**Developing Standards for Quality Basic Education
in Central and Eastern Europe and
the Commonwealth of Independent States**

Prepared for
UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office

December 6, 2010

Miske Witt & Associates Inc.
St. Paul, Minnesota USA

By Nancy Clair, Ed.D.
and Shirley Miske, Ph.D.,
with Deepa Patel, M.P.P.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ACRONYMS

AL   Active Learning

ALSL   Active Learning and School Leadership

APEC   Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

BiH   Bosnia and Herzegovina

CARK   Central Asian Republics and Kazakhstan

CEE/CIS   Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States

CEI   Center for Educational Initiatives

CFS/QBE   Child-Friendly Schools/Quality Basic Education

CO   Country Office (UNICEF)

CRC   Convention on the Rights of the Child

EAPR   East Asia and the Pacific Region

EFA   Education for All

ELDS   Early Learning and Development Standards

EMIS   Education Management Information System

ERP   Education Reform Program

EU   European Union

GE   Global Education

ISSA   International Step by Step Association

KMK   Kultusministerkonferenz

MEST   Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Kosovo)

MOE   Ministry of Education

MoES   Ministry of Education and Science (Armenia)

MoNE   Ministry of National Education (Turkey)

MOPE   Ministry of Public Education (Uzbekistan)

MWAI   Miske Witt and Associates Inc.

NCTM   National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

NES   National Education Standards

NGO   Non-governmental Organization

OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMC	Open Method of Communication
PEDC	Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children
PEIS	Primary Education Institution Standards
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
REA	Regional Education Advisor (UNICEF)
RfP	Request for Proposals
RO	Regional Office (UNICEF)
SbS	Step by Step Association
SMIS	Standards Management Information System
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) declares that all girls and boys in the world are entitled to the right to survival; the right to development – *which includes the right to be educated*; the right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and the right to participation in matters that affect their lives and that prepare children to take on increasing roles of responsibility as they mature.

Developing and monitoring standards for basic education that will ensure that all girls and boys can claim and enact this right to a quality education has become a high priority for countries of the Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) region. This shared priority became evident at a regional meeting in Geneva in 2009 for representatives from national ministries of education, UNICEF Country Offices (COs), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on "Child-Friendly Schools" (CFS). When this priority emerged, the UNICEF Regional Office (RO) seized the opportunity to develop a process that would support the development of standards of quality basic education (QBE) in countries of the CEE/CIS region.

In initiating the process, it was obvious early on that conceptual clarity was needed in the discussion both of CFS and standards. The Child-Friendly Schools approach was being discussed in various, overlapping, and sometimes competing ways; that is, in terms of "characteristics" (up to 13), "dimensions" (five or more), and/or "principles" (three). With regard to standards in the region, Clair (2010b) had diagnosed "significant variation in the literature and confusion among stakeholders with terms such as standards, benchmarks, indicators, and learning outcomes, to name a few." She observed that the terms frequently were being used "interchangeably and inconsistently among stakeholders and in documents, resulting in an unclear path towards developing, implementing, and monitoring progress towards meeting or exceeding standards" (Clair, 2010b, p. 5).

In 2009, the CEE/CIS UNICEF Regional Education Advisor (REA) developed a Concept Note, which determined that a conceptual framework was needed to provide clarity to these concepts, along with a road map to provide direction to countries as they embarked on the standards development process. In preparation for developing a conceptual framework and road map, the REA determined that field studies would be needed first in order to document the current status of CFS and of system-wide CFS standards efforts. Miske Witt and Associates Inc. (MWAI), St. Paul, MN USA

was contracted to undertake the work and prepared three documents. *The Status of Quality Basic Education/CFS Standards Development, Implementation, and Monitoring in the CEE/CIS Region* (Clair, Miske, & Patel, 2010a) was developed to strengthen the position of the RO to support partnerships within and among countries of the region in the standards development process. *A Conceptual Framework for QBE/CFS Standards Development in the CEE/CIS Region* (Clair, Miske, & Patel, 2010b) was drafted to facilitate and strengthen discussion about CFS/QBE standards among partners in the region and beyond. Finally, *A Road Map for QBE/CFS Standards Development in the CEE/CIS Region* (Clair [with Miske & Patel], 2010e) was prepared to chart the course for standards development in countries of the region*.* This final report, *Developing Standards for Quality Basic Education in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States,* represents the culmination of 12 months of work, integrating the three individual reports into this comprehensive study.

In preparing this report, while all countries of the region are working to incorporate CFS/QBE principles or dimensions into their education reforms, in two countries of the region the term "quality basic education" (QBE) is used more frequently than CFS. In those countries, CFS is associated more frequently with a particular UNICEF project rather than a national approach. Since this study seeks to understand how the basic concepts of CFS and/or QBE undergird standards of education quality within a national education system, this report combines the terms and uses the acronym "CFS/QBE" when discussing a comprehensive approach to improving quality in the education systems of the CEE/CIS region. With regard to the actual standards, in CEE/CIS, the term "Standard of Quality Basic Education" is preferred to "CFS Standard" since CFS is too often associated with a UNICEF project or model instead of representing a national approach.

PART 1. BACKGROUND

1.   Background and Objectives

1.1   CEE/CIS Perspective

Countries of the CEE/CIS region have a history of universal education, gender parity, and relatively high academic achievement. However, the break-up of the Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia in the late 1980s and early 1990s resulted in the birth of 22 independent states across the region, and political instability, war, ethnic hatred, economic collapse, and the destruction of social services characterized the transition to independence. Education systems collapsed or suffered greatly during this time. Subsequently, the countries in transition have worked to transform their education systems from early childhood through university, drawing on examples of reform from the region and from international frameworks and models of education.

1.2   Child-Friendly Schools

One of the international frameworks to which countries of the CEE/CIS region have turned to improve the quality of their education systems is the Child-Friendly Schools approach. Following the adoption of the CRC in 1989, UNICEF and partner agencies developed the CFS concept. Although it has developed differently in countries around the world, the concept is a holistic, system-wide approach to improving educational quality that places the child in the center of education reform (UNICEF, 2009a).

Some countries of the CEE/CIS region began promoting the CFS/QBE approach around 2002. Other countries began to discuss CFS/QBE four or more years later, catalyzed by a study tour for UNICEF Country Offices (COs) and Ministry of Education (MOE) representatives to Thailand in 2006, organized by the CEE/CIS RO.

1.3   Project Objectives

The CFS/QBE approach has been implemented differently in CEE/CIS countries. Countries of the region are in varying stages of defining, developing, implementing, and monitoring progress towards meeting CFS/QBE standards. The ultimate goal of this study and subsequent activities is for countries to develop and/or strengthen their CFS/QBE standards in order to: improve system-wide planning and resource allocation; monitor progress towards meeting or exceeding the standards; and evaluate effectiveness of education reforms.

The work has three objectives:

1) a review of the status of CFS/QBE reforms in the region and worldwide, specifically focusing on the development of standards, through a desk review and field visits;

2) the development of a conceptual framework that will ground and strengthen CFS/QBE efforts in the region; and

3) the development of a road map that outlines a participatory process through which countries in the region can integrate CFS/QBE principles and dimensions in existing national efforts or continue the development and refinement of CFS/QBE standards.

2. Methodology and Process

The review of the status of CFS/QBE reforms in the region and internationally began with a literature review. It was followed by a meeting of representatives from the seven participating countries, field visits to the countries, and individual reports on the country visits. The synthesis of the literature review and field visit summaries comprises the first report and Part 2 of this study.

Based on the contextual information and the lead authors' experience in standards development and in the CFS approach, the Conceptual Framework and Road Map were then developed. Additional details of the methodology and process are given below.

2.1 Literature Review

UNICEF's CEE/CIS RO provided MWAI with 33 documents related to Child-Friendly Schools and standards development. Documents reviewed include general reports on the background and implementation of CFS/QBE; evaluations assessing the implementation of CFS/QBE; standards development documents; and CFS/QBE documents specific to the CEE/CIS region. These documents were reviewed to provide a foundational understanding of CFS/QBE implementation and CFS/QBE standards development. Documents were summarized in a template to capture the essence of their findings and were then summarized and synthesized in the first report.

The global literature review begins with a history of Child-Friendly Schools. Documents such as Chabbott's (2004) *UNICEF's Child-Friendly Schools Framework: A Desk Review* and *A Human Rights-Based Education for All* (UNICEF/UNESCO,

2007) provide a rich background on the conception of CFS/QBE. The historical background is followed by a discussion of two evaluations – Bernard's 2004 evaluation of CFS/QBE in East Asia and the Pacific Region (EAPR) and the CFS 2009 global evaluation by Osher, Kelly, Shors, and Chen – and an overview of the UNICEF Child-Friendly Schools Manual (UNICEF, 2009a). The examination of international documents ends with a review of standards that are being implemented in some countries of the CEE/CIS region, the International Step by Step Association (2009), and Kagan and Britto (2005). It concludes with a discussion of the influence of academic content standards and standardized tests on standards development.

Following the global literature review, CFS/QBE in the CEE/CIS region is examined, paying particular attention to UNICEF's analysis of education in the region in *Education for Some More than Others* (2007a) and in Silova's (2002) *The Right to Quality Education: Creating Child-Friendly School in Central Asia.* The CEE/CIS section ends with a review of European Commission documents related to the Lisbon Objectives and their particular influence on CFS/QBE development in Central and Eastern Europe.

2.2   Field Visits and Country Reports

In the next phase of this study, five MWAI associates conducted field visits in seven CEE/CIS countries to gain a deeper understanding of the status of the CFS/QBE approach and standards in each country.   Countries visited include Armenia,[1] Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Moldova, Turkey, and Uzbekistan. Prior to conducting the field visits, the RO convened a regional workshop in Istanbul, Turkey in March 2010. At the workshop MWAI associates prepared UNICEF CO education specialists from these countries and their counterparts in national education ministries and NGOs for the upcoming field visits. The objectives of this workshop were to: 1) introduce the project work and its relation to CFS/QBE; 2) situate the CFS/QBE approach to current work in the region; 3) exchange information about CFS/QBE; 4) examine CFS/QBE standards, concepts, and definitions; and 5) prepare for the field visits.

In preparation for the field visits, MWAI created a field visit manual, which provided pre-visit, in-country, and post-visit details to ensure transparency of the field visits.

---

[1] The field visit to Armenia took place in October 2009 prior to the other visits. The visit was conducted under a separate Terms of Reference to assess CFS/QBE pilot projects and standards documents. While data were gathered in a slightly different way from the other six visits, similar research questions were evaluated and the visit provided valuable insight for understanding the current status of CFS/QBE standards development efforts.

The field visit was a collaborative effort between UNICEF COs and MWAI, which placed a field researcher in-country for approximately five days to learn firsthand about CFS/QBE standards. Through document reviews, interviews, focus groups, and school visits, the field researchers sought to answer these questions (Clair, 2010c):

1) How do stakeholders at varying levels of the system and within different organizations define and understand CFS/QBE principles, concepts, and dimensions?
2) How do stakeholders at varying levels of the system and within different organizations describe and understand CFS/QBE standards?
3) How have CFS/QBE standards been developed (i.e., the process), implemented, and used across the system? What have been the challenges and solutions?
4) How has progress towards meeting or exceeding CFS/QBE standards been monitored? How has the information been used to strengthen children's overall academic progress, health, and well-being?
5) What are some opportunities for embedding or integrating CFS/QBE standards in existing national standards?

In countries where CFS/QBE standards have not yet been developed or have not been fully implemented and reviewed, questions 2 through 4 were asked in terms of a country's intentions (e.g., How are CFS/QBE standards being developed and how will they be implemented and used across the system?).

UNICEF COs arranged for the field researcher to meet with a range of stakeholders: 1) school level personnel; 2) representatives from relevant governmental departments; 3) UNICEF staff involved in CFS/QBE implementation; and 4) representatives of NGOs involved as partners in CFS/QBE implementation efforts (Clair, 2010c). The field researcher conducted these interviews and focus groups in accordance with the pre-established field visit protocol. An interview question template ensured consistency of questions asked among stakeholder groups and countries visited.

After the field visit, field researchers (Katz, Kauffman, and Miske) and project manager (Clair) synthesized the interview data and wrote reports for each country. The country-specific reports include: a brief history of education reform; Child-Friendly Schools implementation; and a summary of findings regarding the status of

standards development and understanding within the country. These reports were sent to COs for feedback on accuracy of information. The content of the individual reports was summarized, analyzed, and synthesized in a report on the status of CFS/QBE and CFS/QBE standards in the region; it is also presented in Part 2 of this study.

2.3   Conceptual Framework and Road Map

Grounded in the realities and understanding of the development of the CFS approach and of CFS standards in the seven countries, the authors then developed a Conceptual Framework and the Road Map for CFS/QBE standards development. Miske had observed and participated in the development of the Child-Friendly Schools approach since the late 1990s and Clair had been a leader in standards development at the state, national (USA), and international levels since 1994.[2] Integrating the knowledge and experience of these two areas with information from the global literature review and from new documentation on the status of CFS/QBE in the region, Clair then designed the Conceptual Framework and Road Map for use in the region and beyond.

2.4   Methodological Constraints

While the methodology proved solid, there were two particular constraints. First, the authors were constrained by the information available regarding CFS/QBE implementation and the development of CFS/QBE standards. Few cross-national comparative evaluations had been conducted on CFS/QBE implementation. Also, aside from a few country-specific standards development documents, little information was available regarding the creation of CFS/QBE country-specific, system-wide standards.

Second, the field researchers faced constraints of time and the ability to meet with all relevant stakeholders in each country on the five-day field visits. Field researchers were able to capture an understanding of the current standards development process through document review and stakeholder interviews; however, in some countries the number of relevant documents was limited. Since time was also limited, field researchers could not meet with every stakeholder involved with CFS/QBE and were constrained to meet with only a subsection of stakeholders. However, they did meet

---

[2] Clair was a leader in standards development for the state of Massachusetts (1994) and for English as a Second Language (ESL) National Standards for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL, 1997). She also conducted and published research on standards implementation with English language learners in US urban schools (1996-2000) and led standards development initiatives in Ghana (2004-2008) and Egypt (2005).

with a diverse sample of the population and gained as broad a view as possible of CFS/QBE standards development and implementation in each country. In countries where classroom visits occurred, while the visits were invaluable, they provided only a snapshot of the school's culture, teaching, and learning.

Despite the constraints, the status report offered a comprehensive review of how stakeholders understand CFS/QBE principles, dimensions, and standards, and the process of developing, implementing, monitoring, and integrating QBE standards into national policy in the CEE/CIS region. The interview protocol ensured consistency in the kinds of information gathered from different countries, and every effort was made to capture diverse perspectives through interviews and focus groups.

PART 2. REVIEW OF CFS AND EXISTING STANDARDS

1.   The Literature Review

The literature review examines the history of the CFS/QBE approach and its global implementation to assess how countries and regions have understood this approach and developed frameworks and standards to achieve Child-Friendly Schools. The information was used to inform the field visit interview guide as well as the development of a conceptual framework and road map. Table 1 outlines the type of documents reviewed.

Table 1: Documents Referenced

Type of Document Reviewed	Number of Documents
Global Child-Friendly Schools Documents	5
East Asia and the Pacific Region Documents	5
Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States Documents	10
European Commission Documents on the Lisbon Objectives	8
Performance Assessments and Learning Standards	5

The literature review begins by examining CFS from a global perspective. This includes a brief history of the origin of the CFS approach, a discussion of its early development in the East Asia/Pacific (EAP) region, the intention of the CFS/QBE framework, and evaluations of CFS. Attention then shifts to the development of standards within and beyond basic education in the international arena. The discussion moves geographically to the CEE/CIS region to review the history of CFS/QBE as well as information on CFS/QBE standards. It includes a look at one particular country in the region – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – and its CFS system-wide standards development efforts, and examines the Lisbon Objective's influence on CFS/QBE development in Central and Eastern Europe. As a prelude to examining the status of similar efforts in the seven countries under scrutiny in this study, the section ends with a brief discussion of the promise and critique of standards-based reform.

1.1   A Global Perspective of Child-Friendly Schools

1.1.1   Origins of the Child-Friendly Schools Approach

After education was recognized as a human right in 1948, a number of other international conventions also supported the concept of free and compulsory primary education.[3] In 1989, the CRC strengthened and broadened the idea of a human rights-based education by determining four key principles to a rights-based approach (UNICEF/UNESCO, 2007):

1) non-discrimination;
2) acting in the best interest of the child;
3) providing the right to life, survival, and development to the maximum extent possible; and
4) ensuring the right of children to express their views in all matters affecting them.

One conceptual framework of this rights-based approach to education grounded in the CRC emphasizes the interrelationship between access, quality, and respect. Access ensures the opportunity to learn throughout life in a sufficient, accessible school with equality of opportunity; quality promotes cognitive development as a primary objective along with the promotion of a child's creative and emotional development; and respect values the individual's language, culture, and religion, and views (UNICEF/UNESCO, 2007).

In the mid-1990s, UNICEF's Innocenti Child Development Center in Florence organized a workshop discussing the Child-Friendly Schools concept. After this workshop, an informal one-page document discussing the 13 "Characteristics of a Rights-Based School" began circulating (Chabbott, 2004, p. 5). The World Health Organization (WHO) then developed a checklist for CFS/QBE "aimed at enabling schools to support the development of happy and well-adjusted children, able to engage in learning" (Bernard, 2004, p. 2). This checklist outlines the following 13 characteristics of a Child-Friendly School (UNICEF, n.d.):

1) reflects and realizes the rights of every child;
2) sees and understands the whole child, in a broad context;
3) is child-centered;
4) is gender-sensitive and girl-friendly;

---

[3] These include the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966), and the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (1981).

5) promotes quality learning outcomes;

6) provides education based on the reality of children's lives;

7) is flexible and responds to diversity;

8) acts to ensure inclusion, respect, and equality of opportunity for all children;

9) promotes mental and physical health;

10) provides education that is affordable and accessible;

11) enhances teacher capacity, morale, commitment, and status;

12) is family focused; and

13) is community-based.

In 2000, UNICEF and Save the Children brought together representatives from 11 South Asian and Southeast Asian countries in Chiang Mai, Thailand to discuss and identify the core tasks of CFS. The representatives agreed upon four key activities for promoting CFS in the region (Bernard, 2004, p. 3):

1) Adapt the five basic CFS principles at the national and local levels by "enabling the genuine participation of policy-makers, communities, families and children in creating both the vision and the functions of a child rights-based school";

2) Focus on a "holistic" approach to education that emphasizes activities inside and outside the school building. "Build on the lessons of effective schooling as child-centered in all learning, teaching and management activities, and on the wider environment to emphasize CRC concerns with families as the first place of reference for children's care and development, with comprehensive inclusion of all children";

3) Create a data system to track student progress; and

4) "Strengthen inter-programme networking so educators can share experiences and approaches in order to professionally grow and learn from their community."

EAPRO and Thailand's Ministry of Education promulgated the CFS approach in the region through annual CFS workshops to which representatives of UNICEF COs and national ministries of education were routinely invited.[4]

---

[4] Other regions of the world, including East and Southern Africa Region (ESAR), also advanced the CFS approach, especially through child-friendly/girl-friendly initiatives. See Chapman and Miske (2007) and Mannathoko (2008) for information on the development of CFS in that region.

1.1.2   Intention of the Child-Friendly Schools Approach

The CFS approach is a comprehensive and system-wide approach that looks at all aspects of a child's well-being and involves stakeholders from the national and local levels to ensure children receive a quality education. "[CFS frameworks] represent pragmatic pathways towards quality in education that have evolved (and are still evolving), from the principle of education as a human right to a child-centered ideology that regards the best interest of the child as paramount at all times" (UNICEF, 2009a, p. 2).

As described above, after the CRC was adopted, the first document to emerge and give direction to these "pragmatic pathways towards quality education" after the meeting in Florence in the mid-1990s elaborated 13 steps to or characteristics of a CFS approach. Later, in the early years of the new millennium, EAPR countries agreed to adapt five basic CFS principles (later called "dimensions") at the local and national levels of their countries. Some countries expanded the five principles to seven or more to address the issues of their particular contexts. The five original dimensions were: 1) rights-based; 2) child-seeking and inclusive; 3) gender sensitive; 4) democratic participation; and 5) quality-based. CFS was viewed as a comprehensive reform effort that restructured all aspects of a school from the facilities, curriculum, and teacher instruction to children's health and nutrition.

These original five dimensions later evolved into five slightly different dimensions that were elaborated in a UNICEF guide for EAPR programme managers on assessment. In this guide, the dimension of health, safety, and protection was added; "quality-based" became effectiveness; and child rights were not stated explicitly as a dimension but rather were seen as the underpinning of all the dimensions. Countries of the CEE/CIS region use both sets of dimensions as well as variations on the two.

