



Learning for innovation in quality education: A meta-evaluation of Plan's School Improvement Program

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Abstract

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Centre for International Development Issues Nijmegen

The objective of this research is to improve Plan's quality education intervention in Less Developed Countries, by learning from the implementation of Plan's School Improvement Program (SIP). Plan implemented SIP in 2003 and thoroughly evaluated it in 2006 and 2007. SIP supports initiatives from governments and civil society groups to achieve Education for All goals by 2015.

SIP strives for quality and access to education for boys and girls in Africa, Asia and Latin-America. This paper presents information collected from a desk study of fifteen evaluation reports on SIP, literature review, participatory observations in a forum on quality education in the Netherlands, participatory observations in Plan's global thematic group on Universal Primary Education, eight semi-structured interviews and a field visit made during an evaluation of the SIP program in South Sulawesi, Indonesia.

Within this paper, quality education is defined as: 'Knowledge boys and girls gain through methodologies, learning materials, textbooks and a relevant curriculum that stimulates inquiry and dialogue between pupils and teachers in school, all within an institutional and organisational framework, that increases their problem-posing abilities in their daily lives'.

Lessons are learned from the SIP program and described in six SIP components; teacher motivation, teaching methodologies, participation of children in school governance, relevance of the curriculum, involvement of the education department and gender.

Indicators are used to monitor and evaluate progress on education programs. Indicators that make results visible at outcome level or those processes inside the classroom are recommended. These include indicators that illustrate the perceptions of teachers and children on aspects of quality education.

About the author

Stephanie Zwier (1981) specialises in improving the quality of education and environmental development programs. Family visits to Chile at a young age motivated her to work on socio-political and economic issues that determine distribution of resources, knowledge and wealth. She obtained her masters' title on international development studies at the Centre for International Development Issues Nijmegen and during her studies she did extensive research in Malawi and Uganda. This research is part of a cooperative program between CIDIN and Plan Netherlands. This research is conducted for CIDIN, but supported by Plan Netherlands'. At Plan's policy and program departments she guided and contributed to the quality of Plan's education and livelihood programs. In January 2008 she founded Create Consultancy.

Abbreviations

CPME	Corporate Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child
CSB	Civil Society Building
DPA	Direct Poverty Alleviation
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
EDI	Education for all Development Index
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LDC	Less Developed Country
L&A	Lobby and Advocacy
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PALS	Program Accountability and Learning System
PPM	Program and Project Module
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SIP	School Improvement Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations' Children Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WB	World Bank

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Chapter one: Positioning quality education

During a recent field visit to schools supported by Plan Netherlands in South-Sulawesi I was pleasantly surprised to see teachers involving pupils, who actively asked questions, rather than sitting passively in class. The objective of this research is to improve Plan's quality education intervention in Less Developed Countries, by learning from the implementation of Plan's School Improvement Program. In the schools visited children were seated on benches and, in most cases, classes were not over crowded. When visiting the best school in the district, not supported by Plan, its physical appearance was pleasant, but classes were over-crowded and teaching methods involved mainly fact memorization. This reminded me of a course I had once started at a Ugandan University. While my fellow students had grown accustomed to this teaching methodology since primary school I had to excuse myself from continuing this course. The Indonesian consultants conducting the mid-term evaluation were less enthusiastic about the quality of education provided and provided plenty of recommendations. When analysing the quality of an education intervention, standards are much debated. This debate is rooted in policy approaches and global trends and debate.

1.1 MDGs and the Universal declaration on human rights

The debate on quality education is rooted in a broader debate on poverty reduction. On the one hand the 'top-down' approach was believed to result in poverty reduction.

It maintains that development starts at the top with policy makers and 'trickles down' to communities. This approach, is 'strongly associated with

the 1950s through to the early 1970s and places faith in the existence of a linear and rational path to development' (Binns, Elliot, Potter, & Smith, 1999). The 'bottom-up' approach on the other hand, stimulates participation and ownership. Communities and local management gain a larger role in poverty reduction. To achieve poverty reduction, the approaches need to be bridged; common goals have only been set recently.

There is an international commitment to provide education to all children, boys and girls alike. 191 member states of the United Nations have pledged to meet eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 (UNDP, 2003). Goals two and three focus on increasing the access children have to education and promoting gender equality. Improved access to education, as part of the widely supported MDGs, is believed to contribute to poverty reduction for children in less developed countries. Nevertheless, it is questionable whether the funds gathered by slogans such as 'doubling aid to halve poverty' will indeed have the intended effects (Court, Perkin & Warrener, 2005). Improved access to education does not seem to have significantly contributed to the wealth of Less Developed Countries. To realise poverty reduction, the hypothesis that more emphasis is needed on increasing quality education is supported rather than focusing on increased access to education, like the MDGs do.

Box one shows MDGs two and three, their targets and indicators used to monitor progress. With the 2015 target date approaching, these indicators are used to understand whether 'the goals are on track, and where additional efforts and support

Box 1: Millennium Development Goals 2 and 3, targets and progress indicators.



MDG 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education

Target

Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Progress indicators

6. Net enrolment ratio in primary education (UNESCO)
7. Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 (UNESCO)
8. Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds (UNESCO)



MDG 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Target

Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

Progress indicators

9. Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education (UNESCO)
10. Ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 years old (UNESCO)
11. Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector (ILO)
12. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (IPU)

are needed, both globally and at the country level' (www.MDGmonitor.org). From this box it appears that the indicators used include, amongst others, enrolment, progress/ literacy rate and the boy/ girl enrolment ratio.

Some decades before the formulation of the MDGs, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal declaration on Human Rights in Paris in 1948, which states:

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory (UNESCO, 1949, p. 270).

Ever since this declaration, international emphasis has been placed on providing education to all children to ensure that children fulfil their right to education. The provision of UPE in Less Developed Countries has led to mass expansion in Africa, Asia and Latin America since the 1960s.

In Latin-America gross enrolment rates even surpassed 100% by 1980 (Bray, M. 1986). Schools, however, were not equipped to meet the requirements of mass expansion, resulting in declining quality during the 1970s and 1980s (Chapman & Mählck, 1993). The human right justification is, according to Bray, questionable, especially if making it compulsory; 'one might suggest that they should have the right not to attend school as well as to do so' (Bray, p. 151). Additionally the human rights' statement can be criticised, because it does not include a statement on the quality of the education provided. Sefa Dei criticises the Western education system imposed on Africa;

the educational policies in postcolonial Africa were modelled on Western systems of teaching, learning, and schooling whose status have been considerably reinforced through the current globalization processes (Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2006).

The relevance of knowing math, English and science should not overshadow gaining indigenous knowledge. George and Jain share the criticism on the fundamental right to education and expose the irony in demanding protection from the same institutions that infringe upon their human dignity, for they are inherent to institutions (State, market, media and NGOs) themselves (George & Jain, 2000, p. 18) .

NGOs implement their education programs in a globalising world, in which World Bank and UN bodies dominate. Conditionality is essential in the existing power field. The public sector's sense of responsibility in providing quality education decreased due to Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) implemented by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Through these programs much emphasis was placed on privatisation within education. Samoff describes the increasing power of the World Bank:

Since its first loan in 1963, the World Bank has increased its education funding significantly.. By 1990, the World Bank's allocation of nearly U.S. \$ 1.5 billion made it the largest single source of external financing for education in developing countries. ..Dependence on external funds leads to both explicit conditions imposed by the funding organisations and more subtle influences (Samoff, 2003, p. 65).

The conditions set through SAPs are, according to Carnoy, the forerunners to stimulating privatization within the education sector and is supportive of 'free market' policies. Carnoy states that pressure on the public sector to improve educational quality is reduced, as "it makes the public sector less 'responsible' for the delivery

of educational services (Carnoy, 1999, p. 52)". Conditionality set by SAPs has thus contributed to a declining emphasis on quality education in the public sector. Nevertheless, this emphasis might be reinstalled with the formulation of the EFA goals.

1.2 The EFA Goals

The Education for All goals, as the name suggests, emphasises access to education. Quality is, however, incorporated. The dominant emphasis on access has made way for an increased emphasis on improving quality education since the 1990s (Kanu, 1996). The six Education for All goals were formulated during the 1990 World Conference on EFA, in Jomtien, Thailand. 155 countries and representatives from 150 organizations agreed to 'universalise' primary education and reach EFA goals by 2015. A growing concern with quality education is reflected in the EFA goals, as can be seen in box two.

Box 2: The Education For All (EFA) goals

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to a completely free and compulsory, good quality primary education;
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes;
4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and

achievement in basic, good quality education;
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills.

Source: www.unesco.org

While the MDGs assume an improved access to education will result in poverty reduction, the EFA goals are broader in their approach; access to education is described as a human right and education should also be of good quality. EFA goal six, in particular, makes reference to the quality of the education provided. Various governments, such as the Dutch government, increasingly emphasize quality education as a predominant concern (Ministry of foreign affairs, 1999). The Dutch Government is an initiator of the Fast Track Initiative¹. The EFA Global monitoring report of 2008 describes that, out of 129 countries, 51 have achieved or are close to achieving the four most quantifiable EFA goals, 53 are in an intermediate position and 25 are far from achieving EFA as a whole, the EFA Development Index² shows (EFA, 2008, p.1). While access remains a concern, it is currently supplemented by an increasing emphasis on quality education.

Although the EFA goals include providing quality education, the indicators used to monitor progress and its realisation do not really provide information that actually reflects what quality improvement entails. The EFA goals are monitored on the EFA development Index (EDI), which

is a 'composite using four of the six EFA goals, selected on the basis of data availability. The goals are: UPE, adult literacy, quality of education and gender'. On quality education the best available proxy used was the survival rate to grade five. The reason provided for the selection of this proxy is the availability of comparable data for a large number of countries. It is, however, questionable whether this should be the main criteria for selection of such important proxy indicator. In practice, however, few interventions in the area of education aim and closely monitor contributions to an improved quality of the education. Many primary education interventions have not benefited children in a way that it has actually helped them to realise their full potential. Internationally standards of success are compared and this places an increased emphasis on achievements in mathematics, science and English as a foreign language (Cornoy, 1999, p. 16). The danger of monitoring certain indicators, if they were not carefully selected, focus diverts to irrelevant indicators and programs.

1.3. Plan's school Improvement Program

Plan was founded in 1937 and has a long history of supporting children's education around the globe. Plan's average (1996 to 2006) expenditure on education is over US \$ 55 million (Plan International, 2007). Initially, focus was on infrastructure and equipment, but recently Plan has aimed to realise quality education. Plan Netherlands also invests in education, as it is a core theme. Compared to other Dutch co-financing agencies, Plan Netherlands spent the largest

1. This is an international partnership of bilateral and multilateral donors and governments of developing countries that aims to speed up the implementation of education programs to reach the EFA goals.

2. The EFA Development Index reflects progress towards the goals of universal primary education, adult literacy, gender parity and education quality.

share of its budget on basic education. While other co-financing organisations spent between seven to ten per cent of their total budget on basic education in the 2002-2007 subsidy period, Plan Netherlands spent 33 percent of the total budget on basic education (Bruning, E., 2005, p. 16). Plan Netherlands' emphasis on quality education first appeared during the implementation of 'quality learning' in Latin-America in the end of the '90s.

Since 2003 Plan has been implementing a global pilot program that strives for quality education. It is called 'School Improvement Program (SIP)' and has been implemented in Africa, Asia and Latin-America. The overall aim of the SIP Framework is to support the initiatives of governments and civil society groups to achieve EFA goals by 2015. More specifically, the SIP Framework aims to (Plan, 2005):

1. Promote the rights of children and enhance the quality of education they receive
2. Achieve enrolment, attendance and completion rates that meet the EFA goals
3. Achieve gender equity and inclusiveness, and eliminate all forms of discrimination on access to education
4. Achieve better outcomes for children on completion of primary school

The eight focus areas of SIP are (Plan, 2005):

1. Ensuring teachers are competent and motivated, respect and promote child rights
2. Promoting child-centred and activity-based teaching/learning methods, accompanied by

- appropriate teaching/learning aids
3. Promoting the active participation of children and parents in school governance
4. Promoting the establishment of relevant curriculum; and the transparency and accountability of schools and teachers to target children and communities
5. Advocating for supportive supervision and an acceptable level of government budget allocation to the basic education sector
6. Ensuring a safe, sound and effective learning environment.
7. Ensuring high levels of student preparedness (e.g. health-nutrition status, access to ECCD, parental support, motivation to learn³, etc.).
8. Empowerment and support to communities and school leaders.

These focus areas receive attention in the various evaluation reports. This research looks into the different focus areas of SIP. Appendix one provides a thorough description of SIP and appendix two provides the evaluation model for regional SIP evaluation in Latin-America.

While the effective school⁴ paradigm is largely concerned with realising basic skills, the quality education paradigm that prevails in the SIP model entails more than realising these skills alone. The main difference, at least in theory, between SIP and the effective school model is that SIP is not only focusing on technical aspects of quality but also the 'political' accountability of school as an institution through commonly agreed targets and indicators. This is confirmed by lessons learned on the rela-

3. "... student motivation is what really counts in schools", Wrigley, T. (2003) *Schools of HOPE*, p50,

4. Effectiveness refers to 'whether the objectives of a project were achieved (Cracknell, 2000, p. 131). An effective school is a school that 'contributes significantly to students' achievement independently of students' background and community context' (Grisay & Mählick, 1991, p. 5).

onship between accountability and quality education (C.2 appendix one). Besides accountability, another purpose for monitoring and evaluation is to learn from past experiences. SIP takes an integrated approach by simultaneously improving eight components on quality education. These eight components are: Teaching capacity, learning, school governance, healthy environment, curriculum, leadership and school management, government support and child preparedness. Lessons can be learned from the thoroughly evaluated SIP program and its 2005-2007 publications. This study is a continuation of a 2005 publication by Plan Netherlands about learning from its primary education programs (Plan Netherlands, 2005) and on continuous learning in SIP.

Plan Netherlands has been able to implement many of its programs with funding from the Dutch government, whose requirements are becoming stricter. While in western countries this accountability trend has been visible since the 1980s onwards, it has only recently also become visible within NGOs that work in Less Developed Countries (Blank, 1993). Plan Netherlands was, according to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign affairs, insufficiently able to demonstrate its results, its so-called track record and this was one reason for them not to fund its programs in the 2007-2010 subsidy period. Besides upward accountability, Plan is also accountable to Dutch taxpayers and the beneficiaries. The Dutch population seems to have become more critical of development aid. Plan's interventions in education need increased monitoring to ensure funding availability from the Dutch ministry and other institutional donors with strict conditions. The quality of an intervention can only be ensured when it is clo-

sely monitored, thus allowing Plan to adjust its intervention, when it is off track. Stakeholders in the Netherlands that implement programs aiming to improve quality education outlined dilemma's they face and this contributed to the problem formulation.

1.4. Problem formulation

Through methodologies applied, a three-fold problem soon came to light in the early stage of the research. This comprised a lack of; a practice-based definition of quality education, identification of lessons learned in SIP and no agreed indicators to monitor progress at outcome level.

Firstly, Plan has no usable definition of 'quality education'. In the Netherlands there is a forum on quality education, in which the Dutch government, NGOs and various scientists participate. They have searched for common ground on defining quality education but this appears difficult, if not impossible (see chapter four). In chapter four I provide a definition of quality education which is meant to trigger debate.

Secondly, SIP was evaluated and various evaluation reports were written. This SIP was a pilot program and was meant to contribute to the realisation of the EFA goals. In order to ensure the optimal implementation of similar quality education programs in future, it is important to reflect on the implementation of this program and derive lessons learned. These lessons can also serve as direct input for a global evaluation of all Plans' education interventions from 2001-2006, which is currently entering its preparation phase. The recommendations are meant to increase quality education interventions in the near future. Moreover, this thesis will be disseminated to partners within the education sector.

A third problem is that, for accountability purposes, it would be useful if Plan uses agreed indicators at outcome level to monitor contributions to realising quality education. Currently indicators monitor progress at impact level and reflect the international tendency to ensure universal education to all, such as enrolment and dropout rates. They fail to reflect pedagogical processes directly effecting children's' learning in class.

1.5. Research objectives and questions

The following research objective is formulated:

To improve Plan's quality education interventions in Less Developed Countries, by learning from the implementation of Plan's School Improvement Program.

This objective will be realised by addressing the problems formulated in the previous section. Firstly, a practice-based definition of quality education will be sought in the theoretical chapter. Secondly, lessons learned will be derived from the recommendations and findings in the various reports. Thirdly, suggestions are provided on indicators.

This will result in answering the main research question:

What can we learn from the pilot School Improvement Program to improve planning, monitoring and evaluation of quality education programs?

The sub-questions answering this research question are:

1. What is a practice-based definition of 'quality education'?
2. What lessons can be learned from a meta-evaluation of SIP?
3. What indicators can be distilled to monitor and evaluate the progress of quality education programs at outcome level?

