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**REBUILDING RESILIENCE IN A CHANGING WORLD: CONFLICT AND  
CRISIS SENSITIVE APPROACHES TO PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING  
FOR EDUCATION SYSTEMS**

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**CONVENORS:**

Lyndsay Bird, UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP),  
[l.bird@iiep.unesco.org](mailto:l.bird@iiep.unesco.org)

Naoko Arakawa, Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE),  
[naoko@ineesite.org](mailto:naoko@ineesite.org)

**AUTHORS:**

Sergot Jacob, Special Advisor to the Haitian Minister of Education and Vocational Training

Sami Aburoza, Education Advisor, Ministry of Education, Palestine

Deng Deng Hoc Yai, Undersecretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, South  
Sudan

Lyndsay Bird, Programme Specialist, IIEP

Naoko Arakawa, Coordinator for Education and Fragility, INEE

Anna Azaryeva, Education Specialist, Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme,  
UNICEF

Marie-Claude Rouillard, Intern, IIEP

Chloé Chimier, Consultant, IIEP

**ABSTRACT:**

Conflicts as well as natural and man-made disasters leave devastating impacts on the economic and social development of countries. Education can play a critical role in reducing conflict and disaster risks, but can also perpetuate or even exacerbate the risks. Education actors increasingly recognize the dual role education can play, and are seeking to systematically integrate conflict and disaster risk reduction measures into their national education sector planning processes. Development partners are offering support in the form of tools, guidance and funding. This paper explores how the ministries of education in Haiti, Palestine and South Sudan have planned for the crises affecting their countries, and examines how agencies such as IIEP, INEE and UNICEF have developed different methodologies in support.

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# REBUILDING RESILIENCE IN A CHANGING WORLD: CONFLICT AND CRISIS SENSITIVE APPROACHES TO PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING FOR EDUCATION SYSTEMS

## 1: FRAMING THE DEBATE

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### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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**Marie-Claude Rouillard, Lyndsay Bird and Naoko Arakawa**

*'Dear brothers and sisters, we want schools and education for every child's bright future. We will continue our journey to our destination of peace and education. (...) And if we want to achieve our goal, then let us empower ourselves with the weapon of knowledge and let us shield ourselves with unity and togetherness.'* Malala Yousafzai at the UN Security Council on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2013.

This quote from Malala, a 16-year-old Pakistani schoolgirl shot by the Taliban for attending school, illustrates the demand for quality education no matter what the risk (UN News Centre, 2013). To demonstrate how education can be provided regardless of the risks, the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) and the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) hosted a Symposium entitled "Rebuilding resilience in a changing world: conflict and crisis sensitive approaches to planning and programming for education systems".

This paper is based on the presentations made at the above mentioned IIEP-INEE Symposium on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013 as part of the 12<sup>th</sup> UKFIET International Conference on Education and Development. This Symposium brought senior policy makers from crisis-affected countries together with agency practitioners experienced in providing crisis-sensitive policy guidance in such countries.

The paper follows the structure of the Symposium, with an overall introduction in section 1, followed by an examination of policy and planning issues in Palestine and South Sudan in section 2. Section 3 highlights current tools and frameworks from IIEP, INEE and UNICEF which have been used to support countries in their efforts to strengthen the resilience of the education system. Finally section 4 concludes with some reflections on common challenges and approaches.

### 1.2 RATIONALE FOR CRISIS SENSITIVE PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

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Education is one of the highest priorities of parents and children living in crisis-affected situations (International Save the Children Alliance, 2010: 33). In a United Nations global survey more than 645,000 people from 194 countries voted education as their top priority for post-2015 (UN, 2013a). Yet in the Report of the High Level Panel for post-2015, education is not included as one of the proposed new goals for sustainable development, and the role of education in mitigating conflicts and disasters is not recognized (UN, 2013b). Recognition of the importance of education in humanitarian situations has also declined. An update of statistics of the EFA Global Monitoring Report indicates that in 2012, education accounted for just 1.4% of

humanitarian aid, down from 2.2% in 2009 (UNESCO-GMR, 2013). Also, only 38% of education requests were met in consolidated appeals (UNESCO-GMR, 2011a).

The decline in prioritization and funding fails to account for the shocking statistics that out of the 57 million primary-aged children not in school in 2011, half live in conflict affected countries. Furthermore, out of the 69 million adolescent of lower secondary school age not in school, 20 million lived in conflict-affected countries in 2011 (UNESCO-GMR, 2013: 1). This demonstrates that while development gains have been made in education in the last decade, these have not translated to similar gains in countries affected by conflict or crisis. Moreover, an estimated 175 million children per year are likely to be affected by natural disaster during the current decade, and evidence shows that natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes and hurricanes may “exacerbate conflict dynamics and risk through multiple and indirect pathways” (MacEwen et al., 2010, p. 3). It is evident that countries affected by conflicts and disasters are the farthest from reaching the EFA and MDGs goals, and that Children and youth in these countries are the most significant group for our attention (UNESCO-GMR, 2011a; World Bank, 2011; INEE, 2013).

To combat the increasing risks to education delivery due to the impacts of conflicts and disasters, a growing number of international aid agencies are including conflict and disaster risk reduction as one of the core aims of their aid strategies for education. Many have developed tools or guidance to support their staff and/or their partners to integrate conflict and disaster risk reduction into policies and programmes (UNESCO-GMR, 2011; UNESCO-IIEP, 2012; Talbot, 2013). Section 3 will look at how agencies including IIEP, INEE and UNICEF have developed concrete tools and guidance which can support ministries and agencies to mainstream crisis-sensitive education.

Currently, only a few countries have succeeded in embedding conflict and disaster risk reduction measures into education policy, planning and implementation. Typically such efforts remain limited to a context analysis or the education sector diagnosis component of sector planning, and are often only addressed on an ad hoc basis. It is therefore critical to identify the challenges as well as to learn from countries which have effectively integrated risk reduction measures into their education systems. The following section reviews how Haiti, Palestine and South Sudan have effectively integrated risk reduction measures into their education systems in different ways.

## **2: PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE - THE CASES OF HAITI, PALESTINE AND SOUTH SUDAN**

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In order to identify how to mainstream both natural disaster and conflict risk reduction measures into education program and policies, the cases of Haiti, Palestine and South Sudan are examined. These are countries where innovative approaches to planning and programming are being implemented in difficult conditions.

