Title: School Health and Nutrition

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Author's Outline:

Education and health are inseparable. To learn effectively and benefit from the investments in education, children must be healthy, able to concentrate, and attend school regularly. Similarly, years of schooling are related to economic productivity and health status. Meaningful partnerships between the education, health and social sectors are essential for progress toward EFA's goals-and the development of social capital.

This paper examines activities that have taken place over the past decade to advance the field of school health and nutrition in support of EFA's goals. The 1990 World Declaration of EFA and its articles recognized the interrelationship of health and education stating, "...education can help ensure a safer, healthier, more prosperous and environmentally sound world..." and Article VI, "Learning does not take place in isolation. Societies must ensure that all learners receive the nutrition, health care, and general physical and emotional support they need in order to participate actively in and benefit from their education."

To do so, it is recognized that "new and revitalized partnerships at all levels will be necessary between education and social sectors and that suitable health policies will enhance learners' incentives and contributions to societal development."

Two important frameworks, developed in the last decade, will set the stage for the global review: Active Learning Capacity (Levinger) and the Health Promoting School (VMO Expert Committee). Active Learning Capacity examines the relationship between the qualities and characteristics of the child in the classroom -his/her capacity to actively take part in the learning process due, in part, to health and nutritional variables -and educational outcomes. The concept of the Health Promoting School examines all measures at a school's disposal policy environment, services, instruction, partnerships with parents and community -and how they can foster health and learning. How can schools use a variety of health-promoting measures to positively influence the active learning capacity of the individual young person and thereby influence educational outcomes?

Guided by these models, this paper will review briefly evidence that has emerged in the last decade about the effectiveness of selected health and nutrition interventions on health status and their relationship to learning. The focus will be on a package of basic, minimal interventions that should be available to schools everywhere. Policies and programs that affect teachers and administrators, in particular, as well as girls will be highlighted. Where available, estimated costs per pupil to implement specific strategies will be included. In the context of EFA's Declaration and 'Framework for Action' the paper will concentrate on documenting and assessing those activities and accomplishments that have resulted at all levels -international, national, regional, and local -since 1990. What new partnerships, major policies and programs have advanced school health and nutrition efforts? Sample tools that have been produced to guide and stimulate policy and program implementation will be included.

In particular, the paper will discuss where action and implementation fall short of declarations and policies and what is needed now for more schools worldwide to be able to address health and nutritional issues essential for learning. How can more action on the ground make a positive difference for teachers and students, especially those in very poor countries? What successes have taken place, what failures and how do the lessons learned since 1990 shape the agenda for
The audience for this paper is wide, including a broad range of people interested in partnerships for policies and program delivery to promote health through schools. The audience would include education planners and decision makers at national and international levels as well as senior and mid level representatives of ministries of health and education; non-governmental organizations; teachers' unions; donor agencies; and agencies of the United Nations. Parts of this paper will be relevant to local level programmers as they must often set priorities and support programs implemented in schools.

Chapter Outline

I. The Role of School Health and Nutrition in Learning and Education

Sets the stage for the important interrelationship between health status, ability to learn and educational outcomes. Argues why the partnerships between the education, health and social sectors are essential. Defines the field of school health and nutrition, major terms to be used, key players in the field and the relationship to EFA's goals and 'Framework for Action'. Poses key questions to be addressed in the paper and the challenges for the decade ahead.

II. Looking Back - Status of School Health and Nutrition in 1990

Reviews the state-of-the art of school health and nutrition in 1990. In particular, at the international level, what were the platforms of various international agencies, lending banks, foundations and governments with respect to school health and nutrition? What initiatives were launched in 1990 with what stated goals, and what progress has been made? How do these initiatives and their progress relate to the conceptual framework?

III. Conceptual Frameworks

Describes in detail the models of Active Learning Capacity, the Health Promoting School and a basic package of interventions and relates them to EFA's goals. Graphically presents these models for clear understanding of each and the relationships between them. Offers a way to analyze progress according to dimensions of each model. Where has the emphasis been with respect to policy and practice and why?

IV. Why Invest in School Health - What Evidence of Effectiveness?

One of the main achievements in the past decade has been the completion of new research and the synthesis of existing research findings about the effectiveness of various intervention strategies. Presents highlights of the major evidence that has been compiled in the past decade, how it has been disseminated and with what effects. Presents why and how this body of work needs to be disseminated further and embraced by the education community.

V. What Has Happened; Has it Been Successful?

Using EFA's 'Framework for Action', at the international and regional levels and using country examples, presents an analysis of developments in the field of school health and nutrition activities at the international level and in each EFA region. Based on interviews (including those with Regional Technical Advisory Groups), case studies, country data and published research, what has happened and what has been the impact? A review of major regional and international conferences and their contributions to the field will be included.
VI. What Have We Learned: What’s Worked Where? Why?

Considers and discusses where and why progress has been made. What factors have positively influenced and resulted in change? Where is the field stuck? What larger macro factors stand in the way? What can be done or should be considered to advance progress in this field going forward? Who are the key players? What roles might they play? What co-ordination of talent and resources is advantageous?

VII. Future Action: Where Do We Go From Here?

Proposes future actions that need to be taken, by whom, where and why to advance progress in the decade ahead, with emphasis on social and behavioural determinants of health that can be influenced by school health programs.

VIII. Sample Tools to Guide National and Local Action

International agencies and non-governmental organizations have developed a variety of tools to guide policy development and the selection and evaluation of intervention strategies. A brief review of sample tools and how they can be used to stimulate and support more action on the ground will be presented.