Educate A Child

Celebrating 10 Million

Partners' Meeting

Report

28 April 2018
New York, USA

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I. Executive Summary

The 4th Educate A Child (EAC) Partners' Meeting, held in New York on 28 April 2018, was part of celebration related to its collective achievement to enrol more than 10 million out of school children (OOSC) worldwide. This event brought together current and former EAC partners to not only mark this historic moment, but to actively network, engage, share ideas and lessons learned through an expansive, structured meeting linked to three important themes:

1. A Promise Kept: Celebrating our Collective Achievement to Enrol 10 Million OOSC;
2. Sharing Noteworthy Experiences (Approaches, Best Practices, Stories) on Impact; and
3. The Journey Continues: Conversations on Future Strategies.

It is impossible to capture the richness and depth of ideas emanating from an ambitious, devoted and diverse partnership. However, it is possible to summarise some key points. The meeting was crucial because it:

- Allowed EAC and its partners to pause and consider their massive, collective undertaking and recognise their contribution to addressing the global phenomenon of OOSC;
- Validated many of the principles underpinning EAC through the reflections of the implementing partners;
- Provided an opportunity to better understand how change can occur on a global scale;
- Underscored key barriers that are common across continents and partners, such as discrimination, poverty, conflict and a lack of infrastructure;
- Offered hope for progress on the data, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) challenges faced by all who work to increase education access to OOSC;
- Challenged the notions that resources for education are scarce and brought attention to the need to identify a greater range of resources in support of the most marginalised children;
- Served to ground EAC's work across the spectrum of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and
- Reinforced EAA/EAC thinking with regard to the importance of building on this experience to work more closely with government structures.

Equally important, however, is the recognition that the experience and expertise that has been marshalled must not be lost. Rather, it must be captured, harnessed and shared, so that all children can access quality primary education.

> *EAC's mandate is to influence the enrolment and retention of at least 10 million children who are out of primary education worldwide. EAC focusses on the most marginalised children with a special emphasis on children in poverty; those facing social or cultural barriers to education; and children burdened by crisis and conflict. Through partnership and an orientation towards scale, innovation and sustainability, EAC contributes to creating a world where every child can realise her/his right to quality education.*

Introduction – Why Hold a Partners' Meeting?

The 10 million milestone would not have been possible without the contributions, hard work, determination, and commitment of the many partners who brought their expertise, knowledge and experience to bear in finding and enrolling OOSC. EAC and its partners share a vision of a world where

all children have the opportunity to access a quality primary education. We pursue this global endeavour by supporting and expanding direct interventions that target the barriers impeding the path to education for OOSC.

The gala event on 27 April celebrated the 10.4 million commitments secured to help individual children realise their right to education. On the following day, we assembled our partnership network for a private meeting, so we could reflect on our efforts and rededicate ourselves to the cause of advocating for and supporting OOSC. The meeting was emceed by Derek J Langford. The agenda is included in Annex 1.

II. Opening Remarks

Mr Fahad Al Sulaiti, Education Above All CEO, and Dr Mary Joy Pigozzi, EAC Executive Director, welcomed participants in the Partners' Meeting. It was absolutely necessary to underscore for all the partners present (and the few who were unable to attend) their pivotal role in enabling EAC to reach this milestone and bring the situation of out of school primary-level children to the attention of the

world. Together, we achieved something epic; a feat that has never been attained before for OOSC. Mr Al Sulaiti trained his comments on the value of the partnership network and Dr Pigozzi elaborated on its nature, diversity and dynamism.

What was, in fact, emphasised was the value of being together at the fourth ever EAC partners' meeting. It is difficult in terms of time and resources to bring people together from across 50 countries

so they can meet face to face. One key outcome sought from the meeting, however, is that partners will have their commitment to OOSC revitalised.

Clearly, one day could not do justice to the wealth of experience, expertise and learning present in the room. Nevertheless, the time together was an opportunity to share and develop a deeper ethos of partnership that will extend beyond the meeting and the lifetime of the many projects currently at work to reach OOSC.

III. Looking Back

At its core, EAC is about catalysing change so that education can make a material difference in the lives of the most disadvantaged children. In just over five years' time, we have collaborated with a large and diverse cohort of partners, each with unique approaches, interesting achievements and stories, and a desire to make the world a more sustainable place for us all. Together, we are working to change at least 10.4 million futures.

Since 2012, EAC and its partners have been able to secure enrolment commitments, on average, of over one million per year. Analysis of a representative sample of EAC projects confirms that about nine out of every 10 OOSC enrolled through partner projects are actually retained in their education programme. Unfortunately, most of these data are not captured in conventional education management information systems (EMIS) because in-school data systems are seldom linked to OOSC or to the data sets of alternative providers.

However, identification and enrolment of OOSC are only part of our historic journey. Experience shows that the barriers that prevent children from accessing education are persistent; they do not go away when a child enrols in an education programme, but continue to either push or pull that child out of education. Therefore, in addition to addressing education quality issues, EAC and its partners treat the holistic needs of the child to help ensure that once enrolled, s/he is retained and learning.

The collective efforts have brought EAC to an incredible moment on our organisation's timeline. Through 71 projects with 42 partners in 50 countries, we are offering alternative futures to 10.4 million children. Each partner, though distinct from the others (whether a multi-lateral organisation, international or local NGO or foundation), is united by a common cause – to enable the most vulnerable OOSC to access primary education.

As we look back however, it is important to understand what, beyond our common cause, has brought about this significant milestone. Based on feedback from many of our partners, we believe our guiding principles form the bedrock of our success. Chief amongst which are:

- Believing quality education is a universal human right;
- Working to ensure education systems serve all children – not just those already in school;
- Bringing education to children and not necessarily children to school;
- Understanding that the child is not the problem – the access barrier is;
- Supporting a diversity of formal and non-formal approaches to reaching OOSC;
- Operating through partnership and collaboration to address a problem of this magnitude – no one organisation can do it alone;
- Respecting the expertise of our partners on the ground – they understand the barriers and have experience in delivering effective solutions;
- Identifying what works and then providing technical and financial resources to increase impact at scale;
- Responding to the needs and solutions identified, rather than prescribing whom to target and how best to reach them;
- Ensuring projects are embedded in government priorities and plans, as well as rooted in communities;
- Targeting areas where the need is the greatest with no pre-determined amounts of funding for specific countries or regions;
- Focussing on scale;
- De-emphasising competition and prioritising selectivity and inclusivity when identifying partners; and
- Employing a co-funding model to ensure shared commitment and leverage additional resources for OOSC.