The rapid return of schoolchildren to school in Haiti after the earthquake was an indication of both the commitment of the government to ensuring a return to normality for school children, and a signal of the resilience of the system to respond. Palestine’s latest strategic plan highlights

how establishing greater predictability through a new joint financing modality alongside the integration of fragility indicators in its EMIS can enable the Ministry of Education to plan more effectively. South Sudan's General Education Sector Plan according to Tebbe (2013) in her review of education sector plan (ESPs) of nine Sub-Saharan African countries, "...includes conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding to the greatest extent as compared with the other ESPs in the sample" (p. 41).

## 2.1 HAITI, BEYOND THE CONTRADICTIONS: DEEPENING SOCIAL RESILIENCE

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### **Sergot Jacob**

In 2008, four hurricanes and tropical storms (Fay, Gustav, Hana and Ike) damaged 968 public and non-public schools. On 12 January 2010, while the Haitian education system had not yet finished recovering from the previous disasters, the earthquake devastated the country, killing hundreds of thousands of people. The country suffered a heavy toll not just in terms of human life but also in terms of material and infrastructural damage. Yet beyond the humanitarian disaster, the 2010 earthquake revealed the high resilience of the Haitian society as well as its ability to support and innovate when government institutions were not able to efficiently play their role.

The 2010 earthquake hit Haiti when two strategic policy documents – the National Education and Training Plan (PNEF)<sup>1</sup> and its National Action Strategy for Education for All (SNA-EPT)<sup>2</sup> – provided no guidelines for action in emergency and contingency situations (Jacob, Mathurin and Pierre, 2012). This contribution to the synthesis paper will look at how the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (MENFP) recovered from the 2010 earthquake, and what strategies helped to reopen the schools less than three months after such a disaster. It also reviews how the overhaul of the system was conceived and translated into the 2010-2015 operational plan.

### **The 2010 earthquake: a catalytic event that reshaped the education system**

As the largest natural disaster in Haitian history, the earthquake of 12 January 2010 caused huge human damage, officially estimated to some 300.000 dead, 1,2 million homeless and 500.000 displaced (GoH, 2010). The earthquake also caused the destruction of a large part of the economic, administrative, health and educational facilities in the departments directly affected (West, South East and Nippes). The education sector was heavily damaged: 38.000 students, 1.300 teachers and ministry officials were killed (MENFP, 2010). The central building that housed seven technical directorates collapsed. Approximately 4,268 schools, vocational training centers and higher education institutions were destroyed or damaged, and, in the public sub-sector, 67% of classrooms of fundamental cycles 1 and 2 were destroyed in the departments directly affected (MENFP, 2011). The earthquake caused the immediate cessation of school activities throughout the territory. The extent of the damage, especially in the West,

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<sup>1</sup> See Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports (1998)

<sup>2</sup> See Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle (2007)

caused large-scale migration of people (including school-age children) to seven other departments that were not directly affected.

The Ministry of Education quickly set up suitable arrangements that allowed the return to school in the unaffected departments in February 2010. In contrast, in the departments of the West, South East and Nippes, a gradual return of children to school was planned from 5 April 2010, less than three months after the disaster.<sup>3</sup> Curricula and learning assessment methods were adjusted to complete the remaining five months. Meanwhile, school sites were cleared out or demolished, sheds and tents were set up as well as furniture and basic school equipment in order to accommodate children. The return to school was a key priority of the MENFP in the recovery process.

The return to school implied huge financial challenges for all families, teachers and schools after the earthquake. Through the "Financial Support Programme for Back to School" launched in April 2010, the Ministry decided to provide US\$18 million of financial support to all non-public schools. This emergency operation aimed "to allow children enrolled in non-public schools, in fairness, to return to school and to complete the 2009-2010 school year." The design, as well as the implementation and monitoring of the programme, were based on consultations and consensus made between the MENFP and private and public education actors. A joint monitoring committee, comprised of the Ministry and private and non-governmental partners met every month to decide on the necessary adjustments.

### **Innovations and lessons learned from the disaster**

Three key lessons emerged from the post-emergency situation that could be built on to help shape the future of the education system:

1. *Consolidation of the education system:* Before the disaster, education facilities were strictly separated according to districts and transfer between schools was difficult. To facilitate the return to school, all children were enrolled, wherever their home or school was located before the disaster. This approach allowed the system as a whole to take charge of students, as well as teachers and administrative staff.
2. *Taking into account the psychological dimension:* The traumatic effects of the earthquake were well recognized by the Ministry of Education and a Directorate for Psychological Support is currently being established in order to support the education system deal with the effects of trauma on the school population.
3. *The public funding of private schools:* This was the first time that public money was formally made available to non-public schools. This initiative provides lessons to help frame an innovative and active public-private partnership.

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<sup>3</sup> A back-to-school strategy was devised in order to help the MENFP to deal with the complexity of the situation (see MENFP, 2010).

## **The 2010-2015 Operational Plan**

During the 2010 spring, a Tripartite Task Force (MENFP-BID4-GTEF5) was established to prepare the 2010-2015 Operational Plan (OP) dedicated to reform of the education system. The establishment of thematic groups allowed (national and international) experts and officials from the Ministry to share their knowledge and to address the challenges faced by the Haitian education system. The OP aims to "provide high-quality educational and training system that is: (i) affordable to all Haitians regardless gender, place of residence, or socio-economic status; (ii) consistent with the needs of the national economy; (iii) based on a common set of knowledge delivered by competent teachers in safe, and appropriate environments; and (iv) governed and strengthened at all levels, with municipalities progressively playing a more active role in managing basic education including early childhood and pre-school". (MENFP, 2011).

The Operational Plan carries major innovations, related for example to the decentralization of educational services. The Strategic National Council (CSN), the National Technical Council (CTN) and the Working Groups (GT) are the entities responsible for the implementation of the Operational Plan. In particular, the Working Groups have a dual mission. Firstly, they enable civil society to relay government actions in education so that people can understand and start to take ownership of the ongoing reform process. Secondly, they provide technical support to the technical directors and their officials at decentralized levels both for thematic planning and the implementation, and monitoring of the Operational Plan.

In Haiti, post-disaster management gave the opportunity to reshape the education system. The reopening of the schools as well as the design and implementation of a comprehensive Operational Plan for the education sector paved the way for a broader social reform of the country. This Plan is even nestled within a broader national strategy plan for the GOH and its sectors, which focuses on social, institutional, territorial and economic development.

## **2.2 STANDING FIRM: LONG-TERM EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN PALESTINE AGAINST ALL ODDS**

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### **Sami Aburoza**

Palestinians throughout the decades of dispossession and more than 40 years of occupation have always regarded education as a means to strengthen their steadfastness to remain on their land and build their own state (Nicolai, 2007). In addition to the political and social realities of occupation, Palestine has suffered uncertain financial resources as a function of geopolitical considerations, which has greatly affected the ability of planning in such a volatile environment. Furthermore, international aid has often been delivered in an ad hoc manner through sometimes poorly coordinated projects for example '...41 external funding partners providing earmarked support to 51 projects' (MoE, 2013, p.7). This undermines the possibility to plan and implement system-wide interventions as a means to deal with the entire education sector in an equitable and inclusive way.

