Achieving breakthroughs in education: Key achievements in 2013



www.savethechildren.net

About Save the Children

Save the Children is the world's leading independent organisation for children. It has existed for almost 100 years and works in more than 120 countries. Education is one of our largest programme areas.

Our vision

A world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

Our mission

To inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

Our approach

Across all of our work we:

Innovate – to develop evidence-based, replicable solutions to the problems children face

Achieve results at scale – by expanding effective and sustainable approaches

Use our voice to give others a voice – to advocate and campaign for better practices and policies to fulfil children's rights and ensure their voices are heard and taken seriously

Work in partnership with others – children, communities, governments, civil society and private sector organisations – to increase our impact

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Front and back cover: Cambodia: Hanne Bjugstad / Save the Children



Our education goal

All children can read by the time they leave primary school and all children caught up in humanitarian crises have access to quality education.

Education is one of Save the Children's global priorities, where we are striving to achieve and catalyse breakthroughs in the way the world treats children.

Good quality education brings hope and opportunities for children to transform their lives. Education helps to tackle poverty and improve health, and educated children are more likely to educate their own children. Yet 57 million children of primary school age are not in school¹. And as many as 250 million² children leave primary school without basic literacy and numeracy skills.

As you will read in these pages, we run many types of education programmes. Two priority areas are education for children affected by humanitarian crises, as they form almost half of the children missing out on school today, and improving the quality of education so that children really learn when they are in school. Our education programming and advocacy are informed by our 2012-2015 education strategy 'Moving ahead on education' and driven by a global steering group, as well as the specific needs of children in different contexts.

For us, 'all children' means just that – including the poorest, most marginalised and hardest-to-reach children. Every child has a right to education.



Save the Children's Education Global Initiative Steering Group

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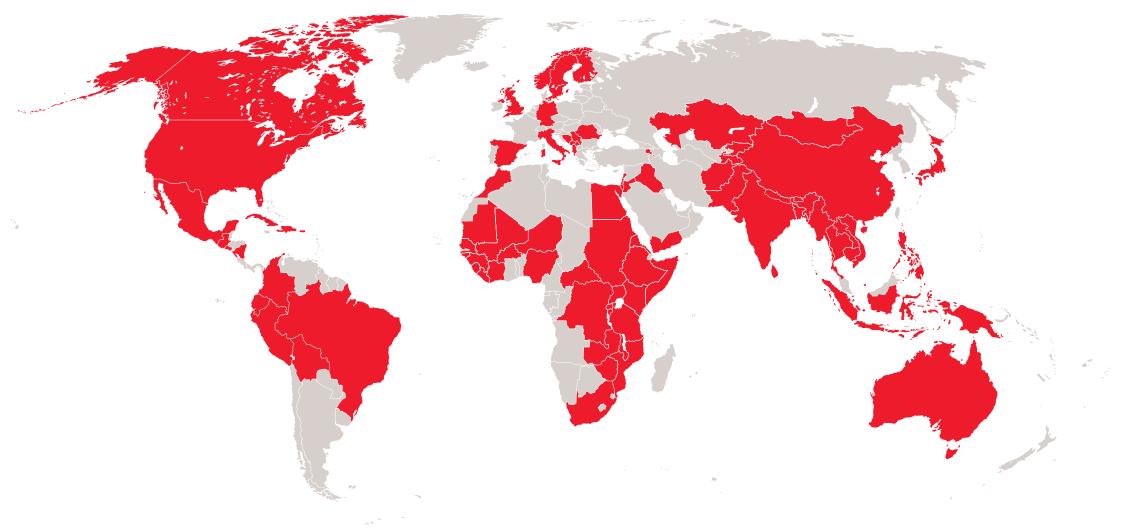
Barbara Reynolds Head of Education Save the Children UK

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Global portfolio

In 2013, Save the Children implemented education programmes in 83 countries worldwide.

