In September-October 2016, the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) joined together with the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to launch the first IIEP online course on Monitoring and Evaluating Gender Equality in Education(1). Targeted at professionals in ministries of education, development agencies and civil society, this course facilitated the means for selecting, assessing, and monitoring the various dimensions of gender equality in the education sector.

Educational practitioners throughout the world formed teams and focused their attention on gender equality in the education sector in countries such as Afghanistan, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Cambodia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Jamaica, Kenya, Myanmar, Oman, Palestine, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Vietnam, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Thanks to the GPE/UNGEI's (2016) Guidance for Developing Gender-Responsive Education Sector Plans, this was the first time that practitioners from all over the world followed a protocol and produced a variety of ‘prototype’ interventions with the objective of improving boys’ and girls’ chances to succeed in their academic and future professional lives.

Here we present some highlights of the IIEP online course on Monitoring and Evaluating Gender Equality in Education, and explore the use of some tools that can be used to address gender inequality in educational sector planning.

1. Selecting interventions – SWOT analysis of the Cambodian Gender Equality Intervention

Sometimes the use of an effective tool can be crucial to assess the effectiveness of an intervention. Such was the case in Cambodia where a team of practitioners implemented a Strengths,
Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis in order to identify the critical points of their gender intervention. Through this analysis it was possible to discuss the implications of the internal and external factors of an intervention aiming at ‘conducting training for teachers and teacher trainers on gender-sensitive pedagogy’ (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) What is working well? (ii) What are some advantages? (iii) What resources currently exist?</td>
<td>(i) What could be done better? (ii) What are the risks?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| - Positive political will  
- Also mentioned in Education Strategic Plan (ESP)  
- Part of Development Partners’ (DP’s) agenda  
- Based on existing initiatives  
- Concrete action by Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) supported by DPs  
- Embedded in the curriculum  
- Making use of existing structures such as District Training and Monitoring Teams (DTMTs) and Teaching Training Centers (TTC) | - High personnel turnover at teacher training colleges  
- Weak coordination of stakeholders and DPs in providing In-Service Teacher Education (INSET)  
- Lack of follow-up of monitoring at district level  
- Low capacity of DTMTs (responsible for INSET) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What new frontiers can be explored?</td>
<td>What are the external issues that can hinder progress?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| - Training of DTMT in monitoring and follow-up  
- By including gender-sensitive pedagogy at Pre-Service Teacher Education (INSET) a sustainable structure is in place  
- Revision of the textbooks will happen soon (in line with principle of gender-sensitive pedagogy)  
- Strong commitment of DPs and NGOs | - Lack of funding for follow-up  
- High workload of the DTMS in providing the training  
- Delay in curriculum and textbook revision  
- DP’s coverage of selected provinces  
- Overloaded curriculum |

Table 1: SWOT Analysis applied to the Gender Equality Intervention. Source: Lenaerts, Braeye, Cnuddle, and Say (2016)

2. Selecting interventions – five criteria

In addition to the SWOT analysis, other criteria and guiding questions can be considered when selecting strategies (IIIEP, 2012). These criteria are: (i) Evidence-based; (ii) Feasibility; (iii)
Affordability; (iv) Desirability; and (v) Sustainability. As an example, the Cambodian intervention discussed earlier is evaluated through these criteria.

(i) Evidence-based: Biases and stereotyping can be transmitted not only through male teachers’ and classmates’ attitudes and behaviour, but also through curricula and textbooks. Research undertaken in Cambodian schools (MoEYS, 2012) revealed that teachers’ interactions with girls were different from their interactions with boys. Similarly, textbooks and teachers’ methodology were found to be gender biased.

A clear example of Cambodian stereotyping was found in a Grade 9 science textbook (see Figure 1) of students who were studying the human central nervous system. Certain brain activities (such as thinking, doing sports, and listening) were associated with boys while other brain activities (such as eating, smelling a flower, and perceiving light) were associated with girls (Lenaerts, Braeye, Cnuddle, and Say, 2016).

(ii) Feasibility: This ‘donor-partner’ intervention was planned as a strategy supported by national resources, according to Annual Operational Plan (AOP) (MoEYS, 2014). In addition, this intervention is considered as part of the ESP, which explains why DPs/NGOs have secured the necessary financial resources. However, planning needs to take into account the time for both (a) training teacher institutes and (b) updating their own curricula. The Greater Mekong Subregion Plan (GMSP) sets five years for the roll-out, which should be a feasible timing. Even if the costs and human resources required for nationwide in-service teacher education are high, these are within the means of the ministry.

(iii) Affordability: A well-designed intervention should include in-house workshops so that transport costs and allowances are kept low.

(iv) Desirability: This intervention is aligned with the broader goals and objectives of the ESP. The
strategy is suitable to cover both country and local communities’ levels. However, we need to be aware of possible resistance, especially in rural areas.

(v) Sustainability: The intervention will deal with existing structures for pre-service and in-service teacher education. Newly graduated teachers will be using gender-sensitive pedagogy, and the capacity building in teacher trainers will stay in the training system to support new teachers. The sustainability of the INSET will mainly depend on the follow-up and monitoring capacity of the DTMTs.

3. Monitoring and evaluating interventions – log frame matrix of school-related gender-based violence from Uganda

In an effort to meet the Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Quality Education and its Target 4.a – which promotes non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all – a team of practitioners in Uganda selected to explore ‘School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV)’.

Research evidence found that nearly 98 per cent of students across five school districts experienced physical and emotional violence with nearly 21 per cent of that violence occurring in school (Skeie, Anudu, and Parrot, 2016).

Since SRGBV clearly represented one of the main reasons why girls in Uganda were not benefiting from the education of good quality, a gender-responsive intervention seeking to prevent and diminish gender-based violence was identified. This intervention was presented in the form of a matrix or logical framework (LogFrame) (see Table 2) where it is possible to observe and confirm connections between the activities, outputs, outcomes, and goals of such intervention.
Table 2: LogFrame Matrix. Source: Skeie, Anudu, and Parrot (2016)


Still another tool that is used to plan the monitoring and evaluation process of gender-responsive interventions is the Theory of Change (ToC). Unlike the LogFrame, ToC focuses on the causal linkages that are expected to produce the needed change. In other words, ToC goes beyond a simple observation of connections between facts because it seeks to explain how and why the desired changes are expected to take place.

Although ToC is a relatively new tendency among international organisations and donor agencies, the strengths and weaknesses of this tool appear as two sides of the same coin. On the one hand,
ToC provides a broader picture of a proposed intervention because it examines the causal connection between events, but on the other hand, identifying such events calls for a higher level of experience and knowledge of the socio-political context in which such causal linkages take place. This might explain why some practitioners might not feel confident to apply ToC. Below an example of a ToC matrix illustrates a strategy seeking to `Strengthen gender-sensitive and learner-centred methodologies (GSLM)’ in Rwanda (see Table 3).

Table 3: Theory of Change illustrating a GSLM strategy

These tools produced by the participants of the IIEP online course demonstrated the feasibility of applying gender mainstreaming in any educational sector plans.

(1) This online course has received the endorsement from Quality Matters, an internationally recognized peer review process designed to certify the quality of online training and promote continuous improvement.

References


Lenaerts, F.; Braye, S.; Cnuddle, V.; Say, S. September 2016. Group Project: South East Asia VVOB. Paper presented at the IIEP online course on “Monitoring and Evaluating Gender Equality in Education”.


UNESCO-IIEP. 2016. IIEP online course on “Monitoring and Evaluating Gender Equality in Education”: Instructional presentations. Paris: UNESCO-IIEP.

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