

# BREAKING THE CYCLE OF **CRISIS**

Learning from Save the Children's  
delivery of education in  
conflict-affected fragile states



Save the Children

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We save children's lives. We fight for their rights.  
We help them fulfil their potential.

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Published by  
Save the Children  
1 St John's Lane  
London EC1M 4AR  
UK  
+44 (0)20 7012 6400  
savethechildren.org.uk

First published 2012

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Cover photo: Monika, nine, at an accelerated learning centre set up by Save the Children near Mazar-i-Sharif in northern Afghanistan. "Before the school came to our village I used to sell bangles with my mother from six in the morning to late in the evening," she says. Monika is the first person in her family to receive an education. (Photo: Mats Lignell/Save the Children)

Typeset by Grasshopper Design Company  
Printed by Page Bros Ltd.

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# FOREWORD

'Rewrite the Future' was one of the most significant international campaigns of the past decade to focus attention on education for children in conflict-affected countries. Through this campaign Save the Children demonstrated an impressive commitment to the use of research as a basis for advocacy and to inform programming.

The initial Rewrite the Future report identified 28 'conflict-affected and fragile states' and highlighted the fact that almost half of children out of school were in conflict-affected and fragile states – at that time 39 million children from a total of 72 million children who were not in school (Save the Children, 2006). A second report examined aid allocations and highlighted that education for children in conflict-affected and fragile states received *'less than one-fifth of education aid despite representing almost half of the world's population of out of school children'*. This suggested that donors were favouring low-income countries other than those affected by conflict. Attention was drawn to the fact that education received little over 1% of funding from humanitarian appeals (Save the Children, 2007).

Since then we have seen several international donors give greater priority to education in conflict-affected countries, and Save the Children's campaign can take much credit for that. Progress has been made, but there is still some way to go. The Global Monitoring Report on Education For All (UNESCO, 2011) reported that fewer children are now out of school in conflict-affected countries (28 million), but this is still 42% of the world total. Children in conflict-affected poor countries are twice as likely to die before their fifth birthday as children in other poor countries. Refugees and internally displaced people face major barriers to education, and conflict-affected countries have some of the largest gender inequalities and lowest literacy levels in the world. Whilst aid to basic education has doubled since 2002 to US\$4.7 billion, current aid levels fall far short of the

US\$16 billion required annually to close the external financing gap in low-income countries. Education now accounts for just 2% of humanitarian aid, and just 38% of emergency aid requests for education are met.

Alongside the challenges of improving access and increasing funding for the education of children in conflict-affected countries, Rewrite the Future addressed challenges in improving the quality of education. Priority areas were identified to increase educational opportunity for the poorest and most disadvantaged, particularly through early childhood education, social protection, and flexible and alternative education such as accelerated learning programmes. There was a focus on teachers and teaching quality, particularly through strategies for recruitment, training and professional development, plus attention to relevant curricula that are sensitive to diversity and promote values that support peace (Save the Children, 2008).

These are complex challenges, but this report demonstrates how it has been possible to make quality improvements for children even in the most difficult and conflict-affected environments. Particularly impressive is the evidence in this report of the impact of Rewrite the Future in improving access to education for 1.6 million children; development of strategies for better child protection and safety at school; programmes aimed at improving teacher quality; and evidence of improvements in attendance and learning outcomes in Save the Children's project schools in a number of countries. Overall, this report should give reassurance to donors that their investments in education are necessary and make a difference to children who face the daily challenge of living and growing up in countries affected by violent conflict.

**Professor Alan Smith**, University of Ulster  
May 2012

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was written by Professor Lynn Davies, drawing on a series of evaluation reports of Save the Children's Rewrite the Future education work in conflict-affected fragile states between 2008 and 2011. The initial evaluation findings and analysis were produced by Dr Ruth Naylor, who led the global evaluation.

Additional contributors to the original evaluation processes and reports included Tarun Adhikari, Gabriela Dib, Emily Echessa, Kennedy Govedi, Lailoma Hassani, Warue Kariuki, Dr Bidya Nath Koirala, Cynthia Koons, Emily Lugano, Grethe Markussen, Ingunn Nakkim, Guro Nesbakken, Mahesh Nath Parajuli, Ingrid Nyström, Rita Oswald Christano, Barbara Pozzoni, Muchumba Sikumba-Dils, Dragana Sretenov, Mike Tauras, Nitika Tolani-Brown, Bo Tovby Jørgensen and Trine Wengen.

Additional inputs and editing to this report were provided by Emily Echessa, Elin Martinez, Ruth Naylor, Helen Pinnock and Dragana Sretenov. The report was edited by Ingrid Lewis and Ravi Wickremasinghe.

## **Lynn Davies**

Lynn Davies is Emeritus Professor of International Education in the Centre for International Education and Research of the School of Education.

Professor Davies's central interests are in the fields of education and conflict, education and extremism and education in fragile states. She has published major books and reports in these areas – for example, *Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos* (which won the Society of Education Studies prize for the best book of 2004); *Educating Against*

*Extremism* (2008); and *Capacity Development for Education Systems in Fragile Contexts* (2009).

Interlocking interests are in children's rights and the impact of student voice. Research grants have included awards for work in education and vulnerabilities in emergencies in South Asia; the impact of school councils; education for peace and social cohesion in Sri Lanka; primary education in post-conflict Angola; democratic education in The Gambia; and global citizenship education.

## **Ruth Naylor**

Dr Ruth Naylor is a specialist in education in conflict-affected settings, and was the lead independent Global Researcher for Save the Children's evaluation of its education work in conflict-affected fragile states between 2008 and 2010. She led the evaluation design process and data collection and presented the analysis of the findings in a set of 10 reports, including country reports and a midterm and final global report.

Dr Naylor previously worked for Education Action and the University of Edinburgh's Centre of African Studies. She has conducted research into education in Afghanistan, Sudan, South Sudan, Angola and Tanzania. She has advised on education programmes in a wide range of conflict-affected contexts including Angola, Sudan, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and northern Uganda, and fed into INEE's work on teaching and learning as a technical expert. Since completing the evaluation she has worked as Education Advisor for Plan UK, focusing on girls' education.

# ABBREVIATIONS

ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme
CAFS	conflict-affected fragile state(s)
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Accord (Nepal); Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Sudan)
EMIS	Education Management Information System
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
INGO	international non-governmental organisation
NGO	non-governmental organisation
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola: People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola
PTA	parent-teacher association
PTSA	parent-teacher student association
QEP	Quality Education Project
SZOP	Schools as Zones of Peace
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola: National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
WiT	Women into Teaching
ZIPS	Zonas de Influência Pedagógica



Children marching in Liberia's capital, Monrovia, to highlight children's right to education in 2006 at the start of Save the Children's Rewrite the Future campaign.



# SUMMARY

*Breaking the Cycle of Crisis* presents expert synthesis of and reflections on four research-based evaluations of Save the Children's Rewrite the Future work to improve the quality of children's education in Afghanistan, Angola, Nepal and South Sudan. It is intended as a policy resource for agencies interested in public service delivery in conflict-affected fragile states (CAFS) – governments, donors and NGOs.

## 'REWRITE THE FUTURE'

From 2005 Save the Children began to dramatically scale up its education delivery in more than 20 CAFS. This was accompanied by a global campaign, Rewrite the Future, which ran until 2010. Rewrite the Future aimed to make the case for increased education financing for CAFS, demonstrating that large-scale education interventions could be delivered in these complex settings.

Rewrite the Future succeeded in getting 1.6 million children into school from 2005 to 2010, and improved the quality of education for 10.6 million children. *Breaking the Cycle of Crisis* focuses on the second part of that achievement – what can be learned in terms of delivering good-quality education in CAFS.

## Evaluating Rewrite the Future

Save the Children's global evaluation of its Rewrite the Future education programming was delivered by an independent team led by Dr Ruth Naylor. It was intended to capture successes and learning from different settings in four CAFS, and to identify effective ways of delivering quality education. It asked two questions:

1. How have Save the Children's project-level interventions contributed to the quality of primary education for children affected by conflict?
2. Which project-level interventions have had what impact on the education quality of children affected by conflict?

This policy report presents synthesis and reflections by Professor Lynn Davies of the original evaluations. Save the Children commissioned Professor Davies to find out what learning could be drawn by an 'expert outsider' from its evaluation findings. Further details on how the synthesis was produced are available in section 4.

## EDUCATION IN CAFS

Basic education in the four countries displayed common features resulting from conflict, such as physical destruction of infrastructure, negative impact on access, retention and learning outcomes and damage to the teaching force, as well as exacerbation of gender inequity. Yet the diverse reasons for conflict, the way conflict affects populations, and the continuing legacies of war, have generated different responses with regard to current and future schooling. The aftermath of conflict can present an opportunity to rebuild and reshape education, but this 'peace dividend' will be lost if not quickly seized by state and non-state actors.

### Key statistics

- Conflict-affected fragile states have 18% of the world's primary school-age population, and account for 42% of the world's out-of-school children.<sup>1</sup>
- One child in three in CAFS does not go to school, compared to one in 11 in other low-income countries.<sup>2</sup>
- Secondary school enrolment rates in CAFS are nearly a third lower than in other developing countries, and far lower still for girls.<sup>3</sup>
- During a conflict, girls of school age are 12% less likely to complete mandatory schooling than girls who complete before the conflict starts.
- Girls in CAFS are 7% less likely to complete school than girls of the same age living in less war-affected regions.<sup>4</sup>

## SIGNIFICANT SUCCESSES OF THE FOUR PROGRAMMES

### Greater availability of schools

**Improving infrastructure:** In South Sudan, project schools visited in 2008 held less than a third of lessons in permanent structures. By 2010, over 40% of lessons in these schools took place in permanent classrooms. Save the Children was responsible for some of this construction; there were also contributions from other organisations. Student attendance at schools with permanent classrooms (57%) was nearly double the level of attendance at schools without (30%).<sup>5</sup>

**Tackling the misuse of infrastructure:** In Nepal, armed political groups used school premises for their troops, and for political messaging and recruitment. With the support of Save the Children and other agencies, communities around the schools declared schools as ‘Zones of Peace’, and negotiated with armed groups. All parties agreed on criteria protecting schools from violence and political interference.

Students, parents and teachers reported that the process had helped prevent schools being terrorised.<sup>6</sup> On average, by 2010, Save the Children-supported schools were open for 14 days more than comparison schools. In 2008, classes had not always been conducted even when schools were open, but by 2010 the project schools had seven more active class days than comparison schools during the year.<sup>7</sup>

**Using community-based schools:** The provision of local locations for learning in Afghanistan was enhanced. By forming community-based schools and classes, Save the Children helped to promote the education of girls and tackle discrimination against minorities (such as Hindu and Sikh communities) in mainstream education.

### Higher levels of student attendance and enrolment

The evaluation found that in Save the Children project schools, student attendance (as measured by headcounts) was consistently higher than in comparison schools. In Afghanistan and South Sudan, between 2008 and 2010, there was a considerable increase in attendance at project schools.

**Increasing girls’ enrolment:** The evaluation highlighted that girls’ enrolment had increased, despite cultural, religious and economic barriers.

In Afghanistan and South Sudan, Save the Children trained student and parent groups to understand and advocate for girls’ right to education in the local context. In both cases, girls’ enrolment in project schools increased well above the national rate.<sup>8</sup>

### Introducing alternatives to formal schooling

Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALPs) are community-based classes provided for a range of vulnerable young people who have found the barriers to education in mainstream schools too great to overcome in the short term. In Afghanistan in 2009, Save the Children supported 772 ALPs and community-based classes.<sup>9</sup>

**Improving gender equality:** ALP classes in Angola, Afghanistan and South Sudan had better indicators of gender equality than formal or mainstream schools. In Angola, ALP classes have created opportunities for young mothers (aged 14–17 years) to attend school. They bring their babies to school and are allowed to leave the class with the baby if necessary. Without these ALP classes these young women would never have accessed basic education.<sup>10</sup>

**Ensuring good-quality teaching and learning:** Increases in girls’ attendance may not just be due to ALPs’ flexibility and proximity to communities. ALP classes have important, distinctive pedagogical features. In Angola, for instance, it was surmised that the more participatory teaching methods and smaller classes were especially beneficial to girls, who responded to a more intimate learning environment.<sup>11</sup>

In South Sudan, a different atmosphere was noted in ALP classes. There was more laughter than in school classes, with learners asking questions.<sup>12</sup> In Angola, the more participatory teaching was thought to contribute to literacy improvements: ALP students read 36 words per minute compared to 10 words per minute for students in formal schools. ALP students were also better at comprehension and maths.<sup>13</sup>

### Better learning outcomes

The evaluations rigorously measured learning outcomes in reading, comprehension and mathematics. It is difficult to isolate all the features that impinge on learning outcomes for different groups and at different times. However, Save the Children’s results have been positive overall, if not always consistently comparable.

Across the areas of learning tested, learning outcomes in project schools in Nepal and Afghanistan in 2008 and 2010 were significantly better than those of comparison schools. Comparisons for Angola between the same schools over time were not possible, but the data offered positive comparisons over time between similar sets of schools. In South Sudan a range of factors made comparisons more complex.

**Improving reading ability:** In 2008 the proportion of students demonstrating some reading skills was higher in project schools than in comparison schools for Afghanistan, Nepal and South Sudan. In 2010, students in Angola's and Nepal's project schools were again outperforming those in comparison schools.

**Better reading with comprehension:** In Afghanistan, Angola and Nepal, children in project schools did better than those in comparison schools. In Afghanistan, project school children improved their reading with comprehension between 2008 and 2010.

**Improving attainment in mathematics:** In all countries apart from South Sudan, Save the Children-supported schools attained better results in maths assessments than comparison schools. In Afghanistan, maths scores in project schools decreased between 2008 and 2010, and increased in comparison schools. In Angola in 2010, project schools achieved significantly better scores than comparison schools.

A key hypothesis in South Sudan was that delays to government's reworking of the teacher training system led to a hiatus in Save the Children's ability to deliver training to teachers, after an intensive period of support provided before 2008.<sup>14</sup>

**Closing gender differences:** In contrast to the findings about ALPs mentioned above, girls generally scored lower than boys in learning assessments overall, with the biggest gaps in Angola. In South Sudan and Afghanistan, however, there was a significant reduction in the gender gap over time. In 2010, project schools in Angola were showing signs of girls closing the gap in reading skills.

## INTRIGUING AND CHALLENGING FINDINGS

### Teacher motivation and recruitment

**Pay and accountability:** It is assumed that teachers will be more productive if they receive a government salary. The example of South Sudan, however, provided an interesting challenge to this. The evaluation found that teachers *not* receiving a government salary were more willing to go to lessons than teachers who were on the payroll. There was also a positive correlation between the proportion of non-payroll teachers and learning outcomes of students.

The hypothesis was that non-payroll teachers were supported by community contributions, being seen as 'volunteers'. These teachers were more accountable to school management and to the community. Crucially, volunteers received regular incentives from communities. They also reported being motivated to 'prove themselves' to enter the government payroll.

By contrast, government teachers in South Sudan often did not actually receive a regular salary, despite being on the payroll. The disappointment of finding out that full teacher status did not deliver expected rewards may have played a role in damaging motivation. Lines of accountability for government-paid teachers were also much more tenuous, and their training may have been inconsistent.

**Gender and qualifications:** Efforts to enhance the quality of teachers may have adverse effects on the recruitment of women teachers. In South Sudan, the *Women into Teaching (WiT)* programme found dilemmas because of new minimum qualifications to enter teaching. During the government's teacher headcount/census, some WiT trainees were left off the government payroll because of their lack of qualifications. Save the Children had worked with the government when the payroll was being established, but then saw the number of accredited female teachers fall by 26%.

During conflict it can be difficult to identify teachers with higher qualifications. This, combined with poor supply of trained and qualified teachers in conflict contexts, creates a need for innovation and room to work with available resources to fill gaps. The lesson missed by government was that, post-conflict, an approach to include less qualified female teachers easily in the payroll and then further improve their capacity would have retained them in the profession.

## Literacy and illiteracy

There had been positive and notable improvements in Save the Children-supported schools (compared to non-project schools), and there had been an increase (2008–2010) in the proportion of students able to read some words. But student achievement presented problems in many contexts. There were still Grade 3 students in project schools who were unable to read a single word from a simple text.

In Nepal, Save the Children's interventions seem to have had a positive impact at the lower end of the spectrum of reading ability. Teacher training focused on ensuring that weaker students were included in lessons. This emphasis on inclusion seemed key to tackling endemic underachievement.

**Reading materials:** Achievements in reading require materials. Most children supported by Rewrite the Future had very few reading materials. Save the Children provided notebooks, but access to relevant reading materials for teachers and students was affected by major weaknesses in supply and distribution. Literacy in such contexts is extremely difficult to attain, and therefore the positive findings on reading are particularly commendable.

## Language of teaching

In Afghanistan and Nepal, the language of instruction in schools was not the mother tongue for around half the children who were tested in the learning assessment. Not surprisingly, these children scored significantly worse in reading than other children.

Save the Children believes that efficiency gains can be made by pursuing good practice in multilingual teaching based in a familiar language, thus lowering drop-out and repetition rates.<sup>15</sup> In Nepal, the focus on inclusion and appropriate teaching methods for non-Nepali speakers has improved outcomes.

## Poor outcomes from teacher training

In South Sudan, Save the Children's teacher training activities were scaled down in 2008 in response to government plans to establish a formal teacher training system. However, implementation of the formal system was delayed, leaving a gap. In 2010 the impact of Save the Children's training on teaching practice was no longer evident.

