

**Save the Children's Education Work and Influence on the
UK's Department for International Development (DFID)
March 2010**

This paper sets out to capture and celebrate Save the Children's advocacy work in country programmes and head offices, as part of the *Rewrite the Future* campaign and our broader education work. It demonstrates Save the Children's influence on the UK's Department for International Development, as evidenced in their recently launched 2010-2015 Education Strategy. It also addresses the resulting changes for children living in conflict-affected fragile states, and what SC can and should do now.

Rewrite the Future: the background to SC UK's advocacy

In 2006, the International Save the Children Alliance launched its first campaign, *Rewrite the Future*, focused on education for children affected by conflict. The campaign started with high quality Alliance plans in 22 countries, contributing towards ambitious global objectives for increased access, improved quality, enhanced protection and better financing of education for children in conflict-affected fragile states. SC's Sep 2006 launch report¹ identified a set of recommendations for National Governments, and urged donors and international agencies to:

- ensure education is part of immediate humanitarian relief work
- ensure child protection through and within quality education
- ensure adequate financing of education in conflict and post-conflict countries

In April 2007, the campaign increased its focus on the financing of education, and published *Last in Line, Last in School: How donors are failing children in conflict-affected fragile states*² (CAFS). The analysis revealed a stark neglect of the financing for these countries, and Save the Children called on all donors to:

1. Increase overall long-term predictable aid for education.
2. Increase long-term predictable aid for education in CAFS
3. Make education a greater priority in CAFS
4. Include education as part of humanitarian policy and response

Save the Children UK: Case Study

In 2006, Save the Children UK developed a policy and advocacy brief specifically focused on the UK's Department for International Development, *DFID: Aid, Education and Conflict-affected Countries*³. Save the Children called on DFID to lead the way by ensuring that children in CAFS do not miss out on the chance to go to school by:

- 1. Increasing long-term predictable ODA for education in conflict-affected fragile states by the November 2007 EFA High-level group meetings.**
 - Ensure at least 50 per cent of new education commitments are for CAFS
 - Prioritise and increase aid to education in CAFS where DFID has significant aid programmes but minimal bilateral investment in education. These countries include DRC, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, and Sudan
 - Ensure funding is available for education in CAFS even where DFID does not have a presence by working with, and encouraging, other bilateral and multilateral donors
 - Work with others to ensure the FTI and other initiatives, such as the new commitments to 10 year education plans, are accessible to CAFS.

¹ http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/rtf_full_launch_report.pdf

² http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/last_in_line_long.pdf

³ http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/dfid_rtf_briefing.pdf

2. Including education within the first phase in all humanitarian responses funded by DFID by the November 2007 EFA High-level group meetings. All responses should aim to meet the INEE Minimum Standards.

- Announce and start immediate engagement and support to education in emergencies as well as protracted crises
- Increase the allocation of education aid in humanitarian crises to a minimum of 5 per cent of humanitarian assistance
- Ensure education is one of the priorities of the new Conflict and Humanitarian Fund, during the next funding cycle
- Include education in its humanitarian policy.

These have remained the advocacy objectives for Save the Children UK's advocacy work over the last four years, modified slightly with each year's analysis of aid data from OECD DAC and FTS, and in response to external events and opportunities. SC UK worked with and advocated to DFID (both directly and indirectly, both in the UK and in country programmes around the world) to move towards these objectives. The advocacy strategy focused on DFID's role and work at a global level (e.g. through FTI, GCE, EFA meetings), in the UK (through meetings and with the UK GCE coalition), and at a country level. The recent launch of the Education Strategy for DFID shows dramatic progress in each of these areas. Without doubt, Save the Children can claim some credit for this – as evidenced by the Strategy and statements by DFID personnel, in both formal and informal contexts.

Central to the success of SC UK's advocacy is the clear and consistent advocacy objectives, the sound analysis, the large and solid base of programming generating evidence and experience, and the sustained pressure through meetings and events (with Ministers, senior civil servants, the education team and the conflict, humanitarian and security team, in London and in countries), over four years.

SC UK's Advocacy:

1. A Solid Programme base

Rewrite the Future included programming in more than 20 countries, with SC UK particularly leading on the work in DRC, South Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, and South East Europe. SC UK was able, therefore, to speak authoritatively on the issues for children in these (and many other) countries, gather evidence and share policy analysis. Our ability to balance publications with global analysis as well as details of the specific realities for children was critical to our on-going advocacy.

2. Meeting with Ministers

At the launch of *Rewrite the Future* a meeting was held with Gareth Thomas (then Minister of State for International Development), SC UK's Director of Policy and Campaigns, and SC UK's Head of Education. SC UK also held a 'brown bag' lunch event at DFID with INEE, where the policy paper *DFID: Aid, Education and Conflict-affected Countries*⁴ was presented. SC updated the aid data through the annual *Last in Line* series and meetings were held with DFID senior level representatives.

