

PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVE

Towards Education Sector-level Conflict Analysis: A Review of the INEE Workshop Methodology

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New approaches are being developed to reveal how the education sector is not only affected by conflict but also serves as a possible medium for unintentionally – or deliberately – reinforcing and perpetuating conflict. Such innovative analytic frameworks are being developed by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Working Group on Education and Fragility – an international, inter-agency group comprised of bilateral and multilateral donors, UN agencies, international NGOs and research institutions. These break new ground in the development and application of sector-level conflict analysis tools to guarantee the analysis of the sector activities' impacts on conflict dynamics. In late 2010 and early 2011, the Working Group held a series of stakeholder consultations building on an analytic framework it developed as part of a multi-country research study. The regional and national-level consultative workshops – in Addis Ababa, Juba and Sarajevo – would allow the Working Group to a) “check” its analytical framework and approaches to education and conflict against on-the-ground experiences; b) generate further knowledge around strategies for maximizing education's mitigating role in conflict; and c) equip national stakeholders with the skills and knowledge to analyze and formulate policies and plans with a “conflict lens” in mind. This report summarises

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lessons learned and recommendations for a workshop methodology towards good practice for sector-level conflict analysis.

Background

In recent years, donors and international organisations have widely used the terms “conflict sensitivity” and “peacebuilding” to refer to a critical premise for effective development in conflict-prone and conflict-affected countries.¹ According to a UN/World Bank review of post-conflict needs assessments, “most international as well as donor agencies would share the assumptions, a) on one side, that “transition programming... should aim at ‘doing no harm’ and minimizing unintended negative impacts”; on the other side that “transition programming... should aim at maximizing its peace building impact in the aftermath of the crisis as well as over the long term”.² Conflict analysis is the primary tool for conflict sensitivity and, during the last decade, UN agencies, the World Bank, bilateral donors³ and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have developed or commissioned more than a dozen conflict-analysis tools to support transition programming to “help (...) create the conditions for political stability, security, justice and social equity”.⁴

Analytical frameworks developed by key donors and organisations – such as the UNDG/ECHA Interagency Framework for Conflict Analysis in Transition Situations, the World Bank’s Conflict Analysis Framework, USAID’s Framework for Analysis and Program Development, or GTZ’s Conflict Analysis for Project Planning and Implementation – are generally designed to address mainly the macro-level and focus on policy issues rather than on the implementation of interventions.⁵ While use of conflict analysis has increased, “donors have struggled to define the

1 The concept of ‘conflict sensitivity’ and deriving ‘conflict sensitive approaches’ to development programming emerge from diverse literature and thinking on Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA), Mary Anderson’s ‘Do No Harm’ work as well as from the macro conflict assessment work undertaken by major donors since 1999. The authors acknowledge that the term has shifted its meaning over time, as development and humanitarian agencies have increasingly expanded their roles from working around conflicts, towards working in and precisely on conflict, recognizing the need to address structural causes of conflict more directly. See Peter Woodrow and Diana Chigas, “A Distinction with a Difference: Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding”, CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2009. Conflict sensitivity is understood by the authors as “... the capacity of an organisation to maximise positive impacts on the (conflict) context, understand the (conflict) context in which it operates, understand the interaction between its operations and the (conflict) context; and act upon the understanding of this interaction in order to avoid negative impacts”. International Alert, 2004

2 UN/World Bank review of Post-Conflict Needs Assessments, 2007, p. 3

3 For example, US Agency for International Development (USAID), UK Department for International Development (DFID), former Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)³ and Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)

4 UNDG ECHA, “Inter-Agency Framework for Conflict Analysis in Transition Situations,” UNDG ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues (United Nations Development Group/Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs), 2004, p. 4.

5 Swisspeace, “Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment and Conflict Sensitivity,” KOFF Info Sheet, 2004, p. 3, available at

operational implications and relevance of the findings of conflict analysis and to change their programmes as a result.”⁶ It has been recognised that analysis often remains academic and lacks guidance for or links to practical approaches to peace and conflict.

There is great potential for sector-level conflict analysis to complement macro-level analysis in ways that improve the operational relevance of that analysis⁷, particularly via the conceptualisation and use of conflict analysis as a planning tool. As noted by DFID, “sector analysis is often needed as a complement to country-level analysis to draw out practical implications for sector programmes.”⁸ The dynamics identified within a macro-level conflict analysis will play out at the sector level in a range of nuanced ways based on the actors, institutions and interactions within that sector. Whether and how the implications of macro-level conflict analysis findings are integrated at the sector level is uncertain.