In fact, teachers trained by the organisation scored slightly *less* well than other teachers on the lesson observation. One explanation was that training in

South Sudan was mostly short-term, direct teacher training without developing supervisory support. In Angola, by 2010, Save the Children's teacher professional development was also supported through the training of school supervisors, in a cluster-based system which was more sustainable and yielded better outcomes.

## Cultures of violence

Changing a culture of violence in education is far from easy. Save the Children made strenuous efforts to eradicate corporal punishment in all four countries. It was found that training alone was not sufficient to change corporal punishment practices.

Participation in drawing up codes of conduct – with discussion and internalisation of the concepts (including by the community) – seemed to be the key. A forum for such discussions is essential. In Afghanistan, Save the Children raised the problem of violence with student councils, and by 2010 student groups were able to give examples of how they had helped reduce bullying and fighting in their schools.

Throughout the evaluation findings, the presence of *participatory* and *widely known* codes of conduct, as in Nepal, were seen as key to many aspects of school improvement. Codes of conduct pasted on schools' walls reminded outsiders of the commitment not to disturb the school or enter with weapons or alcohol. Parents had standards against which to monitor quality. Teachers felt more accountable to parents and children because the code was widely known. Teachers also realised that children were able to note matters, however small. Moral pressure was placed on teachers to attend, arrive on time, and teach a full day. Equally, there was pressure on parents to ensure their children attended.

## KEY FACTORS IN BOOSTING EDUCATION QUALITY

Different factors interact to explain the enhancement of quality in education. The evaluations revealed the following key factors affecting educational quality: **teacher numbers, teaching-learning relationships, teacher professionalism, a sense of belonging, security, and community buy-in.**

Teacher numbers and safe places to learn are necessary, but not sufficient on their own. The social context of teaching and learning also needs to shift,

whether in terms of child and community action to include more learners, or in terms of teachers' understanding of what it means to be a professional educator who works in the best interests of the child. Changes in accepted practices and relationships are often what generate real leaps in quality, but these are not always easy to achieve.

### SIX UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES FOR EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS IN CAFS

- community buy-in
- participation
- resources
- motivation
- understanding
- legal accountability.

### KEY POLICY INTERVENTIONS TO BREAK THE CYCLES OF CONFLICT

The following policy interventions will improve education quality and help to break cycles of inequality, grievance, violence, corruption, and passivity in CAFS.

- **Coherent and sustainable teacher education and training**

Governments must understand the need for training, not just in subject knowledge but in pedagogy coherent with goals of peace and inclusion.

- **National campaigns on ending violence in and around education**

Governments must be influenced to implement legal frameworks on child protection as well as on the protection of schools.

- **Introducing government policy on equity and inclusion**

Governments must be urged to distribute resources equitably and transparently. They must consider shifting the balance of resources towards non-formal approaches such as ALPs; directing resources towards children with disabilities; and identifying and targeting specific groups that are otherwise marginalised.

- **Supporting and strengthening communities**

Crucial work is needed to harness the power of communities to improve their schools – both directly with communities and their leaders, and indirectly with donors and government. This involves training communities in areas such as child rights, taking part in PTAs, and holding school management accountable for spending. In some contexts, it involves recognising the strength of the community in negotiating with armed groups, and supporting such negotiations.

- **Recognising children as actors in conflict prevention**

All stakeholders must recognise children as key actors, not just targets of interventions. Children can and should take part in social and educational change strategies, ranging from peer learning in the classroom to community campaigns and research outside the classroom.



PHOTO: CAROLINE TRUTTMAN/SAVE THE CHILDREN

Sofia, 15, in an accelerated learning class for girls in Kuansa Sul province, Angola.

# I INTRODUCTION

*Breaking the Cycle of Crisis* presents expert synthesis and reflections on four research-based evaluations of Save the Children's Rewrite the Future work to improve the quality of children's education in Afghanistan, Angola, Nepal and South Sudan. It is intended as a policy resource for agencies interested in public service delivery in conflict-affected fragile states (CAFS) – governments, donors and NGOs.

Rewrite the Future succeeded in getting 1.6 million children into school from 2005 to 2010, and improved the quality of education for 10.6 million children in over 20 countries. This report focuses mainly on the second part of that achievement – what can be learned in terms of delivering good-quality education in CAFS. In doing so, this report:

- reviews key successes and challenges from evaluation findings
- reflects on why education interventions appeared to have worked or not to have worked
- discusses findings that are of particular interest
- proposes key policy and strategy recommendations on education in CAFS for governments, donors and international and local NGOs.

## REWRITE THE FUTURE

From 2005 Save the Children began to dramatically scale up its education delivery in more than 20 CAFS. This was accompanied by a global campaign to attract attention and financing to the urgent education needs in conflict-affected countries. The campaign, Rewrite the Future, ran until 2010. It aimed to make the case for increased education financing for CAFS, demonstrating that large-scale education interventions could be delivered in these complex settings.

### Evaluating Rewrite the Future

Save the Children's global evaluation of its Rewrite the Future education programming took place in 2008 and 2010, reviewing work which had taken place

from 2005 to 2009. The evaluation was intended to capture the degree of success achieved across a range of settings in four CAFS, and to identify effective ways of delivering education in conflict-affected countries.

The evaluation asked these questions:

1. How have Save the Children's project-level interventions contributed to quality primary education for children affected by conflict?
2. Which project-level interventions have had what impact on the education quality of children affected by conflict?

There had previously been minimal research and fragmented programming in the area of basic education in CAFS. Because few other agencies had conducted education research of this scale and depth in CAFS before, there were no recognised benchmarks or baselines against which to judge programme delivery. Nevertheless, the evaluation attempted to capture outcomes to a relatively high degree of rigour, taking into account the challenges of conflict, poor security, challenging weather and weak infrastructure, which affected capacity to assess education outcomes in these settings.

## BACKGROUND TO THIS REPORT

This report presents synthesis and reflections on four research-based evaluations of Save the Children's Rewrite the Future work to improve the quality of children's education in Afghanistan, Angola, Nepal and South Sudan. These evaluations were conducted between 2008 and 2010 by a global research team led by Dr Ruth Naylor, producing findings and analysis in a set of global and country reports (see References). This policy report presents analysis and discussion of these studies by Lynn Davies, Emeritus Professor of International Education at the University of Birmingham.

Save the Children commissioned this report to find out what learning could be drawn by an 'expert outsider' from its evaluation findings. Save the Children was particularly keen to know which findings were considered distinctive or useful from

a perspective of improving service delivery in fragile states. A further intention was to capture learning considered useful to donors, governments and non-government agencies about what improvements are needed to programme design and management to support more effective delivery.

This report is intended as a policy resource for agencies interested in public service delivery in CAFS. It presents key successes and challenges from evaluation findings, along with reflection on why education interventions appeared to have worked or not to have worked. The report discusses findings that are of particular interest, and proposes key policy and strategy recommendations for education in CAFS. These are intended to be considered by governments, donors and international and local NGOs.

## OVERVIEW OF THE REPORT

Professor Davies has presented an assessment of both the evaluation findings and the credibility of the research process, against the background of wider research and experience in the field of education in conflict-affected and fragile settings. Further details on how the synthesis was produced are available in section 4.

This report starts by outlining the main issues affecting education in CAFS (see section 2); the background to the Rewrite the Future campaign and its evaluation (section 3); and the methodology for this report (section 4).

The report then highlights and discusses findings from the four evaluation case studies that offer particular interest. It looks at significant successes of Rewrite the Future in delivering good-quality education (section 5); examines the evidence around quality education outcomes (section 6); and explores findings that were positive, intriguing or challenging (section 7).

Section 8 reflects on what worked or did not work, and draws out six key principles for practice that underpin the successes and challenges. The report also looks at selected issues relating to how these principles can be applied in practice, and to what extent these interventions are applicable across countries and cultures (section 9). Based on this analysis, section 10 sets out a series of recommendations for education design and delivery, and for future policy and investment focus in delivering better learning for more children in CAFS.



PHOTO: MATS LIGNEL/SAVE THE CHILDREN

An accelerated learning centre in Afghanistan, just outside Kabul, for children who have missed out on school.

# 2 THE SITUATION IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED FRAGILE STATES

## AN OVERVIEW

### Key statistics

- Conflict-affected fragile states have 18% of the world's primary school-age population, and account for 42% of the world's out-of-school children.<sup>16</sup>
- One child in three in CAFS does not go to school, compared to one in 11 in other low-income countries.<sup>17</sup>
- Secondary school enrolment rates in CAFS are nearly a third lower than in other developing countries, and far lower still for girls.<sup>18</sup>
- During a conflict, girls of school age are 12% less likely to complete mandatory schooling than girls who complete before the conflict starts.
- Girls in CAFS are also 7% less likely to complete school than girls of the same age living in less war-affected regions.<sup>19</sup>

### Poor quality and poor results

For children who do go to school in conflict contexts, the quality of education is usually very poor, leading to poor learning outcomes, and shaping uncertain futures for further learning or employment. Consequently, school is not always an attractive option for parents and students, leading to high drop-out rates. Conflict exacerbates issues of poverty and the lack of an educated and skilled human resource base.

### Lack of safety and security

Schools and teacher training institutions are often destroyed in fighting, and learners and teachers killed. They are also increasingly becoming deliberate targets of attack by different armed groups.<sup>20</sup> Educational institutions may have symbolic value, facing attack because of their supposed ideological content, or because they are seen to support new government structures (for instance, if they are being used as polling stations during elections). Girls' schools, female students and teachers may be a particular target by radical Islamists.<sup>21</sup>

After the conflict it can be difficult to trace teachers or encourage them to return to teaching. Teachers and students may be abducted and recruited into armed groups, sometimes from the school itself. Girls and boys then suffer abuse in different ways, but both experience lasting physical and psychological trauma. Fear of abduction can contribute to a general lack of confidence about attending school.

The use of rape as a weapon of war results in long-term trauma for those experiencing or witnessing it, and the related breakdown of family and community life deprives children of a secure learning environment. The likelihood of rape creates a sense of insecurity among girls about going to school.<sup>22</sup>

A focus on survival during times of conflict and uncertainty may lead to reluctance among education personnel<sup>19</sup> to take initiative. This does not help reconstruction processes.<sup>23</sup> While some communities may act constructively to protect education in times of conflict, as will be documented in this report, conflict can also inhibit community participation, because of fear and/or reliance on outside agencies to solve problems and create peace.

### External support

Donors and international agencies face particular problems with providing sustained support for education in CAFS. Absorptive capacity may be weak and compounded by problems of corruption and nepotism.<sup>24</sup> Save the Children has been supporting education in CAFS for decades, and has succeeded in getting 1.6 million children into school within a five-year period. Ten million children in more than 20 conflict-affected countries have benefited from interventions to improve the quality of education and safety in educational settings. Such work is built on Save the Children's awareness that education is a right for all children – conflict or no conflict, education provides a better future for them, and the right sort of education can help cement peace in a society.



## SPECIFIC CONTEXTS

Each conflict-affected country has a different historical, political, economic and cultural background, and a set of unique features which have made it 'conflict-affected'. The four countries that provide the base to this synthesis show this complexity. A very brief account of each follows.<sup>25</sup>

### Afghanistan

Afghanistan has experienced decades of conflict, leaving it one of the poorest countries in the world (second from bottom in the Human Development Index). Throughout the twentieth century, destruction of infrastructure and displacement of populations meant only a minority of children received an education, and education was largely the preserve of an urban male elite. Under the Soviets, education opportunities, especially for girls, increased. They were then restricted again under the Mujahadeen (1989–1994) and even more so under the Taliban (1995–2001).

Since the overthrow of the Taliban there has been huge progress in education, but the damage caused by conflict means that only 25% of schools are categorised as usable, and thus around half of schooling occurs in tents or open spaces. Fewer than 20% of teachers are professionally trained. It is estimated that there are still 5.3 million school-age children (43%) not in school, and most out-of-school children are female. Around 28% of teachers are female, but they are concentrated in urban areas. Ninety per cent of the 364 districts have no female high school, and 13% (48 of 364) have no female teachers at all.<sup>26</sup>

The security situation continues to threaten education, with schools in the south and east of Afghanistan directly targeted by armed opposition groups. In more remote areas, parents are reluctant to send children, particularly girls, to school, for safety as well as cultural reasons. Security issues also cause difficulties for international agencies in providing sustained support. Quality is hampered by the lack of facilities. Where insecurity is higher, less than half the children receive an education within proper facilities. Even in more secure areas, learners and teachers must tolerate extremes of heat or cold under tents, trees or open sky, which can seriously hinder learning.<sup>27</sup>

### Angola

Angola experienced nearly 40 years of armed conflict, starting with the struggle for independence in the early 1960s. The country then experienced a civil war

between UNITA and the MPLA, which officially ended in 2002. However, Angola is not altogether 'post-conflict'. Separatists in the province of Cabinda have engaged in violent demonstrations about economic inequalities and are seeking autonomy over the resources in that province.

Angola has a 'rentier'<sup>28</sup> economy, surviving on the sale of oil concessions and corporate taxes rather than traditional taxation. Corruption and clientelism pervade all systems. The benefits of oil wealth are slow to reach the education system, and the government's apparent lack of commitment to improving basic education has made donors reluctant to support it. The government's human rights record also remains poor.

Primary education access increased by nearly 2 million between 2004 and 2010,<sup>29</sup> but it is estimated that around a million children remain out of school. Teacher education levels have increased. By 2007 most teachers had completed lower secondary education, but few (30%) had formal teacher training qualifications. Teachers from urban areas are unwilling to move to impoverished rural locations, and access to schools remains limited by the destruction of roads and bridges during the war. Schools are often isolated from education authorities. In the northern provinces, many teachers are returnee refugees, not fluent in Portuguese. Some of the most damaging effects of the war in Angola have been cultural: a lack of faith in the system, a culture of non-planning, and an acceptance of violence.

### Nepal

In Nepal, the conflict between the Maoist opposition communist party and the government lasted a decade, officially ending in 2006. As well as the general destruction of infrastructure, education was directly affected. Both the Maoist opposition and the State used schools as their military camps, and recruited teachers and students as their agents. Students witnessed or heard of killings, abductions and other forms of violence on school premises, and, not surprisingly, parents were reluctant to send their children to school.

A Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) was signed in 2006, which has helped improve stability and education conditions. However, the coalition government is fragile, and levels of grievance among the population have led to a culture of strikes – significantly in transport and education. There are continuing violent conflicts in the Eastern and Far West Terai regions, with schools and students

under threat from political and criminal armed groups. There are still killings of teachers and students, and the recruitment of school children into political groups has continued. Nevertheless, primary enrolment in Nepal has generally increased, reaching 93.7% in 2009, and there is near gender parity in primary and secondary schools. Drop-out and repetition is highest for Grade 1, with 26.5% repeating and 9.9% dropping out. Yet drop-out and repetition rates are improving.

### South Sudan

Sudan has experienced internal conflict for 38 of the 48 years since independence in 1956, making it Africa's longest running war. The conflict has been between the predominantly Muslim north and predominantly non-Muslim south. There has been attempted control and Islamisation by the northern-based government, but also power struggles in the south and fighting for control of oil fields. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in 2005, and the 2011 referendum confirmed secession for the south as the Republic of South Sudan, although stability remains fragile. Conflict has left South Sudan one of the poorest countries in the world.

In what is now South Sudan, education was neglected by both the colonial and post-independence governments, and conflict exacerbated such neglect. In 2005 less than one in five children attended school and only a quarter of those who attended were female. Only 2% of the population completed primary education and there was only one permanent school building for every 10,000 school-age children. There was no formal system of teacher training for the south, as teachers were trained by the northern government. Access to formal training has been limited, with training mostly under the Arabic pattern or conducted in neighbouring countries. Language skills are therefore a problem.

The government of South Sudan is making efforts to develop a teacher training curriculum and, with the help of INGOs, establish teacher training centres.

Progress has been made since 2005, with an increase in access and in particular in female enrolment.<sup>30</sup> But the rate of growth has put a strain on the system; classrooms are overcrowded and there are many over-age children in primary education who missed out during the war.

Since the CPA, many returnee teachers have entered the profession, but in rural areas they remain under-qualified. Female teachers comprise only 16% of the total teacher population. The southern government identified education as a priority in 2005, but by 2009 the education sector received only 6% of spending; education slid down the priority ladder. Release of donor funding was slower than expected.

### SUMMING UP

From these country accounts we can see some common features resulting from conflict, such as physical destruction of infrastructure, negative impact on access, retention and learning outcomes and damage to the teaching force, as well as exacerbation of gender inequity. Yet the diverse reasons for conflict, the way conflict affects populations, and the continuing legacies of war, generate different responses with regard to current and future schooling. People may not have the same aspirations for education, nor the same faith in the State to provide opportunities. There are also different responses by the State in terms of the balance of spending between security and education, and how meagre education resources are allocated within the country and across sectors. The aftermath of conflict can present an opportunity to rebuild and reshape education, but this 'peace dividend' will be lost if not quickly seized by state and non-state actors. It is in these ongoing fragile contexts that agencies such as Save the Children prioritise their interventions and areas of support.

