paragraph 7 that a number of bilateral consultations and exchanges have taken place between UNICEF and UNESCO to address the collaboration between the two organizations and to clarify the terms of the “Framework Agreement between UNESCO and UNICEF in the field of Education” of 9 February 1999. To this end, the Assistant Director-General for Education, a.i., undertook two missions to UNICEF New York in July and September 2000 where he met with the Executive Director of UNICEF and its senior staff. UNICEF also sent a mission to UNESCO in August 2000.

Mandate

2. The consultations focused on the provisions of the Framework Agreement with particular emphasis on issues highlighted in 157 EX/Decision 3.2.1: the division of labour in respect to strengths and mandates of each organization; possibility of new funding agreements; cooperation with private partners, donors and sponsors; and the prospects for joint public information strategies. These issues were examined taking into account differing

contexts, including post-conflict situations, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the emerging role of new technologies, etc., and in the light of the strong partnership between the two organizations in the EFA process at country level, as was evidenced by the EFA 2000 Assessment and the preparation of the World Education Forum in Dakar (April 2000).

3. Central to the consultations has been the follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action (adopted in Dakar), in which the two organizations work together and in complementarity for the furtherance of a joint EFA agenda. Both organizations concur that their respective strengths lie in the following areas.

- UNESCO with its mandate to take on a leading, normative role, can best:
 - (a) promote policy discussions around basic education;
 - (b) set standards for principles of action and indicators of assessment;
 - (c) engage in high level advocacy;
 - (d) strengthen partnerships with other EFA actors, particularly to support capacity-building and policy formulation at the regional and national level;
 - (e) provide access to state-of-the-art knowledge about educational theory and practice by drawing on its well-established links with the academic and research community, as well as on its own experience from innovative action-research-oriented pilot activities;
- UNICEF, concerned with education as a key right of all children, and as an indispensable element of integrated child-focused programmes, can best:
 - (a) provide technical and financial assistance to education at national level, in the framework of its own country programmes, and in close cooperation with government and other external partners;
 - (b) explore and strengthen linkages between education and other elements of integrated child development;
 - (c) promote the sharing and dissemination of innovative grass-roots practice in education, arising from the experience of its country programmes;
 - (d) advocate for the fulfilment of the right of all children to a basic education of good quality.

4. Considering the above, particularly in view of the commitments made in Dakar, the two organizations will concentrate on jointly reinforcing regional, subregional and national capacities to support the implementation of the Dakar recommendations at the national level. This will combine UNESCO's normative role regarding conceptual development and policy formulation for up-stream activities, such as educational planning and management, capacity-building, monitoring and evaluation, with UNICEF's operational knowledge, presence at regional, national, and sometimes, subnational level and capacity to analyse educational needs and opportunities and to plan, finance and implement action at the national level. Both organizations recognize the importance of working at country level with a wide range of partners within the framework of existing United Nations and other comprehensive

programming mechanisms, and of delivering on such existing multi-agency initiatives as the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (UNSI), Low Enrolment Country Activity (with the World Bank) and the Inter-Agency Working Group on Integrating HIV/AIDS Prevention into Schools.

Specific areas of collaboration

5. In more specific terms, the Framework Agreement specifies the principal areas of focus for collaboration on the basis of shared commitments and agendas of the two organizations. Following the general principle set out under paragraph 3 above, it is expected that UNESCO's role will be best articulated in the following specific areas:

- (a) curriculum development and teacher training; science, technology, information and culture, particularly harnessing new information and communication technologies to contribute to achieving the goals of EFA;
- (b) educational quality, particularly through the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, and building national and regional capacity for analytical information collection and dissemination;
- (c) provision of insights and global perspectives on HIV/AIDS, girls', and early childhood education and care, in cooperation with other agencies while UNICEF assumes direct leadership regarding national planning and implementation of specific actions;
- (d) using its comparative advantage in adult education, especially that of women, complement the current work done under the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative by developing a strong programme in women's education;
- (e) finally, democracy and governance, within the context of education systems at school and classroom level or in any other learning context, a matter of crucial importance to educational reform and transformation of existing education systems.

