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for Educational Planning



Alternative education

Filling the gap in emergency and post-conflict situations

Pamela Baxter
Lynne Bethke



Education in emergencies and reconstruction

Alternative education

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Foreword to the series

UNESCO is increasingly requested to provide an educational response in emergency and reconstruction settings. The organization is in the process of developing expertise in this field in order to be able to provide prompt and relevant assistance. It will offer guidance, practical tools, and specific training for education policy-makers, officials, and planners.

The fifth of the eleven objectives adopted by the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000 explicitly focuses on the rights of children in emergencies. It stresses the importance of meeting “the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability and conduct[ing] educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict”. The Dakar Framework for Action (World Education Forum, 2000: 9) calls for national Education for All plans to include provision for education in emergency situations. Governments, particularly education ministries, have an important role to play in an area that has often been dominated by the actions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and United Nations (UN) agencies.

Moreover, the field of educational planning in emergencies and reconstruction is still young. It must be organized into a manageable discipline through further documentation and analysis, while training programmes are being designed. Accumulated institutional memories and knowledge in governments, agencies, and NGOs on education in emergencies are in danger of being lost due both to the dispersion and disappearance of documents, and to high staff turnover in both national and international contexts. Most of the expertise is still in the heads of practitioners and needs to be collected, since memories fade fast. Diverse experiences of educational reconstruction must be more thoroughly documented and analyzed before they disappear.

This task includes the publication, in this series, of country-specific analyses being conducted on the planning and management of education in emergencies and reconstruction. They concern the efforts currently being made to restore and transform education systems in countries and territories as diverse as Pakistan, Burundi, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Sudan, Kosovo, Timor-Leste and Rwanda. They have been

initiated and sponsored by IIEP, in close collaboration with colleagues in other UNESCO offices.

The objectives of the country studies are to:

- contribute to the process of developing knowledge in the discipline of education in emergencies and reconstruction;
- provide focused input for IIEP training programmes targeting government officials and others in education in emergencies and reconstruction;
- identify and collect documentation on the management of education in various countries;
- capture some of the undocumented memories of practitioners;
- analyze the responses in very different situations to educational provision in times of crisis;
- increase dissemination of information and analysis on education in emergencies and reconstruction.

IIEP's larger programme on education in emergencies and reconstruction involves not only these country studies, but also a series of global, thematic, policy-related studies. In addition, IIEP has published a *Guidebook for planning education in emergencies and reconstruction* for ministry of education officials and the agencies assisting them, and is developing training materials for a similar audience. Through this programme, IIEP will make a modest but significant contribution to the discipline of education in emergencies and reconstruction. Its hope is to enrich the quality of the planning processes applied in this crucial field.

Mark Bray
Director, IIEP

Foreword by CfBT Education Trust

The educational needs of children affected by conflict, emergencies and fragility have become an area of increasing attention. The Dakar Framework for Action stresses the importance of meeting “... the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability and conduct[ing] educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict” (UNESCO, 2000: 9). But the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals and Education For All goals is seriously impeded by ongoing conflict and persistent fragility.

The research partnership between CfBT Education Trust and IIEP-UNESCO has sought to address the increasing need for evidence-based education responses in situations affected by fragility and conflict and to inform educational planning and practice. The intention of the partnership was to develop knowledge on specific interventions, strategies and methods that could be used to improve access to quality Education for All.

CfBT Education Trust has long sought to address the barriers to education for the most disadvantaged children worldwide. A key tenet of CfBT’s research and operational work is to achieve greater educational opportunities for learners and enhance the quality of learning received. This research programme has allowed CfBT and IIEP to combine their practical experience in the field of education and emergencies with rigorous research. We hope that the fruits of this research partnership will encourage further collaboration among researchers, practitioners and policy-makers, and foster an increasingly evidence-based attitude among stakeholders, with people desiring to know ‘what works’ and utilize practice-based research to plan and deliver education in situations of conflict, reconstruction and fragility.

The research produced as a part of CfBT and IIEP’s partnership is a component of CfBT’s broader Evidence for Education research programme. CfBT’s research programme was established with the aim of investing in a coherent body of practice-based development and research that can be shown over time to have a positive impact on educational policy and practice both in the UK and worldwide. It is our hope that through this research partnership we are able to contribute to this vital

field of education by enhancing knowledge on different approaches to plan and deliver education, and by doing so help improve the opportunities for learners in these most challenging of contexts.

John Harwood
Chairman, CfBT Education Trust

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List of abbreviations

AEP	Alternative education programme
ALP	Alternative learning programme
ASP	Alternative schooling programme
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CAFS	Conflict-affected fragile states
CAG	Community Action Groups
CASP	Community-based Alternative Schooling Project
COPE	Community Oriented Primary Education Programme
CREDO	Church-Related Education Development Organization
CREPS	Complementary Rapid Education for Primary Schools
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CYCLE	Countering Youth and Child Labour through Education
CYSS	Child and Youth Support Structure
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DEO	District Education Office
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FSP	Flexible Schooling Programme
FTI	Fast Track Initiative (EFA)
GATE	Girls' Access to Education in Nepal
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HCR	High Commissioner for Refugees
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
IFCD	Innovative Forum for Community Development
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
INGO	International non-governmental organization
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency

LSPS	Live Safe Play Safe
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFT	Multi-functional team
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MOEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MSF-H	Medecins Sans Frontieres – Holland
NCTVA	National Council for Technical Vocational and other Awards
NFEC	Non-Formal Education Centre
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPSCE	National Primary School Certificate Examination
NPSE	National Primary School Examination
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSP	Out of School Programme
PACE-A	Partnership for Advancing Community Education in Afghanistan
PEN	Peace Education Network
PEP	Peace Education Programme
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SCUK	Save the Children UK
TEP	Teacher Education Package
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UPE	Universal Primary Education
VDC	Village Development Committees
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WCH	War Child Holland

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Executive summary

Children in emergency situations, especially those who have been affected by conflict, have a wide range of educational needs depending on their context. They may have missed part or all of their education or at the very least their education has been disrupted. Many children affected by conflict have witnessed or experienced horrific events and so require psychosocial support. In addition, all children in emergencies require specific skills and knowledge to help them to deal with the world that they now live in. Not all those who have been affected by conflict have the same educational needs and so there is a need for a variety of educational responses – some can and will re-enter formal schooling if it is available. Others, especially older children, may want to access education but may not be able or willing to attend primary school with younger children. They may, however, be prepared to attend an alternative education programme with the goal of completing at least the primary cycle or of achieving basic literacy and numeracy skills, and perhaps learning some type of trade or skill that will help them obtain employment.

This book reviews some of the types of alternative education programmes that are offered in emergency and post-conflict situations and the contribution of these programmes to achieving the goals of Education for All (EFA), including the improvement of the quality of education. The authors focus specifically on the goals related to access to primary education and appropriate learning and life skills programmes, the elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education and the improvement of educational quality.

The authors consider two broad types of alternative education programmes – those that provide an alternative means of access to education (for example, accelerated learning programmes and home-based or community-based schools) and those that are alternative in curriculum provision.

Alternative access programmes provide alternative methods of delivery to ‘fill the gap’ of education provision for children who are not enrolled in the formal system due to age, gender, ethnicity or geographical location. Alternative access programmes generally include the use of a formal curriculum and pedagogy, but the teachers are often (i) untrained (by the relevant ministry), or (ii) may not have received formal recognition of their teacher training, or (iii) the learning programme may

not be recognized formally by the relevant government ministry. These programmes may also use different pedagogical methods (for example, more learner-centred and participatory than are generally found in the traditional formal system). Case studies from Nepal and Sierra Leone, as well as evidence from Liberia, reveal that these programmes often improve quality at the learner level, but may not always address quality concerns related to the overall education system.

Alternative curriculum provision programmes are defined as (a) those that offer non-traditional/alternative subjects such as HIV and AIDS prevention or landmine awareness, sometimes within traditional, formal curricula and sometimes in parallel to the formal system; and (b) alternative curriculum provision programmes which offer non-traditional/alternative subjects such as HIV and AIDS prevention or landmine awareness, either within traditional, formal curricula or in parallel to the formal system. Most alternative curriculum provision programmes are designed to change behaviour. These programmes often require different methodology and pedagogy that are also considered alternative.

The authors present strategies for implementing infused, parallel and separate subjects through case studies in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sierra Leone. These case studies demonstrate that long-term, sustained support is required to instill effective change in the pedagogy and curriculum.

Finally, the authors analyse challenges in the implementation of alternative education programmes in post-conflict settings. These range from coordination and data collection to programme sustainability, teacher and student certification and accreditation, and teacher remuneration. Given the alternative nature of these programmes and the common misconception that they are not part of a comprehensive means to achieve EFA, the authors argue that the challenges that alternative programmes face are magnified reflections of those that confront education programmes generally.

To overcome these challenges and move forward in alternative education programming, it is essential for government ministries to be involved throughout the design and implementation process. Furthermore, communication between stakeholders is important to ensure the relevance and appropriateness of programme design. The book puts forward recommendations for sustainable planning and coordination between actors and on the planning, design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of alternative education programmes.

Chapter 1

Introduction

At the World Education Forum in 2000, UNESCO estimated that there were approximately 103 million children out of school; as of 2006 there were still 75 million out of school (UIS, 2008; UNESCO, 2008). Save the Children (2009) estimates that more than half of these children – nearly 40 million – are living in conflict-affected states. In some emergencies, either as a result of conflict, natural disaster or conditions of structural violence, the capacity of the government may be so weakened (or non-existent) that the provision of education may fail completely: for all of society, for a particular social group or in a particular geographic area.

Children in emergency or early recovery situations, especially those who have been affected by conflict, are at a distinct educational disadvantage: at the individual level they may have had their education disrupted or they may have missed part or all of their primary education. The disruption may have been due to the frequent absenteeism of teachers, loss of materials, loss of physical infrastructure (damaged, destroyed or subsumed by warring factions), loss of human infrastructural support and monitoring structures for teachers. Alternatively, it may have been due to the inability of children and youth to attend school due to the migration of their families (to another region or even another country) or due to insecurity that physically prevented them from attending school. Many children affected by conflict have witnessed or experienced horrific events and so require psychosocial intervention and support. All of these elements, either separately or in combination, together with the breakdown of the education infrastructure, result in an education system that may be functioning on the surface but not effectively in terms of real learning.

Not all children who have been affected by conflict have the same educational needs – some can and will re-enter formal primary schooling if it is available, some will have insufficient knowledge and skills to enter at a level that would be appropriate socially and some will be ready to enter secondary school. However, for children eligible for secondary education there is often an issue of accessibility: does a secondary school exist? Where secondary schools do exist, there is the issue of student readiness in terms of attainment. The variety and scope of the knowledge

and skills required for successful secondary students make curriculum planning and delivery more difficult than for primary education (World Bank, 2005). This difficulty is compounded by the need for more highly-qualified secondary teachers, who are even scarcer than trained primary teachers.

Some children (especially older children), whose education was disrupted by conflict or who never had the opportunity to attend school, may want to access education but may not be able or willing to attend primary school with younger children. They may, however, be prepared to attend an alternative education programme with the goal of completing at least the primary cycle. Others may feel that they cannot attend primary school or a programme that is a primary school equivalent, but may still want to obtain basic literacy and numeracy skills and perhaps learn some type of trade or skill that will help them obtain employment. In addition, children affected by conflict – whether enrolled in formal schooling or not – will need life skills or psychosocial programmes to help them deal with the effects of the conflict and to help them learn more constructive behaviour for living in their communities (Sinclair, 2004). According to the World Bank (2005), the issue is not which of these options is ‘better’ but rather that the varied needs and experiences of the learners necessitate the availability of a variety of learning programmes. Generally, however, initiatives to compensate for lost learning tend to be marginalized and short term (Dennis and Fentiman, 2007).

1.1 Prioritization of education in conflict-affected states

The scope and variety of educational needs exists, yet funding for education is often a low priority (Brannelly, Ndaruhutse and Rigaud, 2009; Save the Children, 2007, 2008; Collier, 2007; Ghani and Lockhart, 2008). When countries have been decimated by conflict, it is not just education, but all systems – including health, social services, the judiciary, the police, national security and physical infrastructure (including roads and bridges) – that need to be rebuilt. There is a desperate need for resources and the aid that is given tends to go to those components that are perceived as having a more rapid effect on a poverty reduction strategy (such as road infrastructure and the judicial system). Compounding the issue of limited funding, the funding that is received is directed predominantly towards the goal of completion of universal primary education (Marphatia and Archer, 2005) and so responding to the needs of post-primary children is not possible. The logic is irrefutable: there is a higher demand for

primary education, which makes it more cost-effective and it provides the basis for secondary education – if secondary-age children have not completed primary school, they cannot attend secondary school.

Global education policy reflects this logic as expressed in both the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) goals. The Education for All – Fast Track Initiative is the clearest example of this global policy. The initiative is “a global partnership between donor and developing countries to ensure accelerated progress towards the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015” (Education for All – Fast Track Initiative, 2008: www.education-fast-track.org). As a result, these goals contribute to an imbalance in resource allocation in favour of primary education in developing countries, which is then compounded in an emergency situation when national funding for education generally decreases overall and donor funding is uncertain. Thus even when there is no immediate emergency or crisis, children who are not eligible for general primary education tend to be marginalized.

Even with the policies favouring primary education, the funding made available by donors falls far short of what is needed to achieve them (Save the Children, 2008; UNESCO, 2007; Brannelly *et al.*, 2009). Although there have been large-scale efforts by the World Bank, UNICEF and others to support governments in their efforts to achieve universal completion of primary education, Save the Children (2008) estimates that an additional US\$5 billion is needed to achieve the UPE goal. Furthermore, the majority of aid for education goes to lower-income “countries that are perceived as easier to support ... despite being home to half of the world’s out-of-school children, conflict-affected fragile states (CAFS) receive less than one-quarter of basic education aid” (Save the Children, 2008: vii). Save the Children uses the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) database of international aid flows in order to estimate the resources allocated to primary education. For the purpose of the OECD database, however, primary education is included as part of ‘basic education’ defined by the OECD as “early childhood education, primary education and basic life skills for youth and adults” (Save the Children, 2008: 32). Save the Children (2008: 32) therefore uses basic education as a proxy for primary education, particularly when discussing commitments and progress towards the achievement of universal primary education (UPE)”. There is clearly a great need to increase education assistance to countries affected by conflict. In short, there is too little money too late, and it is not targeted at the area of greatest need.

Within the funding for programmes that do take place, there are also systemic issues of poor coordination in emergencies that condition the environment in which alternative education programmes arise (Sommers, 2004; McNamara, 2006). Sommers (2004) argues that coordination by national governments is often difficult, as the governments themselves lack power (because they often do not hold the purse strings), lack control over resources and have limited capacity. He suggests that this situation is exacerbated by an aid industry that is not always good at coordination or handing over smoothly wherever possible to the government. Additionally, the majority of funds is channelled from donors to non-governmental actors rather than to government ministries. This is grounded in the recognition that the government of the day is very often unstable or transitional and that the capacity within the ministry is limited, not least because the national priorities, even prior to the emergency, have rarely included education. Hence the lobbying for developing countries to spend 5 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) on education (an objective not yet achieved). In support of this, there is consensus among international agencies, governments and actors that close coordination is desirable (see, for example, the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, 2005).

Because the national governments in conflict-affected states often have very limited capacity and control over the entire state, it is possible for a plethora of alternative education programmes to emerge, supported and run by external actors with little or no coordination from the ministry (or even at times, knowledge and understanding). These programmes may respond to specific needs, but because they are not centrally coordinated they remain discrete and so cannot mutually support each other. One constraint is that a government's primary concern often is to re-establish and/or maintain the status quo, or to favour particular constituencies. Thus educational programmes that incorporate responses to the particular situation are not necessarily in the best interest of the government as they require changes in implementation practices, curriculum and teacher training.

The humanitarian education cluster (led globally by UNICEF and the Save the Children Alliance) was designed to streamline many of the previously isolated alternative approaches. Ideally, this work done by the humanitarian education cluster will support international agencies and NGOs to work together effectively with their government counterparts to develop capacity within the national education system. This will help

with longer-term recovery and efforts to rebuild the national education system.

1.2 The contribution of alternative education programmes to EFA

Because of the range of educational needs of children affected by emergencies and conflict, there is a need to consider the role of alternative education programmes in helping to achieve the goals of EFA. The predominant focus on formal primary education means that the right of all children to education of good quality cannot be met and it further contributes to the cycle of poor education as there are few opportunities for further education or training outside of primary school. This creates a circular problem: even the most desperate of post-conflict education ministries officially requires a secondary certificate for teachers, but this is difficult to achieve when there is extremely limited (if at all any) secondary schooling. A lack of teachers means an increase in class size which can in certain situations affect the quality of provision. When the few teachers that are available are male (because they are perceived as being able to travel to a secondary school) this compounds the persistent gender disparities in education, especially in contexts like Afghanistan and Pakistan where many parents want their girls to be taught by female teachers. As the demand for primary education increases, either through ‘back-to-school’ campaigns or returning populations, the pressure on the system increases even further. There is also an upward pressure of primary school graduates with nowhere to go as secondary education cannot be established because the talent pool of potential teachers is under-educated or simply non-existent. This problem is further compounded by the lack of formal recognition of training and experience for teachers trained by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to support non-formal education programmes.

In this book, therefore, we review some of the types of alternative education programmes that are offered in emergency and post-conflict situations. We look at the target populations of these programmes and consider the principles that make them effective. We ask the question, are there effective alternatives that will allow out-of-school children and youth to achieve the literacy, numeracy and life skills (in this context, the constructive social and ethical skills for living together, and not livelihood skills, even though there are situations when these are offered in the same package) necessary for their futures, in line with the Dakar

World Education Forum goals for EFA? We also consider whether these alternative programmes help countries achieve the EFA goals and ‘fill a gap’ that will ensure that the right to education for all children is upheld.

1.3 Methodology

Box 1 EFA goals of relevance to this study

Goal 2: Ensuring that by 2015 all children ... have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

Goal 3: Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.

Goal 5: Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015 ...

Goal 6: Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Source: The Dakar Framework for Action, UNESCO, 2000.

This study is based on interviews with representatives from United Nations (UN) agencies and NGOs that support education programmes for children and youth affected by conflict, a desk review of literature produced by these agencies, and observation of specific programmes. We obtained the literature through key informant interviews as well as through a request issued via the listserv of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). In addition to the desk review, we conducted one-week field visits to Kenya, Nepal and Sierra Leone. These built upon existing and extensive professional experience of the authors working in similar situations. In addition a particular piece of field work undertaken in Bangladesh has also been included as another example for comparable analysis.

There is an enormous range of programmes in the field of supplementary and complementary education that comprises the majority of alternative curriculum provision. Some are offered in combination with regular education provision while others are discrete and ad hoc. Those associated with peace education, human rights and life skills were most evident in the countries at the time of the visits and during subsequent work undertaken and, because of the authors’ expertise in

the area, these programmes were more suitable for analysis. Pamela Baxter was also involved extensively in the design, development and implementation of the programmes in Sierra Leone and Kenya, which are discussed in *Chapters 3 and 4* respectively. This involvement, along with her many years of experience developing curricula and training teachers, including in relation to the *INEE Peace Education Programme*, provides additional in-depth insight into how education that is alternative in terms of curriculum provision is implemented.

We selected these countries for their geographical variety and because they provided a spectrum of situations that were in differing phases of emergency or post conflict. Nepal was chosen because it was at the beginning of its post-conflict recovery period and for geographical diversity. Many of the children who were displaced by the conflict in Nepal were able to join formal schools in other parts of the country or could take advantage of programmes that were previously designed to address other populations, such as very poor children, child labourers and children from remote areas of the country. This broadening of a target group from a marginalized group (such as the very poor or children from lower castes) to the conflict-affected groups may be a more common response than has been previously understood. In a post-conflict situation that does not occur across an entire country, it would be reasonable to expand programmes that effectively respond to a post-conflict target group even though they may initially have been designed for a different marginalized group. This also happened in Kenya, where the response from UNICEF to the post-conflict situation was to divert (in part) a programme of conflict management from the nomadic areas of Kenya (historically very neglected by the government) to the most affected districts in terms of the post-election violence.

The conflict in Sierra Leone ended in 2002 with the signing of a peace agreement, so can now be considered a post-conflict state. Immediately following the peace agreement, numerous NGOs and the UN supported a variety of educational initiatives designed to promote access into the formal school system. Six years after the signing of the peace agreement, what is most remarkable about educational programming in Sierra Leone was the limited number of alternative programmes that seek to meet the educational needs of children and youth affected by the conflict. Most of the emphasis was on support for the formal system, particularly to primary education (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Sierra Leone, 2007).

Kenya was originally not one of the selected countries, but the December 2007 – January 2008 post-election violence and the education response by the government together with the international agencies meant that there was an opportunity to investigate a rapid response to an emergency and to see what forms of alternative education were used and were viable. As discussed later in this book, however, many of the immediate responses that have frequently been offered in other emergencies were not implemented in Kenya. This perhaps was due to the perceived limited scope of the emergency and the relatively developed system and coverage of education in Kenya prior to the emergency.

1.4 Why the need for this study?

Although individual case studies of various forms of alternative education programmes have been undertaken, there have been few systematic studies of alternative education as a response in post-conflict or emergency situations. However the principles of varied alternative programmes have been reviewed by Farrell and Hartwell in an ongoing comparative analysis of more than 200 alternative education initiatives (Farrell and Hartwell, 2008). While these do not necessarily focus on post-conflict or emergency situations, the range of different contexts provides an insight into the principles behind different alternative education initiatives. Bangladesh with its frequent floods and massive displacement, and Colombia with pockets of conflict provide comparative examples for the countries under review in this book. The initial report focused on alternative education programmes in developing countries (with examples from Bangladesh, Colombia, Egypt and Ghana) and produced preliminary findings suggesting that alternative education programmes in certain circumstances can be cost-effective and yield positive learning outcomes for children who are often some of the most disadvantaged in their society (due to poverty or discrimination, for example).

The focus in our study relates specifically to alternative education programmes for primary and secondary school-aged children (those who are approximately aged 6-18+) who have been affected by conflict. Accordingly, we will not consider the EFA goals applicable to early childhood education or adult literacy in this study. As noted by Farrell and Hartwell (2008), even in a developmental context, countries may use a variety of interventions in order to match the aspirations of the EFA goals: flexible schooling hours, home schooling, distance education and condensed/compressed curricula to respond to the needs of learners, such

as child labourers, out-of-age learners or adults who need alternatives to the regular formal school system. The need for these types of alternatives is perhaps even greater in conflict-affected states. Similarly, while our focus is on children and youth who have been affected by conflict, many of the principles identified here also apply following natural disasters. Evidence proposed by Farrell and Hartwell (2008), in the ongoing programmes that we observed in Sierra Leone and Nepal and in work conducted by both authors following natural disasters, suggests that alternative education programmes are one important component of national strategies to achieve EFA, specifically the goals related to access to and completion of primary education, access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes, elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education, and improvement of educational quality.

1.5 What is ‘alternative’ education?

Box 2 provides a summary overview by the authors of the types of alternative education that is the focus for the book. It distinguishes between alternative access and alternative pedagogy.

Box 2 Types of alternative education

Alternative education	This is the over-arching term that refers to all types of education programmes that are often not considered formal education programmes by agencies, governments and donors. Often, but not exclusively, alternative education programmes are offered outside the auspices of the formal government education system. Alternative education programmes as defined in this book include those offered to refugees and internally displaced by agencies and NGOs where they are not part of the country’s education system (that is, the programmes are not managed or controlled by the government of the host country). It also includes non-formal education programmes where the certification and validation of the learning is not automatically assured, ad hoc education or awareness programmes that respond to a specific perceived need; and short-term emergency education programmes that are considered bridging programmes (to a ‘real’ curriculum).
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Alternative access programmes	<p>These are education programmes that may look exactly like a formal school programme, but (i) that are focused on a different group of learners, or (ii) that operate in different geographical areas, and/or (iii) that offer different curricula and methods.</p> <p>Alternative access programmes also include education programmes that provide standard curricula but in a non-traditional environment (such as home schools or mobile schools). Sometimes, while the curricula are traditional, they are not comprehensive – they may be limited by the resources available. For example, often so-called comprehensive curricula do not offer a full range of sciences because there is no laboratory available, or music may be formally listed as part of the curriculum but is not offered because there are no suitable teachers.</p>
Alternative subject programmes	<p>These are non-traditional subjects that are offered, sometimes within traditional, formal curricula and sometimes in parallel. These subjects are designed to respond to specific perceived needs, which may be relatively short term in response to a situation that is minimized: behaviour change that is necessary only for this situation (for example, landmine awareness); or long term in response to a situation that requires the building of attitudes and behaviour (such as HIV and AIDS, environment or peace education which are often included in curriculum reform process as a result of post-conflict or emergency interventions). These programmes often require different methodology and pedagogy that are also considered alternative.</p>
Alternative pedagogy programmes	<p>These are often offered as an adjunct to alternative access and alternative subject programmes. They may, however, be offered simply to upgrade the quality of the teaching/learning processes in formal schooling. Offered alone, they are not altogether successful as the content of the curricula is often not modified to suit the new pedagogy and the school system itself (including the examination system) is not modified.</p>

Historically, most programmes labelled as alternative in emergency or post-conflict situations were short-term ‘emergency’ provisions that were reactive and focused on the physical provision of sheltered learning spaces, teachers and teaching/learning materials, but with no attempt made to improve on the teaching and learning situation. These are, more

accurately, substitute education programming as they substitute for the education that would normally be provided through a country's formal education system. Long-term 'developmental' provision, which may incorporate new or non-traditional subject areas and new pedagogy, is not generally seen as alternative although the 'window of opportunity' approach usually means that there are some elements of alternative education that are incorporated, such as supplementary subject areas and intensive education catch-up programmes. The 'window of opportunity' approach refers to situations where quite dramatic changes are made to the education programming, not in direct response to need (although they are often marketed that way) but because of the flexibility provided by the situation (such as limited capacity and fragmented services) and a wish to improve the overall quality of education. Because alternative education programmes respond to a diverse set of circumstances and a complex set of needs, there is no simple framework for their analysis. One way of assessing these programmes is through their structure and based on the needs to which they respond. In this regard, alternative education programmes can be thought of as those that are 'transitional' or provide some kind of bridge to formal education and those that are 'foundational' meaning that they build the foundation for systemic change. *Table 1.1* (as developed by the authors) describes each of these types of programmes and provides examples of specific interventions.

Programmes that utilize a 'window of opportunity' (for change) approach are generally transitional (in the timeline and in scope) but with a view to being foundational. For instance, any programme that has a teacher training component, even if the programme itself is considered limited in time, is foundational as the effects of the teacher training should provide a fundamental change for the future.

Education is considered a basic human right, whatever the security environment (as expressed in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*). During conflict itself, intense insecurity can make school attendance unsafe. One alternative in this type of situation is some form of home-based schooling. One circumstance in which this need may arise is when schools are vulnerable to warring factions, for example, in Rwanda where some schools were occupied by military forces after the genocide (Obura, 2003) or in Sarajevo, Bosnia where children were targeted by snipers during the civil war (AFP, 2007). In these instances, mobile or relatively secure alternatives were used – homes, churches, or mosques.. Institutionalized

or structural violence may necessitate the use of home-based schools where one group is actively prevented from accessing school. For example, during the structural violence of the Taliban regime, which preceded the 2001 conflict in Afghanistan, secret home-based classes ensured that some girls received at least a basic education (Kirk and Winthrop, 2006). For these schools to have operated openly would have threatened the lives of both the girls and their teachers.

Table 1.1 Foundational and transitional programmes

Type	Profile	Examples
Transitional		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short-term response used as a ‘stop-gap’ programme until ‘real’ education becomes available for full populations of learners (e.g. primary schools) or for specific groups (e.g. demobilized children who were associated with fighting forces) • A programme that ‘feeds into’ formal education for specific target groups • These programmes usually attempt to respond to cross-cutting issues such as inclusion and gender equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position on the timeline (acute emergencies through to early reconstruction) • Inclusion of marginalized groups (gender, ethnicity, religion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerated learning and bridging courses • Psychosocial support • Landmine awareness programmes
Foundational		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A longer-term response or one that is preparatory to a long-term response (often with a view to mainstreaming) • A basis for formal education programmes • A programme that is designed to consciously support EFA goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or upgraded pedagogy (embedded in teacher training) • New curricula or subject areas • Non-formal or vocational education for older learners (livelihood skills often in conjunction with basic literacy and numeracy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional subjects – supplementary or complementary • Life skills • Livelihood skills

Even when education is available in emergency situations, it may be offered only to certain age groups or in particular geographic areas and, in either case, some children may be unable to attend due to economic or familial duties. Similarly, after a conflict or natural disaster, the destruction of physical and administrative education infrastructure and continuing low-intensity insecurity may mean that formal schooling is available only in certain areas, or to certain grades. In these cases, informal or community provision may offer alternatives to formal, classroom-based education (Uemura, 1999).

In this study, in order to clarify these distinctive approaches, we distinguish between two basic types of interventions. We look at *alternative access programmes* that provide children who do not have access to a formal school with a means of accessing education; and we consider programmes that are *alternative in their curriculum provision*, that is, they use additional or substitute subjects according to the context.

1.6 Types of alternative education programmes

Alternative access programmes

Alternative access programmes provide an opportunity for children and youth who are not enrolled in formal schools to access education through other means. They provide alternative methods of delivery to ‘fill the gap’ of education provision for particular age, gender, ethnic or geographically-isolated groups. Often this type of alternative education is developed and supported by NGOs and is essential to augment the state’s provision of education – or even to replace it where the capacity, resources or opportunities to provide a comprehensive education system are not available (Nicolai, 2003). Alternative access programmes generally include the use of a formal curriculum and pedagogy, but many of the teachers are untrained (by the relevant ministry), or they may not have received formal recognition of their teacher training, or the school may not be recognized formally by the relevant government ministry. These programmes may also use different pedagogical methods (for example, more [or less] learner-centred and participatory than are generally found in the traditional formal system). Alternative access programmes can be grouped into two broad categories:

Bridging programmes are generally designed for children and youth who have missed the opportunity to go to school or who have dropped out of school. These are transitional programmes that enable

children to (re)-enter the formal system or to complete the equivalent of the primary cycle. Examples include accelerated learning programmes such as the Complementary Rapid Education Programme for Schools (CREPS) in Sierra Leone, the Alternative School Programmes in Nepal, the Community Oriented Primary Education Programme (COPE) in northern Uganda, and many others.

Parallel programmes may look exactly like all other education programmes offered in a particular country but are considered alternative because they take place in a venue other than a formal school, or may seek to ensure access for sections of the community who may be marginalized, either geographically or for reasons of gender, religion, ethnicity or culture. Examples of parallel programmes include community schools where often the only form of support is from the community itself and where the teachers, who may be untrained and unqualified, are paid directly by the community. The pedagogy is generally traditional ('teaching as they were taught') and the schools may have a limited range of subjects depending on the skills and knowledge of the available teachers. Community-based schools may be supported wholly by communities (as was the case with the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) schools during the conflict in Angola; and schools operated by isolated and marginalized communities in Myanmar) but may also be supported in part by UNICEF or the NGO community (as is the case for some of the community schools in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Afghanistan). When community schools receive outside support, the teachers may also receive training from the NGOs to use different pedagogical methods that are more learner-centred and participatory and that fulfil some of the elements of a quality education that are discussed later in this chapter. In most instances, this training is not recognized or accredited by the government ministries.