In 2009, UNICEF Headquarters in New York published a Child-Friendly Schools Manual, which distilled into three principles the characteristics and dimensions that countries of EAPR and other regions had been using. The 2009 Manual observes that, due to the intentionally flexible structure of the CFS framework, there was significant variation between regions and countries, making it difficult to describe one universal model. The manual further notes that the commonality that persists between countries implementing CFS/QBE is their deep commitment to the principles of CRC.

The 2009 Manual cited these three principles as foundational to the CFS approach:

1) Inclusiveness: School environment is welcoming for all children and families, and school leadership and teachers recognize and accommodate for students' differing learning needs.

2) Child-Centeredness: School staff prioritizes students' emotional and physical well-being, builds relationships with students that are positive and respectful, and ensures students are actively engaged in their learning.

3) Democratic Participation: Family and community members are actively involved in the school, and students are engaged in school activities and decision making through a formalized student government or council.

These three principles distill the 13 characteristics of the original list into a manageable trio. In so doing, however, they also collapse and eliminate attention of CFS to certain key features, such as *gender-sensitive and girl-friendly* concepts and the promotion of *quality learning outcomes* – both of which are included in the framework of five dimensions in use in the EAP region. Also not mentioned in the three principles are the characteristics from the original list of 13, which include education that is both *affordable and accessible*; and the enhancement of *teacher capacity*, morale, commitment, and status. These features are mentioned, however, in the chapters of the Manual at various points.

The CFS Manual (2009) emphasizes the following features for the implementation of Child-Friendly Schools: 1) school construction; 2) schools and community; 3) school environment; 4) learners, teachers, and school managers; and 5) monitoring and evaluation.

The Manual notes that the CFS approach does not provide benchmarks or goals indicating the point at which a school will be successful; instead, "it has more to do with the pathways along which schools and education systems endeavor to travel in the quest to promote quality in education" (UNICEF, 2009a). The Manual adds that there is no blueprint for the implementation of the Child-Friendly School and one should not assume that a road map exists just because similar outcomes and characteristics ensue when child-friendly principles are applied in different contexts.

1.1.3   Child-Friendly School Evaluations

In her 2004 desk review of Child-Friendly Schools, Chabbott (2004) observed that almost every region and country using the CFS framework had created or was in the process of creating extensive checklists, which can be seen as an initial step in creating a monitoring system. However, she also noted that not all regions had

tailored the specific lists to their needs, nor did they have a systematic approach of soliciting feedback about the implementation of the CFS approach. This information gap highlighted the need for and importance of evaluation as a means of learning what works and what does not work in the implementation of CFS and the improvement of the CFS framework.

Just prior to Chabbott's (2004) desk review of CFS, Ann Bernard conducted a desk review of CFS documents and coordinated a regional workshop to evaluate CFS in the EAP region. She observed that through the four tasks listed below, the CFS approach was becoming better defined in the region and the Child-Friendly School was "maturing, emerging as a *shared vision of what these qualities mean in practice* [italics in the original]: a coherent set of action principles, necessary conditions for improving the quality, effectiveness and reach of basic education for all children, especially the most excluded" (Bernard, 2004, p. 4). Bernard was able to identify CFS's "critical salient features" due to the more consistent and comprehensive way that CFS was being implemented in the region (Bernard, 2004, p. 6):

1) CFS encompasses "what a good quality, rights-based education is";
2) schools are responsible for actively including all children, especially the most vulnerable;
3) the responsibility of ensuring rights and learning of all children fall to the school, families, and community;
4) "minimum learning conditions" are not providing the "least possible quality" but providing "fundamental learning conditions" that all schools must find a way to deliver;
5) "attitudes and behaviours underlying the concept of child-friendliness require continual learning and change"; and
6) CFS breaks down the traditional forms of teaching and promotes alternative instructional approaches to ensure all children are learning.

Bernard assessed that through this shared vision of CFS, a more systematic approach to implementing Child-Friendly Schools had emerged in the region. While all countries in the region agreed that the five dimensions listed above must be implemented together to create a CFS, in some cases certain dimensions were emphasized more strongly than others. Bernard argued that this approach of emphasizing one dimension more than the others or staggering the completion of each CFS dimension was not a deficiency in implementation, but rather it was a way to cope with the lack of financial or human capital resources (Bernard, 2004, p. 20).

Not long after the completion of Bernard's evaluation, EAPRO created a guide for programme managers to assess the CFS framework being implemented in the region entitled *Assessing Child-Friendly Schools: A Guide for Programme Managers in East Asia and the Pacific*. Two evaluation methods to track progress were elaborated in the manual: 1) formative evaluations, to provide direction and strategies for improvement; and 2) summative evaluations, to focus on lessons learned (UNICEF, 2006). Both types of evaluations are needed to assess the success of Child-Friendly Schools standards, curriculum, and processes. Since the CFS approach was designed to be flexible, allowing for regions, countries, and localities to tailor it to their context and to create standards that met their needs, it was deemed even more important to construct an evaluation system to assess the success of each school's implementation of CFS.

The purpose of the *Guide for Programme Managers* was to "assist practitioners in understanding more fully what needs to be looked into and assessed" (UNICEF, 2006, p. 4). It was the first widely-published document to offer guidance to countries that were designing CFS evaluations. Under each of the five dimensions established and in use in EAPR, the guide introduced the language of "key performance areas," "key performance indicators," and "outcome indicators" to measure, monitor, and evaluate the success of the dimensions within a school or an education system.

In 2007, the Evaluation Section of UNICEF Headquarters, New York, issued a Request for Proposals (RfP) to conduct a global evaluation of Child-Friendly Schools. On behalf of the American Institutes for Research, Washington, D.C., Osher et al. conducted a global evaluation of CFS/QBE through site visits to 25 schools in each of the following countries: Nigeria, South Africa, Thailand, Philippines, Guyana, and Nicaragua. These site visits included interviews, surveys, and focus groups with a randomly selected group of students, teachers, and families; classroom observations; a survey to education officers; interviews with ministries of education; and pictures and videos. The RfP called for a global evaluation of CFS around the three principles of inclusiveness, child-centeredness, and democratic participation. The evaluation findings confirmed that these three principles were essential for a school to be child-friendly (Osher et al., 2009). The study also concluded that, because of their commitment to serving students and improving learning outcomes, schools that implement these CFS principles also emphasize student learning and assess school progress at the student level.

Findings from both Osher et al.'s global study of CFS/QBE and Bernard's study of CFS in EAPR identified similar features in the Child-Friendly School, illustrating the flexibility and functionality of the CFS framework to adapt to the needs of individual countries and regions.

1.2 A Global Perspective of Standards Development

1.2.1 Standards and Their Use

For the past 30 years, standards development, implementation, and monitoring have been essential to system-wide education reform efforts worldwide. In a study of countries that had positive results on PISA and were engaged in education reform, all countries except one had standards that were either created or revised as part of their reform strategy (OECD, 2004). In 1992, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) members came together to discuss the importance of standards. Despite the diversity within the group, all APEC representatives agreed on the importance of establishing education standards and examination systems to support education reform (Office of Policy and Planning, US Department of Education, 1992, p. 1). Those who were involved with the system-wide standards based reform efforts were fully versed in what standards are, how they can be used, and the issues that surround standards based reform, which is essential to the development of strong, useful standards.

Essentially, standards are broad goal statements that define what stakeholders should know and be able to do across an educational system. "Standards are statements that specify an expectation for achievement. They may be used as a basis of comparison in measuring or judging capacity, quality, value, or quantity" (Kagan & Britto, 2005, p.2).

Standards are not meant to penalize or punish schools, teachers, children, or other stakeholders who do not meet the standards; instead, they are meant to measure and guide stakeholder towards minimally meeting (or exceeding) the standards. If a standard is not met, there is opportunity to evaluate the situation and develop ways for stakeholders to meet or exceed the standards in the future.

Without well-designed standards, governments cannot effectively assess the quality of their education system, monitor the academic and social progress of students, or evaluate reforms. Standards for quality education and related indicators inevitably differ from country to country because they depend on national contexts and priorities.

CFS/QBE system-wide standards are comprehensive; they are organized around or include the dimensions of Child-Friendly Schools. Standards allow stakeholders to assess the quality of their education system, monitor progress towards meeting or exceeding the standards, and evaluate the effectiveness of reforms. Information gathered through monitoring and evaluations can lead to a reallocation of resources to places of need. In addition, CFS/QBE system-wide standards can be used to encourage shared responsibility for CFS dimensions of effectiveness; health, safety, and protection; participation; gender-responsiveness; and inclusiveness.

While the most pronounced function of a system-wide standards framework is monitoring and evaluating how stakeholders meet or exceed standards, system-wide standards also fulfill other purposes, such as identifying gaps and inequities in resource allocation. For example, the standards framework of the Lisbon Objectives discussed below includes input indicators such as the number of computers per child and educational expenditure. This information helps the European Union (EU) determine where resource gaps exist and evaluate how resources may be related to student academic performance. Similarly, the Australian Government has developed a framework that uses indicators to determine performance funding for tertiary education and provide incentives for improvement. The Government notes, "the achievement, engagement and quality targets negotiated under the performance funding arrangements will establish concrete goals and provide a financial incentive for universities to improve teaching and learning outcomes, including specifically for low SES students" (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009, p. 26).

Since the CFS/QBE system-wide approach applies to all countries in the CEE/CIS region and seeks to provide a structure for improving education throughout the region, understanding differences in resources between countries or within countries is helpful for ensuring adequate resources are reaching every child so that each child has the necessary materials to succeed.

1.2.2 *The Development of Standards for Quality Education*

The development of standards for implementing the CFS framework and monitoring progress towards CFS goals varies greatly among countries, as is illustrated by two countries of EAPR. Both the Philippines and, more recently, China have developed standards to gauge progress towards CFS goals. While both countries' standards fall within the five CFS dimensions, each country's list of standards is different, illustrating how countries can adapt the CFS framework to fit their needs.

The Philippines identifies these seven goal areas: 1) encourage child participation in school and community; 2) enhance children's health and well-being; 3) guarantee safe and protective spaces for children; 4) encourage enrollment and completion; 5) ensure high academic achievement; 6) raise teacher morale and motivation; and (7) mobilize community support (UNICEF Philippines, n.d.). China has identified four main standards areas: 1) inclusiveness and equality; 2) effective teaching and learning; 3) safe, healthy, and protective; and 4) participation and harmonization (Ministry of Education People's Republic of China, 2008). Each country has developed standards in its own way to fit the needs of its own population, and both countries' standards fit within four of the five CFS dimensions. It is important to note that gender-sensitivity is the one area not stated specifically in the overarching standards of either country, though gender sensitivity is mentioned as a component of inclusion in China's standards.

At the same time that CFS standard areas were being developed, other countries of the region were also paying attention to developing system-level standards of educational quality. For example, in its Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children (PEDC) project funded by the Asian Development Bank, Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training identified five standards of educational quality. These included physical infrastructure; teaching staff; social organization and management; education socialization; and educational activities and quality (PEDC Project, Vietnam, 2006). While these standards and CFS dimensions both attend to educational activities and quality, the PEDC standards do not specifically mention inclusiveness; gender sensitivity; health, safety, and protection; or democratic participation. This contrast between the categories in the two sets of standards highlights the distinctive, child-focused, and child-centered nature of an approach to educational quality that is grounded in the CRC.

Standards developed by international organizations also committed to the principles of the CRC offer additional lessons for the development of CFS/QBE standards, especially in the CEE/CIS region. Two exemplary sets of standards discussed here are those developed by the NGO International Step by Step Association (ISSA) and Kagan and Britto's (2005) Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS).

1.2.3 International Step by Step Association: Quality Pedagogy

The ISSA promotes democratic principles and community involvement in early childhood education, and functions under six core principles that were created under

the framework of CRC (International Step by Step Association, 2009). These core principles coincide closely with the five dimensions of CFS.

ISSA, which implements the Step by Step (SbS) Program internationally, has developed ISSA Pedagogical Standards to guide teacher instruction and bring quality education to pre-primary aged children. ISSA Pedagogical Standards create goals for teachers regarding child-centered approaches to teaching so teachers know what and how they should be teaching.

The development of the ISSA Pedagogical Standards provides a good point of reference for designing CFS/QBE standards since the goal of both is to provide an adaptable framework to different countries. The ISSA standards "guide but do not restrict" in a similar way that CFS/QBE standards provide a framework to guide schools towards being child-friendly. Under the framework of ISSA, the achievement of all indicators ensures the achievement of the standards and the achievement of the standards ensures the attainment of key areas. Once all key areas are reached, the core principles have been fulfilled.

1.2.4 Creating Standards: Lessons from Early Learning and Development Standards

According to Kagan and Britto (2005, p. 8), standards are "rooted in the cultural and national expectations of what the children residing in a given country should know and be able to do"; therefore, given the uniqueness of countries, universal standards cannot exist. Although Kagan and Britto elaborate on ELDS, the process they outline for developing standards applies to the development of any standards. Their process is referenced extensively in the Road Map described in Part 4 of this report.

With regard to standards in the CEE/CIS region, most countries have academic content standards to drive instruction and some are also using ELDS or ISSA standards. Only a few countries are in the early stages of creating and implementing CFS/QBE system-wide standards. Macedonia, Turkey, and Azerbaijan have developed country-specific CFS/QBE system-wide standards, and other countries in the region have started to plan for CFS/QBE standards creation. In CEE/CIS countries, standards are typically developed and grouped by CFS/QBE dimensions. Steps in the process that Kagan and Britto recommend, as well as ISSA's standards, can offer guidance for developing CFS/QBE system-wide standards.

1.2.5 Academic Content Standards

As discussed above, one of the universal dimensions of CFS/QBE is effectiveness (referred to in the earlier CFS framework as "quality based"). Effectiveness is defined as the extent to which the school enhances the teaching and learning environment so that all students at every education level learn to their fullest potential, mastering specific and measurable research-based skills and knowledge. Academic content standards or performance standards that measure pupil content knowledge and progress against a stated goal are part of an effective education system. These standards are especially important given the proliferation of international student assessments that currently evaluate student knowledge of content and analytical skills.

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) all bring to light between-country variation in education. Additionally, curriculum, standards, and educational priorities are important because "everyone needs to acquire a minimum set of competencies in order to learn, work, and achieve fulfillment in a knowledge-based society and economy" (Council of the European Union, 2004). As stated in the Council of the European Union's Education and Training 2010 Report (2004), these common principles are not meant to be mandates for states to follow, they are meant to help create national policy and develop trust between stakeholders (p. 27).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) published PISA results (reading, mathematics, and science) for the first time in 2001. These results showed a high variation in performance both among countries and among social groups within countries. Due to these findings, OECD conducted an evaluation of six countries that had positive results on PISA and were engaged in education reform: Canada, England, France, Finland, Sweden, and the Netherlands.

According to the study (OECD, 2004), all countries except France had academic performance standards that were either created or revised as part of education reform. These standards generally were an essential component to the compulsory core curriculum. While not all countries use the term "performance standards," each country in the OECD study references an indicator that specifies "the achievements that students should [attain] by the end of a certain educational level" (OECD, 2004, p. 36). Furthermore, each country implements student achievement assessments

and/or school inspections to evaluate school performance and student learning against performance standards. Therefore, evaluation systems are a vital counterpart to curriculum and standards since they identify areas of improvement and indicate how well a school meets established standards.

There is no universal system for creating academic performance standards, assessments, and curricula. No set curricula or standards exist that enable each country to achieve successful results on international assessments. However, the results of the OECD study indicate that some form of standards, curricula, and a monitoring and evaluation system are characteristic of successful school systems.

Most countries in the CEE/CIS region have created national curriculum standards, although countries of the region are at different stages of integrating CFS/QBE principles *into* the curriculum standards (e.g., inclusiveness in the curriculum) or creating a comprehensive set of CFS/QBE standards that go beyond academic content.

1.3   A Regional Perspective of Child-Friendly Schools and Standards Development

1.3.1   Background: Child-Friendly Schools in CEE/CIS

After 1991, many countries in the CEE/CIS region suffered from severe internal conflicts and unstable governments. Throughout the 1990s, the region faced economic instability and, as a whole, began to move away from an economy dependent on industry towards a knowledge-based society. This shift increased the value of universal primary and secondary education, which focuses on skill building and knowledge acquisition for all children, from the very young to adulthood.

In 1998, UNICEF's Innocenti Research Center published a regional monitoring report of the CEE/CIS region. A series of worrying changes had occurred throughout the 1990s: 1) families' cost of education increased; 2) school quality decreased; 3) enrolment and attendance often dropped; 4) selectivity and competition increased; 5) war and ethnic tension disrupted education; and 6) young people faced unemployment after completing their education (UNICEF, 2007a). Despite the challenges, positive education reform efforts also occurred in the region after 1988, including the emergence of educational standards, the introduction of school choice, and the recognition of education as a fundamental right.

Countries of the CEE/CIS region view education as fundamental to building human capital, and the CFS approach has been useful to this transition. Silova (2002) observes that the Central Asian nations in particular see education as a means of moving away from Soviet authoritarianism though insufficient resources have been allocated to education due to economic uncertainty. While the framework for Child-Friendly Schools exists in the region, Silova's (2002) review suggests that its implementation has been mixed. The conceptual framework developed for the Central Asian Republics and Kazakhstan (CARK) describes the CFS/QBE concept according to its five early dimensions (rights-based, child seeking and inclusive, gender sensitive, democratic participation, and quality-based), but the goal to create quality education for all children and to implement CFS/QBE reforms faces various obstacles, all of which worsened after the breakup of the Soviet Union:

1) Poorer areas often receive less economic support.
2) Remote rural areas generally have fewer schools and educational opportunities.
3) Certain minority groups may have worse access to education.
4) Emergency issues such as civil wars and natural disasters disrupt education.

Despite these obstacles, education reform has progressed positively in the region. Certain countries such as Turkey are making swift progress, while others such as Tajikistan are just beginning (UNICEF CEE/CIS, n.d.). Sweeping education reform efforts at the national level often "[disregard] the necessities of providing support mechanisms for local authorities, school administrators and teachers to implement changes" (Silova, 2002, p. 91). Teachers at the local level often do not see the reform efforts as comprehensive and meaningful and the reforms do not translate to classroom practice (UNICEF CEE/CIS, n.d.).

In addition to these barriers, the CEE/CIS region also struggles to move away from non-inclusive school programming such as separate schools for students with special needs. An evaluation of five countries of the region found little evidence of the integration of students with special needs into general education schools (UNICEF, 2007a). The study also concluded that gender equality is not a significant problem in the region. However, this must be questioned since no country in the region has equal representation of girls and boys in basic education, and there is little evidence that more profound understandings of gender equality and gender discrimination are explored systematically.

The region has also seen the development of other CFS/QBE-like frameworks such as the Global Education (GE) model. In 2003, faculty at the University of Plymouth, England implemented GE in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. Evaluators noted that GE "[promotes] inductive teaching approaches – with the learner being at the centre of experience and self-exploration" (Pfaffe & DeYoung, 2006, p. 23). GE is seen as an "explicit partner in the realisation of CFS/QBE components, i.e., rights-based, inclusive/child-seeking and gender-sensitive quality learning, with a particular focus on the teaching and learning dimensions (i) teacher, (ii) learner, (iii) process/content, and (iv) environment" (Pfaffe & DeYoung, 2006, p. 27). GE schools see themselves as child-friendly, since they meet the five dimensions of CFS/QBE. The implementation of the GE model and the support provided by the university team has been helpful for the development of educational indicators, particularly in Kazakhstan, where standards development has been a key reform effort. GE is seen as a model that will help to promote the values of Education for All (EFA) and CFS/QBE throughout the CARK region.

1.3.2 Development of CFS/QBE System-wide Standards

Just as the development of the CFS approach varies in countries across the CEE/CIS region, so also the status of the development of child-friendly, system-wide standards varies across the region. As discussed, most countries in the region have academic and content standards but are in the early stages of developing standards for Child-Friendly Schools. While the 2009 UNICEF CFS Manual provides global principles, strategies, and good practices for establishing Child-Friendly Schools, it does not provide a set of standards and indicators that can be used as a tool to improve the quality of education in a particular country.

Standards for quality education and related indicators inevitably will differ from country to country because they depend on national contexts and priorities. In the CEE/CIS region, countries are at different stages of defining, developing, implementing, and monitoring progress towards meeting or exceeding CFS/QBE. Macedonia, Turkey, and Azerbaijan are furthest along with the creation and implementation of CFS/QBE system-wide standards. They provide benchmarks and indicators for schools to become child-friendly that go beyond national curriculum standards that pertain to learning content only. Macedonia's process of CFS/QBE standards development and implementation is discussed below; standards in Turkey and Azerbaijan are discussed in greater detail later in this document.

1.3.3 CFS/QBE in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Macedonia was one of the first countries in the CEE/CIS region to create system-wide CFS/QBE standards. The CFS approach was introduced in Macedonia in 2006. Since then, the approach in some form has reached 11,000 individuals including students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members in 10 pilot schools and communities (Miske, 2008). The CFS/QBE approach complemented the World Bank-funded Education Modernization Project that focused on decentralizing education and encouraging schools to create their own standards and action plans.