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<sup>4</sup> Inter-American Development Bank.

<sup>5</sup> A presidential Commission set up to design recommendations for the education sector.

The development of education in Palestine (the West Bank and Gaza) can be seen through the emergency-reconstruction-development phase prism. Elements of all three exist, with emergency more prominent in Gaza and the developmental phase more established in the West Bank. It is important to note that the Ministry of Education was first established in 1994, following the Oslo accords.

Given the current political and international aid management challenges, the Ministry of Education (MoE) has developed a successful response, which rests on three pillars. First, the MoE agreed with four key Development Partners to establish and implement a new Joint Financing Arrangement (JFA) that allows the ministry to allocate un-earmarked funds (which amounts to more than 50 % of the annual education development budget) to its own policy objectives and engage in a deeper partnership with the Development Partners on the basis of joint principles and goals. Second, planning tools have become more enhanced and responsive to the reality on the ground with the introduction of Fragility Indicators in the annual monitoring and evaluation process providing hard evidence about the educational reality for areas most affected by the occupation. And third, the adoption of the first basket finance mechanism in Palestine, which follows local procedures and systems, has triggered a shift from external accountability toward donors to internal accountability among staff as the catalyst for genuine institution building. Such a significant shift challenges and transforms the existing relationships between all relevant stakeholders and calls for a new mode of assistance.

The Oslo Accords stated that the West Bank should be divided into three parts with different degrees of Palestinian civil and security control:

- **Area A:** includes the main population centers, under full Palestinian security and administrative control, amounting to 18% of the West Bank. This area has decreased to about 10 % in 2013.
- **Area B:** includes the villages and towns adjacent to the cities and is under Palestinian civil control and Israeli security control, amounting to about 21% of the West Bank.
- **Area C:** includes about 61% of West Bank, i.e. 3456 km<sup>2</sup>. It is the only adjacent and non-separated Palestinian area under full Israeli security and civil control. Israel deals with this area as a border area and prevents Palestinian building or expansion in this area. Area C includes 11 regions and contains 194 population communities with a lower population density.

A document published by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in the occupied Palestinian territory examines the issue of displacement in Area C of the West Bank, where Israel retains full control over security, planning and zoning (UN-OCHA, 2011). It highlights how the majority of Area C has been allocated for expanding the Israeli settlements in which about 300,000 settlers live, (double the Palestinian population of 150,000 people). The interviews from this report show the way in which Israeli settlement activity is 'central to the hardships facing Palestinian communities in Area C' (p.1).

The reality of education in Area C (as well as in East Jerusalem and Hebron) is of particular concern. To monitor the situation, the MoE has added Fragility Indicators to its Monitoring and Evaluation System, capturing the degree and extent of damage to the infrastructure of schools, and violations against students and teachers as well as loss of education time. Apart from Area

C, the MoE applies these fragility indicators also in other highly vulnerable areas such as East Jerusalem and the old city of Hebron.

A recent 2012 report issued by the Directorate General of Field Follow-Up cites many violations against students, teachers, school staff as well as physical school infrastructure such as hitting, knocking down, firing guns, throwing sound and tear gas bombs, etc. These recurring violations have caused psychological effects on the teachers and students, as well as physical damage to the infrastructure of the schools (e.g.: broken windows, tiles, trees, doors and locks) (MoEHE, 2012a).

In terms of hard facts, the following summarizes the vulnerable schools and types of violations and restrictions as indicated in the 2012 Annual Progress report (MoE, 2012b):

1. **Schools affected by the Separation Wall**: 30 schools, forming 16% of schools in Area C, where students and teachers have to pass through electronic gates and barriers.
2. **Schools affected by Settlements**: 34 schools, forming 18% of schools located in Area C, are exposed to recurrent violations including opening wastewater pipes near schools and waste dumping.
3. **Jerusalem Schools**: 32 schools, forming 17% of schools located in Area C, are subject to complete closure, cut off from surrounding land with barriers, and are prevented from either expanding, repairing, or building new classrooms. Teachers are frequently not given permits to travel to the schools. The content and use of the Palestinian curriculum, also does not remain under the control of the Palestinian Authorities in these schools.
4. **Schools of Old Town in Hebron**: 31 schools, forming 17% of schools located in Area C, often receive destruction notices, closures and electronic gates.
5. **Distant Area Schools**: 12 schools, forming 6% of schools located in Area C, are difficult to reach because of the lack of access roads. The Palestinian Authority is prevented from building or completing access roads.

The evidence generated through the monitoring of fragility indicators is used as the basis for designing protection mechanisms for the education system during the planning process. The Joint Financing Arrangement (JFA) has also enabled the MoE to design policies and interventions that respond to the security challenges and allocate relevant funding to them. The Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) helped Palestine to build a much needed partnership with Development Partners (DPs) to address the challenges affecting the education sector and move from project-specific discussions to a system-wide focus. The JFAs' alignment with the needs and priorities of the Ministry of Education, effectively handing over project design and prioritization 'power' to the ministry has inevitably led to positive pressures on the other DPs to coordinate more closely with each other and build Palestinian resilience against the political pressures, violations, and restrictions imposed on them.

Since the JFA follows local procedures and systems and relies on internal reporting mechanisms (i.e. the same reports that are used as the management basis for MoE are used by the DPs), positive pressure has been exerted on the ministry to strengthen its internal accountability management structure. While traditionally, aid recipient institutions see their accountability to be primarily toward the external donor rather than toward its own staff and public, the MoE is undergoing a transformation process toward establishing more internal accountability, which is at the heart of institution-building.



To support the MoE in this complex transformation, a new mode of assistance in the form of ‘organic consulting’ is called for. This form of consulting goes beyond the classical technical assistance, focusing on helping staff to undergo transformation of perspectives and mindsets, questioning existing habits and practices, and, most importantly, empowering essential staff who remain often unrecognized in deeply hierarchical organizational structures. Organic consulting immerses itself in the cultural and sociological reality of the organization to define problems jointly and through the eyes of the staff rather than in organizational terms.