Alternative curriculum provision

For refugees, some internally displaced persons (IDPs) and most returnee situations, there are additional needs that develop because of the context and environment. This is often also true for children in post-natural disaster situations. Responding to these additional needs helps provide children with appropriate life skills, as stipulated in EFA goal three, and is also a contribution to the quality of education and therefore to EFA goal six. In an emergency context, children and youth are often exposed to threatening situations that are not always directly connected

to a conflict or disaster situation. Particular topics are then offered as education initiatives to respond to the needs that develop as a result of these threatening situations.

These initiatives provide an alternative curriculum and can include preventive programmes (such as HIV and AIDS education) as well as programmes designed to help overcome the negative consequences of conflict or disaster and associated trauma (psychosocial programmes). Often these programmes, although labelled alternative education, are actually implemented within a formal school system either as infused subjects, co-curricular subjects (after-school clubs) or where the school is used as the place from which to attract the target population (Girl Guides and Boy Scout groups). Very often they are also offered in non-formal settings. These programmes include both subjects (as in the life skills programmes outlined below) and intervention structures (as in the psychosocial activities).

Life skills programmes:

- peace and citizenship education;
- landmine, small arms and light weapons education;
- human rights education;
- environmental education ;
- HIV and AIDS education.

Psychosocial activities:

- recreation activities;
- play centres;
- expressive activities clubs;
- sports activities;
- cultural activities.

When these activities are offered as co-curricular activities or in non-formal settings, they often take place through youth clubs, church groups, social groups (Boy Scouts and Girl Guides) and sports clubs. While these are often structured learning activities, they do not usually utilize trained teachers.

Some of these programmes are short term and designed to be made redundant (such as landmine awareness – as the mines are cleared so the programme becomes unnecessary); others such as peace education and life skills may be incorporated into mainstream curricula as time goes on. These programmes are alternative not because of the time span of

implementation but because they are outside the traditional curriculum. There is a secondary reason for the alternative nature of this type of programme: while the ministry may support the initiative, the impetus for the programme invariably comes from international agencies and NGOs.

In addition to programmes that offer alternative curricula in terms of the subjects that are included, we also include in this category those programmes that seek to introduce or institutionalize an alternative pedagogy which is rights-based and learner-centred and emphasizes learning rather than teaching. As discussed in *Chapter 3*, alternative pedagogies can be supported through programmes focused on pedagogy and methodology, such as the International Rescue Committee's (IRC) Healing Classrooms Initiative and UNICEF's Child Friendly Schools, or they can be a mix of content and pedagogy, as is the case with the behaviour change programmes discussed.

1.7 Structure of this book

In the remainder of this book, we consider in more detail the role of alternative education programmes in helping to achieve the EFA goals related to completion of primary education, access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes, elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education, and improvement of educational quality. In *Chapter 2*, we examine the contributions that these programmes make to educational quality, both at the learner level and the system level. In *Chapter 3*, we discuss alternative access programmes, specifically accelerated learning programmes, home-based or community schools, and youth education programmes that are a mix of literacy/numeracy and skills training. We look at examples from our field research in Sierra Leone and Nepal as well as some well-documented examples from Afghanistan and Liberia.

In *Chapter 4*, we turn to the issue of programmes that are 'alternative' because they offer an alternative curriculum or seek to provide an alternative pedagogy. Recent research (Charlick, 2005; Farrell and Hartwell, 2008) suggests that the linchpin for effective alternative education programmes might be a change in emphasis to learner-centred education involving different pedagogical practices and the use of a variety of teaching and learning materials, not merely textbooks. The in-depth work conducted by Pamela Baxter in Kenya, Nepal and Sierra Leone helps to illuminate how these programmes are implemented.

In *Chapter 5*, we identify the key challenges associated with implementing alternative education programmes and then in *Chapter 6* we look at lessons learned and a way forward for implementing alternative education programmes more effectively in order to fill a much needed gap in relation to achieving the EFA goals. *Chapter 7* is a summary of our key recommendations.

Chapter 2

Working towards quality

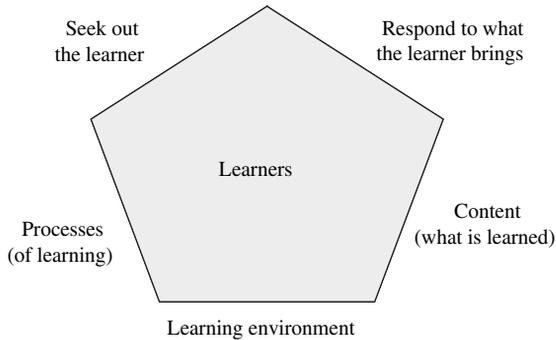
Any discussion of alternative education programmes (whether access or curriculum provision programmes) cannot be complete without an analysis of the educational quality of these programmes and the contribution that the programmes make to the overall quality of education available. The sixth EFA goal – “improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills” (UNESCO, 2000) – is as relevant to alternative education programmes as it is to formal education programmes; perhaps more so as many alternative education programmes are designed specifically to improve quality. The difficulty in assessing quality is that there is no universal agreement on exactly how to define educational quality and how it should be measured though there is general agreement that good quality education leads to the achievement of “recognized and measurable learning outcomes”, as specified in the EFA goal. Analyses of quality education are generally multi-dimensional and take into consideration the evolving nature of educational quality based on relevance to particular situations and contexts (see, for example, Williams, 2001; UNESCO, 2004; Pigozzi, 2004; and the work of the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) project (information can be found at www.sacmeq.org/)).

One of our research questions is how and whether alternative education programmes respond to the EFA goals. In order to answer this question with respect to EFA goal six, we consider alternative education programmes in relation to a model of educational quality proposed by Pigozzi (2004), which is an elaboration of the framework found in the UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report *The Quality Imperative* (UNESCO, 2004). This model proposes two levels at which educational quality should be assessed – the level of the learner and the level of the educational system. Each level has five dimensions – and it is the interaction of *all* of these dimensions which is posited as necessary when seeking to improve the quality of education. We use this framework as another way of ‘testing’ whether and how alternative education

programmes can fill a gap with regard to the achievement of the EFA goals. In order to do this, we include below a summary of the UNESCO perspective:

2.1 Five dimensions of quality at the level of the learner

Figure 2.1 Quality education for the learner



Source: Adapted from UNESCO, 2004: 30.

Seeks out learners: This dimension acknowledges the right of all learners, without discrimination, to be able to access education. It denotes a proactive approach, consciously finding children who are not currently enrolled in educational programmes and ensuring them access. Many alternative education programmes are designed specifically to respond to this dimension. This is especially the case with regard to the alternative access programmes that are discussed in *Chapter 3*. In conflict-affected states, these programmes are developed to provide educational opportunities for the children who have missed out on all or part of their education or who have historically been excluded due to gender, race, ethnicity, caste or religion. In addition, programmes often target children suffering from the effects of the emergency and those with disabilities.

Pigozzi (2004) also stipulates that seeking out the learner means acknowledging that people learn in different ways and that quality educators seek out the different experiences, skills and interests of learners in order to provide a foundation for lifelong learning. The alternative pedagogy programmes discussed in *Chapter 4* are also a response to this dimension.

Responds to what the learner brings: Learners bring both positive and negative elements to their learning. For children and young people

affected by conflict or disaster, their experiences can be especially important as many have witnessed horrific events and have experienced some form of trauma or severe emotional distress as a result. Quality alternative education programmes must therefore consider the experiences of the children for whom they are designed – this is true for both alternative access programmes and alternative curriculum provision programmes. As discussed in *Chapter 1*, alternative access programmes, especially accelerated learning programmes, face a critical challenge in responding to the needs of children and young people when the age range of the target group is very wide and when children have diverse educational backgrounds, ranging from never having attended school to having attended formal school for some period of time but dropping out due to the conflict or factors associated with it. The rights-based, experiential approach described in *Chapter 4* is another way in which alternative education programmes attempt to respond to the needs of learners.

Content: This dimension relates to the need for relevant curricula and teaching and learning materials, including those relating to literacy, numeracy and essential life skills. It applies to all types of educational programmes as it relates to what is learned in relation to the desired learning outcomes that are endorsed by society. As discussed in *Chapter 4*, all alternative curriculum provision programmes have this aspect of quality in their philosophy. Programme designers must conduct a thorough situation assessment to determine the real needs of the learners and then decide what supplementary content is needed and in which context. This should be done with as wide a range of stakeholders as possible to ensure that multiple viewpoints are considered.

This dimension is also critical with regard to accelerated learning programmes, even if the basis for the content is the national curriculum. As discussed in *Chapter 3*, one of the key elements of accelerated learning programmes is the modification of content to ensure that children can learn the required material in the condensed time. This requires thorough knowledge of the content and the methodologies for teaching it.

This dimension is important for alternative access programmes that incorporate livelihood skills training with literacy or numeracy. The content of the literacy and numeracy elements in an alternative education programme also need to be designed so that the material is relevant (to the skills building requirements), and are interesting and informative for the targeted group of learners.

Processes: This dimension looks at the ‘processes of education’ broadly defined. It includes processes ranging from a variety of learner-centred teaching and learning methods to how teachers interact with and model values for the learners. These processes are most often referred to as ‘alternative methodology and pedagogy’. Farrell and Hartwell (2008) also stress the need to re-orient teaching and learning processes as a means of improving educational quality and find that successful alternative education programmes are characterized by learner-centred methods, where learners are encouraged to be active rather than passive participants in the learning process. We discuss issues related to teacher training and alternative pedagogies in relation to alternative access (*Chapter 3*) and alternative curriculum provision programmes (*Chapter 4*). In *Chapter 4*, we also discuss methods of incorporating alternative pedagogies into formal systems of teacher education as a foundational response to improving the quality of education in conflict-affected states.

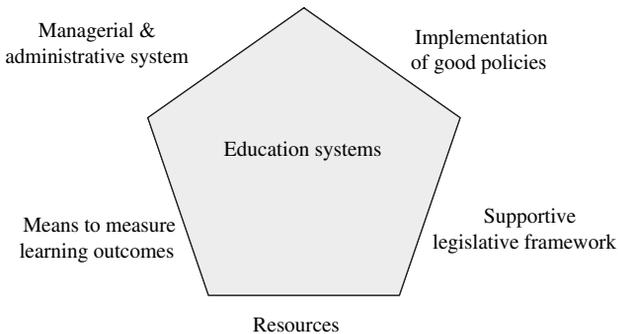
Environment: This dimension relates to the physical and mental learning environment. It includes hygiene and sanitation facilities, school policies that promote safety and physical and mental health, as well as the psychological environment provided by the teacher, which is closely related to the element of processes. Since alternative education programmes generally operate in existing schools, centres or even homes, improving the physical environment of alternative programmes is difficult. Nevertheless, consideration of water and sanitation needs, as well as ensuring that the physical environment is safe, are areas that cannot be neglected when designing alternative education programmes. With regard to the psychosocial environment, several alternative programmes that we outline in *Chapter 4*, such as the Emerging Issues programme in Sierra Leone and the IRC’s Healing Classroom Initiative, exist solely to respond to the need for a constructive psychosocial environment.

As previously discussed, alternative education programmes generally address the dimension of quality at the level of the learner. When alternative programmes are not part of the formal system (for example, when they are implemented solely by NGOs without the true buy-in or support of the government’s education authorities) or when the UN or NGOs provide extra support to government-sponsored alternative education programmes, there is a risk that the quality dimension at the level of the system can be overlooked or given insufficient attention. The risk in ignoring the system level is that the alternative programmes may

be marginalized or become unsustainable and, from the perspective of the learner, disappointing if their learning achievements are not formally recognized. For alternative education programmes to be effective at filling the gap, there is a need to consider how interaction at the system level will affect the quality of the programmes.

2.2 Five dimensions of quality at the level of the system

Figure 2.2 Quality education systems



Source: Adapted from UNESCO, 2004: 30.

Managerial and administrative system. Pigozzi (2004: 7) states:

An education system must be structured and organized so that it is learner-centred. The system must be fair and transparent to all those in it. Rules and regulations need to be clear, with responsibilities and related procedures well articulated and implemented. Teachers need to be facilitated in their work by a managerial and administrative system that is designed to foster improved learning outcomes. Timetables must also be flexible enough to be able to keep at-risk children from dropping out, or otherwise losing their right to education.

Implementers of alternative education programmes that are outside of the formal education system (that is, NGOs or the UN) are limited in their ability to address this dimension of quality directly but the dimension can have a major effect on the government's acceptance and support of the alternative programmes. In addition, external implementers also have the potential to positively influence formal managerial and administrative systems. For example, most of the alternative access programmes that are described in *Chapter 3* include an element of supervision and support in order to improve facilitators' skills. Implementers can (and do) involve

the regular supervisory staff of ministries to assist with the monitoring. When this is done well it can also serve as a capacity development strategy whereby government officials learn new pedagogical and/or supervisory techniques, which can be applied in the formal system as well. Alternative programmes can also serve as ‘role models’ through the implementation of programmes that are transparent and approachable by community members.

Implementation of ‘good policies’: There is a strong inference here that good policies must first exist so that they can be implemented (which also means that these policies must be linked to a ‘supportive legislative framework’). At a minimum, alternative education programmes that are not part of the formal education system must adhere to national laws and legislation. The designers of alternative education programmes have an obligation to develop good policies (educationally) and then to ensure that these are implemented within the programmes. In this way, these programmes may also be able to influence national education policy in terms of establishing and communicating policies that make it possible for all children to access education (for example, via the introduction of flexible alternatives for young people, the recognition and certification of the learning attainments of children who successfully complete an alternative access programme, or through the acceptance and implementation of alternative curriculum approaches into the mainstream education programme).

Supportive legislative framework: Implementers of alternative education programmes also have a role to play with regard to the legislative framework in the countries in which they are operating. As with many of the other dimensions of quality at the level of the system, external organizations can advocate for more supportive and inclusive legislative frameworks and seek to influence their creation and adoption, perhaps through lobbying and at least partly through the demonstration of valid structures. They can also provide (as some are designed to do) a safety net for marginalized learners, especially in post-conflict situations where a new or revised legislative framework is being put into place. In this case, lobbying for supportive legislation must include the validation and accreditation of alternative programmes.

Resources: This dimension includes human and material resources. As discussed above, funding for education in emergencies and post-conflict situations is limited. Therefore it is essential that the design and

implementation of alternative education programmes are well coordinated to ensure the most efficient and effective use of resources. This includes the need for coordination between government education authorities and external organizations in order to make sure that programmes are designed and implemented in accordance with the government's long-term educational objectives. It also includes the need for coordination among UN agencies and NGOs. This coordination could include, for example, the development of a shared curriculum and accompanying teaching and learning materials for alternative programmes that are endorsed by the government and which could be used by all implementers. This would save each organization from spending resources on developing its own curriculum and materials and would make it easier to coordinate recognition of alternative programmes with the government. It may also be possible to design joint teacher training initiatives with a view to how they can be incorporated and used within the government's formal education system.

Means to measure learning outcomes: This dimension applies equally to alternative education programmes as it does to formal education. In the simplest case, children and youth who participate in accelerated learning programmes want some validation of their learning experiences. As discussed in *Chapter 3*, children's success in accelerated programmes is often measured by their ability to pass a national primary examination in order to obtain a certificate and/or entrance to secondary education. As discussed in *Chapter 4*, however, programmes that seek to change behaviour are sometimes marginalized because of strict national examination systems that do not attempt to measure the desired changes in behaviour. Sinclair (2008: 52) argues for a progressive inclusion into the examinations: "Since teachers and students are influenced by the content of examinations, the impact of ... life skills initiatives will be strengthened to the extent that objectives, principles and pedagogy are reflected in examination marks". The onus therefore falls on the implementers of the alternative programmes to find valid ways that can reflect these. This is, of course, no easy task. The experiential approach is often diluted either because of its unfamiliarity to the teacher or because of the pressure to explore the core subjects. Sinclair (2008: 52) argues that the basic skills and key themes of life skills programmes (often the core theme of alternative curriculum programmes) could be included in the examinations in a way that promotes good teaching:

There could be an open-ended question on the process of mediation for example, which would mean that schools would have to teach the stages of mediation, including review of the narratives of both parties to a conflict, and identification of basic needs and some win-win solutions. Questions relating to thematic content will give the theme more prestige – it could be considered a step forward to include HIV and AIDS awareness in the national school leaving examination.

Programme developers must work towards validating ways of measuring the learning outcomes and working with national counterparts to gradually change methods of assessing learning outcomes.

The quality framework outlined above serves as a useful foundation for assessing whether alternative education programmes ‘fill the gap’ (or could potentially fill the gap) in terms of educational quality. While most alternative programmes have as their objectives responses to the dimensions of quality at the level of the learner, the additional challenge for the designers of these programmes is to consider more carefully how their programmes can influence or are affected by the dimensions at the level of the system.

Chapter 3

Alternative access programmes

In this chapter, we look at some of the alternative access programmes that are offered to children and youth affected by conflict. We look specifically at three different types of alternative access programmes: accelerated learning, home-based or community-based schools and education programmes that are part literacy/numeracy and part skills training. Our focus, however, will be on accelerated learning programmes as these have been implemented on a wider scale in several post-conflict environments. We will look at the general description of how these types of programmes operate and consider the main challenges associated with them in emergency and post-conflict environments.

It is important to note that these types of alternative access programmes are not limited to post-conflict situations. They can also provide opportunities for educational access to otherwise marginalized children, such as child labourers, children living in remote geographical areas or very poor children. In Nepal, for example, the out-of-school programmes supported by the government's Non-Formal Education Centre were designed for these reasons and not specifically to address the needs of children during the conflict (IFCD. 2004*b*). Conflict-affected children did benefit from the existence of these programmes, however, especially if they had migrated or dropped out of school as a result of the conflict. They were able to enrol in a programme for out-of-school children and earn a government certificate if they completed the programme.

3.1 Accelerated learning

In emergency and post-conflict situations, the term 'accelerated learning' is generally used to mean that children complete a number of years of education in a shorter time period. These accelerated learning programmes are usually designed for children older than 10 who never attended primary school or whose primary school years were interrupted. The programmes condense the primary cycle into a shorter period of time – for example, a five- or six-year primary cycle condensed into three years. One well-known exception to this general rule is the accelerated learning programme in Southern Sudan, which condenses eight years

of primary school into four. The idea is that older children are able to progress through the curriculum more quickly than younger children and also that some older children cannot or will not take the time to complete the full primary cycle in the standard period of time – that is, five or six years. By making accelerated learning programmes available, in theory children will be able to ‘catch up’ so that they can enter lower secondary school at approximately the correct age if they desire.

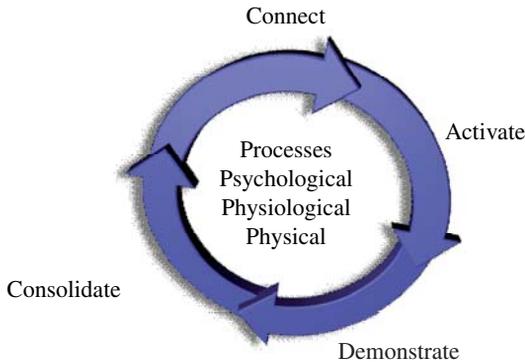
These programmes fill a much-needed gap for children affected by conflict. In some countries (such as Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo) there are legal requirements that prohibit children older than a certain age from entering primary school. In other instances, older children may legally be allowed to enter primary school at any age (for example, Nepal and Sierra Leone) but may not want to attend the early primary school grades with children who are predominantly aged 6 to 8, as they may be bored with the content and methodology of primary education. They need a more relevant and appropriate pedagogy and environment to prevent the cycle of entrance to primary school, ensuing boredom and subsequent drop out. Also, parents of younger children may not want adolescents to be in the same classroom with their young children, for reasons of safety or role modeling. Whether legally allowed or not, having over-age children in regular formal classrooms can have negative effects. It creates a very difficult teaching and learning climate as the range of maturity and cognitive development is too wide for the average teacher to cope with, and it is psychologically damaging for the over-age student to be placed with a class of children well outside his or her peer group. In addition, from a public policy or educational planning perspective, the presence of large numbers of over-age students in the school can lead to the misperception that more of the age appropriate group (that is, 6 to 11 year olds) is enrolled in primary school than is the case. This is a problem in emergency and post-conflict situations where the information needed to determine net enrolment is not available and it further complicates problems associated with planning and financing educational recovery efforts. The net primary enrolment ratio provides information on the percentage of primary school-aged children who are enrolled in primary school. The difference between net and gross primary enrolment ratios is that the gross enrolment ratio includes all children who are enrolled in primary school regardless of their age. If there are large numbers of over- or under-aged children enrolled in primary school, the gross enrolment ratio will be inflated and this can under-represent the

number of primary school-aged children who are not enrolled in school. An accelerated learning programme has the advantage of allowing an over-age student to pick up and complete the primary curriculum even in its telescoped form, with an appropriate peer group, with a suitable pedagogy and with content that minimizes the amount of overlap and revision.

To enable children to complete a number of years of education in a shortened time period, the curriculum is often condensed by dropping non-core (and non-examinable) subjects such as art, sport and music and eliminating repetition and revision time for the core subjects (Charlick, 2005; Nicholson, 2006). The focus is on teaching only the subjects necessary for the students to pass the national primary examination. As discussed in this chapter, however, it is often the non-core subjects or the non-examinable parts of the core subjects that are the ‘carriers’ for ‘alternative’ topics – for example, hygiene, peace education, environment, and sexual and reproductive health. When these non-core subjects are dropped, the need for other types of alternative programming, such as community or youth workshops on life skills or peace education, becomes even greater.

While the accelerated learning programmes offered in emergency and post-conflict situations attempt to accelerate the time period to complete the primary education cycle, they generally do not fully reflect the principles of accelerated learning (Charlick, 2005). The true concept of accelerated learning is not merely about shortening the time involved or deleting subject matter; it is primarily about *how* people learn best and then using a variety of different methods so that students learn more effectively and therefore are able to learn faster (Charlick, 2005; DePorter, 2001). These methods are learner-centred and participatory, and often help learners to discover information and knowledge on their own. This creates a safe and welcoming learning environment, which is a principle of accelerated learning in its pure form (Charlick, 2005; DePorter, 2001; Nicholson, 2006). Accelerated learning principles also recognize that the teacher is the single most important factor, but through guiding and facilitating rather than by teaching in a didactic fashion. This requires teachers to be able to model the expected learning of the student and to have a good understanding of what it is the learner is expected to discover.

Figure 3.1 Smith’s Accelerated Learning Cycle



Source: Smith, 2008: www.alite.co.uk/approach.html

Alistair Smith (2008) describes the accelerated learning cycle, as shown in the diagram. At the core of the cycle are four elements:

- processes: creating an awareness for learning;
- psychological: developing relationships for learning;
- physiological: ensuring readiness for learning;
- physical: creating movement and space for learning.

These core elements are needed to provide the physical and psychological space in which children can learn more effectively. This means creating an environment that is warm and welcoming (and free of corporal punishment), and requires effective teaching and possibly access to other services such as feeding or health programmes. The cycle then consists of four general activities:

- Connect: What do the learners already know? What do they need to know? How will they benefit from knowing?
- Activate: The teacher poses problems to be solved.
- Demonstrate: The teacher provides opportunities for learners to show a variety of understandings.
- Consolidate: The learners are asked, “What have we learned?”, “How have we learned?” and “How will we benefit?”

This cycle also illustrates and reinforces the dimensions of quality education at the level of the learner, as discussed in *Chapter 2* and the alternative pedagogies that are discussed in this chapter. The alternative learning cycle and the rights-based experiential approach require that

learners are actively involved in an exploratory learning process that helps them develop critical thinking and analytical skills – an approach that is generally not in wide-scale usage (Farrell and Hartwell, 2008). Generally, accelerated learning programmes that are implemented in emergency and conflict-affected countries do not implement this full cycle, nor do they fulfil all the parameters outlined by DePorter (2001). However, programme designs do attempt to include elements of the cycle, especially with regard to teacher training on the use of alternative pedagogies and creating welcoming and supportive learning environments.

Box 3 Interview with a 16-year-old boy in northern Uganda

He was abducted in 1998 and escaped in 2004. “He attended class up to Primary 3. On his return he felt that he was ‘too big’ to continue studying with colleagues who were years his junior. He suggests that it would be good to divide pupils according to their age, even in primary education. He sees basic education as particularly helpful with regard to basic literacy. He feels that teachers in formal education are not prepared to teach students necessary ‘life skills’. He feels that even the three years of primary education that he had prior to his abduction helped him to escape from the bush as he was able to read the road signs. He would very much like to be able to continue with his education but he only feels comfortable with people of his own age.”

Source: Dennis and Fentiman, 2007: 91.

The question of cost

While accelerated learning programmes can help to achieve the MDGs and EFA goals of access to and completion of primary school, there is a question of whether the cost of these programmes exceeds their benefit. Would it be less costly, for example, for older children simply to follow a normal course of primary education but in separate classes with only older children in attendance? The question of cost is a complex one and we do not address it directly in our research. A recent study by Farrell and Hartwell (2008), however, has addressed this issue in a systematic way. The authors suggest that a direct comparison of the annual recurrent costs of an educational programme per student in attendance is not sufficient when comparing alternative education programmes to formal schooling. In their analysis, they also use the average cost of completing an educational cycle (for example, primary education) and the average cost of achieving minimum standards of learning or literacy.

In the case of accelerated learning programmes, these two costs are the most relevant comparisons since the objective of accelerated learning programmes is for children or youth to complete the primary cycle in a condensed period of time. Therefore, if a child successfully completes a six-year primary education cycle in three years, then the total cost for the three years should be compared to the cost of completing six years of primary education in the formal system. As the authors note, however, computing the cost of education is not a straight-forward question. There are many variables to consider, including opportunity costs for children and their families, and costs associated with uniforms, classrooms and food provided, among others.

For the purpose of their analysis, Farrell and Hartwell (2008) use per-pupil annual recurrent costs (that is, all costs of the primary system (or alternative programme) except those related to capital and development), per-pupil completion costs and per-pupil learning costs. These three costs were calculated as follows: per-pupil recurrent cost is the total annual recurrent cost (not including capital and development) divided by the number of students attending. The per-pupil cost for completing the primary cycle was calculated as the number of years to complete the primary cycle multiplied by the annual unit cost and adjusted for primary school dropouts. For example, if half of the children who enter Grade 1 complete grade 6 in a six-year system and it costs US\$100 per pupil per year, the unit cost for completers is $6 \times \text{US\$}100/0.5 = \text{US\$}1,200$. The per-pupil learning cost adjusts the per-pupil cost of completion based on the percentage of learners who attain a minimum competency level. For example, if, as in the previous example, the unit cost of completion is US\$1,200 and 40 per cent of the completers have also achieved a minimum competency, then the per-pupil learning cost is $\text{US\$}1,200/0.4 = \text{US\$}3,000$ (Farrell and Hartwell, 2008: 24-25). They calculate each of these three costs for alternative education programmes in Bangladesh, Egypt and Ghana and compare the results to the equivalent costs associated with the public primary school system in each country. While these are not conflict affected countries, the experience particularly from Bangladesh is relevant to the arguments proposed in this study, as it suffers almost annual emergencies which disrupt schooling. In all situations where schooling is disrupted or where there are over-age children needing to access education, has a resonance in emergency settings. In all three countries, the per-pupil completion and per-pupil learning costs of the alternative programmes were lower than

the equivalent costs of formal primary school. Primarily, this result was due to the higher completion rates in the alternative programmes.

In the case of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) non-formal education programme, which is a four-year programme that covers the standard five-year primary curriculum, the completion rate for BRAC students was 94 per cent compared to only 67 per cent for public school students in Bangladesh. Based on their analysis, Farrell and Hartwell (2008: 26) draw two primary conclusions. Firstly, more effort is needed to determine how much it actually costs for children to achieve minimum standards of learning as established by particular governments. Secondly, since the alternative programmes they included in their analysis were originally designed for children from poor areas and communities who did not have access to formal education, they suggest that their evidence indicates that it is possible for alternative education programmes “to reach underserved populations and regions cost-effectively and affordably.”

We do not have the cost data for the accelerated learning programmes described in this chapter but it would be useful for organizations (and donors) supporting accelerated learning programmes to conduct a rigorous analysis of these types of programmes. This would require not only cost information but also detailed information on actual primary completion rates (for both the accelerated programme and the formal system) and the average number of years needed to complete the primary cycle (based on some objective measure of student completion, such as a primary leaving certificate or a passing grade on a national primary school examination). Such a cost and achievement comparison would make it easier to justify the implementation of accelerated learning programmes in post-conflict situations but other factors, such as the psychosocial needs of the children or youth, also need to be considered. It is quite possible that the children or youth who enrol in accelerated programmes have educational needs that simply will not be met by the formal system, and that strict cost considerations are not the only relevant factor. In the rest of this section we will explore in more detail some of the issues associated with accelerated learning programmes in emergency and post-conflict situations in order to document lessons learned and ideas for better programming in the future.

3.2 Accelerated learning case studies

Our analysis of accelerated learning programmes is based primarily on the two case study countries of Sierra Leone and Nepal (accelerated learning was not implemented in response to the post-election violence in Kenya), and also draws on the lessons learned from a countrywide evaluation of the accelerated learning programme in Liberia that was implemented by several organizations (Nicholson, 2007). We include a general description of the programmes here as a background for the analysis that follows.

Sierra Leone

Following the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST, now the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport MOEYS), UNICEF and NGO partners (of which the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) was the largest contributor) initiated the Complementary Rapid Education for Primary Schools (CREPS) programme. The programme was designed for children whose primary schooling had been disrupted during the war or those who had completely missed the opportunity for primary education (including but not limited to children associated with fighting forces). The target group included children between the ages of 10 and 16 in seven districts in the Northern and Eastern provinces of the country, which were the most affected by the war (Mansaray and Associates, 2006). The aim of CREPS was to condense the six years of primary education into a three-year accelerated programme. After completing CREPS, children could sit for the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) and, if successful, enrol in Junior Secondary School afterwards. As a result, the CREPS curriculum was designed based on the government's formal primary school curriculum. The core CREPS curriculum consisted of the subjects of language arts, mathematics, social studies and integrated science. These core subjects are those that are most essential to passing the National Primary School Examination, which tests students in "mathematics, English, verbal aptitude, quantitative aptitude, and general studies" (World Bank, 2007: 78).

The CREPS design also incorporated psychosocial and health issues, including trauma healing, peace education, human rights education, gender awareness, and HIV and AIDS education, based on the assumption that the target group was likely to have been traumatized psychologically and socially by the events of the war. According to their

evaluation, however, Mansaray and Associates (2006: 35-36) found that teachers treated these subjects in an 'incidental' way and concluded that "very little knowledge and skills in these areas" actually accrued to the CREPS learners. For the teachers, the emphasis was on preparing students to pass the national examination.

Although the programme officially started in the 2000/2001 academic year, it was not operating on a large scale until 2002/2003, after the peace agreement had been signed. The total enrolment in CREPS centres reached a peak of 35,301 in 2002/2003 and declined to 28,868 in 2004/2005 (Mansaray and Associates, 2006; Johannesen, 2005). (Enrolment statistics for these years were derived from two sources: the Mansaray and Associates (2006) evaluation of CREPS, which included enrolment statistics for the four districts supported by the ministry and UNICEF, and the NRC CREPS evaluation (Johannesen, 2005) for the three districts supported by the NRC.) From the data available, it is not possible to determine the number of young people who completed the full three-year CREPS programme because of the number of dropouts and new enrolments that occurred during each of the academic years that the programme was operational.