In Macedonia, the CFS/QBE standards that were developed align with the five CFS/QBE dimensions of effectiveness; inclusiveness; gender-responsiveness; health, safety, and protection; and democratic participation. A sixth dimension, respect for child rights and multiculturalism, was created in response to Macedonia's socio-historical context (CFS National Expert Team, Macedonia, & Miske, 2007). In essence, the CFS/QBE dimensions provide a high level view of what a CFS/QBE school looks like and the standards create a pathway through which a CFS/QBE school can be realized.

The CFS/QBE standards development process began after the CFS/QBE approach was introduced in 2006. UNICEF organized a team of experts to examine how the CFS/QBE approach fit with the Macedonian education system. The team used the EAPR assessment guide to help create Macedonia-specific outcome and performance indicators. Two individuals joined the CEE/CIS regional team to visit Thailand and learn about CFS implementation in schools, policy, and practice in that country.

Based on their learning, the CFS team created Macedonia-specific standards for each of their CFS/QBE dimensions. Then they conducted a baseline study to determine the extent to which 21 schools were child friendly. The baseline data provided information on which to design pilot school interventions as well as a five-year plan for implementing the CFS approach across the country.

Macedonia's CFS/QBE strategy represents a significant effort towards creating a set of standards and indicators that are useful for monitoring, evaluating, and ultimately improving CFS in Macedonia. In *An Analysis of the Child-Friendly School Standards for Macedonia*, Clair (2010a) found several areas of strength in this initial effort, such as: 1) a complete set of CFS dimensions that creates a vision for Child-Friendly Schools in Macedonia; 2) standards that generally reflect high expectations for all

stakeholders in the system; and 3) examples of indicators that are measurable, observable, and attainable.

In addition, Clair also identified areas for improvement. She recommended four ways in which to strengthen the standards document: 1) include an introduction to the CFS standards document that details information about the context, organization, audience, and use; 2) include a section that defines CFS principles, dimensions, and standards terminology; 3) ensure that the terminology associated with standards is current, consistent, and commonly understood in the international literature; and 4) conduct a thorough review of the standards and indicators, eliminating those standards that function as indicators, and eliminating or revising indicators that are not measurable, observable, or specific. (See Annex A, "Analyzing Country-Specific CFS/QBE Draft Standards," for the tool used for the analysis.)

Macedonia's CFS/QBE standards and indicators, along with the process of standards creation and implementation, have served as a resource to other countries that are creating CFS/QBE frameworks. Additionally, Clair's (2010a) analysis of Macedonia's standards document and her recommendations can guide the creation of future standards documents in the region to ensure consistency of terminology and clarity for implementation.

1.3.4   Impact of the Lisbon Objectives on CFS/QBE in CEE/CIS

One international instrument that is having an important influence on education reforms and standards development across the region is the Lisbon Objectives. The EU, through the Lisbon Objectives, outlines goals for improving the quality of education and learning in Europe by 2010, and recommends that these goals be extended through a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training through 2020 (Council of the European Union, 2009). While the Lisbon Strategy focuses solely on Europe, the process through which the EU established benchmarks and indicators for improving the European education system can be used as a reference for implementing future regional education reforms – including that of the CFS framework in the CEE/CIS region.

The Lisbon Objectives, conceived at the European Council meeting in Lisbon in 2000, outline a new strategy for the EU to become "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" by 2010 (Commission Staff, 2004). The Lisbon Strategy framed the challenge of education and training as

a European-level obstacle and created the framework for confronting this issue from the European policy level. To reach this goal, the EU implemented the open method of coordination (OMC), in which benchmarks and indicators measure progress. "The aim of benchmarks is not to set standards or targets, but rather to provide policy-makers with reference points" (Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2000). This approach allows each country to develop its own policies and procedures to fulfill the Lisbon Objectives, a design that is similar to CFS/QBE's open and flexible framework.

The three main goals of the Lisbon Objectives are (Council of the European Union, 2002):

1) Improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the EU.
2) Facilitating the access of all to education and training systems.
3) Opening up education and training systems to the wider world.

During the 2941th [sic] Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting in Brussels, 2009, member states reviewed the status of the Lisbon Objectives, agreeing that "significant progress had been made in national reforms of lifelong learning, modernization of higher education and the development of common European instruments promoting quality, transparency and mobility" (Council of the European Union, 2009, p. 1). However, member states suggested that substantial challenges remain if Europe is to become the most "competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" (p. 1). Member States affirmed that during the period up to 2020 they would continue cooperating to ensure support of education and training systems with a focus on "ensuring (a) the personal, social and professional fulfillment of all citizens; and (b) sustainable economic prosperity, and employability, whilst promoting democratic values, social cohesion, active citizenship, and intercultural dialogue" (p. 2).

Conceptual overlap between the Lisbon Strategy, The Council of European Union Conclusions on the Lisbon Strategy, and CFS/QBE include the notions of democratic values; access for all students; quality education; inclusiveness through "flexible learning paths for all"; and democratic participation of parents, community members, and local organizations in students' learning (Council of the European Union, 2002, 2009). The Lisbon Objectives as first developed also attended to gender balance, especially in mathematics, science, and technology. Moreover, the Lisbon

Objectives and CFS/QBE framework both emphasize monitoring and evaluation to ensure that education systems improve and move towards the intended goals.[5]

The Lisbon Objectives represent a regional effort towards improving education and training throughout Europe, and serve as a good reference for the development of future regional education frameworks such as a CFS/QBE regional framework. Additionally, the Lisbon Objectives coincide with the CFS/QBE framework and provide similar goals for Central and Eastern Europe. The two frameworks encourage a rights-based, inclusive education that should enable the Central and Eastern European countries to accomplish the objectives of both simultaneously.[6]

1.3.5   *The Promise and Critique of Standards-Based Reform*

The global, regional, and national perspectives discussed above offer examples of standards efforts that seek to create measurable goals for system-wide improvement. However, it is important to illuminate the promise and critique of CFS/QBE system-wide standards so that stakeholders are aware of the potential and unintended effects of standards efforts. Overall, the intention of system-wide standards is to set high expectations or goals to ensure that all stakeholders master the knowledge and skills necessary to support all children in receiving a quality education. Standards are tools for improvement. Proponents of standards see standards as a "type of powerful organizer that will help affect systemic reform – a catalyst for significant change that will align different educational components such as curriculum materials, assessments, textbooks, teacher professional development, teacher pre-service [education], and the actual content of what students learn" (Lockwood, 1998, pp. 3-4). According to McLaughlin, Sheppard, and O'Day (1995), "standards-based reform reflects a strong commitment to education equity as the same high expectations are to be established for all students, even groups who have traditionally performed poorly and received watered-down curricula" (p. xvi). This is directly in line with the principles and dimensions of Child-Friendly Schools: All children have a right to a quality education, no matter who they are or where they are from.

---

[5] In 2010-2020 member states agreed to the following five benchmarks: adult participation in lifelong learning; low achievers in basic skills; tertiary level attainment; early leavers from education and training; and early childhood education. The commission also agrees to work on three other areas: mobility, employability, and language learning.

[6] One area in which there may be conflict is regarding vocational education. CFS/QBE encourages countries to move away from vocational education since it leads to the exclusion of certain marginalized populations from general education and provides students with specific training that is not easily generalizable. Contrarily, the Lisbon strategy includes an emphasis on vocational education.

Despite the benefits of system-wide standards in providing goals, setting high expectations, and establishing measurable indicators for monitoring progress, there has been opposition. Opponents cite the following reasons for their resistance to standards as a tool to improve education quality: opposition to centralized mandates or a national curriculum; concern about the validity, reliability, and fairness of monitoring progress towards meeting or exceeding the standards; and "worry that standards will exacerbate existing inequalities in educational resources and outcomes" (McLaughlin, Shepard, & O'Day, 1995, p. 7) and divert attention from teaching and learning.

The promise and critique of CFS/QBE system-wide standards frame an important discussion for stakeholders regarding what standards can and cannot do. It is these discussions, along with educating stakeholders about CFS/QBE principles, dimensions, and system-wide standards, that will make reform efforts possible. Standards alone will have little impact on ensuring that every child has a quality education. Critical to education reform are the stakeholders, whose knowledge, skills and attitudes, grounded in the principles of the CRC, will put CFS/QBE system-wide standards into practice so that all children have the opportunity to develop their full potential.

2. Overview of Standards Development in Seven Countries

2.1 Field Visit Country Context

Between March and May 2010 MWAI field researchers visited six of the seven countries in this study to review the status of CFS/QBE standards development, implementation, and monitoring. These countries were invited by the RO and expressed interest to participate in this effort.

This section provides a brief overview of each country's history, education reform efforts, and CFS/QBE implementation. This contextual information then frames the discussion of findings from the site visits. (See Annex B for a matrix of field visit findings across the seven countries.)

2.1.1 Armenia

National Context

Armenia, situated between Turkey and Azerbaijan and south of Georgia, declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. As with other countries in the region, the period after independence was marked with economic decline and challenges.

Approximately three million people live in Armenia and ethnic groups include a majority Armenian (97.9%), with minority groups including Yezidi (Kurd) 1.3%, Russian 0.5%, and other 0.3% (2001 census). The majority language spoken is Armenian.

Education Laws and Reforms

Armenia's Law of Education adopted in 1999 focuses on improving the quality of schooling. Two particularly important documents created after independence were *The National Curriculum Framework for General Education* and *The State Standards for Secondary Education,* both of which influenced curriculum design, assessment procedures, and teaching and learning methodologies.

The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) oversees education in Armenia and has supported reform efforts that focus on school quality. Despite the growth in public expenditure for general secondary education[7] as a demonstration of its commitment to enhance the quality and accessibility of education, Armenia falls short of the CEE countries but the importance of quality education pervades the reform dialogue.

CFS/QBE

Armenia, with the support of UNICEF, began implementing CFS/QBE principles in 2000, and in 2007, the CFS/QBE approach was implemented in 100 pilot schools. The NGO Partnership and Teaching played a large role in the initial implementation of CFS/QBE with the introduction of student councils and democratic participation.

In 2006, Armenia's MoES, in partnership with UNICEF, developed CFS/QBE standards and aligned them with the National Curriculum Framework and Secondary Schools Standards. However, this framework is not systematically aligned with the UNICEF/CFS dimensions. Currently, Armenia is trying to revise the CFS/QBE standards framework and is creating a self-assessment tool for schools to determine the extent to which they are implementing CFS/QBE. The MoES is also moving education towards the requirements of a knowledge-based economy in accordance with the Lisbon Objectives.

---

[7] References to secondary education in Armenia also include primary education.

2.1.2 Azerbaijan

National Context

Azerbaijan is located on the western side of the Caspian Sea. The country also gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Over eight million people live in Azerbaijan with approximately 90% Azeri. Other ethnic groups include Dagestani 2.2%, Russian 1.8%, and Armenian 1.5%, each with its own language. Azeri is the most common language and is the dominant language used in schools.

Education Laws and Reforms

The Constitution of Azerbaijan states that "each citizen has a right to education." The Ministry of Education (MOE) oversees education in Azerbaijan. The Education Law mandates compulsory basic education for nine years and prohibits discrimination based on linguistic or ethnic background (UNICEF, 2008). The Education Reform Program (ERP) initiated in 1999 currently focuses on strengthening quality and efficiency of the education system. The first stage of ERP focused on the development of a new primary and secondary curriculum, textbooks, new assessment and evaluation tools, and teacher training. The second phase plans to strengthen the quality and efficiency of schools. With the implementation of the ERP, the government placed education as a priority in the 2003 State Program of Poverty Reduction and the 2005 National Employment Strategy (Testot-Ferry, 2010).

CFS/QBE

In 2000, UNICEF began support of education reform in Azerbaijan through the Active Learning (AL) project, which focused on training teachers in child-centered methods. During AL implementation, additional aspects that aligned with child-friendly dimensions were added to support teachers as they learned child-centered practices. The Active Learning and School Leadership (ALSL) project (2000-2004) extended the AL work to include school administrators and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) in support of the new instructional methods. By the time the ALSL project ended, CFS dimensions of effectiveness, participation, inclusion, health, and child centeredness were in practice in selected Azerbaijan schools. The outcome of ALSL was a model of child-centered teaching that has influenced MOE policy and CFS programming. Due to the success of PTA involvement, the national PTA was established in 2005 and PTAs are now active in approximately 700 schools.

The CFS project was formally established in UNICEF's 2005-2009 country program. Currently, there are 50 pilot schools in three focus districts with increases planned for

the next five years to reach half of all schools. The CFS framework has been adapted to focus on four dimensions: effectiveness; health and protection; inclusiveness and gender sensitivity; and parent participation and community (Harris, 2010). Future plans for CFS include reforms in pre-service education in order to institutionalize CFS more broadly.

March 2010 marked the approval of CFS standards – "Quality Standards for Comprehensive Schools in Azerbaijan," which provide equal opportunities for all children to get an education with a healthy environment, effective school management, and parent involvement (The Republic of Azerbaijan Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 3). Schools have only recently received these standards and training on their use and implementation is planned.

2.1.3   Bosnia and Herzegovina

National Context

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is located in southeastern Europe bordering Croatia and the Adriatic Sea. Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence from Yugoslavia on March 3, 1992. The Bosnian Serbs, supported by Serbia and Montenegro, responded with armed resistance with the goal of creating a partition along ethnic lines joining Serb-held areas to form a "Greater Serbia." In March 1994, Bosniaks and Croats eased ethnic conflict, signing an agreement to create the Bosniak/Croat Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. On November 21, 1995, the Dayton Peace Accord was initiated (signed in Paris on December 14, 1995) to halt three years of interethnic conflict, retain Bosnia and Herzegovina's international boundaries, and create a multi-ethnic democratic government.

Current day BiH is composed of two major entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska. The independent District of Brcko, a small municipality, belongs to both entities. There are five levels of government within this structure – state, entity, canton, municipality, and town. BiH has 14 Ministries of Education, 12 of which have direct executive powers (one for each of the 10 cantons in the Federation, one for the Department of Education for Brcko District, and one for the Ministry of Education for the Republika Srpska). The remaining two ministries, the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the Federal Ministry of Education, have a coordinating role.

BiH has a diverse ethnic and religious population of approximately 4.5 million people: 45% are Bosniaks, 37% Serbs, 14% Croats, and 4% other. Forty percent of the

population is Muslim, 31% is Orthodox, 15% is Roman Catholic, and 14% comprise other religions. Languages spoken include Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian.

Education Laws and Reforms

The right to a free basic education is written in the BiH Constitution, entity, and canton constitutions and in the Statute of Brcko District. Educational policy in BiH emerges from a fragmented and complex system of governmental bodies that operate under specific mandates but also under restricted powers. Each Ministry of Education (the 12 with executive powers) has designed its own laws, by-laws, and protocols, as well as standards that focus on quantitative aspects of schools, such as how many tables per classroom.

Each of the three governmental entities (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Srpska [RS], District of Brcko) agreed on a "common core curriculum" for all subjects that is described in the Framework Law on Pre-, Primary, and General Secondary Education (2003). However, an analysis of primary school curricula (OSCE, 2010) reveals that each entity interprets national subjects, such as history, language, geography, music, art, and religious instruction, in entity-specific ways, causing huge disparities between education systems.

In 2007, the Agency for Pre-, Primary and Secondary Education was created to take charge of standards development, among other responsibilities, but it was not given executive power. The development of institutional capacity and coordination among governmental bodies was also the aim of the EU-funded Institutional and Capacity Building of Bosnia and Herzegovina Education (EU-ICBE) project (2006-2008). According to EU-ICBE reports, the education reform process has developed slowly and unevenly.

CFS/QBE

From a program perspective, CFS began in BiH in 2002 with a focus on implementing quality, child-centered education and child-friendly environments in all primary schools from kindergarten to fourth grade children ages 6 to10 (Pfaffe & Smulders, 2008). The main technical partner responsible for guiding CFS implementation in all primary schools was the Center for Educational Initiatives (CEI), Step by Step. CEI worked closely with project coordinators and implementation teams in each of the BiH entities. Training centers in each of the entities provided professional development to coordinators, school directors, pedagogues, trainers, teachers, special education advisors, and parents at the local level.

CFS principles, dimensions, and project goals have lived on in subsequent education initiatives. For example, the School Improvement Program (2005) supports schools using existing resources to engage stakeholders in developing a joint vision, creating school development plans, and engaging in self-assessment.

Despite the fragmented system and an education policy separated from practice at the state level, CFS has had an important effect on all stakeholders. CFS has been credited with helping to develop a shared understanding of child-centered education, which offers a platform for developing education standards that incorporate various CFS/QBE dimensions – even though child-centered practices still are not widely used, and most students are still required to memorize facts. BiH has not yet created CFS/QBE standards but there is general agreement that new system-wide standards are needed.

2.1.4 Kosovo

National Context

The Republic of Kosovo, located in the middle of southeastern Europe, is the newest country in Europe. On February 17, 2008, Kosovo declared its independence after almost 10 years of United Nations administration and three years of internationally-mediated status talks.

Approximately two million people live in Kosovo. The majority of the population (92%) are Kosovo Albanians; 5.3% are Kosovo Serbs; and the remaining 2.7% consist of other ethnic groups such as Bosniak, Gorani, and Turk, as well as several Roma groups including Ashkali and Egyptian. The two major languages in use are Albanian, which is spoken by the Kosovo Albanian majority and the Roma, and Serbian (UNICEF, 2007b).

Education Laws and Reforms

Kosovo's Constitution guarantees education to all children; nine years of education is compulsory. Education reform efforts can be categorized in two phases: the emergency period (1999-2002) and the development phase (2003 and beyond). During the emergency phase, the education system was reactivated with the development of a new curricular framework and new structure for the system. The Law for Primary Education and the Law for Higher Education were developed and approved. During the development phase, curricular reforms focused on new teaching methods and approaches, content revision, school textbooks, and student evaluation (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2007).

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) created in 2002 retains a coordinating function and is responsible for formulating education policies, training and licensing teachers, and developing curricula. However, the overall system is decentralized and budget funds go directly to municipalities, which divide the money for each school based on the number of students and requests.

CFS/QBE

Generally, CFS principles and dimensions can be found in Kosovo's Constitution (basic education rights), Primary Education Law (inclusiveness, effectiveness), Pre-University Education Strategic Objectives 2007-2017 (effectiveness, inclusiveness, health), and the draft National Curriculum Frameworks 2010 (child-centered, inclusion, participation).

From a program perspective, CFS in Kosovo was implemented at a time of great turmoil. In 2001, UNICEF in conjunction with the then Department of Education established a working group to identify and establish some priorities to improve education in Kosovo. These priorities were: schools protective of children; family and community involvement; child-centered education; and healthy schools. UNICEF supported the initial piloting of 35 schools through collaborations with seven implementing NGO partners. While this was an important first step, a task force representing municipalities, primary schools, MEST, and NGOs recognized the need to spread CFS more widely.

In 2003, 48 more schools were added in order to spread CFS concepts throughout Kosovo. NGOs focused on and implemented different dimensions in different schools (e.g., Catholic Charities worked on gender issues while World Vision worked on peace and conflict resolution). In 2006, CFS project work ended, but the CFS concepts did not. Currently 160 schools are influenced by CFS principles.

2.1.5   Moldova

National Context

The Republic of Moldova, a landlocked country between Ukraine and Romania, gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. In 2000, Moldovans elected a communist government that was voted out of office in 2008 after a second round of parliamentary elections. The current interim government is a coalition of opposition parties. New elections are expected in 2010, the results of which may significantly alter education policies.

Approximately four million people live in Moldova with over half of the population (65%) ethnic Romanian/Moldovan. The other 35% of the population comprises Ukrainians, Gagauz, Russians, Bulgarians, Germans, and Roma. The majority language is Romanian/Moldovan.

Education Laws and Reforms

During the 1990s there was a simultaneous effort to create a national school as well as a school system consistent with European school systems. The early reforms attempted to remove Soviet ideology and imagery from the schools and the school system. In 1995 Parliament ratified both a 'conception' of education and the law of education. Soon after independence, Moldova began developing a national curriculum, and in 1998 the MOE published a complete version for all subjects, grades 1-12, which included objectives that would guide teachers in the development of lesson plans.

Moldova has a centralized education system. The MOE is responsible for overseeing education policies; however, a high turnover rate at the Ministry puts many education reforms at risk. The curriculum standards developed by the MOE during the past decade are currently under revision to make them more consistent with CFS.

CFS/QBE

The MOE and UNICEF began CFS discussions in 2007. In 2008, UNICEF published a report of baseline conditions of Moldovan schools focusing on the physical condition of schools, the psychological and emotional condition of students, parent perspectives on schooling, and standards and curriculum use in schools. The report revealed that the legislative framework of Moldovan education is consistent with international standards. In practice, however, the school system has many challenges, which include parents having to pay school fees, lack of clean drinking water, and insufficient heating.

