

# **Championing Gender Equality in and through Education**

UNGEI Strategic Direction 2023-2027

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## List of acronyms

ADAP	Adolescent Development and Participation
BIPOC	Black, indigenous and people of color
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
CIFF	Children's Investment Fund Foundation
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DFID	Department for International Development
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EiE	Education in Emergencies
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCI	Gender at the Centre Initiative
GES	Gender Equality in Education
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GRESA	Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning
GTE	Gender-Transformative Education
ICPD	International Conference on Population Development
IIEP-UNESCO	International Institute for Education Planning
IWD	International Women's Day
MoEs	Ministries of Education
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
MHM	Menstrual hygiene management
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OOS	Out of School
PAC	Portfolio Advisory Committee
SDs	Strategic Direction
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMT	Senior Management Team
SRGBV	School-related gender-based violence
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
TE	Transform Education
TES	Transforming Education Summit
ToC	Theory of Change
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCTs	UN Country Teams
UNDAFs	UN Development Assistant Frameworks
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
US	United States
USAID	US Agency for International Development

## Part A: Overview

This section provides an overview of the purpose, primary actors and the development process of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) Strategic Direction (SDs) 2023-2027.

### 1 Purpose of the SDs exercise

The **purpose of the SDs exercise** was to guide the development of UNGEI's 2023-2027 portfolio based on the current gender equality in and through education landscape and on the learnings from UNGEI's previous strategic period.

The SDs exercise was informed by a review of the achievements and learnings from the previous SDs document (2018-2022); an identification of the key barriers to achieving gender equality in and through education; and on the identification of UNGEI's expertise and strengths.

### 2 What is UNGEI?

**UNGEI is a global partnership of organizations that are committed to gender-transformative education (GTE).** These partners include civil society organizations (CSOs), governments, UN (United Nations) agencies, academia, donors and young feminist activists, who all work together to achieve gender equality in and through education.

UNGEI was founded in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000, by the then UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. It was established due to the need for a global initiative to lead the efforts towards gender and education in a context with multiple and significant challenges, in particular, a lack of commitment, evidence and collaboration among actors.

**UNGEI is the only initiative that has made gender equality in and through education its only and core priority.** It is also one of the few initiatives that brings the voice of girls and young feminists to the table, promotes feminist principles and advocates for radical changes in the approaches towards gender and education.

**Since UNGEI's inception, it has grown into a unique initiative and a leader in the sector: it has become a global convener, a knowledge generator and an advocacy champion.** UNGEI's most recent strategic period (2018-2022) is now coming to a close. During this strategic period, UNGEI has evolved from a global advocacy body, which was focused on knowledge generation, to an initiative that is able to put topics on the international agenda, bring key stakeholders together and to identify key gaps to advocate for GTE through effective partnership delivery.



### 3 Introducing Itad

**Itad is a global consultancy organization, which is united by a strong set of values and a common purpose: to help build a more equitable and sustainable world for all.** Since 1984, Itad has provided expert monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) and strategy services to help organizations improve their performance and to catalyze positive and lasting social, economic and environmental change.

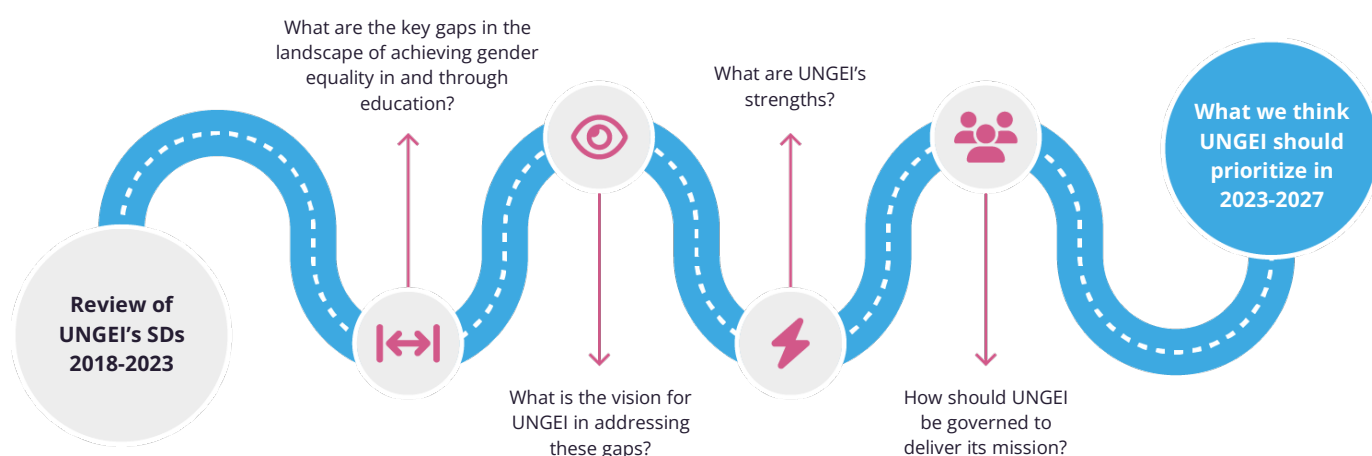
Itad’s approach is based on the principle that there is no single formula for achieving development effectiveness, and that every context presents its own unique challenges and opportunities. It specializes in the following three core areas:

1. **Strategy management and adaptive management**, in which it uses its skills as facilitators to guide its partners in engaging with evidence and making the right decisions.
2. **Design, implementation and assessment** of fit-for-purpose monitoring systems, which deliver insightful data, at the right time, to inform decision making.
3. **Evaluation of programs, policies, organizations and projects** using a variety of approaches to support ongoing evidence-based decision making.

### 4 Process of the SDs exercise

**UNGEI followed the roadmap outlined below, in Figure 1, in order to discuss and agree the SDs that would guide UNGEI’s work over the 2023-2027 period.** UNGEI was supported by Itad in this process, which provided analysis and facilitation support.

**Figure 1: SDs 2023-2027 – the process**



Source: Elaborated by the authors

The process of developing the 2023-2027 SDs document included a review of the achievements and learnings from the previous UNGEI SDs (2018-2022), the identification of the key barriers to achieving gender equality in and through education, and the identification of UNGEI’s expertise and strengths.

To identify the key gaps in the landscape of achieving gender equality in and through education and UNGEI’s strengths to address these gaps, Itad undertook an analysis based on the following four sources:

1. **Consultations** with key stakeholders. These were held with a diverse variety of actors across 40 organizations within the education sector, including those operating at grassroots and global arenas. This included actors from bilateral and multi-lateral donors; foundations; networks; CSOs; non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and individual experts, youths and activists. See Annex A for the full list of organizations and interviewees.

2. **Discussions with the Global Feminist Coalition.** These discussions took place as feminist CSOs and young activists from over 25 countries were convened for the first time to share their insights and discuss the SDs of UNGEI.
3. **Landscape mapping.** A mapping of the global girls' education ecosystem was undertaken through a desk review. This review presented an overview of the state-of-the-world regarding gender equality in and through education and identified the key gaps at global and national levels in relation to the delivery of gender-responsive education sector planning (GRES P).
4. **A SWOT analysis of gender inclusion in education sector planning processes in the Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI) partner countries.** This was conducted across all eight GCI focus countries to better understand the major gaps in achieving GRES P.

## 5 Portfolio Advisory Committee (PAC)

To oversee the SDs exercise, UNGEI constituted a Portfolio Advisory Committee (PAC). The role of the committee was 1) to oversee the work conducted as part of the SDs exercise and 2) to review, discuss and validate the content of the SDs. Table 1, below, shows when and how the PAC engaged in the SDs exercise, the purpose of its engagements and the decisions made at each point. The full list of PAC members is included in Annex B.

**Table 1: Engagement with the PAC**

Engagement point	Time	Purpose	Decisions made
<b>PAC Meeting 1: inception stage</b>	30 September 2022	Provide inputs on the design, methodology and operationalization of the SDs design exercise.	Agreements of expectations and commitments from PAC members throughout the SD exercise.  Sign-off design and methodology for the SDs exercise.
<b>PAC Meeting 2: data collection stage</b>	12 December 2022	Provide an update on the progress made in the data collection phase.  Provide a summary of the findings to date.  Share emerging challenges, information gaps and competing priorities.	Validate progress and confirm the way forward.
<b>PAC Meeting 3: synthesis stage</b>	19 April 2023	Provide an overview of the preliminary findings/insights emerging from the SDs exercise.  Share the emerging shape of the portfolio.	Validate the preliminary insights.  Agree the format and content of the final outputs.
<b>Remote review: design stage</b>	August 2023	Share the draft final outputs resulting from the SDs exercise.	Sign-off of the final outputs.

Source: Elaborated by the authors

## 6 Overview of UNGEI today

Over recent years, **UNGEI has become a unique initiative, leading the way by demonstrating both the importance of an increased focus on gender equality in and through education** and by guiding donors and implementers regarding the pathways to achieving this. Its initial work focused on providing technical outputs and capacity development, promoting policy dialogue and advocacy and coordinating efforts from different actors. The initial efforts and achievements raised its profile and consolidated UNGEI as the lead initiative in promoting girls' education, putting it at the forefront of global discussions in the area.

UNGEI has built on its consolidated roles as a global convener, knowledge generator and advocacy lead; therefore, **today, it brings the voices of girls and young feminists to the table, promotes feminist principles, partners with gender champions on the ground, and advocates for changes in the global communities' approaches to gender equality in and through education.** It does this by bringing the local to the global: ensuring that the funding, focus and direction of education support and funding is aligned to the key challenges actually being experienced on the ground.

In 2022, UNGEI's total expenditure was USD 2.6M. This included global advocacy, research, convening and knowledge in addition to programming in ten countries.

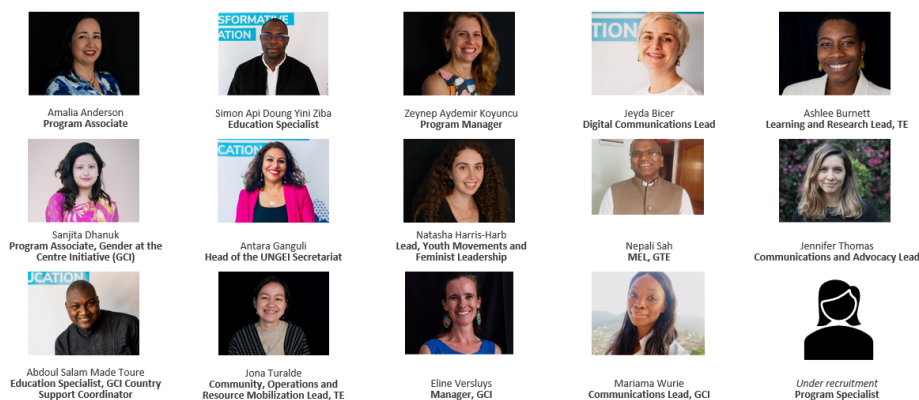


## 7 UNGEI's team

UNGEI's Secretariat consists of a core team, which, with the strategic direction provided by the Global Advisory and Steering Committees, is responsible for the partnership's day-to-day operations. The Secretariat, hosted by UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund), leads evidence building, advocacy, communications, youth engagement, in-country programming, partnerships and other critical areas of work.<sup>1</sup>

The UNGEI Secretariat currently consists of 15 team members, who work across strategy, programming, communications, research and learning, and advocacy. Figure 2 below presents an overview of UNGEI's team in August 2023.

**Figure 2. Overview of UNGEI team (August 2023)**



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ungei.org/who-we-are/our-team>



## Part B: Analysis of previous SDs

This section presents insights from the review of UNGEI's previous SDs, 2018-2022. It offers an overview of the SDs' design, implementation and monitoring, followed by key findings from the analysis of the UNGEI Secretariat's capacity and budget. Additionally, the section includes valuable takeaways from UNGEI's partners' feedback.

### 8 SDs 2018-2022

#### 8.1 Review and analysis of the 2018-2022 SDs

A review and analysis of the SDs that guided UNGEI's work over the 2018-2022 period identified a number of insights and findings relating to the following: 1) the process through which the SDs were designed and set up and 2) the implementation and monitoring of the SDs. These are summarized below.

##### Strategic Direction design and set-up

- **The quantity and focus of the work across the different thematic areas differed from what was planned for and expected in the initial SDs.** The SDs 2018-2022 document presented four objectives, which were intended to guide the work of UNGEI over the strategic period. While the objectives were presented as being at the same priority level, in reality, UNGEI delivered a higher amount of work and achieved a higher impact under some of the objectives. This disparity was due to several factors, such as the shifting contexts and funding landscapes and the level of clarity in the SDs' conceptualization of the objective. The latter is explained further in the point below.
- **The thematic areas with the greatest clarity within the SDs received more focus than the areas with less clarity.** Certain thematic areas, such as school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) and GRESP, were better defined within the SDs. As a result, they received a greater focus during the most recent strategic period, in comparison to areas that were less well-defined, such as gender-transformative governance.
- **It was difficult to measure progress due to the lack of indicators attached to the SDs' objectives.** A key concern noted by the review was the extent to which weak and incomplete gender-related indicators were being used to highlight the state of gender equality in and through education and the extent to which these indicators were clearly tied to the objectives in the SDs. This resulted in significant difficulty in measuring progress and in identifying how UNGEI was contributing to this progress.
- **The high-level Theory of Change (ToC) allowed UNGEI to follow funding and still deliver in line with outcomes.** During the 2018-2022 period, UNGEI was guided by a high-level ToC, which allowed significant flexibility regarding how UNGEI could achieve its strategic objectives. In the absence of core programmatic funding UNGEI needed to be opportunistic. The absence of very specific indicators enabled this. UNGEI have continued this approach of selecting areas of work rather than indicators which assume a pre-determined type of work. This also means that UNGEI can bring together partners around the selected areas of work (called Focus Areas in this SD).

##### Strategic Direction implementation and monitoring

- **There was exponential growth in terms of the tools produced, the events hosted and the webinars conducted.** UNGEI effectively expanded its outreach and footprint by convening global events that were related to advancing gender equality in and through education. For instance, UNGEI convened seven side events at the most recent Global Education Summit and Transforming Education Summit (TES). In addition, multiple tools and knowledge products have been produced. Some of the highlights in these areas are presented in Table 2.

- **UNGEI was remarkably flexible in moving to remote convening and in pivoting to new thematic areas as a consequence of Covid-19.** The review found that, particularly in comparison to other UN entities, UNGEI is very flexible and able to operate with agility in response to rapidly changing situations, such as Covid-19 or changing funding landscapes. For instance, UNGEI is able to liaise boldly and flexibly with Ministries of Education (MoEs) and governments on the need for a more feminist-focused agenda and more gender transformation in planning, budgeting and implementation. This has enabled governments to fulfil their commitments within the GCI focus countries and has contributed to the success of the Freetown Manifesto, which was developed in Sierra Leone in May 2022.
- **UNGEI has a strong ability to adapt and move beyond its current thematic areas as a result of the changing funding landscape.** Despite the changing and difficult landscape seen in recent years, UNGEI has been able to demonstrate the importance of gender equality in and through education and to guide donors and implementers on the pathways to achieving their objectives. UNGEI has built on its consolidated roles as a global convener, knowledge generator and advocacy lead and, today, as well as bringing the voices of girls and young feminists to the table, it also promotes feminist principles, advocates for changes in global communities' approaches to gender equality in and through education. It does this by bringing the local to the global, and by ensuring that the funding, focus and direction of education support and funding is aligned to the key challenges actually being experienced on the ground.
- **There was a move to in-country work in 2021 because of the Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI). According to the mid-term evaluation the GCI “fills an important niche in gender equality in and through education.”<sup>2</sup>** UNGEI launched the GCI in 2020. It was a three-year initiative, which was intended to support the leadership in MoEs and other national actors to advance gender equality in and through education. The GCI is being implemented by eight sub-Saharan African countries, with the support of a multi-stakeholder partnership of agencies, and brings together MoEs, a civil society consortium, G7 donors and multilateral agencies.
- **There is a widely shared view that UNGEI’s Secretariat “punches above its weight”<sup>3</sup> and delivers over its capacity.** Despite a relatively small Secretariat team, one of UNGEI’s strengths is its placement and ability to be present at both the global and local level. Other strengths are its strong technical knowledge and its expertise on gender equality in and through education. UNGEI has the ability to put gender-equality topics on the international agenda; to bring multiple stakeholders together in order to advocate for GTE; to identify key gaps, which are not being addressed at the country level; and to work to fill these gaps through effective partnerships. Its global advocacy work is also strengthened by its ability to build evidence regarding what works through pilot implementation and through their partnerships, enabling UNGEI to advocate more effectively at a global level.
- **The mapping of key achievements onto UNGEI’s outcomes has not always been clearly articulated.** As mentioned above, the initial design of the SDs lacked indicators that were clearly linked to its objectives. Therefore, it has been difficult to concretely measure progress. Similarly, it has also been difficult to document what UNGEI is contributing towards. While indicators relating to gender equity in and through education do not tell the full story, they provide helpful insights in tracking the mapping of achievements, lessons and areas for improvement.
- **Growth and progress in thematic areas were director-driven rather than partnership-driven.** Most of the strategic partnerships and relationships with funders have been held by the Director of the Secretariat. This is due to several factors, including the absence of a senior management team (SMT) to whom the Director can delegate. While this model has achieved progress and growth, changes are still needed in the management of the strategic relationships and in the management’s responsibilities to improve the Secretariat’s efficiency.

<sup>2</sup> Cayambe, Independent Mid-term evaluation, GCI, 2023

<sup>3</sup> Itad consultations with UNGEI stakeholders

## 8.2 UNGEI products and events, 2018-2022

An analysis of the products developed and the events hosted by UNGEI during the 2018-2022 period showed an exponential growth in quantity and size. Table 2, below, shows some of the highlights, which are organized by thematic area.