# 3 BACKGROUND TO 'REWRITE THE FUTURE'

## CAMPAIGN AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

Rewrite the Future was a major global campaign by Save the Children. It was launched in 2005, to tackle the lack of progress on improving education in conflict and post-conflict conditions. The campaign's global goal was to ensure the rights of children in CAFS to an education that enables them to learn, play and develop. It aimed to get 3 million out-of-school children into education and improve the quality of education for 8 million children.

Rewrite the Future objectives relate to educational access and quality, safe schools (protection), and education financing in 20 participating countries.

Programme activities have included:

- building and refurbishing schools
- providing teacher training courses
- supplying teaching and learning materials
- supporting Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALPs)
- establishing safe learning environments and child protection networks
- establishing early childhood development centres
- encouraging community support structures and PTAs for schools
- including children in campaigning for their right to quality education (using child rights clubs and encouraging participation within school management structures and in child-to-child learning).

Save the Children lobbied governments, donors and international agencies to recognise the crucial role that education plays in protecting children in conflict and other crises, and to take special measures to increase educational resources in CAFS. Lobbying and advocacy work at national level included:

- successful pressure to widen parent-teacher association (PTA) membership, to include students and illiterate parents
- national frameworks for early childhood development and accelerated learning classes
- promotion of the child-friendly schools concept
- removal of violent punishment from schools, and support for the development of a teachers' code of conduct

- formation of child protection committees and promotion of Schools as Zones of Peace (SZOP)
- support for the development of teachers' payrolls, including for teachers lacking formal qualifications. This was done in South Sudan.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATING REWRITE THE FUTURE

To measure progress towards the campaign's objectives, Save the Children designed and implemented a global monitoring system that collects information on the outputs and outcomes of key campaign objectives from more than 20 participating countries. The Rewrite the Future Global Evaluation was then commissioned to assess the impact that project level interventions have had on the quality of education.

Four key determinants to improving quality were recognised:

- teaching and learning
- participation by children, parents, teachers and communities
- safe learning environments
- inclusion of vulnerable groups.

### Selecting countries for the evaluation

Save the Children selected four case study countries for the evaluation, and chose a different focus for each country, as follows:

- **Afghanistan:** student and parent participation in schools (student councils, parent teacher student associations (PTSAs), and community education councils)
- **Angola:** teachers' professional development, including support and training of supervisors and teacher peer support groups
- **Nepal:** SZOP, focusing on school-level processes of unifying communities to promote the idea that schools should be places free from fear, violence and political interference

- **South Sudan:** teacher training, in-service content and methodology, intensive English, ALP mentor courses, and courses to support women to become teachers.

The evaluation sought to look at one key quality intervention per country, rather than comparing the same interventions across all four countries. This would enable in-depth representation of an innovative and effective intervention that addressed a major problem in education quality within that country context. Such an approach made synthesising the results a challenge (especially in terms of making recommendations for advocacy work), but equally recognised the context-driven nature of assessing impact.

### Methodology

The evaluation had two phases:

- 2008 – formative evaluation of processes
- 2010 – summative evaluation of outcomes.

In each country, where possible, the same set of schools was used in 2008 and 2010, to enable change to be investigated. This set included:

- one project school seen as a ‘success’ in terms of project implementation
- one project school serving particularly hard-to-reach groups
- two further project schools; one high performing, one low performing.

Two comparison schools (ie, not supported by Save the Children) from the same geographical areas were also included (one high performing, one low performing) so that impact due to Save the Children’s work could be distinguished from general changes taking place in the context.

Each country case study was designed through a participatory process during in-country workshops, attended by Save the Children country office staff, local researchers, field staff, Ministry of Education officers and representatives from partner organisations. In 2008, participants designed data collection tools, and then in 2010 made changes in light of experience. The evaluation design was also shared with children’s groups and adapted on the basis of their suggestions.

### Tools

The tools used in the evaluation were:

- **school data collection survey:** to elicit quantitative data on student enrolment, teacher numbers, training and qualifications, school facilities and school management structures

- **interviews and focus groups:** with teachers, parents, head teachers, supervisors, teacher trainers, local and national Ministry of Education officers, representatives of partner organisations, and specific child groups such as child clubs or school councils
- **focus groups with children:** using a range of participatory methods with groups of school children in their classes
- **learning assessment:** evaluating students’ reading and mathematics achievement in all the schools visited, comparing 2008 and 2010, and also comparing Save the Children-supported schools with other schools
- **lesson observations:** looking for child-centred elements such as giving praise, encouraging questioning, helping children to solve problems, using group or pair work, and trying to include all children.

### Sample

The final sample was:

- 65 supported schools
- 30 ALPs
- 30 comparison schools
- 126 child focus groups
- 71 parent focus groups
- 200+ interviews with teachers and other education professionals
- 350 lesson observations
- 1,121 learning assessments for Grade 3 pupils.

### Analysis

The data was analysed both quantitatively (eg, the survey and the learning assessment results) and qualitatively (eg, focus group discussion, interviews and classroom observations). This mixed mode methodology enabled useful triangulation across different tools.

It is important to note that it was not possible to achieve the sample size initially intended in Afghanistan, due to attacks on schools and other challenges during the data collection process. The complete data set with 2008 and 2010 for matching schools was therefore limited, which prevented detailed statistical analysis and controlling for factors like children’s mother tongue.

For Angola, it is worth noting that 2008 data on learning outcomes can be seen as a baseline for both project and comparison schools, since all schools evaluated up to that point had received the same set of interventions.

# 4 BACKGROUND TO THE SYNTHESIS, ITS AIMS AND APPROACH

The final evaluation report and the different country reports on which this synthesis is based provide a unique insight into how interventions can impact on educational practice and outcomes. The focus for each case study, as seen above, was deliberately different, but together the studies offer a coherent narrative about diverse interventions in quality education and how these are shaped by context.

Because the research for the case studies was so robust, it is possible to generalise findings that could apply to many CAFS. The synthesis also highlights interventions that were less successful, as these provide valuable data and cement the conclusions of the final model.

The current synthesis looks at various layers of analysis produced by the evaluations. At the top level it reviews findings about Save the Children's work that has made significant difference to the quality of education. It then highlights less successful interventions, challenges and intriguing puzzles buried in the findings. From this, chains of likely impact are identified, along with variables that help explain what

works well or less well. Finally a strategic model is described, illustrating a framework of principles that underpin the various interventions. This can be used to support future mechanisms for quality education, and leads us to specific policy and advocacy recommendations.

The main sources used for the analysis are nine reports:

- 2008: formative evaluations of education work in the four countries
- 2010: summative evaluations of education work in the four countries
- Final 2011 report of the Global Evaluation.<sup>31</sup>

This synthesis uses analyses of data already made by the global research teams, so additional analysis of raw data was not attempted. Full details of the statistical and qualitative analyses can be found in the nine reports, and references are provided where relevant throughout this synthesis. The synthesis also draws on other Save the Children publications and research (about Rewrite the Future and other programmes), and incorporates broader documentation and research about the four countries and about quality education in CAFS.



PHOTO: LOUISE DYRING NIELSON/SAVE THE CHILDREN

Children at a newly built school, funded by Save the Children, in Uíge province, north-west Angola.

# 5 SIGNIFICANT SUCCESSES: AN OVERVIEW

This section outlines the significant findings related to the success of Save the Children's work. This is done thematically, in order to show how the different focal interventions in different countries impacted on key aspects of quality: the schools, attendance at those schools, and what learning occurs in them.

## AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOLS

### Lack of infrastructure

Before we can look at education attendance and quality we must consider whether there are even schools for children to go to. In South Sudan, the previously limited education system was destroyed during the war, with schools being targets for bombardment. Basic education largely consisted of community-run 'bush schools', with classes conducted under trees or thatched shelters, lacking basic facilities such as water and latrines.<sup>32</sup> Lack of schools, or lack of physical capacity in schools, is similarly a problem in rural Angola, where many children attend 'open-air' classes.

It is reported that Save the Children helped with school building in Angola, although this was not part of the evaluation assessment. In South Sudan the evaluation reported that project schools visited in 2008 held less than a third of lessons in permanent structures. In 2010, over 40% of lessons in these schools took place in permanent classrooms. Save the Children was responsible for some of this construction, but there were also contributions from other organisations. Student attendance at schools with permanent classrooms (57%) was almost double the level of attendance at schools without (30%).<sup>33</sup>

In Afghanistan and Nepal, Save the Children provided training for PTAs to write development plans and grant applications to construct and repair schools.<sup>34</sup>

### Tackling the misuse of infrastructure

In Nepal, appropriate use of school infrastructure was a particular problem. Armed political groups used school premises for their own troops, and for political messaging and recruitment into their groups. With the support of Save the Children and other agencies, communities around the schools declared them as 'Zones of Peace', and negotiated with armed groups, whether government or (then opposition) Maoists. All parties agreed on a set of criteria protecting schools from violence and political interference.

Through the research, students, parents and teachers reported that the process had helped prevent schools being terrorised by armed groups. This had reduced the sense of fear surrounding schools, enabling lessons to continue without interruption, and had reduced all forms of violence *within* the schools.<sup>35</sup>

On average, by 2010, Save the Children-supported schools were open for 14 days more than comparison schools. In 2008, classes had not always been conducted even when the schools were open, but by 2010 the project schools had benefited from seven more active class days than comparison schools during the year.<sup>36</sup> The marked impact of SZOP was also mentioned in a UNICEF study of education in emergencies in south Asia,<sup>37</sup> and by Smith in work on school protection.<sup>38</sup>

### Using community-based schools

The provision of locations for learning in Afghanistan has been enhanced. By forming community-based schools and classes, Save the Children has helped to promote the education of girls and tackle discrimination against minorities (such as Hindu and Sikh communities) in mainstream education. One school took place in a Sikh temple, with a Sikh head teacher and Muslim teachers. This initiative came

from a Muslim child media group supported by Save the Children, who discovered that children from the local Hindu and Sikh communities were not attending school.<sup>39</sup> This initiative has implications for widening religious tolerance as well as widening access. The vision of the Ministry of Education is to have all ethnic groups integrated within formal schools, but discrimination remains endemic. Without this school, the Sikh children would not have had safe access to quality education.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ENROLMENT

### Comparison of data

A key objective of any education project is to get children into school and attending regularly, for the full duration of their basic education. The evaluation found that generally, in Save the Children’s project schools, student attendance (as measured by headcounts) was consistently higher than comparison schools. In Afghanistan and South Sudan, between 2008 and 2010, there was a considerable increase in attendance at project schools. This is illustrated in the following figures from The Global Evaluation Final Report:<sup>40</sup>

### Reasons for improved attendance rates

In Nepal, evaluation respondents attributed improved attendance of students (and teachers) to the participatory development of school codes of

conduct. In Afghanistan, student councils and PTAs – trained and supported by Save the Children – contributed to improving student attendance. They followed up on absent students, and persuaded families to allow girls who were engaged to marry to complete their education.<sup>41</sup>

In South Sudan, within the evaluation sample a social advocacy team and two PTAs trained by Save the Children had encouraged parents to send their children to school rather than sending them to look after cattle. Their innovative use of drama and songs drew on local traditions for communication and persuasion. During the evaluation, parents explained how they had subsequently used the arguments to persuade other parents to send their children to school.<sup>42</sup>

### Girls’ enrolment

A particular feature highlighted in the evaluation was that girls’ enrolment had increased, despite cultural, religious and economic barriers. In Afghanistan and South Sudan, Save the Children helped to increase girls’ enrolment by training student and parent groups to understand and advocate for girls’ right to education *within the local context*. In both cases, girls’ enrolment in project schools increased well above the national rate.<sup>43</sup> In 2005, less than 30% of students in formal schools in Afghanistan supported by Save the Children were female. By 2009 this had risen to 39%, above the national average of 35.5%. Between 2008 and 2009 the increase in girls’ enrolment in

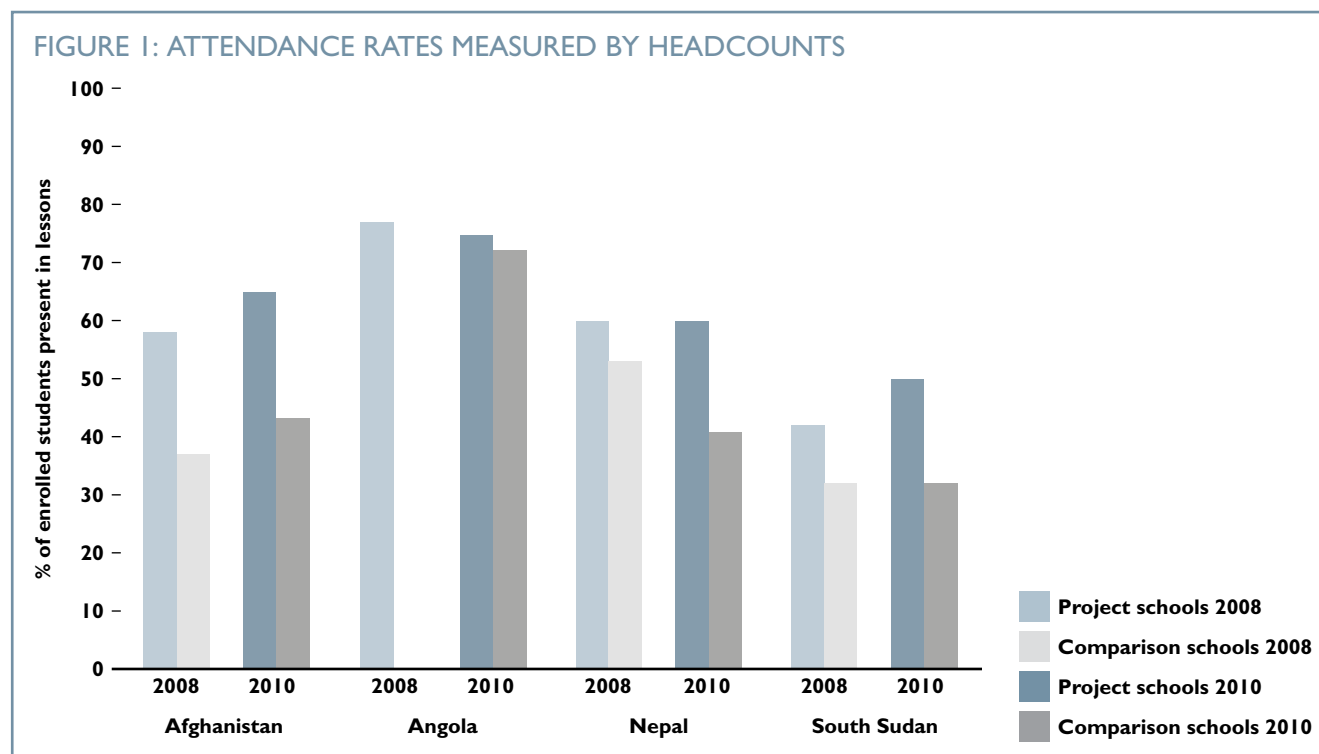
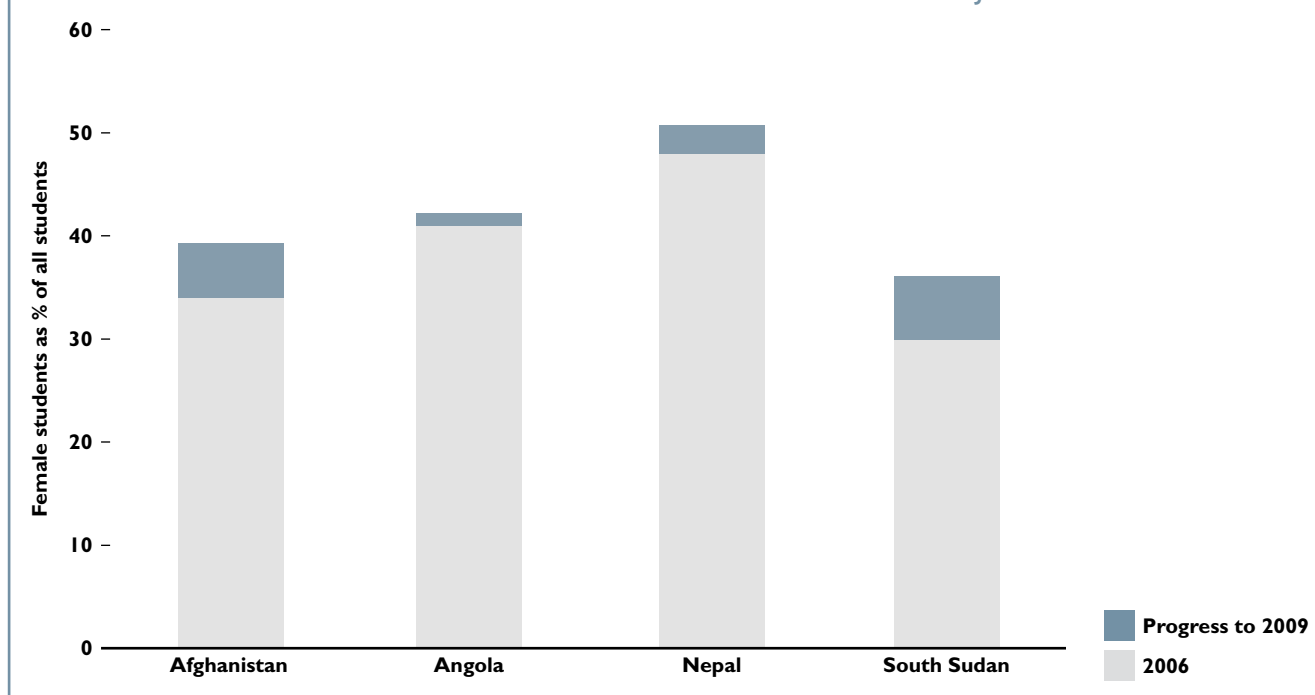


FIGURE 2: FEMALES AS A PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN ALL PROJECT SCHOOLS



Save the Children-supported schools was three times as large as the increase in boys' enrolment.<sup>44</sup>

In Afghanistan, the training of student councillors changed the attitude of males towards girls' education, including a revised view of education for their sisters.