In 2004, the Ministry of Education announced its intention to phase out CREPS. As a result, in its annual report for that year, UNICEF stated, "A three-year phasing out period has been planned and thus there will be no new intakes in CREPS from 2005. However, support will continue until 2007" (UNICEF, 2004: 12). Around this time, NRC began developing its own exit strategy and phase-out plan because: "The situation in Sierra Leone no longer poses a humanitarian emergency with regard to IDPs and refugees" (NRC Exit Strategy and Phase Out Plan, cited in Johannesen, 2005: 47). NRC finished its programmes in Sierra Leone at the end of 2005 with the expectation that all of the NRC CREPS teachers that were still being compensated by NRC would be placed on the government payroll by the end of the year (Johannesen, 2005). When planning its exit from the country, NRC was in contact with the NGO Ibis, which had expressed interest in continuing CREPS in Kono District. Ibis was unable to secure funding before the end of 2005 when NRC left but did begin its programme in the country in June 2006, and started its CREPS classes in Kono at the beginning of the academic year in September 2006 (Ibis, personal communication). At the time of our research, Ibis was the only organization in Sierra Leone that was running

CREPS classes. The large-scale CREPS programme, supported by the government and UNICEF, was phased out in 2007.

In Sierra Leone, there are currently few alternatives available to children and youth who are not enrolled in the formal school system – a troubling trend since our interviews indicated that, especially in the rural areas, there are still many adolescents who have not completed their primary education or equivalent. Reaching these young people through alternative means – whether or not this is done through an accelerated learning programme – will be essential to achieving EFA in Sierra Leone. The individuals we interviewed for this research (some from within the ministry and others from various NGOs) all stressed that some form of accelerated learning is still needed but, as of now, there are no plans to revitalize accelerated learning in the country.

Nepal

The emergency in Nepal was different from large-scale and long-lasting emergencies that involve mass migration from countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia and Afghanistan. Even though the conflict in Nepal lasted 10 years, the affected populations became internally displaced moving to Kathmandu and other safe urban areas. These IDPs generally enjoyed the protection of the government during the conflict period although they were often caught between the Maoist insurgents and government forces. In insurgent areas, however, civilian populations were targeted directly by Maoist forces. Human Rights Watch (2007: 12) reports that, “Warfare directly impinged on children’s schooling, as Maoists widely recruited children from schools, while government forces often used schools for shelter, and schools were mined or bombed. The social disruption caused by the conflict also hindered children’s access to education.” According to a comprehensive report by UNICEF (2006: 9) in 2006 on the condition of women and children in Nepal,

[t]he armed conflict has affected children of all ages through its impact on their families. However, it has particularly affected children by disrupting their education and interfering with their access to healthcare. Some children have been removed from school to help at home, as older members of the family have migrated away from their home village to avoid recruitment by the Communist Party of Nepal–Maoist ... or harassment by the security forces. Children of families displaced by the fighting can expect their schooling to be temporarily suspended or even

stopped, their access to healthcare to be made more difficult, and their living and environmental conditions to deteriorate and become less stable. Some children will be pushed into the labour market.

The Government of Nepal responded to these needs by realigning programmes for out-of-school children that can be labelled ‘accelerated’ and using them for conflict-affected children. These programmes were originally designed specifically as ‘alternative schooling programmes’ to help out-of-school children attain the goal of completion of primary education (Grades 1-5 in Nepal) and thereby increase literacy rates in the country. While Nepal had a net primary enrolment ratio of approximately 87 per cent in 2006 (UNICEF, 2007), nearly 22 per cent of children who enrol in primary school drop out before reaching Grade 5 (UNICEF, 2006). The alternative schooling programmes were designed primarily for the 13 per cent of children not enrolled in school as well as for the significant number of children who drop out before completing primary school. The reasons children drop out of school are primarily related to poverty and the opportunity costs for families of sending their children to school (UNICEF, 2006).

The original target groups for these programmes included children in remote areas of the country, child labourers and other disadvantaged groups such as children from lower castes. As a result of the conflict, however, large numbers of children were displaced and some dropped out of school to avoid recruitment by the Maoist forces. The existing alternative schooling programmes then became a useful mechanism for re-enrolling children in an educational programme.

Since the government started these alternative schooling programmes, there have been multiple variations in effect. The Out of School Programme (OSP) was started in 1992 (IFCD, 2004a). The programme consists of two levels, each of which is a nine month package for out-of-school children aged 8-14 (including children who have dropped out of formal primary school) to help them enter or re-enter primary school. After completion of the first level, children are eligible to enrol in any grade but are intended to rejoin Grade 3; after the second level they are eligible to enrol in Grade 5, which will enable them to complete their primary education in the formal system (Tuladhar, 2004). Children in the OSP attend the programme for two hours per day, six days per week (or 450 hours per level). The programme was originally

designed for disadvantaged out-of-school children in remote rural areas. Because of the number of child labourers and children out-of-school in urban areas, the government, with the support of UNICEF, also started the Urban Out of School Programme.

The Flexible Schooling Programme (FSP) is another of the government's alternative schooling programmes for children aged 8-14. The FSP condenses the formal primary curriculum of five years into three years (Lamichhane and Wagley, 2007). In Nepal, the education system is structured as follows: the primary level is Grades 1-5 and the lower secondary and secondary levels are Grades 6-8 and 9-10, respectively. Children who complete the FSP obtain a government certificate equivalent to completion of primary school (that is, Grade 5) and are encouraged to enrol in Grade 6, the first year of junior secondary school. (This opportunity to obtain a primary education certificate after completion of the FSP, without having to complete Grade 5 in the formal system, is one big difference between the FSP and the OSP.) Children attend the FSP for four hours per day, six days per week. The programme uses a condensed version of the government curriculum and textbooks and is supervised by the District Education Offices (DEOs) throughout the country. The government is responsible for paying the salaries of the facilitators in the FSP and providing basic classroom materials including textbooks. According to an interview with a UNICEF official, UNICEF has supported the FSP by adding child-centred pedagogy to the training materials, and continues to support the training for the facilitators (through NGO implementing partners) and to provide budgetary support to DEOs that can be used to hire supervisors for the programme. According to a UNICEF official, in 2008 there were approximately 700 centres in operation throughout the country, supporting nearly 12,000 children and youth.

One of the other major differences between the OSP and the FSP is the degree of adherence to the formal primary education curriculum. While the FSP uses a condensed version of the primary curriculum with the objective of helping children obtain their primary certificates, the OSP content covers "family life education, civic consciousness, health/sanitation, environment, culture and income generation/agriculture and includes literacy and numeracy activities within these topics" (IFCD, 2004a: 21). The Innovative Forum for Community Development (IFCD) (2004b: 51) evaluation found that children who participated in OSP gained some basic literacy and numeracy skills, such that they were able

to help “manage household affairs ... keeping household accounts, making household transactions ... count money, read bus numbers, teach brothers/sisters”. In addition, the evaluation identified some behaviour changes in the children, such as improvements in “personal sanitation, can speak well, respect to others, leadership”. Despite these accomplishments, the evaluation also noted the “low perceived status” of the OSP “probably because it does not lead to the completion of primary cycle” (IFCD, 2004a: 26). The evaluation also found that parents were more likely to send their girls to OSP and their boys to FSP as they valued formal primary education certificates more for their boys than for their girls. (This was especially true for children from the privileged castes.) This gender discrimination may mean that parents are satisfied with the outcomes of the OSP for their daughters and do not see the need for them to make the transition into formal schooling after completion of the OSP.

As noted in the IFCD evaluation, “One much neglected area the studies reported was data management. Excepting few cases, neither there were [sic] any proper system of maintaining records of student enrolment, attendance, flow, dropout, etc. ... moreover, discrepancies were also observed in the data reported by the NFEC [Non-Formal Education Center], the VDC [Village Development Committees] and the ASP [Alternative Schooling Programme] centres” (IFCD, 2004a: 16). According to an official from the Non-Formal Education Centre (NFEC), the centre is hoping to integrate the data from the alternative schooling programmes (namely OSP and FSP) into Nepal’s Education Management Information System (EMIS) and has developed a form to help accomplish this.

As a complement to the government’s alternative programmes, since 2004 Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has been supporting a programme called the Community-based Alternative Schooling Project (CASP). The programme also operates through the government’s NFEC, while JICA provides technical support for its implementation. CASP operates in only three districts in the country. According to a JICA representative, because of the conflict CASP was suspended in one district in 2005 and JICA suspended some of its monitoring activities, but the teachers still continued CASP classes to the extent that they were able during the conflict. CASP emphasizes the involvement of communities in its programme more than the government does in its equivalent alternative schooling programmes. Communities are involved in the start-up of CASP classes and identify

possible venues where the programme will be run. They also follow up when children are absent and provide education volunteers who teach the classes when the teachers are absent. These volunteers provide an essential service to CASP as, according to a JICA representative, when teachers are absent in the case of the government alternative schooling programmes, “classes simply do not run”. The JICA-CASP education volunteers provide continuity to CASP to ensure that children can continue learning throughout the programme. During our research visit, a JICA representative gave an example from the CASP classes running in Dhading. Two of the teachers had babies and were unable to teach for some time. The education volunteers then took over to keep the classes running. These volunteers are not provided with cash incentives but do receive other small incentives such as bags and training, so they know how to implement the curriculum. During a visit to one of the CASP centres, one of the researchers observed a volunteer teaching a class. She was well received by the children and her teaching techniques were quite good – the children were engaged and on task.

Liberia

In Liberia, the Ministry of Education and UNICEF started the design of an accelerated learning programme in 1998 to address the problem of over-aged students (Nicholson, 2007). The target group originally included children between the ages of 8 and 16. As in Sierra Leone, the accelerated learning programme in Liberia also sought to condense the six years of primary education into a three-year programme, covering two primary school grades in each year of the accelerated programme. After completing the programme, children would be eligible to sit the National Primary School Certificate Examination (NPSCE) and, if successful, enrol in Grade 7 afterwards. The curriculum was based on the national primary school curriculum and included the core subjects of language arts, mathematics, social studies and science. The national accelerated learning coordinator of the Ministry of Education also recommended the four complementary subjects of agriculture, physical education, peace/human rights education and HIV and AIDS education, but these subjects were optional and not implemented consistently by all of the NGOs that were implementing accelerated learning programmes in Liberia (Nicholson, 2007).

The accelerated learning curriculum was developed by a group of education specialists from the Ministry of Education, UNESCO, UNICEF,

the University of Liberia, the West African Examination Council (WAEC), the Church-Related Education Development Organization (CREDO) and Save the Children UK (SCUK). This group worked on identifying key learning points from each grade and removing overlapping content and review sessions. Following this, teachers' manuals were developed and pilot tested for each core subject for each level, with an emphasis on participatory methods (Nicholson, 2007). The programme had two pilot phases: level 1 (equivalent to Grades 1 and 2) was piloted in 1999 and subsequently all three levels (Level 2, which is the equivalent of Grades 3 and 4, and Level 3, which is equivalent of Grades 5 and 6) were piloted in nine counties from September 1999 to June 2000 .

Although the programme officially started with the pilot in 1999, the resurgence of violence in the country beginning in 2000 kept enrolment relatively low, as indicated in *Table 3.1*. During the second post-conflict period, which began in 2005-2006, the number of implementing partners increased and the programme was implemented on a full scale and expanded to 11 counties. As of 2007, the Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) enrolment had expanded and the programme was operational in 499 schools in 11 counties in Liberia, with 10 NGO implementing partners supporting the programme (Nicholson, 2007).

Table 3.1 ALP enrolment figures, Liberia (1999-2003)

Year	Total enrolment	% girls
Pilot	771	n/a
1999/2000	3,402	46%
2000/2001	5,146	42%
2001/2002	4,370	46%
2002/2003	4,969	47%
2004/2005	not available	
2006/2007	53,697	46%

Source: The Ministry of Education ALP National Coordinator's Reports, cited in Nicholson, 2007: 31.

Since October 2006, the Ministry of Education has convened regular coordination meetings among all of the implementing partners, which have resulted in a draft standardized policy for ALP, a framework for teacher training and questionnaires for ALP school data collection for use in a national ALP EMIS (Nicholson, 2007). The coordination meetings also provide partners with the opportunity to share information and resolve issues such as the coordination of training activities and the payment of incentives for ALP teachers. At the central level, these coordination

meetings have been successful and productive, but Nicholson (2007) notes that the same is not true at the county level, where coordination efforts varied considerably depending on the commitment of the ALP focal points.

In a situation like Liberia (or other post-conflict countries such as Afghanistan, Angola or Sierra Leone, for example), where the education of hundreds of thousands of children was disrupted due to the conflict, there is no reason to believe that an accelerated learning programme can 'quickly solve' the problem of over-aged children who have not completed primary education. It can be argued that eight years is only two and a half cycles of the accelerated programme and depending on the number of over-aged children who are out of school, such a programme may still be a reasonable response even a decade after the end of a conflict.

In Liberia, the continued need for the ALP was compounded by the lack of clarity in the original policies on the age range of children to be targeted. Though the target group was officially set at ages 8 to 16 in some documents, different implementing partners targeted varying age ranges of children. For example, Creative Associates supported two programmes, one that targeted children aged from 8 to 18 and another that targeted adults aged 19 to 35, whereas the NRC targeted children aged 10 to 17. Other organizations adjusted their enrolment criteria after they realized that children younger than age 10 could not cope with the compressed nature of the curriculum and the teachers could not cope with the wide age range. Because the policy was not clear and appropriate from the start, spaces that could have been taken by older children were, in effect, given to young children who should have been enrolled in formal primary school.

As of 2007, when the countrywide evaluation was conducted, the ALP was still operating in Liberia, although with a newly elected government taking responsibility for all facets of education and with the transition of international funding from 'emergency' to longer-term 'development', some partners had begun to close down their programmes. As we discuss in the section on phase out and transition of accelerated programmes later in this chapter, what is needed is better planning and consultation with stakeholders (including community members) about the need or demand for accelerated learning or other alternatives for out-of-school children and youth. In some regions, it may be advisable to continue accelerated learning programmes for many years because

the need is still there. In the case of Liberia, the Ministry of Education decided in 2008 to extend the ALP for another two cycles (or five to six years), during which time they hope to remove all over-aged children from the regular classes in order to free up spaces in primary schools for primary school-aged children and in order to meet the remaining demand of the out-of-age learners for a primary education alternative (Nicholson, personal communication).

In the remainder of this section, we will explore several issues related to the implementation of accelerated learning programmes primarily using these examples from Nepal, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

3.3 Key issues: planning and implementing accelerated learning programmes

Teacher training

In most accelerated learning programmes, an effort is made to train teachers in participatory and interactive techniques so that they do not continue to rely solely on rote teaching. Generally, this standard training also includes information on child-friendly schools with an emphasis on creating safe and welcoming environments, which is especially important for children's psychosocial health during or after a conflict situation. However, these teacher training courses are relatively short and are often 'one-off' training workshops with minimal support and monitoring afterwards. For example, in Sierra Leone, when the CREPS programme was operational on a large scale (from 2001 to 2007 with support from UNICEF, the Government of Sierra Leone and the NRC, although the NRC discontinued its support of the programme at the end of 2005), new CREPS teachers, most of whom were unqualified and untrained, received 10 days of training before the programme started (Johannesen, 2005; Mansaray and Associates, 2006). Teachers in the accelerated learning programme in Liberia also received 10 days of training at the start of the programme (Nicholson, 2007) and teachers in Nepal received 12 days of training at the start of the programme (UNICEF-Nepal, personal communication). These are all examples of intensive pre-service courses designed for teachers to be able to implement the accelerated programmes. Given that some had no previous training or experience, it is unlikely that the new methods and content can be absorbed and then transferred to the classroom after such a short training period, especially if there is minimal follow up and in-service training afterwards.

Even where teachers are trained and qualified, 10 to 12 days of even the most effective training is not likely to overcome the habits and coping strategies of long-time teachers or those who have experienced a traditional ‘chalk and talk’ education themselves (and who teach as they were taught). In most emergency-affected developing countries, the usual teaching style is based on rote learning and is very teacher-centred and didactic. Expecting teachers to re-orient their teaching styles based on a few days of training is not realistic. When an entire system is predicated on rote learning and unquestioning obedience, then national trainers too often use rote teaching and learning to convey the ideas *about* interactive teaching and learning. This was illustrated in Nepal where the IFCD evaluation (2004a: 14) found that the training for facilitators “was dominated by lecture mode” with little or no professional support following the initial training.

To overcome the limitations of time constraints and a less than participatory methodology, many NGOs provide refresher training courses and ongoing supervision to help their teachers. In Liberia, for example, the NRC conducted one-day training workshops every two weeks for all of its accelerated learning teachers on a school cluster or district basis, and teachers who were identified as needing extra support received additional training (Nicholson, 2007). The level of teacher training provided varies according to the NGO, however, and depends largely on each NGO’s capacity and level of resources. For example, in Liberia the accelerated learning programmes run by NRC and Ibis had their own teacher trainers and consequently offered more refresher training courses for their accelerated learning teachers than other equivalent programmes (Nicholson, 2007).

There is also the question of how effective existing teacher training is in terms of achieving the objective of orienting teachers on the principles and practices of accelerated learning. In Liberia, Nicholson (2007: 48) notes that “Teacher feedback at the SCF-UK [Save the Children UK] course indicated that the teachers enjoyed the practical teaching but many did not understand the [accelerated learning] cycle” or how to implement it in their classes. Similarly, one of the researchers witnessed accelerated learning programme classes in Liberia where the teachers had undertaken the 10-day training and truly believed that they were conducting participatory lessons based on the fact that the students were responding to questions asked by the teacher. The lessons observed, however, were wholly didactic and relied on rote learning.

Nicholson (2007) also identified several problems associated with teacher training that are not unique to Liberia. These include the following:

- Most of the facilitators or teachers had only secondary education whereas the training materials that were developed for them assumed a higher level of background knowledge and skills.
- The master trainers delivered the training in predominately lecture style with poorly organized group work, rather than focusing on a demonstration of and training in how to use the methodologies and skills included in the teacher's manuals.
- The training for the teachers was often conducted in groups of 50-80 participants, which is much too large for the teachers to assimilate and learn the participatory methodologies they are expected to use.

While the specifics vary depending on the particular context, the problems identified arise in many post-conflict environments. They are often the result of external constraints faced by many response programmes in post-emergency environments. Projects are often hampered by inadequate funding and an inordinate pressure to 'roll out' programmes quickly and with insufficient resources (human, material and financial). The pressure to train a large number of teachers quickly means that the number in each training session or workshop precludes an interactive approach, even if the master trainers have the skills to use it consistently. In many post-conflict environments, however, while the local master trainers may have a higher level of education than those they are training, too often they have the same background as the trainees – that is, a long history of using only didactic approaches. Without first being thoroughly trained and then supported (a step often omitted because of time and funding pressures), the master trainers themselves often have inadequate skills to deliver the training to the teachers.

Target population

A major challenge associated with the effective implementation of accelerated learning programmes is limiting the age range of the children allowed to participate. Accelerated programmes ideally target children aged 10 to 14 or older – those too old to start at the beginning of primary school but young enough to graduate to secondary school or the equivalent in three or four years. In addition, if one of the goals of the programme is to provide a 'bridge' to secondary education, young children who

complete an accelerated programme by the age of 11 or younger are not generally developmentally ready to begin secondary school nor old enough to enter secondary school based on government age requirements. Unfortunately, the demand for education in conflict-affected states is often greater than the formal system can absorb. This means that parents can put pressure on the implementers of accelerated learning programmes to allow their children (including under-aged children) to attend accelerated programmes. This can happen particularly if accelerated programmes are offered in marginalized geographical areas where there are few other educational opportunities available. It can also occur (but with less validity) when the perceived quality of the accelerated programme is better than that of a nearby formal school or when parents believe that their children can complete primary education in a shorter time period and thus be available to help support the family sooner.

In Sierra Leone, for example, younger children did not attend the CREPS classes where there were formal education classes available, except in instances where the children worked and then attended the CREPS classes because they took place after the regular school hours (Mansaray and Associates, 2006). In Liberia, variations in the policy and practices of implementing partners meant that accelerated learning programmes were offered to a wide range of children and adults – anywhere from age 7 to 24 – which meant that there were a number of younger children enrolled in the ALP who could instead have been enrolled in primary school (Nicholson, 2007). One of the authors of this study also discussed with an IRC staff member the issue of under-aged children attending the accelerated learning programme in Liberia. He indicated that having younger children than the target group in the classes was ‘the norm’. According to him this was so that the children could progress more quickly through the grades (“getting a head start”). When asked why the programme was not then extended to all children, his response was that it was not really ‘successful’.

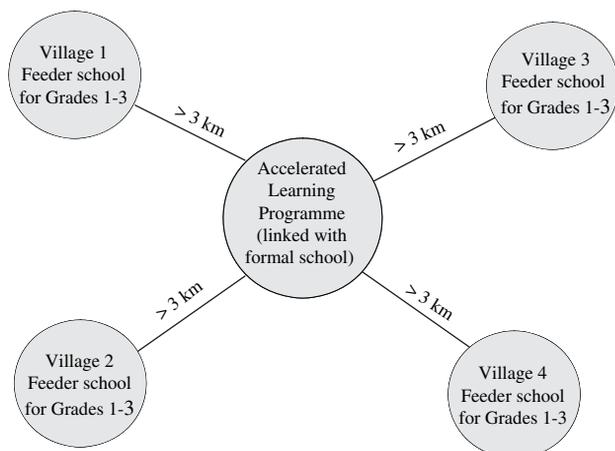
Nicholson (2007) also found that younger children in the programme (predominantly those who were younger than 10 when they enrolled) tended to fall behind or drop out, partly because some of them had never been to school before. Furthermore, she identified a similar finding from an evaluation of an accelerated learning programme in Afghanistan, which found that younger children were not able to keep up in the later years of the accelerated programme (when they had reached approximately the Grade 4 equivalent) and so were much more likely to drop out of

the programme than the children of the targeted age group. Because the accelerated classes in these examples relied not on the principles of acceleration but on a compressed curriculum which required the learners to retain knowledge without revision, young children did not perform very well. Even if the programmes had been able to streamline the curriculum and provide the necessary methodology to change the way that learning takes place, it is unlikely that very young children would have been able to cope as they are not developmentally ready. Very young children cannot cope with the content or the compression; the age range is psychologically damaging to them; and they are potentially taking the place of an older child who can benefit more from the programme.

In situations where an accelerated learning programme is being implemented and there are no other educational options (or a shortage of space in formal schools), how then does a semi-trained teacher with few resources determine who can participate and who cannot? Even in formal education programmes, under-aged children attend because their siblings attend; classes are filled to overflowing because there is no possibility of mandating a class size and the fees are needed (in places where fees are still charged) to pay the teachers. One of the benefits of accelerated learning programmes is that they can reduce crowding in the formal primary schools while at the same time providing older children within a limited age range with the possibility of the interactive learning techniques needed for a quality educational opportunity. If over-aged children have access to alternative educational opportunities that allow them to complete their primary education, there will be fewer over-aged children in regular formal education classes, which in turn will free up more space in the formal education classroom for younger children. This will result in a smaller age and ability range for the teachers to deal with and a more stable psychological environment for the age-grade children who should be there.

For this to happen, however, young children must have easy access to primary education, meaning especially that the schools or learning environments provided for them must be close to where they live. If there is no appropriate formal education programme for them, then different strategies must be adopted for these children (see the discussion on community-based education for one such strategy) rather than simply absorbing them into an accelerated learning programme that is unsuitable for their needs.

Figure 3.2 Model accelerated learning programme



Source: Author illustration.

One way to reduce the age conundrum (over-age or under-age) either in the formal school or in an accelerated programme is to provide both in parallel in all geographical areas. While very young children should not have to travel far to go to school, older children can travel. This means that cluster accelerated classes can be developed based on a model of a central accelerated learning programme with satellite regular classes in villages or settlements around it, as demonstrated by the model accelerated learning programme developed by the authors in *Figure 4*. This requires educational planning, a careful analysis of cost implications and an inclusive approach to education – a requirement in quality education, as discussed in *Chapter 2*.

Are ALPs effective?

In conflict-affected states, there is little wide-scale evidence related to whether accelerated learning programmes achieve the objective of transitioning children back into the formal school system. This is due largely to the lack of information systems and follow-up to determine what happens to accelerated learning programme students after they finish or drop out of the programme, as is the case in Nepal, Sierra Leone and Liberia. In Nepal, for example, the government's Non-formal Education Centre, which is responsible for the Alternative Schooling Program (ASP), does not know how many of their graduates enrol in formal schooling after completion of one of the alternative schooling

Box 4 Testimony of a CREPS graduate

“I graduated from the three years CREPS programme in 2006. I am now in form three at the Koidu Girls Secondary School. I was 13 years old and grown up before I started school. I started school immediately my family returned home from a displaced camp. On our return home, I met some of my companions already in school. They are well ahead of me when I started with CREPS.

“In the beginning, it was difficult for me to understand what the teacher says. This was because I can’t even speak the lingua franca which is similar to English. In my third year on CREPS, I attempted the NPSE [National Primary School Examination] external exams for primary with friends who were ahead of me in steps. I gained promotion with them and I was encouraged with much determination to compete with them. I am grateful to the Ministry of Education and the Norwegian Refugee Council for taking me out the street selling like others doing. There are many girls out there not going to school, similar opportunity must be given to them.”

Source: Young woman who completed the CREPS programme in Sierra Leone.

programmes. This is an area that they hope to incorporate in their EMIS system. Evidence regarding the effectiveness of the ASPs in Nepal, therefore, is largely anecdotal but IFCD (a national NGO) has conducted two evaluations which consider the impact of the programmes. In one they looked at the learning achievements of alternative schooling programme students compared to students in the ‘mother schools’ of the formal primary system. According to government policy, alternative schooling programme classes are linked technically with a ‘mother school’ but the “role of the mother school ... is not clear. Despite policy provisions where ASP centres have functional linkages with their mother schools, in practice these so-called mother schools have no role to play” (IFCD, 2004a: 21). For evaluation purposes, however, these mother schools provide a useful comparison. IFCD found that children in the ASP centres scored higher in mathematics than their mother school counterparts and approximately the same as their counterparts in English and social studies. They scored somewhat lower than their mother school counterparts in Nepali and environment (IFCD, 2004a). Although the evaluators noticed inconsistencies in how examinations were developed, the IFCD results indicate that ASP centres may be producing results comparable to formal primary schools. Additional investigation is

necessary to determine whether the results found by the evaluators are more widespread or whether they were peculiar to the centres included in the small IFCD sample.

In Sierra Leone, Mansaray and Associates (2006) conducted an evaluation for UNICEF of the CREPS programme. Their evaluation results are based on a purposive sample of CREPS centres that existed in the country at the time of their study. They note that, “Although the selection was not strictly random (as some centres had technically ceased to exist), it was assured that not less than 30 per cent of the existing centres from each district were included in the sample” (Mansaray and Associates, 2006: 18). At the time of their evaluation, 43 CREPS centres were operating in five districts in Sierra Leone; the evaluation looked at 16 (37 per cent) of these centres (Mansaray and Associates, 2006). In evaluating the learning achievements of the CREPS students, Mansaray and Associates used the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) as this was a comparable measure for students transitioning into secondary education, whether their transition was from a CREPS programme or from a formal primary school. The results for the 16 centres in their study are indicated in *Table 3.2*.

Table 3.2 Summary of CREPS NPSE results in Sierra Leone, 2002/2003-2005/2006

	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006
Total CREPS enrolment	22,598	19,777	20,352	n/a
CREPS enrolment in 16 sampled centres	1,511	1,922	2,169	1,526
NPSE results in sampled centres				
Entries	175	452	426	423
Passes	168	416	391	317
Pass rates for those taking the exam	96%	92%	92%	75%
% of enrolled CREPS students taking the NPSE	12%	24%	20%	28%

Source: Mansaray and Associates, 2006: 12.

While the pass rates for the CREPS students taking the exam are impressive – more than 90 per cent for the 2002/2003 to 2004/2005 academic years – we do not know how many of those who were enrolled in the third year of the programme and were eligible to take the NPSE actually took it. We also do not know how these CREPS results compare to those of the formal school system, though Mansaray and Associates

(2006: 25) state that for their sample, “We observe that [the NPSE results] compare very favourably with performance in the regular schools, and in some cases, surpass it”.

While not directly comparable, we can gain some perspective by looking at an NRC evaluation of its CREPS programme in Sierra Leone. That evaluation presents the NPSE results for Kono district for 2004, for formal schools and for CREPS centres. NRC ended its support to CREPS in Sierra Leone at the end of 2005. After NRC left the country, the CREPS centres in Kono were not operational until Ibis began supporting the CREPS programme in June 2006. The Mansaray and Associates (2006) evaluation therefore did not include any CREPS centres in Kono District. In this case, 71 of the 185 formal primary schools in Kono (38 per cent) sent candidates to sit the NPSE compared to 22 (of 24) NRC-supported CREPS centres in Kono. The pass rate for students from the formal primary schools and for those from the NRC-supported CREPS centres was 91 per cent in 2004 (Johannesen, 2005). The exact number of Grade 6 students (or Level 3 CREPS students) is not available, so it is not possible to compare the overall rates of participation in the NPSE. What we do know is that in 2005, the last year of the NRC-supported CREPS programmes, 44 per cent of CREPS students registered for the NPSE (Johannesen, 2005).

Another example of evaluating student achievement in CREPS comes from the CREPS programme supported by Ibis in Kono District since September 2006. Ibis is supporting CREPS classes in 12 of 14 chiefdoms in Kono, with a total enrollment of approximately 2,800 children. At the end of each term (three terms per year), Ibis gives a test to all of its students. The tests include multiple choice questions to prepare students for the NPSE, writing (dictation and composition), reading (where each student individually reads a page from the English textbook to the teacher) and speaking (where the student answers questions that the teacher asks). During the first year of its programme Ibis emphasized English and mathematics and then added science and social studies in subsequent years. The tests are designed in part to prepare students for the NPSE but Ibis’s main concern is encouraging the students and keeping them attending the programme. The tests do not cover the more difficult material from science and social studies so that as many students as possible will pass and gain experience in taking tests. In the second term of the 2007/2008 school year, the average pass rates for the Ibis-prepared tests ranged from 41 per cent to 91 per cent in

the 75 Ibis CREPS classes, with an overall average of 68 per cent for all the CREPS classes in Kono (Ibis, personal communication).

The evaluation of the accelerated learning programmes in Liberia (perhaps one of the few countrywide evaluations of accelerated learning) points to the poor quality (and quantity) of information that is available to evaluate the impact of these programmes. The evaluation notes: “Of the six ALP schools [out of 499 in the country] that gave information on the 2006 [National Primary School Certificate Examination (NPSCE)] results [to the evaluator], five had a pass rate of over 88 per cent” (Nicholson, 2007: 62). While these were impressive pass rates, they related to just over 1 per cent of the ALP schools in the country and there was no information on the overall pass rate for the approximately 4,000 ALP students throughout the country who registered for the exam. Instead, the evaluator was only able to gather anecdotal evidence from interviews with school teachers and administrators, which suggested that ‘a large number’ of students who complete the accelerated learning programme enrol in Grade 7 if a school is nearby. If these programmes are to be serious alternatives for achieving universal completion of primary education, there must be systematic collection and reporting of the programme results, including the number of learners who complete these programmes, the number who drop out before completing and the number who subsequently enrol in secondary school.

This type of information will allow programme planners and implementers to design or redesign programmes so that they better meet the needs of young people affected by conflict and truly fill a gap in the provision of education. Even where the learners do not make the transition to secondary schools, this should not be considered a lack of success. In most developing countries and certainly in conflict-affected states, only a small percentage of students go on to secondary school. For example, in 2004/2005 the completion rate of primary school students in Sierra Leone was 65 per cent. Of these students, only 46 per cent moved into Junior Secondary School classes (World Bank, 2007). If young people who completed the CREPS programme were equally likely to enrol in Junior Secondary School, then the programme could have been judged a success. Unfortunately, the information needed to answer that question is not available.