Because “the strategic and sectoral levels are interdependent and conflict sensitivity needs to be integrated at both the national (macro-strategic) level and at the sector level”⁹, similar processes of analysis and planning should be undertaken at the sector level as at the national- or macro-level. The impetus for an increased focus at the sector level is clear both in terms of supporting effective development of a given sector and of ensuring that sector development itself is sensitive to conflict and contributes to peacebuilding. The growing understanding that “blockages for effective reform at the sector level (including for delivery, planning and procurement) can be political and that technical solutions alone may not be enough”¹⁰ has led to an increasing focus on the need for sector-level analysis regarding impacts of the context on development results.

At the same time, it is increasingly recognised that various sectors can play an exacerbating role in conflict dynamics. While there is long-standing acknowledgement of “do no harm,” its application at the sector level requires analysis of the sector’s impacts on conflict, an idea that is gaining practical traction through new research and knowledge generation. The education sector, for example, has in recent years moved forward an agenda that recognises

http://www.swisspeace.ch/typo3/fileadmin/user_upload/Media/Topics/Peacebuilding_Analysis__Impact/KOFF-Infosheet_Peace_and_Conflict_Impact_Assessment_and_Conflict_Sensitivity.pdf, (accessed 18 May 2011).

6 Erika Boak, “Education in Fragile Situations,” 2011, p. 11.

7 Marta Foresti and Leni Wild, “Analysing governance and political economy in sectors –Joint donor workshop report,” 2009, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), p. 3, available at <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/4665-full-report.pdf>, (accessed 20 May 2011).

8 DFID, “Working Effectively in Conflict-affected and Fragile Situations: Analysing Conflict and Fragility,” Briefing Paper A, March 2010, p. 12, available at <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/governance/building-peaceful-states-A.pdf>, (accessed 18 May).

9 International Alert, “Chapter 4: Integrating Conflict Sensitivity into Sectoral Approaches,” Conflict-sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack, p. 4.

10 Foresti et al., “Analysing governance and political economy in sectors –Joint donor workshop report,” p.2.

education not simply as a neutral, technical activity but as a political one which interacts with security, governance, economic and social dynamics through its structures, content and management.¹¹ Country case studies like the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)¹² multi-country research programme entitled "Situational Analysis on Education and Fragility" analyse how aspects of the education system can fuel and/or reinforce conflict, for example, through the politicisation of curricula and textbooks; targeted exclusion and marginalisation; or fragmented sector management structures which entrench ethnic and linguistic divisions.¹³ Actors in other service delivery sectors, such as health¹⁴, are beginning to similarly analyze their sectors' interfaces with conflict and there is a growing body of knowledge about how activities in sectors such as security and justice (e.g. security sector reform; disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes; rule of law programmes) can exacerbate conflict when disconnected from the reality of the conflict dynamics in which they are embedded.¹⁵

Applying INEE's Methodology for Education Sector Conflict Analysis in Eastern Africa and the Western Balkans

With the aim to "check" INEE's analytical framework and approaches to education and conflict against diverse on-the ground experiences and to build on regional and national experiences on education's mitigating role in conflict, the Working Group held a series of consultative workshops on education and fragility in the East African region and the Balkans. The first consultation was held in early October 2010, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This regional workshop brought together 45 education experts from five Eastern African countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan – both Khartoum and Southern Sudan – and Uganda) and members of the Working Group to discuss and analyze education's role in these conflict-affected or fragile contexts. Five months later in February 2011, the Working Group followed-up on the request of the Southern Sudanese participants in Addis Ababa to hold a two-day country workshop in Juba,

11 See Kerstin Tebbe, Brooke Breazeale, Steve Commins, Jane Kalista, Mary Joy Pigozzi, Rebecca Winthrop and Corinne Graff. "The Multiple Faces of Education in Conflict-affected and Fragile Contexts," Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), 2010, and INEE, "Understanding education's role in fragility. Synthesis of four situational analyses of education and fragility: Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia and Liberia," Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning, 2011.

12 INEE is an open global network of representatives from NGOs, UN agencies, donor agencies, governments, academic institutions, schools and affected populations working together to ensure all persons the right to quality and safe education in emergencies and post-crisis recovery. Established in 2000, INEE currently has almost 6,000 members worldwide.

13 See INEE, "Understanding education's role in fragility"

14 See INEE, "Workshop Report on Cross-sectoral Approaches to Mitigating Conflict and Fragility," INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility, 2011.

15 See Clem McCartney, Martina Fischer and Oliver Wils (Ed.), "Security Sector Reform – Potentials and Challenges for Conflict Transformation," Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation Dialogue Series No. 2, Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2004.