In South Sudan, parents reported that the work of community social advocacy teams of children and young people enabled them to see better the economic rationale for sending their girls to school.

In Nepal, since 2009, there have been more girls than boys in project schools. Such figures should be treated with caution, however, as they are related to parents preferring to send their boys to private schools. Some project schools had also received support from UNICEF, such as giving cooking oil as an incentive for girls' enrolment.<sup>45</sup> In Nepal, girls drop out of school at a higher rate. This is said to be due to their high work burdens, safety and security issues, child marriage, the low number of female teachers, a gender-biased curriculum, and stereotyping by teachers.<sup>46</sup> Everything on this formidable list of problems needs to be addressed. Violence in schools is also a gendered issue, but, as discussed earlier, is being tackled by the SZOP initiative.

In Angola, the percentage of girls in education has decreased in recent years.<sup>47</sup> This is partly due to girls never being enrolled in Grade I, and because there is a higher rate of drop-out among girls. The hypothesis from the evaluation report is that parents are losing their faith in education as a worthwhile

investment for girls. There was no evidence provided of discrimination against girls by teachers in the classroom; but the research team admits there may have been lower aspirations for female students that they did not pick up. There is also still a critical shortage of female teachers in Angola (in one municipality they make up just 6% of the teaching workforce).<sup>48</sup>

## ALTERNATIVES TO FORMAL SCHOOLING: ACCELERATED LEARNING PROGRAMMES

### Target learners

Another strategy that is particularly influencing girls' enrolment and retention (but also all hard-to-reach groups) is the ALP approach. ALPs are community-based classes provided for a range of vulnerable young people who have found the barriers to education in mainstream schools too great to overcome in the short term. These young people include those who are uneducated or who dropped out of school, children in remote communities, ex-child soldiers, and children from minority ethnic groups. ALPs aim to provide a condensed primary education curriculum for those who have missed out on school, but who are too old to join the early grades of a regular school. In Afghanistan, Save the Children was supporting 772 ALPs and community-based classes in 2009.<sup>49</sup>



## Innovation

ALPs deliver a system of learning to enable students to catch up, and, like other forms of non-formal education, are often highly innovative compared to mainstream schooling. In Afghanistan, for instance, although learning spaces were very cramped and lacking furniture, the walls in ALPs were covered in examples of students' work and locally made teaching aids. In formal schools, by contrast, the walls were bare. In Angola, the ALP teachers supported by Save the Children reported meeting on a fortnightly basis to discuss ideas and plan their lessons together. They had also been helped by Save the Children's office to access resources from the internet.<sup>50</sup> This shows how ALP training and teacher support encourages more reflection and sharing.

## Improving gender equality

ALP classes in Angola, Afghanistan and South Sudan had better indicators of gender equality than did formal or mainstream schools. Although in some contexts ALPs are viewed as offering a second-class education compared to formal schooling, ALPs and other community-based classes are able to provide a quality education option for girls in contexts where there is strong cultural resistance to them attending school. Classes tend to be closer to homes, so girls are less exposed to risk when they walk to class. There is also a higher proportion of female teachers in ALPs. This is partly because the qualification requirements are lower, and partly because of fewer cultural barriers to women working in community-based classes, which are less public than formal schools. The increased flexibility of timings and management of ALPs help girls to balance education with their other domestic responsibilities.

In Angola, ALP classes have created opportunities for young mothers to attend school. They bring their babies to school and are allowed to leave the class with the baby if necessary. These young women (aged 14–17 years) would never have accessed basic education without these ALP classes.<sup>51</sup>

## Sustainability

These encouraging findings raise interesting questions as to the potential scale-up of ALP initiatives. In South Sudan they have been scaled up by the government and there is a fully fledged department. Such incorporation may seem the best way forward. However, care should be exercised, as with all non-formal programmes, to ensure that they do not lose their distinctive flexibility and responsive appeal if formally adopted by the government.

## Quality teaching and learning

The increase in female attendance may not just be due to the ALPs' flexibility and proximity to communities. ALP classes also have important and distinctive pedagogical features which make them attractive. In Angola, for instance, it was surmised that the more participatory teaching methodology and smaller class sizes were particularly beneficial to girls, who respond better to a more intimate learning environment.<sup>52</sup>

Beyond the current evaluation, other work in Sri Lanka showed similar findings. Davies (2011b) noted that ALP classes and Open Schools were popular, partly because of more humane relationships between tutors and students, and more interesting teaching methods; and partly because there was greater flexibility around the timing and location of lessons, and the age of students. Tutors would visit students at home and find other ways to contact them, which was particularly beneficial for girls. Students in formal schools even tried to attend such classes instead of their regular school.<sup>53</sup>

In South Sudan, a different atmosphere was noted in ALP classes. There was more laughter than in school classes, with learners asking the teacher and each other questions.<sup>54</sup> In Angola, the participatory teaching was thought to contribute to literacy improvements: ALP students were able to read 36 words per minute compared to 10 words per minute for students in formal schools. They were also better at comprehension and maths, as measured by the learning assessment tool<sup>55</sup> in Save the Children's evaluation methodology.<sup>56</sup>

The reasons for enhanced performance are complex, but are likely to relate to the different training the teachers received. This may have resulted in them giving clearer explanations of the teaching and learning materials, praising students and motivating them during lessons. Observations found teachers using practical examples from children's daily lives. Such an approach was highlighted as important by a separate study in Laos classrooms.<sup>57</sup>

Teaching is also influenced by the ALP curricular materials. These suggest participatory activities for lessons rather than just using the textbook.<sup>58</sup> The findings raise the question: why can't all schools be like ALP classes? Indeed, the evaluation reports recommend that ALP teachers could work with formal school teachers to reflect on their practices.

In South Sudan, some teachers were found to teach in formal schools in the morning and in ALPs in the afternoon – and thus changed their teaching style from rote learning to child-centred. It is not clear why they did not change their formal teaching style in the regular school, although the fact that ALP classes are sometimes viewed as second rate – only for older children, drop-outs and children with special educational needs – could be one reason why teachers did not embrace ALP methods in their regular classes. Assumptions that the teaching skills used in ALPs were not needed for children in regular schools could also have been a factor.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

A rigorous part of the evaluations was the measurement of learning outcomes in reading, comprehension and mathematics. A random selection of Grade 3 children from each school in each country was asked to read a short passage, answer some comprehension questions and solve some maths problems. Assessments were carried out in project schools and comparison schools in 2008 and 2010, with the exception of Angola – where Save the Children’s intervention in 2008 was district-wide across project schools and comparison schools, and thus a comparison sample could not be selected. The findings are complex.

## Reading ability

In 2008 the proportion of students demonstrating some reading skills was higher in project schools than in comparison schools for Afghanistan, Nepal and South Sudan. In 2010, students in Angola’s and Nepal’s project schools were again outperforming those in comparison schools; but in Afghanistan and South Sudan the comparison schools showed better results. Key variables to note include the fact that, in South Sudan, Save the Children’s teacher training and supervision programmes benefited teachers in all schools in the evaluation areas, including those in comparison schools. The ‘control’ group is therefore not held constant across the years.

The sample is also not constant across the years, as illustrated by Afghanistan. Here the project school sample in 2010 included more children for whom the language of instruction was not their mother tongue (25% of children in 2010 compared to 13% in 2008). Save the Children’s success in increasing marginalised children’s access to project schools means that the 2010 sample contains more vulnerable children, who have probably not been at school long enough to demonstrate improvements in reading (hence the apparent drop in performance results since 2008). This suggests that an evaluation period of two years is not long enough.

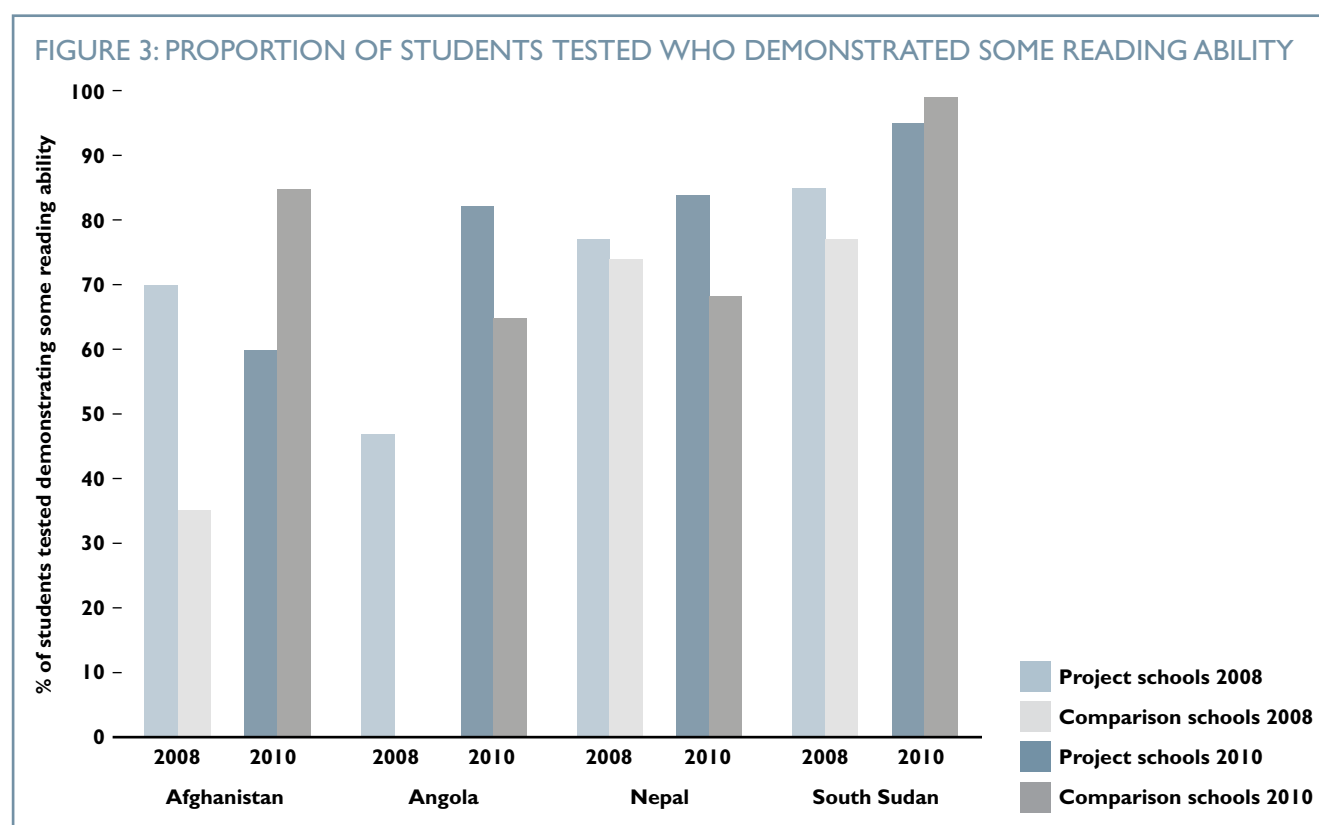
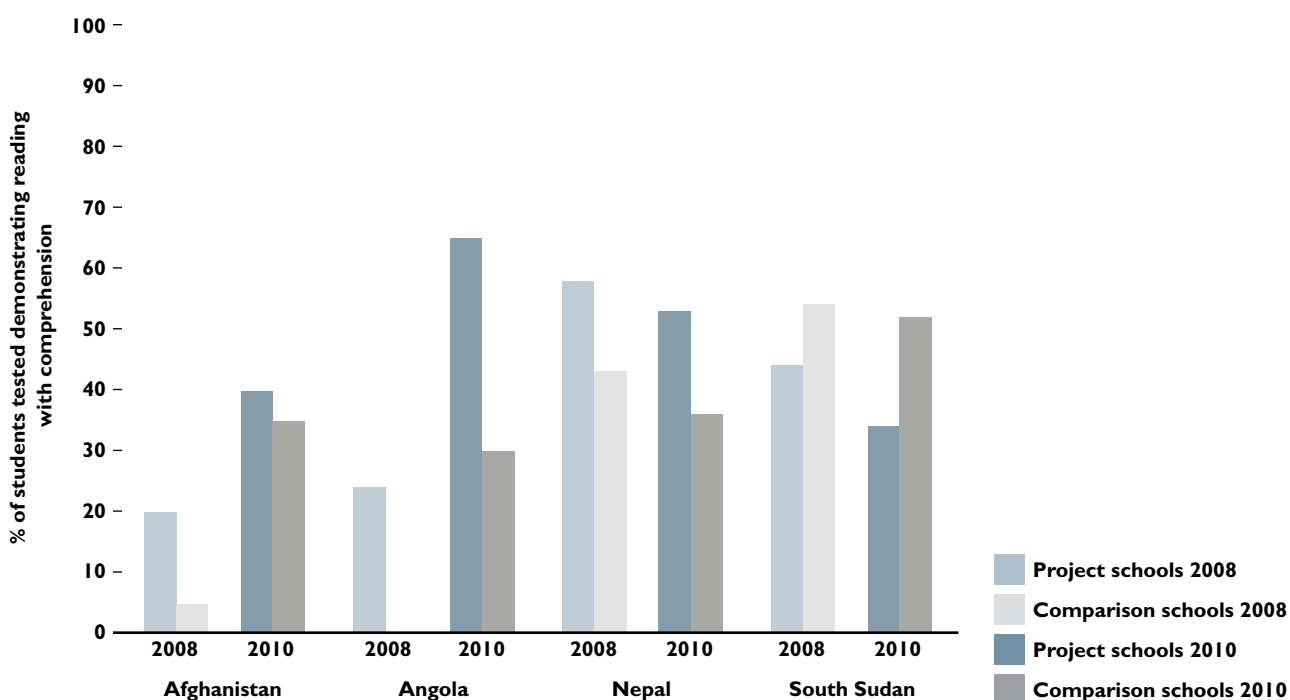


FIGURE 4: PROPORTION OF STUDENTS TESTED WHO DEMONSTRATED READING WITH COMPREHENSION



### Reading with comprehension

The proportions of children able to read and comprehend are inevitably lower than those able to just read words. In Afghanistan, Angola and Nepal, children in project schools do better than in comparison schools, but in South Sudan the comparison schools perform better in both years. Again, this is likely to be linked with Save the Children having worked across all the evaluated schools in South Sudan, and not just with a specific set of project schools. There are also likely to be issues related to the proportion of untrained and trained teachers in project and comparison schools, which is discussed in more detail below.

Between 2008 and 2010, project school children improved their reading and comprehension performance in Afghanistan and Angola, although comparison schools also improved over this period in Afghanistan (data is not available for Angola). In Nepal, children's scores fell in 2010 compared to 2008, in both project and comparison schools. Again, we need to consider that the sample may not be directly comparable across the two years, because Save the Children had focused teacher training activities on ensuring that weaker learners would be included in lessons. This focus existed in all countries evaluated.

The significant difference between project and comparison schools in Angola in 2010 was attributed

by the evaluation team not just to human resource interventions (teacher training and supervision), but to the distribution of books for students and teachers in project schools.<sup>59</sup> However, the evaluation team felt that increased technical input by Save the Children to teacher training played a key role in improvements.<sup>60</sup>

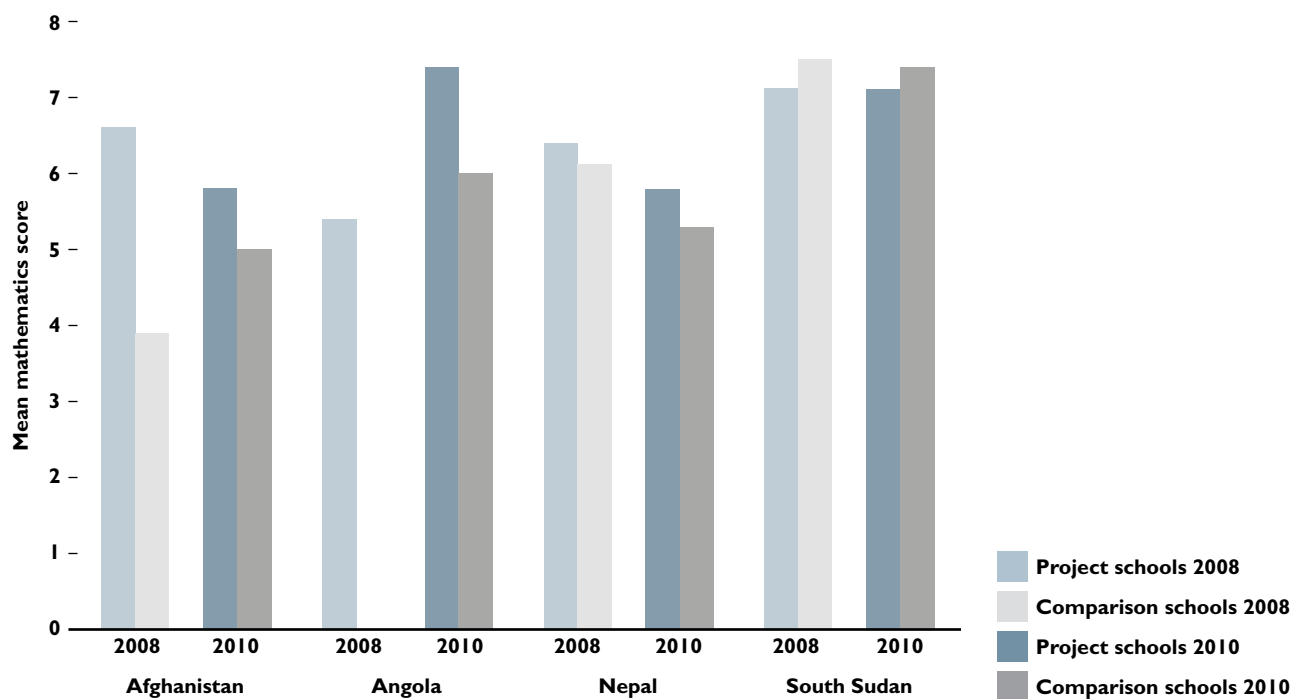
### Mathematics ability

Regarding the maths assessment results, South Sudan again showed slightly better scores in the comparison schools than in the project schools, in both 2008 and 2010. The main hypothesis offered by the evaluation team was that delays to the government's reworking of the teacher training system led to a hiatus in Save the Children's ability to deliver training to teachers, after an intensive period of support that had been provided before 2008.<sup>17</sup> In all other countries the project schools attained better results.