6. Particular mention should be made of collaboration in the area of education in situations of emergency and reconstruction, based on the recognition of the comparative advantage of UNICEF in meeting the most urgent educational needs in emergency situations, notably by rapidly assessing educational and psycho-social needs, providing essential supplies and materials, mobilizing parent and local responses, supporting rapid curriculum and teacher development, and integrating emergency response into the education system. UNESCO's contribution is similarly one of technical assistance for educational needs and damage assessment, as well as helping countries to prepare the transition from emergency to reconstruction.

Funding agreement and fund-raising

7. Although it is not envisaged to conclude any new funding agreement, it is expected that both organizations will ensure that fund-raising activities be complementary rather than competitive, and that they should:

- (a) seek to convey clear messages to donors of the vital importance of investing in education, in order to increase total financing for education;

- (b) continue their fruitful in-country cooperation, where UNICEF, through its country programmes, is providing financial assistance to countries for education.

Joint public information strategy

8. Following the experiences of working together during the EFA 2000 Assessment exercise, the two organizations are convinced of the advantages of cooperation in public information and advocacy for EFA and intend to build further on the positive experience gained through this partnership, focusing on:

- (a) developing joint messages and strategies for advocacy to promote EFA;
- (b) sharing of experience and implementation of advocacy strategies through access to each other's networks, e.g. UNESCO's Associated Schools Network (ASPnet), the network of UNESCO National Commissions, NGO networks.

Mechanism for collaboration

9. In managerial terms, collaboration will be promoted between the two agencies through:

at the global level:

- (a) the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education as source of strategic recommendations for collaboration, as described in the Framework Agreement;
- (b) UNICEF's representation in both the high-level informal group and the working group on Education for All, set up by UNESCO to advise EFA partners on concrete action to follow up Dakar;

at the regional level:

Regular contact (meetings, e-mail, etc.) between regional entities of the two organizations;

at the national level:

- (a) Regular institutional contact between UNICEF country offices and UNESCO subregional/cluster offices to discuss specific interventions at a country level;
- (b) Joint participation in United Nations-wide cooperation mechanisms – such as UNDAF – and other fora either through UNICEF country offices or National Commissions for UNESCO.

10. In view of the foregoing, the Executive Board may wish to adopt the following decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 160 EX/9,
2. Recalling 157 EX/Decision 3.2.1, paragraph 6 and 159 EX/Decision 3.1.1, Part III,

3. Takes note of the Director-General's efforts to strengthen UNESCO/UNICEF cooperation particularly in the implementation of the Dakar Framework for Action;
4. Invites the Director-General to pursue these initiatives and to inform the next session of the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education, scheduled in 2001, accordingly.

Hundred and sixtieth Session

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**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNESCO/UNICEF
JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

CORRIGENDUM

Replace the text of paragraph 3 with the following text:

“3. Central to the consultations has been the follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action (adopted in Dakar), in which the two organizations work together and in complementarity for the furtherance of a joint EFA agenda. The following issues were discussed:

- UNESCO with its mandate to take on a leading, normative role, is well-placed to:
 - (a) promote policy discussions around basic education;
 - (b) set standards for principles of action and indicators of assessment;
 - (c) engage in high level advocacy;
 - (d) strengthen partnerships with other EFA actors, particularly to support capacity-building and policy formulation at the regional and national level;
 - (e) provide access to state-of-the-art knowledge about educational theory and practice by drawing on its well-established links with the academic and research community, as well as on its own experience from innovative action-research-oriented pilot activities;
- UNICEF, concerned with education as a key right of all children, and as an indispensable element of integrated child-focused programmes, is well-placed to:

- (a) provide technical and financial assistance to education at national level, in the framework of its own country programmes, and in close cooperation with government and other external partners;
- (b) explore and strengthen linkages between education and other elements of integrated child development;
- (c) promote the sharing and dissemination of innovative grass-roots practice in education, arising from the experience of its country programmes;
- (d) advocate for the fulfilment of the right of all children to a basic education of good quality.”