## 2.2 SOUTH SUDAN – DELIVERING THE PEACE DIVIDEND

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### **Deng Deng Hoc Yai**

South Sudan is a new nation emerging from 30 years of war and neglect – but with hope for change. Risks of return to conflict however remain high. Provision of quality, inclusive education is perceived by many as a significant stabilising factor for peacebuilding, yet the education system in South Sudan has been severely compromised by the effects of decades of conflict (for details, see for instance MoGEI, 2012, UNESCO 2011, Watkins, 2012, World Bank, 2012). The General Education Strategic Plan 2012-17 (GESp) summarises the difficulties facing the country, as well as the education sector:

Decades of neglect and years of civil war have left the country with a shattered infrastructure, a large diaspora of some of its best talents, and generations of youth who have never had the opportunity to attend school. The country itself is subject to devastating floods and famines, and while independence has been achieved through great sacrifice there is still insecurity in many parts of the country, with resulting armed struggles. The most recent Household Health Survey presented a grim picture: half of the country’s people living below the poverty line; one child in three stunted, moderately or severely, due to malnutrition; health indicators among the worst in the world where 2,054 out of every 100,000 mothers die in childbirth; only 38 percent of adults literate; and approximately 20 percent of the population continuing to face serious challenges to food security (South Sudan Household Health Survey 2010 [using 2005 data]). To add to this is the fragility of the economic situation: less than 2% of national income is non-oil derived and oil revenue is highly unpredictable ... This is the stark reality that is the starting point of development, not least in the education sector. (MoGEI, 2012 p.13)

After the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, the Ministry of Education has been created from virtually nothing: “it had no staff, no policy, limited equipment, and no reliable system for collecting information” (UNESCO-GMR, 2011, p. 14). Eight years later, although important progress has been made, more than 1.3 million children in the primary school age group are not in school, only 25 percent of all schools operate in permanent structures, and every qualified teacher serves no less than 117 pupils (MoGEI, 2012).

The main goals and objectives of the education sector are the universal ones of access, equity, and quality from pre-primary to tertiary levels. It is when these are contextualized that one appreciates the extent of the challenge. The school age population includes thousands of

returnees and internally displaced children. As a result of the lack of educational provision during the war, many older youth have not acquired basic literacy, numeracy or life skills. Adults, especially women, cannot profitably engage in the economic sphere (especially in the informal sector) without having functional literacy. It is a major challenge to not only cater for the needs of out of school youth, but also to ensure that the goals to reduce the high rates of adult illiteracy are achieved.

Quality not only concerns the necessary inputs to the system (better trained teachers, textbooks, supervisors, etc.) but the more difficult tasks of inculcating a problem-solving approach in a tradition of rote-learning. It also involves getting South Sudanese children connected to the vast world of knowledge through the internet. Equity means ensuring that children who live in rural areas, girls who live in communities who may not believe in girls' education, boys and girls with disabilities of various kinds – will not only be treated equally but will receive additional help to guarantee their equal right to education.

It is in this context that the General Education Strategic Plan (GESP), 2012-2017, was developed as the road map for reforming the general education system of the Republic of South Sudan. The GESP contains a series of significant, ambitious and far-reaching reforms. If implemented as envisaged, South Sudan's education system would see significant changes with quality general education being more widely available and accessible than ever before (MoGEI, 2012).

The GESP was the result of extensive participatory planning and policy consultations with central and state level MoGEI officials, supported by UNICEF and the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). These consultations gathered feedback from all ten states on the draft plan, and the resulting final GESP was endorsed in August 2012 by the development partners in the National Education Forum. This has then led to over \$36 million of funding for education from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), as well as \$12 million from Qatar Foundation, \$100 million from FDFID, and \$105 million from USAID. All of these efforts are aligned with the GESP goals.

### **How the GESP addresses conflicts and risks**

One can assess how the GESP has addressed the impact of conflict on the education system in a number of ways. Firstly, in the first two chapters it indicates how conflict has impacted on the education system (i.e. destroyed infrastructure, generations denied their right to education, large number of returnees, lack of capacities of teachers and administrators, severe gender disparity). Secondly, the plan clearly analyses the risks affecting the education system, from the impact of returnees, to the potential of inter-tribal conflicts in the north. It also includes some mitigation strategies to address these risks. This forms the basis for the risk analysis that identifies potential barriers to achieving the GESP goals, which includes a mitigation strategy identified for each goal. For example, if returnees overwhelm both formal and non-formal education services, extra capacity will be injected for the alternative education sector in order to ensure continuity of education (Strategic Goal 3). Finally, there is a commitment by the ministry to develop a national policy on risk reduction and emergency response and to monitor the specific targets related to education in emergencies that have been included in the Plan. (Tebbe, n.d.; MoGEI, 2012)

Peacebuilding opportunities are also a strong component of the GESP. The preface of the plan, for example, mentions that the South Sudan Development Plan (SSDP) sets the framework for national development over the coming years and identifies peacebuilding at the centre of the country's development (GORSS 2011: xix). As a consequence of the SSDP framework, the GESP has ensured that the varying contexts within South Sudan are taken into account when strengthening the overall education system. This implies, for example, ensuring that education is taught in mother tongue during early grades; that the curriculum contributes towards nation-building and citizenship, by essential life-skills, teaching human rights education and conflict prevention (MoGEI, 2012).

In summary, South Sudan's GESP reflects "the willingness at the highest level to recognize the nature of the conflicts (past and ongoing) in the country and to try to address them" (MoGEI, 2012, p. 39). The components related to conflict and disaster risk reduction are, however, more integrated within the four first chapters (i.e. national context and current situation of the education sector; strategic goals and direction) than within the chapters on financing and monitoring and evaluation. This is something that the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) proposes to address in the next iteration of the GESP.

In the months following the endorsement of the GESP, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (now the MoEST), with the support of development partners has implemented a number of major activities as part of the overall goals of the GESP, including construction of 37 new schools and delivery of 9.6 million textbooks, supported by DFID. The Girls' Education programme also supported by DFID has provided 61 million USD in order to increase girls' access, capacity to stay in school, and completion of primary and secondary education.

The drive and political commitment of the government of the Republic of South Sudan towards education as the foundation of the nation is strong. There is recognition that there is a long way to go to ensure that South Sudan can achieve the ultimate aim of all children accessing and completing quality education, but the government is confident that it will get there.

The case of South Sudan shows how political commitment can drive a crisis-sensitive planning process forward, but governments often need tools and resources to support them. The following section provides an overview of some of the tools and approaches that are used by different agencies to support conflict and crisis-sensitive education.