Yet as we look ahead, we know that our work is far from finished. There are an estimated 63 million OOSC in the world right now – and that is just at the primary level. Obviously, our work is cut out for us. EAC will continue to support programmes for OOSC. We shall not set a major enrolment target in the immediate future, but expect to support approximately one million additional OOSC every year. EAC shall also, to a lesser extent, focus on some new areas, which are summarised later in this report.

IV. SHARING EXPERIENCES – CREATIVE STRATEGIES/SOLUTIONS (1/2)

4.1 Engagement in Support of OOSC: Communities, Governments and Private Sector to Bring and Keep Children in School – Michael Cacich, Moderator

It takes a whole world working together to "Educate A Child". The opening panel explored the partners' experience in engaging communities, governments and the private sector to ensure access, retention and quality.

Generally, it is taken for granted that communities and government should be involved in project development, implementation, resourcing and monitoring. A great deal of emphasis, however, was placed on involving the private sector or other non-traditional donors.

This session's objective was to give other partners a quick glimpse of what has been working well and introduce some effective and/or noteworthy interventions that may resonate with others.

The panellists included British Council/Pakistan – **Shazia Khawar**, Director Society, South Asia; Building Tomorrow/Uganda – **Kate Rodriquez**, Partnership Director; and Oando Foundation/Nigeria – **Adekanla Adegoke**, Head. Dennis Mutiso from Girl Child Network/Kenya was invited to the panel, but unable to attend due to visa issues. Despite this setback, Mutiso provided extensive notes on the topic, which the moderator shared during the session.

Session Highlights

Each panellist was given 2-3 minutes to respond to questions related to the themes of engaging communities, governments and the private sector in support of OOSC.

Community: Each partner identified resources within the communities in which they work and described how they engaged directly to be key agents of change, particularly with respect to ensuring that OOSC are identified, enrolled and retained. **Shazia Khawar** described how Mohalla Committees serve as the liaison between the government's education office, schools and communities and the role of ILMBASSADORs (Education Ambassadors) who actively recruit OOSC for school.

Kate Rodriquez spoke about the Building Tomorrow Fellows Programme, an intervention piloted with EAC support to recruit and train Ugandan college graduates to provide two years of capacity-building

training to head teachers and school management committees at newly constructed project schools. Fellows are also charged with identifying and enrolling OOSC, and ensuring they stay in school. Community Education Volunteers, also tasked with ensuring enrolment and retention of OOSC, have taken on an expanded role to include support to children in the classroom. Rodriguez also discussed the Fellows' social entrepreneurialism initiatives that are developed and implemented during the second year of their tenure. These initiatives address local barriers to education through social engagement and income-generating schemes, many of which have been so successful they have developed into NGOs.

On behalf of Girl Child Network (GCN), the panel moderator described how the organisation enters a community, immediately identifying community gate keepers – religious and community leaders – maps their areas of influence, collaborates to gain their support and works through them to mobilise communities. They also employ "community conversations" to challenge social norms and identify barriers to access and retention for OOSC and establish tracking committees as part of a "social contract" with communities.

GCN also identifies, trains and works with "positive social deviants", and "male champions". These may be individuals who, in spite of some cultural norms, have become important advocates for change in their communities. For instance, one such group consists of former female circumcisers.

Adegoke spoke to how Oando Foundation engages communities through community-based renovation, where funds for classroom rehabilitation are provided to school-based management committees to galvanise communities and promote accountability, while reducing costs.

Government: Rodriguez described what Building Tomorrow refers to as "public-private hybrid schools", which are funded by individuals and families, organisations, universities, U.S. businesses, community stakeholders and EAC support. As per the terms of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Building Tomorrow and the Government of Uganda, the Ministry of Education supplies teachers, school materials and furniture in an effort to sustain project interventions.

GCN works closely with the government at all levels. This partner is active in numerous national technical working groups (Special Needs Education Policy, School Health Policy), a member of the National Council for Children's Services, and serves in an advisory role to the National Menstrual Hygiene Coordination Committee. GCN has been the driving force in a partnership with the Ministry's Special Needs Education Directorate on a recently launched special education policy.

Private Sector: Building Tomorrow is collaborating with the Kennedy Foundation and Kyambogo and Makarere Universities to create a model of inclusion for children with learning disabilities. The organisation has also engaged "Junior Kennedy Fellows", primary-age children to act as champions for inclusive education in their schools.

Sports and other recreation activities have proven to be effective ways to attract and retain OOSC. The British Council/Pakistan has developed a sports programme, DOSTI, which is supported in part through private sector funding for sports equipment and teacher training.

GCN has an agreement with Proctor & Gamble, which provides sanitary towels to project schools. This partner has also worked with Kaysalt Company to provide salt to schools and cover the school fees for 20 girl students annually. GCN's outreach to Safaricom, a mobile phone service provider, has led to the construction of latrines and water tanks at selected schools.

4.2 Advocacy: Getting on the Agenda of a Community, the Nation and the World – Sabrina Hervey, Moderator

EAC, along with Aide et Action (AEA), CARE and UNESCO, explored the ways in which a successful

advocacy agenda for OOSC has been articulated and advanced; how the partnership has supported advocacy at various levels; and how to generate greater impact going forward. In brief presentations, each partner outlined their approach and strategies to advocate for change at local/community (AEA), national (CARE) and regional/international (UNESCO) levels. The panel also discussed collaboration and joint advocacy that leads to larger action for marginalised children.

The panellists included AEA/Cambodia – **Samphors Vorn**, Country Programme Director; CARE/Haiti – **Karl Paul**, Country Director; and UNESCO/Asia – **Shantha Retnasingam**, Chief of Section.

Session Highlights

Samphors Vorn presented the successful methodologies of the Cambodian Consortium for Out of School Children (CCOOSC) project, a 23-member consortium led by AEA advocating for greater participation in education and the right of OOSC to a primary education at the local level. The CCOOSC project collaborates to catalyse change and enrol OOSC. This consortium comprises a wide range of development partners, including international and local NGOs, researchers, international experts and local authorities to extend their reach.