In Afghanistan, maths scores in project schools decreased between 2008 and 2010, while they increased in comparison schools. In Angola in 2010, the students in project schools achieved significantly better scores than those in comparison schools.

While the graph shows a difference between project and comparison schools in Nepal (ie, higher scores in project schools), the evaluation report states that this was not statistically significant. The evaluation also noted that comparison schools had a higher

FIGURE 5: MEAN MATHEMATICS SCORES OF GRADE 3 CHILDREN TESTED (MAXIMUM SCORE = 8)



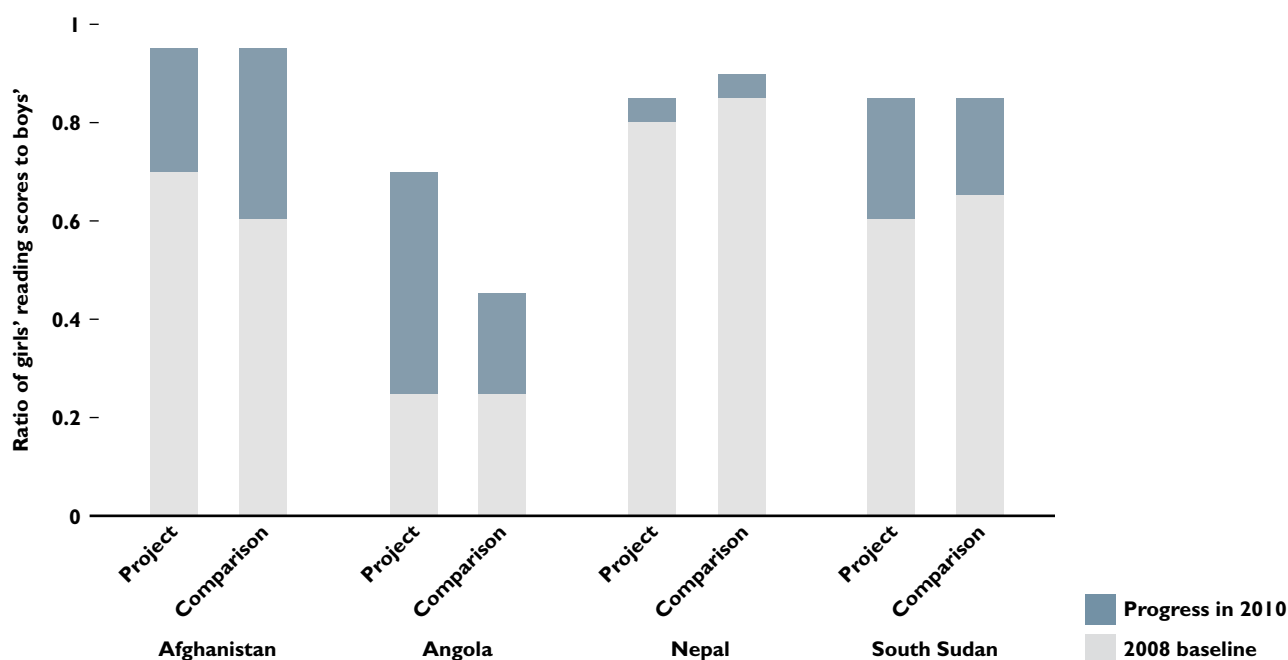
proportion of Dalits and more children for whom Nepali was a second language; while project schools had more children whose mothers could read or whose caregivers had jobs. These sample differences make attributing improved performance to Save the Children’s interventions very complex.

#### Gender differences

In contrast to the findings about ALPs mentioned above, girls generally scored lower than boys in learning assessments overall, with the greatest difference in Angola.

Nevertheless, Figure 6 still reveals some significant successes in working towards gender parity in

FIGURE 6: RATIO OF GRADE 3 GIRLS’ READING SCORES TO BOYS’ (1 = GENDER PARITY)



reading achievement. In 2010, project schools in Angola were showing good signs of girls closing the gap in reading skills. In South Sudan and Afghanistan there was also a reduction in the gender gap, even if the improvement was similar for project and comparison schools. Nepal showed the least increase, but then it started from a much higher base, and, like Afghanistan, is reaching near parity anyway.

Research beyond Save the Children indicates that reducing gender disparities in access and achievement is linked to increases in the number of female teachers<sup>62</sup> (which has been a target for Save the Children), especially in Afghanistan and South Sudan. This is usually attributed to improved cultural acceptability of education for girls from increasing numbers of women teachers.

## SUMMING UP

It is difficult to isolate all the features which impinge on learning outcomes for different groups and at different times, but overall it can be said that Save the Children's results have been positive, if not always consistently comparable. Across the areas of learning tested, in 2008 and 2010, learning outcomes in project schools in Nepal and Afghanistan were significantly better than those of comparison schools (including when controlling, in Nepal, for other factors such as gender, caste, mother tongue, school size and teacher education levels). Comparisons for Angola between the same schools over time were not possible, but the data offered positive comparisons over time between similar sets of schools. In South Sudan there was a range of factors making comparisons more complex.



PHOTO: MATS LIGNELL/SAVE THE CHILDREN

A class for street working children in Jalalabad, eastern Afghanistan. Children here catch up on basic literacy and numeracy, and are later encouraged to move into formal education where possible.

# 6 EXPLAINING OUTCOMES: THE COMPONENTS OF 'QUALITY'

Many interlinking factors influence a child's experience of school and their likelihood of learning, so identifying one factor as more critical than others is not possible. The evaluations revealed the following key factors affecting educational quality that will be discussed in this chapter: teacher numbers, teaching-learning relationships, teacher professionalism, a sense of belonging, security, and community buy-in.

## TEACHER NUMBERS

Having teachers present in schools to do the teaching is obviously a vital factor in learning outcomes. The extensive teacher training programmes in each of the countries – initiated by Save the Children and others – placed more qualified teachers into schools. In particular, more female teachers have been recruited and trained. Flexibility in training and attendance arrangements is an important component in motivating teachers, not just students, as the two examples below illustrate:

In South Sudan, since 2002, the Women into Teaching (WiT) programme has aimed to give women with an interest in teaching some additional education to help them enter and access teacher training. The course is delivered as a residential one, and trainees are allowed to bring their babies and babysitters.

Beyond the current evaluation, Education Action noted similar evidence in Angola, where women teachers brought their babies to school and would breastfeed and generally care for them during classes.<sup>63</sup>

The Rewrite the Future evaluation showed that, in Angola in 2010, 14% of teachers in project schools were female. The proportion of female teachers in comparison schools was just 6% in 2010.

The numbers of teachers on the payroll is, of course, only half the story – whether they attend, once recruited, must also be considered (see section on teacher professionalism on page 18).

## TEACHING-LEARNING RELATIONSHIPS

A second important factor is the way that teachers teach and the relationships they build with students, parents and the school community. In 2008, in Afghanistan, Nepal and South Sudan, teachers trained by Save the Children scored significantly higher on the lesson observation tool than those not trained by Save the Children. Teachers addressed individual students by name and praised them during classroom activities. In Afghanistan, they did more group work and pair work. In South Sudan, teachers were more likely to listen to learners, to help them solve their problems and to try to include all learners.

In Angola in 2010, there was a marked improvement in the quality of teaching compared with 2008. This was a direct result of Save the Children's training in participatory methodology for teachers, directors and supervisors. More teachers were asking children questions to evaluate their understanding, and praising and helping them. More teachers gave opportunities for students to share their own experiences and ideas; and more teachers organised their classrooms in groups or horseshoes rather than rows.

Simply putting children into groups, of course, does not guarantee improved learning (and may

even be counterproductive if the teacher does not understand why they are doing this). Putting together all the components – listening, motivating, trying to understand the children and their level of comprehension, etc. – demonstrates a respect for the learner and their right to learn. There is a shift from assuming that it is enough simply to transmit a body of knowledge, to understanding that learning is a reciprocal activity.

The wider body of research on rights-respecting schools<sup>64</sup> indicates that learners do better when they feel their dignity is respected and when they experience increased self-esteem as a learner. Pair work, peer learning and students asking rather than answering questions are all valuable pedagogical tools; but they also relate to a deeper respect for the capacity of the learner, and equally the teacher's responsibility to tap into that capacity.

## TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

### Planning lessons

The evaluation revealed that, in South Sudan, heads and inspectors reported that teachers trained by Save the Children were better at planning lessons, had greater subject knowledge and greater confidence than untrained teachers. In Angola, supervision work with clusters of teachers enabled joint planning and reflection, which resulted in a marked improvement in teaching. All teachers observed in 2010 in Angola had written plans for their lessons, compared to just two-thirds in 2008.

Beyond the Rewrite the Future evaluation, Education Action carried out a study in Angola,<sup>65</sup> where work on school improvement facilitated teachers, students and parents to identify their own desired changes. These improvements often included lesson planning. It was found that teachers would then engage in lesson planning together (sometimes this was the first time they had planned lessons at all, let alone carried out planning together).

### Teacher attendance

A central aspect of professionalism among teachers is their attendance and punctuality. Student attendance and teacher attendance are integrally linked. However, reliable data on teacher attendance and punctuality was not readily available in the evaluation.<sup>66</sup>

A telling account from Nepal related how headcounts on the day of the evaluation would not have been reliable, as teachers knew about the evaluation in advance. Some schools had teacher signing-in books, but these appeared to be filled out retrospectively and were not a reliable source of data.

In South Sudan, the evaluation revealed that even if the teachers were present, sometimes very little teaching took place. Teachers spent much time sitting in the staffroom or under a tree. The research team had to ask teachers to go and teach in order to observe them. The students' view was that this lack of concern about teaching was linked to delayed pay, low pay, and that even if teachers come to school 'they drink and do not teach'. A social advocacy team in South Sudan highlighted the problem of drunkenness among teachers, but said they had successfully tackled it.

## SENSE OF BELONGING

Another key factor in quality education is the sense of belonging to the school that students – and teachers – have. It is well known that a sense of belonging derives from participation and feeling part of decision-making about learning and school life. Save the Children has facilitated democratic structures in schools to allow this.

### Student councils

Across the four countries, over 50% of the project schools in 2010 had some form of student representation in school management, compared with about 14% of comparison schools.<sup>67</sup>

In Afghanistan, Save the Children has supported schools to establish student councils and has trained their members to advocate for child rights in education. Schools have been encouraged to include student representatives on their PTAs. It was found that the collaboration between student councils and PTAs could enable them to work together to improve student attendance, to recruit extra teachers, and to acquire educational resources such as library books and laboratory equipment. Student councils also

advocated for a reduction in physical violence and humiliating punishments, and for following up absent school children at risk of dropping out. Save the Children pushed for the inclusion of students in PTAs and negotiated the renaming of these groups: parent teacher student associations. This obviously meant greater ownership for students. In one school, for example, a female student council member took on the role of the chair of the PTSA, as she was the only literate member.

### Whole-school approaches

As any study of student democracy would attest,<sup>68</sup> it is important that participation is for everyone across the school, and not confined to small elite groups of students. The success in Nepal of the SZOP idea was linked to its whole-school ethos. Changes in the school culture were the result of a combined effort by students, parents, teachers and the community.

It is clear that structures for participation and dialogue are important for success and sustainability. A whole range of structures emerged from the evaluation case studies, linked to the local environment: child clubs, child protection committees, child-friendly services survey teams, student representatives on School Management Committees, social advocacy teams, and child media groups. The result is a sense of belonging, plus enhanced confidence and assertiveness of members, and recognition by others of one's capabilities – as well as the actual strategies produced.

Similar findings were reported in the evaluation of Save the Children Norway's *Quality Education Project (QEP)*.<sup>69</sup> The report stated that 'it's important to train whole institutions or nothing'. They found that spreading QEP thinly between institutions and districts did not work. On the whole, QEP-trained teachers or teacher educators who were taken out of school to attend courses did not tend to spread their new skills and attitudes to other colleagues when they returned to school.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

The feeling of safety, and being treated humanely and without violence, is closely linked to attendance. In Nepal, school codes of conduct were developed in a participatory way, which included anti-violence clauses. They were agreed by the whole school

community (school management, parents, teachers and students). In 12 of 16 project schools, evaluation respondents reported that corporal punishment had been eliminated; in two more schools it was reported to have been reduced. Physical punishment was not observed in any lessons in project schools, but was seen in around a quarter of comparison schools.

All four country programmes had specific training courses for teachers, PTAs and students in child rights; most included content advocating for an end to corporal punishment. Respondents spoke of the personal attitude changes this training elicited, such as realising that corporal punishment was not helpful to children, realising the importance of listening to children and not just seeing them as foolish, and realising that fear might prevent children from coming to school.

In Angola, the 'child-friendly' concept was much less well understood. However, in Uige province, Save the Children worked on linking its child protection work with its schools work by encouraging the development of school-based child protection networks. Overall in Angola, the situation with regard to beating children was better in 2010 than in 2008, in terms of fewer complaints by students of cruel punishments. Nevertheless, the evaluation report recommended wider development of codes of conduct for teachers, as in Nepal. Codes of conduct developed in Afghanistan had major impact as they were strongly community developed and driven.

## COMMUNITY BUY-IN

### Community decisions

A key element that underpins the previous factors, is ensuring community buy-in for all improvement efforts. In Afghanistan, Save the Children supported remote rural communities, which had no access to government schools, to establish their own community-based classes. Communities first select a Community Education Committee, responsible for recruiting teachers and finding learning spaces. Although there are sustainability issues here, Save the Children provides carpets and textbooks and pays teachers financial incentives (about half the government salary). The learning spaces may be homes or mosques, but some communities have been able to get grant funding from government or donor schemes for more permanent classrooms.



Other accounts relating to Nepal also stress the important role of community. Japanese-supported community-based alternative schooling places greater emphasis on the involvement of communities than does the government in its equivalent alternative schooling programmes. Communities were involved in the start-up, and they identified venues. They followed up absent children and provided education volunteers for when teachers were absent.<sup>70</sup> This clearly made the classes much more sustainable.

### Protection

In CAFS, schools need physical protection. In Afghanistan and Nepal, Save the Children facilitated communities to make schools safer and to negotiate with armed or insurgent groups.

In Nepal, school communities were able to work together to protect learning time through the SZOP initiative.<sup>71</sup> The SZOP process built on community support structures, including child clubs, PTAs and child protection committees. These groups helped to draw up and monitor the school codes of conduct. Parents, teachers and students described how they had used SZOP notice boards to turn away from the schools any weapon holders, political groups seeking donations, and people wanting to hold political meetings or write political slogans. SZOP schools were also less disrupted by strikes.

Armed political groups were initially suspicious of the SZOP process because of its political focus. Importantly, however, the implementing partners and school communities widened the SZOP criteria to include localised issues such as banning alcohol, smoking and cattle grazing on school premises – thus promoting SZOP as a politically neutral process. The focus became about protecting children from all disturbances to learning, and about ending all violence and all discrimination in schools.

In contexts of poor security, community pressure is important in reducing violence from outside. In Nepal, working with insurgent groups involved tackling the perception of NGOs like Save the Children as outsiders, and encouraging those groups to see the partner NGOs as part of the local community. Importantly, according to the evaluation findings, Save the Children's financial transparency and close supervision helped achieve agreement on all sides that the organisation was the 'right one' for the work.<sup>72</sup>

Opposition groups in Afghanistan often use religious arguments to justify attacks on schools, particularly girls' schools. In research outside this evaluation, Glad<sup>73</sup> found that schools established in response to an active request by the community were less likely to be attacked than other schools that were perceived as 'government institutions'.

### Community and parental advocacy

Negotiation may be required not just with insurgent groups, but with the government too. In Afghanistan, Save the Children successfully lobbied the government to drop the literacy criteria for PTA membership. It supported the formation of separate mothers' PTAs. The mothers took an active role – for example, speaking with the families of boys who had harassed their daughters on the way to school and getting them to stop the harassment.