**Table 2: Highlights of UNGEI events, resources and tools over the 2018-2022 period**

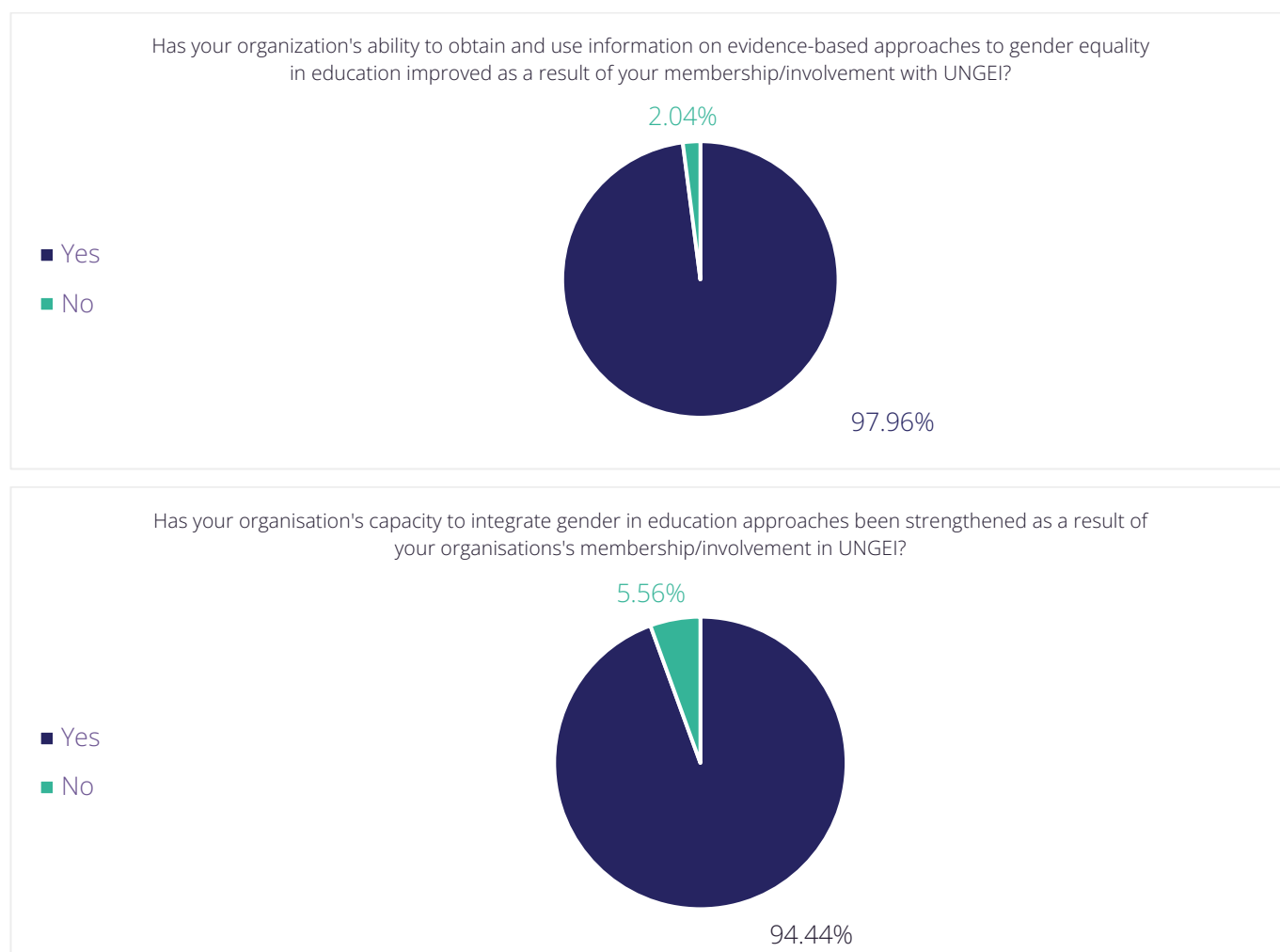
<b>Gender-responsive education plans and policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Launched the Gender Equality in Education Snapshot (GES) Toolkit in Mali and Chad</li> <li>▪ Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI) implementation in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone</li> <li>▪ Guidance and training for Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning (GRESPE) in Africa and Asia – 42 countries covered</li> </ul>
<b>School Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First youth-led 'End SRGBV' campaign</li> <li>▪ 16-day campaign to end GBV</li> <li>▪ Developed End SRGBV thematic briefs</li> <li>▪ Report produced on the gendered dimensions of school violence and its associations with learning outcomes</li> <li>▪ Development and implementation of Whole school approach to prevent school-related gender-based violence: Minimum Standards and Monitoring Framework</li> <li>▪ Co-hosted with UNESCO the Global Working Group to End SRGBV (SRGBV WG)</li> </ul>
<b>Gender-responsive teaching and learning in schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Convened an International Girls Day event and the Ending Gender Stereotypes Campaign</li> <li>▪ Review of existing studies on social norms and girls' education undertaken</li> <li>▪ International Women's Day (IWD) op-ed written on ending gender stereotypes</li> </ul>
<b>Gender-transformative governance and leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Launched Transform Education (TE) on youth day – a youth-led activist campaign</li> <li>▪ 3 Trainings on Gender Transformative Leadership for MoE senior leaders (Sierra Leone, Senegal, Nigeria)</li> <li>▪ Freetown Manifesto on Gender-Transformative Leadership in Education signed by 14 African countries</li> <li>▪ Policy briefs produced on Transformative Political Leadership to Promote 12 Years of Quality Education for All Girls</li> <li>▪ Feminist, youth-led statement of recommendations produced, calling for GTE to advance climate justice</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) guidance note on gender equality</li> <li>▪ Launched a case study collection with lessons from programmatic approaches to the gender-related impacts of Covid-19 on education.</li> <li>▪ Covid-19 and Girls' Education Case Studies</li> </ul>

### 8.3 Takeaways from partners' feedback about UNGEI to date

According to the partners, UNGEI is a global convener, which has led the strong commitments to girls' education and gender equality in and through education at a global level between 2018 and 2022. This has included increasing the commitments from foundations, such as the LEGO Foundation's commitments to the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE's) Girls' Education Accelerator; UNICEF's 2021-2030 Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan; and targeted funding from multilateral and bilateral donors such as the World Bank, GPE, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), the United Kingdom's (UK's) Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), and Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The majority of donor support was directed towards gender mainstreaming, violence against children (even when it did not have a strong gender lens/ methodology) and cash transfer and MHM initiatives; initiatives that received more limited support included gender-responsive life skills, Gender responsive curricula and pedagogy, community social norm change, and comprehensive sexuality education.

According to the feedback given by UNGEI's partners, those that work very closely with UNGEI value its influence over its capacity to implement gender-transformative approaches. As Figure 3 shows, in their feedback, the partners also said that their ability to effectively utilize evidence-based approaches and to integrate gender in education approaches had improved as a result of their involvement with UNGEI.

**Figure 3. Partners' feedback about UNGEI to date**



Source: UNGEI's partners feedback survey 2021

**UNGEI took a multi-pronged and active approach to advocacy and dialogue during the SD period.** This included leading the discussions on how gender-responsive education planning, teaching and learning could ensure gender equality is embedded within national education systems at all levels and in all learning spaces. UNGEI also worked to support its partners in dismantling gender barriers to education in humanitarian crises and emergencies, including through its membership in the INEE’s Girls’ Education in Emergencies (EiE) Reference Group, which seeks to further research and advocate for girls’ EiE. UNGEI was also a co-convenor of the Global Working Group to end SRGBV, as UNGEI has long been at the forefront of efforts to eradicate this violation of human rights. UNGEI has also partnered with youth leaders throughout; their truly intergenerational approach and intentional engagement of youth networks has ensured that advocacy approaches and messages are developed by, and for, those for whom the impact is intended.

“UNGEI brought the issues of SRGBV to the highest level. This convening power of partnerships and collective voice helped to make this through to the discussion table with ministries. It was a real flagship and needs to be continued.”

**Partner consultation**

“UNGEI does a fabulous job at advocacy and convening supported by their huge membership base. One of UNGEI’s strengths is joining the voices of youth leaders and decision makers which is really valuable.”

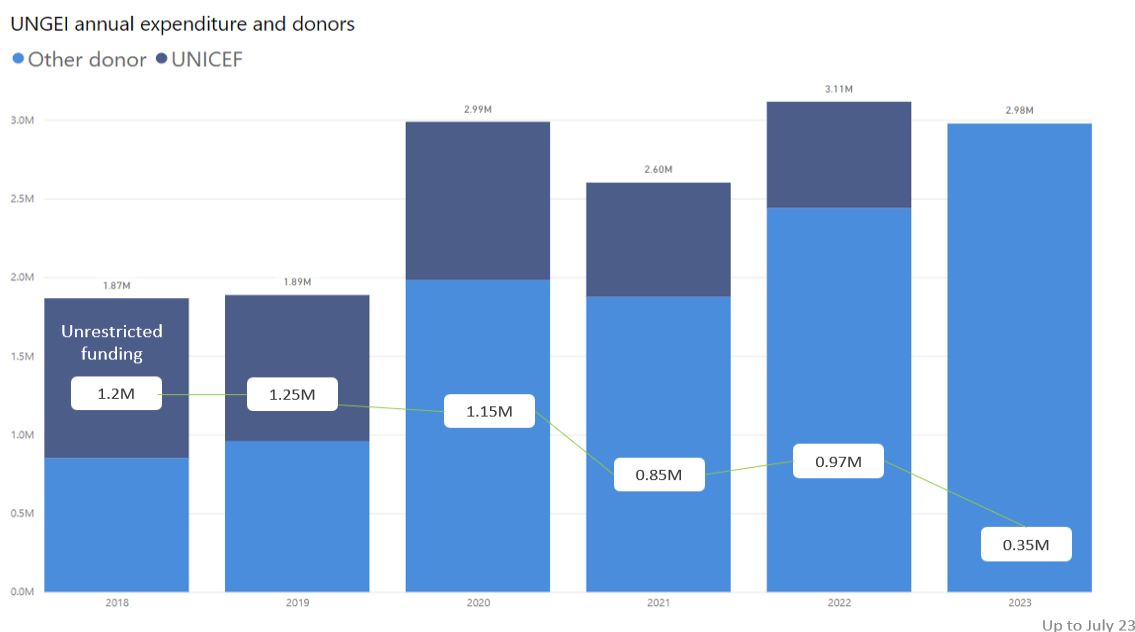
**Partner consultation**

### 8.4 Capacity of UNGEI’s Secretariat, 2018-2022

UNGEI was able to accomplish and contribute to the achievements described above, despite the significant and constraining financial and human resource limitations in the Secretariat. UNGEI is becoming more effective in managing its funds and resources and more sustainable in the long term.

**Although the funding and capacity for the Secretariat has grown since UNGEI began implementing programming, the amount of UNICEF and unrestricted funding has decreased.** As Figure 4 below shows, there has been a clear increase in total annual budget during the period 2018-2023. However, there has been a decrease in the proportion of UNICEF funding to zero in 2023, which suggests that UNGEI is getting better at raising its own funds. On the other hand, the amount of unrestricted funding received by the Secretariat has decreased significantly from USD 1.2M in 2018 to 0.35M in 2023.

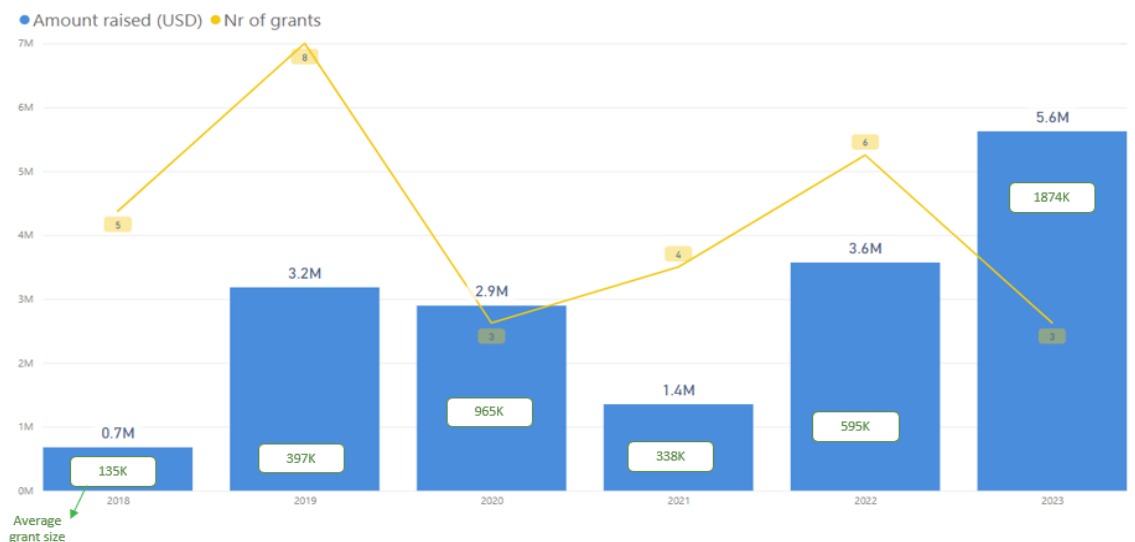
**Figure 4: UNGEI’s budget evolution: 2018-2023**



Source: Elaborated by the authors with UNGEI’s budget data

**UNGEI Secretariat is becoming more efficient in managing its funds. The average grant size is increasing, and the number of grants being managed is decreasing.** As Figure 5 shows, the amount of funds raised per year has increased, particularly since 2021 and to a record of 5.6M raised in 2023 (until July). The average size of grants has increased significantly post pandemic from around 338K in 2021 to 1874K in 2023. Finally, the total number of grants signed each year has decreased over the period 2018-2023 with three grants signed in 2023.

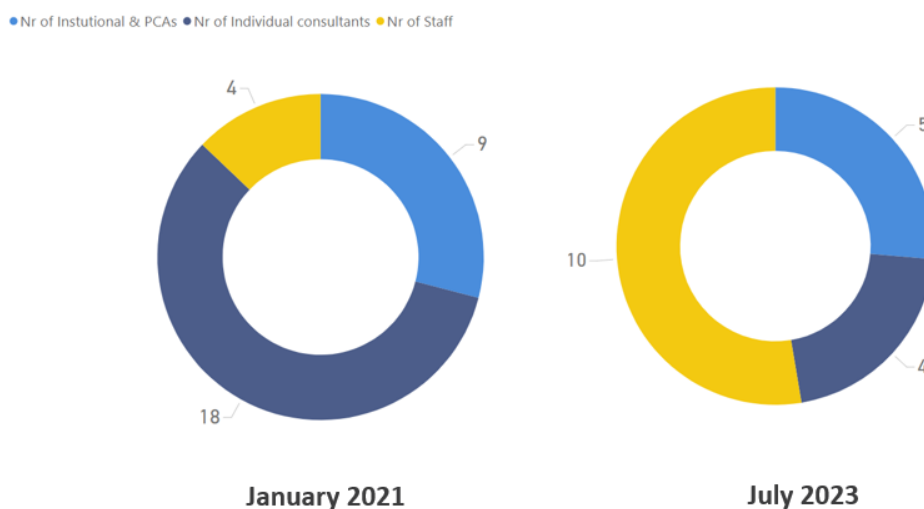
**Figure 5: UNGEI's # of grants and fundraising amounts: 2018-2023**



Source: Elaborated by the authors with UNGEI's budget data

**UNGEI is becoming more sustainable in its delivery model. There is a shift away from the use of ad-hoc consultants for delivery to more structured agreements with PCAs and employed staff.** The limited number of full-time Secretariat staff resulted in a high number of external consultants being employed. Hiring and managing these external consultants resulted in high transaction costs and constrained the organization's ability to grow and sufficiently staff the Secretariat. As shown in Figure 6 below, the number of individual consultants and PCAs have decreased, passing from 27 in 2021 to a total of 9 in July 2023. In addition, the number of UNGEI staff members has more than doubled over this period from 4 staff in January 2021 to 10 in July 2023.

**Figure 6: UNGEI's budget - Profile of UNGEI's delivery model: January 2021 vs July 2023**



Source: Elaborated by the authors with UNGEI's data

# Part C: Gap analysis and UNGEI's strengths

In this section, we present the key findings of the gap analysis, which was conducted as part of the SDs exercise. We begin by outlining the sources of the gap analysis. Subsequently, we provide a summary of the main global commitments to gender equality, priority areas and the significant gaps identified. Finally, we outline the gaps and challenges that UNGEI aims to address during the 2023-2027 period and discuss how UNGEI can leverage its strengths to fill those gaps.

## 9 Gap analysis

### 9.1 Source of the gap analysis

To identify the key gaps and challenges in achieving gender equality in and through education, UNGEI conducted an analysis to identify the key issues that needed to be addressed. The analysis was based on several sources, including the following (which were detailed fully in Section 4):

4. A SWOT analysis of education sector planning processes in GCI countries
5. The discussions and insights obtained from the Global Feminist Coalition meeting in 2022
6. The consultations
7. The landscape mapping of the global girls' education ecosystem

### 9.2 Snapshot of the commitments made to gender equality

**Across the global, regional and national levels, many commitments have been made to gender equality; however, UNGEI is the only organization with the dual mandate of gender and education.** The G7 countries' Charlevoix Declaration on Public Education, June 2018, reiterated the major donors' commitment to quality education for girls and women. Specifically, they committed to closing the gap in access to education during conflicts and crises, including for refugees and the internally displaced and to improving coordination. As a global advocacy body, UNGEI has a significant role to play as it has the mandate and ability to hold global leaders and key players in the education space accountable for their commitments to gender equality, including in terms of their funding commitments. This enables UNGEI to ensure that the priorities of donors and implementers are truly addressing the gaps still being found at grassroots levels. For instance, the UK, through its Girls' Education Challenge, has committed more than US\$265m and almost half of the World Bank's education expenditure (US\$11.4bn) included girls' education components.

**Donors and other stakeholders, including UNGEI, most recently convened in September 2022, during the global TES to reconfirm their commitment to advancing gender quality through and in education.** UNGEI co-convened seven side events at the Summit, which included contributing with other partners to a signed Commitment to Action: "Working immediately to enroll all children and keep them in school, particularly marginalized girls." As well as working to enroll children immediately, the call to action also launched a new platform to hold actors accountable at all levels and to highlight gaps in the progress at country levels: the Global Platform for Gender Equality and Girls' and Women's Empowerment in and through Education.<sup>4</sup> The platform seeks to "convene governments, donors, partners and civil society to monitor progress against the Summit and other commitments, highlight gaps in progress at the country level, and encourage transformative action on girls' education and gender equality in and through education."

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<sup>4</sup> Joint initiative with UNICEF and UNESCO

### 9.3 Gender equality – priority areas

Table 3, below, summarizes the main gaps – from the most commonly to least commonly identified – that were highlighted through Itad’s analysis of the four sources outlined above. It provides a list of all the challenges and gaps that emerged from the various consultations and reviews. The following sections then provide further explanations of the most relevant gaps and identifies which ones UNGEI will aim to address over the next strategic period.

**Table 3: Commonly identified gaps in gender quality across the evidence sources**

Most commonly identified gaps (3+ sources)	Commonly identified gaps (2+ sources)	Least commonly identified gaps (1+ source)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Harmful gender norms and stereotypes</li> <li>▪ Conflict-exacerbated barriers to access and retention</li> <li>▪ SRGBV and GBV exacerbated by Covid-19</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited access to CSE and sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR)</li> <li>▪ Lack of gender-transformative curricula</li> <li>▪ Limited women leadership in schools</li> <li>▪ Limited opportunities for remedial education for out-of-school (OOS) girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of access to life skills education</li> <li>▪ Lack of access to digital resources</li> <li>▪ Climate change adaptations</li> <li>▪ Inconsistent implementation of policy at country level</li> <li>▪ Weak technical expertise</li> <li>▪ Limited resources available for gender expertise</li> <li>▪ Deprioritization of gender by policymakers</li> <li>▪ Limited opportunities for community engagement and accountability</li> </ul>

Source: Gap analysis conducted as part of SDs exercise

The gap analysis also revealed that the majority of funding goes to project-specific interventions, and these are predominately one or two intervention types. In addition, gender equality remains a high priority but commitment to these priorities in terms of financial investments and project initiatives is less clear. This is summarized in the following takeaways that emerged from the gap analysis:

1. UNGEI is the only initiative that has made gender equality in and through education its only and core priority.
2. Focus on gender equality is often project-specific and through limited interventions.
3. The expertise and resources on gender at the country level remain weak.
4. There is not always a clear pathway from commitment to results.



## 9.4 Gender equality – findings from landscape analysis

Drawing on the four sources introduced above, with a focus on the findings from the in-country organizations that work directly with girls and other marginalized groups, several priorities and gaps were identified, as follows:

- **Gender equality remains a high priority, however, the financial commitments to these priorities and the project initiatives from other actors in these areas are less clear; UNGEI remains the only actor that has made gender equality in and through education its only and core priority.** The landscape mapping found that, despite the high-level and visible commitments, gender is not sufficiently prioritized within the education sector, including in emergency settings. An ongoing lack of women in leadership positions within schools, MoEs and in the EiE clusters, as well as a lack of gender expertise, continues to contribute to this deprioritization.
- **Underlying the challenges outlined in Table 3, we continue to see gaps in the prioritization of gender at all levels.** The focus on gender is often the first to be abandoned when resources are limited and this deprioritization limits the expertise, funding and planning that allow gender equality to become central to education delivery. While commitments are being made to ensure that a gender focus is central to progressing quality education, prioritization is often only made by gender activists and experts and these are not always enacted by countries' governments or by large donors, for whom foundational numeracy and literacy are greater priorities.
- **Expertise and resources on gender and gender equality in and through education remain weak at the country levels.** Women leaders, gender experts and CSOs do not have access to and influence over the education system's planners and decision makers at either global or country levels. This is a gap that UNGEI is aware of. As it continues to build its presence at both the local and global level, it can identify the key gaps in the field that are not being addressed at the country level and then work to fill these through effective partnerships.
- **While the commitments highlighted above demonstrate that gender equality remains a high priority, there is not always a clear pathway from committing to these priorities to results.** Policy and financial commitments do not always directly translate into impact on the ground. Therefore, more needs to be done to invest in these areas and to work with the right partners to ensure the right cross-sectoral expertise is being used to deliver outcomes for girls and the most marginalized groups, including those in crisis-settings, where refugees and displaced populations continue to lack access to global interventions to improve gender equality in and through education.
- **In instances where commitment has translated into results, the majority of funding has gone to project-specific interventions, and these are predominately used for one or two intervention types.** According to the landscape mapping, the majority of funding was directed to key themes such as addressing SRGBV, gender-responsive pedagogy and training, life skills training and curriculum, and the elimination of school fees. However, themes such as multidimensional programming, and interventions targeted at gender-responsive planning and remedial education received far less funding.