In response to results of the baseline study and to begin implementing CFS, UNICEF created partnerships to improve school infrastructure with capital renovations and provided professional development to five pilot schools. Sixteen institutions that train teachers are also in the process of creating pilot schools in which to train their teachers according to CFS principles such as child-centered methodology, democratic participation, and children's rights. The current government is drafting a new education law consistent with CFS principles and content standards.

Competency standards for life-long learning also are under review with the aim of embedding CFS principles.

CFS is relatively new in Moldova; therefore, the principles and dimensions have not been consolidated. However, CFS concepts such as inclusion of students with disabilities, parent participation, children's rights, and child-centeredness are finding their way into the new education law. To date, there are no CFS/QBE system-wide standards.

2.1.6   Turkey

National Context

Turkey is located in southeastern Europe and southwestern Asia (the small portion of Turkey west of the Bosphorus is geographically part of Europe). Modern Turkey was founded in 1923 by Mustafa Kemal, or Ataturk. Under his one-party leadership, the country adopted widespread social, legal, and political reforms. In 1950, the Democratic Party took over through a peaceful transfer of power, and since then political parties have multiplied. Democracy has been fractured by intermittent military coups and instability (1960, 1971, and 1980); however, each time political power returned to civilian government. Over the past decade, Turkey has undertaken democratic reforms with the hopes of some aimed at joining the European Union.

Turkey's population doubled to approximately 70 million between 1970 and 2003. Currently, approximately 77.5 million people live in Turkey, with the majority of the population (70-75%) Turkish, 18% Kurdish, and 7 to 12% other. Ninety-nine percent of the population is Sunni Muslim. The official language is Turkish; the minority language is Kurdish.

Education Laws and Reforms

The Turkish education system has gone through two major waves of reform (Batuhan, 2008). The goal of the first wave was to increase access to education. The current second wave continues the push for increased access in addition to focusing on educational quality.

Turkey has a centralized education system with the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) responsible for the administration of Turkey's national education policies. In 1997, Education Law No. 4306 extended primary education from five to eight years and primary education is compulsory through grade 8. In 2003, curricular reform

began and shifted pedagogy to include constructivist teaching and learning, active learning, multiple intelligence theory, and different types of assessments (Wort, 2007 quoted in Batuhan, 2008).

The MoNE has made significant investment in technology. As part of the "e-Transformation Turkey" project, "e-school" currently provides internet access to 94% of primary education students and 100% of secondary education students. All student information can now be stored in electronic media, since the e-school software is compatible with Ministry of National Education Information System (MoNEIS).

CFS/QBE

The CFS approach was introduced to Turkey in 2002 as part of the Child-Friendly Learning Environments Project under the 2001-2005 Country Program of Cooperation between the Government of Turkey and UNICEF. Since 2002, there have been at least three major staff changes in office of the Director General of Primary Education, which has disrupted CFS and other education work. Despite these disruptions, the CFS team has accomplished much in improving education, such as 1) developing a CFS Guide and Training Materials; 2) piloting the CFS approach in 25 schools; 3) developing capacity at the school level through training on school improvement and monitoring; 4) expanding CFS schools from 25 to 301 schools; 5) revising the CFS guide and training materials; and 6) drafting an external assessment system that is integrated into the national e-school system of information management.

One of the major initiatives of the Primary Education Division supported by CFS/UNICEF is the development of standards for primary schools. Since 2008, CFS work focused on the participatory development of minimum standards for primary schools. To date, MoNE has disseminated the draft Primary Education Institution Standards (PEIS) to 81 provinces, developed Standards Management Information Software (SMIS), and prepared a guidebook for using the standards. Piloting the PEIS was set to begin in mid 2010. Planning for and implementing the use of technologies across Turkey's education system and installing the infrastructure across the country to support this is an important development in Turkey and is particularly relevant to the eventual monitoring of standards across the country.

Turkey is demonstrating that national standards that are rooted in the principles and dimensions of CFS can be developed. Using a participatory process, stakeholders

across the system have been involved. Moreover, Turkey is aligning PEIS with its information system, which has the potential to be a powerful tool for monitoring progress towards meeting the standards at the student, school, province, and national level.

2.1.7   Uzbekistan

National Context

Uzbekistan gained independence in 1991 with the fall of the Soviet Union. Uzbekistan is a landlocked country in Central Asia with about 447,400 square kilometers of land. The country is divided into 12 regions, one municipality (Tashkent), and one semi-autonomous republic (Karakalpakstan).

The population as of 2009 was approximately 27.6 million and, according to a 1996 estimate, ethnic groups consist of Uzbek (80%), Russian (5.5%), Tajik (5%), Kazakh (3%), Karakalpak (2.5%), Tatar (1.5%), and other ethnic groups (2.5%). Religious affiliation is predominantly Sunni Muslim (88%), followed by Eastern Orthodox (9%). The dominant language is Uzbek (74.3%), followed by Russian (14%) and Tajik (4.4%). Seven different languages are used in schools as language of instruction (Narolskaya, 2009).

Education Laws and Reforms

After Uzbekistan gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, the government embarked on major education reforms. The Law of Public Education of 1997 was revised in 2007 to include the basic principles of the CRC and CFS, including effectiveness, health, participation, and inclusiveness. The National Programmes on Personal Training (1997) and School Education Development (2004-2009) have increased attention to quality. These reforms focus on: 1) improvement of education standards; 2) increase of qualified teachers; 3) modernization of computers, textbooks, and education materials; 4) increase in participation in physical education; and 5) overhaul of schools and capital investments (UNICEF, 2009b). Most recently (2010) the government has launched a new reform, Harmoniously Developed Generation, which calls for the development and adoption of new standards for continuous education including pre-school child care facilities, secondary special vocational institutions, and higher education.

Two ministries are responsible for the public education system, the Ministry of Public Education (MOPE) and the Ministry of Higher and Special Secondary Education. The system includes compulsory primary education (grades 1 to 4), general

secondary education (grades 5 to 9), and more recently implemented specialized secondary education for grades 10 to 12 (Pfaffe, 2009b).

CFS/QBE

CFS is widespread and has had an impact on teaching and learning throughout Uzbekistan. From a program perspective, CFS can first be traced to two projects: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), a school-based project that promoted children's health and hygiene by encouraging good practices in school and at home; and to GE, a program that focused on training teachers from 2003 to 2006 to use more active and participatory teaching methods and citizenship education. In Uzbekistan, CFS is viewed by many as a continuation of GE.

CFS includes approximately 850 schools in five regions, five regional resource centers, and a national team. It is a collaborative effort among MOPE, UNICEF, In-service Teacher Training Institutes, Pedagogical Institutes, and NGOs. The specific objectives of CFS are: 1) to support the transition to the child-centered educational environment; 2) to set up conditions for collaboration of school, family, and community; and 3) to strengthen school management through decentralization. Since 2008, UNICEF has worked to institutionalize CFS by implementing CFS dimensions of effectiveness ("quality") and inclusion in the pre-service and in-service teacher training institutes and universities.

QBE system-wide standards do not exist in Uzbekistan; however, there is a general perception that the education law and policies are aligned with CFS principles.

2.2   Field Visit Findings

All field visits were conducted under a strict protocol in order to understand the current status of CFS/QBE standards development, implementation, and monitoring. The following section synthesizes the responses to the five central research questions.

2.2.1   Definitions and Understandings of CFS/QBE

Overall, across the seven countries visited, many stakeholders (especially in Ministries of Education) revealed an understanding of a range of the CFS/QBE dimensions. Moldova is the only nation in which the introduction of CFS is relatively new. In Moldova, the stakeholders at the regional and national level had a minimal understanding of CFS/QBE, and at the local level, they spoke of CFS/QBE in terms of existing school programs.

Across countries, stakeholders most frequently described CFS/QBE as embodying the traits of inclusiveness, child-centeredness, and democratic participation. "Inclusiveness" was most typically referred to as the inclusion of students with special needs. There was almost no mention of inclusiveness as it relates to gender, linguistic backgrounds, or those historically or otherwise marginalized from full participation in learning, for any reason. However, teachers in Azerbaijan mentioned the inclusion of girls and a school director in BiH mentioned inclusion of Roma children.

There was some disparity between the understanding of CFS/QBE at the government level and the local level. In Azerbaijan and BiH, government officials described CFS/QBE in vague terms and did not respond with the vocabulary associated with CFS/QBE. Stakeholders at the local level were more articulate in defining the characteristics of a Child-Friendly School.

In certain countries, CFS/QBE is seen as a continuation of an existing program. For Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, CFS/QBE is a continuation of GE and AL, respectively, projects that embodied many of the CFS/QBE characteristics. In Moldova, respondents did not view CFS as a discrete program but pointed to a variety of reforms that are child-friendly, which vary from child-centered methodology to physical renovations of schools, and from national programs for outreach to parents, to curricular and standards reform.

Two countries in particular, BiH and Uzbekistan, prefer to use the term "Quality Basic Education" (QBE) to describe Child-Friendly Schools. In BiH, CFS is viewed as a project initiated by NGOs and sponsored by UNICEF while QBE is seen as a base for statewide effort for education improvement across entities. Uzbekistan prefers QBE because officials believe using the term "child-friendly school" to describe a subset of schools implies that not all schools are child-friendly.

2.2.2   Definitions and Understandings of CFS/QBE Standards

In five of the seven countries visited, stakeholders specifically noted the tension regarding the purpose and use of standards. In many former Soviet Republics, standards are defined as minimum requirements stipulating regulations and norms (i.e., school inspection, building, and health regulations). A competing notion of standards, one that is predominant in the international literature, views standards as a tool for improvement. Standards in this view are defined as broad learning goals that specify what stakeholders should know and be able to do across the education

system. Unlike the former Soviet conception of minimal requirements, these standards are set with high expectations for stakeholders. In order to meet or exceed the standards, supports are in place so that stakeholders can meet or exceed them.

Countries in the region have developed national content standards but the development of CFS/QBE system-level standards is still in the early stages. Turkey and Azerbaijan are the only countries visited (in addition to Macedonia) that have developed CFS system-wide standards. In Turkey, the PEIS have been designed to implement CFS principles into the whole school. PEIS are organized in three standard areas that are aligned with CFS dimensions: 1) education management; 2) learning and teaching; and 3) support services (security, health, nutrition, and hygiene). Each standard area includes standards, sub-standards, and indicators that can be measured and assessed according to a set of rubrics.

The Ministry of Education in Azerbaijan approved Quality Standards for Comprehensive Schools in Azerbaijan in March 2010. CFS principles are embedded in the five core components that are outlined in the standards document: 1) school management; 2) professional development of pedagogical staff; 3) establishment and management of the educational process; 4) personality enhancement of the students; and 5) partnership of the school with parents and community. Azerbaijan's Quality Standards provide a definition of terms, a conceptual basis for standards, standards and indicators, methods and tools for school performance assessment, and self-assessment tools. Both Turkey's and Azerbaijan's standards documents provide a purpose for standards as well as indicators used to assess progress towards meeting that standard.

Armenia is trying to revise its CFS standards framework to ensure that CFS dimensions are consistent, and to include measurable indicators. While the remaining four countries (BiH, Kosovo, Moldova, Uzbekistan) have not developed CFS system-wide standards, there is agreement that CFS/QBE standards are needed and should be developed.

2.2.3   Process of Development and Use of CFS/QBE Standards

Azerbaijan and Turkey, the two countries visited that have CFS/QBE system-wide standards, used a similar process in developing their standards. Both countries established working groups consisting of ministry, higher education personnel, and other education experts; reviewed CFS/QBE standards and relevant standards from

other countries; and adapted and revised existing standards to create their CFS/QBE standards draft.

In Turkey, the PEIS were reviewed by various stakeholders and were revised before piloting based on stakeholders' comments. In Azerbaijan, the standards document will undergo public debate after the pilot and will be revised accordingly. Turkey also will be piloting computer software to monitor and evaluate progress towards PEIS.

In countries without CFS system-wide standards documents, respondents spoke about CFS/QBE standards development in terms of their experience developing academic content standards or of other nations' existing standards efforts. In Moldova and Uzbekistan, the standards development process is similar to that of Turkey and Azerbaijan in that working groups draft standards documents based on examples, elicit feedback from public debates, and make revisions. In Kosovo, the working group worked closely with education experts and with stakeholders to develop its Early Learning Development Standards. In BiH, stakeholders repeatedly noted that the standards development process needs to be participatory and that communicating information to stakeholders about standards is critical. The key word used in BiH to describe the development of standards was "transparency."

While each country is at a different stage in terms of CFS/QBE standards development, each country articulated the need for involving key stakeholders in the process. Countries that are further along in the process looked for examples of CFS/QBE standards that had been created in other countries and developed a process for implementing and revising the process.

2.2.4 Monitoring Progress Towards CFS/QBE Standards

Across all countries, a national system for collecting, analyzing, and using CFS/QBE quality data does not yet exist; however, Turkey has been building the infrastructure for a national system for the past 10 years. Stakeholders in BiH note that they have limited capacity to gather, analyze, and use data for improvement efforts. Similarly, respondents in Uzbekistan indicate that they lack a system for the collection of data.

One impediment to developing such a system is that on a cultural level data are perceived as a means to rank and punish rather than to inform and improve. Azerbaijan and Moldova have monitoring tools that are used at the school level to monitor student learning but their systems do not evaluate progress towards meeting or exceeding system-wide CFS/QBE standards. Azerbaijan's Quality Standards for Comprehensive Schools document defines monitoring and assessment, and it

appears that progress towards CFS standards will be evaluated at the school level through self-assessment activities that include a range of stakeholders.

Turkey has developed software in conjunction with PEIS, which will allow administrators, teachers, students, and parents to input data into the e-school system and engage in school self-assessments. To help with the evaluation and monitoring, the MoNE in Turkey proposed to develop a dedicated unit within the Ministry for standards information called the Unit for Access and Quality. While self-assessments will take place at the school level, the MoNE plans to use their SMIS to monitor progress at the student, school, province, and national levels.

In the remaining four countries (BiH, Kosovo, Moldova, Uzbekistan), stakeholders talked about monitoring and evaluation in terms of student learning outcomes or in relation to their curriculum. Stakeholders did not discuss monitoring and evaluation in relation to the national context of assessing progress towards system-wide standards. However, Uzbekistan has developed a checklist adapted from CFS Thailand for school self-assessment built around CFS dimensions that go beyond student learning outcomes to include security and child protection; quality instruction; increased professionalism of teachers; and participation of children in school life.

While monitoring and evaluation is not systematic, countries in the region – especially Turkey and Azerbaijan – are moving towards a more systematic way of monitoring progress towards system-wide education goals.

2.2.5 Opportunities for Integrating CFS/QBE Principles into National Standards

New education initiatives in the seven countries visited provide national ministries of education with the opportunity to incorporate CFS/QBE principles into national standards. Turkey's PEIS are an example of how CFS/QBE dimensions have been integrated into national standards, and Azerbaijan's Quality Standards for Comprehensive Schools are an example of how CFS/QBE can influence national standards. Similarly, education ministries in Kosovo and Uzbekistan claim consistency between national policies and CFS principles. Moldova also reported the embedding of CFS principles into its proposed education law. BiH, which has the most complicated national structure, also appears to be considering integrating CFS into national standards. Respondents in BiH cautioned that the implementation, not the development, of CFS standards across the country could be problematic since there are no structures in place to support state initiatives.

Those countries that are not yet integrating CFS/QBE standards into national standards efforts, or do not yet have CFS/QBE standards, have other initiatives that could offer direction. For example, Moldova is working on system-wide standards based on the EU competences for life-long learning (European Communities, 2007). Kosovo and Moldova are using ELD Standards (Kagan & Britto, 2005); and BiH is using Step by Step standards for early childhood and the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2002) in selected schools. While these initiatives may be small in scale, they provide a model of how standards that embed CFS principles are developed and can be used to improve education for children.

Elements of CFS/QBE are apparent in all countries; however, the countries are at various stages in terms of integrating CFS principles and dimensions into national policies, programs, and curriculum. Opportunities exist in every country for more deliberate integration of CFS/QBE principles and dimensions into existing education laws, frameworks, and curriculum standards documents. The next section elaborates a conceptual framework that defines terms and identifies essential elements of a standards-based system rooted in the CRC, a framework designed to assist countries of the region and beyond in engaging this cross-national discussion of improving education for all children.

PART 3. A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE REGION

1.   Background and Purpose of the Conceptual Framework

As mentioned, the development of child-friendly, system-wide standards varies among countries in the CEE/CIS region. Most countries in the region have academic and content standards but are in the early stages of developing system-wide standards for Child-Friendly Schools. While the 2009 CFS Manual provides global principles, strategies, and good practices for establishing Child-Friendly Schools, it does not offer guidance on how to create a set of standards and indicators that a particular country can use as a tool to improve its educational quality.

The purpose of the Conceptual Framework is to deepen stakeholder understanding of the elements of a standards-based system that is grounded in the CRC. The Conceptual Framework does not dictate the format or content of standards documents, staying true to CFS/QBE's original conception as a flexible framework and a "pathway along which schools and education systems endeavor to travel in the quest to promote quality in education" (UNICEF, 2009a).

The Conceptual Framework defines terms related to standards and illuminates the essential elements of a CFS/QBE standards based system. It offers a conceptual foundation so countries can develop CFS/QBE standards that are most relevant to their own contexts.[8] Further, it provides the common language needed for countries throughout the region to come together to discuss, share, and learn from each others' standards development efforts to develop standards that will enable them ultimately to provide a quality education for all children.

2.   Definition of Terms

A common understanding of the terms related to standards can facilitate communication about reform efforts within and among countries. UNESCO, in its work towards quality education for all, illuminates the importance of a common language within the international community, noting that a common language "by many countries would strengthen each country's internal dialogue and planning processes" (UNESCO, 2009, p.7). This Conceptual Framework seeks to build common definitions so that countries in the region will be able to speak to each other, without confusion about their standards development, implementation, and revision

---

[8] The Road Map in Part 4 provides practical guidelines for creating and/or revising standards.

processes and, through this dialogue, strengthen each country's internal planning towards improving education quality.

Prior to the March 2010 workshop convened by the RO in Istanbul, Clair (2010g) reviewed the literature related to standards and noted variations in the ways that terms have been defined since the inception of educational standards globally in the mid-1990s. She created a list of terms and definitions that were presented at the workshop to begin building a common vocabulary and understanding of the concepts related to standards (Clair, 2010g). The intent of the definition of terms below was to identify and capture the underlying concept of each term.

Standards: Broad goal statements that define a set of expectations; a set of statements that define what stakeholders should know and be able to do across an educational system. Standards are high expectations as opposed to minimal requirements. Most countries have some kind of standards for quality basic education in order to measure progress, improve planning and resource allocation, and evaluate effectiveness. In CFS countries, standards are developed and grouped by CFS dimensions.

Dimensions: Concepts that emanate from the CFS principles and assist in organizing the standards. CFS dimensions include but are not limited to health, safety, protection; participation; effectiveness; inclusiveness; and gender-responsiveness.

Domains, components, strands, topics, categories, areas: Words that are sometimes used interchangeably, or in varying levels of subordination to describe different categories of content; a way to organize or group standards (e.g., in Early Learning and Development Standards [Kagan & Britto, 2005], "language and literacy development" is a domain).

Indicators: Observable actions, behaviors or other evidence that show the presence, state or condition of something related to the standard. Indicators may relate to input (e.g., there is one textbook for each child); process (e.g., stakeholders develop procedures for school site councils); and outcome (e.g., school council approved school budget allocations). Indicators may be used to measure progress towards meeting the standard.[9]

---

[9] UNESCO uses the same definition of the term "indicator" as the one proposed above: indicators are "useful for measuring progress towards the quality goal" (UNESCO, 2009, p. 7).

Benchmarks: *Observable actions or evidence that measures progress towards meeting the standard.*[10]

Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation System: *A mechanism to provide stakeholders at all levels with ongoing information of progress being made.* Monitoring involves: (a) establishing indicators/benchmarks; (b) establishing procedures, systems and tools to collect, record, and analyze information on the indicators; (c) using the information to improve planning, performance, and outcomes. In addition, monitoring and evaluation systems must be fair, valid, and reliable.

Providing definition of terms in standards efforts is an important step in producing a shared understanding of standards so countries can exchange information and learn from one another.

3.   Essential Elements of a Standards-based System

Diagram 1 (below) visually represents the essential elements of the CFS/QBE standards-based system and pictorially captures the relationship and interdependencies between the CRC principles, CFS/QBE dimensions, standards, indicators, and assessments. It is important to note that these elements are minimally required for any standards-based system.

---

[10] ISSA uses the term indicator in place of benchmark. An indicator is "a measure that describes performance related to standards and other aspects of the education system" (ISSA, 2002, p. 45).