- **Advocacy and research** take place through various means on this project. At the organisational level, each project consortium member disseminates knowledge and lessons learned vis-a-vis discussion platforms, thematic workshops and other interplay to promote best practices.
- **Equitable access** plays an important role in the enrolment of OOSC. The CCOOSC project ensures equitable access by providing suitable WASH facilities for children of both genders, so that girls in particular are not adversely impacted with regard to access and retention. Additionally, a new pilot strategy maintains that schools in high-risk areas for natural disasters have a system and emergency tool-kit in place to assure continuous education delivery. The project has initiated self-help and support groups to enhance the development/delivery of education messaging and stimulate discussions on access.

- **Ensuring quality and efficiency** are crucial when advocating for the enrolment of OOSC. This project provides teacher training rooted in child-centred pedagogy. In addition, interventions seek to sensitise teachers to the needs of diverse students and assists teachers them in engaging students in ways more appropriate to their backgrounds.
- **Capacity building** for quality improvement contributes greatly to advocacy—training, thematic meetings, parent support groups, etc.

CARE Haiti's Country Director, **Karl Paul** spoke to the work the EAC-joint project has carried out regarding advocacy for the education financing law in Haiti and its continued efforts to ensure that funding is properly allocated to education. CARE's approach was to create a social movement at the national level addressing the issue of OOSC by facilitating equitable access to quality education.

In Haiti, the National Education Fund (FNE) created in 2011 by the government and ratified in August 2012 by parliament, experienced a six-year implementation delay. Yet as a result of CARE's advocacy, the law was finally passed.

The advocacy strategy consisted of:

- Creating a collective for the vote of the FNE law by the Senate with 11 national and international NGOs in April 2015;
- Publishing a petition for the vote on the FNE law, which had 1,700 signatures;
- Convening four meetings with the Education Commission of the Senate on the text of the FNE Act;
- Holding a press conference with the President of the Senate Education Committee; and
- Organising a meeting between the UN Special Envoy on the Right to Education and the President of the Senate Education Commission.

Through its advocacy, CARE shone a spotlight on vulnerable children by way of analysis, meetings, media programming, studies and articles by education/community stakeholders and financial partners. This project mobilised the education community within civil society via the Education Committee of the Cadre de Liaison Inter-Organisation (CLIO), former ministers of education, technical ministry staff concentrating on participatory governance for the retention of OOSC. Project activities included:

- Creating the Municipal Commission of Education, which comprised 13 distinct committees seeking to strengthen school governance at the local level;
- Social mobilisation during the Global Action Week for Education 2015–2018;
- Work meetings with local authorities on the creation of Education Commissions; and
- Issuing a booklet on the Communities Management and Development Fund to facilitate education projects by local authorities.

UNESCO's **Shantha Retnasingam and Ichiro Miyazawa** addressed their organisation's strategies on regional/global advocacy and policy change within the context of the EAC partnership. EAC and UNESCO worked together to help create the space (which precipitated the formal endorsement of the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Education for OOSC and Youth) for additional political

consensus, planning and the implementation of interventions that will benefit the region's most disenfranchised children. The scope of the OOSC challenge is enormous and illustrates the importance of government and education stakeholders working in concert.

The ASEAN Declaration was developed in line with SDG4 – to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all – and articulates guiding principles with respect to inclusivity, equity, accessibility, continuity, quality, flexibility and sustainability. The declaration acknowledges that there can be no uniform approach to expanding the reach of an education system.

A video was shown featuring Miyazawa, which discussed the seven principles of the ASEAN Declaration and took the audience through the process of development and endorsement.

The declaration's seven fundamental principles are:

- **Equity:** Address all forms of exclusion and marginalisation, disparities and inequalities to access to education
- **Inclusivity:** Education is a human right for every child, including OOSC
- **Accessibility:** Access to education is a priority to ensure optimal benefits for all children
- **Continuity:** Continuous education which enables access, retention and completion of a full course of basic education needs to be guaranteed
- **Quality:** Quality is paramount and involves a variety of factors, including teacher, curriculum and child participation
- **Flexibility:** Lifelong learning and individual empowerment for disadvantaged children require flexible-learning strategies
- **Sustainability:** Access to education needs to be sustained, so that children are able to enjoy education in a continuum and as a cornerstone of human development

Since endorsement, UNESCO started engaging with regional partners to operationalise the declaration.

Sabrina Hervey asked the panel what they would consider the most essential for effective advocacy:

Panellists asserted:

- Beneficiary buy-in (UNESCO)
- Government commitment, community engagement (CARE)
- Empower the joint effort of stakeholders at all levels – empower policy for sub-national, national
- Build one voice (AEA)

V. Coffee Break Theme-Based Tables

The coffee break sought to promote network engagement vis-a-vis theme-based tables of interest. Providing partners a chance to informally explore a particular education-related issue and share their ideas and experiences. The themes covered education in emergency and conflict situations; creating access for mobile populations; models for achieving scale; alternative financing models; and creative uses of technology. As the session was informal and self-selecting, partner response varied by theme, though a high interest in the areas of education in emergencies, mobile populations and models for getting to scale was noted. There was seemingly less enthusiasm for the themes related to financing and volunteers, however. Below is a short description of the conversations held by partners.

Providing education in emergency and conflict situations

This theme was by far the most popular during the coffee break with great interest from various partners, including CARE, Rise International, Save the Children and UNICEF USA. Partners actively engaged on this issue and drew from their experiences in Angola, Cambodia, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Somalia, Syria and Thailand. Successful Education In Emergencies (EIE) strategies discussed ranged from how to set up effective systems within these contexts to working effectively with local governments. Flexible curricula, psychosocial services, teacher recruitment and training and community mobilisation were also taken up. The challenges of working in EIE situations were highlighted with respect to the impact on learning when children are faced with insecurity. Such situations encompass the incidence of poverty amongst IDP and refugee populations, where, as a result, children are obliged to work to support their family and there is often a lag between securing basic needs and the resumption of education protracts.