## 9.5 Gaps and challenges

The six gaps and challenges which were raised most consistently and which UNGEI will, therefore, work to address over the next five years are detailed below.




- 1. Gender is not being adequately prioritized within the education sector, especially in emergency settings.** Even for those girls who are able to access schooling, significant challenges remain: within schools there is often a lack of appropriate gender-sensitive training for teachers, teaching materials exacerbate harmful gender norms and stereotypes and a men-dominated leadership team. These can impact on girls' learning experiences and their likelihood of transitioning successfully. Poor policy and legal environments continue to support this cycle of educational marginalization and act as a key barrier to the achievement of gender equality. While the evidence base in this area needs building, it is clear that women school leaders enhance the experience of girls within education and support their inclusion, retention and safety.
- 2. An ongoing lack of women leadership and gender expertise continues to contribute to this deprioritization.** Women leaders, gender experts and CSOs do not have access to or influence over education system planners or decision makers at all levels. With a global lack of women leaders, which decreases as we move up through the education system, there is an urgent need to equip national governments to develop strategies and plans to address this imbalance and to advocate globally for more attention and funding in this area.
- 3. Despite some progress in the previous SDs, gender-blind or weak gender policies and processes continue to be seen within education sector planning.** Progress was made by UNGEI in the promotion of GRESP during the previous strategic period (2018-2022), as can be seen through the increased gender knowledge, expertise and inclusion within the planning process. Furthermore, in continuing to champion the need to address SRGBV at a global level, UNGEI has kept it on the agenda at global forums and discussions. However, beyond UNGEI, GPE and the International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP-UNESCO), few donors work systematically with national-level ministries and departments on training in and the implementation of gender-responsive planning and budgeting. At the global level, GPE partnered with UNGEI and UNICEF to develop guidelines for national MoEs in supporting GRESP, but additional work is still needed.
- 4. Gender norms and rights-based sexuality education are not systemically addressed in education curricula and teachers and leaders are not supported or adequately equipped to address harmful norms and biases within educational settings.** All sources of evidence emphasized harmful gender norms and stereotypes affecting women and girls as continuing to be a major gap in the girls' education ecosystem. For instance, the leaders of the Global Feminist Coalition discussed how gender norms surrounding girls' unpaid and often invisible labor in the household limited their ability to learn and complete their education. The landscape mapping similarly found that, while there are many actors – such as the GPE, the Children's Investment Foundation (CIFF) and Girl Effect – working to address attitudes regarding girls' education and wider harmful practices, many of the existing programs are limited in geographic scope and are only just beginning to integrate boys and men in helping to address the patriarchal norms that are harmful to girls.
- 5. Effective strategies are not in place to prevent or respond to SRGBV.** The consultations with stakeholders, discussions with feminist coalitions and the landscape mapping all discussed SRGBV faced by girls, especially in African countries, as a major barrier to access and a persistent gap. The consultations in particular emphasized a gap regarding support to advocacy and implementation of initiatives that seek to address SRGBV. The feminist coalitions stated that GBV also increased during the Covid-19 lockdowns as many girls were forced to stay home and face sexual and domestic violence. The landscape mapping noted that funders such as the Ford Foundation referred to GBV as a "growing epidemic" that requires a "holistic and intersectional approach".

**6. Weak and incomplete gender-related indicators are being used to highlight the state of gender equality in and through education.** The voices of experts from the Global South are not being used or recognized as key data sources. One of the contributing factors to this gap in prioritization is the lack of data that highlight the lived experiences of different marginalized groups, including girls and, in particular, girls with disabilities and the increasing levels of marginalization and violence that they face. While parity is a useful measure for understanding the difference in girls' and other marginalized groups' (for example, girls with disabilities, those living in crisis and the LGBTQI+ community) access to education and their school completion rates, it hides the challenges and experiences that these groups face within the school environment and does not provide any insights into their later life outcomes. It is important to consider these outcomes because girls, for example, continue to encounter huge barriers, such as limited earning potential, a lack of decision-making opportunities, the prioritization of caring roles, and ongoing violence and abuse within the home and community. Data need to go further to demonstrate the experiences and limitations for all marginalized groups, with disaggregation allowing for a true understanding of the additional barriers faced by girls, girls with disabilities, those living in crisis and the LGBTQI+ community.

## 10 UNGEI's strengths to fill the gaps

In the consultations with UNGEI's stakeholders, eight key strengths were identified, which UNGEI can leverage to fill the key gaps. These are summarized in Tabel 4 below.

**Table 4: UNGEI's strengths**

<p><b>Platform for gender and equality</b></p> 	<p>UNGEI should continue to be the convener for all of the actors who are acting for gender equality in and through education. In addition to education actors, this also means youth actors and actors in women's rights, children's rights and skills (among others). UNGEI is well-positioned to take up a similar role to UNAIDS (the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS), but in the arena of girls' education; it could become a convener and generator that ensures gender equality is a priority for all other UN agencies and major donors and holds them accountable.</p>
<p><b>Multisectoral engagement</b></p> 	<p>UNGEI should continue to push for a greater focus on and collaboration with women and youth-led organizations and should be present at the right global events outside of education. UNGEI is well-placed to ensure women's movements are talking about gender equality in education and to bring together other sectors. They have the potential to advocate cross-sectorally, bringing together key actors to ensure that other sectors are also championing GTE.</p>
<p><b>Brokering relationships and supporting and convening coalitions</b></p> 	<p>UNGEI should continue to convene global girls' education actors, such as the feminist coalitions, and should also support regional convening. The progress within GCI has been supported by the national networks that UNGEI has brought together to support CSO engagement in policy dialogue. In this, they have also been successful in linking youth and grassroots organizations with decision makers. With a core principle relating to supporting grassroots organizations and enabling access in policy discussions, this convening power should be continued and strengthened. UNGEI's ability to convene girls' education actors globally and regionally has been demonstrated through the bringing together of 25 feminist organizations and its establishment of the Global Feminist Coalition. This convening power is bringing local voices and knowledge to a global level. UNGEI's support for Transform Education should continue and should be intentional, and national networks should be empowered to support CSO engagement in policy dialogue, thus linking youths at the grassroots level with decision makers.</p>

<p><b>Technical expertise and support</b></p> 	<p>UNGEI should continue to provide technical support to MoEs and to other education actors and donors on priorities, methodology, capacity building, curricula and pedagogy. This includes bringing together expertise across silos (for example, SRHR and GBV), convening meetings to share learnings on best practice, continued leadership on GRESP and in developing rosters of gender experts across countries, including from the Global South.</p>
<p><b>Advocacy</b></p> 	<p>UNGEI should continue to ensure gender equality is prioritized by UN agencies and major donors and should hold them accountable for their commitments. This includes engagement <i>with</i> women and girls in country-level dialogue; aligning the advocacy goals of all UNGEI partnership members <i>through</i> joint work planning and coordinating; advocacy <i>within</i> UNGEI partnership organizations (guided by UNGEI's strategies, goals and targets); and ensuring other relevant sectors are championing GTE. The impact of UNGEI's advocacy is strengthened where the alignment of advocacy goals is seen among the GAC members, who come together to prioritize gender equality in and through education, for example through their joint letter to put gender equality on the agenda at the TES. UNGEI has the potential to advocate cross-sectorally, bringing together key actors to ensure that other sectors are also championing GTE.</p>
<p><b>Evidence building</b></p> 	<p>UNGEI should elevate and prioritize data and research expertise from developing countries, especially in analyzing and articulating global education data. It has the ability to identify useful and relevant resources from the huge quantities of research and evidence developed within the education sector, and to generate more evidence to measure (both quantitatively and qualitatively) whether and how gender-transformative education will actually change girls' life opportunities. UNGEI is also able to make these resources relevant, accessible and user-friendly to ensure that key messages and best practice areas are widely disseminated, ensuring that donors and implementers build on what works to push for gender equality in and through education. Moreover, UNGEI can also lead the conversation on counting disability, LGBTQI+ and other minority identities.</p>
<p><b>Resource Hub</b></p> 	<p>UNGEI should continue to be a central resource hub for gender equality in and through education. UNGEI has developed a widely used knowledge hub, where it continues to use evidence produced by partners operating at country and regional levels, thus enabling its advocacy to be supported by facts and contextually relevant knowledge. UNGEI's development of toolkits should be continued, with clear feedback systems in place to better understand the reach, use and impact of these. Furthermore, UNGEI should continue to focus on building a knowledge hub, which is a "one-stop shop"<sup>5</sup> for resources on gender and education. This includes ensuring that resources are relevant and accessible, guiding local and grassroots organizations to the best evidence base, and producing evidence to inform advocacy in order to support organizations that do not have their own research teams. UNGEI should also continue its initial successes to change the discourse around useful data by bringing in more qualitative data and more voices to direct the narrative around girls' education and gender equality in and through education. Championing this issue globally should be prioritized going forward.</p>
<p><b>Grant-giving</b></p> 	<p>UNGEI can explore the idea of making grants to national and grassroots CSOs and activities through a proposed feminist fund. This funding could be used to deliver where there are gaps, where capacity is not currently available to fill existing gaps, and where CSOs and activists are being pressured by conservative governments and anti-rights movements.</p>

<sup>5</sup> Itad consultations with UNGEI stakeholders



## Part D: Vision, mission, focus areas and principles

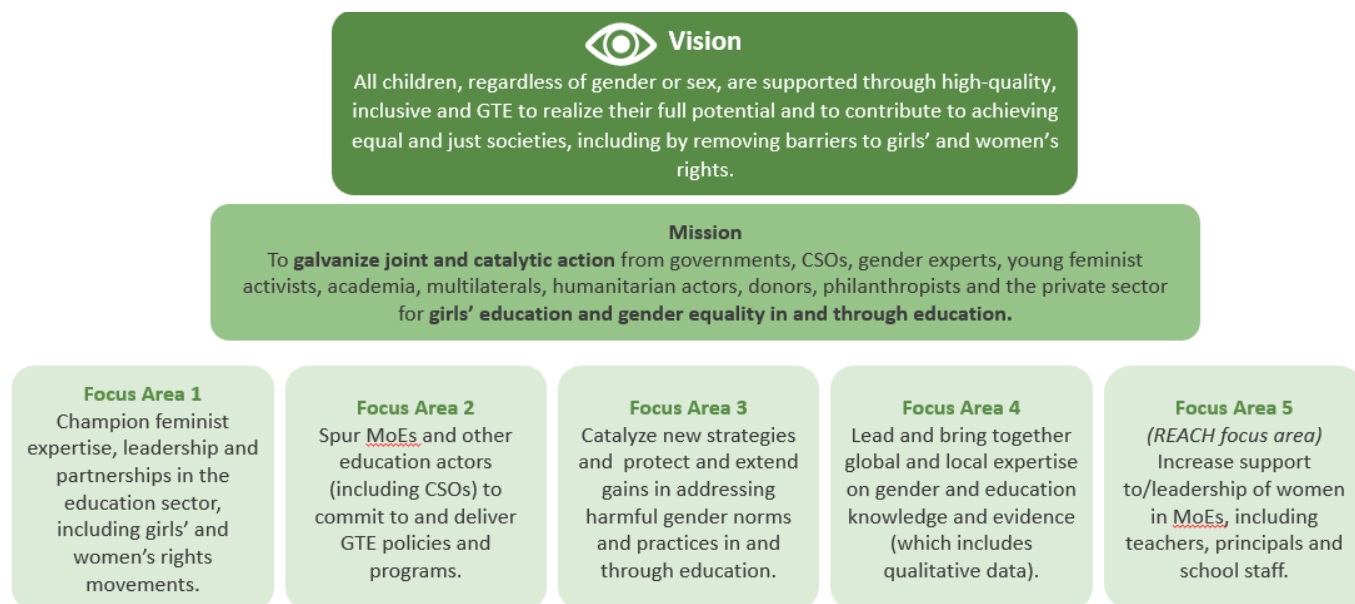
The following section presents UNGEI's SDs for the 2023-2027 period. It starts by introducing UNGEI's vision, mission and focus areas and by outlining the Partnership Principles. Finally, it details the five focus areas and milestones. A full Results Framework (RF), with milestones per focus area and alignment with UNICEF, UNESCO and the UN Women objectives, is presented in Annex D.

### 11 UNGEI's vision, mission, focus areas, and principles 2023-2027

#### 11.1 UNGEI's vision and mission 2023-2027

Based on an identification of the key barriers to achieving gender equality in and through education, coupled with UNGEI's expertise, value add and position as the only UN initiative that focuses on the intersection of gender equality and education, its vision and mission have become clear. These are presented in Figure 7 below. Five focus areas (described in section 11.3) will articulate the work to deliver under the mission and mission.

Figure 7: UNGEI Vision, Mission and Focus Areas 2023-2027



#### 11.2 UNGEI's Principles

UNGEI will be guided by the following **five core principles**, which will be embedded in everything that the organization undertakes:

1. To strive to **be feminist**<sup>6</sup>: Being a truly feminist organization in staffing, actions and approach. UNGEI is an organization that believes in and works for gender equality, girls' and women's empowerment and the dismantling of harmful gender norms.

<sup>6</sup> Feminist. A person or organization that believes in and works for gender equality, girls' and women's empowerment and the dismantling of harmful gender norms.

2. To strive to **be anti-racist<sup>7</sup> and anti-colonial<sup>8</sup>** by elevating black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) and by developing country expertise, knowledge and experience. UNGEI will work to ensure that their actions and decisions do not sustain racial inequality and will actively oppose racism to produce racial equality so that racial identity is no longer a factor in determining life opportunities and chances. Investing in grassroots and feminist organizations to empower them and learn from their knowledge of the context, the barriers on the ground, the community resilience, and their unique and targeted interventions. Demonstrating what works for different marginalized groups to make sure that support and interventions are relevant, appropriate, respectful and do not leave certain groups behind. Moreover, it is also vital to ensure that their experiences and voices are reflected in global-level decision making and funding prioritization.
3. To strive to be **intergenerational<sup>9</sup>**, intentionally sharing power with young feminists. This will include intergenerational partnerships and engaging with youths in a truly participatory way. The engagement with and the participation of youths is essential in generating sustainable change.
4. To strive to be **intersectional<sup>10</sup>** (including LGBTQI+ and disability lenses), recognizing that vulnerability and power often have overlapping layers of discrimination and privilege. This will include leaving no marginalized groups behind, through an increased commitment to the rights of the LGBTQI+ community and those with disabilities. It will also include an ongoing focus on those who are left the furthest behind. In addition, gender analyses will be conducted at all levels to identify those groups facing multiple and intersecting barriers and effective responses, with a specific focus on those who are left the furthest behind. Committing to advocate for these groups and to push for funding at the grassroots level in order to reach them will limit the growing inequality in access to safe and high-quality education.
5. **To have fun!** Because what is the point of revolution if we cannot dance?<sup>11</sup>

### 11.3 Focus Areas

The main focus areas in supporting the delivery of UNGEI's vision and mission are highlighted and explained below. The key milestones that will mark progress against these focus areas are outlined. A full RF can be found in Annex D.

#### 11.3.1 Focus Area 1

**Champion feminist expertise, leadership and partnerships in the education sector, including girls' and women's rights movements.** This area will focus on supporting and equipping more women to effectively champion gender equality in the education sector, bringing increased focus and expertise to this area. These women leaders will push to identify and address the unequal power dynamics that have been limiting the role of women leaders in decision making and that have been contributing to harmful gender norms being reinforced for generations within education.

UNGEI will work to support feminist organizations, leaders and women's movements to strengthen their voice and presence in decision-making forums and will continue to highlight the intersecting barriers that need to be

<sup>7</sup> Anti-racist. To be anti-racist is to recognize and unlearn racialized socialization, address and challenge implicit and structural biases that contribute to the exclusion and harm of BIPOC.

<sup>8</sup> Anti-colonial. To be de/anticolonial is to persistently challenge dominant structures, beliefs and behaviours that have been built on colonial systems and ideals including by redistributing power and resources and putting at the centre the marginalised persons and communities meant to be served by international aid.

<sup>9</sup> Intergenerational: It refers to individuals from across generations working together. UNGEI believes in the power of intergenerational co-leadership, co-creation and knowledge sharing. We can all learn from each other, regardless of what age we are. Source: United Nation's Girls' Education Initiative, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, and Generation Unlimited (2022) Intergenerational partnerships for transformative change: A learning brief.

<sup>10</sup> Intersectional: It refers to the overlapping forms of oppression that emerge from discrimination against characteristics such as age, disability, race, gender and sex (known as "protected" characteristics in the United States (US) because federal law prohibits discrimination based on them). Source: 1989, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of anti-discrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics.

<sup>11</sup> 2007, Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights, Jane Barry, Jelena Dordevic

understood and addressed to ensure that no one is left behind. The indicative milestones for this focus area will include those presented in Box 1, below.

### Box 1. Focus Area 1: key milestones

**Short term:**<sup>12</sup> The Global Feminist Coalition for GTE will provide a strong focus for feminist actors in education between 2023 and 2027.

**Medium term:**<sup>13</sup> Build up a roster of gender experts in key areas, such as gender-responsive planning and budgeting, who can take the lead in country processes.

**Long term:**<sup>14</sup> The Global Feminist Coalition for GTE will be recognized as a key actor in developing the post-sustainable-development-goals (SDGs) agenda.

### 11.3.2 Focus Area 2

**Drive MoEs and other education actors (including CSOs) to commit to and deliver GTE policies and programs.** UNGEI is uniquely positioned to understand and capitalize on opportunities to convene global, regional and national actors in order to develop and commit to the building blocks needed in order to achieve GTE. This will continue to remain a priority for UNGEI. It will continue to set the direction and global narrative on gender equality in and through education and to guide the focus of education actors.

UNGEI will encourage the prioritization of policy implementation and the funding of programs that work in a gender-transformative way. It will also address the different and varied barriers faced by women, girls' and youths in accessing and benefiting from a safe and high-quality education. The indicative milestones for this focus area will include those presented in Box 2, below.

### Box 2. Focus Area 2: key milestones

**Short term:** At least four ministries in GCI-priority countries develop gender-responsive education plans, meaningfully engaging national gender expertise.

**Medium term:** An average of seven global resources and toolkits are produced annually. Over 80% of the partners agree they are useful and they are used by at least four UN agencies and major donors.

**Long term:** Eight GCI countries increase their levels of gender expertise within the education sector and increase budget allocations year-on-year to implement gender-responsive education strategies.

### 11.3.3 Focus Area 3

**Catalyze new strategies and protect and extend gains in addressing harmful gender norms and practices in and through education.** Harmful gender norms and stereotypes – which are demonstrated within any classroom or informal learning center – impact on opportunities and later life outcomes from the early years onwards. While educational settings can perpetuate gender inequality, they also have the unique opportunity to address it from an early age and to equip students to continue to push for gender equality within their homes, communities and countries.

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<sup>12</sup> 1-2 years

<sup>13</sup> 3-4 years

<sup>14</sup> 5-10 years



UNGEI will look to address these harmful gender norms and to break down toxic masculinities in order to address the high rates of SRGBV, which continue to impact girls, LGBTQI+ children, youths and those with disabilities. The indicative milestones for this focus area will include those presented in Box 3, below.

### Box 3. Focus Area 3: key milestones

**Short term:** At least two resources/global public goods on SRGBV, CSE and ending harmful gender stereotypes are produced annually, either led or co-led by UNGEI.

**Medium term:** GTE becomes institutionalized in non-education platforms such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the International Conference on Population Development (ICPD).

**Long term:** A pooled fund provides coherent, flexible, trust-based funding to at least 10 local feminist organizations, which are working to end harmful gender norms through education in alignment with UN Country Teams (UNCTs) and UN Development Assistant Frameworks (UNDAFs).

### 11.3.4 Focus Area 4

**Lead and bring together global and local expertise on gender and education knowledge and evidence (which includes qualitative data).** There is a growing consensus that a focus on achieving gender parity in access to and the completion of education is not enough to ensure gender equality both within the school/education setting and in a successful transition and later life outcomes.