The examples from Nepal, Sierra Leone and Liberia all point to a clear need for better information about what happens to students after they enrol in an accelerated learning programme. It is only with better

data that we can effectively measure the success of such initiatives and make the relevant cost comparisons to determine whether accelerated learning programmes are an efficient means of addressing the educational needs of out-of-age children.

Accelerated or remedial?

Among the problems associated with implementation of the accelerated learning programmes reviewed were the attitudes of ministry officials, students, teachers and parents with regard to the ‘acceleration’ aspect. Parents interviewed in Liberia and Sierra Leone said, for example, that they wanted their children to have a ‘head start’ and, as discussed above, children younger than the prescribed age group were enrolled for the same reason but many did not achieve the desired results. Among ministry representatives, a very common attitude was that the responsibility for learning belonged to the learner. This meant that the curriculum itself was barely altered from the mainstream approach to the accelerated approach but it literally ‘went faster’ (which, after all, is what accelerate means). Teachers left the issue of internalization to the students, relying on their intrinsic motivation to manage the application and revision necessary for learning. In most cases, then, the programmes were accelerated not because the children learned differently – or learned how to learn – but because, as one ministry official said, “they were older and so needed less revision and could retain more effectively”. This in effect makes these programmes remedial rather than accelerated in that they helped the children to ‘catch up’ to where they should have been, rather than moving them ahead.

Many people in Sierra Leone still see the need for these programmes, although they have almost been phased out. One former CREPS teacher observed that the excluded children had felt neglected and were envious of those in the programme. He claimed that “CREPS is the best programme to enhance children between the ages of 12-18 who have never been in school but are eager to do so”.

Perhaps a more appropriate response to the learning needs of young people affected by conflict is the remedial approach. A remedial programme is a catch-up programme as opposed to an accelerated one. It starts with an assessment of the core learning competencies and is developed with a focus on those identified. In a remedial programme, the focus is on mastery of competency while expansion and detail is omitted. If, for example, there are ten ‘blocks’ of learning to be covered,

a remedial programme picks out and teaches the absolute core elements that must be known in order to move ahead, which may be only three or four core competencies in the ten blocks. The rest are associated competencies, applications and revisions, and they are left out of the remedial programme. In practice, such a programme may not be dramatically different from the accelerated learning programmes that have been offered in Sierra Leone and Liberia, but there are several potential advantages to such an approach:

- Without the implied ‘head start’ promise there would be fewer problems associated with younger children trying to access the programme;
- because the methodology is not accelerated (the elements outlined are the elements of quality teaching and learning processes rather than those of accelerated learning), the expectations of the students’ achievements may be more realistic;
- the programmes might be more effective in retaining students until they complete the primary cycle if there was more attention paid to teaching the absolute core competencies.

Even if the young people do not continue on to secondary school, their completion of the primary school cycle is a success in itself and is enough to allow the students to take up semi-skilled and sometimes skilled employment. Without the options that provide young people with the equivalent of a primary education (whether accelerated learning, remedial education or another option), thousands of children (mostly adolescents) are denied their right to education.

Transition and phasing out of accelerated programmes

Accelerated learning programmes have a role to play in achieving the EFA goals. By providing a form of primary education that ‘fills the gap’ of access for out-of-age children who missed the opportunity of education because of a protracted conflict, accelerated learning programmes respond to the goals of EFA. An important consideration then is for how long such programmes are needed in post-conflict environments and the role of the government in their design and implementation. Because accelerated programmes are generally transitional and not part of the formal education programme there is no pressing need for sustainability, but without a government buy-in these programmes may not receive the support needed to meet the needs of over-aged children who are out of school and are therefore deprived of their right to education.

In addition, given that the teachers of accelerated learning programmes need to be specially trained and the curriculum needs to be specially produced, accelerated learning programmes cannot be transitioned to the government while it is struggling to enrol thousands of new learners in the formal schooling system with insufficient resources for this. In countries with low net enrolment ratios, such as Liberia (25 per cent) (UNICEF, 2008) and Sierra Leone (63 per cent) (MOEST of Sierra Leone, 2007), the pressure on the government to enrol out-of-school children is immense. If the over-aged children are invisible, as they often are, then it is possible to ignore them in the light of the greater priority of out-of-school primary-aged children. In a case such as Nepal, where the net enrolment ratio is approximately 87 per cent (UNICEF, 2007), the government could reasonably be the main implementer of the programme. However, the Nepalese government currently relies heavily on UNICEF and organizations such as JICA for funding and support, including for supervisory staff. Without that support the programme would suffer in that the facilitators would be less likely to receive any type of training and it is also very unlikely that the supervisors would visit the programme on even a semi-regular basis.

One of the issues, then, is how to plan properly for the implementation of an accelerated learning programme. This requires an estimate of the number of over-aged, out-of-school children in the country plus an estimate of how many of them would be likely to attend a programme if it was available. Such estimates could potentially be derived from pre-emergency statistics of school enrolment. These would have to be analysed based on population movement due to the conflict, the length of the conflict and the number of years that schooling was disrupted in certain areas of the country, combined with an estimate of the population in a certain age range, such as ages 10 to 17. In emergency and post-conflict situations, however, such data are often not available or are of questionable quality. Therefore, another possibility is to conduct sample surveys in areas affected by the conflict in order to make these estimates. This is an area where the coordination of all those involved – government, UN, NGOs and donors – will result in better efforts to collect and collate more reliable data, as long as all the partners agree to work together and share information. Regardless of how the initial estimates are made, it is important that they are revised based on additional information that becomes available, plus the experience of actual enrolments and waiting lists as the programmes are rolled out.

Once the estimates are made, the partners can use them to develop a plan to determine how many children can be accommodated in accelerated learning classes each year, the class sizes and therefore the number of classes in a given location, and the number of cycles necessary to respond effectively to their needs. If a programme reduces the curriculum to three years, then the planning and funding needs to involve a minimum of three years. If a programme is funded for only three years, then only one cohort of children (that is, those who start during year one) will go through the entire programme. This is the problem currently faced by Ibis in Sierra Leone. Ibis finished its first three-year CREPS cycle in May 2009. Although it is felt that the programme is needed in about half the towns of Kono District, at the time of this research they did not have the funds to continue the programme beyond May 2009 (Ibis, personal communication). Therefore, planning for accelerated learning programmes needs to take into consideration the number of three-year cycles needed to reach the number of potential students and the corresponding time frame required. Planning should include a joint exercise with the 'host' schools – those housing the accelerated programme and those receiving graduates – to determine the resources available.

If this planning is not done, then what happened in Sierra Leone is a good example of the likely result. As mentioned earlier, the government and UNICEF officially phased out the CREPS programme in 2007 and the NRC ended its programme in 2005. Only the Ibis CREPS programme, serving approximately 2,800 children and young people in Kono, was still operating at the time of this research. From the time that CREPS started in 2001/2002, all agencies involved in supporting the programme took what seemed to be the correct steps:

- They worked with the ministry to make sure that the programme could eventually become a government programme.
- They tried not to recruit government teachers so as not to drain the formal education system of much needed human resources.
- They upgraded the teaching skills of the CREPS teachers by providing them with access to the government's Distance Education Programme for teachers. Several of the organizations also ensured that their teachers attended nine weeks of in-service training for unqualified and untrained teachers. This was sponsored by the In-service Teacher Training Project, funded by Education Action International.

- They worked to facilitate the transfer of the CREPS teachers to the government's payroll.

In theory, it should have been possible for the CREPS programme to be fully transitioned to the government. Instead, the government discontinued the programme as all but one NGO stopped supporting CREPS, and there was a subsequent lack of resources. It could be questioned as to whether the quality of the development process was sufficient. For example, did the ministry 'rubber stamp' the programme, or accept it simply because it was presented as a full package? Was the ministry genuinely involved in the planning and development process? However, UNICEF and the NGO partners did appear to take the correct steps to transition the programme to the government, yet this did not succeed and the reasons are undoubtedly many and complex.

Even though one objective of the programme was to support the achievement of the MDG and EFA goal of universal completion of primary education, this was in competition with the goal of "concentrat[ing] on the enrolment of children at their right age of schooling in formal schools" (UNICEF, 2005: 24). In order to do the latter, the government has to devote most of its resources to formal primary schools, which are overcrowded and understaffed (class sizes in the urban areas can exceed 100 students). The government asserts that it does not have enough teachers to achieve its goal of 40 students per class. To do this, the government needs to employ additional teachers but the IMF ceiling on the public sector wage bill limits the number of additional teachers the government can employ. For example, "In 2003, an estimated additional 8,000 teachers were required in the country but with the MOF ceiling of 25,000 teachers already met, only 3,000 teachers were hired in 2004" (Sierra Leone National Recovery Strategy Assessment 2003, cited in ActionAid International, 2005: 7). According to a senior ministry official, since the government was unable to hire the required number of additional teachers, one way that it could help to ease the overcrowding situation was to transfer all of the CREPS teachers who were already on the government payroll into the regular primary school classrooms. Undoubtedly, the additional monetary resources needed to continue CREPS were yet another factor in the government's decision to stop the programme.

The need for coordination

In Sierra Leone, many of the agency representatives with whom we talked pointed to the need for some type of accelerated (or remedial) programme but wondered whether a single NGO would have the resources to invest in developing (or adapting) an appropriate curriculum and in properly implementing the programme (including the selection, training and supervision of teachers). A coordination body similar to a humanitarian education cluster, working together with the government, and taking a lead role in the development of a unified national accelerated learning curriculum, could ensure that component parts were allocated to agencies and NGOs on the basis of strengths and that implementation would be cohesive, with minimal gaps and overlaps. Coordination efforts should also include the development of common guidelines for the implementation of accelerated learning programmes. It would then be easier to sustain programmes through the use of a single curriculum and guidelines to implement cohesive accelerated learning in different parts of the country. In addition, as mentioned above, if the various needs assessments and results of the programmes were shared among all those in the coordination body, ongoing planning would be more effective. This would make it more feasible to roll out accelerated learning on a larger scale or to consider and implement other alternatives, such as remedial education, in order to respond to those who are in most need of such programmes.

3.4 Home-based or community-supported schools

In this section, we look at the use of home-based or community-supported schools as another form of alternative access programme. In Nepal, there has been an effort to devolve the management of schools to the community level but schools are typically still government-supported via grants, and are considered to be formal government schools. In theory, when local communities start their own schools, they are entitled to government-supported teachers. In reality, however, there have been problems associated with these 'unaided' community schools, with some having been told that they are required to pay a 'registration fee'. Although the government's policy is to provide one teacher for every 50 students, community schools in the Terai (a more disadvantaged area) are entitled to only one teacher for every 60 students (Vaux, Smith and Subba, 2006).

In Sierra Leone, in order to enrol more out-of-school children, the Ministry of Education, UNICEF and their partners within the Global Movement for Children Coalition, began working with local communities in 2004 to develop single classroom schools in remote communities where there had never been schools. The original plan was that communities would contribute the manual labour and local materials for the schools, the Ministry of Education would recruit and pay the teachers, and UNICEF would provide the construction and educational materials, and support teacher training (UNICEF, 2004). In 2005, however, UNICEF (2005: 25) reported that “most community school teachers do not receive remuneration from government and depend on goodwill (either in kind or cash) from communities”. While these community schools are attempting to fill a gap in terms of providing access to early primary education in remote communities, unless they have been at least recognized by the government it is likely that the quality of education will be very low. In Sierra Leone, there are three categories of schools. ‘Government assisted’ schools are intended to receive a fee subsidy and full support from the Government of Sierra Leone. ‘Recognized’ schools are registered with the MOEYS and are on a waiting list to become government assisted, and should receive teaching and learning materials from and supervision by the District Education Office. ‘Community schools’ are set up by communities and are not recognized by the ministry or government, nor are they eligible for any government support. More effort is needed at the system level (see the dimensions of quality at the system level in *Chapter 2*) to make sure that learning at these schools is validated by the government and that mechanisms are put in place so that children can transition to other schools after three years and complete their basic education, which in Sierra Leone is primary education plus junior secondary.

Afghanistan

Unlike the informal community school examples in Nepal and Sierra Leone, Afghanistan is an instance where steps have been taken to provide formal recognition for home-based or community schools, due largely to the support of NGOs. We picked this example because there is a significant amount of research and documentation available on community-based education. Also, the context of Afghanistan illustrates the major challenges involved in developing and implementing effective community-based education programmes, which may be applied in other contexts. In December 2005, CARE, along with the IRC, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Aga Khan Foundation, formed the Partnership

for Advancing Community Education in Afghanistan (PACE-A). Before that, CARE and the IRC, as well as other NGOs, had been operating community-based schools for many years. The CARE Community Oriented Primary Education Programme (COPE) has been operational since 1998 (Chabbott, 2006) and the IRC has been supporting home or community-based schools in Afghanistan since 1997 (Kirk and Winthrop, 2005) as well as in refugee camps in Pakistan.

During the Taliban era, NGOs supported home-based schools for girls – sometimes clandestinely and sometimes with the explicit support of local community and religious leaders – despite the official prohibition on the education of girls. After the end of the Taliban regime, community-based schools continued to operate but enrolment dropped dramatically as thousands of children entered the formal school system. The IRC estimates that a significant number of children who had been enrolled in home-based schools (which reached a peak of 14,000 in 2003 and declined to 5,800 students two years later, 70 per cent of whom were girls) entered the formal system as a result of the government's massive back-to-school campaign, which was supported by UNICEF and others (Kirk and Winthrop, 2006). This is a classic example of the transitional type of alternative education. In the very best of circumstances, this transitional programme is no longer needed as the children for whom it was designed have another option – formal education. However, in the case of Afghanistan, the need for community-based schools has not yet disappeared, especially in remote rural areas of the country, because of geographic and cultural factors and increasingly, because of insecurity.

While enrolment in the formal system increased from approximately 500,000 students in 2000 (Kirk and Winthrop, 2006) to nearly six million in 2007 (Ministry of Education in Afghanistan, 2008), the government estimates that the net enrolment ratio for primary schooling is only about 60 per cent (46 per cent for girls). An accurate estimate is not possible due to a number of factors, including the lack of an updated population census (which has been delayed again) and the difficulty in obtaining accurate information on student ages in each grade (Ministry of Education, personal communication). To accommodate these children, the government and its partners have made a great effort to increase the number of teachers and learning spaces in public schools. While the progress is impressive, the remote and rugged geography of Afghanistan, combined with insufficient resources to rebuild the country and provide security for all of its citizens, make it difficult for the Ministry of

Education to reach all areas of the country and provide teachers, school buildings and materials for all children and communities that desire them. The government's efforts to rebuild and start schools throughout the country have been steady but the "Government, foreign donors and the NGO community all agree that the Afghan Government will not be able to establish and fully fund conventional primary schools in all communities in Afghanistan for several more years" (Chabbott, 2006). In addition, increasing insecurity throughout the country combined with a growing number of attacks on schools, especially girls' schools, also point to a continuing need for smaller community-based schools that are closer to children's homes and are supported by local communities. This is the case even though CARE estimates that community-based education supported by NGOs only reaches about 10 per cent of Afghanistan's out-of-school children (Chabbott, 2006). For this 10 per cent, however, community-based education fills a gap and plays a vital role with regard to the effort to achieve EFA in Afghanistan.

As the government has continued to expand the number of schools in operation throughout the country, CARE and the IRC have been working to integrate their community-based schools into the formal system. The key criterion in the Ministry of Education's guidelines for community-based schools is that they are located at least three kilometres from the nearest primary school. In instances where the community-based school is within the three kilometre limit, it can be integrated with the nearby primary school. This integration takes multiple forms. The government can take over a community-based school and accept it as an official government school or the children and teachers from a community-based school can be absorbed into newly established or existing formal schools. CARE views integration on two dimensions:

'Partial integration' can be viewed as a continuum along which the government accepts increasingly more responsibility for the newly integrated schools as their capacity to support the schools grows. Meanwhile, the international non-governmental organization (INGO) continues to assist the school, most frequently through teacher trainings and supervisory visits designed to provide feedback and improve quality of teaching in the schools. A 'fully integrated' school, conversely, is entirely supported by the Ministry of Education, which has agreed to provide teachers' salaries and materials as well as accept responsibility for monitoring and supervision (Guyot, 2007).

One issue associated with the ‘integration’ of NGO schools into the formal system relates to the available human and financial resources. The government is often not able to support the schools fully in terms of material requirements, teacher salaries and monitoring and supervision. Therefore, it is helpful for the government if the NGOs continue to provide assistance for the schools, hence this is ‘partial integration’. The difficulty with partial integration for NGOs is determining how long to support a school. Both CARE and the IRC agree that support to a school should continue for at least one year following ‘integration’. To date, the longest that CARE has supported a school is seven years, while the IRC’s support does not exceed three years. CARE states that it withdraws its support based on the ministry’s capacity to support the school, whereas the IRC’s continued support depends on available (IRC) resources (Guyot, 2007). There is also a concern that if the NGOs continue to support the ‘integrated’ schools, the government will more easily accept on paper the community-based schools without bearing any true responsibility for their operation (Guyot, 2007).

In cases where community-based schools run by NGOs are closed and the students are integrated into nearby government schools, the question that arises is whether all the children from a community-based school make the transition to a government school. In most cases, children, teachers and communities prefer to be part of a government school – the teachers because they receive a salary from the government and are eligible for government pensions and other benefits, and the children and communities because after integration education is perceived as ‘official’ (Guyot, 2007). One IRC teacher trainer, who was interviewed for the PACE-A study, commented that, “Everyone knows that INGOs are only temporary solutions to the problems of education in this country” (Guyot, 2007: 20). Thus the link with the formal system is valued by communities that want the government to support their children’s education.

Despite this need for legitimacy, there are still reasons to proceed with caution. Whereas the goal of ‘integration’ is for all of the students to transfer to an official government school, there are examples of children dropping out when the community-based school is transferred, sometimes for reasons related to bad planning or an incomplete understanding of the situation. For example, the PACE-A integration report found that in one community where a community-based school was ‘integrated’ into a nearby high school, the school was actually for boys. A girls’ school was subsequently built but only for Grades 1 to 3, whereas the previous

community-based school had been for Grades 1 to 6. This meant that girls had nowhere to go to school after Grade 3 as a result of the ‘integration’ into the formal school (Guyot, 2007). Similarly, “in Machalghu village in Paktya Province, CARE’s [community based education] classes were closed when the government re-opened a boys’ school in the community. Girls, meanwhile, were left without access to educational opportunities for two years, until the ministry established a girls’ school in the village. Currently, however, this school goes only until third grade – three years less schooling than was provided in [community-based education] classrooms” (Guyot, 2007: 13). The report does not speculate on whether these instances were a result of gender-based discrimination or merely unintended events but the net result is the same – poorly planned integration can result in the denial of access to education for girls. These issues can and should be addressed by the ministry and the Consortium to ensure that integration efforts result in an overall increase in access to education rather than the opposite.

As such, an important recommendation for external agencies supporting community-based schools is the necessity to develop a clear and cohesive strategy for integration and ‘handover’. Such a strategy must be created in partnership with the education authorities and should specify responsibilities at each level of the system, making it clear that community-based schools are recognized elements of the government system and play a vital role in increasing access to education for all children.

3.5 Mixed literacy and skills training

As discussed in *Chapter 1*, one of the broader contextual issues that has an impact on alternative education programmes in emergency or post-conflict situations is that of youth whose education has been forfeited or at least severely disrupted. The Women’s Refugee Commission (formerly the Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children) and others have done extensive work on issues related to adolescents and youth (see for example Lowicki-Zucca, 2005; Lowicki and Anderson Pillsbury, 2001a, 2001b, 2002; Lowicki and Emry, 2005; Sommers, 2001, 2006a, 2006b; Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2007). The conclusion of these studies is that the varied needs and life experiences of these youth make it all the more important that a variety of learning programmes are available.

The range of programmes made available to youth is extensive and cannot be discussed in its entirety here. Accelerated learning programmes (as discussed above) are the main type of ‘transitional’ programme that is implemented specifically for adolescents, though there are also one-year programmes such as the NRC’s Teacher Education Package (TEP), which seeks to help children re-enter the formal school system and has been implemented in several conflict-affected countries, including Angola, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The TEP is essentially a bridging course for children who are not in school to get them into school, plus a set of basic classroom materials (both consumables and non-consumables). In its original form, it was developed for children without functional literacy to bring them to a stage where they could join a class at their age-grade level. Life skills and peace education programmes are other educational options that are made available to adolescents (as well as younger children). In this section, therefore, we will consider examples from Nepal and Sierra Leone (at the time of our research in Kenya, no special skills training programmes for young people had been proposed or implemented as a result of the post-election violence) that combine elements of literacy training with skills and/or livelihood training, as these programmes respond to multiple EFA goals. This includes ensuring that the learning needs of young people are met (Goal 3), increasing the literacy rate (Goal 4) and improving all aspects of the quality of education in order to achieve measurable learning outcomes (Goal 6).

A flexible, modular approach in Nepal

In Nepal, many of the skills training programmes for young people were originally designed to address the needs of child labourers and not specifically to address the educational needs of young people affected by the conflict. UNICEF estimates that one in every three children between the ages of 5 and 14 (or approximately 2.6 million children) in the country is a child labourer. As is the case with Nepal’s alternative schooling programmes that were discussed earlier, however, the existing skills training programmes are also available to children affected by the conflict. Because many children migrated and/or became child labourers as a result of the conflict, the NGOs that we met did not track which children were attending their programmes specifically because they were affected by the conflict. The important issue was that the children and youth were not in school and were in need of the programmes, so they were eligible to attend.

World Education offers multiple skills training programmes that also include a literacy and numeracy component for out-of-school children. Its Girls' Access to Education in Nepal (GATE) programme is a nine-month programme targeted at girls aged 10 to 14. Although progress has been made in reducing the gender disparity in education in Nepal (the net primary enrolment ratio for girls was 87 per cent in 2007 compared to 91 per cent for boys in that same year (UNICEF, 2008)), the continued high dropout rate in primary school contributes to the lower literacy rate of women in the country. The 2007 youth literacy rate (ages 15 to 24) was 85 per cent for males compared to 73 per cent for females (UNICEF, 2008). The GATE programme provides out-of-school adolescent girls with an opportunity to learn life and livelihood skills, including topics related to health and reproductive health; information about child trafficking; financial management skills such as how to save, how to use a calculator, how to make 'business' plans; core content from the government curriculum and English language training. In addition, girls who prefer to continue on to formal schooling can study basic education with the goal of passing their District Board examination, making them eligible to join Grade 6 of the formal school system if they choose. To better meet the needs of the girls and to make its programme truly 'flexible' World Education adopted a modular approach and developed approximately 30 modules at three levels (beginning, intermediate and advanced) for this programme. The organization built on this flexible approach when designing its Brighter Futures programme, which is targeted at child domestic servants, porters, miners, ragpickers, those working in the carpet industry and child victims of trafficking (these represent the six worst forms of child labour, as identified by the Government of Nepal and the International Labour Organization), and seeks to provide skills training based on an assessment of local economic markets.

The government's Flexible Schooling Programme (FSP) (described in the section on accelerated learning) offers some flexibility in terms of when a particular programme runs during the day, but is designed mostly as a standard programme where learners enter at the beginning of the programme and then stay for the prescribed time (three years) before entering formal school or obtaining their primary certificate. In the World Education programmes, learners may join at any time during the year and can attend at hours that suit their schedule. This is possible because the World Education centres are open all day, six days a week, and some are also open in the evening or early morning (World Education, personal

communication). Because World Education has developed a modular approach, learners can progress at their own pace, depending on their capacities and other responsibilities. They may also complete a series of modules, take a break and then return to complete the higher-level modules if they choose. This approach offers children and young people a great deal of flexibility with regard to their own learning.

From a resource perspective, however, the approach requires the full-time availability of a learning space and facilitators who can staff the learning spaces throughout the day (much longer than a normal school day), which is more costly than using a learning space for two to three hours per day for an alternative learning programme. According to a World Education representative, the location of the centres has to be chosen carefully in order to make sure that there are enough learners to make the centres cost-effective, while at the same time encouraging the attendance of the learners. World Education has found that if the centres are located too far from where the learners live, they do not attend consistently.

In addition to the need for identifying a learning space that children can access ‘on demand’, this model requires facilitators who are well trained in the content of each module and who have the skills and capacity to help learners at varying levels and capacities progress through the materials. The World Education official interviewed said that “facilitators need to cope with multilevel, multilingual classrooms. They need to be selected carefully and be better trained than in conventional programmes. They need refresher training. They need to be longer term and [in order to retain them, they] need better pay.” It is worth noting here that the requirements for the facilitators in the World Education programmes may more closely resemble what is necessary for high quality teaching in any type of programme, an issue that we discuss further in this chapter. To judge accurately whether this type of flexible, modular approach is greater than the cost of formal schooling, the cost analysis, as suggested by Farrell and Hartwell (2008), would have to factor in the cost of the high dropout rate in the government school system in Nepal (more than 20 per cent of children drop out before completing primary school) and ideally to estimate the cost of achieving a specified learning outcome, such as literacy.

World Education has found that its learners are motivated to attend the centres but the interviewee thought that their most successful centres

were linked with other services (like health or microfinance) and also provided recreational opportunities for the learners. This official saw a need to improve the recognition of the alternative education qualifications or equivalencies that learners obtain through the programmes, as some children might need formal recognition to access another job training programme or to qualify for certain job opportunities.

Examples from Sierra Leone

Immediately following the conflict in Sierra Leone, there were a number of educational opportunities for youth, especially those targeted at former child soldiers as part of broader disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes (see for example Bethke and Braunschweig, 2004; Hansen, Nenon, Wolf and Sommers, 2002; Lowicki and Anderson Pillsbury, 2002; and Sommers, 2006b). One interesting finding from our visit to Sierra Leone was how few of these programmes remain even though there are still thousands of young people out of school. As discussed above, the main focus of the government and the international education community is on increasing access to and improving the quality of the formal education system, which was reflected in the programming of the NGOs that we visited in Sierra Leone. We did, however, find some examples of skills training programmes that are being implemented.

One of these is the Countering Youth and Child Labour through Education (CYCLE) programme of the IRC. Interestingly, this programme was implemented through the Child Protection unit and not the Education unit of the IRC in Sierra Leone. The goal of the CYCLE programme is to identify 5 to 17 year olds who are involved in child labour, to help the young children to access primary school and provide the older children with some form of skills training or apprenticeship. The programme started in September 2005 and is scheduled to be finished in 2009. It is a two-year programme targeted at child labourers (specifically street vendors and those involved in the fishing, mining and prostitution industries). Children in the skills training programme attend three times a week for three and a half hours each session. The programme combines literacy training with livelihood skills training. The first group of children graduated from the skills training component in December 2007 and received start-up kits. At the time of our visit, there had been no follow-up with these children to determine whether they were using the skills they learned during the programme.

During our visit to Sierra Leone, we observed a CYCLE skills training class in Tombo (just outside Freetown) that was being implemented by the IRC's partner, the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE). The FAWE and IRC staff told us that Tombo was an escape route for the rebels during the war. Many girls from the area were forced into marriages with the rebels during the war and, when the rebels fled, they abandoned their 'wives' and children there. In Tombo, there are more females out of school than males because these 'wives' are not willing to go to school with young children. In our interviews with the girls and with community members from the Child Welfare Committee, they told us that older out-of-school children should go to primary school but that they should be separated into age-appropriate groups (a view shared by the case study interview in Uganda included earlier in this chapter). This is a change in educational policy that should be considered, especially since there are so few educational opportunities available for older out-of-school children. In Tombo, for example, members of the Child Welfare Committee told us that the CYCLE programme was the only programme for out-of-school children in the community.

The CYCLE session that we observed consisted of two parts. The first part was a literacy activity in which the instructor asked the girls to do some basic activities, such as writing their names on the board, but the session did not include application of concepts related to literacy and numeracy. The literacy materials were formal primary school textbooks, which were not specifically designed for teaching literacy or particularly relevant for this group of adolescent learners. In contrast to these literacy materials, we also reviewed some very good literacy materials that were developed by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) for its programmes, which highlights one potential benefit of coordination for these types of programmes. If organizations that conduct literacy programmes for young people share learning materials and do not all create their own materials, they can save resources and make it easier to move towards a system of recognition for these types of non-formal educational activities.

The second part of each CYCLE session is devoted to skills training activities. In the class we visited, the girls were learning weaving and sewing or tailoring, which highlights one of the fundamental problems with vocational or skills training programmes for young people. One of the dangers is that these types of programmes are often implemented without market surveys or a review of the potential demand for the skills

taught, with the end result being that there is an oversupply of tailors, carpenters or hairdressers, for example. While these programmes may provide children with a constructive way to spend their time; they may also result in frustration (and a waste of resources) if the graduates are unable to obtain employment or are not interested in the types of skills on offer. Sesnan, Wood, Anselme and Avery (2004) offer the following principle to organizations involved in skills training for youth: “No market demand, no training.” While this is a simple principle, the actual conduct of a market survey takes time and resources, which agencies may not have or be willing to invest in, but this is an area where simple surveys or discussions with community members can be conducted initially and then followed up with additional information as conditions change or new information becomes available.

GTZ is another organization in Sierra Leone that has been implementing vocational or skills training programmes for young people. The organization’s programmes are generally on a small scale, for example, vocational training from July 2004 through 2006 for 285 young people affected by the war and a mobile vocational training programme that serves approximately 30 young people per class. They do, however, report a high rate of success as measured by completion of the programme and successful employment afterwards – for example, 247 of 285 students obtained a recognized ‘Certificate in Apprenticeship Training’ (GTZ, 2007). At the time of our visit, GTZ was beginning a new programme in five districts that will combine functional literacy with income-generating measures.

While no longer operational, another programme in Sierra Leone that combined skills training with literacy training was the NRC’s Youth Education Pack (Youth Pack), which was implemented from 2003-2005. Sierra Leone was the first country in which the NRC implemented the Youth Pack programme so its evaluation provides useful insight for this type of programme. The objectives of the Youth Pack programme centred on three areas: functional literacy and numeracy, practical skills for future income generation, and life skills (HIV and AIDS, peace and human rights, psychosocial, environment, sports and culture). To implement the programme, the NRC engaged two types of teachers – those for academic subjects and local skills or crafts professionals for skills training. In an evaluation of this programme, the NRC found that skills training was regarded as the most important element for the learners and that most of the youth who completed the programme ‘got

some form of paid work', but most did not achieve functional literacy, in part because the students were working in two languages and because the teacher training and follow up was not sufficient. Because the programme was phased out when the NRC left Sierra Leone in 2005, the NRC used the lessons learned from Sierra Leone to improve upon the Youth Pack, as implemented in other countries.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, we reviewed three types of alternative access programmes: accelerated learning, community or home-based schools, and mixed literacy and livelihood skills training programmes. Each of these types of programmes has a potential role to play in 'filling the gap' in access for children and youth affected by conflict. According to the quality framework discussed in *Chapter 2*, these alternative access programmes are designed to some extent to respond to the five dimensions of quality at the level of the learner. The main focus is on seeking out the learners and, in principle, responding to their needs. This is especially true for accelerated learning and community-based school programmes, which are implemented expressly for reaching children and youth who would not otherwise be enrolled in an educational activity. There is more work to be done, however, with regard to the design and implementation of mixed literacy and skills training programmes. Many of these programmes rely on the same few skills areas, which are sometimes more accurately described as 'occupational therapy' programmes rather than skills training programmes that result in a marketable product. The result is often un- or underemployed youth. The design of these programmes needs to be linked to actual market surveys in order to rationalize the types of skills training offered and to coordinate activities among the organizations conducting the skills training and with relevant government ministries, such as the ministry of education and the ministry of labour.