We invested US\$236 million in our education programmes globally in 2013. Together with our partners we provided education to 9.8 million children. We enabled 70,656 children to access education in 15 conflict affected countries. Since 2005, we have assisted nearly 2 million children in conflict affected areas this way.



Achieving breakthroughs in education

2013 was a critical year for Save the Children's global efforts to ensure that every child, everywhere enjoys the right to education.

Working closely with a wide range of partners, we helped to provide education to 9.8 million children. We invested over US\$236 million to increase access to, and improve the quality of, education across the world. We have measurably improved learning for over 0.5 million³ children through programmes such as Literacy Boost. This report highlights some of our achievements in 2013, as well as the challenges we continue to face.

Sadly, there are still many barriers preventing children from learning. Conflict, natural disasters and other emergencies continue to be a major factor preventing children from going to school. Far too many children in school are excluded from learning because they do not understand the language of instruction, their parents cannot afford to buy school books, or the quality of education is poor or not matched to their needs.

This report gives some examples from our education and humanitarian programmes that show it is possible to break through these barriers and ensure that every child attends school and learns to the best of their ability. Some Save the Children programmes that address other barriers to education, such as income and health, are also highlighted in this report.

Looking ahead, we can see the barriers, but also great opportunities to break through them and deliver better education for children and make a real and lasting difference to the life chances of children across the world. Working with our partners we can make a major contribution to ensuring that there will not be another lost generation of children denied their right to learn.

We are enormously grateful to our donors and to our staff for their continued commitment to children's education. Without you, we would not be able to make a difference to children's lives through education.



Literacy: all children can read by the time they leave primary school

Today, 57 million children are failing to learn, simply because they cannot attend school. But access is not the only education crisis – poor quality teaching is holding back many children who make it into school. These barriers mean that one third of primary school age children are not learning the basics.⁴

In 2013 Save the Children continued to respond to this global learning crisis by ensuring that children learn in school, giving them the tools for future life and learning. The following projects illustrate the range of approaches we use to improve children's learning outcomes.

Literacy Boost: a proven way to improve core reading skills

Literacy Boost began in Pakistan in 2010 as a 10-school pilot. It combines reading assessments, teacher training and community support to enhance young children's literacy skills, the basis of all school-based learning. It works with the teachers, children and local communities to improve children's reading skills by working in schools as well as at home. Children's reading is assessed at the beginning and at the end of the programme so we can collect evidence on the impact of the intervention. Based on strong results, particularly for girls and the most marginalised children, we have now implemented Literacy Boost in over 400 government primary schools in Pakistan, reaching 144,509 children. The project has been endorsed by the Government of Pakistan, supported by teachers and communities, and continues to show strong results for children. An assessment in November 2013 found that students in Literacy Boost schools made significantly more progress in core reading skills than students at comparison schools, in both the language of instruction (Urdu) and their home language (Pashto).

In 2013, we ran Literacy Boost projects in 24 countries. In Mali for example, we expanded the programme from 20 pilot schools to a further 60 primary schools in the south of the country, reaching 19,619 children. At the same time we strengthened programme quality, particularly in community-led reading activities. The project was able to continue despite political insecurity, and we are now working with potential donors to provide support to children in northern, conflict-affected areas of the country, whose lives and education have been severely disrupted.

"I enjoy reading with my buddy because he helps me understand the story. I can read without difficulties and understand it better. I enjoy my studies now. It has become like playing a game." – Shoaib (7)



Shoaib has learned to read through a buddy system in which students team up to help each other read. This is one of the techniques used in our Literacy Boost programme.

⁴ From Teaching and Learning: Achieving quality for all Education For All Global Monitoring report 2013/14

I'm Learning: creating a stimulating environment for learning

The I'm Learning programme is a holistic approach to help schools improve children's learning and development, incorporating life skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and communication as well as literacy and numeracy. Competent and motivated teachers, a safe and stimulating learning environment and community support are other strands of I'm Learning. The programme is implemented in partnership with communities and governments to ensure local ownership and sustainability, and to be certain that the voice of children is heard.