To shift the narrative on parity, UNGEI will share the voices and lived experiences of individuals to make the case for continued and strengthened investment in gender equality and to highlight what barriers are not being adequately addressed on the ground. Where evidence and data continue to be weak, such as around the experiences of girls with disabilities within educational settings, UNGEI will raise these voices and use their experiences as valid and useful evidence to build a case for funding, investment, research and support. The indicative milestones for this focus area will include those presented in Box 4, below.

### Box 4. Focus Area 4: key milestones

**Short term:** Traffic to the UNGEI website's Knowledge Hub increases 100%.

**Medium term:** At least two joint-research studies are undertaken annually and the UNGEI partnership uses youth-led and community-based research approaches.

**Long term:** UNICEF and other UN agencies' communications and advocacy teams share key evidence and messages, as suggested by UNGEI, through global and national channels.

### 11.3.5 Focus Area 5

**Increase support to/leadership of women in MoEs, including teachers, principals and school staff.** With a global lack of women leaders, which decreases as we move up through the education system, there is an urgent need to equip national governments to develop strategies and plans to address this imbalance and to advocate globally for more attention and funding in this area. While the evidence base in this area needs building, it is clear that women school leaders enhance the experience of learners within education and support the inclusion, retention and safety of girls. The indicative milestones for this focus area will include those presented in Box 5, below.

#### Box 5. Focus Area 5: key milestones

**Short term:** A toolkit/strategy regarding women in leadership within education, which is based on global evidence, is developed.

**Medium term:** Increased commitments are seen in this area by at least five actors.

**Long term:** A multi-country program (such as GCI) brings together education and women's leadership actors to increase women's leadership in schools, teaching unions and MoEs.

## Part E: UNGEI's organizational structure and governance

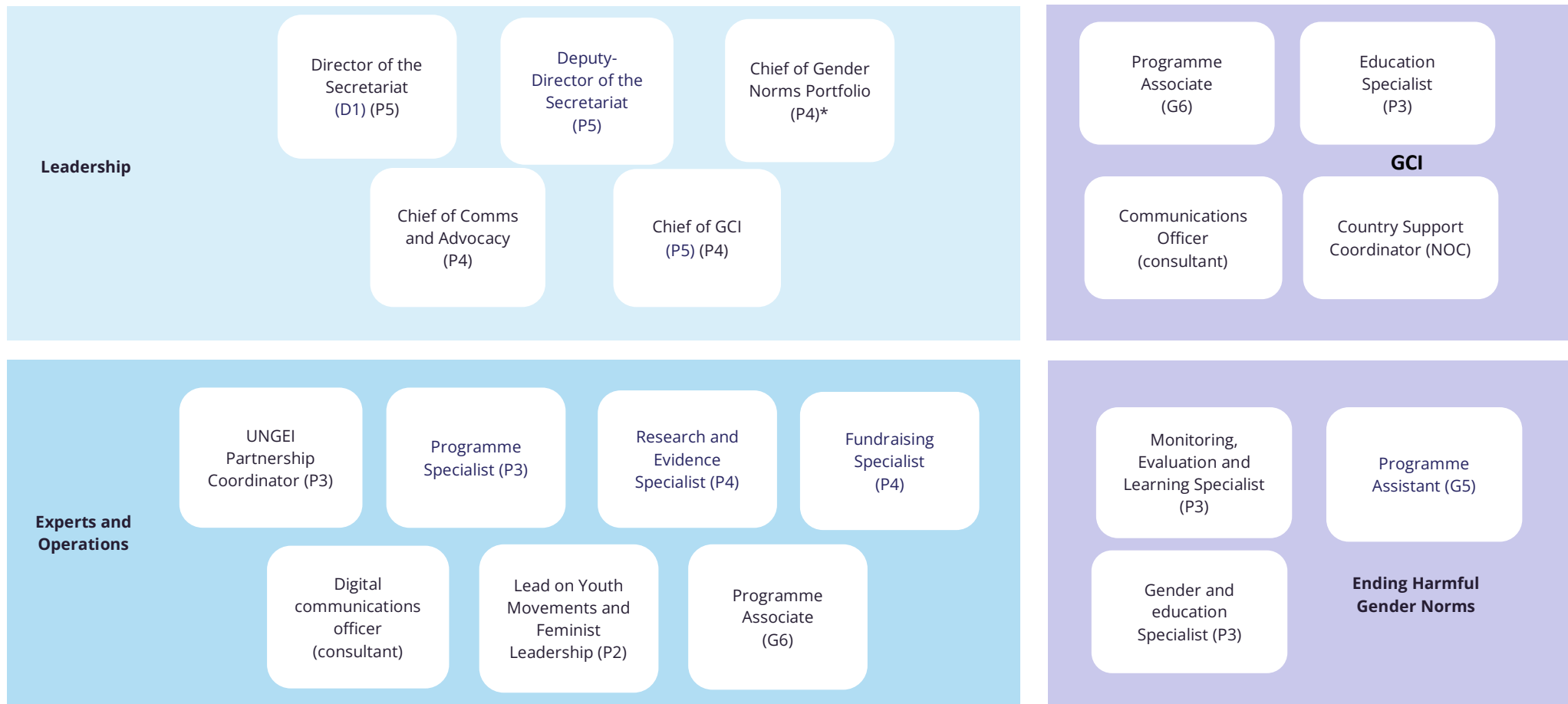
The following section presents UNGEI's organizational structure, including some recommendations on staffing, and changes to UNGEI's operational and governance model. It starts by providing an overview of the Secretariat's structure. It then describes the Partnership Principles agreements, which were signed between UNGEI and UNICEF. Finally, it introduces the changes to the UNGEI Partnership and Advisory Board.

### 12 UNGEI's organizational structure

To achieve the outcomes within this coming SDs period, increased capacity is needed within the UNGEI Secretariat, as depicted in the proposed structure, shown in Figure 8, below. Over the last SDs period, UNGEI faced challenges in the staffing of the Secretariat (as previously outlined). This balance between staff and consultants will be addressed in the next SD phase to reduce the associated cost and management issues created by this imbalance to achieve the following:

- To strengthen the team's capabilities.
- To provide time and space for the Director of the Secretariat to focus on strategy and growth.
- To have dedicated fundraising support to increase longer term, non-restricted funding. This will give the Secretariat more stability and reduce the requirement to be completely donor-driven, which could impede the delivery of the current SDs.

**Figure 8: Proposed UNGEI Secretariat structure**



*Desired  
Existing*

*\*sits with UNICEF Innocenti*

## 13 UNGEI Secretariat – recommended staffing

The following three recommendations are suggested to increase the capacity and effectiveness of the UNGEI Secretariat, according to its core functions:

- **UNGEI Secretariat’s staff will grow to 12 core operational staff, with adjusted positions and responsibilities.** This is in addition to two program teams, including a team of four who will be focused on GCI. This is UNGEI’s biggest area of funding and work and there are plans for its growth. Moreover, there will be a team of three focusing on harmful gender norms.
- **A leadership team will consist of the Director of the Secretariat, alongside a Deputy-Director (a new position), who will support the Director and lead on strategic partnerships and donor engagements.** The SMT will also include the Chief of GCI, the Chief of Gender Norms Portfolio and the Chief of Communications and Advocacy.
- **Three further new positions** will include a Fundraising Specialist, a Research and Evidence Specialist and a Program Specialist. UNGEI plans to recruit the Research and Evidence Specialist within the first year of the SDs (2023) and the Deputy-Director of the Secretariat within the first two years of the SDs (2023/24).

These positions and the five focus areas will continue to be supported by the current roles: the Lead on Youth Movements and Feminist Leadership, the Digital Communications Officer and the Operations Support.

**The expanded UNGEI Secretariat team will be structured to enable them to deliver impact against the five focus areas over the next five years.** The Secretariat’s focus will be to continue advocating at a global level, delivering in partnership at the country level, convening actors globally and locally, and building the evidence base while also maintaining the knowledge hub. To do this, the Secretariat’s core functions will include a focus on the following:

- **Strategic Partnerships:** Building strong relationships for longer term funding opportunities (in line with the core focus areas) and for joint advocacy to continue raising the profile of gender equality in and through education and the support needed to achieve it.
- **Oversight and Accountability:** Tracking UNGEI’s impact and enabling UNGEI to be flexible and to adapt in line with what is having the greatest impact on gender equality in and through education.
- **Communications and Advocacy:** Continuing to place UNGEI (as the leading global initiative) at the intersection of education and gender equality, building support and commitment from global and national leaders for this work.
- **Operations:** Enabling UNGEI to be present at selected global forums, where its presence can progress GTE while leading on events and managing consultancies to bring in specific, project-based expertise.

## 14 UNGEI–UNICEF Principles

UNGEI and UNICEF have signed a **Partnership Principles agreement, which is based on a shared vision.** The shared vision of UNICEF Education/Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP), UNICEF Gender and UNGEI is *a world where universal girls’ education is achieved, and gender equality is progressed through gender-transformative education.* The full agreement is included in Annex E.

This agreement will be the first time that UNGEI’s institutional arrangement with and within UNICEF has been articulated. Guided by the UNICEF values of care, respect, integrity, trust, accountability and building on our comparative advantages, UNICEF Education/ADAP and UNGEI will see each other as a resource by default, harness each other’s capacities and utilize each other’s experience and knowledge.

The work done by UNGEI at regional and country levels will be undertaken in accordance with UNICEF accountability mechanisms at the Regional Office (for regional work) and the Country Office (for country work), keeping in mind that UNGEI brings urgency, voice and boldness on issues that UNICEF may not take on directly.

The key highlights of this Partnership Principles agreement are as follows:

- **Communicating** regularly across all areas of work, such as through monthly meetings.
- **Mobilizing resources** and building partnerships together at a global level, when relevant. This will include mobilizing additional resources for girls' education and gender equality using each other's assets, brands and platforms.
- **Collaborating** to ensure that the UNICEF Country Offices buy in to the common mandate.
- **Following** established UNICEF and **UN accountabilities and procedures**.

## 15 UNGEI Governance

### 15.1 UNGEI Partnership

**The Global Advisory Committee will be re-named as the UNGEI Partnership to reflect its role and future contribution to the achievement of UNGEI's results.** The current Global Advisory Committee (GAC) is core to UNGEI's operating model and has been highlighted as UNGEI's real strength, given its variety of expertise, knowledge and voices, which have the ability to amplify, extend and strengthen UNGEI's work.

Within this SDs period, UNGEI will seek to invest time and resources into the previously named GAC in order to use the expertise from their partners strategically, to continue to build the knowledge and evidence base, to strengthen advocacy messages through aligning the voices and to increase impact through joint working towards the key milestones.

Members of the UNGEI Partnership will sign-up to and align themselves with the following principles:

- Identifying as a feminist actor, committed to GTE.<sup>15</sup>
- Committing to an intersectional, intergenerational, feminist, anti-racist and anti-colonial partnership.<sup>16</sup>
- Considering UNGEI partners as the "first port of call" when developing new programs and campaigns.
- Sharing knowledge and information freely.
- Making space and providing opportunities for each member's partner organizations to engage to ensure the wider participation and involvement of grassroots, local organizations and to ensure the inclusion of those who are not members.
- Commitment to the inclusion of the LGBTQI+ community.
- Investing in, and reaching out to, grassroots organizations (being inclusive of those not within the UNGEI partnership with funding and engagement).

UNGEI will continue to work alongside members of the UNGEI partnership in order to strengthen their advocacy, to enable evidence and voices to come from the local into the global arena, to draw on partners' expertise to strengthen the narrative around acceptable and useful evidence and to engage in joint research and toolkit development.

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<sup>15</sup> **Feminist:** A person or organization that believes in and works for gender equality, girls' and women's empowerment and the dismantling of harmful gender norms.

**GTE** seeks to utilize all parts of an education system – from policies to pedagogies to community engagement – to transform stereotypes, attitudes, norms and practices by challenging power relations, rethinking gender norms and binaries, and raising critical consciousness about the root causes of inequality and systems of oppression.

<sup>16</sup> Definitions of each of these will be finalized in consultation with the new UNGEI Partnership. See footnotes in Section 10.3 for existing definitions as well.

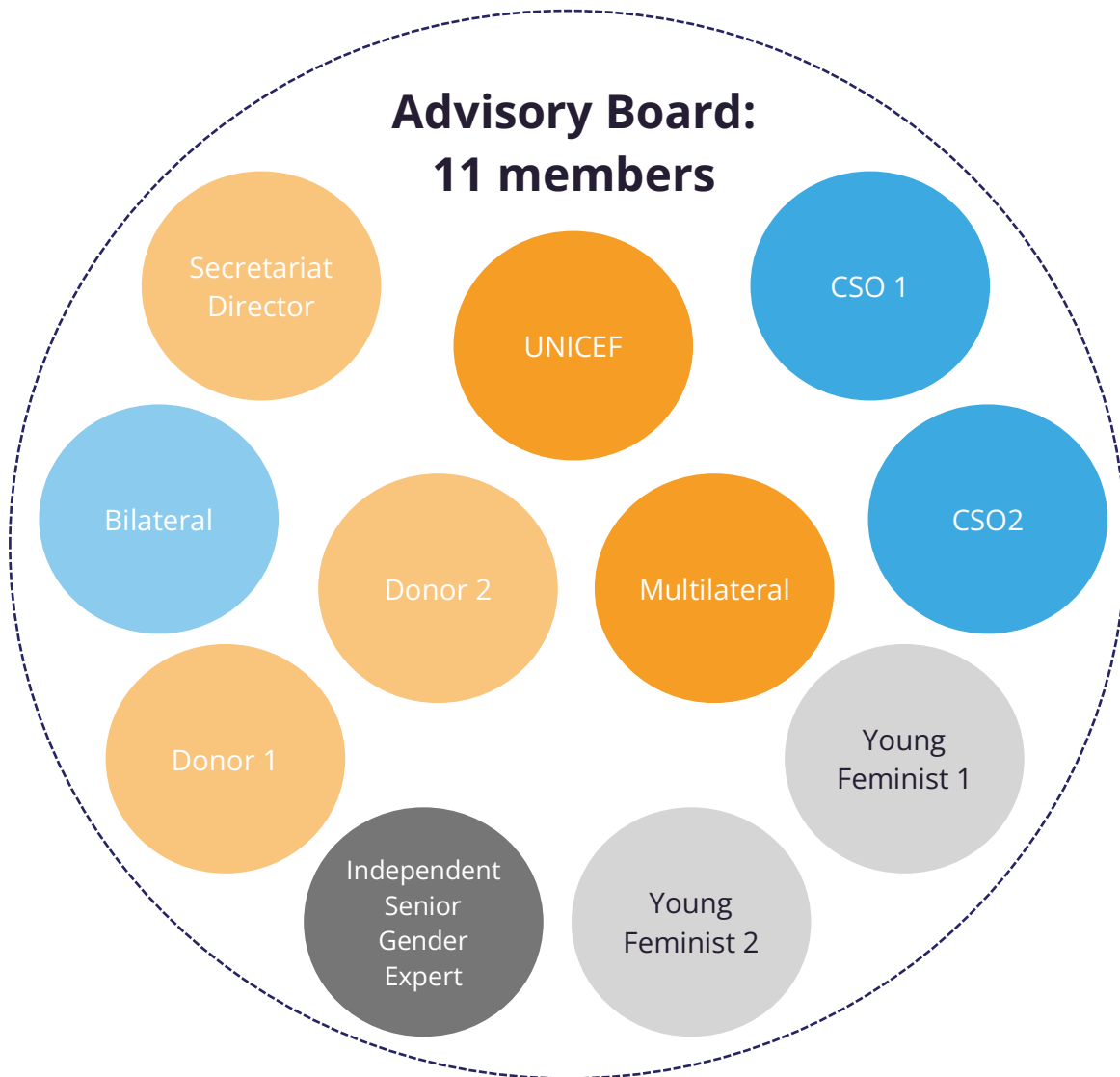
## 15.2 Advisory Board

The main governance body for UNGEI, including the work of both the Secretariat and the UNGEI Partnership, will become a new Advisory Board, which will replace the current Steering Committee. The Advisory Board will be the principal decision-making body in governance processes for UNGEI and will bring together a small but diverse range of actors to support UNGEI in achieving its overall vision and mission. The Advisory Board’s mandate will be to provide the UNGEI Secretariat with guidance, advice and views on the overall SDs of UNGEI and will provide recommendations to maximize its impact and influence. The proposed composition of this Advisory Board is depicted in **Error! Reference source not found.9**, below.

Its key responsibilities will include the following:

- Supporting the UNGEI Secretariat to institutionalize its presence and impact.
- Advising and guiding the UNGEI Secretariat alongside the UNICEF Director of Education.
- Funding and supporting the funding of the UNGEI Secretariat and Partnership.
- Contributing to maximizing the reach of the UNGEI Secretariat and Partnership.

Figure 9: Proposed composition of UNGEI Advisory Board



The representatives of each member of the Advisory Board will be senior leaders and decision makers from within each organization. The operational process of the Advisory Board will be as follows:

- Meeting quarterly, normally remotely but sometimes face-to-face, once a year.
- Being chaired by the Director of the Secretariat, with support from a member of the Advisory Body (rotating).
- Ensuring that individual members commit to being on the Advisory Body for a period of two years.
- Committing to UNGEI's values and principles.
- Ensuring that discussions are translated into actionable "agreed recommendations" based on the advice and suggestions provided in the quarterly meeting.

## Annex A - Organizations and individuals consulted

### List of organizations and individuals consulted

**Table 5: Organizations and individuals consulted**

<b>Organizations</b>
Global School Forum (GSF)
Gender at Work
Equal Measures 2030
AAHGUNG
CAMFED
Girls Education Challenge (GEC)
Transforming Education (TE)
Echidna Giving
Education Cannot Wait (ECW)
BMGF
UNICEF
Agha Khan Foundation
VVOB
ANCEFA
FCDO
European Union (EU)
Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)
Room to Read
Educate
USAID (US Agency for International Development)
ActionAid
Purposeful
UNESCO
Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
Plan International
Sida
Brookings
Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health
Global Affairs Canada (GAC)
Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD)
Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children
UN Women
Education Outcomes Fund (OSF)
Humanity & Inclusion (H&I)
<b>Individuals</b>
Ex UNGEI Director

## Annex B – PAC Members



## PAC members

The following list are the members and affiliations of the PAC:

- **Dr. Yasmin Ali Haque**, Former Representative, UNICEF India (retired)
- **Joanne Sandler**, Senior Associate, Gender at Work
- **Erin Ganju**, Managing Director, Echidna Giving
- **Dr Heike Kuhn**, Head of Division for Education, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
- **Ida Thyregod**, Team Leader for Strategic Partnerships, LEGO Foundation
- **Sheena Hadi**, Executive Director, Aahung
- **Robert Jenkins**, Director of Education and Adolescent Development, UNICEF
- **Solange Koumbon Akpo**, Regional Coordinator, ANCEFA
- **Yona Nestel**, Senior Education Advocacy and Policy Advisor, Plan International
- **Maki Hayashikawa**, Chief of Section for Inclusive Quality Education, UNESCO
- **Tara Painter**, Acting Director on Education and Child Protection and Gender Equality, Global Affairs Canada (GAC)
- **Sally Gear**, Senior Lead on Gender and Education, Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
- **Judith Herbertson**, Head of Girls' Education, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)
- **Vic Mall**, Strategy Lead, Education, Gender and Equality Directorate, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)
- **Jona Turalde**, Community, Operations, and Resource Mobilization Lead, Transform Education
- **Ashlee Burnett**, Learning, Research & Creative Lead, Transform Education

## Annex C – Landscape analysis

### Landscape analysis

#### Overview of landscape mapping on girls' education

##### State of the world around gender equality in and through education

In the last 20 years, there has been tremendous progress regarding gender equality in and through education. The Global Partnership for Education reports that twice as many girls are on the path to gender equality in lower-income countries.<sup>17</sup> This is especially encouraging in increasing access to education for primary school-aged girls.

However, the sector is still not on track to reach the targets set out by SDG4, particularly regarding quality education, learning outcomes, and supporting the transition and retention of adolescent girls to secondary school. The situation has worsened even more so as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, which according to UNICEF, resulted in over 2 trillion hours of lost in-person schooling and learning.<sup>18</sup> The situation faced by young girls and women seeking education is especially dire. Some concerning statistics regarding the state of the sector are presented below, as well as a table of the most common barriers to education faced by girls and young women.

- Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the out-of-school rates for girls in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) were above the targets set by SDG4. In 2020, the OOS rate for primary-school-aged girls was over 13 percent, 20 percent for girls who were lower-secondary school age, and over 42 percent for girls of upper secondary school age.<sup>19</sup>
- Since the Covid-19 pandemic, UNESCO estimates that 129 million girls are out of school, including 32 million of primary school age, and 97 million of secondary school age.<sup>20</sup>
- In FCAS contexts, girls are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than boys, and at the secondary level, are 90% more likely to be out of secondary school than those in non-FCV contexts.
- Covid-19 was also one of the largest disruptions for education globally, but especially for marginalized and vulnerable girls and for those estimated 5 million children (as of October 2021) that lost a parent or primary caregiver due to Covid-19.
- According to UN Women, “fewer than 3 percent of Covid-19 stimulus funds have gone to education.”<sup>21</sup>
- In regard to transition and completion in low-income countries, less than two thirds of girls complete their primary education, and only 1 in 3 completes lower secondary school.<sup>22</sup>
- Two out of three (67.5 percent) young people aged 15-24 who are not in employment, education or training are young women.<sup>23</sup>
- Women account for 63 percent of all illiterate adults, a proportion unchanged in decades,<sup>24</sup> and new gender gaps are developing in digital literacy skills.<sup>25</sup>

While contexts and populations vary significantly, there are common barriers that girls and women face in accessing quality and safe education, according to the literature. All of the barriers are rooted in harmful gender

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.globalpartnership.org/results/education-data-highlights#gender-equality>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/23-countries-yet-fully-reopen-schools-education-risks-becoming-greatest-divider>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.ungei.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/13102022%20Report%20G7.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/education/girls-education>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/feature-story/2022/10/leaving-no-girl-behind-in-education>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/missed-opportunities-high-cost-not-educating-girls>

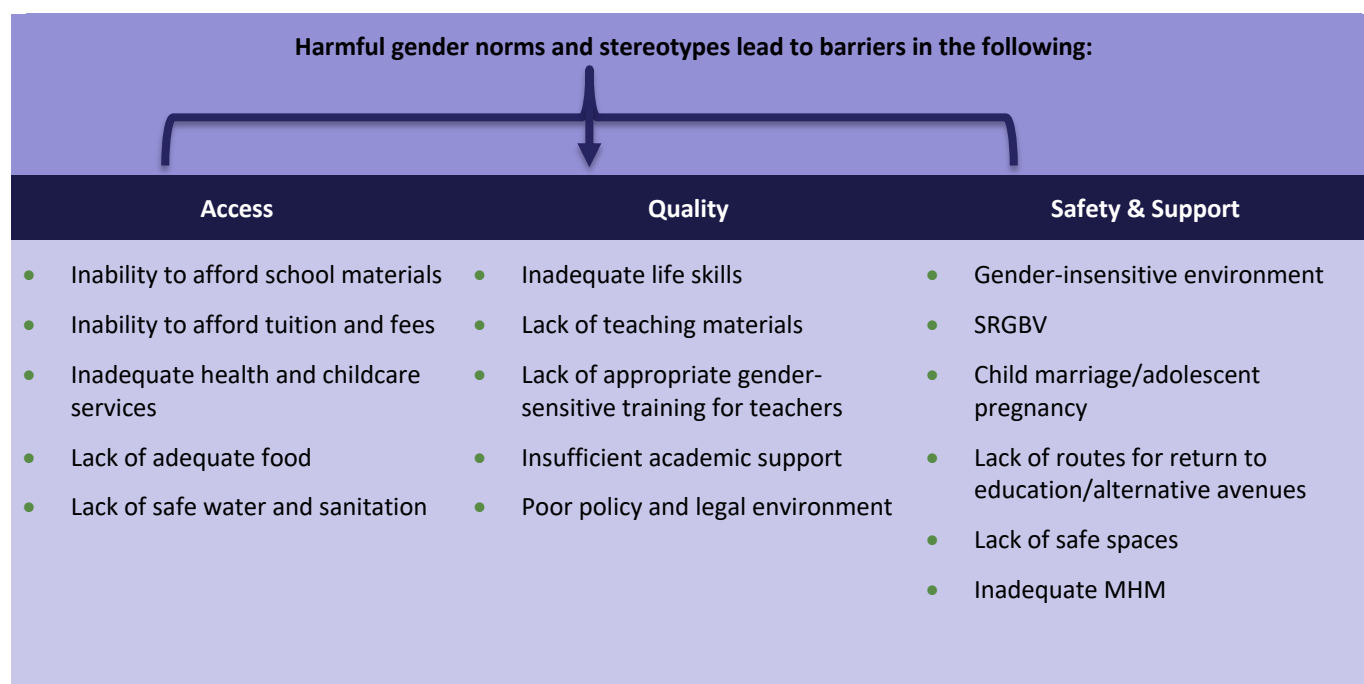
<sup>23</sup> International Labour Organization (ILO). 2021. Young people not in employment, education or training. Technical brief 3. ILO/SIDA Partnership on Employment. Geneva, ILO.

<sup>24</sup> UNESCO. 2022. Global Education Monitoring Report 2022: Gender Report. Deepening the debate on those still left behind. Paris, UNESCO. Most recent data from 2020.

<sup>25</sup> UNESCO. 2020. Global Education Monitoring Report 2022: Gender Report. A new generation: 25 years of efforts for gender equality in education. Paris, UNESCO, pp. 20-21.

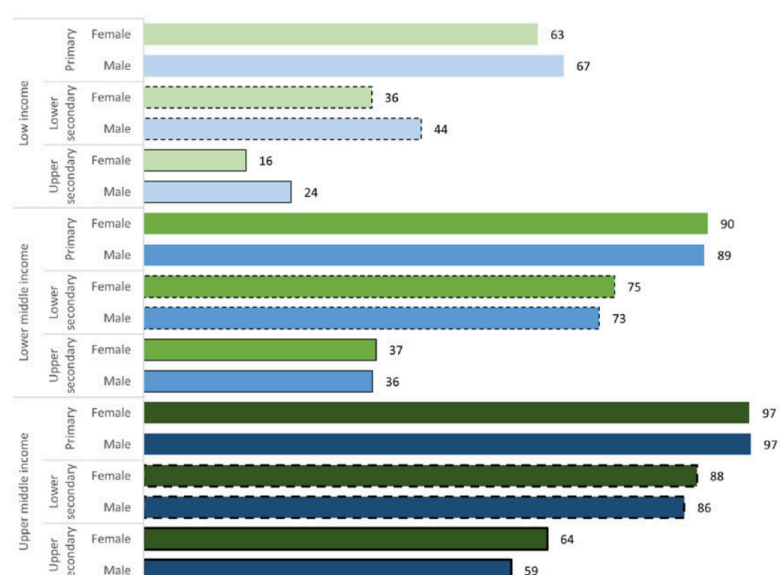
norms and stereotypes, leading to an impact on the access, quality, and safety and support for girls in education. The most prominent and cited barriers are presented below, in Figure 10.

**Figure 10: Barriers to education for girls**



While indicators relating to educational access and parity do not tell the full story regarding gender equity in and through education, it is a helpful insight regarding what may be taking place and is an often-used indicator with significant amount of data available globally. However, countries vary tremendously in regard to both access and learning, as well as the challenges that girls and boys face.

**Figure 11: Gender inequities in education differ at the primary and the secondary level**



Source: Evans et al. 2021<sup>26</sup>

## Limitations of landscape mapping

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.co-impact.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Evidence-Full-Education.pdf>

The limitations to this landscape mapping should be clearly acknowledged. Firstly, this is a rapid overview of the global girls' education landscape as it relates to donors, implementers, governments, and other actors in the ecosystem. The scope of this mapping is predominately global, with anecdotal evidence from country-level programming. It does not include what governments and MoEs in the Global South are doing to support gender equality through and within education; such a study is certainly needed but beyond the scope of this assignment and would be better suited to be conducted at the regional or country level so as to ensure the appropriate contextuality. EGER has also recently commissioned some detailed landscape mappings to take place in a number of East African countries; such mappings can also be a resource for subsequent country-level studies.

Secondly, there is limited accessibility and availability of transparent, up-to-date, and complete financial data. Donors, particularly bilateral and multilateral donors, provide information regarding their commitments to global summits, large-scale agreements, and funds in support of education. However, such data is often incomplete (particularly in regard to commitment versus disbursement) and often unavailable for private philanthropies and foundations. Thirdly, where financial data is available, there is oftentimes a lack of differentiation or distinction regarding the extent to which financing is set aside for girls' education or gender equality within education programming specifically.

### **What does the girls' education ecosystem look like?**

There is a worrying trend to a global decline to foreign and domestic budget expenditure for education, in response to compounding financial, health, and security crises. According to the IFFEd, from 2019-2020, 43 donors reduced their bilateral aid to education, and 40% of low- and lower-middle-income countries reduced their education budgets.<sup>27</sup> This decline in bilateral aid spending may in fact precede the most recent compounding crises, as bilateral total ODA for education declined from US\$11.491 billion in 2018 to US\$11.195 billion in 2019, according to GEM reporting.

As overall education ODA declines so too do overseas finance in support of gender equality in and through education as well as the pressure donors are able to apply onto national governments and officials in aid-recipient countries. Additionally, as discussed above in the limitations, there is limited transparency and consistency in the reporting of funding commitments and disbursements by major donors in support of gender equality in and through education.

### **Who are the biggest funders and implementors globally and nationally?**

The most prominent and influential funders towards girls' education can be categorized into three primary groups: multilateral and UN agencies (World Bank, UNICEF and GPE), bilateral donors (FCDO and USAID), and foundations (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Echidna Giving). One cohesive snapshot is the funding pledges made by bilateral and multilateral donors as a direct result of the June 2018 Charlevoix Declaration on Public Education. The Charlevoix Declaration from the G7 reiterated major donors' commitment to quality education for girls and women, and specifically committed to<sup>28</sup>:

- Close the gap in access to education during conflict and crisis, and for refugees and the internally displaced, both inside and outside camps; and
- Improve coordination between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation.

From 2018 to 2020, signatories pledged a total of US\$3,513,629,205 and funded a reported US\$4,023,769,111.<sup>29</sup> Specific pledges by Charlevoix donors are presented below in Table 5, below.

**Table 6: 2018 Charlevoix Declaration Aid Pledges and Disbursements**

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/transforming-education-summit/IFFEd#:~:text=The%20International%20Finance%20Facility%20for%20Education&text=IFFEd%20is%20a%20powerful%20new,children%20are%20out%20of%20school.>

<sup>28</sup> [https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international\\_relations-relations\\_internationales/g7/documents/2018-06-09-quality-education-qualite.aspx?lang=eng](https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/g7/documents/2018-06-09-quality-education-qualite.aspx?lang=eng)

<sup>29</sup> <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/inee/viz/CharlevoixDashboard-English/Dashboard1>

Donor	Pledged Funding	Reported Funding
Canada	US\$298,284,862	US\$301,806,863
Denmark	US\$245,640,871	US\$257,466,968
European Commission	US\$82,098,062	US\$107,932,033
Germany	US\$151,425,314	US\$172,633,980
Japan	US\$200,000,000	US\$240,304,391
Netherlands	US\$131,128,848	US\$127,708,096
Norway	US\$40,000,000	US\$37,228,660
Qatar	US\$125,000,000	US\$175,355,541
United Kingdom	US\$240,051,348	US\$265,332,579
World Bank	US\$2,000,000,000	US\$2,338,000,000

These donors, as well as others in the global ecosystem, came together most recently in September 2022 during the global TES<sup>30</sup> to reconfirm their commitment to ‘advancing gender equality through and in education.’ Their signed Commitment to Action included “Working immediately to enroll all children and keep them in school, particularly marginalized girls.”<sup>31</sup> As well as working to enroll children immediately, the call to action also launched a new ‘Global Platform for Gender Equality and Girls’ and Women’s Empowerment in and through Education’ to hold actors accountable at all levels as well as to highlight gaps in progress at country level.<sup>32</sup> The platform seeks to ‘convene governments, donors, partners and civil society to monitor progress against the Summit and other commitments, highlight gaps in progress at the country level, and encourage transformative action on girls’ education and gender equality in and through education.’<sup>33</sup>

G7 donors are predominately the biggest and most influential bilateral donors. In May 2021, the G7 donors signed their Declaration on Girls’ Education to reconfirm their prioritization of girls’ education ODA and the need to address the access and learning losses girls face due to Covid-19 and in anticipation of seeking to meet their SDG 4 agenda for 2030. They stated their intention to:

**“Strengthen efforts by 2026 to prioritise global ODA for girls’ education in low and lower-middle-income countries - sustaining a focus on education financing, recognising key upcoming moments, including the Generation Equality Forum, COP26 Conference and IDA20, and channelling resources to our partners, including developing country governments, UN agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector and global partnerships such as the Global Partnership for Education and Education Cannot Wait, their implementing partners, including UNICEF and the multilateral development banks.”<sup>34</sup>**

The UN Secretary General (António Guterres) and UN Special Envoy for Global Education (Gordon Brown) also announced at TES the International Financing Facility for Education (IFFEd), a new and first-of-its-kind finance facility developed with the Governments of Sweden, the UK, Netherlands, as well as the Asian and African Development Bank. The new financing facility seeks to multiply and leverage donor resources and states a goal of increasing “access and learning outcomes for the most marginalized children and youth, especially the poorest, girls, the disabled, and those forcibly displaced.”<sup>35</sup> However, the extent to which or proportion of financing committed either directly or indirectly to girls’ education is not clear.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/transforming-education-summit>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/brief/commitment-to-action-on-foundational-learning>

<sup>32</sup> [https://transformingeducationsummit.sdg4education2030.org/system/files/2022-09/TES%20SS5\\_Gender%20equality%20and%20girls%20and%20womens%20empowerment\\_CtA\\_8%20September\\_web.pdf](https://transformingeducationsummit.sdg4education2030.org/system/files/2022-09/TES%20SS5_Gender%20equality%20and%20girls%20and%20womens%20empowerment_CtA_8%20September_web.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> [https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/tes\\_ss5\\_gender-equality\\_cnprogramme.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/tes_ss5_gender-equality_cnprogramme.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/g7-foreign-and-development-ministers-meeting-may-2021-communicue/declaration-on-girls-education-recovering-from-covid-19-and-unlocking-agenda-2030>

<sup>35</sup> <https://educationcommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/IFFEd-Dec-2021-invitation-to-join.pdf>

The most prominent G7 donor focused on girls' education has historically been the **UK Government's FCDO (formerly DFID)**, which launched the prominent Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) in 2012 as an initially 12-year commitment to reach the 'most marginalized' girls in the world. It is the largest bilateral global fund dedicated specifically to girls' education. After the first phase (2012-2017), which according to FCDO reporting and evaluations provided quality education to over one million marginalized girls, the GEC is now in its second phase (2017-2025) which is focused predominately on primary school completion, secondary school enrolment, and continuation to tertiary or vocational skills training. There is also an additional component within the second phase known as the 'Leave No Girl Behind' funding window that is centered on highly marginalized adolescent girls who have either never attended school or dropped out before basic education completion. The second phase and Leave No Girl Behind window combined encompass 41 projects in 17 countries<sup>36</sup> across Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. The GEC is providing £500 million to support these 41 project activities. Beyond GEC, the FCDO also funds many other programs across its aid recipient countries. There are two noteworthy and large-scale upcoming programs that may indicate the FCDO's direction moving forward:

- Girls' Education Skills Partnership (GESP): The Girls' Education and Skills (GESP) program will be delivered in Bangladesh and Nigeria through 2 components: Challenge Fund and Passport to Earning (P2E). The Challenge Fund will award grants, each between £750,000 to £1.5 million (GBP) via a competitive grant call process on broad themes such as employment readiness, 21st Century skills, economic empowerment, and STEM education. GESP aims to tackle skills and employment barriers to empower women learners aged 13 to 25.<sup>37</sup>
- Strengthening Higher Education for Female Empowerment program (SHEFE) – an investment of up to £45m over the next 5 years - is designed to reform higher education systems to deliver a better future for women and girls in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa through partnering with the UK's best universities and higher education institutions.<sup>38</sup>

The **United States Government (USG)**, primarily through USAID as well as the State Department, Treasury Department, and Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), is one of the largest bilateral donors to education and gender equality globally. USG's strategy for education aid is primarily focused on basic education, and includes efforts to empower girls and women through basic education through:

- Educating girls in safe environment
- Women's economic empowerment
- Staying in school to improve health outcomes

Earlier this year, USAID Administrator Power announced a massive new investment by the USG in advancing gender equity and equality. In March 2022 she stated:

**"I am pleased to share that today President Biden will issue a \$2.6 billion budget request to advance gender equity and equality worldwide. This request would represent USAID and the Department of State's largest-ever investment in gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls."<sup>39</sup>**

Additionally, USG's executive branches have begun to coordinate through a new 'Agency Advisory Group and an Interagency International Basic Education Working Group' to facilitate robust coordination among federal entities and increase transparency and accountability to Congress and other stakeholders. One of the primary areas of focus of one of the Working Group's sub-group will be on girls and women in education; however, what form and function that sub-group will take remains to be seen.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, the MCC also emphasizes women

<sup>36</sup> Afghanistan, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/international-development-funding/girls-education-skills-partnership-gesp-challenge-fund-request-for-proposals>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/international-development-funding/fund-management-of-the-strengthening-higher-education-for-female-empowerment-shefe-programme>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/mar-08-2022-statement-administrator-power-international-womens-day>

<sup>40</sup> [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USG-Education-Strategy\\_FY2019-2023\\_Final\\_Web.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USG-Education-Strategy_FY2019-2023_Final_Web.pdf)

and girls as marginalized learners in its Gender Policy.<sup>41</sup> One approach the MCC takes is by requiring that gender based barriers are identified and addressed throughout its work, from the initial country selection and assessment to the development and design of programs, project implementation, the monitoring of program results, and evaluation of program impacts.<sup>42</sup>

The two other most prominent (in terms of expenditure) bilateral donors are the European Commission (EC) and Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The EU's most recent Gender Action Plan in 2020 emphasized a multisectoral approach to promoting gender equity and equality, including combating GBV, renewing emphasis on SRHR, promotion of women leadership, and equality in education. Most of the education aid from the EC is channeled through the multilateral Global Partnership for Education (GPE, discussed below). Most recently in 2021, the EC's President Ursula von der Leyen increased the EC's commitment to GPE and prioritized girls and women as aid recipients, stating:

**"I am proud we will be supporting the Global Partnership for Education with €700 million for the period 2021-2027 to help transform education systems around the world. Supporting education, in particular for girls and women is key to give the young generation good prospects in life."<sup>43</sup>**

In terms of private philanthropic foundations, the most prominent foundation – not due to its size or expenditure but its singular focus on girls' education – is **Echidna Giving**. The foundation is a private funder with one sole aim: "delivering the promise of girls' education."<sup>44</sup> Over the next forty years, Echidna Giving estimates that they will spend between US\$500 to US\$700 million in support of girls' education. They seek to do so through two approaches: 1) catalyzing and supporting the acceleration of knowledge, advance practice, and drive system change; and 2) supporting robust ecosystems in the sector among implementers, researchers, and champions. Ultimately, their mission is to seed fund programs in order to accelerate innovation and generate additional financing 'toward solutions that evidence tells us works for girls.' Echidna Giving is primarily focused on two pivotal moments in a girl's life: early childhood and adolescence. While their support includes interventions relates to primary and secondary attainment and transition, quality, and skills building, they also support cross-cutting topics such as empowerment, masculinity, mentorship, addressing social and gender norms and beliefs, and violence at home, school and in relationships.<sup>45</sup> They support programs across Western Africa, Eastern Africa, and India.