These questions are answered in this thesis, to realise the research objective.

1.6. Overview

The next chapter describes methodology applied throughout this thesis. A meta-evaluation of recently published evaluation reports on the SIP program is described, as well as the other methodologies used. Chapter three describes debates on monitoring and evaluating quality education and the research framework, while chapter four provides a definition of quality education. Chapter five describes lessons learned from SIP. Chapter six describes indicators used to monitor quality education. Finally, chapter seven concludes by answering research questions and providing recommendations.

Chapter two: Methodology

Various methods were applied and these are described in this section; desk study (2.1), participatory observations (2.2), semi-structured interviews (2.3), during an evaluation of the SIP program various methods were applied (2.4) and various challenges were faced (2.5). Through triangulation⁵ of different methodologies applied, inputs were verified and falsified.

2.1. Meta-evaluation and literature review

The foundation for this research is a comparison of fifteen evaluation reports that were scattered in various departments at Plan Netherlands. The various evaluation reports were joined and a meta-evaluation started. A meta-evaluation is described by Couderé as:

A meta-analysis consists of 'pooling' results from different individual evaluation or impact studies in relation to a similar program or even a similar topic. Each individual evaluation is considered as a separate 'case'. On the total of these cases non formal, cross-sectional research is then carried out. Meta analysis is not a research subject on its own, but uses existing research findings to reach general statements (Couderé, H. 1994, p. 143, freely translated by M.S. Zwier).

All evaluation reports evaluate the School Improvement Program, either as a mid-term or, more frequently, as a final evaluation. These reports and a short description are presented in appendix three. They include two regional evaluation reports in Africa and Latin-America, their sub-

ordinate country evaluation reports and four other country evaluation reports. The vast majority are programs run in Africa and Latin-America, while a minority runs in Asia. All reports compare control groups used to monitor progress at the SIP pilot schools.

2.2. Participatory observations

Participatory observations were held within Plan Netherlands' policy department and education working group, the quality education forum and Plan's global thematic group. Participant observation entails 'the researcher becoming resident in a community for a period of many months and observing the normal daily lives of its members (Pratt & Loizos, p. 63)'. Notes were continuously made on relevant information.

2.2.1. Quality education forum in the Netherlands

Four meetings were held in 2007 with the quality education forum. This forum comprises thirty one representatives of various NGO's, the Ministry of foreign affairs and universities. Plan Netherlands leads this forum; the participants are presented in appendix four, while appendix five provides an overview of the topics of discussion and guest speakers. During these meetings a definition of quality education was sought, indicators used in various organisations were discussed, UNESCO and UNICEF frameworks of analysis for progress on education programs were discussed, a meeting was held with a Dutch inspector on measuring progress in Dutch education system and a meeting was held on best practices for realising quality education programs.

5. The use of three or more theories, sources or types of information, or types of sources analysis to verify and substantiate an assessment. Note: by combining multiple data sources, methods, analyses or theories, evaluators seek to overcome the bias that comes from single informants, single methods, single observer or single theory studies (OECD, p. 37).

2.2.2. Plan's global thematic group UPE

Universal Primary Education was selected as one of Plan's global themes, based on criteria such as alignment with Plan's mission and vision. A small group of approximately ten members was formed, called global thematic group on UPE, which involve colleagues drawn from across Plan offices. This group currently cooperates on preparations of a global evaluation of Plan's education 2001-2006 interventions. Communication among group members happens through email contact and conference calls.

2.3. Semi-structured interviews

Eight semi-structured interviews were held, these interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed. A list of respondent characteristics is found in Appendix six. These respondents were interviewed because of their knowledge of the SIP program and its implementation. From this list it becomes apparent that the vast majority is made up of Plan staff (6 out of 8 or 75%), the vast majority is male (7 out of 8 or 88 %) and is an expert on education programs (5 out of 8 or 63%). In these semi-structured interviews open questions were asked on policy recommendations respondents consider essential, to verify whether evaluators posed the right questions and whether the SIP framework has included the most essential elements on quality education. They also provided knowledge additional to that which was available from the reports.

2.4. Field visit to Indonesia

In August a two-week visit was made during the evaluation of SIP, including a visit to the office in Jakarta and to the program area in South-Sulawesi. The main objective of participation was to gain knowledge on monitoring and evaluation

practice and methods applied.

Firstly, observations of pupils in class and the school environment were made at six 'SIP schools' and at two 'non-SIP schools', during class hours. Various stakeholders were observed such as; the evaluators, Plan Indonesia program staff, teachers, pupils, parents and communities. Observations and interviews were held with the consultants and eight principles at various schools, the head of education council and head of the education service. Finally, four Focus Group Discussions were held with 36 teachers that addressed progress and difficulties during SIP implementation.

Interviews were held with school (group) inspectors. Informal conversations were held with Plan staff. This included education and Early Childhood Care and Development specialists, Plan Indonesia's monitoring and evaluation officers.

Various informal conversations were held with stakeholders. This included government education officers, environmental education officers and various others. A list of stakeholders with whom conversations were held is included in appendix seven. Various other informal conversations and email correspondences contributed to this thesis.

Finally, a Focus Group Discussion was held with the consultants and coordinator of the program to identify shared and conflicting opinion. The statements include topics that were raised during the evaluation. The participants were enthusiastic about this method.

2.5. Challenges and limitations

Several challenges and limitations were faced. A time frame of 200 hours (twice as many hours were put into the research) most notably restricted research activities, and led to strict prioritisation. Because of this time limit a quantitative survey was not conducted.

Secondly, there was a selection bias in the respondents selected for semi-structured interviews. Since the preferred method used was face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with Plan staff, the respondents selected depended on the program officers visiting the Plan Netherlands' office. Those visitors knowledgeable on the research topic and visiting NLNO are included in the study. A gender bias towards men is visible from appendix six.

Finally, although it would have been interesting to involve children in the research directly, they were only indirectly involved for practical reasons. The research was conducted largely at Plan Netherlands' office and participation of children was therefore difficult. Children were not involved during the field visit to Indonesia because of the tight schedule of the evaluators. Nevertheless, the vast majority of evaluations conducted and reports studied during the evaluation involve children through group discussions. Some evaluators, however, hardly involved children at all, resulting in a limited representation of their views and opinions.

It would be recommended for any future evaluation on children to explicitly mention child participation in the applied methodology.



Picture of knowledge forum on education taken by: M. S. Zwier. February 19, 2008.

Chapter three: Monitoring and evaluating quality education

Throughout the history of monitoring and evaluating quality education programs emphasis is placed on measuring input and output. Although new waves of evaluation strategies can be discerned (3.1), accountability purposes and focus on input and output seem to overshadow learning purpose of monitoring and evaluation (3.2) and a focus on learning processes inside the classroom remain invisible. Different levels of measurement are described (3.3) as well as the process of developing indicators (3.4) and selected components for learning (3.6).

3.1. A review of monitoring and evaluating education programs

Monitoring and evaluation of development efforts have increased simultaneously with increases in aid budgets since the 1960s (Cracknell, 2000). Increased funds were spent on education programs and growing concerns about the proper allocation of these funds resulted in the introduction of evaluations. Evaluations make an effort to discover what results were achieved by an intervention. They try to isolate other possible influential factors to discover what progress made in a program can be attributed to the intervention. While prior evaluations fall within a school effectiveness paradigm⁶, there is a growing need for an education quality paradigm (Janssen, 1995).

Three waves can be discerned within evaluations of school effectiveness research. The first wave, 'the economic production function wave' is characterised by measuring input and output and conducting surveys. In this approach a baseline study allows for an analysis of the 'before'

situation and a survey of the 'after' situation. The difference then illustrates the results that can be attributed to the effort in the education intervention. The 'logical framework approach' supported the application of this approach (Cracknell, 41). This approach was criticised by the end of the 1970s for disregarding local conditions and process variables. The second wave focuses on individual schools, systemic factors and process variables. In the late 1980s a third wave of research emerged, so-called multi-level analysis. This wave is characterised by involving stakeholders at different levels in the educational hierarchy (Ridell, 1997).

Despite changes within the school effectiveness model Jansen argues for a growing need for an education quality paradigm that relates to: "(1) processes of teaching, learning, testing, managing and resourcing which must be (2) investigated on its own terms, i.e. through in-depth qualitative investigations of such processes, and (3) drawing more deliberately on insider perspectives of what happens inside schools and classrooms" (Jansen, 1995:195). Jansen considers these two paradigms as "competing and incompatible" with each other.

As the school effectiveness paradigm was criticized for its rigidity a fourth wave of evaluations developed, commonly referred to as the 'participatory approach' (Cracknell, 2000). This approach is based on Paolo Freire's philosophy. However, the first wave still appears to dominate evaluations of quality education programs (Riddell, 1997).

6. Effectiveness refers to 'whether objectives of a project were achieved (Cracknell, 2000, p. 131)'.

3.2. Learning and accountability

In monitoring and evaluation two issues are central; accountability and learning. Intrac explains that there is polarisation between accountability and learning, this is a central issue in today's monitoring and evaluation debates. While, in theory, reference is constantly made to the learning purpose, in practice most practitioners quickly admit that efforts are prompted by accountability purposes (INTRAC, 2007). Current debate centres around the question whether learning can be combined with or should remain separate from accountability purposes.

Peter Senge placed the concept of the learning organization on the international management agenda in the 1980s. Senge portrays various advantages of becoming a learning organization such as; superior performance, competitive advantage, improved quality, understanding risks and promoting innovation (Boyett, 1998, p. 87). Lessons can be learned from past mistakes and best practices. Roche describes a number of well-known bottlenecks to promoting organisational learning. These include; high staff turnover, poor systems for recording, storing and retrieving information and poor links between learning and training. Within Plan Netherlands the concept of the learning organisation has only recently been institutionalised. Plan is currently revising its quality processes, in which learning and accountability are both included. While accountability is central in Plan's internationally used system known as 'Corporate Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (CPME)', accountability and learning are combined in the Program Accountability and Lear-

ning System (PALS). PALS replaces CPME from January 2008 onwards. The CPME system goes through different project phases, from baseline to planning, monitoring and evaluation of the project.⁷ It is a system that is constantly revised. Progress is measured on Plan indicators on the five Plan Domains,⁸ including the learning domain.

Plan's monitoring and evaluation system was previously criticised for its failure to incorporate the learning component. Van der Velden states that: 'Despite the fact that 'Institutional learning' and 'Learning' belong to the cornerstone of Plan's Principle Guidelines and Domain Principles, internal systems for learning are not in place. This may, in due course, affect the legitimacy of the organisation (van der Velden, 2002, p. 5)'. Wigboldus and Woodhill argue that: the 'learning' element of an enhanced M&E system starts right at the development phase and not only after the system has been designed (Wigboldus and Woodhill, 2004, p. 25)". The concern seems legitimate in the CPME system. Whether the situation will be better in the newly developed PALS system remains to be seen.

3.3. Levels of measurement

A concern in Plan's current monitoring system is that more emphasis is needed on indicators that better address results achieved at the outcome level. Various levels of measurement can be discerned. On the one hand Plan's monitoring system (called PPM) measures output see appendix eight, including numbers of courses provided and numbers of schools built. The CPME system, on the other hand, measures progress at impact le-

7. CPME processes are explained thoroughly in the CPME reference guide and this is considered part of the Field Operations Book.

8. The five Plan domains are: Growing up Healthy, Habitat, Learning, Livelihood and Birth Registration

vel, see appendix nine. The CPME system is used to measure progress at impact level. Within a program, however, it is necessary to measure not only output and impact, but also outcome; what happens in the so-called 'black-box' inside the classroom. OECD defines outcome level as 'The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs (www.oecd.org)'. Appendix ten provides a description of different levels of measurement.

3.4. Developing indicators

The classical debate between qualitative and quantitative research is characterised by their different aims and two quotes (Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M., 1994, p. 40). While 'subjective' supporters of the qualitative research methods aim for complete descriptions and can be characterised by Donald Campbell' quote: 'All research ultimately has a qualitative grounding', 'objective' supporters use quantitative data that aims to construct statistical models to explain what is observed and are characterised by Fred Kerlinger's quote 'There is no such thing as qualitative data. Everything is either 1 or 0'. Debate within the various forums is similar to this classical debate and revolves around the nature of the indicators ; should they be measured quantitatively or qualitatively? Quantitative data is said to be more objective, data collected in different regions becomes comparable and it becomes possible to aggregate data and view trends over time. The disadvantage of quantitative information is that it can fail to grasp the complexities of every day life and the learning processes inside the classroom. Also, focus could remain on input and output, as was the case in the economic production function wave of education evaluations. Qualitative indicators are much praised within social sciences,

because they are able to demonstrate what is actually happening and grasp complexities of everyday life. Nevertheless, Plan faces the difficulty that this information gets lost when it is aggregated. It is also more difficult to compare information from different areas. From Plan Netherlands' education working group, it becomes clear that indicators used insufficiently address the processes within the classroom. The Dutch forum on quality education faces the same difficulty and has formulated an objective to find a limited number of indicators that could be used to monitor progress on quality education. Plan and other international agencies face similar difficulties.

The challenge this research aims to overcome is to bridge the gap between quantitative and qualitative research, in searching for quantifiable indicators that provide qualitative information on processes inside the classroom. Often indicators are used to: "inform us about prevailing problems and hint at some of the causes of these problems" (Vos, R. 1996, p. 2). They are used to indicate that a problem is rising in a certain area. A different approach is necessary in which indicators are carefully selected to direct policy and program implementation. Education indicators should thus be selected to: 'include statistics that have specific relevance to policies that direct and shape education' (Blank, R.K. 1993).

3.5. Frequently faced difficulties in searching for adequate indicators

Difficulties were mentioned in the evaluation reports on monitoring and evaluation of progress.

A primary difficulty is that of attribution. This difficulty has already been mentioned briefly

in the earlier section. Roche describes the difficulties NGOs face: 'Yet one of the most problematic parts of impact assessment is determining causality, because in real life, a combination of several factors is likely to have caused any observed change (Roche, 1999, p. 33)'. To prevent this problem, conducting a baseline can clarify the prior situation. Difficulties persist however, even when a baseline is conducted. It is not certain that changes can be attributed to the intervention, as other interventions might have been influential in the eventual results achieved. A baseline, however, is also not always properly conducted. When a baseline is conducted, it regularly occurs that sampling techniques are not carefully documented and systematically implemented. The result is that data becomes incomparable. A possible solution to this could be to work with a control group that does not take part in the program and is systematically monitored. Information needs might also change over time, which reduces the usefulness of earlier collected data.

A second difficulty in monitoring and evaluation is the aggregation of results. When different units of analysis are used, the results cannot be supplemented to achieve generalising statements and to increase the usability of information. If for example, in one program the number of children reached is counted, while in the other country, the number of classes is counted, this data is cannot be aggregated.

Criteria that indicators use to monitor progress are not always clear. Acronyms, such as SMART and SPICED are used to describe these properties. SMART stands for: - Specific, - Measurable and unambiguous, - Attainable and sensitive, - Relevant and easy to collect and -Time bound.

While SPICED stands for: - Subjective, - Participatory, - Interpreted and communicable, - Cross-checked and compared, - Empowering and - Diverse and disaggregated (Roche, 1999, p. 48-49).

A third difficulty deals with the usability of indicators in different settings, contexts and socio-, political- and economic situations. Although EFA goals are agreed upon by a large number of countries, governments differ in their interpretations of quality education. Realising gender equality is differently interpreted in different areas. It is therefore questionable, whether it is worth striving for universal indicators that can monitor progress. It might be suggested that indicators should be adaptable to local circumstances and not be isolated from reality or imposed in a top down manner.

A final difficulty organisations face is to ensure that data is measured in a gender disaggregated manner. It is important in mainstreaming gender throughout programs that indicators used are sex disaggregated; meaning that each indicator measures male and female discrepancies (1997, CIDA, p. 16). It is however not enough to only measure indicators in a gender disaggregated manner, it is necessary to also investigate the processes inside class. Stromquist rightly emphasizes that indicators need to be "placed in their socio-economic and political context in order to reach an accurate interpretation, both of what they mean, and what may have caused them" [Stromquist 2003]. Despite the improvement in gender parity [achieving equal participation of girls and boys in all forms of education based on their proportion in the relevant age-groups in the population, improvement in the area of gender equality [ensuring educational

equality between boys and girls (Subrahmanian, p. 363)] are limited. Education should not only be measured by increased access (right to education), but also gender aware education environments processes and outcomes (right within education) and meaningful education outcomes that link education equality with the wider process of gender justice (right through education)] (Wilson, 2003). Gender equality deals with the relationship between men and women. Subrahmanian stresses the importance of the

relational aspect when stating: “given that the socially constructed inequalities between boys and girls are often reproduced through social institutions, including educational institutions, in ways that do not challenge prevailing discriminatory norms and practices (Subrahmanian, 2005, p. 401)”.