Creating access for mobile populations

UNICEF and buildOn discussed effective ways to reach mobile populations. The discussion revolved

around four inter-connected issues. The first, being able to provide education and programmes that are flexible and not time bound. This includes programming that is not necessarily tied to government curriculum like Alternative Education Programmes. These programmes are flexible in the sense that they are shorter, speedier and are non-formal. The second was to determine ways in which members of the community, including refugee families can serve as teachers. The recruitment of teachers who can follow these mobile communities often presents a serious challenge. The third addressed finding pathways to formal schooling and credentialing education that has been received elsewhere. This typically requires organisations to work closely with governments to create avenues that lead to the formal system. Some programmes provide low-cost boarding schools to these children. The fourth discussion point was on the provision of education and skills acquisition that are

relevant to lives and livelihoods, so communities see the value in sending these children to school. The group also discussed the need to provide children safe spaces for learning.

Models for achieving scale

A solid representative group of partners that included Aprendiz, CARE and HPPI engaged this theme. They drew from their experiences in programme scaling in Brazil, Haiti and India, respectively. The main issues discussed centred primarily on human resource constraints and working with government when attempting programme expansion into new areas. The recruitment and retention of teachers, as well as local operational staff were deemed significant challenges for scaling projects. The difficulty in securing the teaching staff necessary to manage new schools from governments and local communities in underserved regions was also noted. Partners also found staff turnover to be an issue when expanding into remote and/or insecure regions. Due to time limitations there was no opportunity to discuss and share potential solutions.

Alternative financing models

Though interest in this topic was suboptimal, partners, including Educate Girls and World Vision started brief conversations on the issues of education bonds and the value of public-private partnerships. A particular concern was the disconnect in values between corporations and NGOs.

Creative uses of technology

Partners discussed the use new applications (IOS & Android), which help teachers and students access learning and teaching materials. These applications are functional offline, so teachers and students do not have to worry about Internet access in that respect. AEA provides subsidies to teachers and students to minimise the cost of access.

VI. Sharing Experiences – Creative Strategies/Solutions (2/2)

Creative M&E Strategies: Identifying and Tracking OOSC – Noor Muhammad, Moderator

The children targeted by EAC partners are, by definition, amongst the most marginalised and hardest-to-reach. They are often "invisible" or "semi-invisible" to government systems and communities. EAC requires partners to establish clear OOSC identification, enrolment and tracking strategies, adapted to the context and systems in which the projects are implemented. This 30-minute session aimed to showcase some best practices in bringing "invisible OOSC" into view. In total, three partners delivered overviews on their strategies to effectively identify, enrol and track OOSC in data-management systems. The session was divided into two parts to permit a separate focus on OOSC identification and enrolment tracking.

The panellists included Aprendiz/Brazil – **Natacha Costa**, Executive Director; UNICEF/Kenya – **Daniel Baheta**, Chief of Education; and Plan International/Burkina Faso/Mali/Niger – **Hana Gunn**, Senior Programme Manager. Shahidul Islam from Dhaka Ahsania Mission/Bangladesh was invited to the panel, but unable to attend due to visa issues. Despite this setback, Islam provided a PowerPoint presentation on the topic, which is included in Annex 2.

Session Highlights

Sub-session 1: Identifying OOSC

Costa focussed on the approach, tools and the level of detail Aprendiz is able to collect from its data, as well as how this data is stored and managed. She asserted that Aprendiz's use of ICT includes mobile platforms like WhatsApp that can leverage official statistics on OOSC. By using mobile-based applications, the project greatly improved its ability to conduct active searches and mapping of OOSC, thereby reaching the hardest to reach. This significantly improved the project's efficiency and effectiveness.

Sub-session 2: Tracking enrolled students

Daniel Baheta and Hana Gunn presented respective strategies UNICEF Kenya and Plan International have employed to track OOSC, which concentrated on: who is involved in tracking; the frequency of

tracking; data systems for tracking; and the use of technology in tracking. Plan International has established a comprehensive system that has digitised the processes of mapping and monitoring with the potential to integrate EMIS. Besides timely data to support decision-making, Plan International suggested that ICT has made each child's education outcome easier to track. UNICEF Kenya, for its part, has pushed the boundaries with regard to tracking individual students by focussing on data and information management systems. The project has rolled out a Digital Attendance Application (DAA), which is a breakthrough in attendance record keeping.

General remarks

Investing in ICT has facilitated the circumvention of key identification and tracking challenges. That aside, there is always need to invest in adequate human resource capacity. However, hiring additional human resources amid limited finances can be daunting. Some partners have leveraged the use of community volunteers to bridge the gap. Digital attendance record keeping has also been a major step in the effort to track enrolled OOSC. Lastly, internet connectivity and digital literacy amongst teachers are still formidable barriers for OOSC identification and tracking, while interestingly at the same time they are sources of progress with respect to EMIS implementation.

VII. Moving Forward Based on Lessons Learned

Leveraging Resources to Create a Multiplier Effect: Financial, Technical and Experiential – Said Yasin, Moderator

The demand to address the needs of OOSC population worldwide is beyond the capacity of any one organisation or country for that matter. To reach its ambitious target of providing over 10 million OOSC opportunities to access primary-level education, EAC devised a model to leverage resources inside and outside the target communities. Specifically, EAC instituted an approach to identify

additional funding sources to invest in scalable projects to amplify the impact our investment makes. From the start, EAC knew that the need and the children were there, and that innovative programmes and scaling models existed, but there was an imperative for a focussed approach to leverage additional resources. EAC also understood that implementing partners possess a unique understanding and insight, and deeper ties to the communities in which they work.

EAC asked the Bharti Foundation, Pact and World Vision to share their experiences on leveraging resources in India, Ethiopia and Uganda, respectively. The three partner projects have a combined enrolment target of over 100,000 OOSC (48,200 in India; 15,120 in Ethiopia; and 40,000 in Uganda). The purpose of the panel was to highlight the different strategies EAC partners employ to tap the myriad financial, technical and experiential resources available at the community level. This often involves the formation of local partnerships and networks over time.

These projects utilised diverse strategies and interventions to enrol OOSC. For instance, with a focus on quality and teacher training, the Bharti Foundation scaled up its Learning Centres initiative in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan States, as well as in remote regions of India that have high concentrations of OOSC.