There are other private foundations that support and finance education programming that include or are focused on girls and women, though none focused to such an extent as Echidna Giving. Other prominent and active foundations include:

- **The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation:** BGMF's global education strategy, launched in 2018, is predominately focused on improving literacy and numeracy among early primary children in Sub-Saharan Africa and India. It is not externally evident that there are programs or interventions focused predominately on girls, however, they do emphasize seeking to 'incorporate a gender-based perspective.'<sup>46</sup> Additionally, they support Population Council's **Evidence for Gender and Education Resource (EGER)**, a free and wide-ranging interactive database on implementers, donors, advocates, and programming globally.
- **Girl Effect:** The organization Girl Effect, originally founded by the Nike Foundation in 2004, is focused on media generation and dissemination of positive behavior change messaging for adolescent girls in Africa and Asia. According to their reporting, Girl Effect's youth brands and media platforms reach an estimated 29 million girls per year cross 50 countries. Their approach includes the creation of safe spaces, TV dramas,

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.mcc.gov/resources/doc/gender-policy>

<sup>42</sup> [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USG-Education-Strategy\\_FY2019-2023\\_Final\\_Web.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USG-Education-Strategy_FY2019-2023_Final_Web.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/education-eu-increases-its-commitment-global-partnership-education-pledge-700-million>

<sup>44</sup> <https://echidnagiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Echidna-Giving-Strategy-March-2018.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> <https://eeresource.org/profiles/organizations/5f89a643-39ab-41cf-9b72-5a1da239850e/>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.gatesfoundation.org/our-work/programs/global-growth-and-opportunity/global-education-program>

music, magazines, digital and social media, mini-media clubs, viewing and discussion clubs across their implementing countries.

- **Ford Foundation:** The Ford Foundation has historically focused on education domestically in the United States (US) but is expanding its outreach globally, including by working against GBV internationally. Their approach to preventing and reducing GBV is based on a ‘holistic and intersectional approach.’ Most recently in June 2021 their overseas work expanded as,

**“The Ford Foundation announced a commitment of \$420 million over the next five years to tackle gender inequality around the world which has been further exacerbated by the devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The financial pledge is designed to focus on multiple issues including addressing the growing epidemic of gender-based violence, reinforcing the need for a care-based economy, increasing workplace equality, and bringing critical resources to feminist movements and women’s rights organizations addressing these global challenges.”<sup>47</sup>**

- **Dubai Cares:** Since 2007, the foundation Dubai Cares has committed over 26 million USD for girls’ education programs, research, and advocacy in 14 countries across Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The grants included in Dubai Cares Girls’ Education Portfolio range from ones entirely centered on girls, to others which include a focus on girls’ education as a major and essential cross-cutting theme.
- **LEGO Foundation:** In partnership with the Danish MFA, the LEGO Foundation in 2022 made a large contribution of 100 million Danish Kroner (approximately US\$15 million) to the Global Partnership for Education’s Girls’ Education Accelerator. According to LEGO:

**“Our grant – which GPE matched – will help them fund more initiatives in more countries to breakdown gender inequality barriers. That starts with getting more girls into school.”<sup>48</sup>**

The most prominent multilateral donor agencies in the girls’ education ecosystem are the **Global Partnership for Education (GPE)** and the **World Bank (WB)**. The GPE, formerly known as the Fast Track Initiative, is the world’s only multilateral fund solely focused on providing quality education to children in lower-income countries. GPE was founded on the principle of mutual accountability and a shared commitment with its partners in developing countries to end the world’s learning crisis.<sup>49</sup> It currently mobilizes partners and grantees in 76 partner countries to contribute to enhancing their educational systems and delivering quality, accessible learning to more girls and boys, including and especially those marginalized portions of their societies. GPE’s approach to transformational change is presented in the GPE Strategic Plan (2021-2025). The overall goal of the 2025 GPE Strategic Plan and its initiatives is to accelerate access, learning outcomes, and gender quality through equitable, inclusive, and resilient education systems fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>50</sup> This goal has evolved from the previous goals of the GPE Strategic Plan 2020: 1) improved and more equitable learning outcomes; 2) increased equity, gender equality, and inclusion; and 3) effective and efficient education systems.<sup>51</sup>

The most prominent way in which the GPE supports gender equality in and through education is its recent 2021 launch of their Girls’ Education Accelerator. Currently worth more than \$250 million USD, the Accelerator is a funding window available to GPE partner countries that have committed to gender equality as the primary focus for their system transformation in their partnership compact, which defines focus areas for domestic and donor expenditure and policy. Donors including the GPE are expected to align their support behind these domestically identified focus areas. The Accelerator is not expected to fund stand-alone or singular programs

<sup>47</sup> [https://www.fordfoundation.org/news-and-stories/news-and-press/news/ford-foundation-commits-420-million-to-tackle-gender-inequality-around-the-globe-post-covid-19/#:~:text=Paris%2C%20France%20\(June%2030%2C,of%20the%20COVID%2D19%20pandemic.](https://www.fordfoundation.org/news-and-stories/news-and-press/news/ford-foundation-commits-420-million-to-tackle-gender-inequality-around-the-globe-post-covid-19/#:~:text=Paris%2C%20France%20(June%2030%2C,of%20the%20COVID%2D19%20pandemic.)

<sup>48</sup> <https://learningthroughplay.com/how-we-play/girl-power-equal-education-for-all-starts-with-getting-more-girls-in-school>

<sup>49</sup> Global Partnership for Education, “Terms of Reference for Rapid Review of Education Out Loud’s Operational Component 1,” May 2021.

<sup>50</sup> Global Partnership for Education, “GPE 2025 Strategic Plan (2021-2025),” April 2021, <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/gpe-2025-strategic-plan>.

<sup>51</sup> Global Partnership for Education, “GPE 2020 Strategic Plan (2016-2020),” May 2018, <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/annual-grant-status-report-2020>.



or initiatives but support the wider package of aid and support available to a partner country. The national government may as a result use GPE financing to finance gender-responsive strategies for girls' education, including awareness-raising campaigns, community gender training, women teacher recruitment and separate toilets, among others.<sup>52</sup>

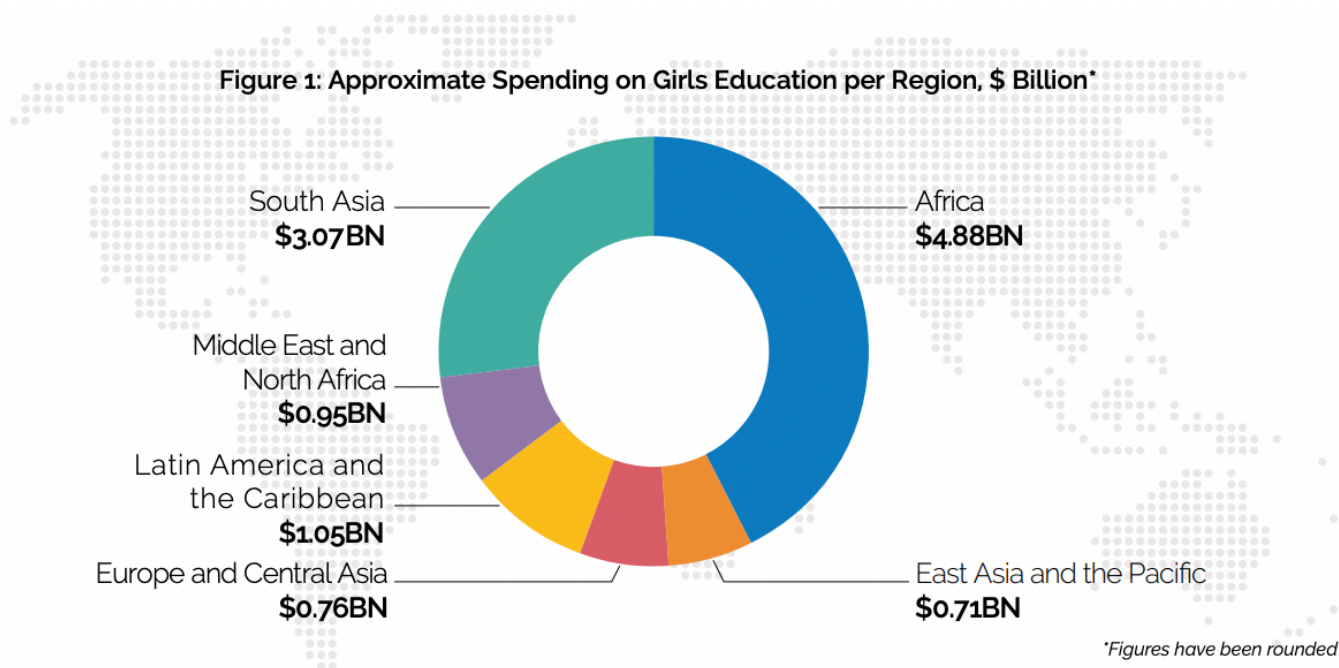
While GPE is hosted by the **World Bank**, the largest donor to education, additional funds are given directly to support education. The World Bank utilizes a 'lifecycle' approach to support to girls' education that extends from birth to adulthood. Therefore, financing includes programming from ECD to TVET, higher education and skills, and life-long learning.

According to WB reporting, within the total Educational Global Practice portfolio worth US\$23.3bn, US\$11.4bn is spent specifically in support of girls' education.<sup>53</sup> The majority of this expenditure on girls' education is spent in the Africa and South Asia Regions of the World Bank. The World Bank is also a signatory of the G7 Charlevoix Commitment (discussed above); it initially committed US\$2bn for girls' education but has already exceeded that pledge by committing an estimated US\$3.2bn to girls' education in FCES contexts.

Other activities by the World Bank's Education Global Practice in support of gender equality through and in education include:

- Collaborating with the UK FCDO about targets and high-level engagement with G7 donors, to support aid and financial commitment for girls' education
- Being a member of the INEE Girls' EiE Reference Group, which seeks to further research and advocacy for girls' EiE
- Being a member of the UNESCO Gender Flagship Reference Group and providing technical contributions to the UNESCO-commissioned study "When schools shut: Gendered impacts of Covid-19 school closures"
- Working closely with the Global Partnership for Education as the implementing agency for 57% of the total GPE grants of US\$3.46bn, that also support girls' education

**Figure 12: A geographic overview of the World Bank's support to Girls' Education<sup>54</sup>**



<sup>52</sup> <https://www.globalpartnership.org/what-we-do/gender-equality>

<sup>53</sup> <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/5c5cdd4c96799335e263023fa96db454-0200022022/related/CountMeIn-Education-brochure-03-07-22.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/speech/2022/09/speech-transform-education-transform-gender-equality>

## What are approaches and funding working to be gender transformative?

### What's proving to be most impactful?

Though gender equality in and through education remains a high priority for most bilateral and multilateral donors and foundations, the commitment to such priorities in terms of financial investments and project initiatives is less clear. There is a clear rhetorical commitment on the global stage to pursuing a multisectoral approach to gender equality in and through education:

**“We must transform the power relations and the harmful norms, stereotypes and biases that pervade—and degrade—our education systems. We must create safe learning spaces, in person and online, that not only protect girls and women from gender-based violence but propel their creativity, potential and innovation.” Sima Bahous, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN Women, September 2022.<sup>55</sup>**

However, most funded programs are predominately on one or two intervention types. A recent review of the evidence of what works for girls' education at scale clearly outlined what policies and programs work best:

**“Our results show that programs and policies that have increased school completion or boosted learning for girls at scale in areas where girls face educational disadvantage include, among others, the elimination of fees or providing scholarships or stipends, reducing the distance to school or facilitating travel to school, providing school meals, improving the pedagogy of teachers through a range of inputs, and interventions that help students receive instruction at their level of learning” (Evans et al. 2021, 4; emphasis added).<sup>56</sup>**

The following bullets present a few common themes in girls' education programming, and the extent to which donors and implementers are actively pursuing such approaches.

- **Gender responsive pedagogy training for teachers and management:** The most prominent bilateral donor investing in gender responsive pedagogy (GRP) is the **FCDO**, which identified ‘the need to invest in good teaching’ as one of its primary strategies in its most recent girls' education global action plan. This includes supporting the recruitment, retention, and training of teachers in support of girl children's diverse needs.<sup>57</sup> For instance, in Ethiopia FCDO supported the Ministry of Education in training 125,000 teachers and headteachers. Additionally, in Malawi, the FCDO is supporting training all teachers nationwide on gender-sensitive pedagogy and special educational needs for children with learning difficulties. Another bilateral donor, **NORAD**, is also supporting GRP training for teachers. However, their approach differs as they work in cooperation with UNESCO, UNFPA and UNICEF in promoting the inclusion of CSE in teacher training, school curriculums and classroom teaching.<sup>58</sup>
- **UNICEF** also focuses on teacher training and professional development on gender-responsive pedagogies, including by developing toolkits and guides for implementors to adapt to any context. Their most recent gender-responsive pedagogy toolkit in 2020 was co-developed with the Forum for African Women Educationalists, UNESCO and UNGEI.<sup>59</sup> Additionally, another multilateral organization, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), is increasingly working on GRP training. Most recently in 2021, ECW supported over 8,400 women teachers being trained on a variety of topics, including subject knowledge, planning, pedagogy,

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/speech/2022/09/speech-transform-education-transform-gender-equality>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.co-impact.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Evidence-Full-Education.pdf>

<sup>57</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/986027/FCDO-Girls-Education-Action-Plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/986027/FCDO-Girls-Education-Action-Plan.pdf)

<sup>58</sup> [https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/vedlegg/fn/womens\\_rights.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/vedlegg/fn/womens_rights.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/6726/file/GRP-A-Toolkit-for-Teachers-and-Schools-2020.pdf>

mental health and psychosocial support, inclusivity, gender, WASH, emergency preparedness and DRR. In addition, 14,191 teachers (44% women) were trained on gender-related aspects in 2021.<sup>60</sup> For instance, ECW is funding the IRC in Tanzania (US\$1.5m in seed funding) to support refugee and host community girls to stay in school during Covid-19 school closures. IRC implemented targeted gender initiatives that included distributing MHM kits, MHM training and gender responsive teacher training. These trainings reached a total of 2,175 teachers and focused on promoting gender equality, reducing gender stereotypes, and responding positively to the needs of all learners.

- **Life skills training and curriculum:** One of the most prominent actors in the promotion of life skills training is **Global Affairs Canada (GAC)**. Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy emphasizes that GAC-funded programs and partners should include life skills and TVET opportunities 'with an emphasis on assisting women and marginalized youth find work, including in non-traditional and better-paying jobs.'<sup>61</sup> This is further emphasized in GAC's National Action Plan for the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security 2017-2022, where they highlight the need to include SHRH education and training for girls and young women.<sup>62</sup> For instance, GAC has provided US\$12 million CAD from 2019 to 2023 to improve the learning outcomes of girls in upper primary and secondary levels and to increase the enrolment of young women in gender-responsive, market-based skills training in Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp and Kalobeyei refugee settlement. The initiative provides access to education and skills training to adolescent girls and young women as well as community members and education stakeholders.
- Foundations such as **Aga Khan Foundation** and **Dubai Cares** similarly focus on integrating life skills training and interventions in their girls' education programs, often in FCAS contexts. For instance, Aga Khan Foundation's FCDO STAGES II program in Afghanistan (currently paused) supported highly marginalized girls living in 230 remote communities with alternative educational opportunities, packages of life skills trainings, and psychosocial support. Another foundation, Mastercard, is similarly focused on skills training in their Young Africa Works Strategy across 33 countries in Africa. Their approach partners with governments and the private sector to better understand priority sectors for economic growth, and subsequently aims their vocational and life skills training based on the skills employers are seeking.<sup>63</sup>
- **Addressing school-based and gender-based violence:** Two of the most influential actors are **UN Women** and their **End Violence Campaign**, as well as **Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children's End Violence Fund and Safe to Learn program**. Under the leadership of their partners UNICEF and the FCDO, the Safe to Learn Program and financing window has sought to generate learning and best practices through interventions in five countries (Cambodia, Lebanon, Nepal, South Sudan, and Uganda) to prevent and respond to violence in and through schools and other learning environments. They facilitate a Global Working Group, which is a large coalition of global partners including UNICEF, FCDO, the World Bank, GPE, WHO, GAC, ECW, UNESCO, UNGEI, the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, the Global Business Coalition for Education, End Violence Against Children, and the Civil Society Forum for Ending Violence Against Children. The Safe to Learn program utilizes an 'Ecological Model' as the best multi-faceted approach to helping identify context-based risk and protective factors, and corresponding entry points for intervention. They also advocate for a 'Whole School Approach' in which each level of the school – from headmasters to teachers and pupils/students – develop and implement a collective vision for a safe and nurturing learning environment.
- A particularly prominent partner is the **Civil Society Forum to End Violence Against Children (CSO Forum)**, which was created to harness the collective power of civil society organizations to end violence against children. The CSO Forum has a large number of members and seeks to facilitate broad-based, inclusive, effective, and accountable engagement from civil society. Their primary goals are to: build and sustain political will through advocacy; accelerate action at the country level; and collaborate and learn

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.educationcannotwait.org/annual-report-2021/assets/pdf/ECW-Annual-Report-2021.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> [https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues\\_development-enjeux\\_developpement/priorities-priorites/policy-politique.aspx?lang=eng#5.2](https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/priorities-priorites/policy-politique.aspx?lang=eng#5.2)

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.international.gc.ca/transparency-transparence/women-peace-security-femmes-paix-securite/2017-2022-action-plan.aspx?lang=eng>

<sup>63</sup> <https://mastercardfdn.org/women-at-work/>

from one another. The CDSO form works closely with governments at the national level to build political will towards ending violence against children. For instance, the CSO convened more than 100 grassroots organizations in Mexico for an awareness-raising campaign and helped to drive the #MxporlaNiñez movement forward to promote a national dialogue around the Agenda of Childhood and Adolescence.

- **School facilities supporting girls:** Most of the programming and interventions geared towards supporting gender equity through school facility improvement seek to ensure girls have access to safe and sanitary WASH facilities and, to a lesser extent, are providing MHM support to adolescent girls. For instance, **GIZ's Fit for School Program**, in close collaboration with UNICEF and Save the Children, has been very successful and strongly influenced the Philippines' Department of Education to recognize MHM and integrate supportive policies in their national WASH in Schools (WinS) program.<sup>64</sup> As a result, the national government institutionalized the policy and from 2017 to 2021, the number of schools participating in the monitoring increased from 30,000 to 45,000, covering 93% of public schools in the country. Other bilateral donors such as **GAC** are similarly supporting the building of safe WASH facilities and MHM support. GAC is financing the Canadian Red Cross for program implementation in FCAS settings such as South Sudan to build facilities and provide SGBV awareness and training to boys, men teachers, and community members in and around those same schools.

Other actors that seek to support girls' education through school facility improvements include Dubai Cares. Many of Dubai Cares' girls' education programming include support to infrastructure to increase access and retention of girls.

Similarly, UNICEF and ECW both focus heavily on support to adolescent girls. **UNICEF**, with its increased focus on adolescent girls, has sought to address facility-related barriers to education such as dignified MHM in schools and re-entry policies for young mothers who require safe and separate WASH facilities. In early 2020, UNICEF held a global virtual conference on supporting dignified MHM in schools.<sup>65</sup> The conference highlighted examples of programs that had found innovative ways to identify and address barriers to safe, dignified MHM in schools, such as innovative digital solutions and apps for MHM (the Oky app in Mongolia and Indonesia) and the creation of inclusive menstrual hygiene markets using innovative finance by the Australian Government's Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade. **ECW's approach to gender equality** has also focused on the provision of gender-responsive water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities in emergency contexts. In 2021, ECW reported that 2,581 ECW-supported learning spaces increased access to clean drinking water, safe sanitation facilities and basic hand-washing facilities. 16,983 teachers and administrators were trained in WASH topics.<sup>66</sup>

The significant majority of school facilities programs are based in Sub-Saharan Africa; Figure 11 presents a map of the distribution of such programs across the continent, according to EGER.