### **3: CRISIS-SENSITIVE TOOLS AND APPROACHES**

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A range of tools and approaches have been elaborated by development partners to support crisis-sensitive planning and its implementation. For example, DFID has used conflict assessments for programming in the past and is now looking at how 'scenario planning' enables DFID country offices to design programmes, aid modalities, and interventions that can continue to deliver for children regardless of whether levels of conflict or fragility rise or fall (DFID, 2010). The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) includes fragile states as one of its three key strategic priorities and offers guidance for countries in preparing their transitional education sector plans (GPE, 2012). USAID has developed an education and fragility assessment tool (Miller-Grandvaux, 2009) and a Checklist for Assessing Conflict Sensitivity in Education Programs (USAID, 2013) to guide its staff on how to programme more effectively in fragile

contexts. The World Bank is promoting Education Resilience Approaches. This captures the assets (capacities and engagement processes) that allow people, communities and institutions to recover from crisis, to perform in spite of difficulties, and to transform in the face of adversity (Kelcey, 2013; World Bank, 2013).

This section highlights only a few of these tools. IIEP's tools and guidance aim to support senior ministry of education officials' mainstream conflict and disaster risk reduction into education policies and plans. INEE's Conflict Sensitive Education Pack, which includes INEE Guiding Principles, Reflection Tool and Guidance Note is a concrete tool for practitioners and donors. Finally, UNICEF's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme which aims to include children's rights and issues in broader conflict-analysis through a participatory process.

### 3.1 IIEP'S APPROACH TO CRISIS-SENSITIVE PLANNING

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#### **Lyndsay Bird, Marie-Claude Rouillard and Chloé Chimier**

IIEP plays a unique role within the United Nations system, as the only specialized organization with the mandate to support educational policy, planning and management. It was established in 1963 as an integral part of UNESCO to develop the capacities of ministries in charge of education to plan and manage their education systems. One of IIEP's thematic priorities in its next Medium-Term Strategy 2014-2017 will focus on strengthening the resilience of education systems through crisis-sensitive planning.

IIEP is convinced that mainstreaming conflict and disaster risk reduction measures into education policy, planning, and programming is the only sustainable way that countries can strengthen their capacity to anticipate, prevent, and respond to conflict and crisis. To support governments to increase their capacity in crisis-sensitive sector planning, IIEP has developed tools and resources. Crisis-sensitive planning is integrated to IIEP's three main axes of research, training and technical cooperation.

IIEP's research and publications play a key role in disseminating new concepts, methods and techniques in crisis-sensitive planning. IIEP conducts research studies to ensure educational continuity during and after emergencies<sup>6</sup>, as well as in-depth analyses of the integration of conflict-sensitive measures within countries' education sector plans (Sigsgaard, 2013). The development of guidance, training materials as well as workshops for personnel within ministries of education in crisis-sensitive planning are a substantive part of IIEP's core training activities. Finally, specialized technical cooperation programmes have been developed in a number of countries to assist governments to plan in crisis situations e.g. Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Chad, Seychelles and South Sudan. IIEP has also supported ministries to undertake vulnerability and conflict analysis as well as integrate the relevant prevention and response measures into countries' sector plans e.g. Burkina Faso, Chad, Seychelles.

In order to better understand how crisis-sensitive planning is undertaken in different contexts the main resources developed by IIEP are discussed below.

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<sup>6</sup> See IIEP's series on Education in Emergencies and reconstruction <http://www.iiep.unesco.org/capacity-development/sector-planning-support/emergencies-and-reconstruction/research.html>

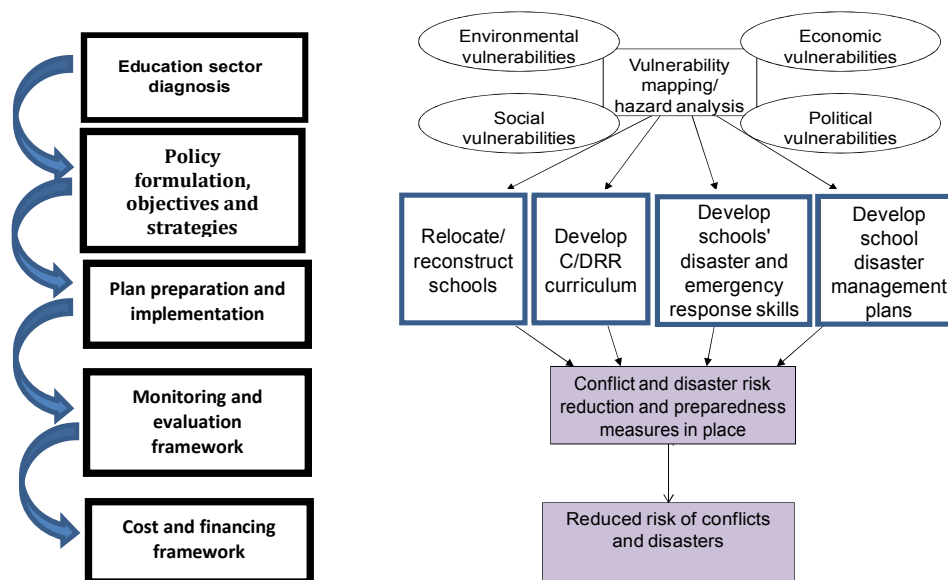
## Tools and guidance: Implementing crisis-sensitive measures

IIEP's approach to training and capacity development for integrating conflict and disaster risk reduction (C/DRR) is founded on 12 years of research and development of tools and guidance. For example IIEP's 'Guidebook for planning education in emergencies and reconstruction' provides detailed information and guidance to support ministries of education in countries affected by conflict or natural disaster (IIEP-UNESCO, 2010). Each chapter identifies strategies or policy options that have already proven successful in different contexts.

In addition the 'Guidance Notes for Educational Planners: Integrating conflict and disaster risk reduction into education sector plans' (IIEP-UNESCO, 2011), were developed by IIEP-UNESCO and UNICEF-West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO), on behalf of the Global Education Cluster. The Guidance Notes were designed specifically for officials in planning departments at central level in countries affected by conflict and/or disasters. The Guidance Notes offer a practical step by step approach on how to include, adapt, and implement conflict and disaster risk reduction (C/DRR) measures as part of sector planning.

Each chapter of the Guidance Notes presents a typical phase of the planning process of an education sector plan (i.e. education sector diagnosis, policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation, and cost and financing for plan implementation) with information on how to adapt each of the phases to integrate C/DRR measures as indicated in Figure 1 (IIEP-UNESCO, 2011).