Diagram 1: Essential Elements of a CFS/QBE Standards-Based System

Key Principles from CRC

Dimensions

Regional/Country Context **Regional/Country Context**

**System-wide
CFS/QBE Standards**

Indicators/Benchmarks

**System-wide
Monitoring, Evaluation,
and Assessment
Strategy and Tools**

Regional/Country Context
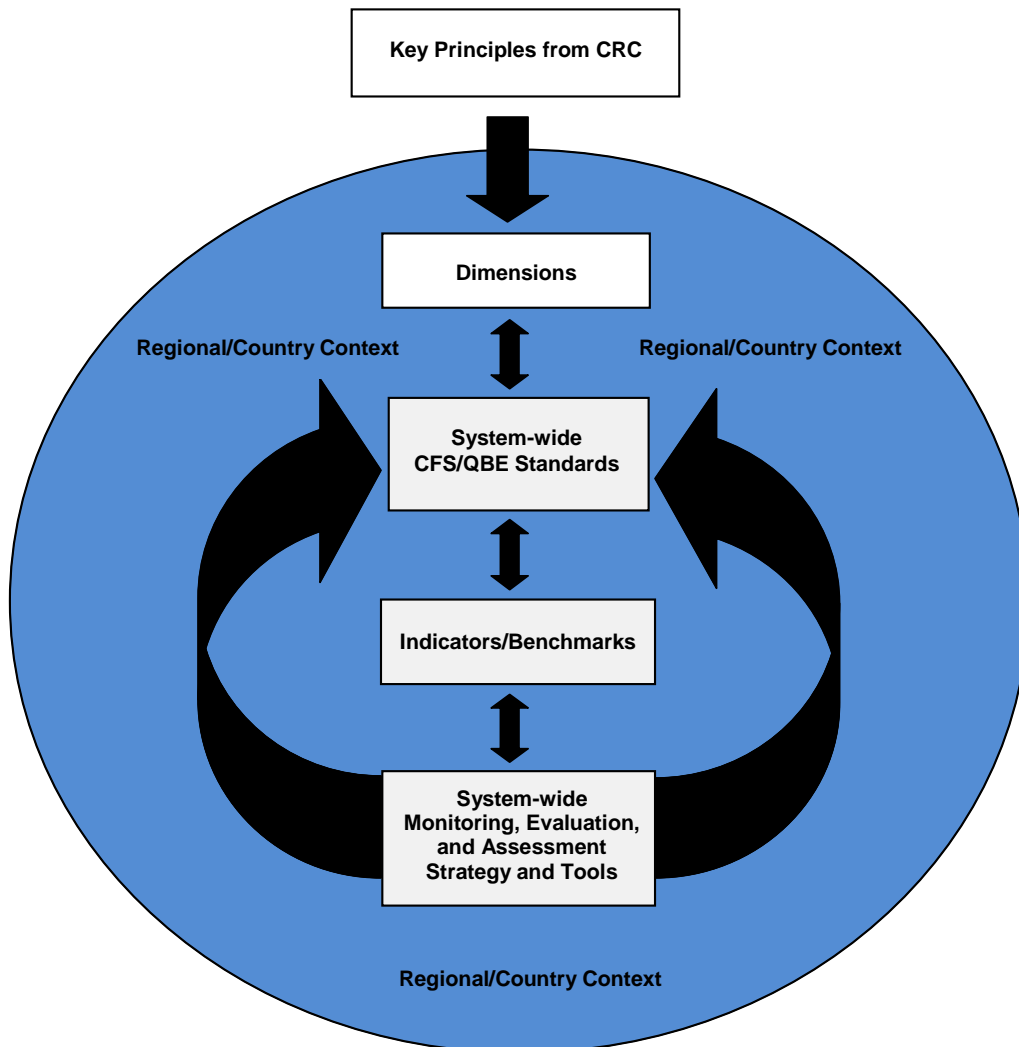
As shown, the CRC principles (access, quality, respect) are external influences of CFS/QBE dimensions (health, safety, protection; participation; effectiveness; inclusiveness; gender-responsiveness). The relationship between a child's access to education, the quality of that education, and the respect for a child's rights are illuminated by the CFS/QBE philosophy. The application of CFS/QBE dimensions in each country and region looks different due to the varying national contexts; therefore, Diagram 1 shows the standards development process taking place within a blue circle, visually representing the importance of regional or country context in the development of standards.

Within the blue circle are four boxes representing the elements of the CFS/QBE standards-based system, all of which account for regional and country context. The first element is the CFS/QBE dimensions, which are the philosophical components that comprise a Child-Friendly School. The CFS/QBE dimensions capture a

worldwide philosophy and are implemented in country-specific ways. For example, Macedonia added a sixth dimension – an explicit respect for children's rights and multiculturalism – in response to its socio-historical context. Similarly, China added "harmonious" to the democratic participation dimension, to ensure relationships between stakeholders are amicable and further student learning.

In order to fulfill these country-specific dimensions, there is a need for a second element – country-specific, system-wide standards. Each standard is a broad goal statement that defines what stakeholders should know and be able to do in order to fulfill a CFS/QBE dimension. Like the CFS/QBE dimensions, the format of the standards depends on the country context. In Azerbaijan a separate document specifying CFS/QBE standards has been developed, while Turkey has chosen to embed CFS/QBE standards within its existing Primary Education Institutional Standards.

Standards are further broken down into a third element – indicators or benchmarks (observable actions) – that are used to measure progress towards fulfilling the standards. Indicators or benchmarks provide digestible, actionable steps that need be accomplished in order to fulfill a particular standard. While the terms "indicators" and "benchmarks" are sometimes used interchangeably, they are slightly different. Both indicators and benchmarks are observable actions and behaviors related to standards. However, benchmarks are slightly different from indicators because they are observable actions used to monitor progress towards meeting or exceeding standards.

The fourth element of the CFS/QBE standards-based system is an assessment, and/or monitoring and evaluation system. Like the other three elements, the monitoring and evaluation system depends on the country context; specifically, the capacity within the country to create and implement a monitoring system with tools that are reliable, valid, and fair. While it is beyond the scope of this study to discuss the details of an effective monitoring and evaluation system, it is important to note that one of the purposes of creating standards is to monitor and evaluate progress towards meeting or exceeding the standards. Monitoring and evaluation serve other purposes as well, such as determining the allocation of resources and creating accountability at the national, district, school, and student level.

The two-way arrows in Diagram 1 indicate the reciprocal relationship among the elements. CRC principles drive the establishment of worldwide CFS/QBE

dimensions and the CFS/QBE dimensions drive the creation of country-specific, system-wide standards and indicators. However, the standards development and/or revision process is not necessarily linear. Standards, for example may influence how dimensions are defined, just as the indicators and/or benchmarks will influence how the standards are written and the monitoring tools are designed. Measuring progress towards fulfilling the CFS/QBE dimensions and CRC principles occurs from the bottom up – that is, from the students and teachers in the school classroom or learning space up through the system to the highest levels of the education system bureaucracy. Indicators and benchmarks must be met or exceeded for standards to be reached, and standards must be satisfied for the accomplishment of CFS/QBE dimensions and CRC principles to be realized.

Diagram 1 outlines the framework specific to a CFS/QBE standards-based system; however, the same framework can be used to establish any set of standards documents, including academic content or performance standards and early learning and development standards. Effectiveness, one of the CFS dimensions (e.g., in literacy, numeracy, and life skills) is an essential component of education and learning for all. As with CFS standards, indicators and benchmarks in these content areas must be met or exceeded for standards to be reached, and standards must be satisfied for the accomplishment of the effectiveness dimension and the CRC principle of quality education for *all* to be realized.

4.   Interrelationship of Terms and Subordination

The terms that comprise the CFS/QBE standards-based system are interrelated in a hierarchical manner. Diagram 2 visually depicts the subordination of the terms in which principles provide the broadest category from which standards are developed, and indicators and benchmarks present the most detailed, concrete observable actions used as evidence for determining whether the standards have been met or exceeded.

Diagram 2: Subordination of Terms
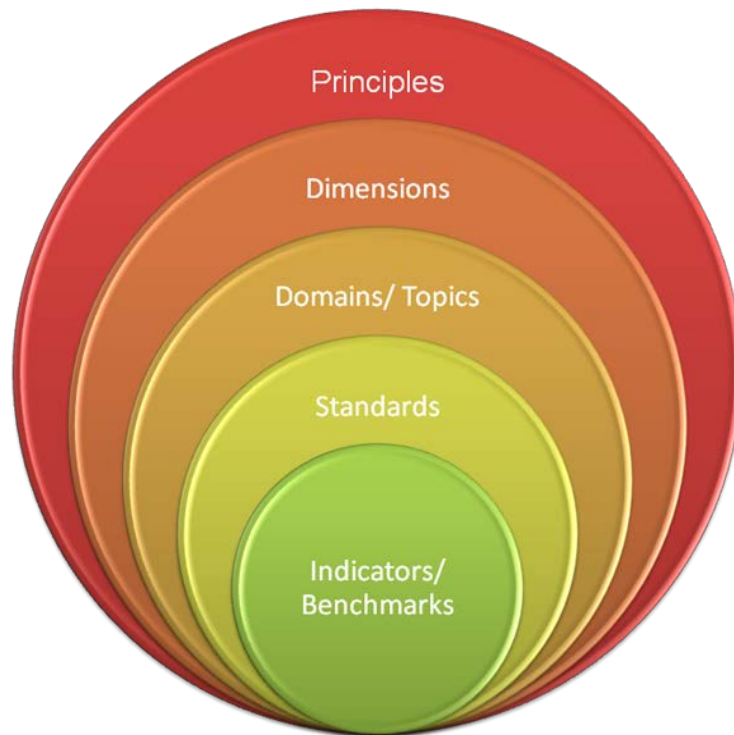
As represented by the largest red circle, principles are created first and state the broadest category in which the standards will fit. Principles provide high level guidance for the development of dimensions, domains/topics, standards, and indicators/benchmarks. As stated earlier, the broad CRC principles led to the creation of the CFS/QBE dimensions. The dimensions, in turn, provide more detail about the principles of access, quality, and respect.

The size of the circles in Diagram 2 inversely mirrors the degree of detail that each level of the standards development process offers. As the circles become smaller, the level of detail gradually increases. After dimensions, which are slightly more specific than principles, come the domains. As stated in the section on definitions, the terms domains, components, strands, topics, areas, and categories frequently are used synonymously. Having domains in addition to dimensions can support the organization of the standards document.

Domains/topics vary more widely than the CFS dimensions. The CFS Manual (UNICEF, 2009a) and CFS/QBE standards from Azerbaijan and Turkey illuminate the variation of domains and topics. For example, the CFS Manual proposes these domains (called "features"): school construction; schools and community; school environment; learners, teachers and school managers; and monitoring and evaluation. Azerbaijan uses these categories: school management, professional

development, personality enhancement of the student, and partnerships with family and community. Turkey uses these standard "areas": education management, teaching and learning, and support for students. Domains are optional and are used as way to further organize the standards, indicators, and benchmarks. Table 2 (below) shows the variation that exists between domains in the different standards documents.

Table 2: Domains (Components, Strands, Topics, Categories, Area): CFS Manual, Azerbaijan and Turkey Standards

Standards Documents →	CFS Manual	Azerbaijan	Turkey
Domains, (Components, Strands, Topics, Categories, Areas) ↓	1) school construction 2) schools and community 3) school environment 4) learners, teachers, and school managers 5) monitoring and evaluation	1) school management 2) professional development 3) personality enhancement of the student 4) partnerships with family and community	1) education management 2) teaching and learning 3) support for students

The next level of detail is the standards, which provide more specificity on how the dimensions and, more broadly, the principles, will be accomplished. For example, in Macedonia's CFS/QBE Standards (CFS National Expert Team, 2007, & Miske, 2007) under the Inclusiveness dimension, the standard "All children attend school regardless of their background or ability" offers a more detailed picture of what needs to occur to achieve inclusiveness. Indicators and benchmarks provide the most detail on what actions need to be taken for the standard, dimension, and principle to be achieved.

Continuing with the Macedonia example, an indicator such as "The school has a list of school age children in the region, regardless of whether they are enrolled in school or not, and the school provides suitable, safe and reasonably priced transport to school" provides measureable, observable actions that a school must complete

before it can be deemed as inclusive. Table 3 contrasts the level of detail for a dimension, standard, and indicators.

Table 3: CFS Baseline Study Indicators from Macedonia: Dimension, Standard and Indicators[11]

Dimension	Standard	Indicators
Inclusiveness	All children attend school regardless of their background or ability	▪ The school has a list of all school aged children in the region, regardless of whether they are enrolled in school or not ▪ The school provides suitable, safe and reasonably priced transport to school

In sum, the terms principles, dimensions, domains, standards, indicators, and benchmarks are dependent on one another to provide a coherent picture of what the education system must do to accomplish its goals. The principles and dimensions provide the broadest view of what must be accomplished. However, principles and dimensions are useless without understanding the steps needed to accomplish them. Those details and specifications come from standards, indicators, and benchmarks. Each element – principles, dimensions, standards, indicators/benchmarks – is essential and useful *only* if it is accompanied by the other components. It is the full set of elements from the principle to the indicators and benchmarks that provides the holistic guidance necessary to improve child-friendly practices. (See Annex C for an example of standards and indicators developed for each of Macedonia's six dimensions.)

5.   Existing Standards: The Conceptual Framework in Action

The following section provides an overview and brief analysis of four existing sets of standards that are being studied and used on a small scale in some countries in the CEE/CIS region. Kosovo, Macedonia, and Moldova are using the Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS); Bosnia and Herzegovina are studying International Step by Step Association (ISSA) standards; and Moldova is studying the Lisbon

---

[11] From *Child-Friendly Schools: A situation analysis for FYR Macedonia (Draft).* (2007). CFS National Expert Team & S. Miske (p. 1).

Objectives (Clair, Miske, & Patel, 2010). Finally, Macedonia's draft CFS/QBE standards are presented as well.

In addition to being used in the region, the ELD and ISSA standards are presented here because they are well-designed and have been implemented successfully in a variety of contexts outside the region, making them outstanding examples. The Lisbon Objectives are presented because, like the CFS/QBE standards framework, it is a regional document framing the educational goals of every country in Europe. Since the Lisbon Objectives are a broad framework that must cater to several countries with varying economies and cultures, the document provides useful guidance for this Conceptual Framework, which must also gain the support of a diverse group of countries. Macedonia's CFS/QBE draft standards are presented to show how a draft CFS/QBE standards document from the region is aligned with the conceptual framework.

The ELD, ISSA, and Macedonia's CFS/QBE standards and the Lisbon Objectives target a different audience for different purposes, and use different terms to describe their standards. However, all four sets of standards are conceptually and structurally aligned with the CFS/QBE Conceptual Framework. This demonstrates the power of this Conceptual Framework for providing a foundation for CEE/CIS countries as they develop or refine their CFS/QBE system-wide standards.

5.1 Early Learning and Development Standards

Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) are statements that describe expectations for children's behavior and performance across several domains, including: language and literacy development; social and emotional development; motor development; logic and reasoning; and approaches to learning (Kagan & Britto, 2005). The ELDS contain the following elements: domains, standards, indicators, benchmarks, and learning activities. The domain is the broad educational area under which the standards are being developed. Standards are goals indicating what a stakeholder (e.g., student, teacher, parent) should be able to accomplish within the particular domain. The indicators, benchmarks, and learning activities provide detailed specifications for achieving the standard.

Diagram 3 (below) represents the similarities between ELDS and the CFS/QBE Conceptual Framework. While elements of the ELDS framework are referred to by different terms, the purpose and use of ELDS elements coincide with the CFS/QBE Conceptual Framework.

Diagram 3: ELD and the QBE/CFS Conceptual Framework

QBE/CFS Standards
- Principle
  - Dimension
  - Domain
  - Standards
  - Indicators/Benchmarks

ELD Standards
- Guiding Principle
  - Domain
  - Standards
  - Indicators
  - Benchmarks
  - Learning Activities
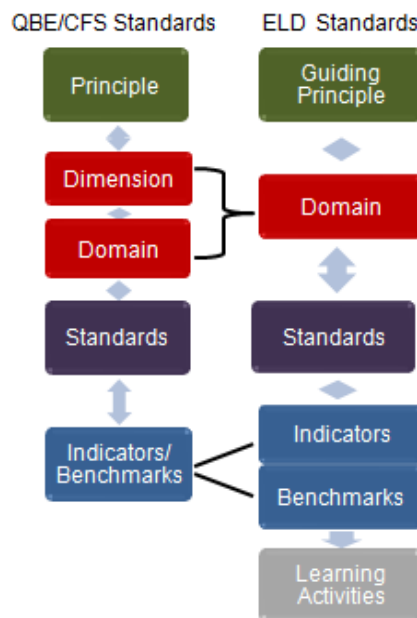
Like the CFS/QBE conceptual framework, ELDS begin with overarching, guiding principles that drive the creation of domains, standards, indicators, and benchmarks. As shown in the diagram, ELDS domains serve the same purpose as the CFS/QBE dimensions and domains in providing further detail about the essential categories to which standards should align. Both frameworks include standards, which provide a set of goal statements that define what stakeholders should know and be able to do across an educational system. Unlike the CFS/QBE standards framework, ELDS provides indicators and benchmarks separately to divide the observable actions included within a standards area from the observable actions used to monitor progress towards meeting or exceeding standards. Finally, ELDS offers one more level of detail than the CFS/QBE standards framework by defining learning activities that explicitly state activities teachers can do with students to achieve a standard.

While variation exists between the two standards structures, the underlying conceptual frameworks are similar. Both start out with broad, guiding principles and progressively become more detailed in the actions and behaviors stakeholders must take to meet or exceed standards and ultimately to fulfill the guiding principles.

5.2   International Step by Step Association

ISSA "shares the vision of early childhood services as a life space where educators, children, and families work together to promote well-being, development, and learning based on the principles of democratic participation" (International Step by Step Association, 2009, p. 7). ISSA functions under six core principles that coincide closely with CFS/QBE's five dimensions, and like CFS/QBE, were created under the

framework of the CRC (International Step by Step Association, 2009). These core principles are:

1) Equal access to education and care opportunities
2) Child-centered, individualized teaching
3) A holistic approach to the child's development
4) Inclusion
5) The significant role of families and community involvement
6) Culturally appropriate learning environments and approaches

In order to create high quality educational programs, ISSA implements the Step by Step Program (SbS) and has developed ISSA Pedagogical Standards to guide teacher instruction and bring quality education to pre-primary aged children. ISSA Pedagogical Standards create goals for teachers regarding child-centered approaches to teaching so teachers know what and how they should be teaching.

Diagram 4 (below) indicates how the ISSA Pedagogical Standards align with the CFS/QBE conceptual framework. As mentioned above, both CFS/QBE and ISSA Pedagogical Standards are grounded in the CRC principles.

Diagram 4: ISSA and the QBE/CFS Conceptual Framework
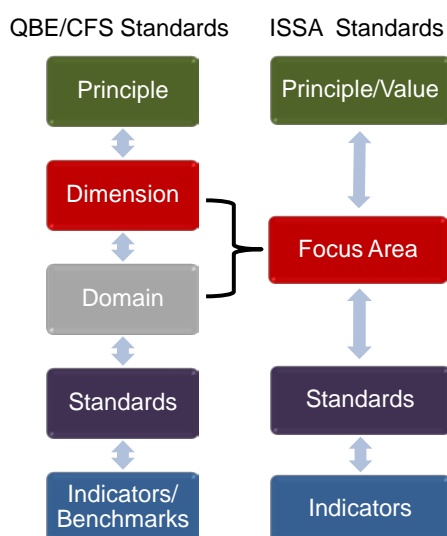
ISSA created seven focus areas that support a child's learning and development: 1) interactions; 2) family and community; 3) inclusion, diversity, and values of democracy; 4) assessment and planning; 5) teaching strategies; 6) learning environment; and 7) professional development (International Step by Step

Association, 2009, p. 15). To ensure teachers teach in a manner that corresponds with ISSA's core principles, the seven key areas listed above were identified to provide guidance in organizing standards. Like CFS/QBE, these seven key areas are broken down into measurable standards or goals and each standard has a set of actionable indicators that must be achieved in order for the standard to be met or exceeded. The CFS/QBE Conceptual Framework and the ISSA Pedagogical standards operate under closely aligned frameworks. The only differences are the collapse of the CFS/QBE dimension/domain into a focus area in the ISSA Pedagogical Standards, and a slight variation in the vocabulary used to describe the elements of the CFS/QBE standards framework.