With regard to the dimension of quality related to 'content', the alternative access programmes reviewed suffer from the same problems as the formal school systems of the countries in which they operate. The accelerated learning programmes reviewed all have an objective of enabling children to transition to the formal school system if they desire. Accordingly, they all teach a version of the formal primary curriculum, even though the curriculum design for the accelerated programmes may also include other subjects, as was the case in Liberia, Nepal and Sierra Leone. It is important to note, however, that in both Liberia and

Sierra Leone the extra subjects (which were deemed necessary by the curriculum designers but were non-examinable) were treated as optional by the teachers and therefore were largely not taught, even though the extra subjects were an attempt to respond to the needs of the learners. In *Chapter 4*, we will look further at ways in which alternative content can be incorporated into education programmes for children affected by conflict.

Since many of the alternative access programmes discussed in this chapter are implemented by or with the support of UN and NGOs with the support of a range of donors, most of them also include training for teachers on inter-active, child-centred teaching techniques and establishing a conducive and welcoming learning environment. In the case of large-scale programmes such as the alternative schooling programmes in Nepal or the CREPS programmes previously implemented by the Ministry of Education in Sierra Leone (albeit with financial support from UNICEF), resource constraints (combined with the lower priority given to these alternative programmes) mean that the level of training, support and monitoring that is needed to help the teachers implement these new pedagogical techniques is not sufficient. This is also a system issue, which we will discuss below.

While alternative access programmes can be effective in improving quality for the learners, these programmes – especially when implemented by the UN or NGOs – often do not sufficiently take into consideration the dimensions of quality at the level of the *system*. For alternative access programmes that are designed to transition children and youth into the formal system, the danger is that they are implemented as temporary responses and that the expertise and experience developed in the programmes are lost, with little or no benefit to the system overall. Avoiding this will require a sustained effort to coordinate and engage with the education authorities at multiple levels and to consider opportunities for the capacity development of national educational staff – from ministry of education staff to teacher trainers in universities and teacher training institutes to the involved teachers – in all phases of programme design and implementation. For example, NGOs that are implementing programmes could work in partnership with ministry staff to supervise the alternative programmes, as the skills gained in this process can be used and transferred to the supervision and support of teachers in the formal schools.

Also, at the system level there is a need to focus more on the learning outcomes that are expected from each of these types of alternative access programmes. Currently, there is an overall lack of information about the learning outcomes associated with these programmes. To determine which type of programme is effective, we need more systematic efforts to determine what learners achieve – whether this is measured as entrance into formal school, some level of literacy, some level of achievement with regard to particular skills or perhaps employment following a skills training programme. Doing this will require that donors and implementing agencies plan in advance for this type of evaluation and follow up.

With regard to mixed literacy and skills training programmes, there is a need for broader coordination among implementing organizations and concerned government ministries (education and labour, for example), as well as local communities. Better planning and coordination of these activities might yield more of an impact in terms of the employment of youth but should also result in a more efficient use of resources, as there is a potential to share materials (so as to avoid the duplication of efforts) and possibly even learning spaces. In addition, there may be more efficient ways of involving local communities such that costs are reduced and so that there is more acceptance in the local community regarding the skills that are taught. Finally, when these programmes are implemented by non-government actors, there is a need to consider the certification of learners' attainments and links to the formal system, in order to help motivate learners.

Chapter 4

Alternative curriculum provision

Given the parameters of quality previously outlined in *Chapter 2*, in this chapter we will focus on alternative curriculum provision and how it responds to the dimensions of quality. This includes the introduction of alternative or non-traditional subjects and the associated alternative methodology as well as programmes that focus primarily on methodology and pedagogy, with content being secondary. Most of these latter programmes, however, require some interaction of content and methodology (otherwise they are not programmes for the classroom). Generally, alternative curriculum programmes are designed to change behaviour (for example, HIV and AIDS prevention, landmine awareness and conflict management or peace education programmes). These alternative curriculum programmes have been developed precisely because the mainstream curriculum is not attempting to respond to the perceived needs and are, therefore, ‘filling a gap’.

We will begin by reviewing the background of behaviour change theory and how this relates to effective educational practices. This is followed by an analysis of the importance of pedagogy with regard to the implementation of alternative subjects. We then consider three curricular models for introducing alternative subjects – infusion, parallel and separate subjects – and two corresponding implementation models – the community-by-community approach and the national rollout approach, as well as the pros and cons of each. We conclude this chapter with case studies that describe each of the implementation models in more detail.

4.1 The types and evolution of behaviour change programmes

Behaviour change programmes have their genesis in the behaviourist theory of B.F. Skinner. Skinner’s theory, when applied to people, is that behaviour changes are the result of an individual’s response to events (stimuli) that occur in the environment (Skinner, 1968). This was then expanded by social cognitive theory, which requires a situation (or learning space) so that behaviour, personal factors and environmental influences can interact. Social cognitive theory addresses the psychological dynamics underlying behaviour and the methods for promoting behaviour

change. In other words, different people react differently to the same situations. Bandura (1986) claims that one of the key constructs in a more general social learning theory – that of self-efficacy – is the single most important factor in promoting changes in behaviour. This refers to the individual's confidence in their ability to take action and persist in the action. This in turn determines the choice of activities, the level of energy concentrated in that activity and how long the individual persists in the face of failure. It stands to reason then, that the higher the level of self-efficacy the higher the participation. Social cognitive theory builds considerably on Skinner's theory as it takes into account the internal psychological state and processes of individuals. From a learning point of view, this theory requires the teaching/learning process to be varied to take into account the different types and levels of self-efficacy. It also requires the teaching/learning process to focus on building confidence and success to ensure continuation of the desired behaviour.

A similar theory that builds on cognitive theory and the self-efficacy of social learning theory is the attribution theory (Weiner, 1986). This theory focuses on how the learners' perceptions of self (the self-efficacy component) will strongly influence the ways in which they will interpret the success or failure of certain behaviours and so their tendency to perform these same behaviours in the future, or in different circumstances. In summary, the learners view their own behaviour (learning) as being dependent on their ability (all the types of ability required), the effort they are willing to expend, the level of difficulty of the task and the randomness of luck. These attributes are viewed through those elements that are internal or external (to the individual), stable or unstable (in the situation) and the level at which these elements can be controlled. For example, the level of ability (intellectual or physical) is generally perceived to be internal, while the level of difficulty of the task or learning is seen as external. How much effort is used to perform the task is controllable.

The interesting addition that the attribution theory brings to behavioural learning is the interaction of intra-personal attributes and causal influences. While causal influences may be intra-personal (for example, physical ability) they are also external (related to the environment). This is an important addition to the generalized theories as it attempts to explain how our self-esteem and perceptions of individual power and control, and our self-efficacy affect and influence our level of behaviour change (or more accurately, the level of transference of a newly

learned behaviour from the learning environment to a new situation). The negative intra-personal causal influences lead people to realign their expectations to lower goals or to choose easier alternatives if the task is difficult (when they do not truly believe that they can manage the behaviour anyway). However, when people believe that external causal influences affect their behaviour, then they are more likely to try to work around these influences.

Generally, in behaviour change programmes, there is an assumption that attitude and behaviour are inextricably linked and are, in fact, cause and effect. Those behaviour change programmes that require ethical behaviour as a resulting action from ethical attitudes often make this assumption as a given in programme design. However, in the theory of reasoned action, the research has consistently demonstrated that an attitude is likely to predict behaviour only when:

- the attitude includes a specific behavioural intention;
- both the attitude and the intention are very specific;
- the attitude is based on first-hand experience (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

These points are particularly important when developing behaviour change programmes. If they are not taken into account or if the attitude/behaviour link is assumed rather than developed, then the programme is unlikely to be successful. Many years ago, students were routinely taught about the lives of famous people and heroes, the reasoning being that they would be inspired and therefore emulate the positive behaviour. However, generally none of the three points above were built into the lessons and this approach is no longer used in schools. In *Box 5*, the authors present a summary of behavior change approaches.

Box 5 Summary of behaviour change approaches

Modern behaviour change approaches are a combination of behaviourist models, social learning theory and social cognitive models. In summary, the combined behaviour change approach is designed to utilize the reinforcement of the behaviourists, the modelling and conformity of the social learning theories, and the self-esteem and cognitive development of the social cognitive models. It is the social cognitive theory that is the foundation for interactive learning and the modern constructivist approach. All the theories require the individual to have a 'safe space' for the new behaviours to be practised.

Source: Author summary of experience.

Knowledge acquisition programmes

The premise behind knowledge acquisition programmes is simply that when people know the facts they will change their behaviour. The Planners Guide for Global Handwashing Day puts it very succinctly: “The conventional ... campaigns that raise the spectre of disease and death – have had little success in changing people’s behaviour, research shows” (Health in Your Hands, 2008: 15). Pure knowledge acquisition programmes are increasingly rare, however. In Cambodia (1992-1993), there were massive landmine awareness programmes, both in association with landmine clearance and as a warning of known or suspected landmine fields (author personal field experience 1992-1993). However, the signs denoting mined fields were stripped from the stakes and used as roofing ‘tiles’, people tattooed themselves as a protection against mines and desperation for food meant that rice paddies were farmed in spite of the danger of anti-personnel floating mines. Clearly, knowledge was not enough to change behaviour.

In the Landmine Monitor: Cambodia Country Report (February 1999) the report states that “... effective exclusion of civilians from the suspected areas does not rely only on marking. Mine awareness program and the active participation of local authorities have an essential role in modifying the behavior of villagers in suspected mine areas. Though there are improvements, they are still limited as the villagers, driven by economic necessity often go to the dangerous areas”. This lack of behaviour change because of necessity was witnessed by the author in 1992-1993 when mine marking was classified as an education programme.¹

More sophisticated analyses show that there is a wide range of reasons or ‘facts’ that make people change their behaviour. What is often called sensitization or ‘consciousness raising’ – discussions and exhortation by respected members in the community – is very successful when done well and singularly unsuccessful otherwise. The unsuccessful approaches tend to be when the sensitization is undertaken by outsiders or done in a passive way (without interaction). Unfortunately, this includes some of the more favoured approaches such as concerts (especially by children), posters or billboards, t-shirts and radio programmes.

1. Landmine Monitor 1999.

HIV and AIDS education programmes are a good example of how the thinking about behaviour change programmes has changed over the years. In the first examples of awareness or education about HIV and AIDS, there was a fear-mongering approach; pictures of the ‘grim reaper’ telling how quickly AIDS would kill (Australian TV advertisement 1987). There were similar advertisements around the world. The next level of education was focused on ‘knowledge of transmission’. For example one of the adverts for awareness on *HIV/AIDS education* stated “If AIDS education were completely effective, there wouldn’t be nearly so many new infections. These infections do not only occur amongst young people – many people who have already experienced AIDS education continue to become infected with HIV”. Having the knowledge of HIV and AIDS did not have a great impact on behaviour.

Now, most effective HIV and AIDS programmes focus on the life skills associated with living constructively in an environment where young people are at risk of infection and where people are living with HIV and AIDS; knowledge is complemented by skills of empathy, support, and looking for the positive elements and building on them.

Skills acquisition programmes

Skills acquisition programmes focus on helping recipients achieve particular skills (often generic life skills) so that they have the tools to manage behaviour change. They are never purely skills acquisition programmes as there must always be an element of knowledge acquisition and a focus on what the possible positive effects are for the recipients. It should be noted, however, that while having the skill in itself does not necessarily change behaviour, it enables the change to occur.

Composite behaviour change programmes

Composite behaviour change programmes look at why the behaviour occurs in the first place and attempt to minimize these causes. They then provide the ‘tools’ (the skills) so that behaviour can change and finally, knowledge of the constructive behaviours as well as the impact or effects of negative behaviour. The *INEE Peace Education Programme* is structured this way – the activities are based on a ‘what happens if’ approach (INEE www.ineesite.org/index.php/post/peace_education_programme/). In a unit of work, the preliminary lesson has an activity that demonstrates ‘real’ behaviour (what usually happens in a given situation), which is then analysed (depending on the age of the target

group) to see why this is so and subsequent lessons work through the development of tools and practise of the constructive behaviours.

Behaviour change programmes need to provide the knowledge, skills, time and safe space to practise them. Most importantly, the knowledge and skills must be not only taught but learned. The desired behaviours are a reflection of constructive values and ethics, but often it is these values and ethics which are missing in the development of programmes. The desired behaviours resulting from supplementary alternative programmes are often those that have historically been classified as the outcomes of the hidden curricula – those of constructive socialisation, ethics and positive behaviours. These are now perceived as areas that must actively be taught, given the rapid social change worldwide and the even more rapid social disruption involved in crisis situations. To do this effectively, a very different pedagogy is necessary. Fortunately, the pedagogical principles of behaviour change programmes are the same principles as those of quality education, which were described in *Chapter 2*.

4.2 Alternative pedagogy: the need for a constructivist approach

In most traditional education programmes, the methodology is instructivist rather than constructivist. In its simplest form, an instructivist approach is didactic – what is often called ‘*tabula rasa*’ or a ‘filling the empty vessel’. It refers to the *epistemological* thesis that individuals are born without built-in mental content and that their knowledge comes from experience and perception as well as teaching. It is teacher-centred and contradicts many of the aspects of quality described in *Chapter 2*. Constructivist teaching and learning is diametrically opposed to an instructivist approach.

The constructivist approach has its basis in the work of Piaget (Donaldson, 1984) who saw play as a way that children make sense of the world and develop cognitively. This idea has expanded into the constructivist concept that learning generally is developed by creating knowledge from experience. Effective alternative programmes are generally very structured and constructivist in approach. While the constructivist approach is generally not implemented in its pure ‘academic’ form, the idea that knowledge is built on the basis of experience and ‘making sense of the world’ very much underpins the philosophy of effective alternative programmes.

The key to the more recent constructivist approach is that it is multi-faceted. From a teaching/learning perspective, it is what we often label as experiential learning and is rights-based and guiding rather than teaching. It requires the teacher to provide developmentally-appropriate learning opportunities to facilitate learning that is initiated by the learner and then to help the learner to aspire beyond his/her comfort zone. It requires that the learner takes risks and learns from the results of these risks. In summary, a constructivist approach focuses on the learning that takes place as opposed to the teaching that takes place.

Elizabeth Murphy (1997) summarizes the main authors and proponents of the constructivist approach which have been adapted by the authors in *Table 4.1*. The table summarizes much of what is discussed as quality, rights-based and child-friendly education. In the right hand column are some practical teaching and learning principles that could be used in a post-conflict or post-disaster learning space.

While this methodology is the most suitable in terms of achieving quality and supporting internalized learning and therefore behaviour change, it is very difficult to achieve in the context of most alternative programme responses. To train teachers sufficiently to give them the pedagogical skills and attitudes reflected in the associated teaching skills summarized in *Table 4.1* is not possible in a few weeks or months. In addition, the education system must be able to support this type of learning. It requires fewer learners in a class; more resources; a different type of assessment beyond that of knowledge level, rote learning, and pencil and paper tests; and it requires a monitoring and support system that supports this open learning and flexibility of approach. Given that alternative programmes are only one entry point within a wider education programme that is heavily traditional, the implementers of alternative education programmes are obliged to modify the levels of constructivism in order to integrate into the education system. In *Annex 1*, there is an example of how a training session may be facilitated in a constructivist approach.

Table 4.1 Teaching and learning practices within a constructivist approach

Elements of a constructivist approach	Teaching and learning practices	Facets of quality
Knowledge construction, not reproduction.	Objectives are developed by the learner in conjunction with the teacher.	The learner's previous knowledge constructions, beliefs and attitudes are considered.
Knowledge construction takes place in individual contexts, through social negotiation, collaboration and experience.	Multiple perspectives are encouraged through discussion and both group and individual work.	Processes of learning (including critical thinking) are emphasized.
The learner's previous knowledge, beliefs and attitudes are considered in the knowledge construction process.	Activities, opportunities, tools and environments encourage metacognition and self-analysis.	The learner's previous knowledge constructions, beliefs and attitudes are considered.
Problem-solving, higher-order thinking skills and deep understanding are emphasized.	Teachers act as facilitators.	Higher-level thinking skills are part of the processes of learning.
Errors provide the opportunity for insight into students' previous knowledge constructions.	Exploration is a favoured approach in order to encourage students to seek knowledge independently and to manage the pursuit of their goals.	Experiential approaches encourage the processes of learning.
The student plays a central role in mediating and controlling learning.	Learning situations, environments, skills, content and tasks are relevant and realistic.	A learner-centred approach is used.
A process of increasing complexity of tasks, skills and knowledge acquisition.	Collaborative and cooperative learning are favoured in order to expose the learner to alternative viewpoints.	Processes of learning include social negotiation.
The teacher provides a support structure of thinking to help students 'push the envelope' – to perform just beyond the limits of their ability.	Assessment is authentic and interwoven with teaching.	Learning outcomes are carefully measured.

Source: Modified and adapted from Murphy, 1997.

4.3 Alternative methodology/pedagogy programmes

When alternative programmes and participatory methodology were first developed, facilitators (and teachers) were told about the efficacy of interactive approaches but they did not experience the interactive approach themselves. Therefore, they did not really understand why they were effective or why they should be used, there was no chance to practise the new approaches, and there was no support available to use these techniques. Today, more and more alternative methodology programmes actually use the methodology and pedagogy that they promote and the learners learn by doing, resulting in more effective implementation. There are at least two predominantly methodology/pedagogy programmes (with very little content) that deserve mention and which are being implemented in a number of countries.

UNICEF's child-friendly schools programme

UNICEF has developed a child-friendly schools programme that helps teachers to use interactive methodology and a rights-based approach, which should include life skills and peace education (UNICEF, n.d.a). Through the use of interactive pedagogy, the programme hopes to build constructive attitudes and behaviours. The approach is “inclusive, healthy and protective for all children, effective with children, and involved with families and communities – and children” (Shaeffer, 1999, cited by UNICEF, n.d.a). It has a basic framework that reflects the same principles as those associated with quality education (see also *Chapter 2*):

- It is proactive in seeking out the learner.
- It promotes effective learning.
- It acts in the best interests of the child.
- It is gender sensitive and involves families and communities.

It is assumed that through these measures, constructive behaviour changes will occur in teachers' skills levels and attitudes. It is the aim of UNICEF to change the traditional didactic approach and so mainstream what is currently alternative. In practice, however, in the countries reviewed, UNICEF uses the approach as an intervention that responds to specific needs generated by crisis (that is, it is used not as a system-wide change but rather as a ‘window of opportunity’ approach, the opportunity sadly having been created by a crisis situation).

The IRC's healing classrooms initiative

The child-friendly school approach is not unique to UNICEF. The IRC (2005) also has a programme that attempts to mainstream content and pedagogy that are more usually considered to be alternative. Healing Classrooms is an IRC initiative that is implemented in more than 20 countries. Like the UNICEF child-friendly classroom, it is focused on the mainstream classroom rather than using a separate approach. It addresses teachers' roles in creating supportive and healing learning environments for children (IRC, 2005). It is specifically designed to be adapted by a diverse range of people to support culturally appropriate responses and especially to suit conflict and post-conflict contexts. The programme focuses on the psychosocial well-being of children. Teachers who are under-trained or marginalized either geographically or socially are specifically targeted by this programme. The training focuses on understanding the well-being needs of learners and, associated with that, the well-being and motivation of teachers. The aim of the programme is to help teachers develop a safe space in the classroom and to use a rights-based experiential approach to support a psychosocial healing programme. An internal evaluation indicated that the psychosocial concepts could be more effective if integrated into pedagogy, lesson planning and classroom management training (Winthrop and Kirk, 2005). This is an entirely alternative philosophy to that underpinning education in many developing countries.

4.4 Curricular models for implementing alternative programmes

The implementation of alternative subject programmes tends to follow three main models: (i) infused into a traditional subject (also called the carrier subject approach); (ii) parallel subjects (often called 'co-curricular activities', usually in the form of after school 'clubs'); and (iii) separate subjects within the formal curriculum. Some subjects, such as specific sanitation programmes or HIV and AIDS programmes, can be infused or aligned to the traditional formal subject of health (the 'carrier' subject approach). Others, like conflict management or peace education, are sometimes infused into moral education or social studies and sometimes substitute for these subjects. Still other subjects, like landmine awareness, have no 'carrier subject' (such as health or social studies) and need to be taught separately.

Often, because of the constraints of an overloaded syllabus and an examination-oriented system, even those alternative subjects that

could technically be integrated are not, because there is no room for them within the carrier subject. For the same reason, many of the non-traditional alternative subjects are taught as co-curricular or parallel subjects (through after-school activities or ‘clubs’). This approach limits the number of children who can be part of the programme as well as sending the message that the subject is not important as it is already marginalized in the eyes of the learners, since it does not take place as part of their formal education.

Whichever curricular model is chosen to reach the target groups, it requires a formal method of transfer if it is to reach more than the initial group of learners. In line with the philosophy of behaviour change (each person changing individually as a result of programme interventions), some programmes spread very slowly. As the behaviour changes become evident, the programme spreads. Unfortunately, this is not viable for a system-wide implementation.

A further constraint to implementing alternative subjects in an examination-oriented system is that the behaviour-change component is considered ‘un-examinable’ or is reduced to a knowledge-level response. This is further compounded in a crisis or post-crisis situation; there is not the time, nor the opportunity, to modify the national examination system to ensure more appropriate evaluation techniques. In Sierra Leone, for example, the CREPS programme discussed in *Chapter 3* had a component of behaviour change (a peace education component) but, according to Mansaray and Associates (2006), it was rarely taught as the teachers were under enormous time pressure. As this component was not examinable, it was therefore easy to exclude.

Sometimes, the form of implementation depends on the anticipated longevity of the programme. An intervention such as landmine awareness may be valid for a relatively short time (as landmine clearance programmes negate the problem), after which the programme is no longer considered necessary. Other interventions are perceived as increasingly important as time goes on. What may initially be perceived as a ‘response to violence’ programme may be reviewed and later used as a proactive programme in other situations where there has been no outright violence (for example, the *INEE Peace Education Programme*). In some instances, political pressure or a perceived need to respond nationally may result in an attempt at full-scale nationwide implementation. The programmes can in fact be implemented in several combinations. Each has advantages and disadvantages, which are described in *Table 4.2*.

Table 4.2 Advantages and disadvantages of each curricular model based on the chosen implementation approach

Curricula model	Implementation approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
Infused subject	Community-by-community	There is a better chance of monitoring and support for the teachers (as well as a more manageable teacher training component). Success tends to breed success, so that once it is proven successful in one place, others will accept it more readily. The communities tend to claim full ownership, which means it is more sustainable.	Full implementation is very slow and is often overtaken by events. There is often a lot of pressure from ministries and donors to show results quickly.
Infused subject	National rollout	Equality of approach and acceptance by the system, including the examination boards.	Usually means the alternative subject or topics disappear and there is often no monitoring. If the specifics of the subject or topics are not examinable, they will almost certainly be ignored in favour of the examinable parts of the subject. If full teacher training is undertaken the cost is prohibitive; if it is not undertaken there is no assurance that the programme will be implemented at all or implemented according to the methodology.
Parallel subjects (co-curricular)	Community-by-community	In addition to the above, topics can be implemented by trained carers or facilitators from the community (not necessarily teachers); community ownership is more readily assured and so it is perceived as a community programme rather than a school programme; and can reach out-of-school learners as well as those in school.	The subject cannot be made compulsory and so must have in-built motivation to encourage attendance. There needs to be constant and constructive monitoring and support for the facilitators in the early stages of implementation.

Curricula model	Implementation approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
Parallel subjects (co-curricular)	National rollout	Does not interfere with the syllabus and is generally accepted as part of the learning programme. Requires a limited number of teachers and so it is easier and less expensive to train them.	Cannot be made compulsory and is often limited in the numbers who can attend. There is usually a difficulty in recruiting teachers to implement (as it is extra work for no extra pay) and there is also parental pressure not to allow the children to stay after school. It is not possible to implement co-curricular activities when a shift system is in place.
Separate subjects	Community-by-community	Does not interfere with the syllabus of other subject areas and is accepted as an integral part of the learning programme. Requires a limited number < of teachers initially (a semi-specialist approach) and so it is easier and less expensive to train them. Sends a direct message to the learners of the importance of the subject.	Very slow and is sometimes overtaken by events. A community-by-community approach ensures that the subject is non-examinable (and therefore not legitimate in the eyes of the learners and the ministry).
Separate subjects	National rollout	Does not interfere with the syllabus of other subject areas and is accepted as an integral part of the learning programme. Requires a limited number of teachers initially (a semi-specialist approach) and so it is easier and less expensive to train them.	Requires a major policy change to insert a 'new' subject into the curriculum (which takes time and funding if there is no international support for the development and production of support materials and teacher training).

Curricula model	Implementation Advantages approach	Disadvantages
	<p>Sends a direct message to the learners of the importance of the subject (for example, every student knows that mathematics is important because it is a subject in its own right – even though it is also utilized in science and could therefore be ‘integrated’).</p>	<p>Requires considerable advocacy at all levels of the education system and understanding of the need for such a subject. There are levels of administration that need to be taken into account: terms and conditions of service of teachers, examination and types of assessment for behaviour change programmes, distribution of workload within a school and so on that are necessary for any new subject – but which are perceived as ‘too hard’ if the administrator has not been part of the process of development and training.</p>

4.5 Implementation approaches for alternative programmes

As described above, there are three different curricular models for implementing alternative subjects – infused, parallel and separate subjects. The choice of which of these models to use depends largely on acceptance by the education authorities of the alternative subjects and their ability to make curricular changes to accommodate the additional subjects. Broadly speaking, there are two implementation approaches that can be used to implement alternative subjects – a community-by-community approach or a nationwide roll out of the programme.

Generally, the community-by-community approach is taken by NGOs, at least in part because they work in selected communities and because they do not have the right or the obligation – or indeed the necessary resources (either human or financial) – to deliver a countrywide programme. The community-by-community approach obviously makes quality control easier and modifications can be made according to feedback received from the earliest pilots. The community-by-community approach (from an NGO perspective) also has the advantage of being able to choose a community that fits the profile so that the intervention is almost guaranteed to be a success. It allows a concentration of time and resources so that strong capacity can be developed before moving to the next community. Almost by definition, a community-by-community approach is learner-centred and the ‘ownership’ of the programme is firmly established. All of these factors make this approach a very slow but successful one. There are occasions where national ministries also use a community-by-community approach (or at least a district-by-district approach). Sometimes this is in response to a geographically-limited need and sometimes it is labelled a ‘pilot programme’ to take advantage of the possibility of modifying and upgrading where necessary.

The national rollout approach is diametrically opposite to the community-by-community approach. It is ‘top down’, initiated by the ministry (generally with the support of the UN agencies concerned with education) and is introduced to the entire country usually on the basis of greatest needs first or more commonly, urban areas first. Increasingly, national ministries utilize at least a limited pilot programme, although sometimes the timeline is so tight that modifications are not made to the materials and so the pilot becomes a ‘rubber stamp’ approach. It should be considered, however, that national ministries in developing countries (and particularly in conflict and post-conflict situations) are linked directly

to the government (that is, the minister of education, a political post, is the actual working head of the education 'department'). This means that the educators must be as responsive to the political needs as they are to educational needs, and so a national rollout is often considered the politically expedient thing to do. It must be kept in mind that the national ministry is responsible for the entire country and so the perception that only some sections are receiving support is not desirable. A national rollout is more difficult to accomplish as it often requires parliamentary approval for curriculum change (by definition, if there is a national rollout it means curriculum revision); it requires huge resources; any materials developed have to be produced for the whole country; it needs intensive training for a large number of teachers, with the result that very often the training is superficial and very limited. Without strong support and follow up, a national rollout can falter and fail part of the way through or become mere 'window dressing'. The alternative is a top-down ordering by the ministry, often with no support in the way of materials or training. This degenerates into a paper exercise almost immediately.

4.6 Examples of alternative subject programmes

The following programmes have been observed, experienced or reviewed. Many of the programmes reviewed are operating in multiple countries and as this is often a sign of programme success this is sometimes referred to. Because there has been such a lot of detailed evaluation on HIV and AIDS programmes around the world, these programmes have not been reviewed except for the Window of Hope programme in Namibia (UNESCO, n.d.b), an example of an HIV and AIDS programme that takes a composite life skills approach that was designed to operate as a co-curricular activity and was strongly supported by the Namibian Ministry of Education. The focus in this chapter is on those programmes that have a composite approach and deal with either a multiplicity of subjects or topic areas or a different methodology or pedagogy. For genuine efficacy, it is not enough only to have a composite approach – it is also necessary that the actual and potential stakeholders are involved in all phases of the planning and implementation of the programme. Historically, many programmes carried the seeds of their own failure because they were implemented by donors or humanitarian organizations in isolation from the ministry and other stakeholders within the country, including the learners.

*Infused subject, community-by-community approach:
Bangladesh INEE Peace Education Programme*

In 2007, Bangladesh's government took steps to establish its Human Rights Commission and opened the way for more humane treatment of the refugee communities in Bangladesh. UNHCR took this opportunity to establish a life skills or peace education programme for the more than 26,000 refugees from Northern Rakhine State in Myanmar, who were in two camps (Kutupalong and Nayapara) outside Cox's Bazar. Although the refugees had been in Bangladesh for more than a decade, the position of the government made it difficult to provide more than the most basic interventions of support for the refugees. Historically, these refugees had not been allowed to have education programmes, while they had no livelihood or community programmes and extremely limited health interventions. Shelter, sanitation, food and water had all been the most minimal interventions. With the advent of the commission, the refugees could become part of their own solution. However, before this could occur, the cycle and mentality of dependence had to be broken and the refugees had to be helped to understand their own strengths and capacities. Among the refugees, there had been a strong culture of 'litigation' and reference to authorities, a situation where even the most minor disputes were taken to multiple higher authorities looking for a favourable decision. This meant that historically, there was little or no effort by the refugees to develop solutions for themselves.

In September 2007, UNHCR brought government officials, implementing partners, interested NGOs and key refugees together for an initial workshop using the INEE Peace Education materials. The introduction of peace education was undertaken alongside responding to the need for provision of the most basic services, including shelter, water and sanitation, education and health facilities. The two-week workshop was a 'community workshop' (the non-formal skills building programme that is approximately 36 hours long and is designed to be offered to any community group in parallel to the formal education component that takes place in schools). The idea of bringing together agency staff, government representatives and refugees themselves is, in itself, an example of what peace education is about: equality, open communication, cooperation and dignity – but Bangladesh is one of the few countries where the principle has been effected.

Outcome of peace education training in Bangladesh

The participants had an opportunity at the end of the course to develop their own implementation plans (shown in *Table 4.3*). Following the course, volunteers worked to adapt the materials and deliver the messages and skills they had learned. As a result, there was a series of longer-term initiatives within the refugee communities, including the implementation of non-formal education programmes (which included peace education), teacher training programmes and peace education within the refugees' formal education programme.