SIP component	Albania	Egypt	Ethiopia	Malawi	Sudan	Uganda	Zambia	Regional Africa	Honduras	Nicaragua/Peru	El Salvador	Ecuador	Regional L-America	China	Total
1	1	3	2	2	6	2	2	1	3	3	3	1	3	1	36
2		2	1	1	4	3	2	2	3	3	3	1	3	1	32
3	1	4	1	2	3	1	2		3	3	3	2	3		31
4				1	1							1			3
5	1	3*	2*	3*	4*	3*	1	2*	2*	2*	2*		2*	4*	33
6	1	1			3									2	7
7					1		1								2
8	1				1							1			4
Gender		2		1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1		11
Total	5	15	6	10	24	10	8	6	12	12	12	7	12	8	159

Table 1: Appearance of specific SIP component and gender⁹ in recommendations

* M&E and administration within Plan, but also in relation to the government system

Source: Plan Albania, 2006; Plan China, 2006; Plan Ecuador, 2007; Plan Egypt, 2007; Plan El Salvador, 2006; Plan Ethiopia, 2006; Plan Honduras, 2006; Plan International, 2007; Plan Malawi, 2006; Plan Nicaragua, 2006; Plan Peru, 2006; Plan regional office, 2007; Plan Sudan, 2006; Plan Uganda, 2007; Plan Zambia, 2006.

9. Other recommendations, that do not fall within these components describe various aspects of quality education, such as; information sharing mechanisms for teachers (Albania), scaling-up of SIP and acquisition (Egypt, Sudan, Uganda & regional Africa), developing mechanisms to strengthen coordination in collaborative forms (Ethiopia, Sudan, Regional Africa), improvement of project implementation processes and procedures at Plan office (Malawi, Zambia, Regional Africa) and emphasis needed on inclusive education, high levels of drop-out (Malawi).

3.6. Selected components for learning

After reading the various reports a first analysis was made to select a number of key components that need improvement. This selection was necessary, because of the limited time available for this research and limited information availability in the reports. Two criteria were used to select these components; firstly the frequency with which the reports address specific SIP components (information availability). The recommendations of these reports were read and a scan was made, based on these recommendations. Table one roughly shows the frequency at which the different focus areas of SIP are mentioned in the recommendations. Besides the SIP components, gender is frequently mentioned and this is one of the SIP aims; therefore this aspect was included in the analysis as well. From this representation it is visible that components on teachers, on methodologies, on school governance and on the government gain most attention in the different reports. These components were, therefore, included in the research. The other components received less attention in the reports, but were not excluded straight away.

A second criterion was used to select some additional components. This criterion is the emphasis put on certain issues in the various reports and in the semi-structured interviews. Hardly any reports mention the relevance of the curriculum; this component and the component on the learning environment were included at the early stage of the research. During the semi-structured interviews respondents frequently mentioned that Plan is relatively successful at improving the learning environment, but that the content and relevance of the curriculum requires more emphasis. That is why the latter component was included, while the former was not. Within the reports' recommendations there was relatively little emphasis on the ECCD component. The reports that did include this component limited their recommendations to the importance of this component and, to a lesser extent, on what could be learned from experience.

This component also received little attention during the semi-structured interviews. During the field visit to Indonesia, it appeared that ECCD and the environmental aspects were important there, as it did from that evaluation report, which was published in November. It did not say that the components included in the research are more important than those excluded; its exclusion is based on information availability and a limited time for this research. The last three components from the original eight were therefore excluded in further analysis. These three components address the environment, student preparedness and school leadership.

Six components were selected as key components that require more attention. These four components were frequently mentioned and emphasised recommendations of the various evaluation reports. The six areas addressed in SIP that are included in this study are: Teacher motivation and competence, teaching methodology, participation of children in school governance, relevance of the curriculum, involvement of the local education department and gender. Recommendations from various evaluation reports are compared by conducting a meta-evaluation. Identifying lessons learned is central. A learned lesson is defined as:

Generalizations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact (OECD, p. 26).

Chapter five describes the lessons that can be learned from the different evaluation reports. In the next chapter a practice-based definition of quality education is sought.

Chapter four: Defining quality education

Finding a practice-based definition of quality education is necessary to improve the quality of an education program. This chapter answers the first research question: ‘What is a practice-based definition of ‘quality education?’’. It reflects on dimensions and elements of quality education as used by various stakeholders (4.1) and provides a definition that is meant to trigger debate (4.2).

4.1. Dimensions of quality education

Considerable consensus exists on dimensions with which quality education should comply. These dimensions have been developed by UNICEF and are presented in box three.

Box 3: Dimensions of quality education as defined by UNICEF

1. Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;
2. Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;
3. Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace;
4. Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed schools. Skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities;
5. Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

Source: UNICEF, 2000, p. 4.

Besides these dimensions the UNESCO framework for understanding quality education, attached in appendix 11 is influential in setting standards for quality education in NGOs, including Plan. Defining what is meant by quality education is essential; it is a crucial first step to providing policy directions and to identifying indicators on which Plan will measure its success. In Plan’s policy paper no definition is provided but five main characteristics of quality are described (Plan Netherlands, 2006). These include; nutritional status (children need to be healthy and ready to learn), conducive environment (schools should be safe and adequately resourced, both in terms of physical and psychosocial elements), teachers (teachers are the main link between a school, its pupils and their community), curriculum (CRC stresses that the curriculum should be of direct relevance to the child’s social, cultural, environmental and economic context. Curriculum should be standard based and take into account local knowledge and contexts) and organisation (issues range from a financial resource base to inclusive decision-making processes) (Plan Netherlands, 2006). Additionally it is stated that these characteristics are in line with policies set by UNICEF and the Dutch government. They however do not provide a definition of what exactly is meant by quality education and do not go beyond identifying dimensions or characteristics with which quality education should comply (UNICEF, 2000; Ministry of foreign affairs, 1999).

Participants of the Dutch forum on quality education were asked for their definition of quality

education. No participants had a definition of quality education, but the majority mentioned elements of quality education. From the above descriptions it becomes clear that the participants in this forum aim to realise quality education. They strive for more than just the realisation of the MDGs and increasing access to education, as their aims are more in line with EFA goals that include a contribution to quality.

4.2. Debate on right to education

The concept of quality education is rooted in the international debate on the universal right to education. This debate is divided into those supporting the current world order and those who want fundamental change, which is reflected in their stance towards the global campaign for universal primary education. UNESCO, UNICEF and governments all support the campaign for UPE. According to international declarations, education is a fundamental human right.

Others believe that the campaign for 'right to education' is founded on northern interests from which they will benefit through international institutions. George and Jain explain the profits Northern countries will make, because of UNESCO distributing textbooks and curricular materials, as declared in the integrated framework on education for peace, democracy and human rights (1995) (George, Jain, 2000, p. 14.). Furthermore, they stress why it is so crucial to them to push UPE into becoming a human right

When education is ratified in the Constitution as a fundamental right, the State will be forced to increase the level of public subsidies it provides for the sector. This increase will require a reduction in spending in other social sectors, an increase in

common taxes, and most importantly, the taking out of international loans (George, Jain, p. 15).

Freire moves from this global debate to the classroom, where quality education is taught. He relates education to liberation of 'the oppressed'. He describes the provided education to the power fields in which provision of education takes place. His famous book 'Pedagogy of the oppressed' portrays the classroom as a 'black-box'; what happens inside the classroom is frequently invisible, though crucial to the child's learning process (Freire, 1970). He describes the oppression of people and develops a theory on how they can realise 'their liberation', by becoming conscious of their reality. Two opposing approaches are distinguished; the banking and problem-posing approach to education. The first approach consists of teachers "filling" pupils with irrelevant facts. The "problem-posing" approach encourages the development of a critical consciousness. Quality education deals with improving the education provided, but northern powerful countries might not benefit from empowerment processes that could be triggered by quality education and might subsequently not support such initiatives. This is the international debate in which 'quality education' needs to be defined.

4.3. A definition of quality education

Various participants in the Dutch quality education forum have described essential elements in quality education and dilemmas they face.

Appendix twelve outlines eight participants' contributions regarding views they hold of a definition of quality education and dilemmas and problems they face. From the elements described by the participants and those elements formulated by the Dutch ministry of foreign affairs (Minis-

try of foreign affairs, 1999, p. 25) a definition of quality education is formulated. Most frequently mentioned elements relate to UNICEF elements and address; learning processes, teacher role, cognitive development, teaching content, school environment and gender.

A definition of quality education, used throughout this thesis:

Knowledge boys and girls gain through methodologies, learning materials, textbooks and a relevant curriculum that stimulates inquiry and dialogue between pupils and teachers in school, all within an institutional and organisational framework, that increases their problem-posing abilities in their daily lives.

Some components of this definition require further explanation. The term 'institutional framework' describes the policies, formal and informal regulations that determine the quality of education. The term 'institution' is not used by the organisations, although Bernard van Leer Foundation and the ministry of foreign affairs do refer to policies in their descriptions. Appendix thirteen describes the broader theoretical debate that emphasises the importance of incorporating an institutional and organisational analysis in the realisation of a public good, such as education. The institutional setting is studied separately to the organisational setting; the rules and the players are distinguished.

The organisational framework refers to actors, those who are involved in the institutional framework, i.e. the education system.

Thirdly the term problem-posing ability requires further clarification. The forum participants all emphasise the importance of interactive learning methodology. Freire describes 'the problem-posing approach to education', which resulted in the inclusion of the term 'problem-posing abilities' in the definition.

Fourthly, the term 'daily lives' requires clarification. Oxfam Novib uses this term as a core element of quality education. To improve the quality of education it is important to take the broader context of the child into consideration. This is in line with Sen's capability approach. Sen describes how the capability of a person reflects 'alternative combinations of functions the person can achieve, and from which he or she can choose one collection (Sen, 1993). According to Sen the freedom to lead different types of life is reflected in the person's capability set (Sen, p.33).

Finally, boys and girls are mentioned separately because it is important to distinguish between them and ensure that additional focus is put on girls to increase their participation. Plan Netherlands, like all other NGO's, has mainstreamed gender throughout their policies.

Chapter five: Lessons learned from Plan's School Improvement program

In this chapter the second research question is answered: 'What lessons can be learned from a meta-evaluation of SIP'? These lessons are described on six components; teacher motivation and competence (5.1), teaching methodology (5.2), participation children in school governance (5.3), relevance of the curriculum (5.4), involvement local education department (5.5) and gender (5.6).

5.1. Teacher motivation and competence

In all the recommendations made in the evaluation reports (see table 1) and in all interviews teacher motivation and competence was mentioned as a key component in realising quality education. The first SIP component is described as: 'Ensuring teachers are competent and motivated, respect and promote child rights'. The evaluation reports studied, respondents spoken to and the Dutch forum all recognise the importance of teacher's motivation and competence in realising quality education.

Various recommendations are made in the evaluation reports to improve the teacher's motivation. These can be clustered in the need for more suitable training, improved housing facilities and the institutionalisation of active learning. Firstly, the reports all have certain recommendations on how to ensure the teacher training better fits local needs. In Egypt for example the need for specialized teachers for certain activities such as music, computer and sports has been identified (Plan Egypt, 2007, p. 13). In Uganda a lack of skills in child-centred teaching methods by new teachers has been noticed (Plan Uganda, 2007, p. 31). In China it was noted that there were unequal opportunities for

teachers to receive training. The principle gave preference to young teachers to follow training, because "they are considered have fewer family commitments, find it easier to adapt to new knowledge and have better stamina (Plan China, 2006, p. 42)".

Secondly, in Malawi, the provision of teachers' blocks and teacher houses resulted in an increase in the punctuality of teachers and pupils (Plan Malawi, 2006, p.34). Finally, the Ethiopian reports stress that active learning should be institutionalized in the schools. They explain that short term trainings at cluster level and support systems from the district education office should be strengthened (Plan Ethiopia, 2006, p.45). Furthermore, they stress the need for activity-oriented reading materials for school teachers. Thirdly, the institutionalisation of learning is recommended. The Malawi (Plan Malawi, p. 6), Albania (Plan Albania, 2006, p.24) and Ethiopia (Plan Ethiopia, 2006, p.45) reports recommend that teacher training should become a continuous process because of the high teacher turnover. Follow-up should be given to courses provided and teacher training should be institutionalised. The Albanian evaluation recommends providing continuous in-service training to provide an additional incentive for teachers and students. They advise the use of long-distance learning approaches so that rural teachers do not have to travel to the capital city (Plan Albania, p. 24).

The respondents also recognise the importance of motivated and competent teachers. They stress the importance of increased teacher salaries and the recognition of teachers requires

continued emphasis. Mr. DeGreve, program support manager at Plan Indonesia, explains that in Indonesia teacher salaries are low and although 'being a teacher is a respected profession, you can't buy much with that alone'. Mr. Wei explains that implementation of the SIP program implies a heavy workload, which is not translated in the teacher performance recognised by the government system. There is no additional certification, which could increase teacher motivation. Mrs. Cusato explains the importance of the competencies of teachers; 'without the necessary skills, teachers will not be motivated in the long run'. The respondents describe how capacity could increase through more competencies and certification by the education department.

Teacher motivation is regarded, by the evaluation reports and respondents, as essential in improving the quality of education provided to children. Challenges need to be faced, such as considering a high teacher turnover and responding to it. These challenges can be faced by providing; more suitable trainings, improving housing facilities and institutionalising active learning. Lobbying should also occur to increase teacher salaries and to gain recognition for teachers' increased capacity through government certification.

5.2. Teaching methodologies

The second component of the SIP framework describes how SIP aims to: 'Promote child-centred and activity-based teaching/learning methods, accompanied by appropriate teaching/learning aids'. Although training is successfully provided to the teachers of, for example, Child Friendly Teaching methodology, implementation of participatory methodologies frequent-

ly remains invisible. Fourteen out of fifteen evaluation reports stress the importance of improving the teaching methodologies in their recommendations. The majority of the evaluation reports describe how teacher methodologies are based on memorization and that children are passive in class. The regional SIP evaluation in Latin-America describes the passive learning process in the area:

The classes observed at the SIP schools in the different countries are of the more traditional type, characterized by the mechanical reproduction of the contents delivered by the teacher in class...There is no connection with or discussion of previous knowledge or integration with other areas of learning either. Although there are group work activities, students are passive in their learning process (Plan Regional Office, 2007, p.141).

Changing the methodology applied by the teacher therefore remains a challenge. Egypt's evaluation report provides a positive exception; training the teachers in different subjects improved their skills and enabled them to deal with pupils in the classroom in a more participatory way, based on dialogue rather than on memorization (Plan Egypt, 2006, P. 74).

Suggestions made by teachers on how to improve methodologies applied by fellow teachers are; to support working with children with learning disabilities, continued support on professional development in methodological strategies, administrative support to monitor innovations and sharing experiences with other teachers (Plan Regional Office, 2007, p. 133).

Respondents also acknowledge this importance but are careful in their ambition regarding what is achievable in this area. They recognise that, prior to improving teaching methodologies, teachers should have knowledge of the content of what is taught. The respondents share a concern similar to that of the evaluators in the evaluation reports. According to them, a few necessary steps need consideration before teacher methodology can improve. Mrs. Cusato stresses the importance of knowledge of content, before looking into methodology applied. She raises the question of how to transform those teachers that have the worse results and explains that there is no single recipe for success; one methodology may work for one child, but not for another.

The teacher not only needs to be able to implement good methodology but, first of all, they have to be familiar with the content of a program. A teacher has to manage various methodologies and has to adjust the methodology he or she applies, based on the characteristics of the students and the group (Mrs. Cusato). Mr. DeGreve also addresses the importance of reaching marginalized children.

The way forward includes continued teacher training on subjects (content), child friendly and participatory methodologies, learning (sharing experiences with other teachers), administration (to increase innovation and improve monitoring and evaluation) and inclusiveness aimed at reaching those children with disabilities and poor children (possibly also those affected by aids). These recommendations are made in the different evaluation reports.

5.3. Child participation in school governance

Perceptions parents, teachers and communities have of childhood differ and the ability of children to participate in school governance differs too. Traditionally, a concept of childhood persists as a period of dependency, with the need to be informed, disciplined and helped in the developing world. In progressive notions of childhood, children are regarded as knowledgeable and able to take on responsibilities. There is a close link between the construct of childhood in society and child participation. Most SIP reports and respondents regard children as able to co-manage the education they receive. Different lessons can be learned from SIP with regard to child participation in management.

Child participation is widely acknowledged as a crucial aspect in improving quality education; thirteen out of fifteen evaluation reports provide recommendations on how this component can be improved. Firstly, various reports mention the added value of children's participation in service delivery. Service delivery is part of Plan's activities and children in some program areas were involved in the services provided. This involvement resulted in a more comfortable learning environment that better fitted children's needs. In Sudan, for example children proposed that new benches should be made out of timber and have spaces in between, rather than be one broad plank. This is how they were designed and they are popular (Plan Sudan, 2006, p. 20). The respondents did not mention children's participation in service delivery. Children's participation is positively perceived by the evaluators and should be considered in future service delivery in any SIP program.