5.3   Lisbon Objectives

The Lisbon Objectives (European Commission, 2000) identify four main areas or domains: attainment; success and transition; monitoring of school education; and resources and structure. Within these four main categories, 16 indicators were developed to provide "quantifiable targets" that provide a means to compare best practices across countries and establish a tool for monitoring progress.[12]

Diagram 5 (below) shows how the Lisbon Objectives coincide with the CFS/QBE standards framework. Both operate under a set of domains, referred to as "areas" in the Lisbon Objectives document. As noted above, the Lisbon Objectives developed 16 quality indicators that provide broad goal statements and set expectations for stakeholders. Following the definitions presented in this document, the term "indicator" in the Lisbon Objectives is synonymous with the term "standard" used in the Conceptual Framework. This illustrates vividly how terms can be used differently while the underlying concepts associated with the terms remain clear.   As visually represented in Diagram 5, the Lisbon Objectives' 16 indicators are synonymous with and provide the same function as standards in the CFS/QBE framework.

---

[12] The European Report on the Quality of School Education: Sixteen Quality Indicators (2000) represents the first response to the European Commission (EC) meeting in Lisbon, 2000. Since 2000, the EC has issued a number of progress reports building on this original work.

Diagram 5: Lisbon Objectives and the QBE/CFS Conceptual Framework

QBE/CFS Standards   Lisbon Objectives

Principle

Dimension ——— Area

Domain

Standards   Indicators

Indicators/
Benchmarks   Benchmarks

Examples of
Practice
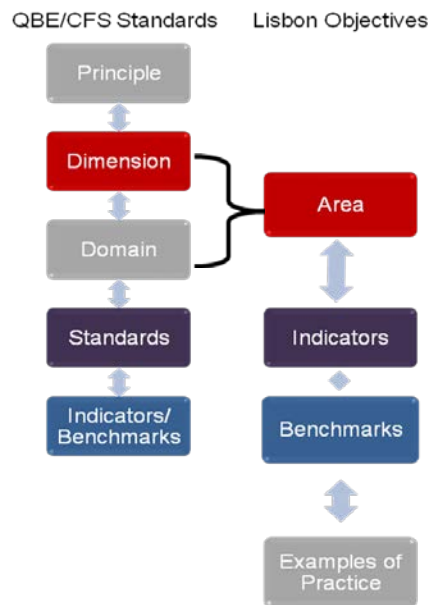
The Lisbon Objectives 16 indicators (standards) are further refined into benchmarks
that provide reference points on progress towards meeting standards similar to the
function of CFS/QBE standards document's indicators/benchmarks. The Lisbon
Objectives' "benchmarks are used to identify issues which need to be investigated
further, and to suggest alternative routes to policy goals" (European Commission,
2000, p. 7). As shown in Diagram 5, the CFS/QBE framework and the Lisbon
Objectives are similarly structured with only slight variation in term use. The Lisbon
Objectives provide a further level of detail in the "examples of practice," which is not
contained in the CFS/QBE Conceptual Framework.

Like the CFS/QBE Framework, the Lisbon Objectives provide a regional framework
of objectives and goals that can be accomplished in a variety of ways depending on
country context. The goal of both documents is to provide guidance to countries in
meeting standards and, ultimately, to improve the quality of education regionally.

PART 4. A ROAD MAP FOR STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT AND REVISION

The first three sections of this study provide the basis for the Road Map, which includes the steps and considerations necessary for developing system-wide CFS/QBE standards. Like the Conceptual Framework, the Road Map is a flexible tool that allows countries with differing political, social, cultural, and economic situations to adapt the standards development process to their unique situations.

## 1.	Purpose of the Road Map

The purpose of the Road Map is to provide countries with a participatory process in developing, refining, or revising CFS/QBE system-wide standards. As with the Conceptual Framework, the Road Map is meant to serve as a guide, not a mandate, to assist countries at varying stages of the standards development process. Given the range of progress in standards development, the Road Map provides a flexible process that can be adopted at any stage of the standards development process. While the Conceptual Framework outlines the essential elements and structure of a standards-based system, the Road Map offers principles, decisions, steps, and recommendations to create a participatory process by which country-specific CFS/QBE standards can be developed, refined, or revised.

## 2.	Contents of the Road Map

The Road Map offers concrete guidance to countries beginning the CFS/QBE standards development process and to countries in the revision and refinement stage of standards development. The Road Map begins with a review of pertinent literature from standards development efforts worldwide. Three standards development efforts: are highlighted: 1) The Common Core Standards (National Governors Association & The Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010) represent a large-scale development effort in the United States that illustrates how a state-led standards development process serves a national interest. 2) The Development of National Standards in Germany (Klierne et al., 2004) also illuminates a national and state-wide effort within a European context. 3) The ELDS highlight well-written standards that go beyond academic content and are familiar to some of the countries of the CEE/CIS region.

Following the discussion of these major standards efforts, the Road Map is presented and sets forth guiding principles, decisions, stages, and steps that are grounded in the literature and practice and are necessary to create a participatory process for standards development efforts. A final section on general recommendations for standards development proposes next steps for each country to consider in developing its action plans, which keep in focus the importance of children's rights in the center of CFS/QBE standards work.

3. Standards Development Efforts in the Literature: Guidelines, Steps, and Decisions

The three examples of standards development efforts come from distinct contexts and have different content. The key message to be derived from the comparison and contrast of the three cases is that regardless of the differences in context and content, the development of successful standards in each case follows a similar path to development.

McLaughlin, Sheppard, and O'Day (1995) outline four central guidelines for the standards development process:

1) Use existing research knowledge
2) Pay constant attention to equity issues
3) Foster a shared sense of responsibility among all stakeholders
4) Implement ongoing evaluation and improvement of the system

These four guidelines underlie standards development processes. For example, ISSA Pedagogical Standards follow the four guidelines in these ways: 1) The standards are grounded in existing research knowledge and in the educational theory of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Piaget, Bruner, Erikson, Dewey, Kamensky, and Vygotsky. 2) ISSA's mission calls attention to equitable education, and the ISSA standards aim to fulfill the goal of "quality care and educational services for all children from birth through primary school, *with a focus on the poorest and most disadvantaged*" (emphasis ours; International Step by Step Association, 2009, p. 8). 3) The ISSA standards were created by a diverse group of educators (i.e., by experts in the CEE/CIS region and worldwide) and, as evidence of the intent to share responsibility among stakeholders, ISSA notes that the standards have "served as a basis for professional discussions and encouraged teachers, program managers, educational authorities, and others to follow the developments in the field and the changing situation and needs in the region" (International Step by Step Association,

2009, p. 8). 4) Finally, ISSA believes deeply that standards are not static documents; they must be revised based on experiences. ISSA has developed an updated set of pedagogical standards based on the knowledge and experience of stakeholders.

Box 1. Central Guidelines for the Standards Development Process

1. Use existing research knowledge
2. Pay constant attention to equity issues
3. Foster a shared sense of responsibility among all stakeholders
4. Implement ongoing evaluation and improvement of the system

McLaughlin, Sheppard, and O'Day (1995)

In order to achieve a standards document embodying these four guiding principles, Marzano and Kendall (1996), in their work with content standards, suggest eight process steps for achieving effective standards (p. 42). The steps have been adapted below for the development of CFS/QBE system-wide standards. (See Box 2.)

Box 2. Process Steps for Achieving Effective Standards

Step 1: Organize a steering committee to guide the standards-setting efforts

Step 2: Ensure that the standards and indicators/benchmarks are written by those with expertise

Step 3: Present the first draft of the standards to a group that comprises educators and community members who are non-educators

Step 4: Ask the educators and non-educators for feedback on additions, deletions, and changes to the first draft

Step 5: Give suggested additions, deletions, and changes to the steering committee and specialists to produce a second draft

Step 6: Present the second draft to a representative sample of stakeholders for review and comment

Step 7: Use stakeholder input on the second draft to create a third draft

Step 8: Present the third draft to the community at large

Adapted by N. Clair from Marzano and Kendall (1996, p. 42)

This process is illustrated and the eight steps are further elaborated in the examples below.

3.1 The Common Core State Standards (United States): A Large-Scale Effort

In May 2010, educators across the United States completed a multi-year process in the development of the Common Core State Standards to be implemented voluntarily (with strong incentives) in all 50 states. This example shows that the process proposed by Marzano and Kendall (1996), which encompasses the guiding principles outlined by McLaughlin, Sheppard, and O'Day (1995), is relevant for large-scale standards development efforts.

The Common Core Standards are grounded in exemplary standards and relevant research. Equity was an important component of the standards development process and attention was given to ensuring expectations were consistent for all. Additionally, collaboration of various stakeholders was important. Following Marzano and Kendall's steps one through three, core writing teams came together to draft the standards while receiving ongoing feedback from external feedback teams. The standards were then released for public comment via the internet and face-to-face meetings, validated by a committee of experts, and released as a final standards document. Currently, the standards are being adopted by the states. The adoption process is voluntary with strong monetary incentives in place for those states that adopt them.

The process the developers used to create common standards closely follows the process suggested by Marzano and Kendall in which stakeholders are brought into the process at different stages to provide valuable feedback to the experts writing the standards. While community involvement is essential for support or "buy-in", Marzo and Kendall (1996) caution against premature community involvement: "[T]he [standards] development process is a technical one making the premature involvement of the community at large a precarious endeavor" (p. 44). The importance of expertise is further demonstrated through the development of the National Education Standards (NES) in Germany.

3.2 National Education Standards (Germany): The Importance of Expertise

The decline of PISA and TIMMS scores in Germany initiated a fundamental shift in thinking with regard to the education system and the role of the national government (Klierne et al., 2004). While federal states continue to be responsible for establishing state standards, implementing them in schools, providing support to schools, and

evaluating them, in 2002, the Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK) – Germany's ministers of education and cultural affairs – introduced the idea of standards as a national framework for the country. Following the introduction of this national framework, standards development teams produced primary school standards for German language and for mathematics.

In general terms, the KMK followed the standards development steps presented by Marzano and Kendall (1996) with particular emphasis on ensuring that standards developers have sufficient expertise (step 2). In preparing for standards development, the KMK began by reviewing existing state-level documents, other national standards efforts such as the US-based Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics (NCTM, 1989), and the Common European Framework for Reference in Languages, Learning, Teaching and Assessment (Council of Europe, 2000). The KMK created guidelines for working groups (comprising experts from state institutes for teacher education and curriculum development) to draft the planned national standards and assessments.

The KMK sees structures for developing and revising standards, devising assessments based on the standards, and running an education monitoring program as the responsibility of the national government. However, these tasks require significant expertise in various areas – not only in content but also in child and adolescent development, assessment, evaluation and measurement. For expertise in these areas, the KMK turns to scientific institutions, universities, and academic organizations and outsources particular tasks to them (Klierne et al., 2004). The German experience emphasizes the importance of expertise (Step 2, Marzano & Kendall) throughout the development of the NES.

3.3   Early Learning Development Standards: Three Phases and Decisions

As described throughout this report, the ELDS exemplify a standards effort that is in use in some of the CEE/CIS countries. The process for developing the ELDS standards applies to the development of any standards. Kagan and Britto (2005) identify a three-step process for standards development:

1) Initial Decision Making answers these questions: What are the guiding principles? Who should be involved? What domains should be included? What age range will the standards cover? What is the format of the standards? What is a realistic time line for completion?

2) Developing Standards: Develop standards based on current information and

practice with the assistance of expert consultants. The process is iterative so revise and reflect often on the written standards.

3) Validating Standards: Ensure that the standards are appropriate in terms of content and age level.

In going through this process, it is imperative that the right political climate exist to support the creation of new standards and to provide the resources necessary for implementation. Additionally, a few key individuals who have a clear understanding of the overarching standards framework are needed to advance the effort (Kagan & Britto, 2005).

While Kagan and Britto (2005) distil the standards development process into a three-step process, their process contains many of the elements Marzano and Kendall (2006) suggest. Kagan and Britto propose an initial decision-making step similar to that of Marzano and Kendall in which they suggest building an expert steering committee to make the initial decisions and create the guiding principles, domains, and standards. In the development of standards, Kagan and Britto (2005) suggest an iterative process with continual revision and reflection. Marzano and Kendall's process mirrors this iterative process with steps 3 through 8 recommending the gathering of feedback from key stakeholders and revising standards based on feedback.

In addition to mirroring Marzano and Kendall's standards development process, Kagan and Britto's process contains the guiding principles proposed by McLaughlin, Sheppard, and O'Day (1995). Abiding by the first principle of using existing research and the third principle calling for the involvement of stakeholders, Kagan and Britto propose the grounding of standards in "current information and practices" with the support of experts. Additionally, both Kagan and Britto (2005) and McLaughlin, Sheppard, and O'Day (1995) identify the standards development process as iterative and requiring validation.

3.4   Similarities among the Examples

The Common Core (U.S.) Standards, National Education Standards (Germany), and the ELDS each present a standards development process within a different context and with different content. The Common Core and German National Standards are large-scale efforts that focus on academic content.[13] The ELDS focus on early learning standards, which include development in areas such as language and

---

[13] Academic content standards are included in the CFS dimension of effectiveness.

literacy, social and emotional, motor, logic and reasoning, and approaches to learning. Amidst the differences in content and context, their guidance overlaps and contains many of the same elements: 1) the standards development process should be based in educational theory and current practice; 2) the process should include various stakeholders but a group of experts should guide the process; and 3) standards development is an iterative process and the document should be revised based on feedback from multiple sources and ways.

## 4.	A Road Map for Developing and Revising CFS/QBE Standards

The Road Map for Developing and Revising CFS/QBE Standards includes three essential parts of a standards development process – principles, decisions, and steps. The sections below detail these parts, and a visual representation of the Road Map (Diagram 7) shows how the discrete parts work together. The final section provides general recommendations for developing and revising CFS/QBE standards.

## 4.1	Standards Development Principles

Knowledge, transparency, participation, iteration, and equity are five principles that ground the standards development process. Each of these principles is important to ensure that the CFS/QBE standards are well developed.

Knowledge

At least two types of knowledge are necessary to develop CFS/QBE system-wide standards: attitudinal knowledge and technical skills. Attitudes and beliefs shape one's view of the world and influence behavior. CFS/QBE standards developers must hold a deep commitment to a rights-based approach for children; that is, one that is non-discriminatory, acts in the best interest of the child, provides the right to survival and development to the maximum extent possible, and ensures the right of children to express their views in all matters affecting them (UNICEF/UNESCO, 2007, p. 7).

In addition to the commitment to a rights-based approach, CFS/QBE standards developers (or the standards development team) must have deep knowledge in two technical areas. The first is expertise in Child-Friendly Schools – the philosophy, principles, and dimensions of inclusion; effectiveness; gender-responsiveness; health, safety, and protection; and participation. For example, in order to create standards and indicators for inclusion, standards developers must have deep knowledge about the historical and current context of marginalized groups and appropriate ways to include these children. Second, standards developers must

have a deep knowledge of standards: the purpose of standards and the essential elements of a standards-based system (Clair, Miske, & Patel, 2010b). They must know the different ways that standards documents can be organized and the elements of the assessment and monitoring system that ultimately will be aligned with the standards.

German's NES and Turkey's PEIS provide examples of the knowledge principle in standards development efforts. The German experience sought individuals with a high level of expertise in content, child and adolescent development, assessment, evaluation and measurement and they outsourced tasks to experts with this knowledge to join the standards development efforts (Klierne et al., 2004). In Turkey, the PEIS development effort included expertise in CFS/QBE dimensions – specifically, effectiveness, gender, and inclusion, as well as health and safety. In addition, standards developers in Turkey understood the intimate connection between standards and assessments; therefore, they employed measurement expertise in the early stages of the standards development process (Miske & Clair, 2010).

Transparency

The second important principle in developing CFS/QBE standards is transparency. Transparency means that the process, purpose, and outcomes of the standards development effort are clear. Standards developers must build in ways for stakeholders from all levels of the system to have access to information about the standards development process. Community meetings and an informational website are just two of the many ways that the standards development process can be transparent.

Development of the US Common Core Standards exemplifies a large-scale effort that utilized the internet at the earliest stages to provide stakeholders with relevant and up-to-date information about the standards development process. The website www.corestandards.org, sponsored by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, includes the mission, information about the standards, voices of support, news, frequently asked questions (FAQ), and the standards themselves.

In the CEE/CIS region, field visits revealed that transparency was critical to many stakeholders. Even in countries such as Kosovo, Moldova, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where CFS/QBE standards development efforts have not yet begun,

stakeholders noted the importance of clarity in terms of the process, use, and outcomes of future standards development efforts (Clair, Miske, & Patel, 2010a). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, stakeholders emphasized participation and communication as vital. In describing the development of standards, the key word used was "transparency" (Katz & Clair, 2010a).

Participation

Participation is significant in the standards development process. At the core, the CFS/QBE standards should reflect a broad vision of education reform that is based in the CRC. If the broad vision reflects a consensus among stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, and community members) all can play a role in supporting children's academic, social, emotional, and physical growth.

However, this does not mean that *all* stakeholders participate in *all* aspects of the standards development process because, as discussed previously, the standards development process takes a high level of technical skill. Participation must be intentional and planned. Standards developers must be strategic in soliciting participation from stakeholder groups, ensuring that the participation is commensurate with the group's expertise. For example, in Kosovo during ELD standards work, developers solicited validation from two different groups. For content validation, focus groups of parents, educators, and municipal officers were asked to review the draft standards and provide feedback. For age validation, a task that requires deeper knowledge, developers ask child development specialists to review the standards for age appropriateness (Katz & Clair, 2010b). In Uzbekistan, the national content standards were reviewed first by educators who had content expertise, then by general educators and the public (Clair & Kauffman, 2010c).

CFS/QBE standards development in Azerbaijan provides an example of participation from different stakeholders with varying levels of expertise. The MOE of Azerbaijan recently developed and approved a set of standards commonly referred to as CFS standards but officially called "Quality Standards for Comprehensive Schools in Azerbaijan." The MOE solicited participation first by convening approximately 30 people to draft the standards: teachers, school managers, university professors and methodologists, a child psychologist, a PTA representative, and one international expert. Except for the international expert, the consultants were specialists working in the education sector in Azerbaijan. Once drafted, the working group piloted the standards in 15 schools and used the questionnaires included in the document.

Revisions were made as appropriate. The MOE has since distributed the standards to 50 pilot schools. The standards will be published and available for public debate after piloting them in the 50 schools (Clair & Kauffman, 2010a).

Iteration

The standards development process is an iterative process; that is, steps are repeated and the results from the previous stage are used again to inform the next stage. Kagan and Britto (2005) propose that each stage in standards development goes through a process of "review, reflection, and revision" (p. 9).

Stakeholders from Turkey, Macedonia, and Uzbekistan (national content standards) report that their standards documents went through numerous revisions incorporating feedback from outside experts and community members. For example, standards developers in Turkey noted that the PEIS took two years to develop with at least five drafts (Miske & Clair, 2010).

Equity

Equity is the final principle and perhaps the most important for a standards development process. Equity pertains not only to the standards development process but also to the outcomes of standards efforts. The standards development process must be equitable in terms of working group members and participation. Equity includes diversity; representatives from varying communities and expertise must be part of the standards development process either as a core working group member or a participant in feedback or validation meeting.

Moreover, equity is the promise of standards. Standards and indicators specifying what stakeholders need to know and be able to do across the system are the same for all children, regardless of national origin, geographical location, socio-economic status, gender, or heritage language. Standards developers set high expectations for all children through standards and indicators. For example, in Macedonia under the gender-responsiveness dimension, one of the standards is "All children have equal access/opportunity to participate fully in the learning process and to achieve their maximum academic and social potential regardless of gender" (CFS National Expert Team, 2007).

4.2   Standards Development Decisions

In addition to the five principles that guide the standards development process, a number of decisions must be made prior to starting the technical work. In developing

the ELDS, Kagan and Britto (2005) identify six key questions that essentially start the standards development process. The five key questions below are adapted for CFS/QBE standards development. While the authors provide responses to the question, standards developers must come to consensus around these questions in order for the technical work to begin.

Decision 1:   What are the guiding principles that drive the standards?

The guiding principles for CFS/QBE standards development are grounded in the CRC – access, quality, and respect. Access ensures the opportunity to learn throughout life in a sufficient, accessible school with equality of opportunity; quality promotes cognitive development as a primary objective along with the promotion of a child's creative and emotional development; and respect values the individual's language, culture, religion, abilities, and views (UNICEF/UNESCO, 2007).

Decision 2:   Who should be involved in the standards development process?

Kagan and Britto (2005) suggest that involvement in the standards development process exists along a continuum (p. 8). At one end of the continuum is a centralized approach where an individual or small group of people develop the standards and send them out for review when completed. At the other end of the continuum is a more decentralized, participatory, and inclusive approach.

The precision and comprehensiveness of the standards is directly related to those who draft the standards (Kagan & Britto, 2005). As emphasized throughout this report, standards development takes a certain level of knowledge and technical expertise. Therefore, cross-sectoral representation is recommended. These would include individuals – either as reviewers or writers of the standards drafts – from agencies involved in CFS/QBE dimensions (e.g., Ministries of Education, Health, and Finance; the Inspectorate); international organizations (e.g., UNICEF, INGOs); geographic constituents (e.g., rural and urban); standards experts (e.g., academics, consultants); educators (e.g., teachers, pre-service, in-service); and parents.