We have developed the Quality Learning Environments (QLE) indicator to capture how I'm Learning influences children's learning outcomes. In 2013 pilots we established baselines, action plans and research proposals for the programme and launched it in Cambodia, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The programme will expand further in 2014 but we can already report some successes. In Uganda, for the first time ever, no girls dropped out of seventh grade in one of the project schools, and they all passed their exam to continue secondary education. This is partly due to us teaching girls how to make pads so they could attend school while menstruating. In Cambodia, our five pilot schools developed comprehensive school improvement plans with child representatives, teachers and community members. In Zimbabwe, we introduced I'm Learning schools to child-centered teaching to ensure that more children are fully engaged in their learning.

Early childhood care and development (ECCD) programmes

The roots of school success begin in early childhood, before children enter school. Around the world, Save the Children supports parents and early childhood professionals and children themselves to strengthen learning in early childhood.

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Pakistan and Nepal:

Our Early Literacy and Maths package helps young children aged 3–6, especially from disadvantaged communities, to develop foundational literacy and numeracy skills that are critical for later school success. In 2013 we trained staff members and partners from eight countries, in preparation for rolling out the programme in 2014.

Bangladesh: Promoting Talent through Early Education aims to smooth the transition from preschool to primary school and support children's learning beyond the school walls. Participation in the 10-month after-school programme yielded impressive benefits in 2013 - participating children scored significantly higher in literacy and maths assessments compared to their peers in the control group, equivalent to an academic year of learning for maths and two-thirds of a year's gains for literacy.







Mozambique: The Ministry of Education launched a US\$40 million national ECCD programme reflecting our community preschool model. This programme is based on powerful evidence from the World Bank's evaluation of our approach, showing that our model is a cost-effective way to improve children's early learning. We will continue to help scale up this programme until the end of 2016.

Philippines: Only one third of children in the Philippines have access to quality ECCD programmes. In 2013 we reached 50,361 parents and children aged 0–3 with First Read, a programme to build parents' knowledge, skills and resources to support their children's emerging literacy skills. We helped publish and distribute the first books for very young children in three minority indigenous languages. We also documented indigenous songs, stories and games and produced print and audio resources to support community play and story groups to extend children's learning.

Basic education: ensuring all children have access to a good quality education

Rwanda: Our Rwandan Children's Book Initiative facilitates the production of high-quality local language books to support children's reading and learning. Working with the Government of Rwanda, this innovative programme involves training publishers, writers and illustrators to produce Kinyarwanda children's books for use in early grade classrooms. Illustrator training was provided by world renowned illustrator Sophie Blackall, who illustrated over thirty books for children. This has already resulted in the publication of six new titles being distributed to over 100 schools. Alongside this, we trained 728 teachers and 87 school principals and education officials in using books effectively in the classroom.

Our extensive baselines in Rwanda demonstrated the need for a holistic approach to ensure that all children leave school able to read. To address this, we launched Advancing the Right to Read in early 2013. The programme involves working with the government, communities, the publishing industry, schools, children, parents and teachers to support children's literacy development from birth to primary school. It provides materials and training to boost early literacy skills in preschool and early grades of primary schools.

Guatemala: 126 schools have Save the Children-supported learning resource centres, benefiting 23,881 students in 2013. The centres are stocked with bilingual story books, games and creative educational materials. We also train primary school teachers in participatory teaching methods and using these materials effectively. This has significantly improved children's reading skills as well as their performance in other subjects.