Equipping communities to advocate for child rights is a key role in these contexts – giving them a basis for negotiation and demands. In Afghanistan, Save the Children approached local religious leaders to get their involvement in community education councils, school management committees, PTAs and the running of ALPs. Two of these mentors who were visited during the evaluation were imams, and two of the classes observed were in mosques.

Other studies beyond the current evaluation have shown the importance of language, religion and culture, and that the Taliban would be acquiescent if teachers were called mullahs and classes took place in mosques.<sup>74</sup>

Save the Children worked with religious leaders to produce a booklet on child rights and Islam, which was distributed to school communities. During the evaluation, one PTA member identified this booklet as '*one of the most useful interventions from Save the Children*'. Parents discussed issues of school quality at the mosque. Members of women's PTAs and student councils trained by Save the Children spoke confidently about children's right to education, especially girls' right, within an Islamic context. They were also able to quote religious texts to support their case.<sup>75</sup>

In contrast to Nepal and Afghanistan, Angola and South Sudan did not report such extensive community involvement (although it should be noted

that this was not the focus of their evaluations, which looked more at teacher training and supervision).

In Angola, there were parents' committees – *Comité de Pais e Encarregados de Educação* (CPEE) – but there was variation in how often they met and what they did. Their main activity was school maintenance and construction, but some mentioned monitoring that teachers deliver their lessons, or resolving cases of teacher misconduct.<sup>76</sup> While Save the Children's work did impact on teaching and learning in the child-friendly schools, there was not yet much evidence of improving parents' and students' participation in developing a safe learning environment. There was a perceived need to develop school committees and parent groups, to promote a clear vision for the schools. One school reported serious vandalism by the community: all the furniture and light fittings had been removed from classrooms, and cars often drove through the school grounds.

In South Sudan (as noted above), social advocacy teams and PTAs worked with parents to encourage

them to send their children, especially girls, to school. A telling result was how parents had used the arguments they heard to persuade other parents to send their children to school – demonstrating the ripple effects of community intervention.

## SUMMING UP

This section has shown how different factors interact to explain the enhancement of quality in education. Teacher numbers and safe places to learn are necessary, but not sufficient on their own. The social context of teaching and learning also needs to shift, whether in terms of child and community action to include more learners, or in terms of teachers' understanding of what it means to be a professional educator who works in the best interests of the child. Changes in accepted practices and relationships are often what generate real leaps in quality, but these are not always easy to achieve, as seen in the next chapter.



PHOTO: COLIN GROWLES/SAVE THE CHILDREN

Makier, age 8, at a primary school in South Sudan. "I like coming to school so that I can get an education, and become someone important in the future," he says.

# 7 INTRIGUING OR CHALLENGING FINDINGS

This section highlights some intriguing or challenging findings which help in the analysis of what works and what doesn't work for strengthening education in CAFS. As seen above, some interventions have negative effects in some countries and positive effects in others. Some results seem counter-intuitive, and some strategies pose dilemmas for future policy. The following sections provide examples; sometimes only from one country, but nevertheless worthy of consideration for wider application.

## TEACHER MOTIVATION AND RECRUITMENT

### The impact of payment

It is generally assumed that teachers will be more productive if they receive a government salary. The example of South Sudan, however, provided an interesting counter to this. The evaluation found that teachers *not* receiving a government salary were more willing to go to lessons than the teachers who were on the payroll. There was also a positive correlation between the proportion of non-payroll teachers and learning outcomes of students. The hypothesis was that non-payroll teachers were supported by community contributions, and were seen as 'volunteers'. They were more accountable to the school management and to the community. Volunteers received regular incentives from communities, and reported being motivated to 'prove themselves' and enter the payroll.

However, in South Sudan government teachers often did not receive a regular salary, despite being on the payroll. It is possible that the disappointment of finding out that official teacher status did not deliver expected rewards played a key role in damaging teacher motivation. The lines of accountability for government-paid teachers were much more tenuous, and in addition to irregular pay their training may have been inconsistent. This raises questions of

motivation, and the extrinsic rewards of pay versus the intrinsic reward of being a professional teacher. This issue becomes especially important when a project creates potentially greater workloads for teachers through new roles or extended time in the classroom. The idea that motivation problems can be dealt with by allocating more money to teachers on paper, without considering other factors, should be viewed with caution.

### Issues of gender and qualifications

Efforts to enhance the quality of teachers may have adverse effects on the recruitment of women teachers. In South Sudan, the Women into Teaching (WiT) programme, mentioned earlier, raised dilemmas because of the minimum qualifications required by the government to enter teaching. During the government's teacher headcount/census, some of the WiT trainees were left off the government payroll because of low qualifications. Save the Children had worked with the government on the payroll issue when the payroll was being established, but then saw the number of accredited female teachers fall by 26%.

The national percentage of teachers who were women fell from 17% to 12% during the period 2007–2008. Many of the WiT teachers with whom the evaluation team spoke in 2010 had very low levels of English and mastery of curriculum content, and this inhibited their ability to teach well. Such examples pose dilemmas for 'positive discrimination' in favour of women or those with lower qualifications, who may possess more of the attributes that communities value – in particular, being able to teach girls and using children's mother tongue.

During conflict it can be difficult to identify teachers with higher qualifications. This, combined with the low supply of trained and qualified teachers in conflict contexts, creates room for innovation and room to work with available resources to fill gaps. As such, WiT was an approach to increase teacher populations overall, as well as to increase numbers of female teachers in the most deprived contexts. The

lesson missed here by government was that, post-conflict, an approach to include these teachers more easily in the payroll and further improve the capacity of female teachers would have retained them in the profession.

## RAISING ACHIEVEMENT

### Continuing illiteracy

Student achievement presented problems in many contexts covered by the evaluation. There had been positive and notable improvements in Save the Children-supported schools (compared to non-project schools) as outlined previously, and there had been an increase (2008–2010) in the proportion of students able to read some words. But there remained a percentage of Grade 3 students in Save the Children-supported schools who were unable to read a single word from a simple text. As lessons from Grade 3 onwards assumed that students would have a reasonable level of literacy, any illiterate students were unable to participate fully in learning.

The question for this synthesis is why such an apparent failure of literacy learning exists,

despite training and the provision of some reading materials. One supposition is that these children might be newer arrivals to the school. Another would be that some teachers still do not individualise learning nor see their responsibility for enabling literacy. They teach, and it is the learner's fault if they do not learn.

The evaluation reports do note significant shifts in how teachers teach, yet there may still not be a fully accepted culture of students saying they do not understand, or of teachers checking the comprehension or skills of individual children. The changes in teaching still do not always reach the whole spectrum of children. Once students fall behind in a curriculum which presses on regardless of student understanding, they never catch up, nor do they benefit from future teaching.

In Nepal, by contrast, Save the Children's interventions seem to have had an impact at the lower end of the spectrum of reading ability. Teacher training had focused on ensuring that weaker students were included in lessons, and this emphasis on, and acceptance of, inclusion would seem to be key to tackling endemic underachievement.



EMMANUEL KENYI/SAVE THE CHILDREN

A training session for primary teachers in South Sudan. One student on the course said, "I've learned new skills that I will apply when I go back. Before I didn't know how to manage children, but here we're taught psychology and philosophy, and about the curriculum."

## Reading materials

Achievements in reading are of course related to whether there are materials to read. Most of the children supported by Rewrite the Future have very few reading materials. Save the Children has provided notebooks, but access to reading materials for teachers and students is difficult due to major weaknesses in the supply and distribution of relevant materials.

Literacy in such contexts is extremely difficult to attain (and therefore the positive findings on reading mentioned above are particularly commendable). The section on language, below, will look into this issue in more detail.

Beyond the current evaluation, Education Action's study of rural Angola revealed similar findings. The medium of instruction was Portuguese, which the community did not speak, and there were no materials. In fact, there was no written material in any language to be seen in many of the villages, not even a village name or road sign.<sup>77</sup>

## The role of teachers

Differential achievement remains something of a mystery. In South Sudan there were negative correlations between the number of trained teachers in a school and the number of words Grade 3 children could read. Controlling for age, gender, parents and so on made this less significant, but did not reverse the trend. Maths achievement did correlate with the presence of trained teachers, but not literacy. So why was this? One issue might be teachers' mastery of the language of instruction. There is also the issue of motivation – as seen above, non-payroll teachers, despite their lack of training, were accountable to the parents and community that paid them. This might be a reason for greater motivation to support their students' literacy learning. But when it comes to teaching maths, more in-depth expertise derived from specific training might also be needed.

## Different levels of achievement for different groups

Efforts were made to address gaps in girls' and boys' reading achievements, but gaps persisted. In Nepal, the impact of Save the Children's interventions seems to be more obvious at the lower end of the spectrum of reading ability. In Afghanistan and South Sudan, however, interventions seem to benefit older learners. This could simply be due to the fact that the

older classes had classrooms, while younger ones had to study outside, and that more experienced teachers are often allocated to higher grades. Also, as the final evaluation report highlights, when more children attend school there may be a higher proportion from more vulnerable groups, who face more difficulties with the language of instruction – hence, some of the evidence for poor improvement in achievement between 2008 and 2010.<sup>78</sup> These complex case studies demonstrate how difficult it is to establish simple cause and effect relationships in school achievement.

## CULTURES OF VIOLENCE

Changing cultures of violence is far from easy. Save the Children has made strenuous efforts to eradicate corporal punishment in all four evaluated countries, but it was found that training on child rights alone is not sufficient to change corporal punishment practices.

### Prevalence

In Angola, in particular, the prevalence of physical punishment was high. Teachers were aware that it was against government policy to beat students, and almost all adult respondents denied doing it. Yet the students, during children's focus groups, reported teachers using alternative punishments to beating, such as making them crawl on sharp gravel, or getting another student to inflict the beating. The practice of allowing the class monitor to carry a stick and beat other students still occurred in some schools supported by Save the Children. A student focus group in one project school said they felt some beating was necessary to maintain discipline.<sup>79</sup>

A similar prevalence of corporal punishment was found in Education Action's study in Angola. Students accepted it as normal, and as a way to improve learning.<sup>80</sup>

### Participatory solutions

What can be concluded from this? It is clearly difficult for NGOs to argue for forms of 'discipline' that are different from those experienced in the home. The teachers who simply used alternative forms of inhumane punishment would most likely not have understood the rationale of child rights, nor the eventual impact that the normalisation of violence in schools would have on wider society. Participation in drawing up codes of conduct – where there would be

discussion and some internalisation of the concepts (including by the community) – seems to be the key. A prerequisite is a forum for such discussions. In Afghanistan, Save the Children raised the problem with student councils, and by 2010 student groups were able to give examples of how they had helped reduce bullying and fighting in their schools. Violence in the household, wider community, by teachers and among students needs to be seen – and tackled – together.

### Codes of conduct

Throughout the evaluation findings, the presence of *participatory* and *widely known* codes of conduct, as in Nepal, was seen as key to so many aspects of school improvement. This related not just to cessation of violence in the school. Codes of conduct pasted on the schools' outside walls reminded outsiders of the commitment not to disturb the school or to enter with weapons or alcohol. Parents had standards against which to monitor the quality of education. Teachers felt more accountable to parents and children because the code was widely known. Teachers also realised that children were able to note matters, however small, leading to a different way of seeing children and their capabilities. Moral pressure was placed on teachers to teach their lessons (to attend, arrive on time, and teach a full day). Equally, there was pressure on parents to ensure their children attended; otherwise heads would have little power to discipline absent teachers.

A code of conduct for teachers in South Sudan, developed at ministry level, made little difference to their behaviour. The existence of a written code for teachers was not enough or was not internalised unless it was developed in a participatory way. Both rounds of the evaluation reports in South Sudan<sup>81</sup> indicate that training on child rights alone was not always sufficient to change the practice of using corporal punishment in schools. Real understanding of such rights and their implications is necessary. Detailed codes of conduct in schools, issued by the Ministry of Education, were not widely known by children and parents, and were much less effective in reducing violence than codes that had been developed within the school. The South Sudan example confirms that intervention at system level is not enough.

The Angola programme had a strong focus on capacity building of education authorities during the post-war setting. Current writing on capacity development in fragile contexts confirms that capacity development initiatives that do not take

into account organisational and political cultures are likely to be ineffective.<sup>82</sup>

The drawing up and enactment of legislation also needs to take account of community cultures and beliefs. In CAFS in particular, violence is deeply ingrained in communities and learning institutions. Multiple interventions at all levels are needed for violence to be eradicated, but this does not mean that schools cannot make a start.

The example of Kenya illustrates this need for intervention beyond legislation. Laws on corporal punishment were enacted and corporal punishment criminalised, at home as well as in institutions,<sup>83</sup> but a large percentage of mothers and fathers (around 50%) still believe in corporal punishment as a means of disciplining their sons and daughters.<sup>84</sup>

## SUSTAINABILITY

### Remuneration

The sustainability of interventions is a continuing challenge. ALPs were particularly effective for girls. However, they lacked sustainability in Afghanistan as they were reliant on continued support from Save the Children in the form of incentives. The ALP classes visited in 2010 had not been operating for five months because the partner organisation had pulled out, and teachers had not been paid.

Even if increased pay is not necessarily a motivator, consistent pay which enables a good standard of survival certainly is. The teacher remuneration guidelines from the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) are clear on the remuneration packages and related motivating factors that attract teachers to stay and teach better.<sup>85</sup> Questions remain regarding the length of time INGOs should provide teachers with pay incentives when projects are time-bound, and how such support can be handed over to government.

There needs to be more advocacy work around government recognition and support to ALPs, and to encourage donor and basic education funding to expand to cover alternative education such as ALP classes. Detailed consultation with governments on ALPs is needed, from design stage through to implementation and monitoring, in order to facilitate maximum ownership and scale-up of ALPs in a way which retains the essential features of flexibility, community responsiveness, and inclusive, good-quality teaching.

## Scaling up

Scaling up – as successfully done in South Sudan – may mean INGOs working closely with governments on the design, implementation and monitoring of ALPs. NGOs delivering ALPs need to have a clear financing plan, if government support is not there, or take on delivery using donor funds on behalf of a ministry of education. The success of ALPs, as shown by the Save the Children evaluations, could be helpful when advocating for sustained financial support. It was concluded in the final evaluation report that Save the Children needs to improve the monitoring of the ALPs that it supports and collect evidence on the progression of ALP students through a complete cycle of basic education.<sup>86</sup> Such evidence is vital if scaling up is envisaged. Presenting this evidence in relation to key government priorities, and articulating the scale of need for good-quality ALP, will be equally vital.

## Poor outcomes from teacher training

In South Sudan, Save the Children's teacher training activities were scaled down in 2008 in response to government plans to establish a formal teacher training system. However, implementation of the formal system was delayed, leaving a gap. In 2010 the impact of Save the Children's training on teaching practice was no longer evident; in fact, teachers trained by the organisation scored less well than other teachers on the lesson observation, even if the difference was not significant. When education levels were statistically controlled for in regression analyses, those with training from Save the Children still scored less than those without any teacher training.

Why was this training not sustainable or differentiated? One explanation was that the training in South Sudan was mostly just short-term, direct teacher training without including the development of supervisory support. By contrast, in Angola the teacher professional development was also supported through the training of school supervisors, in a cluster-based system, which was more sustainable and yielded better outcomes.

Another explanation relates to teacher motivation. Some teachers in South Sudan on the government payroll were poorly motivated and no longer applying their training. Trained teachers received the same salary as untrained teachers (when salaries were finally paid), with no upgrading system in place. In one district they were on strike during the 2010 evaluation, over a considerable period of time.

The obvious conclusion is that sustainable change is only as good as the motivation of the teachers implementing it, and their understanding of their place in the reform. Post-conflict governments must regain control quickly to meet their obligations to pay teachers progressively and punctually, and to plan for their training. There remain questions, however, about the options for delivery agencies and donors when the motivation or capacity among traditional duty bearers (like ministries of education) is not in place.

## Infrastructure

The impact of infrastructure and physical support was not always easy to identify during the evaluations. In South Sudan, parents and the government associated quality with proper classroom furniture, rather than, for example, floor coverings. In Nepal, the provision of carpets, child-level blackboards and educational wall paintings was considered to complement what had been learned in teacher training, with floor seating allowing more interaction between the children, and teachers using wall paintings as teaching resources. In other countries the walls were bare, except for ALP classes in Afghanistan, as mentioned earlier.

In South Sudan, permanent classrooms were provided. However, while student attendance improved, there was no relationship between learning outcomes and the number of permanent classrooms. Also, there was no relationship between the number of pupils in a class and learning outcomes. What happens within these structures – the relationships that are built between teachers and learners – seems to be a key factor in achieving and sustaining quality education.

## SUPERVISION, TRAINING AND UNDERSTANDING

### Supporting teachers' understanding of changes

In Angola, Save the Children initially provided only logistical support to teacher training and supervision, without 'technical' input (that is, the organisation did not support the development of classroom methodologies). The 2008 evaluation thus found no clear difference between the lesson observation scores of trained and untrained teachers. Save the Children then provided technical support and facilitated supervision.

Supervisors set up regular meetings between teachers where they were encouraged to reflect on their teaching and plan their lessons together. Through this cluster-based support, by 2010 there was a marked improvement in teaching. A crucial part of this eventual success was the training of the supervisors. They initially lacked expertise in child-centred teaching, but through a systematised professional development programme they gained insights.

