

ESSENTIAL LEARNING PACKAGE



SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

The Essential Learning Package (ELP)

– one of the ‘bold initiatives’ of UNICEF’s Basic Education and Gender Equality programme – provides the essential supplies and services for developing Child-Friendly Schools. This initiative seeks to ensure that more children enrol in school, attend regularly and complete a programme of worthwhile learning. It was inspired by large-scale and rapid back-to-school interventions in emergencies, and pays particular attention to the logistics of procurement and distribution of learning materials.

Launched in 2003 in Burkina Faso at a regional UNICEF-World Bank workshop, the Essential Learning Package includes proper supply planning, procurement and distribution of educational materials to achieve national goals and programme objectives as they are determined at the country level. This is the focus of the ELP in 12 countries in the West and Central Africa region.¹ It includes a comprehensive range of supplies and services, such as infrastructure and equipment, classrooms and wells, separate toilets for boys and girls, desks and chairs, adequate numbers of trained teachers and communities that are fully engaged as partners for change.

¹ Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Gambia, Guinea (Conakry), Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

Key Messages

- Essential Learning Package is a comprehensive package based on experience in emergency situations where large numbers of children are rapidly brought into schools through a major campaign supported by strong logistics and supply deliveries.
- The goal of this initiative is to establish viable national systems for delivering quality education through the massive procurement of supplies designed to ensure that more children enrol in school and complete their education.
- The success of the ELP depends in large measure on the extent of its endorsement and ownership by governments as they integrate the package in long-term education-sector budgets and plans.

“The Essential Learning Package is a bold initiative designed to increase children’s access to school, improve retention, completion and the quality of learning, through rapid distribution of essential services and supplies.”

Rima Salah,
UNICEF Deputy Executive Director



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Recent Activities

In August 2006, a donation from the Government of the Netherlands helped UNICEF initiate the 'All girls to school' campaign in Benin. The grant will assist implementing the ELP component of a 10-year plan for education developed by UNICEF Benin and its partners. The programme focuses on accelerating girls' access to education by training teachers, improving the school environment and reinforcing the value of girls' education within the community.

In 2006, UNICEF worked to introduce the ELP into 134 primary schools in five regions in Chad, paying special attention to developing

capacity among regional education authorities and assessing the management actions and financial costs needed to introduce each element. Recent activities have strengthened the quality of education services for 38,000 children. By focusing on the most influential and cost-effective aspects of this package, this will provide a sound base for the significant expansion of activities in 2007. In the regions affected by the influx of Sudanese refugees, the ELP was introduced in 40 schools in cooperation with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, which supports school construction, and the World Food Programme, which supports school feeding.