Education in Emergencies: all children caught up in humanitarian crises have access to quality education

"We do not want our evacuation centres to be in our schools because it disrupts our space and classroom time." A child quoted in Save the Children's report See me, ask me, hear me: children's recommendations for recovery three months after Typhoon Haiyan

Alongside medicines, food and shelter, children affected by armed conflict and natural disasters tell us that they want to go back to school. Education gives children a chance to see friends, recover from difficult experiences and build hope for the future. That is why Save the Children continued to focus on providing education in emergencies in 2013.

Syria

In 2013 more than 3 million children affected by the conflict in Syria left school, and thousands of school-aged children were unable to enrol in class. A fifth of Syrian schools have been destroyed, damaged or used for other purposes. And school systems in neighbouring countries struggled to accommodate the increasing numbers of refugee children from Syria.

In 2013 we have helped establish 40 education spaces in Syria, reaching more than 17,000 children. We focused on providing safe learning environments, quality education and building the capacity of local communities and partners to meet children's educational needs. We also provided education in the wider region. In Lebanon, for example, we have organised Back to School campaigns to help integrate displaced Syrian children into education since the outset of the conflict.

We also run Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALP) that allow children who have missed more than two years of schooling to study at an appropriate level. Our ALP courses provide language courses in English and French to help Syrian children learn in the bilingual Lebanese education system. In Tripoli, we provided awareness-raising sessions for parents and teachers on the importance of schooling, positive (non-violent) discipline and ways of supporting children. To tackle rising tension between Syrian refugees and Lebanese families, we held eight festivals to bring Lebanese and Syrian people of all ages together.

"I like it very much here because I love to learn. Another good thing about going to school is that I make friends here. When I grow up, I want to become a doctor. Then I can treat the wounded in Syria." – Huszaifa (8)

Huszaifa, one of 350 Syrian refugee children aged 6–14 who are participating in our Accelerated Learning Programme in Bar Elias primary school, Lebanon.



Philippines

Typhoon Haiyan swept through the Philippines in November, killing over 6,000 people and displacing some 4 million. Thousands of schools were damaged or destroyed. In the aftermath, many schools were used as evacuation centres and teachers could not teach because they were busy seeking food, burying relatives and rebuilding their homes.

We responded immediately, collaborating with our shelter and child protection colleagues. We established teams in Tacloban, Estancia and Ormoc to assess priority education needs, lead on Education Cluster⁵ coordination and support early years and primary education activities. In the early days following the typhoon, we provided training for more than 300 teachers in giving psychosocial support to children, and supported and led clusters in Tacloban, Estancia and Manila. We also reopened seven schools, distributed materials to more than 20 schools and provided tarpaulins to safeguard materials and equipment in more than 20 damaged schools.

Education programmes in other emergencies

Ethiopia: We trained volunteer teachers from two refugee camps in Dollo Ado in the Somali region, including in psychosocial support, active learning, what makes a Quality Learning Environment, and developing teaching and learning materials from locally available resources. Later on, we supported the volunteer teachers in using practical tools to record learners' attendance, assessments and progress.

Kenya: We are supporting Alternative Basic Education programming in Dadaab refugee camps and the surrounding communities. This initiative focuses on reaching out-of-school children and youth, and enabling them to enrol in some form of education. To date, the project has renovated or constructed 17 centres providing non-formal education to around 2,700 children and youth, including early childhood education, basic literacy skills classes and vocational skills classes for vulnerable girls and young mothers. The project is also building the capacity of local teachers, school management boards and education officials to ensure ongoing education improvements.

Nicaragua: Our Education in Conflict-Affected Areas project has been a great success in the north west region of Nicaragua. By strengthening psychosocial support, teaching methods and parental involvement, retention rates increased from 87% to 91%. We got 406 out-of-school children into education, in close collaboration with local education and child protection officials. Children's reading skills have also improved as a result of psychosocial support, participatory teaching methods and reading clubs, among other initiatives.

Occupied Palestinian territories (oPt): We supported the Education Cluster to coordinate education programming across agencies and with national authorities. As part of this coordination, we and our partners developed minimum standards for education responses based on the INEE minimum standards for education in emergencies. The standards were developed through several trainings and workshops across West Bank and Gaza.