The *Zonas de Influência Pedagógica* (ZIPS) in Angola – the clusters of schools where teachers and directors come together for reflection and planning – were found to work well and to increase understanding, as has been testified elsewhere.<sup>87</sup>

Teacher training must be paired with the training of supervisors and inspectors. Supervisors then feel confident to follow up teachers in the classroom and to facilitate and strengthen teachers' capacities.

Unless there is co-ordinated training for teachers and supervisors, producing deep understanding and internalisation of the principles behind a desired change in teachers' behaviour, then implementation can even be counterproductive.

It is also important for teachers, parents and students to have a clear understanding of child rights, but this can be difficult to achieve on a short-term basis.

In a DFID study of alternative basic education in four African countries emerging from conflict (including South Sudan), Dennis and Fentiment<sup>88</sup> highlight that international agencies are determined for education to conform to prevailing international ideas – being 'child-centred', and involving active learning and 'learner-centred pedagogy'. They point out that this imposes an additional burden on inexperienced incoming administrations, and is unlikely to make them keen to embrace innovative, alternative basic education. Save the Children Norway's QEP project similarly identified that a failure to internalise and act on training can lead to teachers having only a superficial understanding of the debates around change, rather than understanding change in reality.<sup>89</sup>

## LANGUAGE

### Mother tongue teaching

Language issues made the evaluation of impact and the assessment of learning outcomes particularly problematic. In Afghanistan and Nepal, the language of instruction in schools was not the mother tongue for around half the children who were tested in the learning assessment. Not surprisingly, these children scored significantly worse in reading than other children (with the results controlled for socio-economic indicators).

In South Sudan and Nepal, education policy allows primary schools to use the local language for early years teaching; a small improvement, despite evidence that local language teaching should be used for the whole of primary education to deliver meaningful improvements in learning outcomes.<sup>90</sup> The evaluation found that this policy was hindered by a lack of learning materials in mother tongue languages and a lack of teachers able or trained to teach in these languages. Schools claimed to use mother tongue, but this was found to be only for spoken communication.

### Level of language skills among teachers

When teachers experience difficulty in the medium of instruction, they are more likely to transmit the textbook verbatim, without explanation or supporting activities. This was found to happen with English instruction in Arab-speaking regions, populations or towns, such as Wau in South Sudan. Such language barriers also limit what teachers can learn from teacher training.

In Angola, French-speaking teachers were found to have no difficulty in using Portuguese. Save the Children trained more than 600 French-speaking teachers in Portuguese during the Rewrite the Future programme, and developed a special programme for them with the support of a Portuguese university.

### Multilingual teaching

While learning materials in multiple languages have a cost attached, Save the Children believes that efficiency gains can be made by pursuing good practice in multilingual teaching based in a familiar language, thus lowering drop-out and repetition rates.<sup>91</sup> Multilingual teaching may even be cheaper in the long run, once developed.

In Nepal, the focus on inclusion and appropriate teaching methods for marginalised groups, such as non-Nepali speakers, has improved outcomes. In



South Sudan, Save the Children's intensive English courses have been targeted at teachers trained to teach in Arabic pattern schools. However, during the evaluation, more than a third of teachers who were observed teaching classes beyond Grade 3 (where English is the official medium of instruction) still did not use clear and simple English. English remains a key teacher capacity gap.

## DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

The final challenge relates to the time period for the evaluations, which was just two years. Some improvements from the 2005–2008 period of Rewrite the Future were not able to be captured in the evaluation analysis. This meant that improvement between 2008 and 2010 sometimes seemed to be limited, whereas in fact the benefits or changes might have already been felt before 2008. The inference is the need for a longer monitoring period.

During conflict it is often very difficult to collect data on a regular basis, due to rapidly changing accessibility of project areas. Devising ways to both mitigate and take such constraints into account during such evaluations is vital.

Beyond the current evaluation, Bethke and Baxter<sup>92</sup> highlight the neglected area of data management on alternative education in Nepal, with no proper system of maintaining records of student enrolment, attendance, flow, drop-out, etc.<sup>93</sup> Other studies have pointed to the importance of Educational Management Information Systems (EMIS) in CAFS such as Afghanistan;<sup>94</sup> robust evaluations such as the current one could usefully be integrated into such EMIS.



PHOTO: MATS LIGNELL/SAVE THE CHILDREN

In Jalalabad, eastern Afghanistan, Save the Children has helped run a project to stop violence and abuse in school. Fifteen-year-old Lima (left) says: “I’m not worried any more about being punished at school because I’ve learned through the project how we should behave and how to convince our teachers not to punish us. The teachers had many workshops on children’s issues too, which definitely changed their behaviour toward us. Now they rarely beat us.”

# 8 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This analysis section is divided into three parts. Below, there is a simple summary of what worked and didn't work so well, and why, based on the main evidence presented in the evaluation findings. From this summary, six commonly occurring principles in determining the success of education interventions in CAFS emerge.

This section looks at these six principles – community, resources, understanding, motivation, participation, and laws – and explains how they are interlinked (eg, the absence of just one of these elements can impact negatively on the success of education work).

Inevitably, the way in which these principles interact, the practical ways in which they can be implemented, and the impact they might have on education interventions will vary in each context. The latter part of this section therefore looks at some of these context-specific issues, to help us guard against believing in homogenous contexts and one-size-fits-all solutions.

## WHAT WORKS, FOR WHOM AND WHY?

The tables on pages 30–31 use the evaluation evidence to summarise (a) the potential pathways through which successful interventions occur, and (b) the factors that may hinder positive outcomes. The tables allow us to see different levels in the process of explaining what works/doesn't work and why. We start with a stated outcome (eg, 'improved learning') and then see the factors that contribute to that outcome (eg, 'student attendance'). The table then shows the features that help to facilitate this (eg, 'student attendance is facilitated by communities tracking absent children'). Finally, the table explains the underpinning principles (eg, 'community ownership').

While the facilitating features may be very country-specific, the principles will cut across all or most contexts. The six principles identified in these tables are discussed in detail on pages 32–33.

A) WHAT WORKED WELL AND WHY?

Outcome	Through	Facilitated by	Concept/principle
Increased or better learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities tracking children</li> <li>• Community advocacy on child labour and girls' education</li> <li>• Child and parent groups following up individual cases of absentee children and persuading parents to send their children to school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community</b> ownership and understanding, and community and school-based structures such as councils, child protection committees, PTAs, etc.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers teaching more lessons</li> <li>• Teachers attending work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher accountability to parents and students through committees</li> <li>• Monitoring and supervision of teachers</li> <li>• Participatory codes of conduct for all</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay and non-pay <b>incentives and motivation</b> for teachers</li> <li>• Community <b>participation</b> as above</li> <li>• Teacher and head teacher <b>networking</b> through school clusters</li> <li>• More female teachers</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers enabling learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers using child-friendly methodologies and positive discipline</li> <li>• Teachers planning lessons together</li> <li>• Peer mentoring, cluster-based supervision, without the need for residential courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers' <b>understanding</b> of <b>rights</b> and child-friendly methodologies</li> <li>• Teachers' <b>participation</b>, feeling part of a group</li> <li>• Technical input from outside</li> <li>• Provision of <b>training materials</b> for the clusters on participatory teaching</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School time protected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools as Zones of Peace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community</b> advocacy</li> </ul>
Reaching girls and hard-to-reach groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accelerated learning and nonformal programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ALPs' participatory and inclusive teaching and learning styles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flexibility</b> for greater inclusivity</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy work with parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of student and parent groups to reach out into the community and to target girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community</b> buy-in and <b>understanding</b> of girls' rights as well as economic benefits</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making schools dignified places in which to study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girl-friendly schools that consider teacher behaviour, sanitation and safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Understanding</b> of girls' needs</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing understanding of issue of language of instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative ways for teachers and students to communicate</li> <li>• Professional development for teachers in language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Motivation</b> for teachers to improve language instruction</li> <li>• Networking</li> </ul>

A) WHAT WORKED WELL AND WHY? *continued*

Outcome	Through	Facilitated by	Concept/principle
Reducing violence in and around school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory codes of conduct for teachers and learners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students, parents and community working together to develop codes within a school, and outlining responsibilities of students, teachers and parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Participation</b> in deciding discipline and responsibilities of all</li> <li><b>Understanding of rights</b> and of cause and effect</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers' professional development in positive discipline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision</li> <li>Peer mentoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers' <b>understandings</b> and <b>incentives</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communities negotiating with armed groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structures such as SZOP and child protection committees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Community confidence</b> and skills</li> </ul>

## B) WHAT WORKED LESS WELL AND WHY?

Outcome	Through	Hindered by	Concept/principle
Teachers' lack of attendance or interest in teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Codes of conduct for teachers drawn up by ministry but not used</li> <li>Lack of incentives to teach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers not reading the codes</li> <li>Lack of supervision or peer support</li> <li>Flat rate or irregular salaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Authoritarian</b> top-down strategy</li> <li>Lack of ownership</li> <li>Lack of regulation or efficiency</li> </ul>
Teachers not keeping to child-friendly methods despite training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of understanding and motivation</li> <li>Externalisation of problems, blaming lack of resources</li> <li>Lack of suitable professional development resources on reflective practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of supervision</li> <li>Insufficient resources for follow-up practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of <b>understanding</b> of principles</li> <li>No <b>participatory</b> follow-up</li> </ul>
Schools still condoning corporal punishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adherence to older ideas of childhood</li> <li>Equation of beating with discipline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guilt</li> <li>Denial to observers of its use and its frequency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of real understandings of the cumulative effects of violence on children</li> <li>Lack of <b>laws</b> on child protection</li> </ul>
Children still facing problems with literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local languages not properly used</li> <li>Limited instructional time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of learning materials in mother tongue</li> <li>Teachers lacking capacity in language of instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of reading materials and <b>resources</b> to build confidence of teachers and learners</li> </ul>

## SIX UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS IN CAFS

### The model

For change or improvement to happen, various factors interact and reinforce each other. A simple linear list of recommendations would not capture this complexity; hence, our focus on a more structured model of six core principles:

- community buy-in
- participation
- resources
- motivation
- understanding
- legal accountability.

### Community buy-in

This is needed to ensure quality control at the lowest levels, to demand accountability of teachers, to avoid vandalism and to protect schools, to support attendance, to understand and support a rights-based approach, to promote inclusion of girls and the hard-to-reach, and even to negotiate with insurgents.

### Participation

This covers the participation of students, parents and teachers (through a range of structures such as school committees and councils, teacher groups and child protection committees) in drawing up suitable and usable codes of conduct to promote rights, to advocate for safe schools and to monitor school quality.

### Resources

This can be expanded to ‘resources provided on time’. In addition to finance reaching school communities, resources can include: government provision of curriculum and textbooks; professional development resources for trainers (supporting teachers to learn to teach in a participatory way), as well as classroom resources; innovative resources on rights for teachers and parents; learning materials in mother tongue languages; and reading and learning materials in local and dominant languages.

### Motivation

Motivation for teachers includes remuneration, career progression and compensation. However, it also covers non-pay incentives and support for teachers to take the risk of changing their teaching styles or sustaining their new behaviour (eg, through school clusters, peer support in and across schools,

joint planning, seeing the success of students or improvements in behaviour, accountability to school management, and accountability to the community).

### Understanding

This includes the understanding and acceptance – by teachers, supervisors and trainers – of the overall vision for education (ie, of child rights, of what ‘child-centred’ or ‘child-friendly’ or ‘protection’ really mean, and *why* it makes a difference to learning and attendance). This also includes the community’s understanding of rights (for example, within Islam) and of the need for girls’ education.

### Legal accountability

A framework of laws, which will give people recourse when rights are violated or protection is needed, is important. There is a need for a raft of legal frameworks (on discipline, on teachers’ pay, on recruitment and promotion, on finance and accountability) that set some standards. Community laws are important to include in this notion.

### The importance of all components in the model

These six components are not independent desirable items in an education project. If all principles are being addressed, there is a strong likelihood of change taking place. But by paying too little attention to, or by totally missing out one of them, the success and viability of the other principles is put at risk, as the following table illustrates.<sup>95</sup>

### Lack of community involvement

If you have a focus on resources, understanding, motivation, participation and laws, but the community is not involved, then there is likely to be tension or lack of support for the initiative, which then becomes more fragile.

### Lack of resources

If teacher educators lack resources they can use in a participatory way, then training may remain ‘top-down’: teachers are told about rights and participation without experiencing them. Without resources in the classroom, teachers feel frustrated and fall back on traditional methods, feeling unsupported by government or donors.

### Lack of understanding

Without a full understanding of rights and the benefits of ‘child-centred’ methodologies, quality is not sustainable, and teacher training may be counterproductive. This may leave teachers confused

Community ownership	Resources	Understanding of the vision or principles	Motivation and incentives	Participation in decisions	Legal frameworks	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Change
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Tensions
✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Frustration
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	Confusion
✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Resistance
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Alienation
						Impermanence

about why or how they should use certain tactics in the classroom. Trainers and donors also need to understand classroom realities: if classrooms have 200 students and there is no room to move around, then ‘chalk and talk’ may be the most realistic option: different ways to promote active learning within this environment may need to be suggested.

#### Lack of motivation or incentives

Even if there are resources and structures that support participation, if teachers are not remunerated properly or feel no sense of motivation to take risks and try new behaviours, there will be resistance to change. This may be especially true if they are told they ‘lack’ particular skills when they have been surviving in an extremely difficult situation – such as conflict – for a long time. Any recommendations for changing behaviour among people operating in challenging conditions need to be handled with sensitivity.

#### Lack of participation in decision making

A lack of ownership can persist if there aren’t sustained structures for taking part in decisions about the school or about relationships between school and community. A lack of such structures can also lead to poor internalisation of external policies, whether from the government or donors.

#### Lack of legal accountability

Without some sort of legal framework which legitimises areas of rights, equity or transparency, changes in individual or organisational behaviour are less sustainable.

#### Where does government policy fit into the model?

This model is not saying that government policy is not important as an overall umbrella. However, the

model provides a framework for understanding why government policies or guidelines may or may not be effective. It is known that national plans are important in setting directions and providing confidence in the system.<sup>96</sup> However, Save the Children’s evaluations have helped to reveal what happens in the midst of all these plans and wider sets of directives, and how they translate into effective implementation.

## CONTEXTUAL FLEXIBILITY

When applying or adapting any model or framework, it’s important to consider contextual variations that can affect whether ideas that facilitated change in one place are likely to do the same elsewhere. Dennis and Fentimen<sup>97</sup> argue that key contextual issues must be analysed when reconstructing the basic education system – for example, the historical context; whether the educational system featured language, religious and cultural disparities; whether young people, including girls, were recruited as combatants, etc.

#### Fragile states

The positioning and role of education (and thus the relevance of any initiative) are closely linked with the drivers of fragility<sup>98</sup> and grievance in a country. INEE’s study on education and fragility highlighted this. It categorised fragility in terms of:

- **governance** – power, inequality, lack of legitimacy, corruption
- **security** – military activity, violent civil conflict, human rights violations, extremism
- **economy** – unemployment, static or declining national growth
- **social/cultural** domain – ethnic or religious tension, gender disparity, cultures of patronage and fear
- **environment** – environmental degradation.<sup>99</sup>

For each of these domains, education may either reinforce fragility, make little or no difference, or support progress towards overcoming fragility. And of course, these domains are not isolated from each other, but all interact.

### Building resilience

Such studies argue that it is difficult to demonstrate direct connections between education and state building. However, good quality, equitable education may help individual citizens to become more resilient, by providing livelihoods and human security. If enough citizens become resilient to economic, political or environmental shocks, then the nation and government may be more secure (less fragile).<sup>100</sup> Resilience here may be defined as the capacity of individuals and communities to withstand political, economic or environmental threats to survival and wellbeing.

So how is resilience built, and how do different groups (in different contexts) need to be targeted to achieve this? In a similar way to UNICEF's South Asia study,<sup>101</sup> we can look at factors that support education (and thus resilience) *for all*; and those that target education (and resilience) *for particular groups of individuals*. It is here that we will see more differences between countries. The evaluations suggest that individual resilience would emerge from sustainable ALPs which target out-of-school youth, and hopefully lead to livelihoods. Community resilience in relation to education was seen both in Afghanistan (against the Taliban), and in Nepal (against manipulation by government and opposition forces).

### Transferring concepts: 'peace'

What ingredients for resilience and positive change are directly transferable from one context to another? The Schools as Zones of Peace approach works in Nepal. It started as a response to attacks on schools and then broadened its remit, and there seems no reason why the concept and its participatory structures could not be applied elsewhere. However, the language of peace is not necessarily welcome everywhere. 'Peace education' or 'education for peace' is not always favoured by governments that wish to attribute blame for conflict on particular (historical) groups, or that see themselves in a post-conflict situation where peace education is not necessary (as in Sri Lanka). Different terminology may be needed when working in these contexts.

### Transferring concepts: 'rights'

The discussion (and materials) on child rights and Islam worked well for Afghanistan; clearly this would need to be adapted for other religious or secular contexts. An equivalent booklet on rights and Christianity, for instance, might work in predominantly Catholic Angola (teachers and parents in Africa, as elsewhere, routinely quote Biblical passages about 'sparing the rod and spoiling the child' to justify corporal punishment).<sup>102</sup>

### Transferring concepts: community-based education and community ownership

Community-based education has been crucial in widening access in Afghanistan, particularly for girls. The move now is to get these schools adopted by the government to ensure their recognition and support.<sup>103</sup> Whether this would work in other contexts is not clear.