3. Influencing the Treasury

Save the Children UK also made specific targeted efforts towards Gordon Brown as then-Chancellor of the Exchequer, which resulted in the April 2007 *Education beyond*

⁴ http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/dfid_rtf_briefing.pdf

Borders announcements⁵. We regularly used these commitments as the benchmark for measuring DFID's progress.

4. The May 2007 Brussels Conference

The SC Alliance worked collectively to increase the profile of CAFS in the 2007 'Keeping our Promises' Education Conference in Brussels⁶, in which DFID was a key player. Jasmine Whitbread attended the conference on behalf of the SC Alliance and made a key intervention on education for children in conflict-affected fragile states⁷.

5. The Global Education Cluster

Save the Children also became the Global Co-lead of the Education Cluster, formalised through an MoU with UNICEF in 2007⁸. The cluster has raised the profile of education in emergencies and as part of humanitarian reform – a reform for which DFID is a key advocate⁹. SC is the only NGO in the world to have a global cluster lead responsibility. Since 2007, 37 countries have established an Education Cluster – the majority of which are operational, although several have minimised activities as the crisis has entered more of a recovery phase. SC UK also developed *Education in Emergencies: A toolkit for starting and managing a programme*¹⁰ in March 2008, and we began to increasingly monitor DFID's country based work in response to each emergency (with particular attention to emergencies in Pakistan and Myanmar)

6. SC UK-DFID meetings in London

In May and June 2007, SC UK met with DFID to review the updated data from *Last in Line*, and consider the implications for DFID. In 2008, SC UK developed a joint paper with DFID to analyse DFID's financing, and met to review progress in September 2008. There were also frequent informal meetings and discussions on the issues.

7. The Fast Track Initiative (FTI)

SC UK represented the SC Alliance on the FTI and Fragile States task team, made presentations at the FTI Meetings in 2008 and 2009, and was a key informant of the 2009 external evaluation of the Fast Track Initiative. The Evaluation concludes with several key recommendations for change to better address the needs of CAFS – and these remain high priorities under Carol Bellamy's leadership.

8. The 2009 Photo Exhibition

SC UK held an exhibition in London of education in emergencies photographs from around the world, accompanied by a discussion session which included the recently appointed Head of DFID's Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department (CHASE), Phil Marker and SC UK's Director of Policy, David Mephram. The exhibition was designed to promote recognition of education in emergencies by DFID (and CHASE in particular) and others in the UK.

⁵ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Media-Room/Press-releases/2007-completed/Delivering-Education-Beyond-Borders/>

⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/development/services/events/promises-edu/index.htm>

⁷ <http://ec.europa.eu/development/services/events/promises-edu/pdf/Ms%20Jasmine%20Whitbeard,%20Save%20the%20Children.pdf>

⁸ <http://oneresponse.info/GlobalClusters/Education/Pages/default.aspx> and <http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Default.aspx?tabid=115>

⁹ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Media-Room/Speeches-and-articles/2008/Humanitarian-reform---Speech-by-Gareth-Thomas-UK-Minister-of-State-for-Development1/>

¹⁰ http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/54_5680.htm

9. The Global Monitoring Report (GMR)

SC UK input into the 2010 Global Monitoring Report¹¹ (GMR) on the theme of marginalisation, was commissioned to write a background paper and provided ongoing input to their increased analysis on CAFS and emergencies. SC is also working closely with the GMR team on the forthcoming 2011 Report on Conflict.

10. The Global Campaign for Education (GCE)

Save the Children is a member of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) both globally and in many countries around the world. In the UK, Save the Children's representation ensured the analysis and needs of CAFS were included in our advocacy towards DFID (reflected in both the *Final Countdown*¹² and *A Call for UK Action*¹³). SC's membership in the Global GCE coalition has also seen CAFS increasingly included in GCE's global advocacy messages (including the request for 50% of new aid), and fragile states are clearly located in the financing messages for the 2010 1GOAL campaign¹⁴

11. DFID's consultation on their Strategy

In 2009, Save the Children UK made a submission to DFID's consultation for their Education Strategy, clearly pointing to our main advocacy messages from *Rewrite the Future* and our broader education work.

12. The EFA Working Group and High Level Group Meetings

Each year SC UK has attended the EFA Working Group meetings in Paris, and in 2006 and 2010 SC UK attended the High Level Group Meeting, consistently raising the issue of CAFS. In the 2010 High Level Group Meeting, SC UK's Head of Education was part of a high level panel presentation on the education in emergency response in Haiti (the first time the topic has been on the agenda of EFA meetings).