In Ethiopia, Pact utilised flexible and innovative models to expand opportunities to help the hardest-to-reach children access and complete a primary education across six regions in the country. Working closely with its local implementing partners and drawing on well-established relationships with community stakeholders, including the ministry of education (MOE), district representatives and local institutions, Pact provided learning/teaching materials, set up school improvement plans and built the capacity of school management committees.

In Uganda, World Vision addresses barriers to education in Karamoja's Abim, Kotido and Kaabong districts through a close alignment with the government's priorities and official policy. A fundamental assumption that undergirds the project is that only through the buy-in and the support of community structures and systems, can their intervention succeed. As such, the project conducts community-awareness raising and district-level enrolment campaigns, constructs classroom and WASH facilities, in addition to providing life skills and teacher training.

The panellists included Bharti Foundation/India – **Vijay Chadda**, CEO; Pact/Ethiopia – **Gloria Sangiwa**, Vice President, Integrated Programme Advancement; and World Vision/Uganda – **Jihwan Jeon**, Project Manager of Addressing Barriers to Enolment and Retention in Karamoja (ABER-K).

Session Highlights

Approaches and Strategies to Leverage Community Resources

These EAC partners adopted different strategies to tap the resources available in target communities. The approaches are characterised by intentionality and the recognition that from the outset, a concerted effort to engage and build on existing local and national structures is necessary. Furthermore, where these structures are non-existent, they build meaningful networks.

To leverage financial resources, partners report that they:

- View EAC as "catalytic" to raising resources. They target both local and national donors and leverage resources utilising marketing strategies with the support of their national and headquarter offices;
- Focus on tangible activities, such as proposals to dig boreholes and WASH facilities – the more focussed the support request is, the higher the probability of receiving funds; and
- Find that creating proposals that are visually appealing with photographs is effective.

To engage parents, communities and governments, partners report that they:

- Identify key community stakeholder, including village chiefs and local elders with whom to engage and develop programmes. These stakeholders can be critical to community acceptance, ownership, sustainability and resource mobilisation;
- Often engage and consult community leaders and parents in site selection, identification of OOSC and community mobilisation. EAC partners rely heavily on active community participation without which identification, enrolment and retention of children will prove difficult; and
- Build district, state and national government partnerships to construct schools and classrooms, recruit and train teachers, supervise and monitor schools, and provide materials once EAC support is secured. Governments are often willing to pay salaries and provide furniture when schools and learning centres are established.

The common chord amongst EAC partners' experiences is that they view EAC investment as a trigger to attract additional resources, be they from within or without the community at large.

VIII. Speed Chat

Meeting and Sharing – Michael Cacich and Salam Yacoub, Moderators

This session was a fast-paced, energetic exchange that provided an opportunity for partners to meet each other and share project experiences. In pairs, partners had two minutes (one minute per person) to share their name, their EAC-joint project and a response to the prompts (below). Each partner recorded this information from the other on an index card. After two minutes, each partner found another partner to repeat the exchange. A questionnaire was sent to partners in advance of the meeting, so that they would come prepared with two or more responses to share on the topics/themes below.

- Key project achievement
- **Most creative idea that came out of the project**
- Biggest challenge faced implementing the project

- **Unintended/surprising outcomes**
- Most effective way to engage communities
- Most effective way to engage government
- Best way to leverage additional resources
- **What have I learned from children?**
- **What have I learned about partnerships?**

During the first part of "Speed Chat", four of these prompts (in bold text above) were used for two rounds. An "ice breaker" question was also asked:

If you could have dinner with anyone in the world – past or present – who would that be and what would you like most to show her/him about your EAC project?

In plenary, partners volunteered to share, the most interesting responses they heard. At the end of the session, EAC moderators presented some highlights, i.e., common themes or noteworthy responses from the partner surveys.

Session Highlights

Partners discussed the most interesting responses they had heard during the "Speed Chat" and shared lessons/experiences/ideas that they would like to take forward. While the list of project activities, which inspired other partners is too extensive to enumerate here, a small sample appears below.

- Success of Oando Foundation/Nigeria in soliciting the MOE to replicate effective project practices, including "walk-in" centres and teacher training
- The stabilising effect of Self-Learning Materials developed by UNICEF USA/Syria
- Use of Boat Schools by BRAC/Bangladesh to overcome regular flooding
- Village-based gender champions (instead of remote sensitisation or support) by Educate Girls/India
- Training volunteers to increase enrolment and retention of OOSC – Community Education Volunteers with Building Tomorrow/Uganda and ILMBASSADORS with British Council/Pakistan
- Cultivating Village Savings and Loans Associations as entry points to sensitising parents on the value of education
- Using studio teachers to deliver education via technology to remote areas
- Involving members of parliament in community action groups, so they become champions of education in their local constituencies

The EAC moderators then shared a few notable mentions from the partner surveys. Common themes or interesting responses for all nine prompts are as follows.

For **key EAC-supported project achievements**, 16 of 21 projects mentioned OOSC enrolments, but only six mentioned retention. The **most creative ideas** focussed on community engagement; use of technology for data collection; and strategies to improve education quality. There were seven projects that cited access barriers, such as poverty, lack of teachers, inadequate learning space and/or cultural norms, as their **biggest challenges**. M&E, project success and resource mobilisation were also

considered by some partners as burdensome. **Unintended/surprising outcomes** achieved in projects came in the form of partnerships with other sectors outside of education; a partner's ability to reach scale; and the government replication of some project interventions.

Partners reported that the most **effective way to engage communities** was through traditional leaders and holding meetings in schools. Working with SMCs/PTAs and through children were also cited as effective engagement strategies. Partners maintained that **effective measures to engage governments** include signing MOUs, capacity-building initiatives, regular meetings and joint-project visits. Governments, communities, the private sector and co-funding models were all reported to be **the most effective way to leverage additional resources**. Partners also reported that sharing success stories and engaging local youth are potential avenues for leveraging new resources for education.

An overwhelming majority of partners responded that they had, in fact, learned that children can be their own advocates. Lastly, partners also **learned that true partnerships require** hard work, as well as ongoing attention and clarity of objectives.

IX. The Journey Continues (What's Next?)

9.1 What have we done well? What could make us even better? David Mumo and Oussama Eraky, Moderators

EAC used an online survey as a means to elicit anonymous feedback from partners. Our partners were asked to fill out a Survey Monkey questionnaire a week prior to the Partners' Meeting.