Also, if the schools become government managed, to what extent is this still community ownership? Indeed, are community-based schools always driven by a sense of community ownership anyway?

Burde's rigorous study of community-based schools in Afghanistan showed their dramatic effect on children's academic participation and performance, and their tremendous potential for reducing gender disparities in rural areas. Children were almost 50% more likely to go to school if there was a community-based option available. However, interviews revealed this was not an issue of greater community ownership in the school, but simply of access – it was culturally inappropriate for girls to walk long distances unaccompanied to school, so they favoured the community-based facilities.<sup>104</sup> Such examples highlight the importance of doing in-depth analysis into the barriers affecting children's education, so as to develop contextually relevant solutions.

'Community' is a catch-all term that is often romanticised. Yet communities may be internally divided, dominated by powerful elites or not inclusive for minorities or women. Vested interests in the community can sometimes take over. Traditional voices in the government and community might feel a challenge to their authority if other stakeholders start participating in running schools.<sup>105</sup> Understanding the 'community context' is therefore very important when establishing the transferability of interventions and ideas.

# 9 ESSENTIAL CHANGES FOR IMPROVING EDUCATION QUALITY IN CAFS

The analysis of findings in this synthesis has generated recommendations for those making decisions on policy and funding priorities. They complement the recommendations from Save the Children's 2010 report, *The Future is Now*. Seven broad areas are identified here as targets for change.

## TEACHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This key area should avoid simply replicating existing methods of teaching or teacher training. The notion of 'professional development' is preferred, rather than 'capacity development'. The latter can imply that teachers have a 'lack' of capacity, whereas they actually have many skills and capacities, just ones that differ from the donors'/NGOs' ideas of what is needed for the future. There are six features of effective professional development in CAFS:

### **Experiential and participatory methods:**

Teacher training pedagogy needs to ensure that teachers experience classroom democracy, questioning, receiving praise, listening, working in groups, etc. for themselves.<sup>105</sup>

**Non-violent discipline:** Teachers need support in using non-violent discipline and promoting a non-violent school ethos, with positive practical techniques provided. They need experience in working with students and parents to draw up guides (codes of conduct) which apply to all school participants. Their training should include how to work with the community, and with children from vulnerable groups (eg, internally displaced persons, returnees, and those with disabilities or learning difficulties) who are particularly vulnerable in times of emergency.<sup>107</sup>

### **Running ALPs and similar non-formal programmes:**

'Second chance' learning (such as ALPs) is advocated by the 2011 UNESCO *Education for All* report.<sup>108</sup> Teacher preparation and curriculum, therefore, should include how to run accelerated and non-formal learning programmes, and how to manage the different relationships with students and parents that these can involve. They also need to learn about the importance of flexibility in time and space, so that ALPs do not simply mimic formal programmes. Donors should allocate resources to strengthen and link ALPs to other forms of education and opportunities.

### **Understanding children's capacities:**

Teachers may need to change their ideas about children's capacities. Save the Children's evaluations valued children's views through focus groups and student clubs and organisations. Children have shown themselves able to take active roles within school structures and clubs, and in supporting each other's learning and encouraging other children to come to school. They can be active researchers as well as targets of research. Understanding children's capacities includes teachers understanding gender issues, where girls are considered less able to take advantage of education.

### **Learning to work with the community:**

Teachers may need to learn about and experience working with local communities, both in advocacy work and in partnership work to support the school.

**Sustainable training:** Teacher education needs to be sustained. In-service professional development for teachers is often of short duration (eg, a one-off workshop of 10 or 12 days). This is not enough to develop understanding of why new skills or orientations are being demanded, especially if there is limited follow-up. Donors must also select and fund programmes that aim to increase female teacher populations in conflict contexts.



## TEACHER MOTIVATION, INCENTIVES AND REGULATION

**Remuneration:** It is customary for teachers to expect/receive regular remuneration at a level they can live on. To achieve this there needs to be information about the overall number of teachers, and their locations. EMIS and teacher registration systems are obvious tools for gathering this data. Planners should ensure that payroll schemes do not exclude teachers with lower qualifications. Of course, teacher registration and allocation systems are open to abuse, corruption and nepotism, if not conducted in a transparent manner. An EMIS system is only as good as the data fed into it, but EMIS and teacher registration systems should at least be attempted and developed.

**Follow-up support for teachers:** Regular pay is desirable, but not sufficient as a motivator on its own: other forms of motivation are needed. Programmes or structures for participatory follow-up are needed after teachers have been trained. This could be done through school clusters, peer mentoring and support, and joint planning. These are long-term strategies, which include structures for monitoring and supervision, with agreed criteria and understanding of what is expected in teaching and learning.

**Supervision:** Supervision is linked to teacher motivation and quality education. Supervisors and inspectors need training and in-depth understanding of positive discipline or child-centred learning, as well as how to relate to teachers and run peer-support networks.

Head teachers also need such knowledge and skills, and, as with teachers, this is best attained through school networks or clusters, like the Angola ZIP models. It is *not* recommended that head teachers are sent away for management training, nor that national institutes for such training are established. The evaluation noted in South Sudan that supervised school-based training did not happen, but that it should have happened, to maintain coherence and motivation. Supervisors also need to meet and reflect, and clusters provide a base for this. The policy emphasis should therefore be on supporting school clusters and local teacher resource centres. Creating opportunities for ALP teachers to support and share techniques with mainstream teachers should be a key part of such an approach.

**Codes of conduct:** National-level codes of conduct for teachers are necessary to spell out the legal regulatory frameworks which exist. They should provide a framework for school-level codes, developed in participatory ways across the whole community. Initially, teachers may resist an end to physical punishment and feel demotivated by the move. However, once they have worked in a collaborative way to develop more humane rules, most teachers will welcome the alternatives.

It is essential that codes apply to all participants in the learning process. Some rules apply to all (eg, respect, politeness, attendance, punctuality); others highlight different responsibilities for teachers, students and parents. The rights-based process means that when students and teachers draw up rules, they do not just reproduce old punitive methods of discipline. Codes of conduct also need to be translated into local languages to ensure accessibility.

Training in child rights for students, teachers and head teachers enables people to use legal frameworks to demand protection, as well as to draw up suitable codes of conduct at school and community levels. Schools must be given resources and support to enact legal codes on child protection.

## NATIONAL POLICIES ON LANGUAGE AND INCLUSION

**Use of local language:** Primary schools should be allowed or encouraged to use local languages for those whose mother tongue is not the official language or main language of instruction. This may mean providing materials and reading books in these local languages. Teachers may need support to work in a local language (especially if this is not their mother tongue). Teachers will also need support to teach the national language as a second language, rather than simply using it to deliver the curriculum. They also need advice on how to minimise the negative consequences of policies that require a switch to instruction in an official language (such as English or Portuguese), particularly in the early years. Flexible policies and guidelines are crucial, rather than insistence on only or always using the official language of instruction.

**Supporting students with disabilities:** Ministries of education and development partners need encouragement to focus on including children with physical, intellectual and sensory disabilities and those

experiencing learning difficulties. Governments have obligations to uphold the right to education for all children and provide resources needed to achieve this. Advocacy work with communities (by students and teachers), to encourage parents to send children to school and keep them there, may be needed. Schools need to ensure that they do everything possible to maximise the learning of those with disabilities. Peer support between children can be encouraged. The country studies provided examples of simple actions (eg, seating students with visual impairments near the board). Actions can also involve supporting the teacher training curriculum to include questions of inclusion and differentiation, and ensuring that such training is practical and experiential.

### **Out-of-school children and young people:**

The inclusion of out-of-school children and young people is not just about upholding education rights, but is important in the security of a country. There will always be out-of-school children – former combatants, street children, those who drop out for economic reasons, girls who have been withdrawn from school, those who might have been excluded for religious reasons, etc. The evaluation evidence shows that ALPs for such learners are not second-rate. They can, in fact, be models for the formal sector, because of their flexibility and learner-centred approaches. Governments must recognise and accredit ALPs on a sustained basis, rather than seeing them as a temporary solution to clear a backlog of learners.

## WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY

**Community consultation:** Communities need to be consulted about the role they wish to play in new visions for education – particularly in contexts like South Sudan where they have been supporting the education of their children for 20 years. With large numbers of people returning to the south, there is not an agreed model of basic education. While it is the role of government to provide, communities can advise and express their ideas and wishes.

**Community-based education:** Community-based education and community associations are an essential element for enhancing participation among marginalised groups, strengthening a community's commitment to education and increasing community cohesion.<sup>109</sup> Separate mothers' PTAs may be needed, and illiteracy should not be seen as a barrier to participating in such groups.

Community groups can be empowered through an awareness of rights and by being given practical means to improve their schools. Funding for the establishment and training of community groups is needed. This should be relevant to the local context and should pay attention to gender and the inclusion of women. Members of the community will need advocacy skills, so that they can hold governments and school leaders to account. Models for tracking the use of funds can be developed, so that communities can see how much is coming in and how it is spent<sup>110</sup> (eg, formal systems of Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys, or localised methods such as posting the school finances on the school wall, as in Uganda).

## RESOURCES, LINKED TO WIDER GOALS

**Physical resources:** Physical resources do not necessarily mean large structural resource inputs, such as classroom buildings. Provision may relate to temporary structures or to making schools attractive places to learn – for example, with carpets to sit on.

It has been often argued<sup>111</sup> that schooling has 'two faces' with regard to conflict and peace: schooling may have contributed to the conflict itself. Reconstruction work, therefore, must avoid replicating physical and symbolic structures that create divisions.

**Information resources:** Teachers, teacher educators and supervisors need information resources on how to introduce participatory structures in school and community (such as student councils, PTAs or child clubs), and on positive discipline.<sup>112</sup> Young (or even older) people may not necessarily know how to take positions of responsibility or representation, and may benefit from structured training materials.

Written resources are also needed to support advocacy, such as promoting child rights within particular cultures, and may include materials for communities and parents. Resources for working in local languages, and in mother tongue, are also appreciated by teachers and can be very cost-effective. As above, efforts must be made to avoid retaining curricula and textbooks that foment cultural suspicions or prejudice.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

Desired behaviour changes can be more effective if embedded in formal legal processes, which legitimise such conduct and provide a means of redress. Children, teachers and systems can gain from codified and legalised statutes that establish protective laws for children and their education in CAFS. The UNESCO collection, *Protecting Education From Attack*, contains articles on international law and the protection of education systems. It also discusses the law of war with regard to the protection of schools (giving them parity with hospitals and religious buildings).<sup>113</sup> Additionally, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the right to education in emergency situations (A/64/L.58) provides the most recent framework for the protection of the right to education. Implementing such provisions requires supporting governments to develop, enact and assess such laws. In turn, this entails increased donor support to such processes.

## EVALUATION

Further use and development of rigorous evaluation tools is called for, as are methodological techniques around assessing 'quality', especially in CAFS. These tools might consider the impact of each of (or combinations of) the six principles (see pages 31–32), together with longitudinal studies, and the generation of good baselines.

Follow-up research is needed to be persuasive, to provide empirical evidence about the policy changes needed at national level, and to offer evidence for donors to fund such projects. For instance, Save the Children's evaluations have shown ALP programmes to be more successful sometimes than formal schools in their learning outcomes. Yet research is needed to see whether this success translates into employment opportunities, and what the transitions might be into other forms of technical and vocational training. Tracer studies can indicate how qualifications may link to labour market conditions.



PHOTO: CAROLINE FRUTMANN/SAVE THE CHILDREN

Boys play outside a school built by Save the Children in Uíge province, north-west Angola.

# 10 KEY POLICY INTERVENTIONS TO BREAK THE CYCLES OF CONFLICT

The policy interventions suggested below would arguably be applicable to any developing country situation. They have particular significance for CAFS, however, where legacies of war and continuing conflict or violence are part of everyday culture. These policy interventions are based on Save the Children's long-term experience in CAFS. They contribute to breaking cycles of inequality, grievance, violence, corruption, and passivity.

## COHERENT AND SUSTAINABLE TEACHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Governments must understand the need for training, not just in subject knowledge, but in pedagogy, which is coherent with goals of peace and inclusion.

- Teacher educators will need support in developing a curriculum, and in developing their own pedagogy to enable trainees to learn in ways that reflect how they will subsequently teach.
- Particular areas for training will include: rights (for children, females and minorities); working with the community; flexible, non-formal and adult-based approaches; positive discipline; and how to research their own and others' practice.
- Logistically, such training needs to be long-term (not short workshops), and/or developed in localised clusters of schools where teachers, head teachers and supervisors can meet, plan and reflect on practice.
- Ways to attract more females into teaching need to be continued and strengthened in countries where gender equity remains a challenge.
- Follow-up of teachers is crucial, to sustain training and to provide a data base on what happens to them.

## NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS ON ENDING VIOLENCE IN AND AROUND EDUCATION

Governments must be influenced to implement legal frameworks on child protection as well as on the protection of schools.

- They need to be influenced to develop school-based codes of conduct for teachers and students, which prohibit corporal punishment and challenge the use of violence to solve problems.
- The establishment of Schools as Zones of Peace or the equivalent, which incorporate child protection committees, child clubs, community advocacy teams and the like, also need to be encouraged as a way to tackle violence in the home and at school.

## GOVERNMENT POLICY ON EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Governments must be urged to distribute resources equitably and transparently.

- They must consider shifting the balance of resources towards non-formal approaches such as ALPs; directing resources towards children with disabilities; and identifying and targeting specific groups who are otherwise marginalised.

Work on resources must be accompanied by transparency on spending. Corruption cannot be eliminated overnight, but it can be challenged at all levels.

- While EMIS systems are never perfect, working towards them enables greater efficiency in areas such as teacher registration and payrolls and removing 'ghost teachers' and 'ghost schools'.
- Systems for tracking and publicising expenditure show how resources are distributed nationally and at regional and local levels.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND STRENGTHENING

Crucial work will be directly with the community and their community leaders, or indirectly with donors and government, to harness the power of communities to improve their schools.

- This involves training communities in areas such as child rights, training mothers and fathers to take part in PTAs, and giving communities the skills and knowledge to hold school management accountable for its spending.
- In some contexts, it involves recognising the strength of the community in negotiating with armed groups, and supporting such negotiations, including the conditions for establishing schools or keeping them open.
- It also involves formulating laws and developing structures to guide PTAs and the implementation of Schools as Zones of Peace initiatives.

## RECOGNISING CHILDREN AS ACTORS IN CONFLICT PREVENTION

All stakeholders must genuinely recognise children as key actors, not just targets of interventions. Children's views are central in evaluations of policy initiatives, and at the planning and dissemination stages.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child urges governments to provide accurate data on children and adolescents, and emphasises that it should be inclusive, with adolescents participating in the analysis to make sure that the information is understood and used in an adolescent-sensitive way.<sup>114</sup>

- Children can and should take part in a whole raft of social and educational change strategies, ranging from peer learning in the classroom to community campaigns and research outside the classroom.
- Children should be recognised as primary stakeholders with their own expertise and contributions to make. This may mean developing a different view of childhood.



PHOTO: OLIVIA ARTHUR/MAGNUM PHOTOS FOR SAVE THE CHILDREN

Khatera, 12, and Shamayel, 10, in a class at the Working Street Children Centre in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan.

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- <sup>91</sup> Evidence from the World Bank (2005) *In Their Own Language...Education for All*, World Bank Education Notes (<http://worldbank.org/education>)
- <sup>92</sup> Bethke and Baxter (2009) op. cit.
- <sup>93</sup> ibid.
- <sup>94</sup> Sigsgaard (2011) op. cit.
- <sup>95</sup> Adapted from Knoster et al (2000) on their model for change for school inclusion
- <sup>96</sup> Sigsgaard (2011) op. cit.
- <sup>97</sup> Dennis, and Fentiment (2007) op. cit.
- <sup>98</sup> The concept of fragility is a debated one, but usually refers to a country where state structures lack political will and/or capacity to provide basic functions for poverty reduction, development and security. The problem of negative labelling and of ignoring of external factors in fragility means that the term 'fragile state' is sometimes replaced by the notion of a 'fragile context'.
- <sup>99</sup> INEE (2011) *Understanding Education's Role in Fragility: Synthesis of four situational analyses of education and fragility: Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Liberia*, Author: Lynn Davies, IIEP Research Reports, Paris: UNESCO
- <sup>100</sup> Davies, L (2011c) 'Can Education Interrupt Fragility?' Toward the resilient citizen and the adaptable state' in K. Mundy and S. Dryden-Petersen (eds) *Educating Children in Conflict Zones: Research, policy and practice for systemic change – A tribute to Jackie Kirk*, New York: Teachers' College Press
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# BREAKING THE CYCLE OF **CRISIS**

Learning from Save the Children's delivery  
of education in conflict-affected fragile states

*Breaking the Cycle of Crisis* looks at Save the Children's work to improve the quality of children's education in Afghanistan, Angola, Nepal and South Sudan. This work was part of Save the Children's Rewrite the Future campaign, which successfully demonstrated from 2005–10 that large-scale education interventions can be delivered in conflict-affected, fragile states. This report presents expert synthesis of and reflections on four research-based evaluations.

The report presents key successes and challenges. It reflects on why education interventions appeared to have worked or not to have worked. It discusses findings that are of particular interest, and proposes key policy and strategy recommendations for education in conflict-affected states.

This report is intended as a policy resource for government departments, donors and NGOs interested in public service delivery in conflict-affected, fragile states.

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