

School Health, Nutrition and Education for All

Levelling the Playing Field



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List of abbreviations and acronyms

ACT	Artemisinin-based combination therapy
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARI	Acute respiratory infection
ARTIs	Acute respiratory tract infections
ARV	Antiretroviral
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CRS	Congenital rubella syndrome
DALYs	Disability adjusted life years
DFID	United Kingdom's Department for International Development
DQ	Development quotient
ECD	Early Child Development
EFA	Education for All
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
FRESH	Focusing Resources on Effective School Health
GER	Gross enrolment ratio
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDA	Iron deficiency anaemia
IDD	Iodine deficiency disorders
IEC	Information education and communication
IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IPT	Intermittent preventive treatment
IQ	Intelligence quotient
LBW	Low birth weight
LRTIs	Lower respiratory tract infections
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoH	Ministry of Health
MTCT	Mother-to-child transmission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OME	Otitis media with effusion
OR	Odds ratio
PCD	Partnership for Child Development
PPC	Partners for Parasite Control
PROGRESA	Programa de Educación, Salud y Alimentación (Mexico)
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SD	Standard deviation
SEECALINE II	Surveillance et Education des Ecoles et des Communautés en matière d'Alimentation et de Nutrition Elargie, Phase II
SGA	Small for gestational age
STIs	Sexually transmitted infections
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV&AIDS
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UTIs	Urinary tract infections
WFP	World Food Programme
WHA	World Health Assembly of WHO
WHO	World Health Organisation

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About the book

“A major step forward in building the argument for school health and nutrition and Education for All.”

*Francisco Espejo,
Chief School Feeding Service,
World Food Programme*

“Persuasively argues that moderate investment in school health and nutrition programmes now will reap great dividends for hundreds of millions of children, for their education and for their future after school.”

*David Bloom,
Clarence James Gamble Professor of Economics and Demography,
Harvard School of Public Health*

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Chapter 1

The compelling case for school health and nutrition

Challenges in achieving Education for All

Providing education to children is not a simple task. For children to benefit from a full course of primary education, many things need to be in place: a school that provides the essential materials required for learning and a motivated and well trained teacher guided by strong school leadership. Children need to learn free from competing distractions in the home. Families need to find other ways and means to carry out responsibilities traditionally falling to children and they need to provide money for uniforms, school equipment and in some cases school fees too. Children need to be supported by caregivers who understand the process of education and encourage children in their efforts. Girls in particular need to be given every opportunity to do well and the support to take these opportunities. Children themselves need to be motivated to succeed; they need to see the rewards for their efforts in the availability of secondary school places and in jobs and livelihoods that reward the investment in their education. All these things need to be in place for children to develop essential skills from a full course of primary education, and not just for 1 day or 2 days or a week, but for every day of every school term for 6, 7 or 8 years. Considering the complexity and scale of the task involved, it is perhaps not surprising that global and national efforts, supported by years of development assistance have yet to fulfil the promise of Education for All (EFA).

Education for All is a global movement committed to achieving six goals agreed in the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action. This book looks at how improving children's health and nutrition is essential for reaching these goals. In particular it is concerned with the ultimate goals of promoting access and

Box 1.1. The Dakar Education for All Goals and the UN Millennium Development Goals

The Dakar Education for All Goals

The goals establish a framework for action that is designed to enable all individuals to realise their right to learn and to fulfil their responsibility to contribute to the development of their society.

- (i) Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
- (ii) ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
- (iii) ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes;
- (iv) achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
- (v) eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality;
- (vi) improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The UN Millennium Development Goals

Of the eight Millennium Development Goals approved by world leaders at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, Goals 2 and 3 focus on education explicitly while education is an essential part of achieving Goal 1.

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

- Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day
- Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

- Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary education

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

- Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015

Source: UNESCO (2000)¹, United Nations (2001)².