Table 4.3 Implementation plans from the sub-groups represented at the initial workshop

	Immediate	Longer term
Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue close collaboration and information sharing between agencies and refugees through meetings and discussions [3 weeks: October 2007] • Meeting at camp level with community workers, NGOs and government support staff • Open meeting set up with the Imams and community representatives to discuss peace and reconciliation [last week in October] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-functional team (MFT) established [government, NGOs, High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR), Medecins Sans Frontieres – Holland (MSF-H), refugees]. Establish a permanent MFT by December 2007 • Integration of Peace Education Programme (PEP) in the education system
Community leaders (Imams and community leaders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday mass (prayers): presentation on peace. Parents will be made aware of their duties towards the children and the rights of children • People will be made aware of the rights of women, first within the family and then wider • In discussion with the Imams, they plan to put these discussions within the context of Islam so that people can see that the religion supports peace, the protection of children, and women and human rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the skills of peace education when called upon to do problem solving • Explain to the community the rights of refugees and fundamental rights (and those things that are not rights)

	Immediate	Longer term
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to as many people as possible about peace education and our experiences of the workshop • Call the guardians of the students and discuss what we have learned (conflict resolution) [start within 2 weeks] • Lead by example (for example, act respectfully and not discriminate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once or twice a month, over a period of at least six months, meet with the guardians and teach the workshop • Lead by example long term with self-behaviour awareness
Community workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical care and shelter • Use the skills learned when asked to resolve conflicts and problems • Tell the community what we have learned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop trust by being trustworthy • Make sure that the work includes protection and then peace education

Source: Baxter, 2007 :149 150.

The following report displays some modifications that reflect the philosophy of peace education, respond to the needs of the community and demonstrate how a programme can be integrated effectively into an existing programme.

Infused subject, national rollout approach: Nepal Peace Education Network

UNESCO Nepal initiated a series of training workshops in 2006 using the *INEE Peace Education Programme*. At the time, Nepal was technically still in an emergency phase as the peace agreement had not been signed and tensions were very high in the country. Historically, however, Nepal has had a strong civil society working in the area of peace building and conflict management, which presented a tremendous opportunity on which to build.

UNESCO-Nepal, following its mandate of coordination as opposed to implementation, drew together a wide range of stakeholders and, as far as possible, managed a diversity of representation. The teacher training colleges, the consortium of private schools, and the local and international NGOs were all enthusiastic about the concept of peace education in schools, implemented initially through teacher training. In UNESCO's view, the training of trainers' series was the motivational tool for these stakeholders and the Ministry of Education. The feedback

from participants indicated that this approach was successful, if not necessarily sustained (Baxter, 2007).

Box 6 Report on the peace education programme in the refugee camps of Bangladesh

Kutupalong Refugee Camp: One of the education initiatives implemented by UNHCR is a non-formal intensive English language programme. After the initial INEE peace education workshop, I used the materials in the context of the language programme. To ensure that the message reached further than the 30 participants in the English class, each student had to take on another student from outside the course and teach them as they learned themselves. Thus I could double the number of graduates without falling back on a didactic approach. To really reinforce the concept of unity and cooperation (and to overcome the problem of no official translators), I explained that there had to be a 90+ per cent pass rate. Thus if there were more than five failures, then nobody would receive certificates. I made it clear that all students would need to cooperate and see themselves as part of a bigger whole as peace-builders if they were to succeed. We had a 100 per cent pass rate. I think an 'outside voice' is important to start the process, but then there are those who will truly lead by example. There is one Imam in particular who has shown great potential as he is held in high regard in the community.

Nayapara Refugee Camp: In this camp, the majority of the participants involved were teachers, so I asked each of them to teach in parallel with the implementation of the workshop. Each of my students presented their students for an oral examination and received their certificates based on the success of their students. I was impressed at the gender balance and the age range and especially impressed by the level of understanding of some of the younger students. Once again, the pass rate was 100 per cent.

Conclusion: Our (UNHCR) goal is to 'hand over' peace education to the refugees and the local NGOs. The refugees demonstrated an extremely high sense of community and also showed that they are more than capable to pass on what they have learned in peace education. There was unanimous agreement that peace education should be implemented in the schools, as a separate subject taught once a week. This recommendation has been forwarded to the NGO responsible for education in the camps.

Source: Kwamie Phiri, peace education coordinator.

The idea and structure of the workshops were developed in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, the participating NGOs and civil society organizations, and the Nepal Human Rights Commission. The

workshops were sponsored by UNESCO and followed the original INEE Peace Education Programme design: a non-formal ‘community workshop’ – so that participants had the opportunity to explore and internalize the concepts – followed by a series of teacher training workshops conducted with the teacher trainers. There were also mini-workshops on educational planning (in relation to peace education), mapping needs and responses, and a ‘lessons learned’ seminar.

Because the training workshops were spread over a 12-month period, those involved in teacher training could (and did) contribute to workshops two and three (the teacher training workshops) in terms of reporting and demonstrating the adaptations made to the original INEE materials, which were distributed and analysed at the end of the initial ‘community workshop’. This phased approach to the training also allowed for the internalization of many of the concepts by the participants. Many of the participants were extremely well educated and were familiar with the pedagogical principles and rights-based approach. They appreciated the content and processes of the non-formal ‘community’ workshop and were enthusiastic about incorporating these into the school curriculum.

Immediately following the initial ‘community workshop’, the participants came together and formed PEN (is mightier than the sword) or Peace Education Network. This network supported initiatives by individual organizations and provided a vehicle for information sharing and consequent streamlining. Through the network, international and local NGOs worked together to implement peace education in the education system of Nepal, as well as to contribute to community efforts to develop peacemakers and peace-builders. Within a year, PEN organized a nationwide seminar and peace ‘carnival’ with dozens of stalls from different groups in civil society working on various aspects of peace and allied subject areas. Despite this initial success with the teacher trainers, however, the process of implementation had several limitations.

This was the first time the education authorities had been involved in the idea of peace education or peace building, even though there was a strong civil society focus in this area. The authorities were concerned about how the programme would work because the formal curriculum was already overcrowded. They were also unsure of whether the teachers would understand the approach because ‘culturally’, teachers were used to didactic methods.

The previous work done in terms of peace education and peace building in civil society was reactive rather than proactive, which was understandable given the political situation in Nepal at the time. The idea of proactive peace, that is, building the knowledge and skills necessary for constructive peace, was not initially well understood.

While the ministry was supportive, there was no key person to provide the 'drive' needed. In most cases of successful implementation of alternative programmes, there is a key individual who has the initial enthusiasm and commitment that develops the motivation.

The representation from the various organizations in the training workshops often did not include policy-makers. This meant that implementation through the various stakeholders depended on the ability of workshop participants to advocate within their own organizations.

The lack of active UNICEF involvement at the initial stage was unfortunate. Although UNICEF staff attended PEN meetings, the agency as a whole was not deeply involved in the concept until the end of the workshop series. From the international agency perspective, this was not as coordinated a response in terms of the transfer of responsibilities as was planned. It is hoped that the increased emphasis on coordination will allow these types of issues to be addressed early on.

In addition to lack of UNICEF representation there was also an exclusion of certain castes in the workshops. In an interview with the UNESCO officer in charge of the programme in 2006/7, it was made clear that in spite of his best efforts, there was almost no representation from the lower caste groups in the training workshops, even though other 'balances' (gender parity, geography and agencies or group representation) was managed. This could be because the lower castes are not well represented in the levels of the system that were part of the workshops (reflecting a deeper level of discrimination) but it meant that there was a certain superficiality in the discussions about equality and constructive peace education skills as the group already had a bias.

The Nepal programme, like other versions of peace education, was foundational in approach as it contained new subject matter and a radically different methodology. The aim of the programme was to change the behaviour of both teachers and students, providing them with skills for constructive living. From the UNESCO Nepal-sponsored workshops, the participants internalized the concepts for themselves, and

developed awareness and education programmes in conjunction with already existing non-formal approaches (similar in that they utilized a rights-based methodology). The subject of peace education was infused into the general school curriculum. Because of this, within weeks and months there were flourishing school-based programmes, although at the time of the research none of these were national (but they were more than a community-by-community approach). Following the initial UNESCO-sponsored workshops, UNICEF obtained funding to take the programme forward and brought in a consultant to work together with the ministry to mainstream the programme. In 2008, UNICEF's focus had changed slightly to revise the formal curriculum so as to include peace education at all levels (UNICEF, personal communication). This will hopefully ensure a national approach of peace education as a subject that is infused into the traditional subjects in the curriculum.

Box 7 Right to Play

Right to Play is an NGO (previously called Olympic Aid) dedicated to a healthier, safer world through play and sport. In 2001, there was an agreement in place between the (then) Olympic Aid and UNHCR with regard to a programme called Sportworks, which was about helping refugee children play constructively and so fulfilling their right to play. This programme operated as a co-curricular activity in some UNHCR-supported refugee schools. Since 2003, sports and games have been used increasingly as a conduit to teach life skills. The programme is based on the foundation principles of inclusion and sustainability, with special emphasis on children who may be disabled or marginalized. The motto of Right to Play, 'look after yourself: look after one another', is used for instruction about HIV and AIDS but also for life skills such as belonging, cooperation and problem-solving.

Sources: Personal communication with Johann Olav Koss, President and CEO of Right to Play, (www.righttoplay.com) and interviews with staff from Right to Play Sierra Leone.

Parallel subject, community-by-community approach: Right to Play

Right to Play provides an extreme alternative approach and methodology to teach behaviour change. It is based on a structure of volunteers who teach a series of games and activities to groups of children. The games and structure are developed centrally and the coaches implement them according to the manual and the specifics on the ground. To be able to do this with facilitators who have no pedagogical

skills means that the material is extremely well structured. As it is based on experiences (the games), the programme is a good example of a constructivist approach. The games are used as a 'carrier' for messages of behaviour change in a range of life skills areas: for example, health (HIV and AIDS), self-esteem, conflict management and peace skills.

In Sierra Leone, the Right to Play programme supports the National HIV and AIDS Secretariat through the implementation of its Live Safe Play Safe (LSPS) HIV and AIDS prevention education resource. The aim of the programme is to change behaviour in a sustainable way. This should result in reduced vulnerability to the social pressures that may result in HIV and AIDS, the impact of HIV and AIDS is reduced and there is a decrease in the transmission of HIV. All of this should foster a conducive environment in communities. The programme has an added dimension in Sierra Leone, which is to build the capacity of the National HIV and AIDS Secretariat, including updating and revising the Live Safe Play Safe resource, selecting and training coaches to implement the project, and increasing the effectiveness of the project through monitoring and evaluation.

Because the programme operates non-formally, there is no guarantee that all learners can be reached, even in a reasonably limited geographical area. For example, a volunteer coach operates only in his/her own community as there is no funding for travel and it would contradict the community ownership of the programme. Even within the coach's own community, however, there is no guarantee that every child in the community will be involved because the programme is self-selecting. At a larger level, if there are no coaches for particular communities, then there is no programme and none of the learners of that community will be reached.

Parallel subject, national rollout approach: Window of Hope

Window of Hope is a UNICEF-funded programme in Namibia that was started in 2004 and designed to build constructive attitudes among children to help them make healthy decisions for their future in relation to HIV and AIDS (UNICEF, n.d.b). It is the child-oriented version of the UNICEF 'Window of Hope' programme that served as an advocacy and awareness programme about HIV and AIDS. The programme is designed as an after-school activity. The materials are designed for a weekly intervention and the programme is limited to 30 children per group. There are eight modules of five sessions each across each of four

grades: four modules for Grades 4 and 5 (red, yellow, blue and green) and four for Grades 6 and 7 (violet, orange, turquoise and lime-green). This is approximately forty hours per year for each grade (one hour per week). The approach is semi-structured and based on activities that build constructive attitudes obliquely. Each ‘window’ (module) has the same format: a starting ritual consisting of a song and flag; a sharing time (structured discussion) which raises the content of the session (for example, “expressing feelings”, “how we have changed”, “what can we do for sick people?”); an activity; a game, art, story or drama that expands on the content and adds knowledge; a skills-based activity that allows the children an opportunity to practise and reinforce the knowledge (often a song or exercise, such as a relaxation exercise or a story) and then a closing ritual. While the programme is about behaviour change in terms of safe sexual behaviour, it builds children’s life skills and self-esteem through games and activities that start with cooperation and self-esteem.

Box 8 Window of Hope

“Children don’t learn in school that their life has value and that they can say no, they don’t learn these things far enough in advance. So when they’re in a situation where they have to say no, they’re unprepared. Window of Hope teaches them how to respect one another and treat each other appropriately. It develops a culture of respect between genders.”

Source: Coordinator Melissa Welp of the Regional AIDS Committee for Education in Omusati Namibia, www.unicef.org/infobycountry/namibia_31512html and the Teachers’ Manuals Window of Hope.

The programme was designed in and for Namibia, and was done in concert with the Namibian Ministry of Education. It is a composite programme and one of the few that we reviewed that was actually designed as a co-curricular activity but with a national rollout. Unfortunately, this programme seems to have had a limited time frame in Namibia (although this may be only because UNICEF’s support was limited and so external reports are limited to the UNICEF involvement). The programme has now been adopted in Southern Sudan and several other countries, including Sierra Leone, but through NGOs and is therefore limited with regard to the number of schools in which it is implemented.

The programme has been structured and developed carefully. There are, however, a series of disadvantages that would need to be taken into

account if it is to be sustainable. It was developed centrally and while apparently some training was provided initially, the materials have been designed to stand alone. The ministry decreed that all primary schools were required to offer it as an after-school activity (such a top-down approach is rarely successful) and the programme itself is very resource intensive. In addition, there are all the general disadvantages of a parallel programme: it is marginalized; it is open to a small number of children (limited to 30 children per group) and it lacks legitimacy as it is not part of the formal curriculum – even though it has the full support of the ministry.

Separate subject, community-by-community approach: War Child Holland, Sierra Leone

War Child Holland (WCH) develops and implements life skills programmes, the best known being the I DEAL and BIG DEAL programmes (Griede, E; Speelman, L., 2007). These programmes are centrally designed and very structured, focusing on the development of constructive life skills. The themes have anything from two to five sessions. Only the first and last themes are ‘compulsory’, while the others are according to need. The themes – ‘identity and assessment’, ‘dealing with emotions’, ‘peer relations’ ‘relations with adults’, ‘rights and responsibilities’, ‘prejudice and stigmatization’, ‘conflict and peace’ and ‘future’ – are all undertaken as separate subjects often in parallel to formal schooling. This makes them co-curricular rather than separate subjects.

However, in 2008, WCH-Sierra Leone started a community-based psychosocial intervention that involved children and youth through the community. This is a parallel programme to the formal education system as it also includes literacy and numeracy for those children and youth who missed out on education as a result of the conflict. Within this parallel approach, life skills are treated as a separate subject. They are based on the I DEAL modules and themes. The programme focuses on the improvement of the psychosocial well-being of children and youth through their empowerment, so that they are enabled to cope in a constructive way with the challenges in their day-to-day life. The project aims to develop sustainable community structures that involve and support children and youth. These are designed so that they result in increased awareness of and support for child rights and the psychosocial development of children and youth in the community. In addition, there should be increased positive dynamics and cohesion within the

community. As a result, children and youth will gain life skills and have increased educational opportunities. Implementation of the programme follows a series of steps and parameters:

- A preliminary general needs assessment by WCH-Sierra Leone to determine community viability for programme implementation.
- The mandate of WCH-Sierra Leone is to target the most vulnerable communities in terms of risk factors related to the psychosocial well-being of children and youth.
- Once the general needs assessment is completed, a participatory needs assessment is undertaken together with all the stakeholders of the communities.
- The community must have a high level of motivation and commitment towards the WCH-Sierra Leone community-based psychosocial programme.
- After this commitment has been made, WCH-Sierra Leone establishes a structure in each community, which acts as a formal link with previously established traditional community structures. These community structures are actively involved in all stages of the project from the assessment and design, to the implementation and evaluation.

The programme is being implemented in 30 communities in the three districts of Port Loko, Bombali and Bo. While the psychosocial interventions have their genesis in the I DEAL programmes, they are more focused on the specific needs of Sierra Leonean children and youth.

There is no doubt that the programme is successful in the communities in which it operates. Anecdotal feedback from both community members and WCH-Sierra Leone staff supports this. The real question is whether this model could be as successful if the parameters were not in place. It is accepted that as one community has a successful intervention, other communities that want the programme will try to respond to the parameters (and this could be considered a positive benefit deriving from the programme). This is the 'osmosis' type of growth of a community-by-community programme. The structure inhibits rapid growth, even without the parameters, while the intensive training and genuine community ownership development precludes the reactive approach often implemented by outside authorities. The overriding question from a country perspective is whether it could be implemented countrywide,

the short answer to which would have to be ‘no’. The need to ‘pick and choose’ communities according to a particular profile and to focus on specific needs means that the communities that do not or cannot fulfil the criteria will never be participants in the programme.

In some respects, given the parameters required for the implementation of this intervention – that the community is sufficiently viable (as a community), the needs are no different to any other community (that is, they tend to reflect national trends) and there is a willingness to change – it could be questioned as to whether the intervention is required at all. Perhaps it is reasonable to expect that constructive change would occur as a matter of general development and all that the intervention has achieved is to give structure to the change. On the other hand, the intervention provides a model that can be adapted to create an awareness of particular needs and a structure to help communities respond constructively. It also provides new and proactive methodologies for a community approach.

Separate subject, national rollout: two case studies

The following two case studies are composite in content, experiential in methodology and foundational alternatives moving to mainstream. They are both ministry-led approaches with strong support from the international humanitarian community. In Sierra Leone, the ‘emerging issues’ response is a nationwide programme using the teacher training programmes as an entry point and initially targeting the teacher training curriculum with plans to move into the formal school curriculum in 2009/2010. In Kenya, the peace education programme has been planned as a national programme even though the violence was geographically specific. Both interventions are considered alternative because to date, neither has assured specific implementation in the formal school curriculum. In addition, the content of both programmes is alternative (that is, non traditional).

Sierra Leone: Emerging Issues response

Sierra Leone is emerging from a particularly brutal ten-year war. During the conflict and in the immediate post-conflict period, UN agencies, NGOs and others attempted to support reconciliation and the rebuilding of Sierra Leone with initiatives in formal and non-formal education that responded to the myriad needs and problems facing the country.

In 2007, UNICEF, together with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MOEYS), the teacher training colleges and other partners began the process of streamlining the many *ad hoc* initiatives that had been implemented as alternative subjects into the mainstream curricula and by doing so, also to change the way traditional subjects are taught. A representative from MOEYS said during an interview that the ministry could not keep responding to the range of initiatives with which it was presented. The only way to adopt some of the obviously needed topics was to somehow group them together. The UNICEF officer who was interviewed said that the suggestion by the stakeholders (at a meeting convened by UNICEF and MOEYS) was to streamline all the discrete projects into a cohesive single subject. It appears that this decision, while initially perhaps a UNICEF suggestion and funded by UNICEF, has been accepted by the government ministries and institutions involved.

The first step was the formation of a task force of stakeholders with representation from all the component parts of the MOEYS, the teacher training colleges and resource centres, the National Curriculum Development Centre, the National Council for Technical Vocational and other Awards (NCTVA), other ministries and government organizations (such as the Pharmacy Board of Sierra Leone), UNICEF and NGOs working in education, health and gender. These stakeholders identified the areas that they felt were emerging issues. There was then a series of regional and some district-level consultations to canvass the views of communities (including the learners) to determine the emerging issues. While some of these issues were genuinely emerging, many of them were simply issues that needed an educational response, were outside the traditional subject areas or had previously been dealt with ineffectually. While the emerging issues programme is primarily a range of content area topics, there is a common philosophy that is based on providing the new methodology of interactive learning and a constructivist approach to teaching, as each of the topics requires a behaviour change.

Much of the negative behaviour that the task force identified is thought to be a product of the years of conflict, as well as extreme poverty. While these deep-seated causes cannot be addressed solely by the education system, the task force believes that it will be possible to initiate change by focusing attention on the issues and teaching constructive skills and attitudes to minimize any negative aspects. The programme is starting with teachers – not the curriculum – although there are parallel programmes of curriculum reform and upgrading that

will hopefully streamline the process. This approach dovetails with the EFA idea that teachers are the cornerstone of all attempts to improve quality. The content of this teacher training is therefore an attempt to improve the attitudes and behaviour of the teachers as well as provide skills and knowledge that will then be transferred to the students and thereby improve the quality of education in Sierra Leone. While it is anticipated that formal curricula for the students will be developed by the curriculum development sector of the ministry, initially the teacher training curriculum is primarily for the teachers to learn and change their own attitudes and behaviour.

Thus the ministry, UNICEF and other stakeholders are streamlining initiatives through a programme that is focused on educating teachers on a range of topics felt to be ‘emerging issues’ in the context of Sierra Leone. These are also major components of what is considered life skills and so relate to the EFA goals. In addition, teachers are supported to recognize, have the knowledge and skills to deal with, and the appropriate methodology to teach ‘emerging issues’. This programme is different from typical teacher training initiatives because the idea is to tackle many of the issues that plague post-conflict countries, not in isolation, as has been done historically, but as part of a structured whole. The programme focuses primarily on four themes – human rights, civics and democracy, gender, and health and environment – plus a series of topics grouped as principles and pedagogy. This latter component was introduced to ensure that a constructivist interactive methodology appropriate to alternative subjects is introduced, included and practised.

All of the topics in the course (see *Annex 2* for a complete list), such as sexual and reproductive health, human trafficking, deforestation, hygiene, drug abuse, peace education, gender and human rights, are usually dealt with through an alternative (supplementary subject) approach. In no conflict-affected state that we know of have all of these topics been integrated into formal education programmes and certainly not as an integrated whole. In most cases they remain alternative and outside the formal curricula, offered sometimes as parallel (co-curricular) subjects, or infused into traditional subjects (but without the requisite methodology), or implemented through out-of school community-based activities. Under this initiative, the ministry and its partners are seeking an alternative way to improve the overall quality of education in Sierra Leone and to transform teaching practices throughout the country.

Following the identification of priority issues, UNICEF and the ministry convened a writers' workshop to write a curriculum for teacher training in emerging issues. The writers were representatives from the various sections of the ministry plus specialist NGO staff who had a special interest or expertise in the various areas. The first draft of the materials was circulated among the NGOs for review. *Box 9* highlights some of the challenges experienced by the authors in the development of the curriculum for this programme.

Box 9 Challenges in the development of curriculum for emerging issues

There is a real challenge involved here that is not limited to Sierra Leone. Curriculum development is a discipline of its own but is often poorly understood. A curriculum is relatively easy to mimic but not so easy to actually develop. In Sierra Leone and in Kenya (the two case study countries), the original writers took material from the current school textbooks, creating repetition and ignoring the need for new content. They also took associated materials from other documents and programmes and from the internet, but then these were simply amalgamated. The idea of a structured 'building block' approach to curriculum development was singularly missing. There seemed to be little understanding of how a learner develops and how curricula need to match this development. In both countries, one of the authors initiated a writing workshop to outline these principles and supported a massive rewrite of the curriculum materials. At the behest of the writers, this material was incorporated into the training materials so that both the developers and the trainers learned how to link the development and learning principles as part of various workshops for curriculum writing and training of trainers.

Source: Author personal field experience.

The 2008/2009 teacher training programme in Sierra Leone has three components:

- pre-service teacher training (a three-year full-time course);
- distance in-service education for those who are teaching but do not have a teaching certificate (that is, unqualified);
- intensive in-service training for teachers who are qualified but who need to upgrade their knowledge and skills (as 'emerging issues' is a core subject and so necessary for further promotion), held during the term vacations.

The emerging issues course will be part of the three-year course with topics offered each term (that is, it is not offered as a module in a single year or term). This is the equivalent of 140 hours and the NCTVA and the ministry have agreed that it is a core subject worth four credit points (equivalent to mathematics) in the teacher training programme. This is a major shift in policy. Topics that have always been regarded as peripheral and thus dealt with in an alternative way are now being mainstreamed as a single, cohesive subject and will be examinable. The policy also endorses the idea that these issues all require a dramatically different methodology and approach, one that is experiential and rights based. According to officials within the ministry, the course is perceived as the carrier subject of a new methodology and pedagogy. One ministry official who was interviewed stated that it is expected that the emerging issues course will be the new standard and example of pedagogy, an example that all other core subjects and eventually all subjects will adopt. It is assumed that if this new pedagogy can be used effectively in the training colleges and modelled there, then the teachers will in turn use it in the classrooms.

Box 10 Testimony of an Emerging Issues facilitator (1)

“The content materials [and pedagogy] were well structured and I understood each concept very well. The difficulty I had was how to get rid of previous ideas I had held onto for so many years. Having academic knowledge of something is quite different from how you feel about it when it comes to application. It was really tough at the beginning but I gradually adapted to the situation.”

Source: Anonymous feedback from a facilitator during the second training workshop.

The materials that will be used in the teacher training are a combination of knowledge and a pedagogy that helps in the development of the desired values and behaviours. As a philosophy of implementation of the pedagogy, this will have its share of challenges. Currently, there is no structure in the system to support the experiential approach. The system is heavily examination oriented and the examinations themselves are limited to knowledge level, multiple choice, unfinished statement and true/false questions. There is currently no room for analysis and synthesis-level thinking. While there is some limited effort to include these as part of a continuous assessment, the level of corruption in Sierra Leone is

so high (as in many other settings) that teacher-authorised assessment has no credibility. Even in the teacher training colleges, Emerging Issues is limited to 50 to 60 minute time slots because of the way the college timetable is organized – and Emerging Issues has to fit into the larger scene. As a result, each topic has been limited to a maximum of two ‘activities’, but if the college lecturers/facilitators revert to being lecturers (as is common in this and other settings), then there will not be time for two. Because the experiential methodology is very new, it is difficult for the facilitators to trust that it is effective and so they lecture even where there is no need and then claim that there is no time for the activity.

Box 11 Testimony of an Emerging Issues facilitator (2)

“This is an opportunity for us to open up the discussion; but the activities ... it would have been very difficult and boring but with the methodology [and] more of the activities we are highly involved and responses are taken into consideration, which makes it very interesting.”

Source: Sulaiman Senghe Bonthe, facilitator, Emerging Issues programme, Sierra Leone.

While the teachers are being trained to use the pedagogy and the new materials, their head teachers and field supervisors have not yet been trained. As a result, there may be challenges as these supervisors are the monitors of the teaching process and are responsible for the promotion of teachers. If they do not recognize the experiential learning approaches as valid, the teachers will not be promoted and so, in turn, they will not pursue the intervention.

There is also an issue of transference. The first ‘graduates’ of the teacher upgrade course (the intensive in-service) will be qualified to teach in June 2009 but there is no space in the school curriculum for the subject and no materials ready for use (although the training materials could be adapted readily). Transference of subject and pedagogy is never assured in any country but it is especially difficult if each individual teacher has to fight for a place in the syllabus to teach the subject.

One of the key challenges is the issue of implementation. Quality control is extremely difficult even when a community-by-community approach is used. A national rollout means, almost by definition, that there is a loss of quality control. It is almost impossible to train enough supervisors who can internalize the concepts and materials themselves

and support others across a whole country. In a country like Sierra Leone, where between 50 and 60 per cent of teachers are not qualified as teachers (although many of them have academic qualifications) and untrained, a lot of support is required. If the support structure does not support the new materials and methodology, untrained teachers are especially not likely to pursue a course that is not favoured by the education hierarchy.

Because the Sierra Leone programme is in its initial stages there is time and opportunity to address many of these challenges while they are challenges (and before they are problems). The Emerging Issues programme is, however, one of what is hopefully the 'new breed' of ministry-led alternative-to-mainstream initiatives.

Kenya: post-election violence response

Kenya, while not typically considered a conflict affected country, had an interesting and rapid response to the disruption in schooling that arose out of the violence in December 2007 and January 2008. Although there were an estimated 350,000 IDPs (IRIN, 2008) as a result of the violence, the immediate education response was restricted to integrating children into local schools, which separated them from their classmates, and continuity of teaching. The more traditional response of alternative education targeting those immediately affected by the violence was not undertaken at this stage. The violence was so shocking to Kenyans and to the government that it was strongly felt that the entire country had been affected adversely.

In response to the violence, the Government of Kenya developed a Post-Election Recovery Plan called Vision 2030 (Voice of America, 2008) with a focus on healing and the prevention of this sort of violence in the future. One of the core principles of the Ministry of Education's component of the plan was the implementation of peace education in schools.

In general, one of the key reasons for the implementation of alternative content subjects is their specific relevance to the situation. In Kenya, the peace education response is part of what creates quality education and so responds to the EFA goal of improving quality (Goal 6). In addition, peace education is also a major component of what is considered life skills and so relates to the EFA goals in that context as well.

Although the ministry officials were supplied with a wide range of materials associated with peace education from local and international

NGOs and UN agencies, their final choice for adaptation was the *INEE Peace Education Programme*, with a small number of additions relating to civic duty and patriotism, which was understandable given that the violence was of a tribal nature. The programme was developed through a series of steps that were very similar to those followed in Sierra Leone, and probably common to alternative programmes that are implemented through the government:

- a training and writing workshop where the materials were analysed and adapted to the Kenyan context (with the national educators being trained in the principles of curriculum development);
- printing the draft materials and appointing trainers who were trained in a mix of methodology and content (the methodology and the entire pedagogy were rights-based and experiential in their approach);
- conducting two series of four concurrent workshops for teachers from the 23 most affected districts and then a planned rollout to the entire country.

The materials are rights based and activity based. They are classroom materials and can be effective class by class but for the most effective implementation, the democratization of the entire school and a major attitudinal change in all teaching and school staff will be necessary. The initial phases of the implementation concentrated on helping the teachers understand why such an attitudinal change is warranted and on helping them to understand the materials (the equivalent in Sierra Leone is the 'principles and pedagogy' theme).

This step of helping the teachers to understand why attitudinal change is needed and how this can be accomplished is necessary in programmes where a small group within the ministry develops materials (often in conjunction with the UN agencies). The classroom teachers who carry the responsibility for implementation are often ignored in the development and are simply directed to implement. Not surprisingly, unless the contents are examinable, teachers ignore the directive as they have no ownership of the work.

While the organic growth and ownership developed in the community-by-community approach cannot be replicated in a full-scale national approach, by presenting the programme as a dynamic living programme and explaining and helping the implementers (the teachers and education managers) to understand the process and make contributions

to it, 'buy in' to the process and philosophy can be encouraged and supported. If one or two teachers per school feel part of the process and in turn support and encourage their peers, then the programme can grow. This network approach to rollout is slower but more sustainable and less expensive than full-scale national training.

In Kenya, the initial trainers were from the various branches of the ministry and the teacher training institutions, based on the assumption that their involvement meant that all elements of the ministry were supportive of the initiative. While the initial trainers accomplished the work in a very professional manner in most instances, there is no guarantee that they will have the power or indeed the motivation to change their own departments in the ministry.

During the teacher training workshops, the teachers (the trainees) were effusive in their response to the programme and the issues raised within it. They were motivated and willing to work in spite of the challenges, and to overcome them. This motivation may have been typical workshop euphoria and therefore may be short lived because the challenges facing implementers are enormous, but for a few it may be genuine. Because the programme is new and it is still in the phase of initial implementation, there has not been a systematic attempt to determine whether those trained did indeed act as advocates for the programme within their own departments. However, the roll out to schools seems to be promising as the teachers themselves see the need for the programme and, once introduced to the 'new' methodology, they are aware that it is more effective in the classroom.

The writers' workshop managed to review and adapt the materials to make them ready for classroom use as a separate subject or through a carrier subject in grades 1 to 10. A core group of teachers from the most affected districts was trained while the author was present and there have not yet been any reports made available about subsequent training. Despite this, it is not clear how the programme will be implemented in the schools. Because it does not have a formal implementation approach, one of the options considered is the classic 'co-curricular' approach often used for alternative subjects. So far, according to the UNICEF project officer supervising the programme, the teachers who are convinced are unofficially using an 'infusion' approach (inserting activities and discussions in other subjects where possible). The danger here is, of course, the loss of curriculum structure (UNICEF, personal communication).