Secondly the reports emphasise the importance of increased involvement of children in school management; younger children, girls, poor and marginalized children require continued attention to ensure their involvement. The Sudan report acknowledges the achievements of SIP in the acceptance of children in forums with their head teachers, parents, chiefs and other opinion leaders to discuss issues relating to school development (Plan Sudan, 2006, p. ix). The report however, also mentions that older students are dominating meetings, while younger pupils are hardly present at all (Plan Sudan, 2006). It is suggested that younger children are included through improved structures:

‘a more structured and institutionalized type of participation is valued, it needs to be open to issues that are more related to the children themselves, to lower grades, and not only to the best students (Plan Regional office, 2007, p. 161)’.

Respondents acknowledge the need to involve all children. Relating the programs to the local realities of children in various areas is difficult. Mrs. Cusato explains that it is crucial to change the perception parents have of children. According to her a child should not be treated as Pinocchio; ‘it’s not a toy you have to mould. A child should be perceived as capable of participating in its own process; the right to participate is part of the rights of the child’. She gives the example of teaching them about sexuality: ‘Teachers and parents might say they are too young’. She adds that ‘many facilitators do not feel that children can participate in their educational process; they adopt it as a discourse, but don’t really feel it. But social inclusion also

means reaching those that are still excluded from the education system’. An additional effort is needed to reach them. Mr. DeGreve confirms this, he emphasizes that ‘education for all is more a ‘war cry’ and insufficient investments are made to realize it for marginalized groups, handicapped and socially disadvantaged children’. A challenge mentioned in doing so, is that it might not be in everyone’s interest to shift powers to children. Children empowerment, directly relates to a disempowerment of other stakeholders. Increased participation invariably means a shift in powers. Mr. Wei explains that ‘power shifts encouraged through participation might run against the interest of those who have the power over its implementation’. Realising the empowerment of marginalized children is not straightforward and requires specific attention.

Finally, although the evaluation reports paid little attention to increasing child participation, most respondents mentioned the importance of involving children in monitoring and evaluation. Mr. Massart explains that it is important to understand the problems children face from their perspective. He describes how child-friendly evaluation methods, such as theatre, can increase understanding of their problems and those of the wider community. He gives the example of a study conducted in which youth groups played with researchers:

We invite them to a place and we stimulate them by saying: ok, imagine this tree has been listening and watching and has a big memory. You’re talking to this tree, what could it tell you? From there the children decide a topic and form a play (Mr. Massart).

Through participatory evaluation methods children's problems and understanding can better be integrated into the development of the program.¹⁰ Children's involvement in school governance requires a shift in perceptions of the broader community. Children should be perceived as participants, rather than solely recipients of education. Through a changed perception, their views will be taken into consideration by others in the community.

5.4. Relevance of the curriculum

The fourth component in the SIP framework describes the relevance of the curriculum:

Promoting the establishment of relevant curriculum; and the transparency and accountability of schools and teachers to target children and communities

The various SIP evaluation reports pay little attention to the relevance of the curriculum; only three out of fifteen evaluation reports pay attention to this component in their recommendations. The SIP Honduras report describes that there is an absence of specific questions referring to curricular questions in the program and also on the follow-up of such questions (Plan Honduras, 2006, p. 61). It is not only SIP Honduras, but all other evaluation reports that pay little or no attention to the relevance of the curriculum. The Malawi report does mention that to reduce the high drop out in lower sections of primary school 'there is need for studies on indigenous and exogenous complementarities or those that can help us understand better the transition from home to school and appropriate

teaching methodologies to address transitional gaps while promoting positive home traits' (Plan Malawi, 2006, p 64). In Ecuador curricular redesign procedures are recommended at national and regional levels for bilingual education. The Ecuador report also describes that 'education professionals consider that the standard curriculum used by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) is outdated and irrelevant, especially for children living in poor, rural areas of the country' (Plan Ecuador, 2005, p. 8). The other reports pay little attention to the relevance of the curriculum.

The absence of information on the relevance of the curriculum in the SIP evaluation reports is in stark contrast with the emphasis placed on it in the semi-structured interviews. All respondents emphasise the importance of a curriculum that meets local needs. Respondents link relevance of the curriculum to a broader debate in the education paradigm. Mr. Massart, evaluation and research specialist at the West Africa Regional Office, is most critical in this perspective. He explains that currently in western Africa, education programs do not fit actual conditions.

This is post-colonialism; this is not a free world. Shaping the knowledge discourse is extremely important in this post-colonial era; making sure that Africans see themselves as lacking everything and lacking development. It's the discourse of being out of time... What do you do with an education system that systematically puts down African skills and only valorises skills coming from outside? (Mr. Massart).

10. See also: National Evaluation of the Children's Fund (NECF). The evaluator's cookbook: Participatory evaluation exercises. www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Education programs, according to Massart, fail to meet local conditions in relation to the local time schedules, the skills learned, the language and the local needs of people. He describes the gloomy situation in Western Africa and criticises the irrelevant facts learned at schools, like learning about the Eiffel tower and French grammar at the age of six, while little emphasis is paid to local and more relevant knowledge in the context. These statements are however rejected by Plan's senior policy advisor who comments:

Many education experts tend to think that content and relevance of the curriculum is a serious issue. I disagree. If we are considering primary education (grades 1 to 5 or 6), the national curriculum that exists in many countries is relevant and is adequate. A national curriculum should take into account the educational needs of all children coming from different geographical locations and socio-cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it may not be and cannot be relevant to the specific needs of each and every community in a country. To make the curriculum context and need specific, the teachers should use their creativity and adapt the national curriculum to suit the local context and culture. Therefore the curriculum application is the problem and not the curriculum content as many technical staff think.

However, there may be other issues pertaining to the freedom that the Ministry of Education or the local education offices allow to teachers to use the curricula flexibly and teachers' competence and confidence to apply the curriculum creatively. Curriculum after all is a medium to teach certain competencies. As long as the teachers are equipped to apply the curriculum creatively and help the pupils

acquire the expected competencies, there should not be any problem. (Sathya, F., 2008, email correspondence).

Mrs. Cusato describes the tendency in Latin America to provide a homogenous curriculum and advocates the situation where children, parents and the community decide curriculum content. She explains that this tendency originates with the desire to give the same chances to all but, according to her, equality is not reached by giving the same opportunities to all, but by giving opportunities to those that need them and ensuring their use of these opportunities. Mrs. Cusato stresses that Plan's strength is their knowledge of local reality. It is important to understand the reasons why people make certain choices. To an outsider it might seem that these are not in the best interests of the child but in the given context such a choice might actually reflect the child's interest. Mr. Wei, Plan China's program support manager, explains that in China the curriculum is internationalised and does not fit the local context. A curriculum reform is currently taking place to increase the relevance of its content as a result of Plan China's active lobbying.

To determine the way forward and increase the relevance of the curriculum requires more investigation. Because little emphasis was given to this SIP component in the various evaluation reports, more research is needed in this area. The respondents stress that this component is crucial in order to increase the quality and relevance of the education children receive, while Plan's senior policy advisor questions whether the content is really the crux of the matter or whether it is the application of the curriculum that is the hampering factor.

5.5. Involvement of the local education department

The fifth SIP component describes how important it is to: ‘Advocate for supportive supervision and an acceptable level of government budget allocation to the basic education sector’. Discussions persist about the shape government and NGO cooperation should take in realising quality education for children. Formally, it is the responsibility of the local government to provide free primary education. NGOs however fill the gaps of ‘failing states’ in Africa, Asia and Latin-America. Respondents acknowledge the importance of supportive supervision and an acceptable level of government budget and add some other areas for improving cooperation.

Thirteen out of fifteen evaluation reports stress the need to improve supportive supervision through monitoring and evaluation systems in their recommendations. Most evaluation reports see a role for the government and local inspectors. Sufficient budget needs to be allocated to monitoring and evaluation from the design of the program onwards.¹¹ The China evaluation report argues that ‘monitoring and evaluation by Plan should be combined with a supportive educational inspection system of the local education department (Plan China, 2006, p. 47)’. A similar argument is made in the Uganda report, stressing the need for close monitoring by the District Education Officers (especially the school inspectors) (Plan Uganda, 2007, p. 8) and a hand-over policy (this includes training on the administration of teachers’ salaries and

inspector training). Monitoring and evaluation of the SIP program by Plan should supplement and, as much as possible, make use of monitoring by the local inspectors. The Uganda report states that:

For sustainability and/or scaling up of the SIP, it is important the District Education Officers, especially the School Inspectors, are mobilised and closely involved in the monitoring of SIP-type undertakings (Plan Uganda, 2007, p. 8).

Local inspectors already collect data on educational progress; it seems a more sustainable effort for Plan to increase the capacity of these local inspectors and make use of the data they collect, rather than each monitoring their own progress. These inspectors will be there in the long-term, even when Plan phases out. During the field visit to Indonesia, it appeared that much information is collected by teachers on, for example, boy and girl attendance in class. This data was collected by the inspectors, but not by Plan, even though it could be useful data.

The importance of an acceptable level of government budget is mentioned in relatively few evaluation reports, despite it being part of the SIP component. The Uganda report suggests that Plan should negotiate with the District Education Office so that the government (MoE) school development funds are channelled into the provision of teachers’ houses (Plan Uganda, 2007, p. 9). Lobbying is also mentioned to ensure stable teacher salaries. Respondents do mention that

11. Sufficient budget needs to be allocated within Plan for monitoring and evaluation, but also within the education department: “The weakest dimension, totally inexistent in the designs (the logical matrixes) of the pilot SIP programs, is that of a supervision that provides support and an acceptable level of budget allocated by the education department. This area probably requires further analysis in terms of the realities of each country to be able to adjust the possibilities to the needs (Plan Regional Office, 2007, p.151)”.

it is important that the government allocates sufficient budget to education. Mr. DeGreve emphasises that the Indonesian government should allocate an appropriate share of government budget to quality education. DeGreve explains the decentralisation in the Indonesian government. This results in the problem that the national government does not allocate the agreed share of 20 % of the total budget to education, but limits itself to a share that varies between 10 and 15% of the total budget.

Besides advocacy for a sufficient level of budget to the education system and a supportive system, other areas are mentioned for which Plan should improve cooperation with the government.

The regional Latin America evaluation suggests creating a forum for discussion. The report explains the importance of a shared and participatory administration because it allows dialogue amongst actors and consultation with the educational community. It also stressed that

regular monitoring should be stimulated.¹² The reports suggest a role for Plan to lobby for and advocate more government support in areas such as; teacher housing conditions, teacher contracts,¹³ teacher salaries,¹⁴ early childhood care and development¹⁵ and child rights and gender. Although in most countries Plan policy is in line with that of the local education department,¹⁶ gender inclusiveness, children's rights and Early Childhood Care and Development are frequently not included in government's education policy.

Respondents emphasise the importance of the aspects that are less emphasised in the evaluation reports. Mr. Surwanto, Plan Indonesia's ECCD coordinator for example describes the negligence of the Indonesian government in this respect and emphasises that a lot remains to be done to improve this situation. Respondents furthermore describe that cooperation with the local education department is crucial for the sustainability of the program.

12. The Plan Sudan evaluation report mentions that 'Close monitoring and effective feedback system by front-line/programme staff is vital in ensuring that capacity enhancement activities yield results. .It does appear that visits and contacts with some of the schools are infrequent, and limited to meetings during training sessions. There would be a need to intensify monitoring in order to detect weaknesses early and take the necessary action (Plan Sudan, 2006, p. 78)'.

13. The Albanian report explains that investments are not stable, because of the high teacher turnover. They propose to that 'before new trained programs are applied there has to be a contract with the department of education where the trained teachers are equipped with a long term working contract (Plan Albania, 2006, p. 24)'. In case of a shift in government, the teachers will have a working contract they can rely on. Plan should stay involved to increase the number of contracts teachers have with the government.

14. Plan rarely provides teacher salaries, while teacher salary is one important driver for a teacher's motivation. Plan relies on government for teacher salaries and thus for a large part on teacher's motivation.

15. The evaluators in Sudan recommend lobbying, advocacy and capacity enhancement as a means of the state education department to 'take full responsibility for basic education, targeting areas that have been neglected so far like early childhood development (ECD) (Plan Sudan, 2006, p. 75)'.

16. The regional Africa evaluation report recommends Plan works with women's and children's rights' organisations at national level to strengthen its lobbying capacity with respect to community empowerment, gender inclusiveness and children's rights (Africa regional, p.5).

Given the current formulation of the SIP component on government cooperation, it might be good to reflect on its formulation and broaden it. From the various evaluation reports it appears that more areas need to be included within this component.

5.6. Gender parity and equality

One aim of SIP is to: 'Achieve gender equity and inclusiveness, and eliminate all forms of discrimination to access to education'. Lessons are learned from reports and respondents.

Firstly, various reports show that much needs to be improved if female representation is to be increased in decision-making positions. Various reports show that women participate, but do not decide. A first example is the Egyptian evaluation that stresses that 'women are refrained from participation in the board of trustees and the parents' associations due to their family responsibilities and the dominant traditions in their communities (Plan Egypt, 2007, p. 71)'. The Sudanese report reflects on this reality and provides an example of a committee composed of six women and fourteen men, because in their culture:

Women take time at home looking after the children, providing food and taking care of the home, andMen are the ones who are responsible for decision making on matters such as education and others issues!" (Plan Sudan, 2006, p. 21).

The vast majority of the reports in Africa and Latin-America reflect on this lack of decision making power by women. It is recommended that an increased number of females are included in decision-making positions within school government bodies and committees.

Secondly, certain reports describe how gender equality can be achieved by improving gender sensitivity in education. They describe how SIP should tackle the reproduction of gender relationships through the school as an institution and through sensitization of children, parents and teachers. This is described by the African regional evaluation:

Promoting educational programs from a gender perspective implies having to analyze the performance achieved by boys and girls, in addition to identifying possible factors of discrimination and/or promotion of sexual equality, in the areas of school administration, leadership, and the participation in classroom, family and institutional contexts (Plan Regional Office, 2007, 176-177).

Implementation of the education programs thus requires continued monitoring of girls' and boys' performance, to unravel inequalities that have become part of the education system.

Thirdly, according to a number of reports, the broader community needs to be sensitised about gender equality. Some success cases were described, such as in Egypt and Malawi. Plan is successfully increasing parents' awareness about the importance of girl education (Plan Egypt, 2007, p. 12). Realised by providing training and organizing orientation sessions and meetings with parents. Initiatives focusing on girl empowerment are well accepted. In Malawi results were acknowledged as girls were empowered through 'Girl Guide clubs' and through the 'take a girl to work' initiative, through which they gain responsibility in learning (Plan Malawi, 2006, p. 3) and working women serve as role models (ibid, p. 32).

Respondents stress that realizing gender equality means realizing change within the broader community. Mrs. Cusato stresses that Plan could be a strong actor in realising gender equality because Plan works directly in communities and takes an integrated approach. From the focus group discussion held in Indonesia it appeared that expectations towards realising improvements in the area of gender should not be too high, it is difficult to change this culturally embedded situation. It also became clear that although females are teaching, they hardly ever reach management positions. From eight schools that were visited only one was headed by a female principle (similar figures are reported on the evaluated schools). Although females participated in the school committees, they did

not hold decision-making positions, such as the chair, secretary or treasurer, but rather would participate as members.

Changing gender relations means changing the roots of a society. From the SIP evaluation reports, the interviews and the field visit, it appears that realising gender equality is embedded in the broader society and should be dealt with as a relational concept, involving both sexes. Although in policy gender is mainstreamed, in practice much needs to be realised to ensure gender is not 'out streamed'. The risk of mainstreaming is that gender becomes everybody's responsibility, but that in reality it is nobody's responsibility.

Chapter six: indicators for monitoring and evaluating quality education

Monitoring and evaluating the progress with realising quality education is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, it must be ascertained whether development practitioners, such as Dutch NGOs and government, are on track in realising the MDGs and EFA goals. Secondly, an assessment must be made of whether budgets on primary education are properly spent (accountability). Another reason for monitoring progress is to learn from monitoring our goals. Whenever it appears that we are 'off track' on certain goals, this can raise questions for further investigation. It allows the readjustment of strategies when, in a certain area, results are lagging behind. What has already become clear from the earlier section is that in- and outputs are frequently monitored, while processes characterising quality education are neglected. Different NGOs use different indicators to monitor programs that address quality basic education.

In this chapter the second research question is answered: 'What indicators can be distilled to monitor and evaluate the progress of quality education programs at outcome level?' Indicators that were developed by different stakeholders are described (6.1), followed by indicators used in the SIP evaluation (6.2) and indicators that require further exploration for future monitoring and evaluation of quality education at outcome level (6.3).