The results: DFID's New Education Strategy

The DFID 5-year Education strategy and a range of supporting material is available at <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Global-Issues/How-we-fight-Poverty/Education/Education-Strategy/>

Conflict affected fragile states (CAFS)

An increase in money:

In 2006, DFID's allocation of education aid to CAFS was only an average 16%¹⁵ of its bilateral spend - the equivalent of \$91m or £60m at the time. In the 2010 Strategy, DFID has committed GBP £8.5 billion to education over 10 years finishing in 2015/16, with spend reaching £1bn by 2010/11 – with 57% of this being bilateral aid (about £570m a year). The strategy makes a clear commitment that 'around 50%' of this, approximately £280m, will go to education in CAFS. This has been a clear and consistent request from *Rewrite the Future*, based on the global analysis of needs, and it is a clear and significant increase since 2006. The Secretary of State for International Development Douglas Alexander emphasised the Strategy's focus on education in conflict-affected fragile states¹⁶

¹¹ <http://www.unesco.org/en/efareport>

¹² http://jnne.org/img/GCEdocuments/the_final_countdown.pdf

¹³ <http://resulttsuk.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/efa-a-call-for-uk-action-feb10.pdf>

¹⁴ <http://www.join1goal.org/en/about-1goal>

¹⁵ http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/dfid_rtf_briefing.pdf

¹⁶ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/mar/03/developing-world-education-budget-war-zones>

An increase in impact for children:

DFID's new strategy aims to support 5.5 million school-aged children each year through their bilateral aid. If half of their bilateral spending is in conflict-affected fragile states, DFID's work could reach more than two million children in one year. With their earlier spending on CAFS at only 16%, this would have been far fewer.

Similarly, DFID aims to support the training of 130,000 teachers per year for five years. If half of their spending is in CAFS, DFID's support to teacher training should include tens of thousands more teachers in CAFS than would have been the case in 2006 with DFID's previous investments, and before *Rewrite the Future's* advocacy.

Flexible support:

SC's messaging on the need for flexible demand and supply side support for CAFS is also reflected clearly, with emphasis on delivering frontline services rapidly and via non-state actors if necessary, at the same time as building government capacity (page 23). There is also commitment for DFID education advisors to work in CAFS (page 43), which is not currently the case. DFID's strategy also references the need for innovative approaches to bringing over age children into education, especially in CAFS (page 38).

Emergencies:

DFID's education team previously remained relatively removed from education in rapid on-set emergencies, deferring instead to DFID's Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department (CHASE) as the leaders and decision makers in London, and holding the links with country programmes during an emergency. DFID's 2010 Education strategy, however, makes a clear statement that 'DFID will ensure that short term emergency responses to education protect longer term prospects of rebuilding of education systems and do not fragment provision or deepen social inequalities' (page 23). Furthermore, in DFID's outline of the breakdown of the 2010 education budget allocations (page 44), there is a 5% contingency fund of £55m identified, with a reference that this contingency fund is for disasters and emergencies. This could be quite significant support for education for children caught up in emergencies.

The education cluster:

DFID reiterated their annual fund of £4m for capacity building of UNICEF (for its leadership of four clusters) (page 23) – therefore there was no stated new commitment to the education cluster.

Influencing on DFID from our broader education work

Save the Children UK has also grown expertise (in both programming and in our analysis and advocacy) on inclusive education, quality of education and, specifically, the use of language in schools. These areas were also core areas of our input to DFID's consultation on their Education Strategy.

Key publications included *Making Schools Inclusive: How change can happen*¹⁷ in May 2008 (a documentation of SC's experience from 13 countries) and a Policy Brief on *Inclusive education*¹⁸ in March 2009. On the quality of education, SC UK developed a policy brief with the UK Global Campaign for Education and a publication¹⁹ in partnership with IDS, and undertook a major qualitative evaluation of

¹⁷ <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/making-schools-inclusive.pdf>

¹⁸ http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/Inclusive_education_policy_brief_30Mar09.pdf

¹⁹ <http://www.ids.ac.uk/index.cfm?objectid=5596307E-C162-AD20-3B48D7B34A7E5048>

Rewrite the Future's work to improve the quality of education in four countries. On language specifically SC produced *Steps Towards Learning: A guide to overcoming language barriers in children's education*²⁰ in April 2009 and *Language and Education: The missing link*²¹ in November 2009. Each of these publications was actively shared with DFID and with country programmes, SC UK hosted a GCE seminar on quality with DFID in London and the topics were part of SC UK's submission to the DFID consultation.