Box 12 Infusion as a method of implementation

An infusion approach is one of the most popular but unfortunately least effective forms of implementation. It relies on a reactive approach in that when something happens in the classroom that can act as a carrier or teaching point, then the relevant ‘piece’ of the new curriculum is inserted. The key disadvantages are the loss of continuity in the original subject – a major disadvantage in an examination-oriented system – and the loss of curricular and developmental structure of the new curriculum. It is the equivalent of teaching mathematics only when some mathematics concept arises in the course of teaching something else. Nevertheless, if it could be coupled with a school- or system-wide democratization and more general integration across subject areas, it could be very successful. In a traditional system that is subject oriented with separate subject time slots and rigid examinations, this is not possible.

In some cases, the term ‘infusion’ may also be used to include the contents in lesson plans of relevant school subjects. This is more accurately a cross-referencing approach, where the new subject matter is linked to traditional subject matter – for example, sanitation issues linked to traditional health topics in science.

Source: Author personal experience.

Because this programme was a response to specific violence but with recognition of the underlying tribal issues and long-term discrimination within groups in Kenya, there was a strong emphasis on equality, unity and civic education. The material consists of classic peace education topics plus psychosocial interventions, the concepts of nationhood and citizenship, and some topics supporting a rights-based experiential methodology (for teachers).

While the programme is a ministry initiative (but with strong UN support) and is attached to the mainstream education system, it qualifies as alternative because there is no place as yet in the curriculum for the subject and because without the external support of UNICEF and UNHCR, the programme could not have taken place at all. UNHCR conducted the initial writing workshop in conjunction with UNICEF, and UNICEF conducted the training of trainers and the subsequent training of teachers. Even with the efforts of the original ministry participants, there is a possibility that many within the system will view this as a UN initiative and not internalize it for themselves. This would mean that the

programme is not only alternative but marginalized and not accepted by the teachers.

The programme is also considered alternative because it is based on experiential learning, which is a very different approach to the mainstream teaching methods. While the trainers and teachers who were trained know the jargon associated with experiential learning, implementing it consistently means overcoming the habits of a lifetime. If there is insufficient support, this is a difficult change to make. For this initiative, the fact that the pedagogy is reflected in the materials provides some of the needed support and makes it easier to implement.

Prior to the post-election violence, UNICEF was implementing a 'child-friendly' approach in UNICEF-supported schools (predominantly in the poorest areas of the country). Child-friendly schools are a school- and (hopefully) system-level response that uses a rights-based methodology. The post-election violence in Kenya meant that the attempt to mainstream the child-friendly schools programme shifted in terms of geographical emphasis and developed a content emphasis. One advantage is that the national rollout of the ministry-driven UN-supported peace education programme and the child-friendly approach where it has been implemented will be mutually reinforcing.

4.7 Conclusion

Alternative subject programmes are among the emergency education initiatives most likely to have increasing relevance as a school system develops. Attempts to mainstream them require that the stakeholders recognize the need for the intervention, have the capacity to support it and actually want it to be effective. It is only then that the alternative subjects and pedagogy can be implemented. In addition, contrary to the political agenda of the ministries and the international agencies, behaviour change among teachers and students cannot happen in a short-term response. It requires a commitment for a sustained period to provide a sustained change.

Chapter 5

Challenges

Alternative education programmes face the same challenges as all post-conflict education interventions, but they are different in degree if not in kind. All of the issues that affect education implementation – the level of capacity within the government ministry, coordination, accurate data collection and analysis, programme sustainability, student certification and accreditation, teacher training and accreditation, teacher remuneration and responding to learners’ experiences – are exacerbated by the fact that alternative programmes, by definition, are outside of the mainstream. In this chapter, we consider these challenges in the context of the implementation of alternative education programmes.

5.1 Ministerial capacity and coordination

In a situation where a system has been neglected or isolated because of the conflict, the ministry personnel have missed opportunities to grow and develop their capacity. As a result, they often have limited understanding of new pedagogy and worse, because of the chronic shortage of resources, both material and financial, outdated pedagogy and content is still taught because there is nothing else. In this situation, it is not easy to adopt new ideas and techniques. As well as the human limitations, post-conflict education authorities often have to deal with what Peter Buckland refers to as “contested or weak political authorities [which lack] the political vision and leadership required for reform”. As a result, he notes, “The lack of an effective administration makes implementing reforms extremely difficult” (World Bank, 2005: 25-26). In many post-conflict countries, agencies find themselves working with multiple governments (or at least, changing ministry officials and policies) and sometimes, as in the case of Kosovo, Liberia and Timor Leste, with a UN transitional authority in lieu of a government – all in quick succession. It is often difficult for these new authorities to make policies, and perhaps even more difficult to have policies validated by successive governments.

The gap created by this lack of effective administration often means that the formal education system is in disarray and cannot

provide education throughout the country (for example, in Somalia or the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the government does not have control of all parts of the country). The gap may exist because the national government has priorities other than education and so cannot devote sufficient resources even to enrol all primary school-aged children, much less upgrade the quality of education throughout the country. Thus, when the international agencies and NGOs working in education identify educational needs that are not being addressed by the formal education system, such as the exclusion of certain groups of children from formal schooling, the need for quality improvements (through differentiated pedagogy), or the need for additional subjects that are necessitated by the circumstances, they often end up working in isolation – not necessarily from each other but in relation to the government of the day. Even when international organizations do work with the government, sometimes the collaboration is more superficial than genuine because the ministry lacks the resources and capacity to address all the educational needs of the country.

In the case of both alternative access and alternative curriculum provision programmes, there is also a tremendous need for coordination among all the actors involved. It is a waste of resources for each agency to develop its own separate materials when, if the agencies worked together, they could develop a quality programme that could be used and shared by all involved. Similarly, agencies often develop their own teacher training materials and tools for data collection, monitoring and supervision, rather than coordinating their efforts. While the need for coordination seems obvious, the pressures of donor support, funding, agency mandate and philosophical differences mean that discrete initiatives within the same country and region continue to occur.

5.2 Data collection

At least in part because of the difficulties outlined above, there is generally a lack of available ‘hard’ data about the outcomes or effectiveness of the programmes, and in some situations, a realization that there is a need for such data. While this is true for formal education, it is especially true for alternative education programmes, of both the transitional and foundational types. In spite of detailed interviews with a range of education authorities and implementing partners related to information for access programmes in particular, we were unable to find comprehensive information about how many children completed,

how many children dropped out and what happened to the children after they completed or dropped out of the programme. Did they make the transition into formal school, for example? None of these figures were readily available or indeed, available. This lack of data is symptomatic of broader data collection issues in conflict-affected countries but may also be an indicator of perceptions about the relevance of alternative access programmes in particular. These data are needed, however, to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes and because they also can be incorporated into a country's progress with regard to achievement of the MDGs and EFA goals.

It is difficult to gauge the success of accelerated learning programmes when data are not available on the number of children who completed the full programme compared to the number who, for example, sat and passed the national primary school examination, and even more so compared to the number of children who completed the accelerated programme and then enrolled in post-primary education. Without hard data, we can never learn which programme methodology or content works best or whether these programmes really are a good practice for providing alternative options for children and young people.

Of course, hard data alone will not answer these questions but without the data, none of the questions can be answered. In discussions with education authorities, we found that one reason for the lack of understanding the need for this type of data (quite separate from the administrative difficulties of accessing and recording it) is the lack of recognition that these data should also be part of the country's progress towards achieving the EFA goals. By and large it seems that ministries do not understand that children and youth who complete alternative access programmes add to the number of those who complete primary school and so can be counted towards the achievement of this EFA goal.

5.3 Sustainability

A major challenge, even for programmes that are not foundational, is that of sustainability. In emergencies, organizations are often restricted to single-year funding and priorities change very rapidly. While programmes may be planned for three years, if the funding is not available, even the best-planned programme cannot be a success. Beyond changes in government and the consequent changes in priorities, agencies tend to have global priorities that may not match the priorities of the country, while programmes may be overtaken by events and occasionally, if

modifications are not made during the initial implementation and the programme is deemed to be a failure, then it may be halted rather than modified. Sustainability must be measured against the objectives of particular programmes: if a programme (such as CREPS) is designed to 'catch' a large group of under-educated out-of-age children, then the programme needs to continue until all these children have been absorbed into mainstream programmes that are relevant and appropriate. The CREPS programme in Sierra Leone and the Accelerated Learning Programme of Liberia have completion of the primary school cycle and entry to secondary school among their objectives. Although both programmes were compressed so that the levels of work matched the grades in formal schooling, it was not part of the design that children would transfer across to a middle grade in primary school, not least because the programmes' objectives were to provide a relevant and appropriate alternative for out-of-age children. To transfer the students back into primary school because the alternative programme stops defeats the out-of-age criteria. The CREPS programme in Sierra Leone stopped rather than finished, at least in part because of the different priorities of the government and the agencies. While some officials within the ministry and UNICEF reported that the CREPS programme had achieved its objectives, the EFA project coordinator formally reported to a group of partners and donors at a capacity building workshop that

In the 2003/2004 school year, the Ministry of Education was of the view that this group of children could be better catered for by the rapidly expanding formal system ... therefore UNICEF had to terminate its support to this programme. ... It is my view that there is still a need for this programme to be resuscitated nationally, otherwise a good percentage of children disadvantaged by the war will be deprived of their constitutional right to education (Nelson-Williams, 2008: 6).

The issue of sustainability, therefore, also needs to include an exit strategy, especially for programmes that are deemed transitional. How long an intervention should be continued depends on the accuracy of the needs assessment and subsequent data collected and analysed. In *Table 5.1* the authors illustrate the number of years of implementation needed to complete two cycles of learning for an accelerated programme that compresses six years of formal primary education into three years.

Table 5.1 Illustration of cycles of accelerated learning programmes

1st year of implementation	2nd year of implementation	3rd year of implementation	4th year of implementation
1st intake – level 1	1st intake – level 2	1st intake – level 3 End of first cycle	
	2nd intake – level 1	2nd intake – level 2	2nd intake – level 3 End of second cycle
		3rd intake – level 1	3rd intake – level 2
			4th intake – level 1

Source: Author illustration.

As shown in the table above, after four years of implementation, only two full cycles of learners would have graduated. If the programme continued for a fifth year, three cycles could be completed. If a new level 1 group is admitted each year of implementation, then whenever the programme is stopped there will be a group that is only part way through the programme.

If the overall goal of providing accelerated learning is to provide an opportunity for all (or a specific number) of the out-of-school over-aged children to complete their primary education, then the only way to ensure access for these learners is through planning based on initial and updated estimates of the number of potential learners. It is these estimates that are then used to design the programme so that a sufficient number of classes is established to accommodate all of the children in a specified time period. The example in *Table 5.1* shows that in four years of implementation it is possible to complete two full cycles of a three-year accelerated learning programme. Therefore, if the programme was designed for children aged 12-17 and it was estimated that 200,000 children in this age range would be eligible for and might want to access the programme, then it would be necessary to enrol 100,000 children in each of the first two years of the programme. There would be no new intake in either year three or year four if the plan was for only two full cycles of the programme (that is, four years' duration). Assuming an average class size of 50, this would require that about 2,000 accelerated learning classes be started in the first year, and an *additional* 2,000 classes would start in year two and continue through year four. To do this, a total of 4,000 trained accelerated learning teachers and identified learning spaces would be required, unless there was a way to operate the programme in shifts. Managing such a large programme would require multiple implementing partners, intensive

teacher identification and training, and a coordinated approach to ensure that none of the learners were denied access, and that the programme was implemented according to some agreed standards.

5.4 Recognition of learners' attainments

Another challenge facing both types of alternative programmes (those that provide an alternative access mechanism or an alternative curriculum) is the recognition of learning attainments. For alternative access programmes that are designed to transition children into the formal system, the challenge is to address the assessment of learning attainment in the planning and design phase. The government must approve the curriculum used and agree to allow children to sit for the national primary examination or to make the transition into formal education after completing the programme. Similarly, the challenge with community schools is linking them with formal schools and the formal education system so that learners' attainments can be recognized. Youth who participate in programmes that provide a mix of literacy and skills training often do not receive formal recognition of their learning attainments (though they may receive a certificate of completion). The challenge in these situations is to work with the relevant ministry (which could be the ministry of education or the ministry of labour, for example) and the relevant section of the ministry (perhaps the non-formal education section) to validate the learners' attainments. This will require strong advocacy for recognition of the programmes as well as recognition of the work undertaken by the teachers and students (if recognition is being sought for both, also see the next section on recognition and accreditation of teacher training).

In the case of alternative curriculum provision programmes, the challenge generally relates to the assessment of changes in learners' behaviour and acceptance of the tools used to ascertain this. The measure of changed behaviour does not fit neatly into the formal assessment system used to measure learning outcomes, so the attainments are regularly marginalized. Often this work is not recognized because there is a lack of capacity within the ministry to analyse the range of studies undertaken through the alternative programmes. Aside from the reluctance that often occurs to include and recognize the achievements of those who were formerly 'the enemy', there is frequently an inadequate understanding of what has taken place in the alternative programmes. In this situation, support for the ministry through the development of counterpart officers is warranted for the ongoing progress of the programmes.

5.5 Recognition and accreditation of teacher training

Because alternative education programmes are implemented primarily by UN agencies and NGOs, they almost invariably have a teacher training component. Certainly, all those reviewed for this research have this component. One of the challenges for teacher training in alternative education programmes is assessing teachers to ensure that they go beyond rote learning. Interactive pedagogy assessment requires qualitative assessment procedures that will test for synthesis of ideas and practical, consistent application of techniques. This is usually beyond the capacity of the training institutions and so they require the support of the organizations implementing the programmes (and others who are looking for an increase in quality).

With regard to the recognition and accreditation of teacher training, there are two quite distinct sets of parameters: firstly, recognition of the teacher training in the sense of accepting the training (both content and methodology) and providing a certificate of recognition; and secondly, what recognition may mean within a specific country.

In some countries, certification automatically means that teachers are placed on the government payroll. To ask a ministry to simply accept that teachers have been trained to an acceptable standard is unrealistic (especially if the courses are not submitted to the ministry for review). Even when certification is automatic, the ministry may not be able to accept all teachers as this has obvious financial implications, and the government may not be able to absorb so many teachers even when they are needed because the budget is not big enough. As discussed in *Chapter 3*, there may also be staffing ‘ceilings’ imposed by the IMF or the ministry of finance that prevent the government from hiring more than a specified number of teachers. Countries like Sierra Leone have conducted a teacher census to try to ensure that those on the payroll are ‘real’ teachers and where ghost teachers exist, they can be expunged. This will enable the government to recruit more ‘real’ teachers and still be within the staff ceiling.

Recognition is possible if the nexus between recognition and employment is broken. In many countries, the teacher training institutions are semi-autonomous anyway – thus discussions about the recognition of teacher training should be with the teacher training institutions and not with the ministry per se. This is the approach UNICEF took for the Emerging Issues programme in Sierra Leone and the Peace Education

Programme in Kenya. Some of the difficulties historically (for example, having trained refugee teachers accepted and absorbed into the home country ministry) have been because the external organizations have not separated the two aspects of training and employment, because in practical terms people are trained in order to be employed.

5.6 Teachers' remuneration

In most crisis-affected countries, governments struggle with the costs associated with the infrastructure they are expected to support. There are many competing demands for the government budget. Health, roads and security are all critical areas that must be supported and education is almost always last in line (Brannelly *et al.*, 2009; UNESCO, 2007; Save the Children, 2008). In recent years, there have been efforts to change this situation through sector and direct budget support, and pooled funding. In the latter, the ministry of finance receives the funding from donors and it therefore becomes a government decision as to where the money is allocated. However, this is not an approach that has generally been applied in conflict-affected countries, except in the early recovery stages. Because of this, it is necessary for the international community to support education directly. In this situation, 'he who pays the piper calls the tune'. While the donors will construct schools, provide teaching and learning materials and even train teachers (and pay the associated costs directly to teachers to 'compensate' for the low salaries) they are reluctant to pay recurrent costs – i.e. salaries – if they are not providing budget support.

In situations where all trained teachers are automatically considered part of the teaching force and therefore need to be paid, recognition of training becomes an issue of having to pay the teachers, which is something the government cannot afford to do. The education system in most countries has a budgetary shortfall, but those affected by conflict are very often without the most basic funding needed for the education system to operate. There are certainly insufficient resources allocated to the education budget to ensure that all children and young people have access to and can complete primary education of good quality, much less early childhood, secondary or tertiary education. In fact, Save the Children has estimated that an additional \$5 billion is needed to meet the goal of UPE in conflict-affected fragile states by 2015 (Save the Children, 2008). As teachers' salaries often make up more than 75 per cent of the recurring education budget (INEE, 2008), increasing the number of

teachers for any level of education, much less for alternative programmes, is fraught with difficulty.

Education authorities have a critical role to play with regard to the rationalization of teachers' salaries, and in establishing the number of teachers who are on the payroll and who are truly teaching where they are supposed to be teaching. An accurate teacher census is essential because a falsified number of teachers (and fraudulent salary claims) often indicates that corruption is prevalent. Ghost teachers and indeed ghost schools abound in many conflict-affected countries, and there is generally insufficient transparency and accountability at the various levels of the system for the government to be able to guarantee numbers, so it is difficult for donors to trust the education authorities. In 2008, Sierra Leone conducted a teacher census and while the official report is yet to be published, the figures released just after the completion of the census showed between 3,000 and 6,000 ghost teachers (unofficial Ministry of Education information received by personal communication). A constructive advocacy and support programme helps the authorities to understand how an accurate count of teachers will help them lobby more effectively with their peers from other ministries, including the ministry of finance, and with international donors for a viable education budget and all of the elements required for a quality system.

One of the core issues behind the inaccuracy of teacher numbers and corruption is the issue of teachers' salaries (for a full discussion of issues related to this, see the *INEE Guidance Notes on Teacher Compensation in Fragile States, Situations of Displacement and Post-Crisis Recovery*, at www.ineesite.org). In most conflict-affected states, those responsible for paying teachers pay neither a living wage nor a regular wage. This forces teachers to look elsewhere for extra money. At the same time, the system cannot afford to support the teachers in terms of monitoring or supervision, so it is easy for teachers to report for duty and then to move on to more financially lucrative work. While there is an expectation by the international agencies working with these teachers for high-level pedagogy and integrity, good knowledge of content and rights-based approaches from these teachers, the national education system often does not use a rights-based approach. The international community must look at this more constructively than it has historically. The international commitment to ensure that "no countries seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources" (UNESCO, 2000: 8) must be authentic rather than rhetoric.

However, education is not cheap, so the international community must be prepared to support countries in crisis in their endeavour to develop quality education. The single largest recurrent cost in education is that of teachers' remuneration and it is the one that is the most difficult to sustain support for. Rather than being viewed as a high cost item, it should perhaps be viewed as income generation and support for the rebuilding of the economy. If this view were to be supported, it would require close liaison with quite different international organizations from those dealing with education, such as the United Nations Development Programme or the International Labour Organization. In most countries reviewed, basic teachers' salaries are so low that teachers need some other source of income in order to survive. This creates a series of challenges:

- If teachers have to source income from elsewhere, they will not spend time preparing or developing (or acquiring) resources for use in the classroom. The fact that some teachers do manage this is the exception rather than the rule. Quality upgrades that assume that teachers will automatically increase their preparation time without taking into account the context of low salaries are unlikely to be successful.
- When there is no livable income, there is little motivation for teachers to develop new skills, take on new subject areas or spend more time in school, which is usually required of some teachers for extra-curricular or co-curricular activities (for more on teacher motivation, see Bennell and Akyeampong, 2007).
- It is difficult to eliminate corruption that is endemic. Corrupt practices include fees for extra tuition (and ensuring that these are needed by failing to teach adequately during school hours); bribes for examination results; class overcrowding in situations where fees are paid, in order to get the maximum amount of income into the school; ghost teachers (teachers who exist only on paper and whose salaries are pocketed by other teachers or education authorities) and misappropriation and sale of teaching and learning materials that have been donated. Apart from the social fragmentation aspect of corruption, if teachers feel that they are forced to cheat to survive or worse, feel that they are 'owed' because their salaries are insufficient and often not timely, they cannot possibly be constructive role models for children or society generally. This creates a hypocritical environment when alternative education includes the life skills associated with integrity.

5.7 Responding to what the learner brings

The alternative education programmes that are transitional or access programmes (that is, they seek to reach out-of-school children) face similar problems. They target a range of children, in terms of age, but also in terms of experience and background. The age range results in a wide variety of developmental levels and, in addition to this, these children come from a range of backgrounds. Some may previously have attended formal school and others may never have attended school; some may have sophisticated social skills while others have been isolated. Thus alternative access programmes may have children in attendance who understand the processes of education but who do not have the content, as well as children who have never gone to school and for whom the process of schooling and education is an entirely new concept. Yet these children and young people may have quite advanced life skills.

For example, the learner who is 16 years old may have the intellectual level of a 16-year-old, the emotional level or experience and responsibilities of an adult, but the reading age of a 6-year-old. So while his or her reading level (and if the student is in regular school, the reading resources) is that of a 6-year-old, the 16-year-old's interest level is at least ten years higher. Without materials that are especially designed based on the interests of older children but with a very low reading level, the teacher has to work particularly hard to sustain the interest of the more mature student. Teachers also have trouble relating the learning to children's experiences in cases where some children in the class are aged six, some are ten and others are 16.

In addition to the wide-ranging experiences of children and young people, programmes that are designed to transition children into the formal system face another challenge. As noted, they are generally targeted at an age range of children, for example 8-14 years or 10-16 years (developmentally, this is very wide) and are developed with an expectation that all the learners are 'tabula rasa' – an assumption that militates against the development of quality. While ideally the learners can enter the transitional programme at any of the levels (usually three), in practice most begin at level one simply because any previous schooling has been so fragmented or too long ago for the learner to have a structured understanding of the content necessary for literacy and numeracy.

This means that the 16-year-old (or someone who claims to be 16 in order to enter the programme) is in a class with 10-year-olds. So there

are pre-pubescent learners in class with learners who are fully matured and who in many cultures are considered adults, with the attendant rights and responsibilities. This is inappropriate culturally in many countries and it is certainly psychologically inappropriate for both the younger and the older learners. In addition, it has been at least part of the background opportunity associated with sexual and physical abuse (Jones and Espey, 2008). This sort of situation usually results in girls being withdrawn from school – a situation where the solution to one problem exacerbates another problem. The developmental and social range of learners is also difficult for the teacher, who is unlikely to have the necessary skills or resources to cope. This diversity within the learning group puts an additional and heavy burden on teachers, who are generally inexperienced and may have no qualifications or formal training.

A genuine rights-based, experiential and quality approach does in fact respond to many of the parameters outlined above. This, coupled with structured training on core classroom management skills and developmental principles of multi-grade and multi-age teaching, would respond effectively to most of the problems witnessed and experienced. In countries affected by conflict, we expect a level of expertise and experience that is not often present in the best-trained teachers in the best-resourced countries in the world. And we expect this from teachers who are undereducated, untrained or undertrained, under-resourced, working in overcrowded conditions with an over-full curriculum and often in very stressful conditions. The issue outlined by Nicholson (2007) and in sections relating to accelerated programmes is also true for supplementary alternative programmes: there is, too often, an expectation that the teachers' 'entering behaviour' (the sum of past training and experience; if the behaviour is ignored in favour of where learners (in this case, teachers) should be, then subsequent training is wasted as it is not responding to the actual needs) is on a level with that in developed countries. It is not, and as a result the teachers are often left to survive as best they can.

5.8 Conclusion

The challenges associated with alternative programmes are the same challenges as faced in all emergency interventions. They are, however, compounded by the fact that these programmes are alternative. They are not perceived by many education ministries as responding to the call for UPE and they tend to respond piecemeal to the goals of EFA rather

than being part of a comprehensive whole. The challenges are part of the much larger challenge of a system that has fragmented and a profession that is not supported or respected. In addition, education is in itself a process and so it can be ignored or marginalized by the politics of the day as the negative results cannot be seen for years. The challenges that face alternative programmes are magnified reflections of the challenges faced by education programmes generally. Perhaps attempts to constructively respond to these in situations where only a section of the population is involved can also provide models for mainstream education. In the next chapter, we will look at lessons learned with regard to the planning, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of alternative education programmes.

Chapter 6

Moving forward

We have established that alternative programmes are as varied as the situations they attempt to address, whether they are designed to ensure access, to respond to specific needs or right specific injustices, or to improve the relevance of the education process. Because this study has restricted itself to crisis and post-crisis situations, it is clear that the challenges associated with effective implementation are also the challenges of working in emergencies and post emergencies. In all of the programmes reviewed, the projects were designed or modified to suit the specific circumstances of each situation and the steps associated with the planning, design and implementation of the projects (the project cycle) were all apparently in place. So why were they not all successful?

Many of the issues historically associated with the effective implementation of education programmes are being addressed through better understanding of the elements of a project cycle, improved liaison between organizations and government authorities, and increased coordination efforts by the international humanitarian community. The latter include the Education Cluster for improved coordination in humanitarian crises and other sectoral coordination groups (where clusters are not officially formed by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator). Alternative programmes tend to lag behind in these initiatives simply because they are alternative. They tend to be implemented prior to formal systems being re-established or later in response to specific needs. Project designers of alternative programmes cannot assume, however, that they can ‘ride on the coat tails’ of formal education interventions. Rather, each step must be ensured and the additional steps of liaison and collaboration with formal programmes must also be considered. In this chapter, therefore, we consider lessons learned for each step of the project cycle in relation to alternative education programmes. We also look at the two overarching issues of government involvement and the need for coordination throughout all phases of the project cycle.

6.1 The first move belongs to the government ministry

As national governments (where they exist) bear the primary responsibility for education in their countries, they should be involved throughout the process of assessment, design, implementation and evaluation of all education programmes, including alternative education programmes (alternative access and alternative curriculum provision programmes). In the absence of a viable government or when the government's legitimacy is challenged by members of the society, international agencies may initiate alternative programming with local communities. In immediate post-conflict situations, this process of programme identification generally happens in consultation with representatives from the UN and NGOs. This was the case in both Sierra Leone (for CREPS) and Liberia (for the Accelerated Learning Programme). UNICEF and its partners discussed with the respective ministries the need for an alternative access programme for the out-of-school over-aged children who had been affected by the conflict. In the case of Liberia, ministry officials also visited a similar programme in Uganda to determine whether an accelerated option would be suitable.

Similarly, most of the alternative subject programmes reviewed in this study (Kenya Peace Education, Emerging Issues in Sierra Leone, peace and democracy in Nepal and life skills in Bangladesh) were initiated jointly by UN agencies and the ministries concerned. In the case of Kenya, the ministry approached the UN agencies and requested technical and financial support to respond to the effects of the violence. In Sierra Leone, the Emerging Issues programme was an attempt by the ministry and UNICEF to streamline the myriad interventions of alternative supplementary subjects that were developed but rarely implemented effectively in the school system in the years following the conflict. Various levels of officers in the ministry complained about the time and money 'wasted' by the lack of effective implementation of a range of expensive-to-produce interventions. While there may need to be strong advocacy and agency commitment in preliminary meetings with education authorities, the initial step is to ensure that the publicly-identified first move comes from the government ministry.

It follows that government counterparts must be involved at all stages of the project cycle. However, for alternative education this requires more structure. By definition, alternative education is outside the mainstream and so ministry officials may not be familiar with the reasoning behind

such programmes. It is vital to ensure that counterpart structures be developed to enhance capacity development within the various levels of the ministry (and the associated departments or sections).

Ministry officials in a post-conflict situation are often overwhelmed by the years of conflict and by the grinding effort to maintain some sort of education programme in the face of the odds, by the sheer numbers and variety of aid without any tools in place to coordinate or take ownership of such resources, and by the range of actors and personalities in place. As a result, education authorities too often acquiesce to the outsiders, which can lead to resentment. It is necessary, therefore, from the education intervention point of view to find the ‘mover and shaker’. For example, in the development of the Emerging Issues programme in Sierra Leone, there were several potential entry points. The planning meetings included central ministry people in basic education, higher education and the various associated institutions (such as the teacher training colleges and the examinations board). The entry point was the one counterpart officer who was very active and committed. It is this officer who has ensured that other sections of the ministry are now fully involved.

6.2 Needs assessment

Often, the designers of an alternative programme will utilize the rapid needs assessment undertaken for general education purposes as the basis for their planning. However, these needs assessments do not always take into account the target groups for alternative access programmes. In the case of alternative subject programmes, they are often proposed as an ‘article of faith’ (that is, based on the assumption that a particular subject is needed or on the belief that the programme will achieve specific outcomes even if there is no evidence to support this belief) or they may be the result of a global initiative rather than a response to the specific needs of the population of the area.

For alternative access programmes, estimates of the number of children who may need particular programmes can be made by analysing a range of information. For example, pre-conflict figures together with the length of dislocation (both pre-conflict and during the conflict) and focus group discussions with community leaders can be used to establish the approximate number of out-of-age children and the likely educational responses needed. The needs assessment process may also need to target particular geographic areas where it is known that there are, for example,

large numbers of over-aged children who have missed some or all of their education.

For alternative subject programmes, however, a needs assessment that is coupled with creating an awareness in the community of the type of programme envisaged is necessary. An unfortunate example of where this has not happened is with some of the child rights programmes initiated in Liberia (UNHCR SO Voinjama Protection Outlook 2008, presented at an internal protection seminar, Monrovia, December 2007). There has been a strong backlash from communities who see child rights education as destroying the culture of respect. As a result, energy and resources are expended ‘correcting’ the perceptions and trying to ensure that child rights education is presented in the context of human rights education and the issue of rights and responsibilities.

Identify and include all partner stakeholders

As discussed earlier, government involvement in the formulation of alternative education programmes is essential. It is not enough, however, to involve only one section of the government ministry or indeed, only one agency or organization. The recognition and inclusion of stakeholders at different levels and for different parts of the process, together with transparent and clear communication with all elements, is vital for the ongoing success and integration of a programme. This requires advocacy and consistent communication to make sure that the relevant sections of the government ministry concerned are involved as soon as is practicable (keeping in mind that in many countries there are different ministries for formal and non-formal education) and that this involvement is genuine and meaningful.

For alternative curriculum provision programmes, especially those that are (or are likely to become) foundational, it is also essential to communicate with the curriculum and examination committees. This is necessary so that they are familiar with and accepting of the curricula and pedagogy used and so that these can be mainstreamed in a meaningful way.

6.3 Planning and design

The reality of many post-conflict interventions is that there are multiple educational responses from multiple agencies. Very often, specific geographical areas are targeted, sometimes because they are areas of extreme need and sometimes because they are accessible.

Particular interventions become fashionable but may be styled differently organization by organization, so that the overlap is not immediately apparent. An example of this is peace education programmes or HIV and AIDS prevention programmes, where multiple agencies each produce their own version of these programmes. Because every intervention generally brings its own funding, government ministries are loath to refuse these different interventions, but the result can be a situation of gaps and overlaps.

Once the intervention has been determined and agreed by the stakeholders, it is essential that the planning process includes all the steps and inputs necessary for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (both formative and summative) as well as the planning related to how the government will take full and final responsibility for the programme (if it is to become part of the government's education system). In the design phase, the content needs to be agreed and then either developed or adapted. Conjointly with this is the understanding, acceptance and then development of the requisite pedagogy. Both the content and requisite pedagogy need to be clearly outlined in the design phase. For access programmes, the content should be in line with the formal education programme so that learners can transfer to the formal system or have their learning validated by the formal system upon completion of the alternative access programme. For an alternative subject programme, the design should ensure that there is a curricular structure that is cyclic in its development so that concepts can be built effectively. In addition, once the alternative subjects have been accepted, there needs to be close liaison with the curriculum development sections of the ministry to establish links with traditional subject areas (for reinforcement), policy decisions to create space in the subject timetable for the new area, and teacher training and the links created with teacher training institutions and assessment tools used.