6.1. Indicators used by different stakeholders

Discussions within Plan and amongst Plan partners address the need to find indicators that can demonstrate improvements made in realising quality basic education at outcome level. For this purpose Plan Netherlands developed a list of possible indicators. At first this was a list of over one hundred indicators, which was then reduced to a smaller list of 'key indicators'. The first section of this chapter describes indicators used by: Plan International, Plan Netherlands' education working group and by a selected group of participants in the forum on quality education.

6.1.1. Plan International

Within Plan different indicators are used to monitor and evaluate progress within the Corporate Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation system. Through this system information is gathered on a number of corporate indicators in the learning domain (appendix nine). Plan corporate indicators (evaluated approximately every four years) address ECCD, (post) primary enrolment and completion and literacy in mothers. They are monitored through the CPME system.¹⁷ The CPME system is regularly revised, the corporate indicators were also changed once. The Corporate indicators are in line with the indicators used to monitor progress on the EFA goals.

17. From January 2008 CPME will even be replaced by a new system called "Program Accountability and Learning System (PALS)". CPME knows different project phases, from baseline to planning, monitoring and evaluation of the project. CPME processes are explained thoroughly in the CPME reference guide and is considered part of the Field Operations Book.

18. The five Plan domains are: Growing up Healthy, Habitat, Learning, Livelihood and Birth Registration

Progress is measured on Plan indicators on the five Plan Domains,¹⁸ including the learning domain. A concern in Plan's current monitoring system is that more emphasis is needed on indicators that better address results achieved at the outcome level. On the one hand Plan's monitoring system, called PPM, measures output, such as the number of training courses provided and the number of schools built. The CPME system, on the other hand, measures progress at impact level on enrolment rates, completion rates and adult literacy. Within a program it is however necessary to measure not only outputs and impact, but also outcome; what happens in the so-called 'black-box' inside the classroom. Additionally the indicators are not gender disaggregated; they do not measure numbers of boys and girls separately.

Indicators to monitor progress are set, even though it is even more difficult to collect the required data, as becomes clear from the following quote derived from a policy document of Plan on learning: 'Basic enrolment and completion figures within our organisation are scarce, the effects of training are not always measured. (Plan Netherlands, 2005)'. It is crucial for the usability of data, that data is systematically collected. A difficulty that has been mentioned is a lack of funds allocated to monitoring and evaluation. Results that appear from monitoring and evaluation are not directly visible and therefore allocating funds to it, is not easily done. A long term investment, without direct results is not prioritised.

Although these corporate indicators are currently used to monitor progress, they are not stagnant, but are under continuous revision. Francis Sathya, Plan International's Senior Po-

licy adviser, recommends several indicators and provides remarks and reasons for recommendation in appendix fourteen.

6.1.2. Plan Netherlands education working group

Plan Netherlands education working group has developed a list of indicators that allows for monitoring and evaluation of quality education programs, presented in appendix fifteen. This list is in line with the intervention strategies developed by the Dutch ministry of foreign affairs. These intervention strategies are; Direct Poverty Alleviation (DPA), Civil Society Building (CSB) and Lobby and Advocacy (L&A). The strategies are part of a strategy matrix. This strategy matrix provides an overview of Plan expenditure on the different strategies. It allows Plan to link expenditure per project to the intervention strategy and programme it contributes towards. The indicators in appendix fifteen were developed by taking into consideration indicators used by international agencies, such as UNESCO and UNICEF, but also by considering Plan Corporate indicators and requirements set by the Dutch ministry of foreign affairs. Additionally efforts were made to develop indicators at outcome level, which reflect the learning process inside the classroom.

6.1.3. Dutch inspection of indicators to monitor and evaluate quality education

The Dutch education inspector was invited by the Dutch forum on quality education to share experiences on monitoring and evaluating quality education in the Netherlands. This experience was much appreciated by forum participants because some quality education aspects in the Netherlands are similar to those faced in less developed countries, such as a safe lear-

ning environment and teaching pedagogy. He shared the list of indicators that is used by the Dutch inspection to monitor progress on quality education in the Netherlands. The list addresses various aspects, including; conditions for quality care, learning supply, sufficient time to learn, teacher pedagogy, an active and independent role for pupils, school environment, supervision, care and yields.

Although certain aspects of quality education in less developed countries are similar to those in the Netherlands, substantial differences persist. During discussions with the Dutch inspector, he shared some of his experiences abroad and emphasised that the situation in less developed countries is different. Certain aspects require specific attention in realising quality education, such as the nutritional status of pupils, but also specific aspects of the aforementioned learning environment and pedagogy. Teachers in less developed countries face difficulties related to having overcrowded class rooms, a lack of adequate teaching materials and irrelevant curricula. These aspects would, according to the forum participants, be insufficiently addressed if indicators used to monitor Dutch primary schools were simply transferred to monitor progress in primary schools in less developed countries.

6.1.4. Forum on quality education's list of possible indicators to monitor quality education

The Dutch forum on quality education has jointly discussed the difficulties they face in developing indicators. A list was developed by a smaller group of participants in the Dutch quality education forum. The participants in the quality education forum tried to select indicators that are in line with UNESCO's framework for quality

education as much as possible. These indicators were, however, questioned and criticised by the participants during a meeting of the quality education forum on January 24th 2008 in Utrecht. Appendix sixteen shows a list of indicators developed during this meeting.

Questions by the forum participants address a variety of issues. A critical question addresses the purpose of developing a list of indicators and who the users of this list will be. The representative of the Dutch ministry of foreign affairs explains that the indicator discussions originated from the fact that currently used indicators are quantitative and insufficiently address the learning process. It was therefore necessary to formulate (for example two) process indicators, that could be added to generally used indicators (minutes meeting on 24th January). Discussions on the manner in which the indicators will be formulated and used arose. Should all participants of the forum follow up on the indicators that will be formulated, or can each participant select indicators from a general list, that it wishes to report on. Would it be easier to have a commonly used list of indicators and request similar information from our partners? The participants broadly agree that it would be impossible to request information on indicators from partners, without discussing these with them.

The list of indicators will therefore be shared with partners by the different participants in the working group. Other questions arose on the relevance of indicators, their SMART-ness and the manner in which the indicators are context-specific. Ultimately, however, the purpose of using indicators seems unclear and could be a major bottleneck in coming to terms with specific indicators.

6.2. Indicators used in the different SIP evaluation reports

The indicators that are most widely used in the evaluation reports generally differ significantly in Africa from those used in Asia and Latin/America.

6.2.1. Overview of indicators used in SIP evaluation reports

Table two provides an overview of indicators that are frequently used in the various evaluation reports and an indication of their level of measurement. The indicated level of measurement can be debated, as the differences

between impact, outcome and outputs are not always that clear cut (see also appendix 10).

As we can see from this list a few indicators are more regularly used than others. The majority of the indicators included in table two reflect impact indicators. In the regional Latin-America evaluation the same indicators were used in Peru, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador and in the regional evaluation, as this evaluation was conducted by one research agency and comparative information was collected. In the regional Latin-America and China evaluations relatively more emphasis was placed on indicators at outcome level than at impact or output level when

Indicator used	Level of measurement	Albania	Egypt	Ethiopia	Malawi	Sudan	Uganda	Zambia	Regional Africa	Honduras	Nicaragua	Peru	El Salvador	Ecuador	Regional L-America	China
Enrolment rate	Impact	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Enrolment rate	Impact	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Dropout rate	Impact	X	X	X			X							X		
Repetition rates	Impact			X	X	X		X								
Attendance rates	Impact/ outcome	X				X		X								
Textbook: pupil ratio	Impact				X	X		X								
Teacher-Pupil ratio	Impact					X	X									
Teachers' perceptions	Outcome			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pupils' perceptions	Outcome			X		X										X
PPM output codes	Output	X	X											X		
Gender disaggregated?	All		X	X	X	X	X	X		X				X		

Table 2: Frequently used indicators in the different SIP evaluation reports

Source: Plan Albania, 2006; Plan China, 2006; Plan Ecuador, 2007; Plan Egypt, 2007; Plan El Salvador, 2006; Plan Ethiopia, 2006; Plan Honduras, 2006; Plan International, 2007; Plan Malawi, 2006; Plan Nicaragua, 2006; Plan Peru, 2006; Plan regional office, 2007, Plan Sudan, 2006, Plan Uganda, 2007; Plan Zambia, 2006.

compared to the African evaluation reports. Appendix seventeen demonstrates an overview of other indicators used in the different evaluations sporadically. Because there are quite a few, they are sorted into the different components they relate to; pupils, teachers, parents, school environment, school committee and other. These components were selected randomly for practical reasons, but any other component could be chosen. In the Latin-America regional evaluation a motivation was given for the exclusion of certain impact indicators. Pupil achievement ratios were not included, because of:

The absence of reliable information in data systems of each of the countries, time and resources available to the evaluation made it impossible to construct and validate instruments for application.. to measure student performance in primary school is a highly complex process in the technical aspect. It involves the construction and validation of relevant questions, which would need to be in line with national curriculum (Plan International, 2007, p. 17).

Various other difficulties had to be overcome in order to access data on prior set indicators. Special difficulties were faced in getting information on control schools. Data was frequently available in schools where Plan implemented its programs, but in schools where Plan did not implement programs data was usually difficult to come by (Plan International, 2007, p.18). Despite these difficulties a comparison was made on a variety of indicators, such as teachers' perceptions on various aspects and school governance at outcome level. The China, Ethiopia and Zambia evaluations included a quantitative

evaluation of pupils' perceptions. The next sections describe how certain aspects of SIP were evaluated within focus areas of SIP.

6.2.2. Formulating indicators on teacher motivation, teacher methodology and relevance of the curriculum

More emphasis is required on what happens inside the classroom, this is also referred to as the 'black box'. This might however also be one of the most difficult aspects to measure. When analysing the various evaluation reports, the regional Latin-America evaluation is one of few SIP evaluations that makes the analysis of this 'black box' explicit and emphasises the processes inside the classroom. The China evaluation measures the process inside the classroom as perceived by children. The regional evaluation in Latin-America only measures teacher and parent satisfaction and children's perceptions are described, but none of the evaluations in Africa reflect the child's perception of the education received by using quantitative indicators. It is, however, emphasised by the respondents that the children's perceptions should be included in future monitoring and evaluation (Mr. Mas-sart).

The China evaluation actively involves children in its evaluation. With qualitative statements and ranking on these qualitative statements, the feeling of pupils towards the education received becomes visible. Statements include: 'I think school is enjoyable', 'I think school is boring', and 'I think school is interesting'; 'I don't like studying and I can get good grades.' Related to these statements, five dependent variables were used, while the different school types were used as independent variables. The

choice of the statements is not made explicit though (Plan China, 2006). Teachers were judged on the perceptions children have of them. Standards were first formulated regarding what being a ‘good teacher’ means, according to the pupils.

Although the respondents emphasise that the relevance of the curriculum is an essential component of quality education, none of the reports evaluated the relevance of the curriculum. They do not include indicators that could provide such information. What the reports did evaluate is teacher motivation; all Latin- American and various African evaluations, for example, measure teacher satisfaction (Plan Regional Office, 2007, p. 97; Plan Malawi, 2006, p. 27). Such tests are shown to contain perceptions of male and female teachers on: the usefulness of the training they receive, their housing facilities, their salaries and their active participation in sharing knowledge with other teachers.

In conclusion, when measuring the pedagogy applied in the classroom, it is recommended in the reports take into consideration a framework that explicitly describes the educational process (Plan Regional Office, 2007, p. 14) and includes the perceptions of children, teachers and possibly also those of parents and committee members.

6.2.3. Indicators used to monitor child participation in school governance

The various evaluation reports hardly demonstrate the participation of children in school management at all and do not use indicators to quantify this. Although almost all evaluation reports monitor enrolment rates (see table two), which is an indicator at impact level, hardly any indicators that are used in the different evaluation

reports demonstrate child participation in class. In the Latin-America evaluation report parent and teacher participation is evaluated by asking them questions about their level of satisfaction. Children’s perceptions or levels of satisfaction are included in the design (Plan International, 2007, p. 23), but they are not evaluated in the report; no indicators are used to monitor child participation as a result of SIP intervention. From the various evaluation reports from Africa, the Ethiopia and Sudan evaluation reports monitor progress on child participation by using quantitative and qualitative indicators. In the Ethiopia evaluation students were involved via a questionnaire and through student focus-group discussions. Questions were asked about pupil participation, such as; ‘Should students participate in school activities (a) yes or b) no?’ and ‘Why?’ (Plan Ethiopia, 2006, p. 60). In the focus-group discussions students were asked about various issues, such as student participation in activities and major problems faced as students (ibid, p. 62). Unfortunately the results of these questionnaires are not presented in the report. The Sudan report describes children’s consultation on various aspects of school governance, school environment and in the preparation of project budgets for school (Plan Sudan, 2006, p. 86-88). The report pays attention to various aspects relevant to child participation in quality education. Qualitative information is provided on pupils’ views on how they are taught, suggestions on improving their learning and participation in school governance. This qualitative information is supported by quantitative information on, for example, pupils’ reports on factors inhibiting their participation in school (ibid., p. 25). The China evaluation report provides a useful manner in which children are involved in the evaluations. Appendix 21 shows questions relating to children’s enjoyment of school.

Mrs. Cusato explains the importance of the perception children have of their own participation. Qualitative information should be incorporated and result measurement should not be limited to measuring child participation in school management or measuring the number of activities inside and outside schools. What is important, according to her, is that the teacher does not impose his or her own ideas (Interview, Cusato).

6.2.4. Indicators to monitor involvement of the local education department

The various SIP evaluation reports hardly use indicators to monitor and evaluate progress on the successfulness of cooperating with the local ministry of education at all. The Latin America evaluation report does, however, include an analysis of the sustainability of the program from the point of view of authorities at local and central level. It describes how SIP is in line with the government's actions in education but doubts are expressed regarding the ministry of education's capacity to continue the SIP intervention. Different qualitative 'concepts' address aspects of the SIP intervention, including include; the context/knowledge,¹⁹ valuation,²⁰ sustainability²¹ and appropriation.²² These concepts complement quantitative analysis (Plan International, 2007, p. 24). The Ecuador evaluation uses expenditure of the ministry of education (Plan Ecuador, 2007, p.11) as an indicator to evaluate progress.

In the previous chapter on lessons learned three recommendations were distilled from the various evaluation reports to improve government cooperation; increasing the government budget allocated to education, stimulating supportive supervision and lobby and advocacy on teacher salaries, housing facilities, ECCD (early childhood care and development) and gender. These aspects require their own indicators to measure progress.

Measuring the success of lobbying and advocacy activities requires a thorough and, if possible, joint planning process with objectives and clearly specified lobby strategies and indicators. Success can be measured by the results it aimed to achieve at an output, outcome and impact level.

Different reports use indicators to monitor progress such as; supervision of a teacher in a term by the district office (Plan Uganda, 2007), the composition of a committee (Male/ Female) (Plan Sudan, 2006), school administration and management (Plan International, 2007), the number of teachers by gender (Plan Sudan, 2006; Plan International, 2007) and teacher salaries (Plan Sudan). Different indicators are thus used, that could provide insight into various aspects on which lobbying and advocacy activities were recommended in the evaluation reports.

19. Knowledge that Plan has of policies, program and general education issues in the country and the ministry's knowledge of work conducted by Plan (Plan International, 2007, p. 17).

20. Self-appreciation of Plan team of work it carries out and ministry's appreciation of work carried out by Plan (Plan International, 2007, p. 17).

21. Focus areas within sustainability are; the appropriation level of the program, transfer and supervision of training, schools' capacity to administrate and implement SIP and external networks and support (Plan International, 2007, p. 17).

22. Both type of actors' ability to incorporate project in regular lines of action of national ministries of education.

6.2.5. Gender sensitive indicators

Gender is mainstreamed through Plan's SIP programs, inequalities however persist in opportunities and chances for boys and girls in education and special attention is required to tackle these inequalities. Plan Netherlands aims to incorporate gender in the SIP programs and indicators used to monitor and evaluate lessons learned should be gender sensitive. Appendix eighteen shows the various gender disaggregated indicators that are monitored in different evaluation reports. To measure gender progress, it is important to include children's perceptions on the three interrelated components described in the previous section; female representation in decision making positions, gender equality within education and gender sensitization of the broader community. A prerequisite to be able to collect gender disaggregated information is a functional quality data collection system and a management system. As described in the background section, Plan's data collection system is currently being revised, realising improved gender measurement should be included in the new monitoring and evaluation system. The China mid-term evaluation measures the perception of children; this is shown in Appendix nineteen. It shows the gender awareness of children in different types of schools in China. It measures awareness of 2450 pupils on the following statements: 'Men are career oriented', 'women are family oriented', 'Men are born more capable than women', 'Men should be brave and tough' and 'Women should be soft and submissive'. Appendix twenty shows the day-to-day monitoring of pupil attendance in Indonesia. Nevertheless, all the quantitative indicators used are not gender mainstreamed in this evaluation report. The country evaluation reports in Africa monitor progress in different areas for boys or males se-

parately to those of girls and women and these results are not reflected in the regional evaluation report. The separate Latin-America evaluation reports provide hardly any quantitative information that is gender disaggregated. Also, in many reports, gender disaggregated data was collected on the number of male and female students enrolled and the numbers of male and female teachers and this data is insufficient. In the evaluation reports hardly any gender disaggregated data is gathered that quantifies data on the processes in the classroom. This is reflected by the following quote from the Latin-America regional SIP evaluation:

None of the countries assigns priority or emphasis to gender (sexual) equality or inclusion, either as part of their general objectives or in their more specific purposes. This is ratified by the fact that there are no achievement indicators aimed at, for example, monitoring the male-female differences that may be established as a result of the execution of the SIP program, in each of the countries evaluated. It is necessary to consider this gap in the non-pilot phases of SIP. In other words, it is important to assign greater visibility to the issue of equality in the designs of future programs (Plan Regional Office, 2007, p. 40).