The results: DFID's New Education Strategy

Language of school: SC UK's input to DFID's education strategy consultation called on DFID to recognise evidence that language is a key factor in educational exclusion and poor achievement. DFID's strategy now represents a much clearer public statement on language of instruction (page 33) than DFID has previously been willing to make. DFID used the GMR list of key factors affecting exclusion, which also included language and in to which SC has inputted. Within its focus on literacy, DFID cites language of instruction that is not a child's home language as a key factor in delaying children's learning (page 33). DFID states that it will work with the FTI on these challenges to achievement and equity (page 48). DFID also emphasises its focus on children in rural areas (page 28), which is where most of those badly affected by language are likely to be.

Quality: DFID's focus remains on cognitive learning outcomes, with a view to enhancing economic growth, social development and peacebuilding (page 28), while SC had called for a broader conception of quality to address child rights, protection and holistic learning. Learning assessments are also going to be a major tool for DFID to engage on quality (page 32).

Inclusive education: DFID states it will work to strengthen such strategies if they already exist, support the FTI (page 48) in its initiative on marginalised groups and issue a toolkit on inclusive education. However there is almost no recognition of the need for clear inclusive education strategies at national level, which is disappointing.

ECCD: DFID's main focus is on nutrition to enhance cognitive development (page 29), influenced quite significantly by Young Lives research.

Research: DFID's emphasis is on supporting research institutions in developing countries and higher education institutions in the UK. It is likely that DFID's substantial support of the three big education research consortia²² is set to continue.

Where can and will Save the Children do now?

Conflict-affected fragile states:

SC UK will inform all SC Country Directors about DFID's increased commitment to education in conflict-affected fragile states. First and foremost this offers an opportunity for Government partners to access this resourcing, directly from DFID or through the FTI – and thereby increase their capacity to deliver education services. It also offers an opportunity for SC programmes to increase the scale of their current work, in partnership with local education authorities, through increased funding for immediate services in challenging contexts. While DFID state that UNICEF is

²⁰ http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/Steps_Towards_Learning_LR.pdf

²¹ http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/Language_Education_the_Missing_Link.pdf

²² University of Sussex/CREATE on access, University of Bristol/EdQual on Quality, and University of Cambridge/RECOUP on Education outcomes and poverty.

expected to lead on education in CAFS, there is reference to NGOs and other providers being directly funded to provide services as well.

Emergencies:

DFID are clear that the decision on whether or not to fund an education emergency response remains with DFID's country teams, based on needs/events in country. CHASE remains very reserved on the value of education in emergencies, although the Education Strategy has now clearly made positive statements. SC needs to follow up and clarify how DFID country teams would access the £55m contingency fund, if they needed to, whether this is new or if DFID's education team has always had a contingency fund, and whether this is in partnership with CHASE. In 2008, in a meeting between SC UK and DFID, CHASE committed to developing 'country level guidelines' on education in emergencies, yet these have not appeared. SC will request in 2010 a meeting to re-engage on education in emergencies.

Cluster:

DFID remain committed to funding only UNICEF's co-lead of the education cluster, despite their continued public statements of support for SC's co-leadership (and their commitment to UN-non UN partnerships as part of humanitarian reform). SC's co-leadership is however unsustainable for SC in the absence of any donor funding. SC should make the clear case for DFID support to the education cluster, via SC, as part of the 2011 PPA process.

Language:

SC will continue to push for tangible action and funding from DFID on language of instruction, in order to deliver on their literacy and numeracy targets. There are several potential opportunities on language given DFID's commitment to promote quality, equitable learning via the World Bank, EC and FTI, all of which have relatively good positions on language.

ECCD:

SC will follow up on DFID's interest in ECCD, and specifically their mention of Save the Children as one of DFID's key partners in providing ECCD services (page 30 states 'Globally we also assist ECCD through core support to UNICEF and through international NGOs such as Save the Children').

Research:

SC UK's Education Team has a clear focus this year on developing partnerships for research, with a particular focus on conflict-affected fragile states. We will accelerate our discussions with existing and potential consortium.

Country Programmes:

Programme teams could get in touch with DFID in country to follow up on the strategy. In particular, Country Directors could ask DFID about their plans for supporting education in emergencies, given that DFID has now formally recognised the value of education in emergencies and signalled that DFID country offices have the authority to decide the level of support that DFID will provide. Country Directors could also approach DFID in country and find out more about how DFID will take forward concerns about language of instruction referenced in the strategy, if relevant to the programmes' work, and how DFID will take forward work on quality, particularly literacy and numeracy.

SC UK Policy Team: SC UK will continue to play a lead role in monitoring DFID's commitments, and hold DFID to account to deliver on the promises in their strategy, particularly for children in conflict-affected fragile states.