Decision 3:   What are the Dimensions and Domains/Topics/Components?

Like the CFS/QBE principles, the dimensions are grounded in the CRC. The dimensions are the concepts that emanate from the CFS principles and assist in organizing the standards. CFS dimensions include but are not limited to health, safety, and protection; participation, effectiveness, inclusiveness, and gender-responsiveness. The domains, topics, components, categories, and areas – words

that are sometimes used interchangeably or in varying levels of subordination – represent an additional way to organize or group the standards (Clair, Miske, & Patel, 2010b, p. 14).

Kagan and Britto (2005) suggest that what is included in the standards "is a reflection of the orientation and priorities of a country's expectations" (p. 9) for stakeholders. For CFS/QBE standards, a thorough treatment of the CFS dimensions is required as it represents a holistic and integrated view of CFS schools.

Decision 4:   What should be the format and framework of the standards document?

The discussion of the Conceptual Framework for CFS/QBE Standards Development elaborated in Part 3 defines terms and suggests a structure that includes the essential elements of a CFS/QBE standards-based system. Minimally CFS/QBE standards documents include: CFS principles, dimensions, standards, benchmarks/indicators, and a system-wide monitoring and evaluation strategy. Moreover the standards document should include an introduction that contains the background, audience and use of the standards; defines terms, and explains the structure.

Decision 5:   What resources are required and what is a realistic timeline for completing a set of CFS/QBE standards?

The creation of CFS/QBE system-wide standards takes a considerable investment of time, human, and fiscal resources. Large-scale standards development efforts can take up to two years or more. The standards development effort requires a development plan that includes the development steps, a time frame associated with those steps, and the outcomes and resources for each step.

4.3   Standards Development Stages and Steps

The stages and steps for developing standards are grounded in the five standards development principles – knowledge, transparency, participation, iteration, and equity. Adapted from Kagan and Britto (2005), the steps can be divided into three stages: Planning and Decision Making; Drafting and Revising; Validation and Feedback. At each stage of development a different approach (i.e., from greater to lesser stakeholder participation) may be used to accomplish the tasks. The stages

and steps presented below are general guidelines; they will vary depending on the national context.[14]

1. Stage One – Planning and Initial Decision Making
    1.1. Decide overarching approach to standards development: centralized or decentralized.
    1.2. Select members of the working group (decision 2 – previous section). Discuss stakeholder involvement outside of the working group (e.g., validation or review team) across a range of groups.
    1.3. Create a development plan that includes the steps and a time frame associated with the steps, outcomes, and resources (decision 5 – previous section).
    1.4. Compile documents for review. These would include examples of CFS/QBE standards from the region and the international literature; national laws and strategies that pertain to CFS/QBE; and the Conceptual Framework for CFS/QBE Standards Development in the CEE/CIS Region described in Part 3.

2. Stage Two – Drafting and Revising
    2.1. Review documents.
    2.2. Set the vision for CFS/QBE standards by drafting the guiding principles and selecting dimensions from the CRC.
    2.3. Decide on structure and format (decision 3 and 4 – previous section).
    2.4. Draft standards and indicators for each dimension.
    2.5. Review and revise. (Note: This is the first step for those countries that have draft CFS/QBE standards.)

3. Stage Three – Validation and Feedback[15]
    3.1. Review the list of stakeholder groups that will validate and provide feedback on the draft standards.

---

[14] Countries that already have drafted CFS/QBE standards may proceed to Stage 2, Step 2.2.5 – Review and revise.

[15] The purposes of validation and feedback are the same: to obtain stakeholders' responses to draft standards. The stakeholders who provide input on content and age validity must have technical expertise. Other stakeholders who provide input need to have a stake in the CFS/QBE standards (e.g., parents, students, etc.) but they may or may not have technical expertise. Validation and feedback are also part of a communication, education, and buy-in strategy. The greater role that stakeholders have in the standards development process (appropriate to their expertise), the more familiar they become with the content and purpose of the standards and the more supportive they are likely to be.

3.2. Plan and conduct validation and feedback meetings that are appropriate to the stakeholder group.

3.3. Revise standards draft based on information from feedback and validation meetings.

3.4. Analyze the final "draft" (see Annex A – Examining Country-Specific CFS/QBE Standards Documents: Guiding Questions [Clair, 2010b]).

4.4   The Sum of the Parts

Diagram 7 below is a visual representation of the essential parts of the Road Map by which country-specific CFS/QBE standards can be developed.

Diagram 7: A Road Map for Developing and Revising CFS/QBE System-wide Standards

```
            ┌─────────────────────────┐
            │  Standards Development  │
            │       Principles        │
            └─────────────────────────┘
                        │
                        ▼
            ┌─────────────────────────┐
            │  Preliminary Decisions  │
            │       Who? What         │
            │       resources?        │
            └─────────────────────────┘

Regional/Country Context          Regional/Country Context

            ┌─────────────────────────┐
            │  Standards Development  │
            │  3 Stages and Steps[16] │
            │                         │
            │  1. Planning & Decision │
            │     Making              │
            │  2. Drafting & Revising │
            │  3. Validation &        │
            │     Feedback            │
            └─────────────────────────┘

            ┌─────────────────────────┐
            │         Review          │
            │         Reflect         │
            │         Revise          │
            └─────────────────────────┘

            Regional/Country Context
```
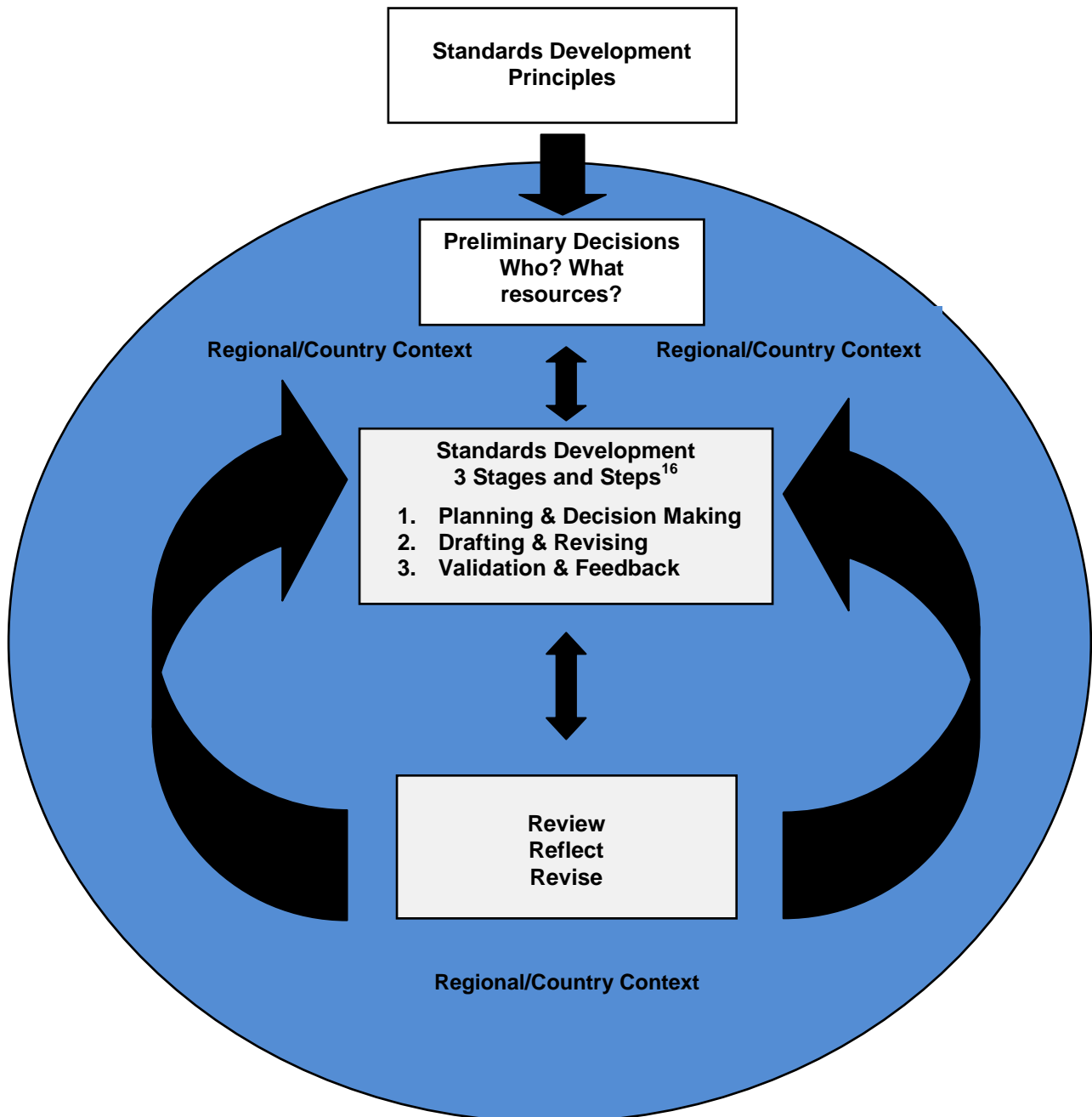
As displayed in Diagram 7 above, the standards development principles –

knowledge, transparency, participation, iteration, and equity – drive the standards

development process. The CFS/QBE standards development decisions and steps

---

[16] See section 4.3 for the several steps that are included under each stage.

are influenced by the regional and national context; therefore, the standards development process takes place within a blue circle.

The decisions – specifically, who is involved, and the creation of a development plan – are the first action steps. The three stages and steps follow. The two-way arrows emphasize the interrelationship among the parts: the principles and decisions influence the stages and steps. Finally, "review, reflect, and revise" are connected to the stages and steps, visually emphasizing the iterative nature of the standards development process.

4.5   Recommendations

The standards development principles, decisions, and steps comprise the parts of the CFS/QBE Road Map. Kagan and Britto (2005) organize standards development recommendations in four categories: standards readiness, development process, the standards content, and technical support (p. 12). Based on the field visit findings from seven countries and other literature, our recommendations are grouped below into these four categories.

Standards Readiness Recommendations

CFS/QBE standards development requires a long-term commitment of human and capital resources. A country can assess its political climate and readiness by asking the following questions (Kagan & Britto, 2005, p. 12):

1) Is there a national policy mandate or strategy to develop CFS/QBE standards?
2) Is there a commitment to CFS/QBE standards development at the government level?
3) Are there resources earmarked to complete the work?

Development Process Recommendations

As noted, one of the early decisions in the CFS/QBE standards development process regards the approach. While there are advantages to a more centralized approach, a more participatory process increases the chance of successful implementation. The following recommendations are aligned with three of the principles of standards development (knowledge, transparency, participation):

1) Ensure a deep knowledge of and commitment to CFS/QBE principles, dimensions, and standards (i.e., process of development, essential elements, uses, and terminology).

2) Create active partnerships across sectors.

3) Secure commitment from important individuals who will lead the work.

Content Recommendations

In order to ensure rights-based outcomes for all children, CFS/QBE standards are comprehensive, rooted in the principles and dimensions of the CRC, and reflective of the cultural values of the country.

1) Ensure that standards developers have expertise in content, specifically the content that relates to the CRC principles and dimensions.

Technical Assistance Recommendations

Developing CFS/QBE standards takes significant knowledge and expertise. Technical assistance can provide needed support and expertise. The following questions guide stakeholders in selecting effective technical advisors.

1) What are the technical assistance needs? Standards developers need to consider what expertise is needed to develop CFS/QBE standards. A review of the standards development principles, decisions, stages, and steps is a good place to start. Through this review, technical assistance needs may become clear. Once the standards development team is in place, it is important to do a critical assessment of the skills and technical expertise of team members. Has the team developed standards previously or is this the first time? It is possible that different types of technical assistance (e.g., advice, training, feedback) will be required at different stages of standards development. Therefore, it is important that the types and purpose of the technical assistance be clearly articulated and the local, regional, and national expertise be assessed and considered.

2) How much technical assistance is necessary? The amount of technical assistance may vary depending on the stage of the development process. For example, more technical assistance may be required during the planning and initial decision making stage of the work.

3) What will the structure and format of the technical assistance be? As noted, technical assistance can be offered in different ways (e.g., face-to-face meetings, phone, e-mail, workshops). The manner in which the technical assistance is delivered depends on the purpose of the assistance. For example, face-to-face

meetings are frequently required for training workshops. Working groups can use the internet to share drafts with one another and international technical advisors can use e-mail to respond to questions and give advice.

4) How will the technical assistance be evaluated? It is critical that the technical assistance meets the needs of the CFS/QBE standards development efforts. Technical advisors should be held accountable for the work that they do. They should have specific objectives, tasks, and timelines for completion of work.

CONCLUSION

A Summary of Key Points

CFS/QBE standards are comprehensive, system-level standards for education that are grounded in the CRC. The intention of system-wide CFS/QBE standards is to set high expectations or goals to ensure that all stakeholders provide the environments and conditions necessary for *all* children to be able to enact their right to education and to fulfill their potential. The primary aim of this work has been to support countries as they develop and/or revise CFS/QBE system-wide standards. Important themes have emerged through reviewing the literature, conducting the field visits, developing the conceptual framework and road map. These themes are summarized below.

The purpose of standards

The purpose of standards that integrate CFS/QBE dimensions and principles is to improve the lives of children and the education provided to them. When standards constitute a mutually agreed upon set of high expectations for stakeholders across the system, and supports are in place to assist stakeholders in meeting or exceeding those standards, standards are a powerful tool for reform. The field visits revealed that this is a relatively new conception of standards for many stakeholders in the region, and that there is significant tension between the understanding of standards as minimum requirements and this new conception. Shifting conceptions of standards requires a concerted effort to educate stakeholders about standards as a tool for improvement. It means providing information, offering concrete examples, and changing attitudes.

Flexible and adaptable frameworks

The field visit findings show that countries in the CEE/CIS region are at various stages of implementing CFS/QBE dimensions and implementing CFS/QBE system-wide standards. The CFS/QBE Conceptual Framework is intentionally flexible and adaptable as evidenced by the parallel analysis between it and the ELDS, ISSA, the Lisbon Objectives, and Macedonia's CFS/QBE draft standards. While these standards documents differ slightly from the Conceptual Framework, the essential elements and underlying structures are conceptually aligned with one another.

The adaptability and flexibility of the Conceptual Framework is important as it accounts for the different context, priorities, and political mandates of countries in the

CEE/CIS region. For example, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Macedonia all have CFS/QBE standards that align with the Conceptual Framework. However, none of their standards documents are identical. Turkey has embedded CFS/QBE standards into their primary education standards while Macedonia and Azerbaijan have established specific CFS/QBE standards.

Like the Conceptual Framework, the Road Map is intentionally adaptable. The principles, decisions, steps, and recommendations in the Road Map serve as a guide; however, the responses to these parts of the Road Map will be country specific.

A common language for standards development efforts

The literature review and field visits show that there is variation among the use of terms and definitions related to standards. The ELD and ISSA standards, the Lisbon Objectives, and CEE/CIS country-specific standards documents refer to similar elements of the Conceptual Framework with different vocabulary. While these standards documents align with the Conceptual Framework presented here, confusion over terminology remains. The Conceptual Framework proposed herein seeks to fix this problem by creating definitions of essential elements and clarifying subordination of terms so all countries can speak the "same language" when it comes to standards. A common understanding will allow countries to exchange ideas, discuss challenges, and arrive at solutions around CFS/QBE standards development, implementation, and monitoring.

Essential elements of the Conceptual Framework and their relationship to one another

The essential elements of the CFS/QBE Conceptual Framework (principles, dimensions, standards, and indicators/benchmarks) are interrelated and dependent on one other to provide a coherent picture of what stakeholders within an education system must do to achieve Child-Friendly Schools. CRC principles – the broadest view – drive the establishment of worldwide CFS/QBE dimensions and the CFS/QBE dimensions drive the creation of country-specific, system-wide standards and indicators/benchmarks. The indicators and benchmarks, as observable actions, provide the specific guidance for what stakeholders across the system must do. *Each element of the Conceptual Framework is essential and useful only if it is accompanied by the other elements. It is the sum of the elements which provides the*

holistic guidance necessary to improve child-friendly practices so all children can succeed.

Resources for standards development

A clear and comprehensive set of CFS/QBE system-wide standards has great potential to support a rights-based approach to reform. The Road Map is a practical guide to assist countries as they develop, revise, and refine their CFS/QBE system-wide standards. Several countries in the CEE/CIS region have made progress in the development of CFS/QBE system-wide standards. These countries have valuable experience and have learned lessons in the standards development process. They can serve as important resources to those countries that are beginning the CFS/QBE standards development process.

Areas of further exploration

The most notable use of standards is in the monitoring and assessment of progress towards meeting or exceeding standards. However, standards are also useful in identifying resource gaps that in turn can be alleviated so that all children have access to a quality education. For example, the Lisbon Objectives include input indicators that identify adequate resources, such as the numbers of computers per student, and the Australian government's new framework that will use indicators to determine performance funding for tertiary education and provide incentives for improvement. While higher education is distinctly different from basic education, these examples and other ways in which standards can be useful for a Ministry of Education to work with the Ministry of Finance in allocating funds for Child-Friendly Schools warrant further exploration.

Next steps: From development to implementation

Standards development represents an enormous commitment of time, energy, and resources; however, in one sense development is just the beginning of the work. Standards developers understand that while aspects of development and implementation overlap, standards implementation efforts require a broad-based approach that includes but is not limited to: a roll-out plan, development of training and supporting materials, and a communication strategy.

Shaeffer's (2009) report entitled *Rolling Out the Child-Friendly School Package in East Asia and the Pacific* provides considerations and recommendations for implementing CFS efforts in that region. Adapting Shaeffer's recommendations, the authors suggest that a system-wide CFS/QBE implementation strategy minimally

contain the following: 1) an orientation for ministers at the highest levels; 2) development of a communication and education strategy that will inform stakeholders about the standards; 3) differentiated training opportunities for stakeholders who will implement the standards, finance the standards, and those who support the standards (e.g., parents and community members); and 4) maintenance of strong partnerships with stakeholder groups, institutions, and organizations that play a role in child rights.

A Final Note: Keeping Child Rights in the Center of the Work

The literature review and field visit findings provide rich information about the current status of CFS/QBE implementation and standards development in CEE/CIS. Countries in the region have made progress, focusing their reform efforts on quality. As these countries continue to grapple with educational reforms, it is essential to keep child rights in the center of the efforts. Defining CFS dimensions and integrating them into standards or other large-scale reforms are fundamental steps, but widespread change in practice and attitude is necessary to ensure children's rights. The power of CFS/QBE system-wide standards is that they are grounded in the CRC, represent a holistic approach to education reform, and have the potential to help bring about this change in practice and attitude so that *all* girls and boys can claim and enact this right to a quality education.

Bibliography

Achieve. (n.d.). Achieving the Common Core. *Achieve.* Retrieved July 28, 2010, from
    http://www.achieve.org/achievingcommoncore

Batuhan, A. (2008). *Education monitoring report 2008 (executive summary).* Istanbul:
    Education Reform Initiative.

Benavot, A. (2004). The quality imperative: A global study of intended instructional time and
    official school curricula, 1980 - 2000. "Paper commissioned for the EFA global
    monitoring report 2005, The quality imperative". Paris: UNESCO.

Bernard, A. (2004). Review of Child-Friendly Schools initiatives in the EAPRO region (Draft:
    Semi-final). An unpublished paper.

Booth T. & Ainscow, M. (2002). *The index for inclusion.* 2nd ed. Bristol, UK: Centre for
    Studies on Inclusive Education.

 CFS National Expert Team, Macedonia, & Miske, S. (2007). Child-Friendly Schools: A
    situation analysis for the FYR Macedonia (Draft). Skopje, Macedonia: UNICEF
    Macedonia.

CFS National Expert Team. (2007). *CFS baseline study indicators (2007).* Skopje,
    Macedonia: UNICEF Macedonia.

Chabbott, C. (2004). *UNICEF's Child-Friendly Schools framework: A desk review.* New York:
    UNICEF.

Chapman, D. & Miske, S. (2007). Promoting Girls' Education in Africa: Evidence from the
    Field. In M. Maslak (Ed.) *The Agency and Structure of Women's Education.* Albany,
    NY: SUNY Press.

CIA - The World Factbook. (n.d.). Retrieved June 23, 2010, from Central Intelligence
    Agency: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/am.html

Clair, N. (2010a). *An analysis of the Child Friendly Schools (CFS) standards for Macedonia.*
    St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Clair, N. (2010b). "Examining country-specific QBE/CFS standards documents: Guiding
    questions (draft)." Istanbul: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Clair, N. (2010c). *Field visit manual (draft).* St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Clair, N. (2010d). "Including system-wide levels in standards development." Istanbul: Miske
    Witt & Associates Inc.

Clair, N. (with Miske, S., & Patel, D.). (2010e). *A road map for creating and revising
    QBE/CFS standards in the CEE/CIS region.* St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates
    Inc.