Recommendations are made in various evaluation reports regarding increasing female representation in school management bodies and children's perceptions of gender issues. The reports use a number of indicators that demonstrate gender equality. Firstly, to monitor and evaluate female representation in decision making positions quantitative indicators can be used, such as; 'the number of females and males in position of chair, secretary and treasurer within a school committee', the number of females

and males in a school committee and the number of male and female head teachers. Secondly to measure gender equality within education more qualitative indicators are suggested that address the perceptions of boys and girls on statements that address girl participation inside the classroom. Thirdly to monitor gender awareness in the broader society perceptions of boys and girls on gender statements that address various stereotypes are analysed.

6.3. Indicators that require further exploration

In studying the large variety of indicators used by different stakeholders that work on quality education, it becomes clear that measuring processes in the classroom is possible, by combining qualitative statements with quantitative measurement. This was done by a variety of evaluation reports that measured perceptions teachers and children have of the education they provide or receive, at times in a gender disaggregated manner. A large amount of evaluation reports monitor the more 'traditional' impact indicators, such as drop-out rate and enrolment rate (twelve out of fifteen reports), a large number of evaluation reports (eleven out of fifteen) supplemented this information with more 'progressive indicators', such as teacher perceptions. These indicators are more progressive in the sense that they aim to measure relevant processes in the classroom that determine quality education. By quantifying certain qualitative statements through surveys information can be gathered that can be aggregated, while remaining relevant to the daily lives of beneficiaries. To monitor, for example, the methodologies applied, one could measure boys and girls perceptions of the child friendliness of teachers. To monitor teacher methodologies, one could, for example, measure perceptions of male and female teachers on: the

quality of the training they received on child friendly and participatory methodologies. Only a few reports measured children's perceptions on the education they received, but a large number of reports recognise a need to include children in monitoring and evaluation. Two debates were bridged, but a new debate arose during this research. By using quantifying qualitative statements, a first step is made in the evaluation reports to face the challenge of bridging the gap between quantitative and qualitative indicators. Quantitative indicators are criticised for not being able to grasp complexities of every day life and processes in the classroom, while qualitative indicators are criticised for the inability to use them for aggregation and generalisation purposes. A second debate describes how indicators can serve the two purposes of accountability and learning. Information received through monitoring and evaluation serves both purposes. It would however be useful if learning was further institutionalised through, for example 'PALS', Plan's monitoring and evaluation system. A third debate however came to the fore; that of a 'top-down' versus a 'bottom-up' approach in searching for indicators. Should northern donors or southern partners define indicators to monitor progress? Empowerment of one party, either the pupil or a southern partner, means a disempowerment of another party, be it the teacher or the northern partner. This power conflict influences the formulation of indicators. Indicators do not necessarily serve the interests of the final beneficiaries, but might serve the interests of those stakeholders that benefit from the current global and local status quo. Focus is on impact measurement of enrolled pupils but not on what is actually taught inside the classroom and what pedagogical methods are applied. It is up to the critical donor community to cooperate and raise voices in changing this situation.

Chapter seven: Conclusion, discussion and recommendations

The realisation of Education for All goals by 2015 is a shared goal of a majority of countries globally; one fifth of these countries are however far from realising them. EFA goals include emphasis on the education of girls and on 'improving all aspects of quality education'. This report wants to trigger debate on critical aspects in realising quality education; it does not want to be conclusive. Some conclusions (7.1) and recommendations (7.2) are provided though.

7.1. Conclusion and discussion

Plan developed the School Improvement Program (SIP) framework that supports initiatives of governments and civil society groups in achieving the EFA goals by 2015. This program strives for quality and access to education for boys and girls in Africa, Asia and Latin-America. It was implemented in 2003 and thoroughly evaluated in 2006 and 2007. This research aims to 'improve Plan's quality education interventions in Less Developed Countries, by learning from application of Plan's School Improvement Program'. This objective is realised by answering the research questions.

Firstly, a practice-based definition of quality education is formulated. Plan takes the lead in a Dutch forum on quality education, in which government, NGOs and academia are represented. Although most forum participants identified elements determining quality education, none had defined it. They contributed to defining quality education as:

Knowledge boys and girls gain through methodologies, learning materials, textbooks and a relevant curriculum that stimulates

inquiry and dialogue between pupils and teachers in school, all within an institutional and organisational framework that increases their problem-posing abilities in their daily lives.

This definition includes the main components relevant to quality education according to participants. An obvious criticism is to question the level of education it aims to address. Most participants focus on basic education, while the majority of the evaluation reports included in this study focus on primary education. It would be good to further develop this definition and specify which level of education is addressed. It is meant to trigger debate.

The second research question addresses lessons that can be learned from SIP. Plan Netherlands has only recently started institutionalising the concept of learning as an organisation. Currently Plan is revising its quality processes, in which learning and accountability are both included. Lessons are learned from SIP on six components. Firstly, a lack of teacher motivation and competence appears from the high teacher turnover. This and other challenges can be faced by providing; more suitable training, improving housing facilities and the institutionalisation of active learning. Lobbying should also occur to increase teacher salaries and to gain recognition of teachers' increased capacity through government certification. Secondly, methodologies applied in class are too often characterised by 'mechanically reproducing content'. A first step in improving teacher methodology, according to respondents, is to improve the teacher's knowledge of the content. The Africa regional evaluation report provides more suggestions for

improving this; 'involve children with learning disabilities, continued support on methodological strategies, administrative support to monitor innovations and sharing experiences with other teachers. To achieve the third component that strives for increased child participation in school governance, it is recommended that they are involved in service delivery, focus on younger and marginalised children and increase their involvement in monitoring and evaluation. The next component addresses the relevance of the curriculum. This component was not really included in the various evaluation reports, although all respondents stress that a relevant curriculum is crucial in realising quality education. More research is needed on best practices in this area and a few lessons learned could be distilled on this component because the reports paid little attention to it. The fifth component describes the importance of supportive supervision and the allocation of a large enough budget to education. The reports emphasise that monitoring and evaluation of the SIP program by Plan should supplement and make use of monitoring by the local inspectors. The evaluation reports hardly mention that insufficient government budget is allocated to education by the ministry of education. Respondents argue that lobbying activities should take place to ensure not only that sufficient levels of budget are allocated to education, but also for more government support in areas such as; teacher housing conditions, teacher contracts, teacher salaries, early childhood care and development, child rights and gender. The final component on which lessons can be learned from the various reports addresses gender relationships in education. For realising gender equality and parity various aspects should be included. Women frequently participate in management, but rarely hold decision making positions. Tradi-

tional task divisions of women as caretakers and men as responsible leaders dominate. In education focus should be on changing role patterns and discrimination that could be reproduced from one generation to the next. The involvement of the broader community is a prerequisite to achieving change in gender relationships. Initiatives in which girls gain responsibilities and women act as role models. Cultural constraints need to be made explicit. The majority of respondents describe that realising gender equality means changing the roots of a society. These were the main lessons that could be learned on the various aspects of the SIP components.

In answering the third research question the indicators that best seem to reflect processes inside the classroom, were derived from the SIP evaluation reports. These are indicators that monitor teacher and pupil perceptions. It is possible to combine qualitative statements with quantitative measurement. Various SIP evaluation reports used such indicators to monitor the processes inside the classroom at outcome level.

7.2. Recommendations

This report describes an ongoing process of defining quality education, identifying lessons learned and developing indicators. In general it is recommended that learning among various participants of the quality education forum, among Plan and among other stakeholders is institutionalised. Recommendations are made to continue the process of generating innovation in education and realising the EFA goals and MDGs two and three.

In searching for a definition of quality education, information sharing amongst participants of the Dutch forum on quality education al-

lowed for the first steps to be made in moving from elements relevant to quality education to a definition. Nevertheless, the search cannot continue without the involvement of Southern partners.

It is recommended that research is carried out on a possible international structure of the quality education forum. It is essential that southern partners and possibly even teachers and children are involved in the quality education programs that aim to assist them. Furthermore it is recommended that definitions of the various levels of education are clarified; ECCD, primary, basic, youth and adult education. The provided definition is meant to trigger debate, this debate should be documented in order to continue developing the definition of quality education. More evaluation is needed on the following aspects; the learning environment; student preparedness (e.g. health-nutritional status, access to ECCD, parental support, motivation to learn); empowerment and support to communities and school leaders; Parent participation; relevance of the curriculum; levels of budget to education by governments and school leadership.

It is recommended that further institutionalisation and harmonisation of the two objectives in monitoring and evaluation takes place, that of 'accountability' and that of 'learning' in Plan's new international monitoring system PALS; Program Accountability and Learning System. Increasing links between lessons learned and indicators used will provide new insights.

Finally, a recommendation is made to further develop possible indicators on perceptions teachers and pupils have of processes that determine quality education. Furthermore it is recommended that indicators are strictly formulated and followed-up in a gender disaggregated manner. The collection of gender disaggregated information makes gender trends visible but additional methods need to be implemented to grasp the complexity of gender relations. Keeping track of additional characterising information from children is also useful because it allows analysis of possible excluded groups. Data collection should include sex, age and preferably economic background. Additionally, it is useful to systematically collect data on a child's tribe, religion, number of family members and the (il)literacy of their parents.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: School Improvement Program;
A holistic framework for quality education

A. Introduction

School Improvement Program (SIP) is a recent initiative of Plan to address comprehensively the issues of children's right to quality basic education; children and community participation in school governance; the accountability of teachers, schools and education systems to children and their communities. This paper presents the concepts and framework of SIP and also explains how SIP operationalises the Child Centred Community Development (CCCD) framework. The 3rd Global Meeting on Learning, held in Paraguay in April 2004, proposed adoption of the SIP framework as a "general framework" for all Learning programs and quality education initiatives supported by Plan. This paper should, therefore, be regarded as one of the outcomes of the 3rd Global Meeting.

B. What is School Improvement Program?

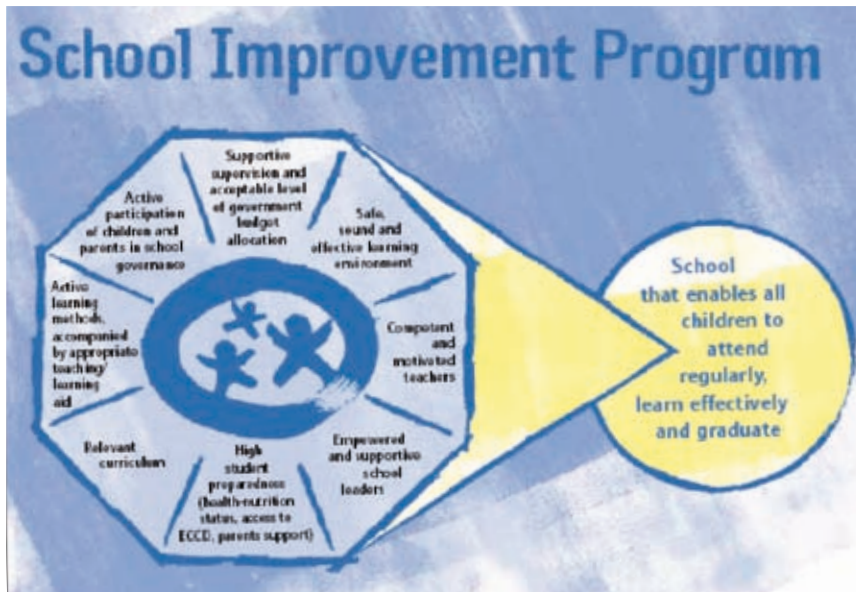
School improvement generally refers to making the schools better places for learning. This depends upon changes at the school level and within classrooms. This, in turn, rests on schools being committed to fulfilling children and parents' expectations. Therefore, school improvement refers to a systematic approach to improving the accountability and quality of schools to ensure safe, motivating and effective learning environment.

C. Why SIP?

Plan's support to basic education is significant and consistent. While the infrastructure of schools have improved considerably in Plan program areas, gender gaps, low rates of

attendance, completion, poor learning and low levels of participation of children and communities in school governance continues to exist in many program countries. These require attention and further improvement. School Improvement Program is a Plan initiated education program based on experiences gained from Plan's extensive work in basic education as well as on lessons learned in different regions and from various school improvement initiatives. Key lessons learnt include the following:

1. Conventional support: Providing inputs that schools request without asking them to demonstrate specific improvements in organising, functioning and school governance does not guarantee improved learner outcomes/achievement and quality education. In most cases this results in under utilisation and wastage of resources reflected by low enrolments and low completion rates.
2. Lack of accountability: Schools in most countries are not fulfilling even the basic expectation of teaching children reading, writing and numeracy skills. The situation prevails because schools, teachers, ministry of education officials and the education systems lack transparency and are not accountable to the children and communities for services rendered.
3. Quality: Education quality cannot be achieved through official directives from above without the genuine co-operation and full participation of children, communities, teachers, head teachers as well as local education officials.
4. Participation and Empowerment: In spite of the emphasis on school based planning and the creation of child friendly schools, parents



and children have little influence on governance at the school level, and on education policies and financing at the national levels. Education systems, policies, curricula and schools often ignore local contexts- cultures, knowledge, skills, etc.

5. Right to education: Parents and children will continue to be marginalised if they do not assert their right for quality basic education. In many countries, and particularly in poor areas, existing parent teacher associations and school management committees do not adequately represent the concerns and expectations of parents and children.
6. Partnerships and Networking: Plan, on its own, has little or no control over the organisation and management of schools. Networking and partnerships with national and international organisations concerned about education is crucial for influencing

- national policies and programs of education.
7. SIP and Child Centred Community Development (CCCD): Plan's Child Centred Community Development is an approach in which children, families and communities are active and leading participants in their own development. It enhances their capacity and opportunity to work together with others to address the structural consequences of poverty at all levels. As per this definition of CCCD and the points highlighted above, SIP and CCCD are closely linked. The SIP and CCCD principles mirror one another (please see Appendices A and D as well) mirror one another.

The SIP framework underscores the principles – ‘participation and empowerment’ of children, communities and teachers; ‘accountability’ of schools to honour the right of children

to quality basic education; ‘partnerships and networking’ among other stakeholders. Therefore, SIP is also offers a practical approach for putting the CCCD into practice. Therefore, a holistic approach that brings key stakeholders - children, parents, teachers, Plan, other NGOs and government officials - to work together to identify all the basic needs, endeavour to secure (from a variety of sources) the essential human and financial inputs to improve the quality, accountability and effectiveness of schools and of basic education in general is necessary. The SIP framework offers such an approach.

Therefore, a holistic approach that brings key stakeholders - children, parents, teachers, Plan, other NGOs and government officials - to work together to identify all the basic needs, endeavour to secure (from a variety of sources) the essential human and financial inputs to improve the quality, accountability and effectiveness of schools and of basic education in general is necessary. The SIP framework offers such an approach.

D. SIP aims and objectives

Included in main text

E. Key areas of focus

Included in main text. Good results in all these areas are essential for success. If any one of these is weak, the overall effect of the others is nullified or may be problematic. SIP can be visualised as an octagon (see figure below (Appendix A in original document)), with each side comprising one element. It is the sum of the eight sides that make the octagon. And it is the effectiveness of all sides that results in “schools that enable all children to attend regularly, learn effectively and graduate”.

F. SIP implementation

Not included

G. Elements of SIP

The key SIP elements are:

1. A core group or committee of children, parents and teachers responsible for developing and implementing school specific improvement plan.
2. School specific data on enrolment, attendance, completion and children’s language and mathematics abilities.
3. School specific plan with targets for improving jointly agreed aspects, more specifically enrolment, attendance, completion, and language and mathematical skills of children.
4. Periodic joint monitoring and reporting on improvements that each school is making.

At each target school Plan supports and assists the core group in all aspects of developing and implementing the school improvement plan. The core group requires particular support in the following:

1. Collection and analysis of school specific data.
2. Negotiating with government officials and lobbying for support and contribution -including frequent school/teaching/learning supervision, increased teaching/learning resources, etc.
3. Capacity building - covering knowledge and skills, children’s rights, community empowerment, active teaching methods, school governance, accountability and transparency, etc.
4. Improving the participation of children, particularly girls.
5. Mobilising resources and establishing part-

nerships/networks for the implementation of the improvement plan.