The questionnaire consisted of the five questions below, of which the first two were close-ended, while the last three were open-ended. In the open-ended prompts, participants could discuss the issues in their own words. From the partner responses, a word cloud was formulated that identified the most common word themes/schema. In total, we received 16 responses (from 40 questionnaires). The results are shown below:

Q1. In which geographic region was your OOSC project?

The distribution of the responses was Africa-52.1 per cent, Asia-38 per cent, the Middle East-14.1 per cent and Latin America and Caribbean-5.6 per cent. This is consistent with the distribution of the 71 projects over the years in which Africa has the highest number followed by Asia.

Q2. Barriers addressed by the project to enhance OOSC enrolment

The participants were free to choose multiple responses on the barriers. The top three barriers cited were:

- 93 per cent of the respondents stated – Poor Quality of Education
- 80 per cent of respondents stated – Poverty
- 73.3 per cent of respondents stated – Infrastructure

When looking at the geographic distribution of the projects, it is no wonder that the barriers cited above are similar to those affecting low-income countries.

Q3. Most effective strategies in the enrolment and retention of OOSC

The most effective strategies reported by partners were:

- Engagement with the community
- Alternative and flexible education delivery methods (ALP, NFE Qur'anic schools, e-learning)
- Working with the local government education officers
- Strengthening skills – teachers, SMCs/PTAs

Q4. Some of the things in the partnership that worked quite well

- EAC's support to partner M&E systems
- Site-monitoring visits provided clarity
- EAC feedback on semi-annual technical reports
- Responsiveness by the EAC team to various issues
- EAC-funding has enabled scale up of programmes

Q5. Areas that EAC could do better in its future partnerships, as regards its operations, technical support, M&E and communications

- EAC should support cross-learning, networking/learning opportunities and information sharing amongst partners
- Ensure quicker disbursement of payments to grantees
- Need to simplify the reporting processes
- Provide guidelines of programmatic & financial management apart from the grant agreement

9.2 EAC Strategic Plan – Sabrina Hervey, Presenter

The focus of the presentation was *10 Million, Now What?* The presentation centred on a few important questions:

- What will happen to the current projects?
- Will EAC support new projects to enrol more OOSC beyond the 10 Million?
- Will EAC expand into new focus areas beyond primary-level OOSC?
- What does it all mean?

What will happen to the current projects?

EAC will continue to support its project/partner commitments to help realise project goals, so that those 10.4 million OOSC will indeed access quality education.

Will EAC support new projects to enrol more OOSC beyond the 10 Million?

EAC will continue to support new projects to enrol OOSC. We will aim to reach one million additional OOSC per year. EAC will continue to consider education solutions that span the development sector.

Will EAC expand into new focus areas beyond primary-level OOSC?

EAC will move into two new areas, supporting children who are: i) in school, but are "at high or most at risk" of dropping out; and ii) transitioning to post-primary education programmes. The intellectual work, including definitions and criteria have been developed in relation to "at risk", as well as the selection framework for proposals. We will launch this on a targeted basis soon. Similar work for the transition to post-primary is in the initial stages.

What does it all mean?

In general, EAC will continue to advocate for and support the most marginalised children, so they may access quality primary education. We will expand to reach more OOSC. EAC will continue to require partner investment in projects. We will continue to focus on quality and retention while moving into two new areas—at risk and transition to post-primary. EAC will continue to advocate for and champion education access for the world's hardest-to-reach children. EAC will work to link education with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

9.3 "Quick Fire" – New Ways to Engage other Sectors – Said Yasin, Moderator

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (comprised of 17 distinct, development goals) reflects an integrated approach that emphasises deep interconnection across sectors and targets. In that regard, SDG4 is a catalyst to achieving other SDGs. When non-formal and second-chance learning programmes are available, new opportunities arise for individuals to become educated and acquire skills. EAC is focussed on and mandated to increase access to quality education to primary-level OOSC. Thus, EAC directly contributes to the realisation of SDG4; however, it is also necessary to consider spill over and interconnection with other SDGs.

The objective of this session was to determine how EAC projects support the whole child and positively impact multiple SDGs; identify how many EAC projects engage other SDGs; and compare the session results with reporting data that we receive from our partners. The critical question that was considered for this session was:

How could a holistic SDG approach contribute to more sustainable outcomes in EAC's investment in education?

The above question was given to partners by the emcee at the beginning of the day, which allowed partners the opportunity to prepare their feedback for this session. The session itself was interactive and involved a game where partners stuck small SDGs stickers on a SDG4 poster. Partners were asked "Quick Fire" questions (see below), to which they responded by providing their contributions to SDGs on distributed paper. Partners demonstrated their innovative work across sectors to address the multiple barriers to education.

Examples of Quick Fire Questions:

- What project interventions engage other sectors? For example:
  - Do you provide a feeding programme? How do you implement? Directly or through WFP?
  - Do you provide clean energy using solar panels in schools? Do you find this to be helpful to children's performance? Who is helping you to provide these services?

- Do you use sanitation-awareness campaigns that target parents to promote appropriate health and hygiene practices? Do you run this under health or education project monitoring?
- Investing in education is key to empowering girls and young women. How is your project supporting this?
- Does your project provide services to the local community near the schools (water well, low-cost water)?
- Do you have partnerships with parents?
- Mapping the SDGs may reveal areas of opportunity to and areas of weakness for education. Do we need multiple approaches and multiple actors? Or should we do education independently?
- What factors enable a project to contribute to multiple SDGs? Why?