Clair, N. (2010f). "Subordination of terms related to standards." Istanbul: Miske Witt &
    Associates Inc.

Clair, N. (2010g). "Glossary of key terms." Istanbul: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Clair, N., & Kauffman, N. (2010a). *Understanding QBE/CFS standards in the CEE/CIS Region: Field visit country report Azerbaijan.* St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Clair, N., & Kauffman, N. (2010b). Understanding QBE/CFS standards in the CEE/CIS Region: Field visit country report Moldova. St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Clair, N., & Kauffman, N. (2010c). *Understanding QBE/CFS standards in the CEE/CIS Region: Field visit country report Uzbekistan.* St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Clair, N., Miske, S., & Patel, D. (2010a). *The status of QBE/CFS standards development, implementation, and monitoring in the CEE/CIS region.* St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Clair, N., Miske, S., & Patel, D. (2010b). *A conceptual framework for standards development in the CEE/CIS region.* St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Commission Staff. (2004). Progress towards the common objectives in education and training: Indicators and benchmarks. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

Commission Staff. (2005). *Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training.* Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

Commission Staff. (2006). *Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training.* Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

Council of Europe. (2000). A common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. http://culture2.coe.int/portfolio/documents/0521803136txt.pdf

Council of the European Union. (2002). Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe. Brussels: Council of the European Union.

Council of the European Union. (2004). "Education and training 2010": The success of the Lisbon strategy hinges on urgent reforms. Brussels: Council of the European Union.

Council of the European Union. (2006). "Modernising education and training: A vital contribution to prosperity and social cohension in Europe." *Official Journal of the European Union.*

Council of the European Union. (2009). "A strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020')." Brussels: Council of the European Union.

Council of Ministers. (2003). Framework law on pre-, primary and general secondary education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sarajevo.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. (2009). *An indicator framework for higher education performance funding discussion paper.* Australian Government. Retrieved August 5, 2009, from http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Documents/HIEDPerformanceFunding.pdf

Directorate-General for Education and Culture. (2000). *European report on the quality of school education: Sixteen quality indicators.* Luxembourg: Office for Publications of the European Communities.

European Commission. (2000). European report on the quality of school education: Sixteen indicators. Luxembourg: European Communities.

Harris, R. (2010). *CFS case study (draft).* Baku: UNICEF Azerbaijan.

International Step by Step Association. (2009). *Competent teachers of the 21st century: ISSA's definition of quality pedagogy.* Budapest: International Step by Step Association.

Kagan, S. L., & Britto, P. R. (2005). *Concept paper on early learning and development standards.* An unpublished paper.

Katz, A., & Clair, N. (2010a). Understanding QBE/CFS standards in the CEE/CIS Region: Field visit country report Bosnia and Herzegovina. St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Katz, A., & Clair, N. (2010b). Understanding QBE/CFS standards in the CEE/CIS Region: Field visit country report Kosovo. St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Klierne, E. et al. (2004). The development of national education standards: An expertise. Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Bonn, Germany: Byndesministerium.

Lockwood, A. T. (1998). *Standards: From policy to practice.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Mannathoko, C. (2008). Promoting education quality through gender-friendly schools. In M. Tembon & L. Fort (Eds.), *Girls' education in the 21st century: Gender equality, empowerment, and economic growth* (pp. 127-142). Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Marzano, R. J., & Kendall, J. S. (1996). A comprehensive guide to designing standards-based districts, schools, and classrooms. Aurora, CO: Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory.

McLaughlin, M. W., Shepard, L. A., & O'Day, J. A. (1995). *Improving education through standards-based reform.* Report by The National Academy of Education Panel on Standards-Based Education Reform. Washington, DC: National Academy of Education.

Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China. (2008). *The Chinese Child-Friendly School standards.* Beijing: Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. (2007). Strategy for development of pre-university education in Kosovo 2007-2017. Pristina: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

Ministry of National Education. (n.d.). Turkey: Minimum standards of primary schools.

Miske, S. (2008). Developing Child-Friendly Schools in FYR Macedonia. Skopje, Macedonia: UNICEF Macedonia.

Miske, S. (2009). *Child-Friendly Schools case study: Macedonia.* New York: UNICEF.

Miske, S., & Clair, N. (2010). Understanding QBE/CFS standards in the CEE/CIS Region: Field visit country report Turkey. St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Narolskaya, Y. (2009). Case presentation for Uzbekistan at the CEE/CIS regional meeting on Child Friendly Schools. Geneva: UNICEF.

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. (1989). *Curriculum and evaluation standards for school mathematics.* Reston, VA: NCTM.

National Governors Association & The Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). Common Core State Standards Initiative. http://www.corestandards.org

Office of Policy and Planning, U.S. Department of Education. (1992). *Education standards for the 21st century: Opening statements of ministers at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Education Ministerial.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Office of the President. (2006). *Brussels European council presidency conclusions.* Brussels: Council of the European Union.

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). (2004). *What makes school systems perform?: Seeing school systems through the prism of PISA.* OECD Publishing.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). (2010). *Primary school curricula in BiH: A thematic review of the national subjects (Draft).* Sarajevo: OSCE.

Osher, D., Kelly, D., Tolani-Brown, N., Shors, L., & Chen, C. (2009). *UNICEF Child Friendly Schools programming: Global evaluation final report.* Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research.

PEDC Project, Vietnam (extract mid term review 2006 on FSQL). Hanoi: Asian Development Bank.

Pfaffe, J. F. (2009a). Child-Friendly Schools in CEE/CIS: Lessons learnt and next steps. Bettembourg, Luxembourg: PROMAN.

Pfaffe, J. F. (2009b). Summative evaluation of the Child-friendly Schools project (2006-2008). Uzbekistan. Final Evaluation Report. Bettembourg: PROMAN.

Pfaffe, J. F., & DeYoung, A. J. (2006). Global education project: Central Asian Republics and Kazakhstan (CARK). Bettembourg: PROMAN.

Pfaffe, J. F., & Smulders, A. E. M. (2008). *Final evaluation report, CFS project in Bosnia and Herzegovina.* Bettembourg: Proman/UNICEF Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Sabani, N. (2010). Child-Friendly School (CFS) framework as a guiding framework for education reform in the CEE/CIS region. Prepared for the UNICEF Leadership Development Institute, Action Learning Project. An unpublished document.

Schubert, J. G. (2009). An assessment of Armenia's Child-Friendly School pilot projects and CFS standards for UNICEF Armenia. St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Shaeffer, S. (2009). *Rolling out the Child-Friendly School package in East Asia and the Pacific: Observations and recommendations for UNICEF's consideration.* UNICEF: EAPRO.

Silova, I. (2002). The right to quality education: Creating Child-Friendly Schools in Central Asia. *Conference.* Almaty: UNICEF Kazakhstan.

Testot-Ferry, P. (2010). *Mission report, Azerbaijan country programme support visit (15-18 February 2010).* Geneva: UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Indpendent States.

The Republic of Azerbaijan Ministry of Education/UNICEF. (2009). *MOE order 306 introduction of quality standards for comprehensive schools.* Baku: UNICEF and The Republic of Azerbaijan Ministry of Education.

UNESCO. (2009). *Learning counts: International coordination on assessing education quality draft funding proposal*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNICEF. (n.d.). *Characteristics of a rights-based, child-friendly school.* Retrieved May 30, 2010, from UNICEF: www.unicef.org/lifeskills/files/CFSchecklist.doc

UNICEF. (n.d.). Is your school Child-Friendly?: A self-assessment guide. Manila: UNICEF Philippines.

UNICEF. (n.d.). Key principles and features of the Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) approach.

UNICEF. (2006). Assessing Child-Friendly Schools: A guide for programme managers in East Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok: UNICEF East Asia/Pacific Regional Office.

UNICEF. (2007a). *Education for some more than others?* Geneva: UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Indpendent States.

UNICEF. (2007b). Governance for children: A brief overview of the situation of children in Kosovo. Pristina: UNICEF Kosovo.

UNICEF. (2008). *UNICEF Azerbaijan: What we do and why we do it.* UNICEF. Baku: UNICEF Azerbaijan.

UNICEF. (2009a). *Child Friendly Schools manual.* New York: UNICEF Division of Communication.

UNICEF. (2009b). Collection of lessons for teachers of elementary grades [Russian]. Tashkent: UNICEF Uzbekistan.

UNICEF. (2009c). *Learning achievement in the CEE/CIS Region: A comparative analysis of the PISA 2006 results.* Geneva: UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

UNICEF CEE/CIS. (n.d.). Reality check: View from the school and the community. Geneva: UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office.

UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office. (2009). "Terms of reference: Developing standards for quality basic education in CEE/CIS." Geneva: UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office.

UNICEF/The Republic of Azerbaijan Ministry of Education. (2009). *Quality standards for comprehensive schools in Azerbaijan*. Baku: UNICEF/The Republic of Azerbaijan Ministry of Education.

UNICEF/UNESCO. (2007). *A human rights-based approach to education for all.* New York: UNICEF.

Annex A. Analyzing Country-Specific CFS/QBE Draft Standards: Guiding Questions

Nancy Clair, Ed.D.
Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

1. Does the document have an introduction that includes the following:

    a. a description of the background and context for the QBE/CFS approach and the standards development process;
    b. an identification of the aspects of the context that motivated the adoption of QBE/CFS;
    c. a statement of what the document contains (i.e., the parts of the document) and how it is organized;
    d. an identification of the document's intended audience; and,
    e. an explanation of how the document is to be used?

    Make a list of what needs to be added to the introduction.

2. Does the document have a section that does the following:

    a. includes key features, principles, and dimensions of QBE/CFS standards; and,
    b. defines terms? Defining key words is extremely important, as one of the major problems with standards is unclear or inconsistent terminology.

    Make a list of what needs to be added to the introduction and what terms need to be defined.

3. Review the structure of the document, with the following considerations in mind.

    a. Make an outline listing the sections, headings, parts, etc.
    b. Is the outline logical? Are the sections organized consistently? If not, why?
    c. Review the levels of subordination throughout the document.
        i. Is the subordination logical and consistent throughout the document?
        ii. Indicate places in the document where subordination is unclear.

    Make a list of the structural and subordination issues that need to be improved.

4. Review the terms associated with standards (dimensions, domains, standards, indicators, benchmarks, etc.) for consistency and accuracy throughout the document.

    a. Make a list of the terms that are defined in the introduction and review how those terms are used throughout the document.
    b. *If terms are not defined, they need to be.*

       Review the document and list the terms that need to be defined. Define those terms and put them in the introduction.

5. Review the standards.

    a. Are the standards broad goal statements? Are the levels of specificity and generality consistent?
    b. Do the standards represent the most current knowledge related to the QBE/CFS dimension?
    c. Do the standards represent minimum expectations or do they hold stakeholders (at all levels of the system) to high expectations?

       Make a list of the standards that need to be revised.

6. Review the indicators and benchmarks.

    a. Are the indicators or benchmarks observable and measurable? Are the levels of specificity and generality consistent?
    b. Do the indicators or benchmarks represent the most current knowledge and/or skill related to QBE/CFS standards?
    c. Is there repetition among the indicators, benchmarks, etc.? Is the repetition purposeful?

       Make a list of which indicators or benchmarks need to be revised.

7. What are the overall strengths of the document?

8. What are the areas for improvement?

9. What are the next steps for revision?

Reference:

Clair, N., Miske, S., & Patel, D. (2010b). *A conceptual framework for CFS/QBE standards development in the CEE/CIS region.* St. Paul, MN: Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

Annex B. Summary of Field Visit Findings

	Armenia	Azerbaijan	BiH	Kosovo	Moldova	Turkey	Uzbekistan
History	- 1991 Independence from Soviet Union	- 1991 Independence from Soviet Union - Early 1990s War with Armenia	- 1992 Independence from Yugoslavia - Ethnic conflict Bosnian Serbs and Bosniaks/Croats - 1995 Peace – multi-ethnic democratic govt. formed	- 2008 Independence	- 1991 Independence from Soviet Union - 2000 elected communist govt. voted out 2008	- 1950 Modern Turkey formed - Intermittent military coups/instability - Military conflict with Cyprus, Greece, Kurdistan	-1991 Independence from Soviet Union
Education Laws and Reforms	- 1991 Law of Education to raise education quality	- 1999 Ed Reform Program – place education as priority for poverty reduction - 2003 State Program for Poverty Reduction - 2005 National Employment Strategy	- 2003 Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education - 2007 Agency for Pre, Primary and Secondary Ed created - Each Ministry (12) has individual laws and regulations pertaining to education reform	- 1999-2002 Education Reform: Emergency Phase - 2003-present Education Reform: Development Phase - 2007-2017 Strategy for Development of Pre-University Education	- 1995 Law of Education - 1998 – complete version of curriculum for grades 1–12	- 1990 Education for All and quality - 1997 – Education Law extends primary to 9th grade	- 1997 National Program on Personnel Training - 2007 Law of Education revised; greater attention to quality of education - 2004-2009 School Education Reform - 2010 Harmoniously Developed Generation

CFS	- 2000 UNICEF began work with MoES - 2007 CFS introduced in 100 schools - Competition in which 22 schools applied CFS approach to become pilot - 364 schools total participated in this approach	- 2000 Active Learning (AL) - 2002-2004 ALSL extended work of AL - 2005-2009 CFS formally established - Current – 50 pilot schools, three districts	- 2002 CFS with introduction of child-centered education and child-friendly environments (K-4)	-2001 pilot in 35 schools -2003: 48 more schools added -NGOs implemented different CFS dimensions at diff schools -2006 – CFS ended but concepts lived on (160 school influenced by CFS)	- 2007 UNICEF and MOE began CFS - 2008 – report on baseline conditions of Moldovan schools - Partnered with Austrian Development Agency and Viola to help with infrastructure and training in five pilot schools	- 2002 CFS began - 2002-2008 developed CFS guide, training materials; piloted 25 schools; expanded CFS schools 25 to 301; developed e-system	- (n.d.) CFS first traced to WASH - 2003-2006 Global Ed (GE) - Current 850 schools, five regions, resource centers, national network - 2008 Institutionalize by including pre-service and in-service training of teachers
Define/ understand CFS/QBE principles	- Core CFS principles in Standards doc are inclusiveness, child-centered, democratic participation	Across stakeholders: - Protect right of child (CRC) - Effective schooling - Democratic participation - Interactive methodology (child-centered) - ALSL included child-centered, teacher-student relationship, parent/community participation	Use QBE not CFS MOCA - Defined in vague terms District/regional level - child centered approaches and inclusion - NGOs clear about CFS (equity, participation, inclusion, child-centered, safety) - NGOs /donors implement educational initiatives	Across stakeholders: Child-centeredness, child rights, inclusiveness	Regional Level -CFS not clearly defined School level, understanding of CFS is tied to existing school programs	Across stakeholders: - Child at center EDUSER: - Democratic - Respect for child's rights School site: - Participation among teachers, parents, students - Healthy and safe - Child-centered teaching	Across stakeholders - Describe CFS as effectiveness, inclusion, safe, healthy, protective, democratic participation - Reluctant to use CFS to describe schools/define CFS standards - From 2010 – all schools must be accessible

Describe/understand CFS/QBE standards	- 2006 National Curriculum Framework and the Secondary Education State Standards template for aligning national priorities CFS dimensions - Standards viewed as minimum targets - Use of content standards at school level to drive instruction	- 2010 Quality Standards for Comprehensive Schools - Inconsistent understanding of purpose - Standards viewed as minimum targets	- CFS/QBE standards do not exist – but agreement on need - Agency in charge of standards – moving away from standards as minimum targets towards quality and effectiveness - Focus on common core curriculum	- CFS/QBE standards do not exist - CFS used as basis to develop other standard (Curriculum Framework, ELD) - MEST high level bureaucrats spoke vaguely about CFS - MEST staff members closely working on CFS could identify specific components	- No CFS/QBE standards Content standards for upper lower secondary - Current work on lifelong learning competencies - Standards not universally accepted - Inconsistent understanding of purpose: minimum target vs. goal to meet/exceed	- Developed PEIS (standards) to implement CFS into the whole school - Other standards development groups, but no organizing principle - Tension among stakeholders about purpose and use	- CFS/QBE standards do not exist - Comprehensive set of national curriculum standards - Emergency Situation Standards relate to CFS dimension of safety - Competing conceptions of CFS/QBE: standards as minimum targets and standards as broad goals to meet /exceed - Most often defined as the minimum
Development of CFS/QBE Standards	- 2006: aligned CFS framework with National Curriculum Framework and Secondary School Standards	- 2010 Quality Standards for Comprehensive Schools - Coordinated by MOE 30 people participated - Looked at foreign models, developed drafts, piloted and revised based on pilot	- Looking for a process for developing standards	- CFS/QBE standards not developed - National Curriculum, ELD, other standards projects can serve as models	- National curriculum is the model for development - MOE mandates all parts of development: working groups, public debate, revisions	- PEIS embody CFS - Development steps: Review docs, write draft, gain measurement perspective, engage stakeholders, expert review, polish, monitor, and develop evaluation software	- No CFS/QBE Standards - National Curriculum standards are model for development: review documents, write draft, get feedback, revise

Monitoring meeting standards	- 2004 Independent testing agency created to monitor progress towards secondary education - CFS standards document meant to be used as self-assessment - monitoring tools have not yet been created	- Monitoring of CFS/QBE standards occurs at school level through self assessments Assessment and Monitoring Department/MOE uses an eclectic set of tools - no comprehensive statewide system	- Limited capacity to collect, analyze, and use data to monitor or improve quality - no discussion of current statewide monitoring system	- Monitoring not a strength of education system - ELD have not yet developed monitoring tools - KEC uses monitoring system that uses observation of instruction and portfolios to certify teachers in accordance with CFS	-Unclear how MOE monitors progress towards meeting/ exceeding standards	- PEIS not yet piloted - Training needs to be done regarding use of PEIS	- QBE standards do not exist - MOE lacks coherent strategy for collecting, analyzing, and using data to monitor or improve quality - CFS checklist for self-assessment
Opportunities for embedding principles into national standards		- QBE standards provide opportunity to align improvement efforts with standards	- CFS principles live in education initiatives - Index for inclusion (CISE) – self review tool to support EFA	- MEST indicates that CFS exists in national curriculum - ELD - KEC has done some work with embedding inclusive education (especially with Roma children)	-Some use of ELD - CFS is embedded at national level in proposed law of education.	- PEIS example of embedding CFS in national curriculum	- Belief that CFS and MPOE policies are consistent - 2010 offers opportunity for embedding CFS - MOPE considering standards for teachers, pedagogy, equipment, buildings, sanitary conditions, textbooks, labs, technology

Annex C. Example CFS Standards

Example Measurable and Observable Indicators (adapted From Macedonia's CFS Baseline Study Indicators)

Dimension	Standard	Indicators
Inclusiveness	All children attend school regardless of their background or ability	▪ The school has a list of all school aged children in the region, regardless of whether they are enrolled in school or not ▪ The school carries out regular campaigns to encourage parents to enroll their children and emphasizes that all children are welcome, regardless of background or ability ▪ The school monitors the enrollment, regular attendance and achievements of students from different ethnic groups and students with special needs ▪ The school provides suitable, safe and reasonably priced transport to school
Effectiveness	All children, regardless of background, ability, and/or gender, are taught and assessed through innovative, child-centered methods	▪ Teachers use teaching methods that are age and ability appropriate ▪ Teachers encourage students to think, make decisions, ask questions, and express opinions ▪ Teachers encourage participation in class, confident that every child can learn ▪ Teachers encourage students to work together, promoting practical and cooperative learning
Health, Safety, and Protection	School-based health services and curricula enhance the health, safety, and protection of all children regardless of their background, ability, and/or gender (to re-write with children as subject)	▪ The school provides annual health screening examinations for students ▪ The school keeps written records about children's health conditions, emergency contact information, and names of authorized people for children's pick up ▪ The school provides simple medical treatments to students, and refers more serious cases to the nearest health centre ▪ School food is nutritious

Gender-Responsiveness	Children learn about and experience respect for gender-equity	• The school curriculum and teaching materials present equitable images of girls and boys • Teachers treat girls and boys equitably in the classroom (e.g., equity in requests for participation and types of questions asked in classroom discussion)
Involvement of Students, Family, and Community	All children and families have equal opportunity to express opinions and participate fully in school organizations regardless of their background, ability, and/or gender	▪ There is an active student organization at the school elected in a democratic way ▪ Students actively participate in forming regulations and making decisions at the school ▪ There is an active parent organization at the school elected in a democratic way ▪ Parents actively participate in forming regulations and making decisions at school
Respect for Children's Rights and Multiculturalism	The entire school community (children, teachers, administrators, parents) behaves in accordance with the Convention of the Rights of the Child	▪ All school personnel demonstrate their understanding of child rights ▪ Learning materials include the content on the history, culture, traditions, of the corresponding ethnic communities in Macedonia