⁵ The Education Cluster brings together all the agencies supporting education in the emergency to improve coordination, reduce duplication and increase impact for children.

"I felt worried when I discovered that my school things were wet and damaged. My books are still wet but I plan to dry them outside, so when I go back to school I'll have books to use. I want to go to school to learn and graduate so I can help my family. I want to become a teacher." – Anna Mae (11)



Anna Mae has 10 siblings. Her house was destroyed by the typhoon and her school items were damaged.

Removing other barriers to education

To provide children with a better chance of getting a decent education and learning the skills they need to thrive, Save the Children supports ECCD and health and nutrition programmes across the world. We also run youth training and empowerment programmes, particularly aimed at vulnerable young people, to help them become active social and political citizens.

Empowering vulnerable youth through education and training

Bangladesh: Our Education for Youth Empowerment (EYE) programme continued to support thousands of youth through non-formal education, life skills teaching and vocational training. We have helped young participants into apprenticeships, jobs and self-employment. After learning how to advocate for their rights through the programme, young people have worked with civil society organisations to improve local living conditions and engaged with the Ministry of Labour and Employment to promote child rights.

Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi and Uganda: Youth in Action is one of our largest programmes for youth and draws on methodologies from other proven Save the Children education and livelihoods programmes, covering literacy, numeracy and building adolescent life and work skills. In 2013, we developed a curriculum that draws on Literacy Boost methodologies and integrates financial literacy, social assets and life skills to prepare 12 – 18 year olds to re-join education or improve their potential in the market. The Youth in Action regional technical team trained local and partner staff and youth workers to roll out the approach. Between 2012 and 2017, we expect that 44,700 young people will benefit from this programme. In 2013, nearly 1,200 young people started the learning cycle. The youth are living in rural areas and are unemployed or employed in low wage agricultural work. The programme, which includes a significant M&E and research component, aims to give them the skills and competencies they need to get better jobs.

Mexico: We supported a federal government, United Nations Program for Development (UNDP) and United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF) programme to help 65,648 high school students make responsible decisions. Topics covered include healthy living, self-esteem, sex education and how to handle difficult issues such as violence and substance abuse. The programme promotes the active participation of teachers, school principals, parents, civil society and government authorities as well as young people.

Uganda: We have designed integrated youth programmes combining economic, social and political empowerment. Based on individual needs assessments, vulnerable rural youth received quality non-formal education – learning about financial literacy, occupational hazards and their rights and how to access them. We helped get young people into work or set up their own business, with support from small business loans and savings groups. We also enabled young people to take part in discussions on local authority budget allocations to influence decisions affecting their lives.







Addressing health and nutrition needs that keep children out of school

Around the world, many children are too sick to attend school or too hungry to learn. Save the Children works to tackle these barriers to learning, as part of our education programming and our global health and nutrition work.

Mali and Malawi: In 2013 malaria control was added to School Health and Nutrition programming. In our target areas, 80% of school children in Mali and 65% of pupils in Malawi were infected with malaria. In Mali, we provided a single treatment that cleared local school children of malaria and reduced the prevalence of anaemia by a third. As well as improving the children's health, this boosted their ability to pay attention in class, with the positive effects lasting the entire school year.

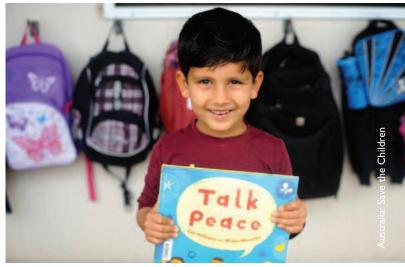
Ensuring inclusive education

One challenge in ensuring that all children receive a quality education is that some children find it harder to enrol in school, stay in school or participate fully in lessons. This is a particular issue for girls in some countries, children from minority ethnic communities, children from families affected by HIV/AIDS and children with disabilities. That is why some Save the Children education programmes prioritise these groups.