Southern Sudan, to support local stakeholders to further identify education's role in conflict there and define context-specific education strategies which can mitigate conflict and support the transition to longer-term development. The workshop comprised 47 education experts from national and state levels and was linked to Southern Sudan's education sector planning process. Additionally, a second regional consultation took place in March 2011 in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, bringing together education practitioners and policymakers from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia to undertake critical analysis of the interface between education and fragility in their countries.¹⁶

The workshops were developed as participatory processes in which participants were led through a series of three to four interactive sessions to analyze conflict dynamics in their countries and education's interfaces with it. Participants first brainstormed and identified key developments and conflict dynamics in their respective countries, as well as how these developments or dynamics had impacted on education. Participants were then asked to analyze education's role in each of those developments or dynamics – e.g. education's impacts on land issues as a key conflict dynamic in Southern Sudan – both in terms of positive or conflict-mitigating impacts and in terms of negative or conflict-exacerbating impacts. Final sessions were focused on brainstorming strategies for how to develop or complement education activities in ways that address conflict dynamics in order to be conflict-sensitive and contribute to longer-term peacebuilding. Each workshop consisted of a process that began with macro-level analysis and focused down on the sector-level, providing, in the final session, an opportunity for participants to conceptualise how to operationalize that analysis. Given the participatory structure of the workshops, each of them had a more or less explicit training component for education stakeholders to understand and learn how to apply the conflict analysis framework in their context with the hope that this exercise would influence their current and future work and thereby continue to inform conflict-sensitive education planning, programming and policy in their respective countries.

Lessons Learned Towards Good Practice for Sector-level Conflict Analysis

Joint Sector-level Conflict Analysis

According to the European Commission, donors should “conduct joint... analysis with other development partners in order to generate a shared analysis, feeding into collaborative decision-making”.¹⁷ The INEE methodology as undertaken in Juba, for example, was premised on this principle of joint analysis in that it brought together a range of member agencies of the Working Group – including DFID, the Fast Track Initiative (FTI), Save the Children, UNESCO's

¹⁶ All three Workshop reports can be accessed through the INEE website at http://www.ineesite.org/index.php/post/event_consultative_workshops1/.

¹⁷ Boak, “Education in Fragile Situations,” p. 12.

International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO-IIEP), UNICEF, the World Bank – as well as government and other aid agencies working in Southern Sudan to participate in the workshop. Working Group members attended from headquarters offices and, in some instances, their locally-based colleagues joined from their offices in Juba. Participants additionally included a range of representatives from an even broader array of other NGOs and donor agencies in Southern Sudan, each of which occupies a different position within the education sector in terms of geographical placement, content focus, and target groups. There was strong buy-in from the Ministry of Education, with national and state-level ministry officials in attendance and opening and closing remarks from the Minister himself.

Participants

The broad range of participants contributed to the joint nature of the country-level workshop held in Juba. Good practice for conflict analysis requires an expansive and inclusive assemblage of participants for each workshop to guarantee that analysis is comprehensive, to uncover hidden dynamics and to substantiate the relevance of the findings. Thereby, the Addis Ababa workshop participant list was specifically designed to ensure that the country teams, though small – three to five people each – included a representative from the Ministry of Education, a donor representative (preferably from the lead donor agency), a representative from a civil society organisation or NGO and/or an academic. A similar composition was attempted for the small country teams that participated in the Sarajevo workshop, though these ended up more heavily weighted towards NGO representation. In both cases, information about potential participants' appropriateness was triangulated by various current and former local colleagues who could weigh in on their positions, scope of work, and personal knowledge and interests.

A fairly extensive search process for appropriate participants facilitated by the organizers and accompanied by a collaborative vetting process of the participant list(s) can ensure a proper balance of stakeholders in terms of background and expertise, type of agency, gender and geographical representation. Successful vetting of the participants must be done by local colleagues who know the context and key actors. While there was an overall good range of representation at the Juba workshop, more time and attention could have been paid to the participant list in order to ensure the presence of some key stakeholders who were missing and that the balance among representatives from the government and other agencies was more balanced. Also particularly important in Juba was the ability to have representation from the 10 state ministries of education to ensure a geographic balance, among other factors – e.g., cultural and ethnic – that this geographic difference represents in Southern Sudan.

Additionally, emerging theory and practice affirms the need not just for sector-specific technical specialists to be engaged in analysis but to mix these sector-focused participants with non-sector specialists who represent a mix of interdisciplinary expertise. A governance specialist or political analyst working in partnership with a sector specialist means that the analysis will not

simply remain at the level of identifying technical challenges".¹⁸ While the Juba workshop did not incorporate non-sector specialists, a presentation on conflict analysis by PACT Sudan, an international NGO working on peace and conflict issues, broadened the parameters for understanding conflict analysis and conflict sensitivity among the participants and, by doing so, added depth to the analysis and to the training aspects of the workshop.