6. Program/project supervision, monitoring and evaluation.

7. Documenting and disseminating lessons learned. Effective support to core groups depends upon Plan's understanding of the dynamics of school systems, good facilitation, advocacy and networking skills.

H. Pre-conditions

Three key preconditions to SIP implementation, all related to commitment, are:

1. Community, school, teacher, MoE2 and other stakeholder commitment to school improvement:

a) Plan is accepted and already working with target schools and communities in collaboration with MoE.

b) Community, teacher, government and other stakeholder support for SIP is very high – MoE and other government officials are demanding extension of SIP to all primary schools.

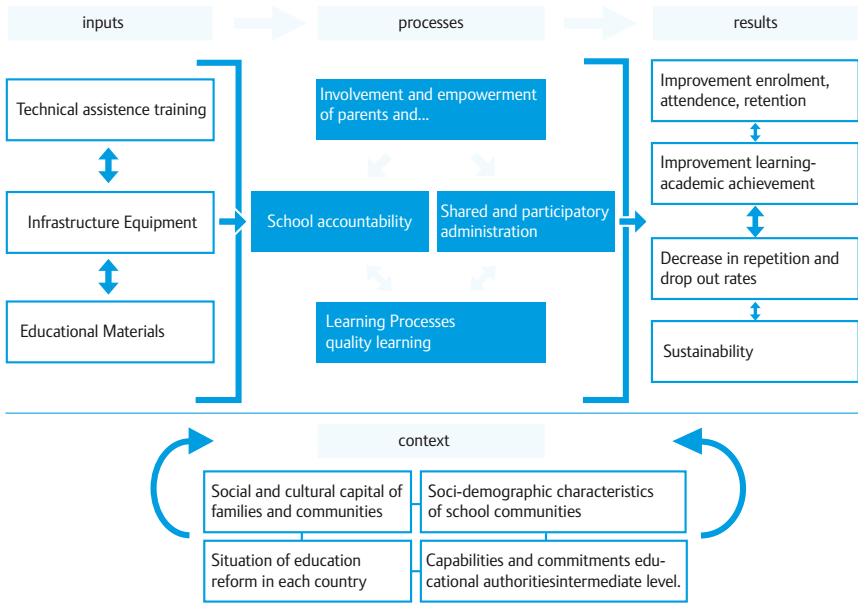
c) SIP objectives complement education

objectives of all governments Plan supports, and directly contribute to governments' EFA initiatives.

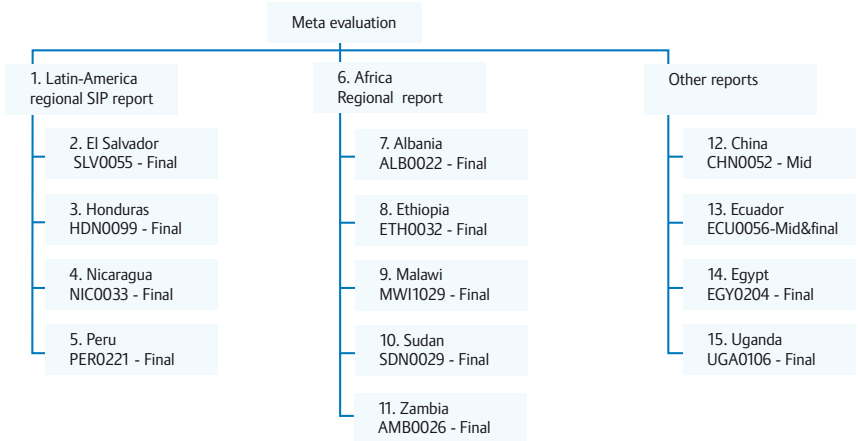
Conclusion

In the short time of its existence, SIP has evolved as an important strategy to address the issues of accountability and quality of basic education programs supported by Plan. In fact, application of the SIP framework has been so successful that it is now employed in most Learning initiatives, projects and programs. SIP is now virtually synonymous with Learning Program implementation. In recognition of this, the 3rd Global Meeting on Learning recommended the adoption of the SIP framework as a "general framework" for all Learning programs and quality education initiatives supported by Plan. The entire framework or selected elements of SIP could also be adapted to complement the existing initiatives such as Esquela Nueva, Child Friendly School, Active School, Quality Learning, etc.

Appendix 2: SIP evaluation model by CIDE



Appendix 3: Various SIP evaluation reports included in the meta-evaluation



Firstly, the analysis of the SIP program in Latin-America addresses the SIP program in 10 rural primary schools and their communities in five countries (Ecuador, Peru, Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador). The Latin-America regional SIP evaluation²³ bundles results from the evaluations conducted in four out of five countries, the evaluation in Ecuador was not included. This regional evaluation uses the same research framework as the individual evaluations and was conducted by the same research institute.

Secondly, the SIP program is run in six African countries (Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, Sudan, Uganda, and Zambia) and one European country (Albania). A regional evaluation report²⁴ studies the individual country reports produced in four out of six African countries (Egypt and Uganda were excluded) and Albania. This report is a synthesis of the various reports, which were conducted by different evaluators and used different research frameworks.

Comparison was therefore more complicated here, because in each report different methodologies were used and the frameworks for analysis were not completely the same.

Thirdly, a number of other reports were included, besides these two regional evaluation reports. These include the earlier mentioned two evaluation reports in Africa (Egypt and Uganda) and one in Latin-America (Ecuador). Furthermore evaluations were conducted in China. The evaluation report in Indonesia was released end October 2007 and was therefore not included in the study. Some of the findings were included through the findings of the evaluation team during their evaluations in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The evaluation reports were released in 2006 and 2007, the information provided is therefore recent and no comparison has been made yet of the evaluation reports of the SIP program.

Appendix 4: Participants in the Dutch forum on quality education

AMIDSt UvA	IC-consult	SLO
AOB	ICS	SNV
APS	IREWOC	Teachers First
Bernard van Leer Foundation	Kerk in Actie	Oikonomos
Child Helpline International	Liliane Fonds	Terres des Hommes
CLU UU	Ministry of foreign affairs	UNICEF
Educaids	OCNVw	UU
Education International	Oxam Novib	UvA IS academe
Edukans	Plan Netherlands	Woord en Daad.
HIVOS	Prisma	
ICCO	Save the Children	

23. The general objective of the Latin-America regional evaluation is to: Analyze the changes and final effects achieved by the program as a global strategy and examine program execution in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and Peru, to come up with a set of criteria and technical and methodological indicators that help strengthen the general administration of the program, and aid in validating it and in improving the intended strategies and interventions, from the perspective of consolidating and improving the policies and practices of PLAN and its partners in the region.

24. The requirement of the regional Africa evaluation was: to assess the experiences from implementing the... pilot countries, with the purpose of extracting best and worst practices, identifying lessons to be learned and formulating recommendations and conclusions regarding its possible usefulness at a larger scale (provincial, national and regional).

Appendix 5: Meetings held within the quality education forum in 2007

Date and location	Topic of discussion	Guest speakers
January 30th 2007 Ministry of foreign affairs, The Hague	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulties in defining quality - Indicators on quality education 	
April 12th 2007 Plan Netherlands, Amsterdam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicators - Good practices - Possibilities for knowledge sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - APS, B. van Velzen; Quality of systems - Ministry of foreign affairs, A. van Dam, quality in education, learning processes - Education international, W. van der Schaaf; public education - Teachers First, S. Platteau. Smart teacher solutions and best practices
June 19th 2007, APS Utrecht	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inventory good practices in relation to education inspectors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinating inspector, Dhr. Rijkers. Inspection of quality education in the Netherlands.
September 20th 2007 Edukans Amersfoort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion indicators - Three good practices in relation to parent participation/ children in school management - Way forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ICCO, M. Ooijens case Burkina Faso - Oxfam Novib, M., case India - Plan Nederland, J. van Heijningen, case Peru
3 October 2007, Scheveningen General meeting knowledge platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is expert meeting on quality: Decentralisation in education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yusuf Sayed
24 January 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality learning methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A.Reints on quality of learning methods - Presentation S. Platteau on research conducted good practices basic education - Inventory indicators used
19 February 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EFA goals will we make it or not? - Panel discussion. <i>Role and action points for Dutch civil society and Ministry of Foreign Affairs to reach 2015</i> - State of affairs working groups - Goodbye to A. van Dam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Y. Sayed senior policy analyst for the EFA Global Monitoring Report. Towards an agenda to make EFA happen. The role of the civil society - Panel members: A. Dam (MFA), M. Marijnis (Global Campaign for Education), L. van Nieuwenhuijzen (Save the Children) M. Lopes Cardozo (UVA), W. Blok (Woord en Daad) - Working groups state of affairs: Quality: J. van Heijningen, Post-conflict: L. van Nieuwenhuijzen, HIV/AIDS: Mr. M. Marijnis, Education and work: M. Ooijens

Appendix 6: Respondent characteristics

Name	function	Age	Sex	Educational background	No. of years with current organisation	Total years with other organizations and type of working experience
Pol deGreve	Program Support Manager Indonesia	52	male	Agriculturalist and Econometry, quantitative methodology	Plan 8 years; 4 years NLNO, 2 years Indonesia, 2 years Thailand	22 years, 10 years FAO Zambia, 12 years Wageningen University
Guy Massart	Evaluation and research specialist WARO (West Africa Regional Office)	43	male	Social anthropology	Plan Senegal, 2.5 years	Total 19 years, 4 y PHD anthropology, and 15 y research.
Wei Wei	Program Support Manager, Plan China	32	male	Economics	Plan China, 2.5 years	Consultancy, 2.5 years
Sudiyo Sudiyo	Education advisor		male		27 years Plan, first technical support liaison, program operational manager	2 years Catholic relief service
Adt Surwanto	ECCD coordinator Plan Indonesia	38	male		7 years	8 years
Faesol Muslim	UNESCO officer		male			
Muhammed Natsir	School inspector	43	male		5 months	Teacher > 20 years
Sandra Cusato	ROA Education advisor	42	female	Educational politics and psychology	Plan ROA 2 years	17 years, University of Chile 3 y, Ministry of education, 4 y, UNESCO 10 years always on quality education

Appendix 7: Stakeholders spoken to during field visit to Indonesia

Name	Function	Date and time	Location	Comments
Pak Sudiyo	Plan Education advisor	20 August 2007, 10.00-14.00	Plan Indonesia office, Jakarta	SIP discussion, five presentations provided. Documentation
Pak Sarwanto	Plan ECCD officer	20 August 2007, 14.30-15.30	Plan Indonesia office	
Sangkala Tair Noerlan	Head of education council	23 August 2007, 20.30-22.00		Also treasury for education service
Drs. H. Satrijo Wiweko MT	PPLH, Environmental education center	25-8-2007		Visitor from Java
Drs. H. Mukhtar Nonci	Head of education service at district level	29 August, 9.00-10.30	District education service office	
Anny	Consultant			Evaluation team member and FGD
Aulia Esti Wijiasih	Program Director KPIA and evaluator			Evaluation team member and FGD
Rahayu	Previous Plan coordinator SIP			Evaluation team member and FGD
Faesol Muslim	UNESCO education advisor	29 August 2007, 9.00-10.00	UNESCO Office, Jakarta	Semi-structured interview on partner cooperation
Ratnayu Sitaresmi	Plan Indonesia research and development,	29 August 2007 11.00-12.30	Plan Indonesia office	Informal conversation on CPME
Hasto	Plan Indonesia Country PPM	29 August 2007 13.00-14.30	Plan Indonesia office	Informal conversation on PPM

Appendix 8: PPM output codes for primary education

Code	Description	Suggestions for units	Comment
Training			
2H10	Primary school committee training	# courses, # Committees	Training for primary PTA / School Governors / School Committee
2H11	Primary teacher training	# courses, # teachers	for paid, professional teachers
2H12	Primary child-to-child	# schemes	Child-to-child teaching for primary education
Books and materials			
2H13	Text books: primary education	# class sets, # child sets	“School supplies” includes exercise books, pens, pencils, paper, chalks, paints, rulers, school bags, lunch or tiffin boxes
2H14	School supplies: primary education	# class sets, # child sets	E.g. paints, musical instruments
2H15	Play/arts materials: primary education	# class sets, # child sets	
2H16	Library books: primary school	# book sets	
Recurrent			
2H17	Girl's scholarship: primary	# scholarships/girls	Includes support for scholarship schemes, community revolving funds for school costs or scholarships for individual FCs or FF members.
2H18	Boy's scholarship: primary	# scholarships/boys	Includes support for scholarship schemes, community revolving funds for school costs or scholarships for individual FCs or FF members.
2H19	Uniform: primary education	# uniforms/children	E.g. payment of teachers' salaries.
2H20	Professional primary teaching	# teachers	E.g. support to pay for utilities
2H21	Primary school: other recurrent		
Infrastructure			
2H22	Infrastructure Primary school construction	# schools, # classrooms	
2H23	Primary school rehabilitation	# schools, # classrooms	
Equipment			
2H24	Equipment Furniture and equipment: primary	# schools furnished/equipped, # classes furnished/equipped	“Furniture and equipment” includes desks, chairs, tables, cupboards, easels, bookshelves, dusters, blackboards, notice boards etc.

Appendix 9: Plan International's Corporate indicators on the learning domain

1. **ECCD:** % of pre-school aged children in Plan communities enrolled in ECCD program (home or centre based)
2. **Primary enrolment** (core program indicator): % of primary school aged (Official) children in Plan communities currently enrolled in formal or non-formal primary education
3. **Primary completion** (core program indicator): % of appropriately aged children in Plan communities who have completed primary school
4. **Post primary enrolment:** % of children in Plan communities who have completed primary education, and are currently enrolled in or have completed formal or non-formal post-primary education (secondary, vocational etc)
5. **Literacy in mothers:** % of female caregivers (15 years or older) in Plan communities able to read, write, and do basic mathematics.

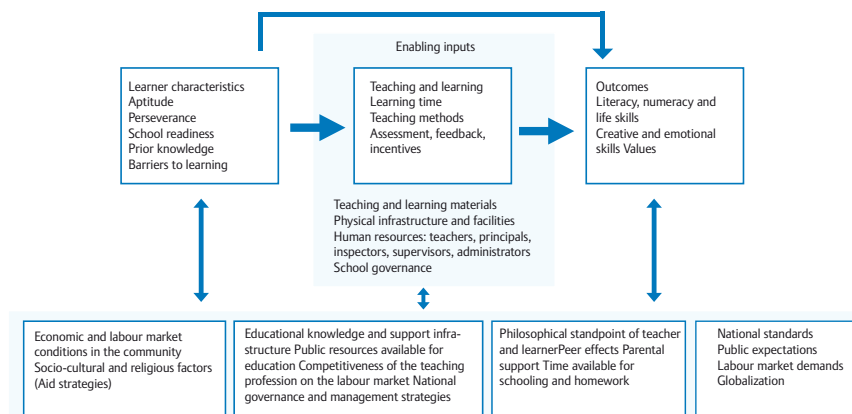
Appendix 10: Levels of measurement: input, output, outcome and impact

Source: www.oecd.org

- Impact:** Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
- Outcome:** The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs.
- Outputs:** The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.
Inputs: The financial, human and material resources used for the development intervention.
- Activity:** Actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilised to produce specific outputs.

Appendix 11: A framework for understanding education quality (UNESCO, 2005)

Source: UNESCO, 2005



Appendix 12: Elements on quality education and dilemmas by Dutch quality education forum

Organisation	Elements on quality education	Dilemmas/ problems
Ministry of foreign affairs (DCO/OO, January 2007)	Important elements are: - learning processes at school and class level. – role teacher – school environment – management process – parent and community involvement – content relevant to context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No single definition of quality - Absence of process indicators and monitoring instruments reflecting elements of quality education. - Little attention for processes of quality. Dilemma: Role donors and local governments (themes as curriculum, teachers)?
ICCO alliance (ICCO/Kerkinactie, Edukans and Prisma)	Quality education entails cognitive development, emotional/creative development and passing values/ attitudes for citizenship. Elements: learning, teachers, learning content, - processes, -environment and - results (UNESCO).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most effective way to support (keeping ownership & accountability recipient country) - Well balanced and realistic prioritisation of various quality dimensions - Systemising quality improvements - Decentralisation in favour of the poor - Better indicators (on social skills, enabling environment & governance issues)
Oxfam Novib	Three core elements for quality education: gender equality, active citizenship and relating to pupil's daily lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can we measure quality education, in terms of citizenship and gender equality? - Tension between mainstreaming principles and autonomy of partner and local context.
HIVOS	Qualitatively good education contains strategies to integrate working children; child labour needs to be actively tackled.	No dilemmas mentioned. Do not work directly on improving quality education. Supports partners with programs that ban child labour.
Woord en daad	Quality education depends on the local context. Factors determining quality at three levels: 1) society and external context (government policy, community/parents) 2) school (facilities, management) and 3) class (didactics, role teacher).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too much focus on success rates - Few instruments to monitor quality broadly. - Bad connection with secondary education and education for work - Need for indicators on relevant education and involvement parents and other actors. - Added value of new media (e.g. internet)
IREWOC	Quality is a relative term. Consider teacher capacity, local economy, intrinsic values, interactive methodology, flexibility and functionality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapting education to local needs: effectiveness versus efficiency - Validity of output factors - Applicability education as perceived by society.
Bernard van Leer foundation	Quality interpreted in terms of learning processes, characteristics teachers, learning environment, learning content (language, culture), results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of capacity support to ECE actors - Contradicting interests various parties. - Lacking priority government & community, research cost/benefit, communication & policy on Early Childhood Education - Need better data collection and analysis - Lacking knowledge exposure child rights - Pressure to upscale versus needs.
Plan Netherlands	Quality derived from: circumstances pupils, learning environment, learning content, teachers and organisation of learning process. Not only relate to cognitive performance, but also to values and attitudes derived from children's rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring quality education; indicators and realisation. - Effectiveness teacher training and education - How can pedagogical renewal (based on children's rights) be strengthened in culture and structure of the education system?