Session Highlights

The following chart describes EAC partners' interventions with the other SDGs. EAC received written responses, though some of the partners preferred to participate by describing their engagement with other sectors through their projects verbally.
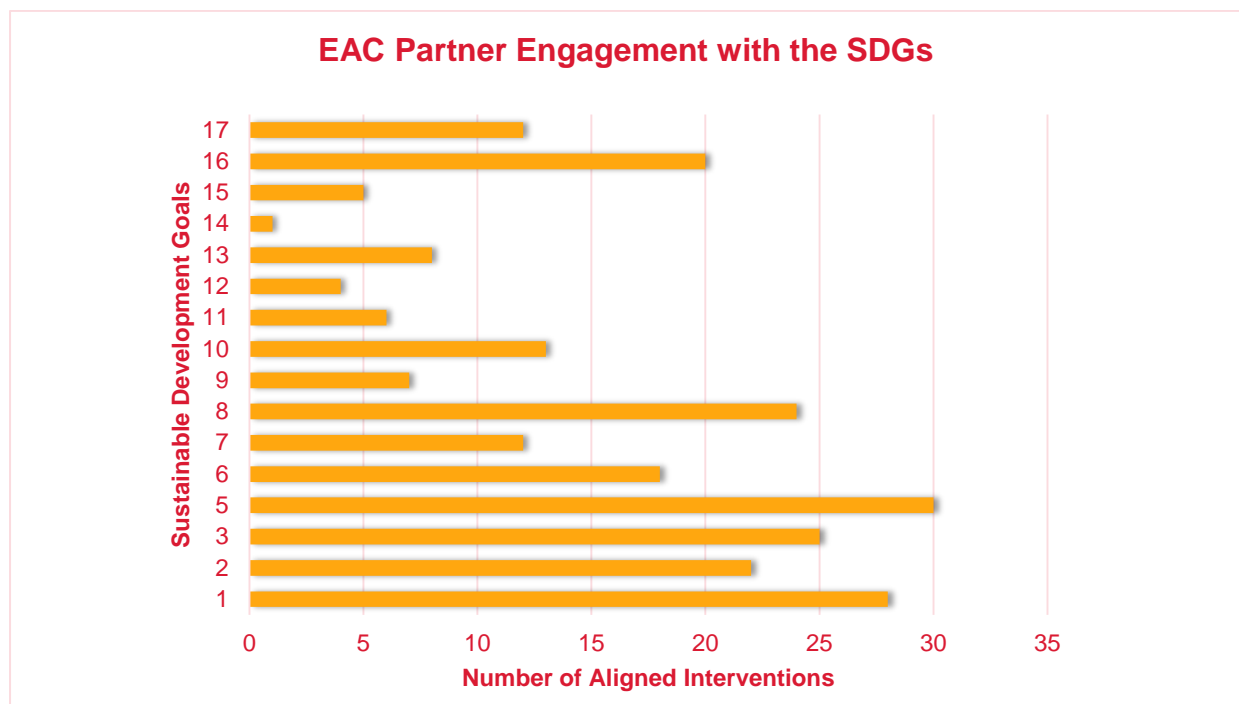
Chart Key

1: No Poverty	8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	13: Climate Action
2: Zero Hunger	9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure	14: Life Below Water
3: Good Health and Well-Being for People	10: Reducing Inequalities	15: Life on Land
5: Gender Equality	11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
6: Clean Water and Sanitation	12: Responsible Consumption and Production	17: Partnerships for the Goals
7: Affordable and Clean Energy		

Partner responses indicate that their EAC-supported interventions align closest with Gender Equality (SDG5) and No Poverty (SDG1). Good Health and Well-Being for People (SDG3) and Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG8) also recorded high rates of response. Several partners gave project examples with their responses. Examples included supporting households to send their children to school (SDG8) and integrating messages of peace into OOSC advocacy campaigns, training sessions and curriculums topics (SDG16). Based on the responses provided by partners, alignment with SDGs other than education (SDG4) appears to be dependent on the local context, needs and barriers to overcome for OOSC to receive an education.

X. Closing Remarks

Though EAC partners are a diverse group, they are bound together by shared principles and a vision for the world. As agents of change, we have a common cause which is to focus on accelerating action in support of OOSC's right to education. This partnership network also demonstrates an enormous generosity of spirit in terms of its commitment to vulnerable children and, in fact, many partners at the meeting exceeded their enrolment target.

As partners, our diversity is important, however. We are different with regard to the kinds of organisations we represent. We are committed to contextualising our responses to the needs of the children with whom we work and we have also demonstrated that we can be extremely flexible so as to meet our goals. Each project is unique.

In a relatively short period of time, EAC partners have had made a significant impact in several areas including:

- Increasing the knowledge base on OOSC and, through this, shining a spotlight on this deserving group;
- Giving "voice" to the most disadvantaged. Through our flexibility and desire to enable children to fulfil their right to a quality education, we have made it possible for others to hear the needs and aspirations of OOSC and to understand their potential, as individuals and contributors to better and more just societies;
- Enlarging the number of people and organisations who take the situation of OOSC seriously and recognise that it is quite possible to make a difference in terms of their education;
- Influencing governments in several ways. Some governments have taken greater "ownership" of OOSC, giving them a more prominent place in education planning and implementation and, in some cases, greater funding priority. EAC partners have also helped improve relationships between some governments and civil society organisations through a shared concern for OOSC; and

- Augmenting funding for OOSC – certainly through EAC's support and the tremendous amounts of co-funding that partners have leveraged. In a little over five years this amounts to more than US$1.8 billion. But, EAC and its partners are also pressing for additional support to OOSC via traditional and non-traditional funding sources.

Although we celebrate our achievement of securing commitments to educate over 10.4 million OOSC, we celebrate more than that, and bring attention to much more than access. Access and quality are intricately linked. They are two sides of the same coin. But, in EAC, we care about quality, too. The quality of the programme is incontrovertible criteria.

Quality education is multi-dimensional and as a group of professionals with experience in the multi-dimensional aspects of quality, we have a lot to offer as we move forward in support of SDG4. Quality embodies academic basics—reading, writing and arithmetic at the foundational levels, but it extends beyond mere basics. It has to reflect the international standards of general academic subjects and the expectations that nations have of their education systems—to contribute to cultivating future citizens who will be active and positive members of society. These expectations demand more of education systems. They demand the development of positive values, of 21st Century skills, of the ability to analyse and think critically, of a willingness to experiment and innovate, of knowledge of when and how to lead and when and how to follow, and of how to live harmoniously in diverse societies.

Our work, our rich variation of education programmes, demonstrates that we know how to "implement" this fuller vision of quality on the ground. We need to take this knowledge and apply it to the work that is currently being undertaken to measure quality in SDG4. If we do not do this, quality education will not be defined for those we represent, the most disadvantaged children. If we do not do this, we will be failing OOSC, as they access education programmes. We must be concerned about quality in education, broadly defined.