Australia: Our School Attendance Program involves parents, schools, communities and a range of local service providers to benefit primary and middle school-aged children in the south-west township of Ceduna and surrounding Aboriginal communities. Throughout 2013 we provided intensive mentoring and support for 26 Aboriginal children, increasing their school attendance by 51% over the year. To encourage school attendance, we also provided breakfast and snacks for 155 children at four schools.

Cuba: We have been working closely with the Ministry of Education to strengthen the quality of primary education and improve learning conditions, benefiting 29,870 children aged 5–12 in 2013. We trained 1,348 teachers on new topics including inclusive education, child protection and gender and sexual education. Alongside this, we renovated and equipped 94 primary schools.







India: Our Education for All project in Bihar is improving education for particularly marginalised children in two districts, in partnership with government departments and two implementing organisations. Covering 100 Anganwadi (health centres that provide non-formal basic education) and 100 schools for children aged 3–14, we have built the capacity of staff, prepared school development plans and created teachers' groups to share best practice. Our pre- and post-project assessment indicated increased learning levels in Hindi and maths among children, as well as higher attendance and fewer children dropping out of class.

Kosovo: We significantly increased the number of children with disabilities enjoying a quality education in mainstream kindergartens and primary schools. We supported 149 children with disabilities to integrate into schools and trained more than 550 teachers in inclusive teaching methods. The success of introducing assistant teachers to support children with disabilities means that local authorities have decided to fund their salaries. School staff, children and families developed plans to improve school inclusiveness, helping 15,193 children to benefit form a more inclusive learning environment.

Numeracy Boost - expanding our successful approach

Building on the success of our Literacy Boost approach, Save the Children has started using a similar approach to improve children's numeracy skills and learning outcomes.

Bangladesh and Malawi: We piloted Numeracy Boost in Malawi and Bangladesh in 2012–2013 and will implement it in Ethiopia, Liberia and Egypt in 2014. The programme is a research-based toolkit for teachers, children and the entire community that focuses on giving children the basic maths skills they need for daily life. Through games, activities, group work and discussion, children in Numeracy Boost schools learn foundational maths topics such as counting, addition, subtraction and measurement. We train teachers in new and more flexible ways to engage children in maths, and use community activities to reinforce the idea that maths is all around us and not just a subject taught in school.







Driving global and national policy change for education

Alongside Save the Children's education programming, our global advocacy work focuses on ensuring that all children enjoy their right to learn, particularly the most marginalised children and those living in areas affected by humanitarian emergencies. We work in partnership with others at local, national and international levels to voice children's concerns and use our expertise to bring about changes in education policy, practice and investment.

Attacks on Education: The Impact of Conflict and Grave Violations on

Children's Futures. We launched this report in July 2013, coinciding with Malala Yousafzai's 16th birthday and her address to the UN General Assembly. Our report calls on world leaders to safeguard education in conflict zones by criminalising attacks on education institutions and prohibiting armed groups from using schools. It also presses governments and international agencies to increase funding for education to a minimum of 4% of global humanitarian funding. The report and event attracted global media attention and the report is quoted in a number of policy reports on humanitarian funding and education in emergencies, demonstrating that our message is being heard and taken seriously.

"One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world. Education is the only solution. Education first."

Malala Yousafzai, leading the first youth takeover of the UN in New York.

Ending the Hidden Exclusion: Learning and Equity in Education

Post-2015. 250 million children, including 130 million who are in school, are still not learning basic numeracy or literacy, limiting their future prospects. This 'hidden exclusion' from education disproportionately affects the poorest and most marginalised children, who are often most likely to be failed by poor-quality schooling. This report sets out an ambitious post-2015 global learning goal, with a strong focus on the world's most deprived children. It has already influenced other frameworks advocating for learning inequality to be addressed. For example, the High Level Panel Report, released in May 2013, was very closely aligned with our report's goal framework suggestions.