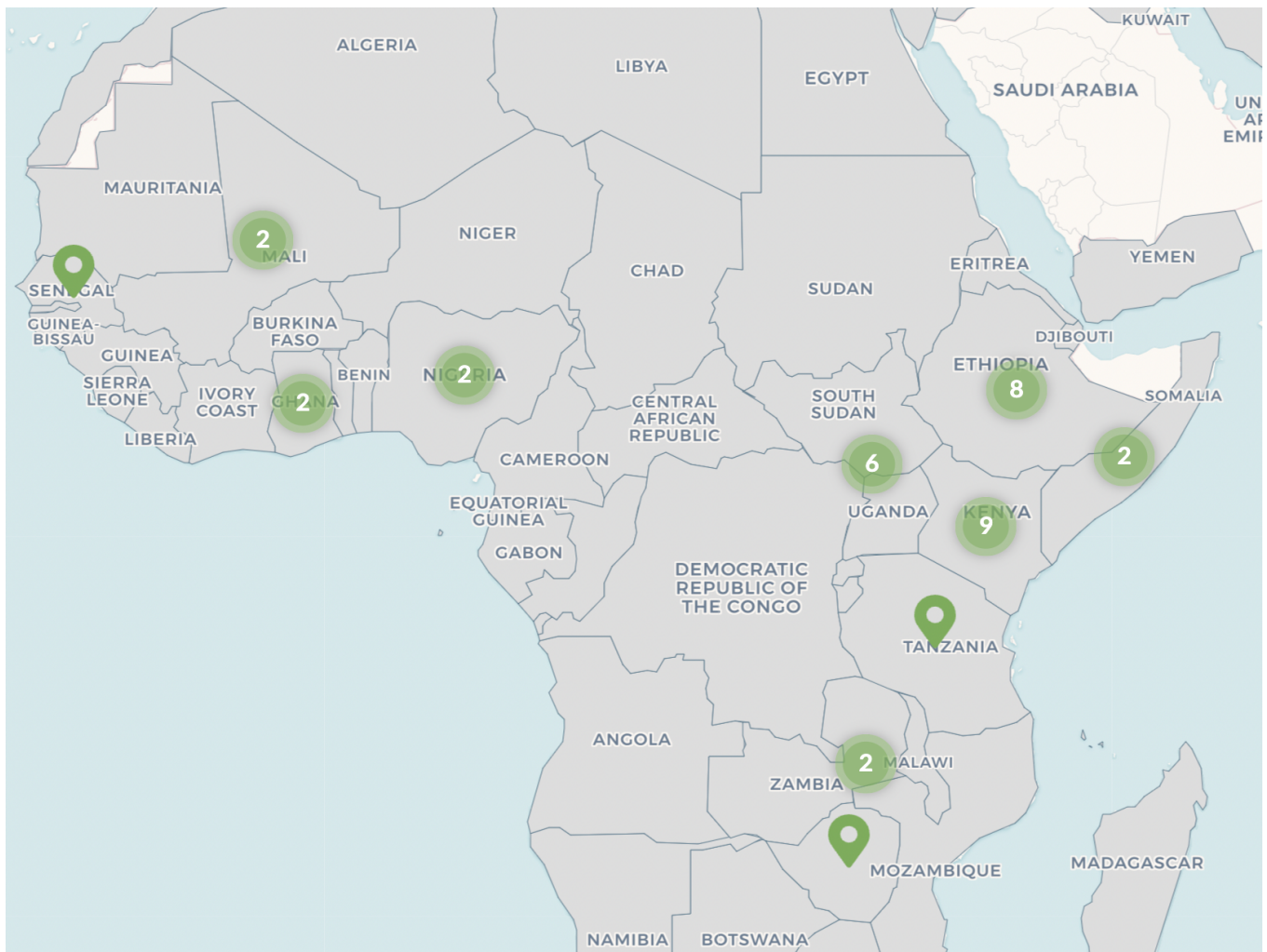
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<sup>64</sup> <https://gender-works.giz.de/competitions2022/fit-for-school-program/>

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/documents/innovation-mhm-putting-girls-center>

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.educationcannotwait.org/news-stories/human-stories/celebrating-teachers-transforming-the-future-education>

Figure 13: Geographic distribution of programs and projects, with a school facilities component<sup>67</sup>



- Community engagement to address attitudes for girls’ education and wider harmful practices:** One of the emerging actors in community engagement is **GPE**, which has historically only operated in tandem with national government. In 2021 GPE launched its new **Girls’ Education Awareness Program (GEAP)**. This program identifies pathways and opportunities for private actors in marketing, business, communications, and advocacy to support the delivery of targeted and context-sensitive messaging to community leaders, families, and girls to encourage awareness around girls’ education. The social marketing campaign is being piloted in three countries – Ghana, Kenya, and Zimbabwe – before being expanded to other GPE partner countries in the future.<sup>68</sup>

Beyond this, social norm change initiatives have been primarily targeted at addresses community concerns regarding the benefit of sending adolescent girls to secondary school as well as harmful traditional practices such as child and early marriage. The philanthropic foundation **CIFF’s Girl Capital program** in Africa (which has invested over US\$91 million to date) takes a holistic approach that seeks to generate actionable evidence and includes a focus on addressing harmful traditional practices. They find that:

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/factsheet-girls-education-awareness-program>

**“Single interventions are less impactful than a blended, multi-pronged approach. For example, school attendance helps, but combining school with cash transfers leads to a significant reduction in cases of child marriage. Similarly, financial capital for women is necessary, but when paired with mentorship, it leads to significant economic activity. The evidence base for dualistic approaches however needs to be further built, and we plan to invest in this generously whilst learning and sharing expansively. We have already conducted an extensive evidence review, and will keep working on building this evidence base to continually inform our programming.”<sup>69</sup>**

CIFF’s social norm change interventions includes those geared towards boys in their **Boys Stand Up program**, which seeks to identify behavioral strategies and processes adopted or implicitly assumed in programs that promote gender transformative effects on attitudes, social expectations, motivational intentions, and decisions. According to CIFF, Boys Stand Up is a unique investment focusing on adolescent boys through a blended model of offline (classroom) and online (social media) communications, community building and norm setting to dilute entrenched patriarchal norms.

CIFF also provides support to **Girl Effect**, one of the organizations most well-known for social norm change programming. As discussed above, Girl Effect is focused on media generation and dissemination of positive behavior change messaging for adolescent girls in Africa and Asia. Their TOC is based on the creation of a ‘New Normal’ for girls. A New Normal is “when girls have agency, and when behaviors and social norms around them are shifting at scale, further enabling them to exercise their agency.”<sup>70</sup>

## Where are the gaps?

- **Gender responsive planning:** Few actors beyond UNGEI, GPE and IIEP-UNESCO work systematically with national-level ministries and departments on training and implementation of gender-responsive planning and budgeting. At the global level, GPE partnered with UNGEI and UNICEF on developing guidelines for national education ministries to support GRESP.<sup>71</sup> The primary international organization supporting educational planning, **IIEP-UNESCO**, has also strengthened their support for gender-sensitive education planning and policy making. That includes the development of online courses and training programming through the Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI).<sup>72</sup> The IIEP also offers “fairness analyses” in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of sector planning and implementation.<sup>73</sup>
- **Addressing costs of access:** Every single donor and actor in the girls’ education sector speaks in one way or another about increasing access (and quality) to education for girls. However, despite the elimination of costs being a well-evidenced approach to addressing access,<sup>74</sup> few donors discuss this in policies or programming. Some donors even utilize the language of ‘economic cost’ of not educating girls for a developing country’s national economy. For instance, the World Bank and GPE often state that “limited educational opportunities for girls are costing countries between \$15 trillion and \$30 trillion in lost lifetime productivity and earnings.”<sup>75</sup>

The two primary donors that discuss reducing costs to access are the **FCDO** and **GAC**. For instance, the two donors jointly financed the girls’ education program in South Sudan for US\$15 million for 2 years (2020-2022). The program seeks to improve girls’ enrolment, retention, and performance in school by providing cash transfers to families and to schools to train teachers and improve infrastructure and by conducting social and behavior change communication and community mobilization to enhance awareness of the value of girls’ education. The **World Bank**, through its **Umbrella Facility for Gender**, similarly has provided conditional cash transfers to encourage families to send girls to school and reduce cost barriers. For example, the World Bank’s Conditional Cash Transfers and Women’s Empowerment and Agency program

<sup>69</sup> <https://ciff.org/priorities/girl-capital/>

<sup>70</sup> [https://www.global.girleffect.org/documents/37/ToC\\_Digital\\_Booklet.pdf](https://www.global.girleffect.org/documents/37/ToC_Digital_Booklet.pdf)

<sup>71</sup> <https://assets.globalpartnership.org/s3fs-public/2018-02-gpe-guidance-gender-responsive-esp.pdf?VersionId=NQ6v92ZTWfFov3NgnL2Tjwmd0iddE34Cc>

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/gender-centre-initiative-putting-gender-equality-core-education>

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/our-mission/gender-inequalities-education>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.co-impact.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Evidence-Full-Education.pdf>

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/07/11/not-educating-girls-costs-countries-trillions-of-dollars-says-new-world-bank-report>

in the Philippines sought to improve not only educational access but nutritional and health outcomes as well.

- **Remedial education:** Remedial education is rarely discussed in donor aid and educational policies. However, there are a few actors operating in this space, particularly in support of adolescent girls seeking to return to school and girls and boys in FCAS contexts. For instance, **FCDO** has historically supported national governments to step up and integrate refugees and IDP girls and boys alongside host communities, providing specialist remedial support.<sup>76</sup>

However, mention of remedial education is increasingly prevalent in relation to ‘learning losses’ experienced during Covid-19 lockdowns. UNICEF commissioned a large-scale study in 2022 entitled ‘Where Are We on Education Recovery?’ that discusses the joint Recovering Education Mission 2021 established by **UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank** to help guide and support countries in responding to the Covid-19 crisis.<sup>77</sup> They find that learning losses are worst for the most vulnerable children, especially girls who suffered larger learning losses than boys in most contexts according to UNESCO’s ‘When Schools Shut: Gendered Impacts of Covid-19 School Closures’.<sup>78</sup> Gendered norms and expectations about what girls should be doing while at home have also affected girl learners’ ability to participate in remote learning and return to school. Additionally, they report “increasing risks of violence, particularly gender-based violence, and child labor that will go under-reported the longer a child remains out of school.”<sup>79</sup>

### What groups are support targeted at?

In terms of which group of girls and women receives the most significant amount of support in and through education, the most prominent group are adolescent ‘marginalized’ girls. The **FCDO** in particular has prioritized marginalized adolescent girls in the Girls’ Education Challenge and its ‘Leave No Girl Behind’ funding window that is centered on highly marginalized adolescent girls who have either never attended school or dropped out before basic education completion. They present a relatively broad definition of marginalization, according to their most recent evaluation:

**“The broad/flexible definition of ‘marginalisation’ meant that the degree of marginalisation varied widely across projects, with few projects reaching the most marginalised children such as disabled girls or out of school girls.”**

The FCDO emphasized to other donors at the September 2022 TES Conference who donors should be targeting:

**“That girl who is hardest to reach. The girl born into poverty; who lives in a remote rural area, in a refugee camp, or caught up in conflict; who is perhaps disabled; or malnourished. The most vulnerable and marginalised. If we can reach that girl, and make sure she is learning and thriving in school, then we can do the same for all children. Girls and boys.”<sup>80</sup>**

Other donors similarly place a heavy focus on supporting adolescent girls, including **Echidna Giving, Girl Effect, UNICEF, and GAC**. For instance, GAC and UNICEF are supporting a US\$15m project implemented by Save the Children in Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras) to increase the number of vulnerable young and adolescent girls accessing safe learning opportunities in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The project seeks to equip them with knowledge and skills to protect themselves from risks and, when needed, to access alternative pathways toward education, training, or employability skills. The project also supports migrants, refugees, LGBTQI+ youth, and young mothers.

<sup>76</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/685536/DFID-Education-Policy-2018a.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685536/DFID-Education-Policy-2018a.pdf)

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/32546/file/Where-are-we-in-education-recovery.pdf>

<sup>78</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379270>

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/32546/file/Where-are-we-in-education-recovery.pdf>

<sup>80</sup> <https://blogs.fcdo.gov.uk/judithherbertson/2022/07/06/tackling-the-education-crisis-our-priorities-for-the-transforming-education-summit/>

Two other groups of girls that are often targeted for support by educational programs are refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and girls living with disabilities. For instance, **Education Cannot Wait** (ECW) is implementing programs in all of the countries with the highest numbers of refugees and IDPs worldwide. ECW emphasizes how crisis-affected girls are at a heightened risk of gender-based violence as well as being forced to marry early to manage the financial burdens of households. They highlight how girls in emergencies and protracted crises are also disproportionately impacted by climate change and natural disaster. In response, since ECW's inception, a cumulative total of 3.34 million girls have been reached through its regular programming. In addition, 16.2 million girls were reached via ECW's targeted Covid-19 investments with distance learning interventions and products, as well as health and hygiene messaging and products since inception. GAC has also invested a significant amount of its financing for girls' education towards supporting refugees and IDPs. One program, implemented by World University Service of Canada and Aga Khan Foundation Canada, is worth C\$15.9m (2019/20 to 2022/23) and seeks to empower adolescent girls and young women, aged 10 to 24 years, who are pursuing educational pathways in crisis-affected areas in Uganda, South Sudan, and Syria. This program is not only targeted towards IDPs and refugees, but the most marginalized girls in host communities as well.

A third group that is not discussed as much as would be expected is girls with disabilities. International UN agencies such as UNICEF are clear in their mandate for supporting all girls, often mentioning girls with disabilities in a long list of the most marginalized including refugees, IDPs, and adolescent mothers. UNICEF's most recent Gender Action Plan (2021-2031) briefly discusses how UNICEF will leverage its convening power with governments and other NGOs to:

**“Include a focus on increasing equity in access and learning by specifically targeting the structural barriers to education faced by adolescent girls, children with disabilities, migrant and displaced children, and other marginalized children and adolescents, and on the development of gender-responsive curricula.”**



## Conclusion

### What's left to do? Remaining gaps to achieving gender equality in and through education

This landscape mapping has sought to present the significant progress that is already transforming the lives of girls and women in and through education. Despite all of the obstacles that arise, including most recently the Covid-19 pandemic and looking forward increasing conflict and risk of climate disaster, twice as many girls are on the path to gender equality in lower-income countries.<sup>81</sup>

However, the sector is still not on track to reach the targets set out by SDG4, particularly regarding quality education, learning outcomes, and supporting the transition and retention of adolescent girls to secondary school. There are still major gaps – both in financing and implementation – to achieving gender equality in and through education. The brief gap analysis below seeks to identify the most prominent gaps moving forward.

The gaps presented below have been triangulated and informed by four primary sources of evidence: consultations conducted by the Itad team; the recent SWOT analysis of education sector planning processes in CGI countries; discussions and insights from grassroots feminist coalitions; and Itad's landscape mapping of the global girls' education ecosystem. The analysis ranks emerging gaps from most identified to least commonly identified. In other words, those gaps identified by a wider number of sources is considered a greater priority and presented as such; the gaps are not presented in terms of urgency or suitability to response by UNGEI.

- **Harmful gender norms and stereotypes impacting access and retention:** All sources of evidence – consultations, feminist coalition insights, SWOT analysis, and landscape mapping – emphasized harmful gender norms and stereotypes affecting women and girls as continuing to be a major gap in the girls' education ecosystem. For instance, the leaders of the feminist coalitions discussed how gender norms surrounding girls' unpaid and often invisible labor in the household limited their ability to learn and complete their education. The landscape mapping similarly found that, while there are many actors working to address attitudes regarding girls' education and wider harmful practices such as the GPE, ClIFF and Girl Effect, many of the existing programs are limited in geographic scope and are only just beginning to integrate boys and men to address patriarchal norms harmful to girls.
- **Conflict exacerbating existing barriers to access and learning:** All data sources except the planning SWOT emphasized the exacerbating circumstances faced by girls and women in conflict-affected contexts. The feminist coalitions, consultations, and landscape mapping highlighted how girls living in conflict-affected areas are more likely to drop-out or be unable to access education in the first place, as well as face a higher risk of GBV and accessing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. The importance of this gap is reflected in the level of funding devoted to this concern by international donors. The June 2018 Charlevoix Declaration on Public Education from G7 countries reiterated major donors' commitment to quality education for girls and women, and specifically committed to close the gap in access to education during conflict and crisis, and for refugees and the internally displaced, both inside and outside camps.
- **Increasing School-based and Home Gender-based Violence, Worsened by Covid-19:** Itad's consultations with stakeholders, discussions with feminist coalitions, and landscape mapping all discussed school-based gender-based violence (SBGBV) faced by girls, especially in African countries, as a major barrier to access and a persistent gap. The consultations in particular emphasized a gap regarding support to advocacy and implementation of initiatives that seek to address SBGBV. Additionally, a focus group discussion (FGD) with girls in Rwanda demonstrated that GBV extended beyond the school to intimate partner violence and conflict at home. The feminist coalitions stated that GBV also increased during Covid-19 lockdowns as many girls were forced to stay home and face sexual and domestic violence. The landscape mapping noted that funders such as the Ford Foundation referred to gender-based violence as a 'growing epidemic' requiring a 'holistic and intersectional approach'.

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<sup>81</sup> <https://www.globalpartnership.org/results/education-data-highlights#gender-equality>

## Annex D – UNGEI Results Framework 2023-2027

### UNGEI RF, 2023-2027

#### Background

The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) is a global partnership of organizations that are committed to GTE. These partners include civil society organizations (CSOs), governments, United Nations (UN) agencies, academia, donors, and young feminist activists, which all work to achieve gender equality in and through education.

UNGEI was founded in 2000 in Dakar, Senegal, by the then United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, with the aim of promoting girls' education and gender equality in and through education. Today, UNGEI is the only intergovernmental initiative for which gender equality in and through education is the sole mandate. It is also one of the few such initiatives that brings the voice of girls and young feminists to the table, promotes feminist principles, and advocates for radical changes in the approaches towards gender and education. Since its inception, it has grown to become a global convener, knowledge generator and advocacy leader, leading the way forward through providing new ways of working in countries to achieve gender equality through education.

In 2022, UNGEI started the process of developing its 2023-2027 SDs (Strategic Plan). This document describes a high-level results framework that accompanies the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. This result framework connects UNGEI's five focus areas and their short, medium, and long-term milestones with the SDGs, the UNICEF Gender Action Plan (2022-2025), the UNICEF Education Strategy (2019-2030) and the UN Women Strategic Plan (2022-2025).<sup>82</sup>

#### UNGEI's vision, mission, focus areas and milestones

The table below shows how UNGEI's vision, focus areas and milestones align with and roll up into SDG4, 5; UNICEF Education Strategy (2019-2030), UNICEF Gender Action Plan (2022-2025) and UN Women Strategic Plan (2022-2025).