Understandings of Peace and Conflict

Allowing space for divergent understandings of conflict and peace within the analysis is fundamental to operationalizing analysis into conflict sensitivity. Participants in each context had their own interpretation and nuanced engagement with the terminology. In the Addis Ababa workshop, each country team interacted differently with the terminology of fragility used to frame the workshop. For example, the Ugandan country team did not consider their context fragile, only that the North had been troubled by violence. At the same time, the Somali representative from Puntland easily appropriated the label of "fragile" to describe his region's circumstances. At the Juba workshop, the terminology of "conflict" and "peace" was used with varying responses; while some participants were antithetical to the term "conflict" – the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was understood to have ended the conflict – there was general engagement with the peace/conflict dichotomy based on a shared understanding or acceptance that Southern Sudan is trying to move towards long-term, sustainable peace. On the contrary, in Sarajevo, participants were adverse to the terms peace and conflict because the violent conflicts of the Western Balkans had ended many years prior and the participants considered their countries to be at peace. However, there were statements made by some participants that they could more easily engage with the terminology of fragility, particularly when viewed on a spectrum, to describe the situations in their countries. A reasonable consensus around the definitions and uses of terminology, therefore, seems incredibly important in facilitating further analysis and setting the parameters for it. Giving participants the opportunity to discuss the terminology should be the starting point for the analysis itself.

Timing

Given the need and goal for conflict analysis to serve as a planning tool, the timing of the workshop was best when linked to existing and ongoing processes at the right moments to ensure its relevance and integration. The Addis Ababa and Sarajevo workshops were one-off events at which participants learned how to utilize the analytic framework; these consultations were not linked to any ongoing work or processes of the participants. Conversely, the Juba workshop was directly tied to the education sector planning process and ran at the beginning of a two-week period in which state ministry of education officials traveled to Juba to participate in a series of planning workshops with other stakeholders based in the capital. Not only did the clear linkages to the planning process tailor participants' expectations for the workshop, this also

¹⁸ Boak, "Education in Fragile Situations," p. 12.

meant that the analysis developed during the workshop could feed directly into the ongoing process to support conflict sensitivity in the new sector plan.

Capacity Building

Integrating conflict sensitivity into established processes and procedures such as education sector planning and needs assessments, as well as into the design, implementation and evaluation of education programs, requires long-term and consistent application of a conflict lens to all activities. As mentioned, the workshops intended not only to share the framework and undertake analysis during the course of the workshop but also to build the capacity of education actors to integrate the conflict lens into their ongoing work. In so doing, the workshops created among participants new knowledge of possible implications of education decisions and activities by utilising the framework and providing guidance on how to implement conflict-sensitive policies and programs. As a result, a highlighted experience for many participants was a new recognition of the need to carry out conflict analysis, as it was believed to help education stakeholders to better understand the context and impacts of their work on conflict dynamics. Multiple evaluation forms from the workshop in Juba, as well as commentary from participants in Addis Ababa and Sarajevo, noted the utility of the workshop as a learning experience. Participants from the Addis Ababa workshop, for example, stated in their feedback forms intentions to share their recent experience with education donor coordination groups and government officials on the national and local level to develop joint actions towards capacity building activities that would allow national staff to develop a conflict-sensitive lens. Further workshops and other ongoing support could help to institutionalise the application of this new approach, as was similarly noted by participants in the feedback forms from the Juba workshop.

Conclusions

The growing recognition among development agencies of the need for more effective engagement in conflict-affected and fragile states is increasingly focused at the sector level as the nexus of country-level strategies or plans and the sources and dynamics of conflict. In education, for example, the primary global funding initiative, the Global Partnership for Education (formerly the Education for All—Fast Track Initiative) is now integrating a conflict-lens into technical and financial support in countries affected by conflict. The INEE workshop methodology has potential as a model for sector-level conflict analysis that can be tweaked and improved, honing in on key aspects. One of the most essential aspects of sector-level conflict analysis is the training component, based on the recognition that incorporating conflict sensitivity into sector policy, plans and programs requires consistent application of a conflict lens that continuously analyzes the sector activities' impacts on conflict dynamics. The critical value of the INEE methodology, therefore, is that it builds the capacity of local actors to analyze conflict at the sector level in their ongoing and regular work, thereby increasing the likelihood

that such analysis will be incorporated from planning through implementation to monitoring and evaluation. A switch in the mindset of local sector-level actors to a consciousness of their own impacts on conflict dynamics in their context helps to ensure that such analysis will have longer-term mitigating impacts on conflict.