ANNEX I. Meeting Agenda

A Promise Kept:
Celebrating our Collective Achievement of Securing Commitments to Enrol 10 Million OOSC

Vision/Theme:

- A Promise Kept: Celebrating our Collective Achievement of Securing Commitments to Enrol 10 Million OOSC
- Sharing Noteworthy Experiences (Approaches, Best Practices, Stories on Impact)
- The Journey Continues: Conversation on Future Strategies

Content:

- Lessons Learned
- The Future/Strategy

Format:

- Introductions and Background
- Panels
- Interactive Sessions
- Reflections and Looking Forward

Programme

09:05 – 09:10	**Welcome**
09:10 – 09:15	**Opening Remarks**
09:15 – 09:20	**Short Video Timeline:** A Promise Kept
09:20 – 09:30	**Looking Back:** Celebrating our Collective Achievements
09:30 – 09:45	**Looking Back:** Celebrating our Partners and Partnership
09:45 – 10:45	**Sharing Experiences – Creative Strategies/Solutions (1/2)**

- Engagement in Support of OOSC
  Communities, Governments and Private Sector to Bring and Keep Children in School
- Advocacy
  Getting on the Agenda of a Community, the Nation and the World

10:45 – 11:15	Coffee Break – **Theme-Based Tables (optional)**

Flexible Programming:
- Providing education in emergency and conflict situations
- Creating access for mobile populations
- Models for achieving scale
- Alternative financing models
- Using volunteers to reach OOSC and mobilise communities
- Creative uses of technology

11:20 – 11:50	**Sharing Experiences – Creative Strategies/Solutions (2/2)**

Creative M&E Strategies to:
- Identify OOSC
- Track OOSC

11:55 – 12:50	**Moving Forward Based on Lessons learned**

Leveraging Resources to Create a Multiplier Effect:
- Financial
- Technical
- Experiential

12:50 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 14:45	**Speed Chat**

Partners sharing experiences about their project:
- Key project achievement
- Most creative idea that came out of the project
- Biggest challenge faced implementing the project
- Unintended/surprising outcomes
- Most effective way to engage communities
- Most effective way to engage government
- Best way to leverage additional resources
- What have I learned from children?
- What have I learned about partnerships?
- What lesson/experience/idea will you take forward?

14:45 – 15:40	**The Journey Continues (What's Next?)**

- What have we done well? What could make us even better?
- EAC Strategic Plan
- "Quick Fire" – New Ways to Engage other Sectors

15:40 – 16:00	**Closing**

- Takeaways: Reflecting on the Day
- Closing Remarks

ANNEX II. EAC and Partner PowerPoint Presentations

To access the PowerPoint presentations from the Partners' Meeting, please click on the following link:

1) Aide et Action – Approaches for Local and Community-based Advocacy

2) Aprendiz – Building a Common Cause

3) Bharti Foundation – Accelerating Enrolment and Quality Education Programmes for Marginalised   Children

4) CARE – Advocacy in Favour of OOSGB

5) Dhaka Ahsania Mission – Strategies/Solutions to Identify and Track OOSC

6) Pact – Leveraging Resources to Create a Multiplier Effect

7) Plan International – Tracking OOSC

8) UNESCO – Regional Advocacy

9) UNICEF Kenya – Digital Attendance

10) World Vision – Leveraging Financial Resources from Others

11) EAC – The Journey Continues

12) EAC – The Second Strategic Plan

ANNEX III. Partners' Meeting Participant List

1) Samphors Vorn, Aide et Action
2) Tariq Cheema, American Refugee Committee
3) Natacha Costa, Aprendiz
4) Vijay Chadda, Bharti Foundation
5) Shazia Khawar, British Council
6) Kate Rodriguez, Building Tomorrow
7) Karl Paul, CARE
8) Riaz Kamlanin, The Citizens Foundation
9) Nancy Devine, Education Development Center
10) Christina N'Tchougan-Sonou, Education Development Center
11) Nomsa Daniels, Graça Machel Trust
12) Godfrey Wawa, Graça Machel Trust
13) Pankaj Jain, Gyan Shala
14) Payal H Patel, Gyan Shala
15) Snorre Westgaard, Humana People to People Initiative
16) Ved Prakash Yadav, Humana People to People Initiative
17) Jeff Meer, Humanity and Inclusion
18) Renjini Devakiamma, MIET Africa
19) Karl Dorning, Monastic Education Development Group
20) Cho Phyu, Monastic Education Development Group
21) Adekanla Adegoke, Oando Foundation
22) Tonia Uduimoh, Oando Foundation
23) Gloria Sangiwa, Pact
24) Hana Gunn, Plan International
25) Lynn Cole, Rise International
26) Dan Pautisan, Rise International
27) Soha Ellaithy, Save the Children
28) Nancy Taussig, Save the Children
29) Priscilla Cruz, Todos Pela Educação
30) Shantha Retnasingam, UNESCO
31) Miya Hashimoto, UNHCR
32) Daniel Baheta, UNICEF Kenya
33) Aurelia Ardito, UNICEF USA
34) Kristen Jones, UNICEF USA
35) Tim Howarth, United World Schools
36) Nan Sitha, United World Schools
37) Soonyoung Choi, World Vision
38) Jihwan Jeon, World Vision
39) Margaret Maimbolwa, Zambia Open Community Schools
40) Cleopatra Muma, Zambia Open Community Schools

ANNEX IV. EAC Staff Participant List

1) Dr Mary Joy Pigozzi, Executive Director
2) Leena Al Derham, Technical Department
3) Al Anood Al Thani, M&E
4) Fatima Al Zahrani, Engagement
5) Noor Muhammed Ansari, M&E
6) Oussama Eraky, Operations
7) Michael Cacich, Technical Department
8) Sabrina Hervey, Technical Department
9) Johnny Lahoud, Operations
10) Derek J Langford, Engagement
11) Joshua Maina, M&E
12) Jade McCulloch, Engagement
13) David Kamau Mumo, Technical Department
14) Brett Rapley, Technical Department
15) Wafa Ahmed Salih, Directorate
16) Salam Yacoub, Operations
17) Said Yasin, Technical Department