**Figure 1: Crisis-sensitive planning process**



## Distance Education Course: Formulating an action plan

Building on the Guidance Notes outlined above, IIEP developed a five-module distance course intended for personnel from ministries of education and development partners directly involved in educational planning. The main objective of the course is to support participants to integrate C/DRR in national education sector planning processes, and develop a relevant C/DRR programme based on an analysis of the education sector's vulnerability to disasters and conflict. Participants were given concrete tasks to apply their understanding of the course content in a

specific context. For example, in IIEP's 2012 Distance Education Course, as part of the group activities, the Uganda team developed a 'hazard map' which physically mapped the different hazards affecting the country such as floods, droughts, landslides or conflict. This was followed by an analysis of some of the major risks and their potential impacts on the country's education system. Country teams also learned how to develop an action plan for the institutionalization of C/DRR in their countries' education sector planning process.

### **Integrating C/DRR into education sector planning: Learning from the Burkina Faso case study**

In 2011, at the request of the Ministry of National Education and Literacy (MENA) of Burkina Faso, UNESCO-IIEP and UNICEF-Burkina Faso supported the ministry to integrate emergency prevention and response measures into the country's 10-year education sector plan (PDSEB) (IIEP, 2012a). The first phase of the process aimed to develop an analysis of Burkina Faso's vulnerability to risks of disaster and conflict in the education sector. Three components of vulnerability are important to consider when undertaking a vulnerability analysis: the potential impact of vulnerability, exposure to a given hazard, and the education system's capacity to prevent, mitigate, or prepare for the occurrence of the hazard. In line with these components, a vulnerability analysis follows the following three steps (IIEP-UNESCO, 2012b):

1. Analyzing hazards and their probable impacts on populations and the education system;
2. Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the education system that contribute to conflict and disaster risk reduction;
3. Evaluating institutional and organizational capacities for the integration of crisis-sensitive measures in education sector planning.

Burkina Faso's vulnerability analysis was consolidated through a literature review and consultations with central and district-level education officials. Based on the vulnerability analysis, the next step in the process was the development of a risk reduction strategy and action plan for the education sector (MENA, 2012a). To ensure the sustainability of the measures put forward in the risk reduction strategy and action plan, UNESCO-IIEP, in collaboration with the MENA and UNICEF-Burkina Faso also provided guidance for the integration of these measures in the 10-year national education plan (MENA, 2012b).

The combination of the above tools, training materials and methodologies has been used in a number of contexts such as Burkina Faso, Chad, Seychelles, and South Sudan. They aim to provide a comprehensive capacity development framework for all ministries to integrate conflict and disaster risk reduction into their planning processes.

### **Towards harmonization**

This capacity development framework for ministries of education will be further combined with some of the programmatic tools and frameworks outlined below, which are designed for international agencies and their staff, as well as policy makers. For example, IIEP's vulnerability analysis will be combined with UNICEF's conflict analysis in a joint project with UNICEF and funded by GIZ, which will take place in Niger 2013-14. A systematic harmonization of the different tools and approaches for all phases of the crisis-sensitive planning process is proposed in a forthcoming project with the Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict Programme (PEIC) as part of an Education Above All Foundation initiative starting in 2013-14.

## 3.2 INEE'S TOOLS FOR CONFLICT-SENSITIVE EDUCATION

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**Naoko Arakawa**

### **About INEE**

The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is an open global network of individuals and representatives from NGOs, UN agencies, donor agencies, governments, academic institutions, schools and affected populations, working together to ensure all persons the right to quality, relevant and safe education in emergencies and post-crisis recovery. Over the years, INEE's membership has grown to include 9500 members in 170 countries.

INEE has produced a variety of tools and resources for policy makers and practitioners in the field of education in emergencies and peacebuilding for more than a decade. One of the most well-known publications is the "[INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery](#)". This is a globally utilized tool that articulates the minimum level of educational quality and access in emergencies through to recovery. Building from experiences and knowledge gained through capacity development on the use and contextualization of the Minimum Standards and other tools, INEE recently launched the Conflict Sensitive Education Pack (CSE Pack)<sup>7</sup> at a high-level symposium jointly organized with UNESCO-IIEP. INEE with its partners continues to address and advocate for the utilization of systematized guidance on developing and carrying out conflict-sensitive education programs and policies.

### **Conflict Sensitive Education**

It has been widely recognized that education and conflict have a complex relationship of multiple interfaces. In many conflict countries, schooling may be disrupted by violence and unrest or schools and education systems may be directly targeted by attacks. Education can also contribute to reinforcing the causes of conflict: for example, curriculum and textbooks that are biased can increase intolerant behavior towards certain ethnic or religious groups. On the other hand, education can contribute to social transformation, inclusion and mutual understanding, and thus the building of long-term, sustainable peace. The CSE Pack mentioned above aims to contribute towards strengthening understanding to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of education can have.

The CSE Pack aims to support practitioners and policymakers to ensure that conflict-sensitive approaches are well-addressed and integrated at all levels of education-related interventions, including project/programme management and education sector planning and policy development. The CSE Pack was developed in response to the high demand of INEE members to support programming, policy and planning in contexts where education should "do no harm" and, ideally, contribute to peacebuilding. The Pack defines conflict sensitive education as a process of:

- 1) Understanding the context in which education takes place;
- 2) Analyzing the two-way interaction between the context and education programs and policies development, planning, and delivery; and

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<sup>7</sup> To learn more about the Pack, please visit [www.ineesite.org/en/education-fragility/conflict-sensitive-education](http://www.ineesite.org/en/education-fragility/conflict-sensitive-education)

- 3) Acting to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of education policies and programming on conflict, within an organization's given priorities.

The approach articulated in the CSE Pack aims to minimize any negative impact and maximize the positive impact of education interventions.

The CSE Pack consists of three resources to help practitioners and policy makers ensure that their policies and programmes are conflict sensitive: **1) INEE Guiding Principles, 2) INEE Guidance Note, and 3) INEE Reflection Tool.** These tools were developed with inputs from multiple stakeholders.

- (1) **The INEE Guiding Principles** can be used to ensure that conflict sensitivity is incorporated in education proposals, national education policies and programmes as standard practice. The principles can be adopted by Ministries of Education, donor agencies, UN agencies and other implementing partners as a commitment to prioritize conflict-sensitive education. The six guiding principles are: 1) Assess, 2) Do no harm, 3) Prioritize prevention, 4) Promote equity and the holistic development of the child as a citizen, 5) Stabilize, rebuild and build the education system, and 6) Development partners should act fast, respond to change and stay engaged beyond short-term support. These six principles are also useful for awareness raising and advocacy.
- (2) **The INEE Guidance Note** offers strategies for developing and implementing conflict-sensitive education programs and policies. It offers guidance on conflict-sensitive education design and delivery at all levels and in all types and phases of conflict. The Guidance Note uses the framework (5 domains) of the INEE Minimum Standards and provides more comprehensive and explicit guidance on conflict sensitivity. Additionally, the Guidance Note includes case studies, conflict analysis sample questions, and a quick reference tool of CSE strategies. This is also useful for capacity building of practitioners and policy makers on key concepts and strategies.
- (3) **The INEE Reflection Tool** is a series of questions designed for education programme staff and other stakeholders concerned with education in conflict-affected and fragile contexts. The tool can be used to ensure that conflict sensitivity is integrated in education at all stages of the programme cycle: assessment, design, implementation/management, and monitoring and evaluation. This tool is particularly useful as a practical "check-list" for field based staff to design, assess, monitor and evaluate implementation at all the stage of project/programme cycle.