Appendix 13 Theoretical background to individual versus collective management Adapted from: Zwier, M.S., (2006), p. 8-15.

Century old discussions provide value to analysis of managing education; they describe the social relations that largely determine interaction. Granovetter distinguishes the “under- and oversocialized view” of human action (Granovetter, 1985, p. 484). While social action and behaviour are regarded in the undersocialized view as rational and self-interested behaviour, (Granovetter, 1985), the oversocialized perspective, ascribes a decisive role to social behaviour in human action. Economists and sociologists have attempted to bridge the gap between the two perspectives, resulting in a paradigm from the economic sciences; New Institutional Economics. Economists have formulated alternative theories on economic development, by which they incorporate social networks as actively contributing to individual choice and behaviour (North, 1990; Bates, 1995; Granovetter, 1985).

Both approaches share a fundamental quest to overcome a seemingly inevitable paradox, ‘that individually rational strategies lead to collectively irrational outcomes’ (Ostrom, 1990, p. 5). This paradox becomes visible in failing decentralisation processes that are widely adopted by governments in less developing countries, but a ‘policy gap’ between practice and policy exists. Sayed describes a tension between individual rights as expressed in School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and the role of the state in creating a uniform education system (Sayed, 2002, p. 44). Common dilemmas deal with the choice for either a short-term individually beneficial choice or for a cooperative choice, which in the end is beneficial to each individual of the group, but not necessarily for each individual on its own.

Education is a public good and its management is complex. The NIE attempts to understand successful cases of institutional arrangements guiding individual actions toward the public good. The core argument of the NIE is that institutions provide the mechanisms whereby rational individuals can transcend social dilemmas (Bates, 1995, p. 29). Formal and informal institutions are set up to overcome social dilemmas by managing and structuring human action According to North, “The major role of institutions in a society is to reduce uncertainty by establishing a stable structure of human interaction” (North, p. 6). North defines institutions as, “-rules and procedures that structure social interaction by constraining and enabling actor’s behaviour” (North, p.3-4).

Appendix 14: Indicators on quality education by Plan International's Senior Policy Adviser

Source: Plan International, Sathya F. (2005). Educational Quality; Essential indicators of quality of basic education.

Recommended indicator	Reason for Recommendation	Remarks
<p>Inputs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. % of boys and girls accessing ECCD programs. 2. Teacher, pupil ratio 3. Pupil, textbook ratio for language and maths. 	<p>These inputs have proved to have very high influence on children's learning internationally.</p>	<p>Recommended also by UNICEF and UNESCO.</p>
<p>Process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Representation of boys, girls and women in the school governments. 2. Involvement of children and parents in the decisions on school management and improvement. 3. Teaching style (democratic, authoritarian and laissez-faire) 	<p>Proxies for child and community participation that the CCCD promotes.</p>	<p>Plan specific. Not emphasised much by other actors other than UNICEF.</p>
<p>Outcome:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health and hygiene behaviours of children. 2. Reading, writing and innumeracy achievements of boys and girls in grade 3 and final grades of primary schools. 3. % of boys and girls successfully completing final grade of primary schools. 	<p>A majority of children in Plan supported schools do not achieve the expected competencies. It jeopardises Plan's efforts to help children realise their full potential.</p>	<p>Others including UNICEF are focusing on health and hygiene inputs rather than behaviours. Reading literacy and mathematics have been included by most other actors in their indicators list.</p>

Appendix 15: Indicators developed by Plan Netherlands' Education working group

DPA			
impact	Qual	Children able to develop their full potential during and after primary education	
Outcome	Quant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of children able to develop their full potential: - # of children going to secondary education (net intake rate secondary education) - # of children with increased self confidence - # of children with increased awareness of their rights 	
	Qual	Access to education	Quality of education
			Institutional capacity of education systems
	Quant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of schools with adequate capacity to attract and maintain children - gross enrolment rate - completion rate - repetition rate - gender parity (in enrolment) - attendance rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of schools with adequate capacity to enhance learning - pupils performance - trained teachers - teachers applying new pedagogical methods - pupil/teacher ratio - pupil/textbook ratio - parental support
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of schools adequately supported by the wider education system - frequency of inspections - development of local PME systems on education performance - # of schools that meet the officially established number of instructional hours
Output	Qual	Capacity of country offices and collaborating partners to enhance the right to education for all children	
	Quant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of schools that benefit directly from project # of children that benefit directly from the project 	

CSB	L&A
<p>Right to education secured by civil society actors (through monitoring and mobilisation)</p>	<p>Right to education is integrated in policies and/or laws Representative cases of enhanced policies/laws:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of school/education governance bodies securing right to education - teacher attendance monitored - education budget monitored - school participation of marginal children monitored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - education budget - ECCD policies - Education for children with special needs
<p>Capacity of education/school governance bodies to monitor and claim the right to education</p>	<p>Capacity / willingness of decision making actors to pursue right to education</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of schools/education governance bodies with adequate capacity to monitor and claim right to education - school governance bodies holding school actors accountable - school/education bodies with active participation of children - school/education governance bodies active in civil society networks - community school governance bodies taking part in civil society networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of politicians, decision makers and public leaders with adequate capacity / willingness to pursue right to education - law proposals - public statements - requests for advice or information - media coverage
<p>Capacity of country offices and collaborating partners to enhance capacity of school/education governance bodies</p>	<p>Capacity of country offices and collaborating partners to lobby/advocate on the right to education</p>
<p># of school/education governance bodies that benefit directly from the project</p>	<p># of decision makers, public leaders targeted</p>

N. Level	Indicator	Used by
A. Education system (national/district)		
1.	% government budget in a country going to education (aim 20%)	FTI,
2.	% education budget going to primary education	FTI
3.	% of pupils that finish school (school completion / survival rate to grade 5)	FTI, EFA
4.	% pupils that must repeat a year (repetition rate by grade)	FTI
5.	Teacher – pupil ratio (with or without education)	FTI
6.	Number of teaching hours per year	FTI
7.	Average teacher salary	FTI
8.	Average results of pupils	EFA
B. School		
1.	The school knows characteristics of pupil population	
2.	School keeps an administration (including teacher and pupil presence)	
3.	School has a system to record pupils' learning results	
4.	School examinations are standardised and results are evaluated	
5.	School reports on the quality of education to government and parents	
6.	Inspection visits school (frequency per year) and exposes results	
7.	School pays attention to safety in and outside the classroom	
8.	School ensures a child friendly learning environment	
9.	School building complies with legal standards	
10.	School has sufficient classrooms	
11.	Classrooms are clean and attractive	
12.	School owns good furniture, books and teaching materials	
13.	Schools learning supply complies with legal standards	
14.	Schools learning supply meets pupil's level of learning	
15.	Learning supply is interrelated (between courses and learning years)	
16.	Curriculum (also) offered in mother tongue pupils	
17.	Curriculum pays attention to academic and creative learning	
18.	Curriculum pays attention to life skills, gender, sustainability, health, HIV/AIDS, human rights and intercultural relationships	
19.	Number of hours in class (strive for more than >850)	
20.	Number of pupils per teacher	
21.	Number of pupils per trained teacher	
22.	Direction and or inspection coaches teacher and school staff	
23.	Role director as manager is clear to government, team and parents	
24.	School has team meetings and reports are available	
C. The class		
1.	Number of education years and experience teachers	
2.	Teacher salary (motivation)	
3.	Teacher applies different didactical methods (also group work)	
4.	Teacher stimulates pupils' thinking	

N. Level Indicator

Used by

5. Teacher makes teaching plan
6. Teacher follows school curriculum
7. Teacher manuals are available and are used
8. Teacher informs parents on progress pupils
9. Teacher identifies pupils with difficulties
10. Opportunity for pupils to get additional schooling is available
11. Teacher uses various methodologies
12. Teacher has sufficient knowledge about curriculum
13. Teacher knows and speaks local language
14. Teacher increases pupils' self confidence
15. Teacher is able to conceptualise knowledge
16. Teacher has basic knowledge on school courses
17. Teacher prepares classes well
18. Teacher facilitates learning and allows pupils to give their opinion
19. Teacher relates curriculum to children's daily lives
20. Teacher uses local learning means
21. Teacher keeps track of children's progress
22. Teacher checks children's work and gives feedback
23. Teacher consciously pays attention to class management
24. Teacher pays attention to individual differences amongst pupils
25. Teacher uses activating working forms
26. Teacher stimulates pupils to actively participate in class
27. Number of textbooks per pupil in class
28. Textbooks and other educational materials are of sufficient quality

D. Pupil

1. Pupils spend sufficient time per day on learning
2. Pupils influence the learning process (fitting their own educational level)
3. Pupils cooperate effectively (in school/class projects)
4. Pupils are involved with the school
5. Pupils' learning results are at the level that can be expected
6. Pupils' skills are at the level that can be expected
7. Pupils get little delay in their education (retention rate)
8. Pupils finish their education (dropout rate)
9. Pupils continue to the next education level

E. Direct school environment

1. School has a school committee or a Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
2. Parents are invited for school meetings
3. Parents are involved in school management
4. Possibility for PTA's to receive training exists
5. PTA's inform school and government on meetings and their results
6. School harmonises policy and actions with other relevant organisations

Appendix 17: Other indicators used in the various evaluation reports

Source: Plan Albania, 2006; Plan China, 2006 (C); Plan Ecuador, 2007 (EC); Plan Egypt, 2007; Plan El Salvador (ES), 2006; Plan Ethiopia, 2006; Plan Honduras, 2006 (H); Plan International, 2007 (RLA); Plan Malawi, 2006; Plan Nicaragua (N), 2006; Plan Peru (P), 2006; Plan regional office, 2007 (RA), Plan Sudan, 2006 (S), Plan Uganda, 2007 (U); Plan Zambia, 2006 (Z).

Pupil

- Completion (S, Z), passing rates (U),
- Frequency of children's meetings (U),
- Children's participation in school governance (U),
- Activities planned by children's committees (U),
- Activities to increase child participation/ hygienic behaviour (ECU),
- Gender awareness of children in different types of schools (C)

Parent

- Parents checking child performance in class (U)
- parents assisting children with school work (U),
- parents' level of education (P, H, N, ES, RLA),
- parents profession (P, H, N, ES, RLA),
- mother's profession (P, H, N, ES, RLA)
- economic family situation (P, H, N, ES, RLA),
- parent's perceptions on whether their opinions are heard (P, H, N, ES, RLA),
- parents participation in program (P, H, N, ES, RLA),
- parents satisfaction with child's education received (P, H, N, ES, RLA)
- Parent's intentions to change child's school (P, H, N, ES, RLA)

School committee

- school committee's perceptions (SDN),
- composition committee (M/F) (S)

Teacher

- No. of teachers by gender (S, H, N, P, ES, GLA),
- Teacher salaries (S),
- Teacher qualifications (U),
- Teachers responses on lessons learned from SIP (U),
- Head teachers responses on the best practices for other schools to learn from (U),
- Number female teachers (Z),
- Themes in which teachers are trained (EC),
- Teacher's material use (EC)
- Reasons for teachers to use certain materials (EC),
- Teacher's satisfaction on their relationship with families (P, H, N, ES, RLA)
- Teaching style director, according to teacher (P, H, N, ES, RLA)
- Years of experience director (P, H, N, ES, RLA)
- Average teaching hours (C)
- Ratios of trainings offered to teachers needs (C)
- Teacher evaluation of SSIP training and coaching (C)
- Training module participation rates (C)

School environment

- pupil toilet, (M),
- Infrastructural index (P, H, N, ES, RLA)
- Basic service index (P, H, N, ES, RLA)
- available materials at school (EC),
- facilities (U),

Other

- stakeholder involvement in supporting schools as reported by teachers (U),
- teacher and Plan staff view on principle achievement (S),
- Challenges in implementing SIP (U),
- Suggested ways to address challenges (U),
- problems in curriculum implementation (S),
- supervision of teacher in a term by the district office (U),
- Budget allocation and expenditure (U,RA,EC,C),
- School Quality Index (EC),
- School administration and management (P, H, N, ES, RLA)

Appendix 18: Gender disaggregated and gender sensitive indicators used in evaluation reports

Source: Plan Albania, 2006; Plan China, 2006; Plan Ecuador, 2007; Plan Egypt, 2007; Plan El Salvador, 2006; Plan Ethiopia, 2006; Plan Honduras, 2006; Plan International, 2007; Plan Malawi, 2006; Plan Nicaragua, 2006; Plan Peru, 2006; Plan regional office, 2007; Plan Sudan, 2006; Plan Uganda, 2007; Plan Zambia, 2006.

* Instruments used provide information on respondents' sex; a more thorough gender analysis can be made

Evaluation report	Quantitative	Qualitative
Albania	None	Girl participation
Egypt	Girl enrolment, attendance, dropout, percentage of pupil's success	Female representation in decision making positions in civil society and PTA (p. 13) - School environment (separate toilets, p.71)
Ethiopia*	Enrolment, dropout and repetition, academic mean comparison	Girls self perception, (p. 40)
Malawi*	Enrolment, dropout, repetition rates, Girl/ boy toilet to pupil ratio	Parental attitudes to girl education
Sudan	Enrolment, Attendance, repetition, drop out and completion rates, teacher reports on factors inhibiting effective pupil participation in school, pupil teacher ratio, teacher rating of grade 3 pupils' scholastic abilities, composition of members of SIPCs	Engendering of teacher and educational administration, presence of girl/boy toilets, policy of government's male/female teacher policy, mainstreaming female leadership in ministry of education
Uganda*	Enrolment, drop out, numbers of children sitting for examination, passing rate, teacher-pupil ratio	Female representation in school management committee, parent sensitisation on importance of education
Zambia	Enrolment, attendance ECCD programmes, retention and completion rates	School girl friendliness, girl sanitary facilities, female leadership in ECCD program
Africa Regional evaluation	No comparison between evaluation reports on gender indicators	None
Latin-America regional report (Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, El Salvador)	None, p. 151	None
Ecuador	Enrolment, graduation, school desertion and repetition rates.	Children's gender awareness
China	Gender awareness of children in different types of schools, number of trainings received on social gender.	

Appendix 19: Gender awareness of children in different type of schools (%).
 $df= 8$ and 2450 children in population

Statements	School type	Strongly disagree	Maybe	Agree
Men are career oriented, women are family oriented $\chi^2 = 60.33$ $P < 0.001$	Non-project county	54.55	15.24	30.22
	Project county but non-SSIP	41.47	23.97	34.56
	SSIP school	57.19	16.40	26.42
Men are born more capable than women $\chi^2 = 42.80$ $P < 0.001$	Non-project county	59.33	17.62	23.06
	Project county but non-SSIP	52.66	18.93	28.40
	SSIP school	63.46	15.28	21.26
Men should be brave and tough $\chi^2 = 10.75$ $P = 0.21$	Non-project county	14.65	13.11	72.35
	Project county but non-SSIP	12.78	14.26	71.47
	SSIP school	17.48	13.31	70.58
Women should be soft and submissive $\chi^2 = 15.86$ $P < 0.01$	Non-project county	39.02	18.86	42.12
	Project county but non-SSIP	31.71	23.30	44.99
	SSIP school	39.51	20.87	39.61
Fathers should earn more money than mothers $\chi^2 = 51.89$ $P < 0.001$	Non-project county	57.42	19.48	23.10
	Project county but non-SSIP	48.37	23.44	28.19
	SSIP school	63.51	17.84	18.65
Fathers not doing housework is OK $\chi^2 = 20.22$ $P < 0.001$	Non-project county	75.93	10.17	13.90
	Project county but non-SSIP	76.25	9.09	14.66
	SSIP school	80.67	9.51	9.82



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