Education Cannot Wait: We co-convened a high-level meeting at the UN General Assembly to address the issue of 28 million children in conflict-affected countries being denied access to learning. In September, leaders from governments, international organisations and civil society came together in New York for the second Education Cannot Wait event – chaired by Gordon Brown, the UN Special Envoy for Global Education, to support the UN Secretary-General's Global Education First Initiative. Leaders made a united call to integrate emergency prevention, preparedness and recovery in education plans and national budgets, to prioritise education in emergencies and to protect children, teachers and education facilities from armed attacks.

Mr Gordon Brown, United Nations Special Envoy for Global Education: "We must turn from past policy responses to humanitarian crises where education has typically been underfunded. Today, we have the opportunity to take immediate action and demonstrate that we can not only prioritise but deliver on the promise of education for all – education without borders – providing hope and opportunity even in the most dire circumstances."



Our education expertise

Globally, Save the Children has more than 1,200 education and child development experts providing much-needed services for children and youth aged 0–24. The vast majority of our education staff work directly with children, parents, communities and national governments to ensure children's right to quality education. We believe in the importance of employing national staff to manage our programmes. As well as having excellent knowledge of the education sector, local staff have a deep understanding of local contexts and are best-placed to build local capacity to ensure the sustainability of our interventions. Our leading experts in specific educational fields such as literacy, early childhood education, education in emergencies and monitoring and evaluation develop our education strategy and programming.

Ensuring that our education experts are well-connected and able to benefit from each other's knowledge and expertise was a key focus for us in 2013. We conducted a number of regional learning meetings to bring staff together. Capitalising on the wealth of our staff knowledge to deliver better results for children will continue to be a priority in our education work.



Accountable for delivering results

Across Save the Children, we continually improve and refine our monitoring and evaluation systems. This allows us to better measure the effectiveness of our education programmes, ensure that children fully benefit from our programmes and demonstrate that money we receive from donors is used as efficiently as possible.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a key part of realizing Save the Children's theory of change and common values and strategies, inherent in the child rights programming framework. In 2013, SCI introduced the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) approach which aims to emphasise the collection and use of data to support decision making, accountability and continual improvement. It seeks to ensure programmes are monitored and evaluated. In addition, stakeholder opinions are sought, quality of activities assessed against minimum standards and findings shared with relevant stakeholders and explicitly fed back into programme decision making, incorporating accountability and learning.

In 2013, we completed a second round of global reporting on the quality of learning environments in most countries where we run basic or early childhood education programmes, reflecting our goal to improve children's access to education but also the quality of their education. This extensive exercise captured qualitative insights from students, teachers, parents and community members and quantitative data on school and classroom characteristics. The data will serve as a baseline against which we can measure progress in future years. It will also identify our strengths and weaknesses more clearly than ever before, enabling us to adapt our programmes to achieve the most for children.

- We assessed 1,258 of our early years education settings across 30 of our country programs: 43% achieved all of our stringent principles for quality education meeting young children's cognitive, linguistic, physical and psychosocial needs, keeping them physically safe and protected, supporting and promoting children's learning and encouraging parents involvement in improving early education.
- We assessed 1,689 of our formal and non-formal schools across 37 of our country programs: 31% of our schools assessed during 2013 achieved all of our stringent principles for quality education meeting children's emotional and psychological needs, keeping them physically safe, improving all learners' learning outcomes, encouraging children's active engagement in class and their parents' involvement in improving education.

Statistics are based on latest available figures from Save the Children programmes or recognised international sources. Monetary figures have been converted into US\$, using the exchange rate on 31 December 2013.

We use an agreed methodology to obtain data through our global annual reporting process. For this publication we used significant figures. This means rounded up or down to the nearest 10,100 or 1,000.

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