### **Application in Practice**

Ministries of Education from Chad, Liberia, Mali, Palestine, Uganda, Sierra Leon, Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya endorsed and signed a Symposium Declaration to promote conflict sensitive education at the High-Level Symposium in Paris in 2013<sup>8</sup> where over 200 policy makers, Ministers, academics and practitioners came together to promote conflict-sensitive approaches to education.

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<sup>8</sup> More information can be found on: <http://www.ineesite.org/en/education-fragility/conflict-sensitive-education/declaration-on-conflict-sensitive-education>



All participants of the Symposium agreed that conflict-sensitive education approaches should be applied at all levels of the education system from the classroom level up to policy formulation. For example, the INEE Guidance Note on CSE looks at strategies for conflict-sensitive “Teaching and Learning” as one of the domains within the Minimum Standards framework. It suggests that a conflict-sensitive curriculum should include information for teachers on developing and delivering lessons free from stereotypes and bias, lessons that promote inclusivity, respect, peace and nonviolence.

Other strategies for conflict sensitive teaching and learning include provision of conflict-sensitive teacher training, professional development and support, peer-to-peer learning, mother tongue instruction and objective assessments. The first of these aims to ensure that opportunities for teacher training are equally accessible to both male and female teachers, without discrimination against any group, including refugee and displaced teachers. Secondly, structures for peer-to-peer learning and mentoring can be established to increase conflict-coping skills, share good practices and provide psychosocial support. Thirdly, in a conflict-sensitive teaching and learning process, it is best for students to learn in their mother tongue for early grades, so recruiting, training and retaining teachers who speak the minority languages is important. Finally, fair and accessible assessment of learning outcomes should be implemented, meaning tests should be reviewed and redesigned so that they are free from bias against social groups and content that could incite to conflict is removed<sup>9</sup>.

The CSE Pack suggests that a conflict analysis is the critical first step in developing conflict-sensitive education policies and plans. It indicates where a new or revised policy may be needed to ensure education is delivered in a conflict sensitive way. For example, if the conflict analysis revealed that ex-child soldiers are not accessing education, a policy on alternative learning programmes can be formulated with subsequent planning and implementation measures and resource inputs to implement equitable access to quality education for all.

The policy formulation process should address the following key areas:

- Mobilize political will and capacity to make education conflict sensitive and address conflict drivers which have emerged through the conflict analysis;
- Promote equitable access to all levels of education;
- Make curriculum, teaching and language conflict sensitive;
- Strengthen emergency preparedness including protecting education from attack; and
- Address other key issues identified in the national conflict analysis process.

Through various channels including its Working Groups, INEE is disseminating the CSE Pack to obtain feedback and collect lessons learned. To learn more about INEE’s work on education in emergencies, the Minimum Standards, and to view the CSE Pack, please visit the INEE website at [www.ineesite.org](http://www.ineesite.org).

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<sup>9</sup> Laub, T. 2013. *Integrating Conflict Sensitivity in Education Programs and Policies*. INEE <http://www.ineesite.org/en/blog/integrating-conflict-sensitivity-in-education-programs-and-policies>

### 3.3 UNICEF'S PEACEBUILDING, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMME

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#### ***Anna Azaryeva***

One of UNICEF's newest and most innovative programmes is based on rethinking the way education can tackle some of the biggest development challenges of our time and contribute to building long-lasting peace. Launched in 2012, the four-year, cross-sectoral Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme (PBEA) is grounded on the understanding that good education policy can not only transform lives, but can also have a long term impact on recovery, address the underlying causes of conflict, and promote cohesive societies and contribute to state-building. On the other hand, poor education policy can undermine all of these processes. Inequitable provision of services or biased curriculum and teaching methods can reinforce existing exclusion and stereotypes. Thus, education needs to be delivered effectively and equitably to ensure that it is a driver of peace rather than war.

The PBEA programme aims to do just this: strengthen resilience, social cohesion and human security in conflict-affected contexts by improving and bolstering policies and practices in education for peacebuilding.

The programme focuses on five key outcomes:

1. Increase inclusion of education into peacebuilding and conflict reduction policies, analyses and implementation.
2. Increase institutional capacities to supply conflict-sensitive education.
3. Increase the capacities of children, parents, teachers and other duty bearers to prevent, reduce and cope with conflict and promote peace.
4. Increase access to quality and relevant conflict-sensitive education that contributes to peace.
5. Contribute to the generation and use of evidence and knowledge in policies and programming related to education, conflict and peacebuilding.

The programme is a partnership between the Government of the Netherlands, the national governments of participating countries and other key partners, building on the successes of the previous Education in Emergencies and Post-Crisis Transition, or Back on Track programme, also supported by the Government of the Netherlands. At present, 14 countries in West and Central Africa, East and South Africa, South Asia, East Asia and the Middle East are participating in the programme. Regional activities are also taking place in East Asia and the Pacific region.

#### **A unique approach to programming**

The process of conflict analysis is as important, or perhaps, even more important than the outcome. It requires a participatory process with engagement of diverse stakeholder groups and provides an opportunity for consensus building around the key issues, as indicated in Box 1. As the process in Sierra Leone demonstrates, the aim is to engage the voices and perceptions of constituencies who are rarely represented in broader conflict analysis, including the education stakeholders, women, and in particular young people and children.

### **Box 1: A summary of the Sierra Leone conflict analysis**

The inequitable and discriminatory nature of Sierra Leone's education system during the 1980s and 1990s is widely acknowledged as a major factor in inciting the civil war. The education system collapsed just before the conflict broke out, and schools were closed, making it easier to persuade young people to join armed groups. Although the war officially ended in January 2002, drivers of conflict persist. Within this context, in 2012, UNICEF carried out a conflict analysis in Sierra Leone as the first step in implementing the PBEA programme.