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<sup>82</sup> Each of UNGEI's programmes have their own results frameworks which are available on request

**Table 6: UNGEI's Vision, Mission and Focus Areas**

Dimension	UNGEI 2023-2027: Vision, Mission and Focus Areas	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
	<p>SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</p> <p>Indicator 4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex</p> <p>Indicator 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex</p> <p>Indicator 4.7.1: Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment</p> <p>SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p> <p>Indicator 5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex</p> <p>Indicator 5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18</p> <p>Indicator 5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age</p> <p>Indicator 5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location</p> <p>Indicator 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions</p> <p>Indicator 5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment</p> <p>Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations (UNITED)</p> <p>The United Nations commits on placing women and girls at the center ("We will place women and girls at the center"), boosting partnership ("We will boost partnerships"), and listening to and working with youth ("We will listen to and work with youth").</p>			

**Table 6: UNGEI's Vision, Mission and Focus Areas**

Dimension	UNGEI 2023-2027: Vision, Mission and Focus Areas	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
Vision	All children, regardless of gender or sex, are supported with high-quality, inclusive and gender-transformative education to realize their full potential and contribute to achieving equal, just societies including by removing barriers to girls' and women's rights	Every Child Learns: Improved learning and skills development for boys and girls from early childhood to adolescence, in particular for the most marginalized and those affected by humanitarian situations.	Girls and women live safe, healthy, empowered lives and engage equally in leading change	A gender equal world in which all women and girls are empowered to enjoy their full human rights
Mission	To galvanize joint and catalytic action from governments, civil society organizations, gender experts, young feminist activists, academia, multilaterals, humanitarian actors, donors, philanthropists and the private sector for girls' education and gender equality in and through education	-	Integrate gender equality programming for transformative results in all areas of work across the humanitarian-development nexus and prioritize institutional accountability to reflect gender equality in the UNICEF workplace.	-

**Table 7: UNGEI's Focus Areas and Milestones**

UNGEI's 2023-2027 Strategy: Focus Areas	UNGEI's Milestones	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
<p>FOCUS AREA 1: Champion feminist expertise, leadership and partnerships in the education sector including girls' and women's rights movements</p>	<p>Short-term<sup>83</sup>: The Global Feminist Network for GTE provides a strong focus for feminist actors in education from 2023 to 2027</p> <p>Medium-term: Building up a roster of gender experts in priority countries in key areas such as gender-responsive planning and budgeting who can take the lead within country processes</p> <p>Long-term: The Feminist Network for Gender-Transformative Education is recognized as a key actor in developing the post SDG agenda</p>	<p>Programmatic Approaches:</p> <p>Systems strengthening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Strengthening education sector analysis and evidence based sector planning and monitoring, including gender and disability-responsive planning, and risk-informed planning responsive to conflict, climate change and other major risks.</li> <li>* Strengthening capacity at central and subnational levels in areas such as data, delivery, accountability for results, and protecting education from all forms of attack.</li> </ul> <p>Strategy: Learning environments: inputs and outcomes linked to child well-being and learning, i.e., protection, health,</p>	<p>Partnerships with women's and girls' networks and organizations and Interagency coordination on gender equality as institutional enables</p> <p>Indicator E4.5. Leadership training: percentage of Global Management Team, representatives and deputy representatives (programme and operations) trained on gender equality, anti-racism and disability inclusion as well as on forms of discrimination, including biases and microaggressions</p>	<p>Impact Area 1. Governance &amp; Participation in Public Life: Women fully and equally participate in leadership and decision-making and women and girls benefit from gender-responsive governance</p> <p>Impact Indicator 1.1: Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments, (b) local governments and (c) executive positions/ministers (cabinets) held by women (SDG 5.5.1)</p> <p>Outcome 1: Global normative frameworks, and gender-responsive laws policies and institutions</p> <p>Output Indicator 0.1.e. Number of partners that have increased capacities to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through national and/or local (multi)sectoral strategies, policies and/or action plans</p> <p>Output Indicator 0.1.f. Number of institutions that have increased capacities to design and implement institutional reforms/ strategies/ policies that promote gender equality and women's empowerment</p>

**Table 7: UNGEI's Focus Areas and Milestones**

UNGEI's 2023-2027 Strategy: Focus Areas	UNGEI's Milestones	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
		<p>gender equality (one key lesson to date is that an enabling school environment is a necessary but not sufficient condition for learning).</p>		<p>Outcome 5. Women's voice, leadership &amp; agency: More women and girls exercise their voice, agency and leadership, including through an enabling environment that supports women's and youth organizations</p> <p>Output Indicator 0.5.b. Number of advocacy initiatives with partners to increase quality, flexible, core funding for civil society organizations working on gender equality and women's empowerment, especially women's organizations</p> <p>Output Indicator 0.5.d. Number of civil society organizations working on gender equality and women's empowerment, especially women's organizations, that have strengthened capacities to exercise their leadership role towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment</p>

<sup>83</sup> Milestones are at three levels: Short-term (1-2 years), Medium-term (3-4 years) and Long-term (5-10 years)

**Table 7: UNGEI's Focus Areas and Milestones**

UNGEI's 2023-2027 Strategy: Focus Areas	UNGEI's Milestones	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
<p>FOCUS AREA 2: Spur MoEs and other education actors (including CSOs) to commit to and deliver GTE policies and programs</p>	<p>Short-term: At least 4 ministries in GCI priority countries have developed gender-responsive education plans, meaningfully engaging national gender expertise</p> <p>Medium-term: An average of 7 global resource and toolkits produced annually, and 80%+ partners agree they are useful. Used by at least 4 UN agencies and major donors</p> <p>Long-term: 8 GCI countries increase levels of gender expertise within the education sector and increase budget allocations year on year to implement gender-responsive education strategies</p>	<p>Goal Area 1: Equitable access to learning opportunities.</p> <p>Impact Indicator: Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex (SDG Indicator 4.2.2)</p> <p>Impact Indicator: Completion rates in primary and lower-secondary education and gross enrolment rate in upper secondary, by sex (SDG Target 4.1)</p> <p>Impact Indicator: Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/ top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all</p>	<p>Goal Area 2: Every child, including adolescents, learns and acquires skills for the future</p> <p>2a. Gender-responsive education systems and equitable education access for all</p> <p>2b. Adolescent girls' leadership, learning and skills, including digital skills</p> <p>2.1 Gender priorities throughout the life course</p> <p>Output indicator 2.1.1: Percentage of countries with inclusive and gender-equitable systems for access to learning opportunities</p>	<p>Outcome 2. Financing for gender equality: Public and private financing advance gender equality through gender responsive financing policies, strategies and instruments</p> <p>Outcome Indicator 0.2.1. Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment (SDG Indicator 5.c.1)</p> <p>Outcome 1: Global normative frameworks, and gender-responsive laws policies and institutions</p>

**Table 7: UNGEI's Focus Areas and Milestones**

UNGEI's 2023-2027 Strategy: Focus Areas	UNGEI's Milestones	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
		<p>education indicators that can be disaggregated (SDG Indicator 4.5.1)</p> <p>Goal Area 2: Improved learning and skills for all.</p> <p>Impact Indicator: Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex (SDG Indicator 4.2.1);</p> <p>Impact Indicator: Proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (1) reading and (2) mathematics, by sex (SDG Indicator 4.1.1).</p>	<p>2.2 Adolescent girls' leadership &amp; wellbeing priorities</p> <p>Output indicator 2.2.5: Percentage of countries with gender-responsive systems for learning and skills development</p> <p>Output Indicator 2.2.6. Percentage of countries institutionalizing holistic skills development to support learning, personal empowerment, environmental sustainability, active citizenship and/or employability and entrepreneurship</p> <p>Impact Indicator 30: Percentage of countries where legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-</p>	



**Table 7: UNGEI's Focus Areas and Milestones**

UNGEI's 2023-2027 Strategy: Focus Areas	UNGEI's Milestones	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
			discrimination on the basis of sex (SDG 5.1.1)  Output Indicator 2.1.1. Percentage of countries with inclusive and gender-equitable systems for access to learning opportunities  Output Indicator 2.2.5: Percentage of countries with gender-responsive systems for learning and skills development	
FOCUS AREA 3: Catalyze new strategies, protect and extend gains on addressing harmful gender norms and practices in and through education	Short-term: At least 2 resources/global public goods on SRGBV, CSE and Ending Harmful Gender Stereotypes produced annually led or co-led by UNGEI  Medium-term: Gender-transformative education becomes institutionalized in non-education platforms like CSW, ICPD  Long-term: A pooled fund provides coherent, flexible, trust-based	Goal Area 1: Equitable access to learning opportunities.  Outcome Indicator 2.1.: Percentage of countries with gender disparity (SDG 4.5)  Goal Area 2: Improved learning and skills for all.	Outcome: UNICEF models and promotes gender equality in all areas of work, with a focus on improving results for adolescent girls  Goal Area 3: Every child, including adolescents, is protected from violence, exploitation, abuse,	Impact Area 3. Ending violence against women: All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence  Impact Indicator 3.4: Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18 (SDG 5.3.1)  Outcome 3. Positive social norms, including through engaging men and boys: More men and boys and women and girls adopt attitudes, norms and

**Table 7: UNGEI's Focus Areas and Milestones**

UNGEI's 2023-2027 Strategy: Focus Areas	UNGEI's Milestones	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
	funding to at least 10 local feminist organizations working to end harmful gender norms through education, aligned with UNCTs and UNDAFs	Outcome Indicator 2.6. Education equity index (reflecting inequalities on gender; urban/rural and wealth quintile) (SDG 4.5 and Global Partnership for Education Results Framework)	neglect and harmful practices 3a. Addressing violence against women and children, including gender-based violence and harmful practices 3b. Eliminate child marriage and early unions Output Indicator 3.3.1. Number of girls and women who receive prevention and protection services on female genital mutilation, through UNICEF-supported Programs Output Indicator 3.3.4. Number of countries implementing evidence-based, costed and funded action plans or strategies with M&E	practices that advance gender equality and women's empowerment, including those that promote positive social norms Outcome Indicator 0.3.1: Extent of bias in gender equality attitudes and/or gender social norms among individuals Outcome Indicator 0.3.2: Number of institutions putting in place policies and practices to address gender-based discrimination and/or combat gender stereotypes Output Indicator 0.3.d: Number of organizations/ institutions with increased capacities to identify and/or address discriminatory behavior and/or social/ gender norms change Output Indicator 0.3.e: Number of draft policies with monitoring/reporting mechanisms developed by partners to address gender-based discrimination and/or combat gender stereotypes

**Table 7: UNGEI's Focus Areas and Milestones**

UNGEI's 2023-2027 Strategy: Focus Areas	UNGEI's Milestones	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
			<p>frameworks to end child marriage</p> <p>Goal Area 4: Every child, including adolescents, uses safe, resilient water, sanitation and hygiene services and lives in a safe and sustainable climate and environment</p> <p>4a. Equitable water, sanitation and hygiene systems</p> <p>4b. Accessible, dignified menstrual health and hygiene: Promote accessible and dignified menstrual health and hygiene services, including tackling taboos about menstruation</p> <p>Output Indicator 4.1.6. Number of women and adolescent girls reached</p>	

**Table 7: UNGEI's Focus Areas and Milestones**

UNGEI's 2023-2027 Strategy: Focus Areas	UNGEI's Milestones	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
			whose menstrual health and hygiene needs are addressed through UNICEF-supported programs [adolescents 15–19 years]	
<p><b>FOCUS AREA 4:</b> Lead and bring together global and local expertise on gender and education knowledge and evidence (which includes qualitative data)</p>	<p>Short-term: Traffic to the UNGEI website's Knowledge Hub increases 100%</p> <p>Medium-term: At least 2 joint-research studies annually as UNGEI partnership using youth-led, community-based research approaches</p> <p>Long-term: UNICEF and other UN agencies' communications and advocacy teams share key evidence and messages as suggested by UNGEI through global and national channels</p>	<p>As part of UNICEF's strategy, it focuses on education sector analysis, planning and strategy development: working with governments and with international partners including the Global Partnership for Education, the World Bank, bilateral donors, UNESCO; and its institutes and other United Nations agencies.</p>	<p>Institutional strengthening and accountability</p> <p>H5. Gender equality programming for transformative results</p> <p>Indicator H5.6. Percentage of country offices reporting gender equality results that are transformative</p>	<p>Outcome 6: Production, analysis and use of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data and knowledge: Gender statistics, sex disaggregated data and knowledge are produced, analyzed and used to inform policy-making, advocacy and accountability for delivering gender equality and women's empowerment results.</p> <p>Outcome Indicator 0.6.3. Number of countries demonstrating use of gender statistics, analysis, and policy relevant research</p> <p>Output Indicator 0.3.a: Number of research and/or practice-based initiatives undertaken to advance data, evidence and knowledge, including standardized methods to assess, monitor, measure and/or achieve</p>

**Table 7: UNGEI's Focus Areas and Milestones**

UNGEI's 2023-2027 Strategy: Focus Areas	UNGEI's Milestones	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
				behavior and/or social/ gender norms change
<p>FOCUS AREA 5: (REACH focus area) Increase support to/leadership of women in MoEs, including teachers, principals and school staff</p>	<p>Short-term: Toolkit/strategy around women in leadership in education which is based on global evidence</p> <p>Medium-term: Increased commitments seen in this area by at least 5 actors.</p> <p>Long-term: Multi-country program (like GCI) brings together education and women's leadership actors to increase women's leadership in schools, teacher unions and MoEs</p>	<p>As part of increasing focus on systems strengthening, UNICEF will advocate for 20 per cent allocation of national budgets to education, and for donors to contribute more to education, particularly at pre-primary level. UNICEF will advocate for, and support the implementation of, pro-poor public expenditure, and work with governments to improve the quality of public expenditure – more equitable, more efficient, more effective.</p>	<p>Goal Area 5: Every child, including adolescents, has access to inclusive social protection and lives free of poverty</p> <p>5a. Gender-responsive social protection systems and gender-responsive care work</p> <p>Output Indicator 5.2.2: Number of countries with social protection programs that are gender-responsive or lead to transformative gender equality results</p>	<p>Outcome 1: Global normative frameworks, and gender-responsive laws policies and institutions – A Comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is strengthened and translated into gender responsive laws, policies, and institutions.</p> <p>Indicator 0.1.3: Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex (SDG 5.1.1)</p> <p>Indicator 0.1.4: Number of laws that were adopted, revised or repealed to advance gender equality and women's empowerment</p> <p>Indicator 0.1.5: Number of national and/or local (multi) sectoral strategies,</p>

**Table 7: UNGEI's Focus Areas and Milestones**

UNGEI's 2023-2027 Strategy: Focus Areas	UNGEI's Milestones	UNICEF Education Strategy, 2019-2030	UNICEF Gender Action plan, 2022-2025	UN Women Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
				policies and/or action plans that are adopted with a focus on gender equality

## Annex E: Partnership Principles UNGEI and UNICEF Education/ADAP

### Background and vision

This document outlines the programme delivery and working principles between UNICEF's Education/ADAP (especially the Gender Equity and Inclusion team) and the United Nations' Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) within UNICEF Education/ADAP Section. It clarifies roles internally and externally thereby harnesses the synergies between UNICEF HQ, RO, COs and other partners to strengthen results in gender equality in and through education.

**The shared vision of UNICEF Education/ADAP, UNICEF Gender and UNGEI is a world where universal girls' education is achieved, and gender equality is progressed through gender-transformative education.**<sup>84</sup>

### Comparative Advantages

UNGEI and UNICEF Education/ADAP are committed to advancing girls' education and advancing gender transformative education to secure gender equality in and through education. Both work in the context of the wider UN development system to strengthen systems and hold a rights-based approach.

They also bring specific advantages to this mission.

#### UNICEF Education/ADAP:

- Largest education actor in the world with education programming in 148 countries and territories based on a long history of reliable, in-country presence enabling a rich understanding of country contexts.
- Technical expertise and programmatic experience in all aspects of children, adolescents and young people's learning including technical staff and senior representatives who engage with government ministers.
- Largest humanitarian education actor: UNICEF's teams are on the ground before, during and after crises.
- Political and convening power to shape global, regional and national education debates, including participation in key system forums (HLSC, ECW, GPE, TES, etc.).

#### UNGEI:

- Partnership of 50+ organizations ranging from multilaterals and donor governments to grassroots NGOs and young feminist activists.
- Only inter-governmental entity with a dedicated, singular mandate of girls' education and gender equality in and through education.
- Small, agile UNGEI Secretariat.
- As a partnership with its own principles and five-year Strategic Direction<sup>85</sup>, UNGEI can be bolder and more explicitly feminist than individual organizations, allowing for creative and innovative partnerships and programmes, especially in the largely greenfield "gender equality through education" space.

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<sup>84</sup> See Annex 1 for relevant extracts from UNICEF Education Strategy 2019-2030, UNICEF Gender Action Plan 2022-2025 and UNGEI Strategic Direction 2023-2027.

<sup>85</sup> UNGEI's five-year Strategic Plan which is developed through universal consultation and in alignment with UNICEF Education Strategy and Gender Action Plan. See here UNGEI Strategic Direction 2018-2023 <https://www.ungei.org/publication/ungei-strategic-directions-2018-2023>

## Principles of collaboration and working modalities

Guided by UNICEF values of care, respect, integrity, trust, accountability, and building on our comparative advantages, UNICEF Education/ ADAP and UNGEI will see each other as a resource by default, harness each other's capacities and tap into each other's experience and knowledge. We will do this by:

- a) communicating regularly across all work areas, monthly meetings to stay in touch, plan and collaborate, at the level of Senior Adviser GEI and Director, UNGEI and their teams.
- b) mobilising resources and build partnerships together at global level, when relevant, which will include mobilizing additional resources for girls' education and gender equality using each other's assets, brands and platforms<sup>86</sup>.
- c) collaborating to ensure the buy-in of UNICEF COs of the common mandate.
- d) following established UNICEF and UN accountabilities and procedures.
- e) attending key moments or events at global, regional and country level jointly, wherever relevant.
- f) UNICEF recognizes and supports the rationale for which UNGEI was established: to convene movement that holds all education actors accountable through advocacy and joint messaging. UNGEI, in turn, commits to always informing UNICEF in advance of such statements and initiatives<sup>87</sup>.

## Accountabilities

UNGEI sits in the UNICEF Education/ADAP section in UNICEF Programme Group. The Director of the UNGEI Secretariat reports to the Director of Education in HQ with a matrix reporting line to the Director of Gender Equality in HQ. UNGEI follows UNICEF policies and procedures including procurement, recruitment, programme management, oversight, resource mobilization and inter-agency collaboration<sup>88</sup>.

Work done by UNGEI at regional and country level will be undertaken in accordance with UNICEF accountability mechanisms at Regional Office (for regional work) and Country Office (for country work). The UNICEF Country Office Representative will review and endorse UNGEI's support and engagement at country level as per the UNICEF accountability framework. The Representative, in this case, should be encouraged to recognize that this is a partnership (and not necessarily branded as a UNICEF programme) when making that decision. UNICEF Education/ ADAP and UNGEI will remind the Representative of the rationale for which UNGEI was set up i.e., to bring a sense of urgency, voice and boldness on issues that UNICEF may not take on directly. This will enable the Representative to decide whether to endorse positions/or support activities that they may not endorse/approve if branded as UNICEF.

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<sup>86</sup> Examples of joint fundraising efforts are described in Annex 2

<sup>87</sup> Successful examples include the UNGEI Partnership statement on Afghanistan (2021) and the open letter to the Transforming Education Summit Secretariat (2022).

<sup>88</sup> The following provision from the '2021 Guidance note on Transferring Contributions from One Agency to Another for Programmatic Activities' will apply should UNGEI choose to send funds to another UN Entity: The Recipient UN Entity has programmatic and financial accountability to the Contributing UN Entity for the Activities, which the Recipient UN Entity has agreed to undertake. The Contributing UN Entity has programmatic and financial accountability to the funding source(s) for the Activities.

<https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/UN2UN-Transfer-Agreement-Template-FINAL-3-June-2021.pdf>



**UNICEF Education Strategy 2019-2030** adopts three core strategies with respect to gender: (1) girls' education; (2) gender parity: focusing on girls or boys, according to context; and (3) gender transformation.

With respect to systems strengthening, UNICEF prioritizes strengthening education sector analysis and evidence-based sector planning and monitoring, including gender and disability-responsive planning, and risk-informed planning responsive to conflict, climate change and other major risks.

With respect to community engagement, UNICEF prioritizes changing gender and social norms, including convening dialogue and providing information to address issues such as girls' education and gender equality in education, early marriage, child labour and violence against children.

**UNICEF Gender Action Plan 2022-2025** commits to '...work with partners to dismantle harmful masculinities', '...expand public-private partnerships and programmes to address harmful stereotypes and promote body positivity among children and adolescents.'

UNICEF aims to 'challenge restrictive or harmful gender norms conducive to violence and to encourage more gender-equitable practices...'

UNICEF commits to 'continue to support the development of gender-responsive education systems...and prioritize a comprehensive response to SRGBV and foster safe physical and online learning spaces for all children and adolescents. UNICEF will 'leverage its convening power and partnerships... to strengthen inclusive, gender-responsive education systems through sector-wide analysis, planning, implementation and accountability'.

UNGEI's vision for 2023-2027 is *"All children, regardless of gender or sex, are supported with high-quality, inclusive and gender-transformative education to realize their full potential and contribute to achieving equal, just societies including by removing barriers to girls' and women's rights."*

UNGEI i) Champions feminist expertise, leadership and partnerships in the education sector including girls' and women's rights movements; ii) Spurs MoEs and other education actors to commit to and deliver gender transformative education policies and programmes; iii) Catalyzes new strategies, protect and extend gains on addressing harmful gender norms and practises in and through education; iv) Leads and brings together global and local expertise on gender and education knowledge and evidence; and v) aims to increase support to/leadership of women in MoEs.

Itad is a global organisation. Our strategy, monitoring, evaluation and learning services work to make international development more effective. We generate evidence on important issues – from malnutrition to migration – to support our partners to make informed decisions and improve lives.

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