The conflict analysis was conducted through a comprehensive, participatory process, designed in alignment with INEE Minimum Standards, Analysis Standard 1. Six steps were included: (1) an **initial mapping** of all available and relevant analysis and documentation, avoiding duplication and building on existing knowledge; (2) a **desk review**, including anecdotal testimonies and pictorial representations by children and young people from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission reports; (3) country office **design of the analysis**, including its geographical scope, key stakeholders and consultation methodologies; (4) **selection of participants** from a wide range of constituencies; (5) UNICEF implementation of participatory **workshops and consultations**, with support from ActionAid and World Vision for children's and adolescents' focus group discussions; and (6) **findings consolidated in a report**, presented to multiple audiences and strategically used to further develop the PBEA programme in Sierra Leone.

*Adapted from:* Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, 'INEE Guidance Note on Conflict Sensitive Education', INEE, New York, 2013, pp. 56–58.

The process provides an opportunity to prioritise interventions and plan strategically, with findings informing programming at all levels – school, community, education sector and national.

In 2012, the fourteen country teams of the programme participated in training on conflict analysis and conflict-sensitive and peacebuilding programming. After completing the training, each country team designed country-specific work plans based on the mapping of existing analyses and identified gaps to define national and subnational scope and geographic areas.

Broader inter-agency conflict analysis also informs the PBEA programme, providing a supplementary and focused assessment of the situation of children and women within the education sector. Several country offices engaged in innovative partnerships with national and international NGOs as well as research agencies and universities in the course of the conflict analysis. This engagement allowed for mutual capacity development on methodology, process, data analysis and interpretation as well as on subsequent programme design. To meet the needs of each specific context, country teams have adapted the analysis terminology and frameworks to ensure broad acceptance and ownership by national partners.

Children's rights and issues are essential to these analyses and have been identified as an important gap in broader conflict- analysis processes. UNICEF is well positioned to fill these identified gaps. In most countries, extensive consultations with children and young people are taking place as part of the process. Dynamics particularly relevant to children and women include, among others, the social dimensions of conflict, children's rights, gender issues,

equitable access to services, protection, security, psycho-social wellbeing, education for peaceful coexistence, and coping and conflict management capacities for children, youth, caretakers and teachers.

Some of the key lessons emerging from the conflict analyses processes in programme countries include:

1. Ownership of the processes and methodology by national counterparts is critical for the analysis and subsequent use of the findings;
2. Design of appropriate methodology and building capacity of key actors to conduct education-focused conflict analysis requires dedicated time and resources;
3. Particular attention needs to be paid to meaningfully engaging youth and children in the analysis. To that end UNICEF developed additional guidance and tools, as this area emerged as a gap at the start of the process. In addition support systems need to be put in place in advance as youth consultations may reveal sensitive issues and partners need to be prepared to respond;
4. Intersectoral linkages are critical for the usefulness of the analysis for broader peacebuilding programme design and planning;
5. Validation of findings at community, sub-national and national level are important for consensus building.

### **Building and sharing evidence**

As education and peacebuilding is a relatively new field, even for UNICEF, the PBEA programme is implementing a robust research strategy and documenting experiences and lessons learned to build broader knowledge about the topic, highlight linkages that already exist, and generate discussions with partners globally.

The PBEA research strategy was developed through a consultative process to strengthen the programme's ability to achieve Outcome 5 - generating new knowledge and evidence about the ways that education might contribute to peacebuilding in conflict-affected and post-conflict environments. It is anticipated that strategic research can also contribute in a formative way to support the achievement of the other programme outcomes.

The PBEA Results Framework and the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) approach will support UNICEF in assessing how to better develop more coherent, coordinated and effective interventions that contribute to peacebuilding. The core of the M&E strategy focuses on demonstrating how education activities are addressing key drivers of conflict. Quantitative and qualitative data will be gathered through ongoing monitoring and learning processes at the country level, as well as frequent analysis of the results and changes.

Given the limited programming in this area to date, the PBEA is ultimately a learning process. The interventions that contribute to peace are therefore not often known at the outset. It is as important to capture unintended results of interventions as intended ones. Programme reviews, lessons learned and developmental or formative evaluations will be used for this purpose.

## 4. CONCLUSION

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This paper explored how Ministries of Education worldwide can rebuild resilience by developing and delivering conflict sensitive policies, plans and programmes. Planning is a forward looking exercise in which we try to predict future conditions based on previous experiences, using strategies which we hope will redress obstacles and promote desirable goals. Some conditions are endemic, such as floods, droughts, and even earthquakes. We can, and in many cases we do, plan successfully to alleviate the worst of their impact. Unfortunately, conflict in its various forms is almost equally as endemic, but involves a more complex set of factors that make it more difficult to plan for amelioration. There is a moral imperative however to ensure that a child's rights to education is guaranteed in a safe and secure learning environment. There is also a democratic imperative, demonstrated by the fact that the vast majority of people affected by conflict and globally give the highest priority to education.

This paper has indicated that we have the tools and approaches necessary to support the implementation of crisis-sensitive education sector plans and their strategies in conflict and crisis environments (and there are many more than those articulated here). We also have increasing evidence from the field that these approaches are working – albeit slowly. We know that prevention is cheaper and easier than the cure, that \$1 spent on prevention saves at least \$7 in recovery costs. We know that building schools to withstand levels of earthquake intensities saves lives, and inculcating peace development strategies through school curricula can increase tolerance and mutual understanding even in most difficult of situations.

Haiti's resilience despite the overwhelming effects of the earthquake demonstrates that we should not underestimate local knowledge and talent. The case of Palestine demonstrated that such conflict-sensitive strategies have to be budgeted for and monitored in a systematic way as part of flexible financing mechanisms. The case of South Sudan highlighted the importance of political will and engagement of the government in ensuring that conflict mitigation strategies were included in their sector plan.

This openness to discuss politically sensitive issues such as conflict, and the mechanisms for its prevention, is quite rare among many governments. As indicated by Sigsgaard (2013), "in some conflict-affected countries, governments downplay or shy away from discussing armed conflict" (p. 14). This can result in Ministries of Education not taking account of conflict issues when designing and implementing their education sector plans. In this paper we stressed the importance of conducting a conflict and vulnerability analysis, as the first step in the planning cycle. This is crucial to understand the environmental, economic, social and political context of a country, and on which a crisis-sensitive planning process depends. We highlighted how this has to be an inclusive exercise, as without the involvement of all stakeholders in the preparation of plans and policies we lose the necessary involvement required for effective implementation.

Finally we reminded ourselves that if over 28 million out of school children live in countries affected by conflict and countless more have their education disrupted by the effects of natural disasters, then the issue of conflict and crisis sensitive planning must be given greater attention in the global discourse and the post-2015 agenda.

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