Mapping the interventions and geographical areas is one way to minimize the potential for overlap and gaps as there is a 'picture' of who is doing what and where, and for whom. The ministry can then assign particular interventions where they are needed most and where there is currently no intervention. This is only valid when the mapping is updated consistently, which implies ongoing liaison with all the stakeholders. Initially, the mapping exercise is associated with the needs assessment but as the planning and design are developed, there must be genuine involvement from the relevant ministry officials.

It should also be recognized that as the design and planning process continues, additional stakeholders will need to be involved. There is sufficient experience now in the international education community to understand that planning alternative subject areas requires a very clear link between the perceived needs (which must be perceived by the community, not just by the international or government stakeholders) and the programmes that are implemented. This response to the community helps to build community ownership which will, in turn, ensure sustainability. Of the programmes reviewed, War Child Holland is the only one that has recipient stakeholder (communities and the children) involvement as a formal, written pre-requisite for implementation. While this pre-requisite is considered essential for the success of the programme as it is a community-based programme conducted by the community, it is equally important for all alternative programmes. Too often, however, the genuine involvement of all stakeholders including the community and the learners, is the exception rather than the rule even for agencies that have community involvement as a policy.

Throughout the design process the roles of stakeholders will vary in importance. For example, while communities are involved in the initial needs assessment, they are probably not involved in the design of content. At this stage, the appropriate curriculum development committees will need to be involved. At the implementation stage, however, the curriculum committees no longer need to be involved directly and the communities are again integral to the process.

Respond to real needs: relevance and appropriateness

Both alternative access and alternative subject programmes are designed specifically to respond to the actual needs of the learners. Relevance, however, depends on the perceptions of the particular stakeholder. If there is limited communication among the stakeholders or between stakeholders and designers, there may well be a mismatch in terms of relevance and appropriateness. One of the most fundamental differences in a philosophy of education is whether education is to benefit the individual (the broad psychosocial viewpoint) or to benefit the society (the education-for-employment and national unity view). Ideally, these two viewpoints merge. The relevance of a particular programme depends very much on which of these two viewpoints is held. The relevance is ideally judged only after taking into account all of the stakeholders'

points of view and balancing these together with the resources available for implementation.

Appropriateness is even more difficult to determine: what materials and programmes are best suited to the learners? The design needs to take into account the developmental levels of the learners, their experiences and backgrounds, the opportunities available in the community for the future, and some learning processes to help them cope with an unknown future. Appropriateness should never be based just on the resources available. Educational responses in a post-conflict situation need to be streamlined and become multi-functional: an education that can establish a baseline of learning that every learner can relate to, that is flexible and responsive to the varying backgrounds and experiences of the children and young people, and that can help those willing to teach these learners to achieve the skills in a structured and logical way. This should be the profile for emergency education. In addition, this approach needs to be developed in conjunction with those in authority and must ultimately respond to the needs of the learners.

The planning process also includes the identification of locally available expertise, both for the purposes of project design and implementation as well as for strengthening the capacity of local educators. Interviews and meetings should be conducted with relevant departments of the ministry as well as with other educational institutions (teacher colleges or teacher training institutes, for example) to identify local people who have the educational background and experience to assist with the formulation of programme materials and with the training of teachers or master trainers. In the case of the accelerated learning programme in Liberia, for example, a technical committee was established within the Department of Instruction to adapt the Ugandan accelerated curriculum for use in Liberia. A group of education specialists, including from the University of Liberia, was convened to develop the curriculum (Nicholson, 2007). A similar strategy was adopted in Sierra Leone for the Emerging Issues programme. For that programme, a writers' workshop (funded by UNICEF) was held and a diverse group of ministry and institution personnel plus specialists from outside the ministry (for example, the pharmaceutical board of Sierra Leone) attended. After a three-day in-service training by a senior teacher trainer from the Freetown Teacher College, the participants then had two weeks to develop the course. Local educators can help make sure that the design and development of alternative education programmes respond to

the specific needs and the context of the country and their involvement will also result in greater commitment and buy-in to the programmes.

While local educators have a tremendous amount of knowledge about context and culture, which cannot be brought in from the outside, they are also limited by their isolation (because of the conflict) and it cannot be expected that they necessarily have the updated knowledge and skills needed to design alternative education programmes. This is especially the case with regard to pedagogical content since in most countries affected by conflict, the teaching has historically been didactic and teachers and other education personnel are generally not familiar with or do not have experience in implementing more interactive, child-centred techniques. In Sierra Leone and Kenya, the materials developed during the writing workshops incorporated a level of knowledge and skills but were not generally in a 'teachable' form. The methodology that was used was especially inappropriate for the behaviour change subjects that were the focus of all the topics in the course. In both countries, UNICEF recruited expertise from outside in order to turn the materials into a format based on an interactive and rights-based pedagogy and at the same time expand and modify the content to improve its suitability as teaching and learning material. Concurrently, the materials were checked for accuracy and applicability. The consultant recruited worked together with the writers to maintain 'ownership' but at the same time to raise the quality and relevance of the work.

Balancing the need for the involvement of local expertise and for 'ownership' of materials produced is the need to build on previous experience and not 'reinvent the wheel'. There was an accepted wisdom that any and every new programme should be developed from scratch to respond to the specific needs of the context and situation. This is no longer so. Whether there is a better understanding of the core skills and knowledge needed and how these can be modified, or whether it is pragmatism, it is now generally accepted that most programmes can be built 'on the shoulders of those who have gone before'. More recently, the trend is to take a programme that has been developed for a similar context or for similar groups and modify it according to the specific needs of the situation. All good alternative subject programmes and true accelerated learning programmes require a rights-based, activity-oriented methodology. With that in common, there are elements that can be transferred from one programme to another, especially as these often have to be taught to the teacher or facilitator who is implementing the

programme. So even if the actual content is quite different, the teacher training component that focuses on the rights-based approach is common and can simply be modified to suit almost any alternative subject or accelerated learning programme. The INEE Peace Education Programme is a classic example. Originally designed for multiple refugee groups in East Africa, it is now in use in a variety of countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, sometimes in its entirety and sometimes as a basis for a more comprehensive programme on human rights and citizenship.

Plan all the way through to the end: sustainability or exit

In *Chapter 1*, we identified two basic types of alternative education programmes: those that are transitional and are meant to exist as long as the need is still present or until the programme can be transitioned to the formal system, and those that are designed to be foundational because they build the foundation for systemic change. Planning for programmes such as accelerated learning, where one of the key objectives is to get the learner ready to re-enter the formal system, must include an estimate of the number of learners who may want to enrol in the programme, the duration of the programme and the number of cycles that will be necessary in order for potential learners to complete the programme (see also the discussion on sustainability in *Chapter 5*). In addition, if learners can transition to the formal system without completing the entire accelerated learning programme, or are forced to transition because the accelerated programme was closed, it will be essential to identify during the design phase how closely the ‘levels’ of an accelerated programme match the grade levels of formal primary education so that school administrators know better how to place the children in the formal system.

With regard to planning for conclusion (or transition) of alternative access programmes, plans should also incorporate consideration of the ‘exit strategy’ of various partners and the timeframe during which they will finish their programmes (if timeframes vary by organization). Timeframes for the closure of a programme should be communicated clearly to the learners, teachers and community members as well as to the ministry and other partners. In addition, arrangements need to be put into place to allow teachers to transfer to the formal system (if they are not already on the government payroll) and to transfer to the regular formal education programme any buildings or classrooms that were built specifically for the alternative access programmes.

For alternative subject programmes, the challenge in planning is not so much the exit or transfer strategy as it is one of process development. Curricular change is a lengthy process in any country or situation. The most effective alternative subject programmes include in their planning some type of task force or working committee with all the components of the ministry and the associated institutions represented, to develop the concept of the programme. In the case of Sierra Leone and the Emerging Issues programme, regular meetings were held for months with possible topics being proposed and discussed, and through this process a sense of ‘ownership’ was developed. Concurrently, a secondary group that included stakeholders outside of the ministry (local and international NGOs, and representatives from other ministries and institutions) also met and offered materials and expertise from a specialist’s point of view. Every so often, these two groups had a joint meeting. The balance between using what already exists and modifying it to the context *vis-à-vis* developing new material and ensuring ownership is a delicate one. There is often a temptation (not restricted to the agencies and organizations) simply to absorb the new material and rename it. However, the process of communication, the development of thinking, and internalizing new processes and ideas cannot be truncated – or at least, not without jeopardizing the effectiveness of the programme.

Coordination with education authorities

As discussed earlier, alternative education programmes are often initiated because there is no government initiative to respond to the perceived needs of the children who have been affected by the crisis. This is true for both alternative access and alternative content programmes. This book is entitled *Alternative education: filling the gap in emergency and post-conflict situations* because the programmes labelled ‘alternative’ are attempting to fill a gap in the educational needs of children affected by conflict. In order to avoid problems for the future of the programme’s implementation, the agencies and organizations that are implementing alternative programmes must be transparent and accountable to the ministry from the planning stages through to the design, implementation, monitoring, supervision and evaluation of these programmes. They should also seek to offer support and clarification to help the ministry personnel internalize the principles of the programmes. Without these formal but genuine links to governments from the start, the programmes will not contribute significantly to the MDGs and EFA goals. The education agencies and NGOs have a vital role to play in helping governments (and

the relevant ministries) to understand the role of alternative programmes in the response to, and achievement of, the MDGs and EFA goals. Given that the sole purpose of introducing these programmes is very often the fact that they respond to one or more of the EFA goals, the agencies and organizations need to communicate openly and constructively and build capacity and understanding step by step, taking into account the political and financial pressures the ministry may have. Agencies that collect and report on education statistics, such as the UNESCO Institute of Statistics and the World Bank, should work with governments to design education management information systems that incorporate formal schooling as well as the results of alternative education programmes.

Harmonization of salaries and incentives

Most international organizations that institute alternative programmes also pay their teaching staff. For these interventions to be successful, there are two critical issues for implementers to consider:

- *Harmonization* – the salaries or stipends being paid in one programme need to harmonize with those being paid by other organizations in other programmes and with the government salaries for equivalent work. While one organization may benefit from luring the best or most qualified teachers and facilitators by paying higher salaries, this is a short-term benefit as it is unlikely that programmes can then mutually reinforce each other or be fully accepted into the system if there is resentment over staff salaries. In addition, the high salaries tend to be limited to smaller programmes, which make the roll out or integration into an entire system unlikely. There is also the problem of sustainability. Programmes where salaries are not harmonized are unlikely to be absorbed into the system as the system cannot afford to maintain the level of expenditure.
- *Payment for extra services* – many organizations use the very low salaries paid as a justification for payments made for in-service training. This is similarly unsustainable in the long term but worse than that, it creates a mindset that makes genuine professional development very difficult to establish or maintain. It creates a situation where people demand payment for their own professional development and where intrinsic motivation is denied to the learner. In the short term it also means that there is competitiveness among organizations offering in-service courses. Those that do not pay do not have attendees, no matter how good the training might be.

These are very common problems in crisis-affected countries and the complications that arise from these poor practices can take up a lot of time and effort, which is a waste when they are preventable problems. However, the underlying problem of extremely low salaries does need to be addressed. Advocacy to the government or government-level donors (such as the IMF and the World Bank), support for interventions such as a teacher census to ensure that the proportion of the budget for salaries actually gets to the working teacher, and supportive monitoring to supplement the monitoring that the ministry can afford to do, are all ways to support a viable solution.

Recognition of learners' attainments

While a lack of recognition and accreditation does not detract from the skills and knowledge gained by the learner, the process of recognition and accreditation has a major impact on their future learning. It ensures access to further learning, provides motivation and is a reward in itself (Kirk, 2009: 41). In addition, the certification of alternative education programmes that are equivalent to the completion of primary education or that demonstrate the achievement of literacy will help governments to more accurately demonstrate their progress towards the MDGs and EFA goals.

The initial recognition of attainments is as simple as the provision of a certificate of achievement. Whether that certificate means anything in terms of access to further learning is the issue. Too often, recognition issues are put aside until the programme is being implemented (not least because it is uncertain what will actually be achieved) and then the problem is compounded by a lack of communication and different standards among multiple implementers. This is particularly true of alternative curriculum and methodology programmes. One way to avoid the marginalization that results from this is to ensure that all programmes that are to be implemented are submitted for review by the ministry's curriculum committee. This will take time, often a great deal of patience and perhaps considerable capacity building as well as concerted advocacy from the organizations concerned, but once the alternative curricula have been approved then recognition is the obvious next step. Without approval of the curricula, there can be no recognition of the learning that has taken place. Thus there is a series of steps or elements that need to be addressed:

- Submit the programme design to the appropriate section of the ministry. If the ministry is not functioning at the onset of the programme, this should be done as soon as is practicable.
- Submit the curriculum or lesson plans and support materials to the curriculum development and policy sections of the ministry.
- Conduct awareness sessions outlining the content, methodology, philosophy and implementation plans with as wide a cross-section within the ministry as possible, including the district-level staff.
- Liaise with the examination board or committees to develop appropriate assessment procedures that will provide qualitative assessments of non-traditional subjects.
- Liaise with teacher training institutions (even if they do not undertake in-service teacher training) to develop an awareness of the teacher training being undertaken and then to develop a structure whereby this training can be accredited towards a general teaching certificate.
- Ensure that all students enrolled in alternative programmes are registered as genuine students (that is, can count towards the achievement of the MDGs and EFA goals).

Recognition and accreditation of teacher training

Accreditation of the teachers or facilitators of alternative education programmes requires close planning and coordination among agencies, organizations and the government. Often, these teachers or facilitators are trained by UN agencies or NGOs but their training is not recognized by the education authorities. The steps to ensure that this occurs are the same as the steps outlined above for recognition of the learning attainments of children, but the curriculum is of course that contained in the teacher training course. It is not yet a common practice for organizations to submit their teacher training course to the authorities; an outline is often the only record of what is actually covered in the training. For the submission of materials to be valid it must be a full course, and not merely the outline or a description. If there is no full course, then the training should not be recognized, not least because there cannot be any quality control under these circumstances.

The issue of accreditation is more complex than that of recognition. While the preliminary steps are the same (the submission of materials to the appropriate section or institution within the ministry, and so on) there needs to be a great deal of ongoing collaboration and coordination

to cross-reference levels and types of training. One relatively simple ‘shortcut’ is to develop an equivalency examination for non-government trained teachers. For this to mean anything, the issues of recognition and subsequent employment (discussed above) need to be clarified. There is also the issue of different approaches in that most teacher training for alternative programmes is in itself alternative. It is designed to help teachers develop the skills of interactive, participatory learning and this is generally very different from traditional teacher training. Thus, a simple equivalency exam may not reflect the enhanced pedagogical skills of the ‘alternative teachers’. In this case, there needs to be advocacy to the teacher training institutions that this pedagogy be included for all teacher training (pre-service and in-service). It may also require considerable capacity building to ensure that this is realistic.

In Sierra Leone, for example, the teacher training that is undertaken for Emerging Issues is given a four-point rating (equivalent to mathematics and other core subjects). While the assessment has not been totally clarified, banks of examination questions and assignments have been established to support the assessment procedures. This was done in collaboration with the curriculum writers, the examinations board and the teacher trainers involved (Baxter, 2008). It is, perhaps, part of a ‘hidden agenda’ that alternative programmes provide the ‘sharp end of the wedge’ and officials in the ministry see that it is possible to have a ‘risk free’ change, knowing that it will be successful because outside organizations have already piloted the change.

Planning for true alternatives

Even when governments and ministries support alternative programmes, particularly alternative access programmes, there needs to be specific planning and advocacy to ensure that they are not developed as a ‘second class’ option. This may be particularly difficult if the alternative access programmes are the only option available for schooling in very remote areas or where they are targeted towards particularly marginalized groups (for example, in Nepal and Afghanistan). The programmes must be true equivalents that provide the same level of certification for children who successfully complete them as that received by their formal education peers. At the same time, however, the design and implementation of alternative programmes must be such that they are not only a replacement for formal education, but that access programmes must also provide an avenue for children to enter the formal school system if they so desire.

6.4 Lessons learned: designing accelerated learning programmes

The development of accelerated learning programmes should take the following into account:

- *Title* – As discussed in *Chapter 3*, these programmes do not comply fully with the principles of accelerated learning. They often take less time to complete because there are fewer subjects and not because the curriculum has been modified in any way. There are programmes that take half as long because they are half as big. If these programmes were more specific in their design (taking into account the constraints of the particular context) they would more accurately be styled as ‘catch-up programmes’. This would minimize the traditional problem of under-age students in the programme as it is not possible to ‘catch up’ in advance. It would also be a clearer indicator that only the essentials are covered; therefore it is not a parallel primary curriculum for primary-age children.
- *Age range* – This needs to be identified clearly and then strictly adhered to by the programme implementers. The minimum age of entry should be based upon the developmental readiness of children. If the accelerated learning depends on the ability of the learner to understand concepts quickly and with little or no revision, and if it depends on a level of self-motivation from the learner, then the minimum age should be the grade age of the primary school graduate. This means that the minimum age should be 11 or 12, as this is probably the youngest age that children are developmentally ready for a compressed accelerated programme. If the principles of accelerated learning (as outlined in *Chapter 3*) are employed, then it would be reasonable for the children to be slightly younger. By age 10, most children would be able to cope with the formal content, providing the methodology is that of true accelerated learning. It is worth noting that the more successful accelerated programmes do involve children who are much older. In the case of Sierra Leone, the success of the programme was, at least in part, because of the maturity of the learners. When the age range for accelerated learning programmes is wide, for example 10-24 years, then accelerated learning classes need to be divided according to age range in the same way as formal education. Ideally, the spread within a single level of acceleration should be no more than three years (until the

learners are above 18 years), thus a level one group of learners will need multiple classes if the age range for that level is greater than 10 to 12 years, for example. This creates a more appropriate classroom (10 to 12-year-olds separated from 16 to 18-year-olds) and a more homogenous group for the teacher.

- *Connections to the formal system* – Wherever possible, accelerated learning groups should be affiliated with a formal school, even when the two institutions are not in close proximity. This helps to ensure that the alternative programme is not marginalized and that it supports the transfer of learners from alternative to mainstream, as they move only from one class to another and not from one school to another. It could also support the mainstream school to provide for those just outside of the age/grade correlation of formal schooling within the formal system. For example, developmentally, a 10-year-old child is too young for the type of accelerated learning reviewed here (as it is predominately a compressed curriculum rather than a streamlined curriculum). However, the 10-year-old who has never been to school is too old to attend class with 5-year-olds. It is possible, however, where the numbers allow it, for a multi-grade class of slightly out-of-age children to be taught within the mainstream school with the support of interactive teaching methodology demonstrated by the accelerated learning programme and its teachers. This response to the needs of the learner is a dimension of quality (as outlined in *Chapter 2*), is more psychologically sound for young out-of-age children and allows for a genuine accelerated approach for older children, thereby more appropriately catering for their needs as well.

6.5 Lessons learned: designing community schools as alternatives

The development of community schools as alternative access programmes should take the following into account:

- *Advocacy* – Many alternative schools that are classified as community schools are in place because the government of the day either cannot or will not provide for specific groups of children, either because of geographical isolation, political or social marginalization, a lack of resources or too few teachers. In these instances, the government needs to be made aware of its obligations towards the MDGs and EFA goals as well as the fundamental human rights issues

involved. Strong, empathetic advocacy towards those sections of the ministry responsible, and providing guidance and support, will be necessary.

- *Accreditation* – As community schools are generally built, staffed and maintained by the community, they are generally not recognized by the government. Sometimes this is because they do not offer the accredited curriculum, or because the teachers are not trained (although very often many teachers in the formal system are also untrained) and sometimes it is for political reasons. Accreditation of a school can happen incrementally. The first stage is to ensure that children are entitled to sit for the national examination. Teachers need to be included in in-service training courses (as in Sierra Leone) where they can use the course towards a general teaching accreditation. At this stage the government should be able to recognize the school as a formal mainstream school and following this, take responsibility for the payment of salaries and then the maintenance of the school building and supplies.

6.6 Implementation

The implementation of access and subject alternative programmes has two levels: the content, methodology and evaluation of the programmes, and the methodology of the implementation.

Content

The content of the most effective alternative programmes and all of the alternative subject programmes that were reviewed, focuses on behaviour change. The content is designed to provide new knowledge and to develop specific skills that result in constructive behaviour and hopefully, attitudes. As noted in *Chapter 3* (and as discussed in the planning and design section above), the trend is to adapt proven materials rather than to re-invent the wheel. In both Kenya and Sierra Leone, a range of previously developed materials was utilized and adapted rather than developing a completely new programme.

Most alternative subject programmes now focus on building constructive life skills rather than imparting specific alternative knowledge. This is often done using ‘conduit’ content. For example, the Window of Hope series, which is purportedly about HIV and AIDS, analyses and ‘teaches’ the same sort of concept areas and life skills that the Peace Education Programme in Kenya teaches. The ‘teaching’ is in

inverted commas because these topics are not taught so much as caught – that is, they are learned because the learners are exposed to structured experiences and situations and guided through them by using experiential teaching techniques.

To change the methodology in traditional subjects is very difficult without a complete curriculum and textbook revision. Full revision, complete with the required training to update teachers on the new curriculum, is a very large and complex undertaking even for education ministries of stable countries.

At the same time, to implement new content in the areas of alternative education (that is, non-traditional subjects or processes) using traditional methodology means that while the topic may be taught, it may never be learned. Each of the alternative topics that was part of the case studies is a behaviour change topic, and each requires the learner to change behaviour based on knowledge or a skill set or the development of certain values. Based on our review and experience, the most effective programmes are those that offer both content and methodology.

Methodology

The review of alternative programmes studied here did not indicate that alternative subject programmes have ever failed because of inappropriate methodology. However, observation by the authors over the years (not just for this study) has shown that no matter how powerful the content is, if it is taught didactically it is rarely internalized by the learners. Without this internalization, there is no behaviour change. For example, among trainees in the Kenya and the Sierra Leone case studies, many knew the ‘correct’ answers in the baseline survey and initial discussions in the training, especially with regard to issues like safe sex, gender equity, peace and civics. In discussions, however, when these respondents were asked whether they acted on their knowledge (that is, changed their behaviour), they admitted that they had not understood and so did not see the connection between the information and the necessary behaviour change. In Nepal, where the trainees were mostly post-graduate, senior personnel, it was a much deeper level of knowledge but there were deeply ingrained discriminatory attitudes that they did not recognize in themselves and so could not act on, even though discrimination was discussed in an intellectual sense in some detail. Ironically, many quoted a Nepalese proverb: ‘Remove the oxen from your own shoulders before removing the tick from your neighbour’s

shoulder'. Given that the respondents were all teachers who claimed to be positive role models (or who at least identified being a positive role model as important for teachers) it was depressing but not surprising to see that knowledge-based education (which is the basis for all the education systems reviewed) was insufficient. The use of a rights-based experiential methodology is of paramount importance to help create the desired behaviours.

The INEE peace education programme, which was the initial programme in Nepal (later built upon by the ministry and UNICEF), is also the basis for much of the Sierra Leone programme and almost the entire Kenya programme. It uses games, drama, activities, stories, songs and discussions to build skills and knowledge in order to develop the concepts. Because the programme has an experiential, rights-based pedagogy (like many of its counterparts), it is dramatically different to the traditional teaching methodology used. It uses a 'what happens if' approach for many of the concept areas and the discussion is based around what behaviour would be better and how to achieve it. This type of experiential approach is true for every programme reviewed, whether it is recognized as experiential or not. Right to Play uses only games, while I DEAL and BIG DEAL from War Child Holland use games and activities together with discussions, and Window of Hope uses activities and discussion. All of these programmes point out, through the games and activities, a more effective way to behave.

Train well

Experiential approaches are very different teaching strategies to those most commonly used. In order for them to be used effectively, teacher training is a necessity. In both the case studies of Kenya and Sierra Leone, the programme implementation incorporated a strong teacher training component. The programme in Kenya began with a writers' workshop, followed by the training of trainers and then almost immediately, by the training of teachers. The programme developed for Kenya is five days of initial training with follow-up in-service training during each vacation (ten days) for the first year, and continuing classroom support by mobile trainers. In April 2008, 12 workshops for teachers were held in Nairobi and the feedback was extremely positive. Although initially there was insufficient time for the trainers to internalize the new skills and behaviours, one of the authors observed constructive changes

in behaviour among the facilitators after they had completed a series of five workshops.

In Sierra Leone, a group of lecturers and tutors representing every training institution was brought together to be trained as trainers for the new emerging issues course. UNICEF's consultant (one of the authors) refined the material into a training format and conducted a training of trainers workshop. One of the key principles here was a series of sessions on why a behaviour change approach was necessary and how it worked. This was considered necessary because these trainers were formally lecturers and all of their previous training and experience used a didactic approach. To use an approach that was diametrically opposite required understanding, new skills and commitment. In addition, these trainers were considered 'pilot' trainers so that as the material was developed further they would have a second chance to upgrade their skills. The trainers were asked for their feedback and input into the material for further refinement.

When introducing a new methodology it must be demonstrated and not just described. The example used earlier, when the participants in Sierra Leone and Kenya knew all the 'jargon' but had not in any way internalized it or changed their behaviour, is symptomatic of non-participatory methodologies. Many of the respondents interviewed gave what one described as 'sweet answers' – that is, answers that sound superficially as if there is an understanding. For example, if asked for strategies to teach a particular concept, there is inevitably a response that includes the use of a role play, even when role play is the least appropriate strategy. Somehow, people have been taught that role plays are 'good' and lectures are 'bad', and they respond accordingly. When they teach sessions themselves, however, they lecture because it is the only strategy that they truly understand and are confident in using. This was true for all the pilot implementation teacher training workshops in Kenya and Sierra Leone (18 workshops in total). It should be noted that these teacher training workshops were implemented almost immediately after the initial training of trainers but before they had a chance to internalize what had been learned from the most recent training. Subsequent trainers training and a second round of teacher training showed considerable changes. Whether or not they would continue when they were not being monitored is at this stage impossible to answer.

When experiential methodology is used to teach both content and pedagogy, and when the teacher participants are given time and a safe space in which to practise, then the methodology begins to be ‘owned’ by the participants (this was the fortunate position of the original INEE Peace Education Programme). At this point, the teachers begin to see how they can be more effective and how the content combined with the methodology can be used to change the behaviour of their students.

Train often

In both Kenya and Sierra Leone, the trainers and the consultant trained a pilot group of teachers in multiple, concurrent workshops. This had a dual purpose. It tested the materials on qualified and unqualified teachers and it highlighted issues within the content that needed expansion or modification. After the pilot teacher training, the trainers had a second training workshop to revise and upgrade their knowledge and skills. This helped the trainers to absorb and internalize the material. Because the trainers represented every training institution, each institution and section within the ministry now has a small core of officers who are committed to the programme.

Multi-functional training

In Sierra Leone, the teacher training course is designed at several levels. It involves in-service training for teachers who are qualified but who want to upgrade to the next level of qualification, an accreditation course for teachers who are teaching but who are unqualified (these teachers undertake in-service distance education), and a pre-service course for trainee teachers. The ministry and the institutions are to manage the distance in-service and pre-service training and UNICEF, together with the ministry, is to conduct the intensive in-service training (for upgrading teachers) to ensure that all teachers ultimately have the skills and knowledge required. If one core training can respond effectively to multiple levels of teacher training, as in the situation of Sierra Leone, it is an effective use of time and limited resources. It also helps to ensure quality control across the various groups and is transparent about the content and methodology of various types of training.

6.7 Monitoring and evaluation

It is imperative that monitoring and supervision is a shared challenge. If agencies and organizations are key players in the design and implementation of programmes, then to leave the monitoring

and supervision to the ministry is tantamount to abandoning it. In a conflict-affected state, the ministry will almost certainly be unable to monitor a programme effectively as it does not have the logistical support to do so. Moreover, simply providing logistical support does not necessarily mean that it will be used for the implementation of the desired programme. Rather, the staff of the agencies and the ministries need to work in tandem in order to develop a shared and agreed monitoring and supervision methodology. Over time, the agency can recede almost imperceptibly.

As discussed in *Chapter 3*, most accelerated learning programmes provide very limited teacher training prior to and in conjunction with the implementation of the programme. Because many of the teachers in accelerated learning programmes are inexperienced, the only way to improve the quality of the programmes and the teaching is through regular monitoring and supervision of the teachers. This is often a difficult task for the ministry responsible as the ministry generally does not have the resources or capacity to monitor the formal school system adequately. Thus, at least initially, the implementing agencies need to take the lead in monitoring and supervising, although this should always be done in conjunction with the ministry personnel. A good example of the monitoring of accelerated programmes is that of the NRC, which builds a supervision support structure into all of its accelerated learning programmes. The supervisors are master trainers who have received further training in order to provide pedagogical support to the teachers. They are provided with observation checklists for use when observing lessons and are also trained to provide model or demonstration lessons during their visits. Regular visits by these supervisors provide the teachers with the level of support that is needed to improve their teaching skills and to become more familiar with inter-active methods. This level of support is, however, not uniform across all accelerated learning programmes and it depends on the available resources of each organization. Yet by identifying and justifying the need for regular support and supervision during the design process, agencies may be able to secure more resources for this purpose.

As none of the alternative subject programmes reviewed have as yet been implemented long enough to be monitored and assessed, there are no best practices to review. However, the lessons learned from the INEE Peace Education Programme and the War Child Holland programmes, in particular, demonstrate the need for alternative methods of assessment

and strong advocacy to have these alternative methods recognized and validated. It seems trite to point out that a behaviour change programme can only truly be assessed based on the changed behaviour. And while this is accepted intellectually by curriculum and examination committees, in practice the tools and methods to do this are not seen as valid and they are so far outside the system that they cannot be incorporated. Structured observation, focus group discussions and interviews all require quite high analytical skills and an understanding of the need for objectivity. These are not skills or attitudes that are particularly valued in the countries where the programmes were reviewed and so it is difficult to demand them as a given. There is also, in most developing countries, a strong culture of ‘saying what the speaker thinks the authorities want to hear’ so when an outsider asks about a particular programme’s efficacy a participant will often respond in the most glowing terms. It is naive for an evaluator to take these responses at face value without using a triangulation approach or at least cross-checking with one other stakeholder. This means that the processes surrounding qualitative assessment and evaluation also have to be taught and learned to ensure accuracy and objectivity, and to minimize the possibility of corruption (an issue consistently referred to when discussing more subjective interpretations of evaluation results).

In Sierra Leone, as an offshoot from a discussion on alternative evaluation tools and the necessity to have them ‘match’ the teacher training assessment procedures, there was a session on examination questions that could (at the least) test for higher-level thinking skills and the application of behaviour change elements. While this exercise was conducted with some very experienced trainers and examiners, there is such a tradition of rote learning and knowledge-level questioning that it was difficult for people to analyse exactly which elements were necessary in higher-level responses. It was a salutary lesson for the facilitator (one of the authors) that nothing can be taken for granted – and that even when examination questions look appropriate, how they are marked and graded may be very superficial and inappropriate.

6.8 Conclusion

An effective programme, whether it is an access or alternative curriculum provision programme, is one that is owned psychologically and in actuality by the population concerned, and where the content builds constructive values and behaviours that protect learners plus develop skills and promote knowledge. It also needs a methodology that

genuinely develops effective learning and a sufficiently skilled teaching force to implement it. It then requires a matching alternative assessment and evaluation that genuinely assesses what the programme was designed to achieve, and can do this taking into account the parameters of learning. The final component is the least tangible: it needs belief and commitment, and a genuine understanding of the psychology of learning.

Based on our review of alternative programmes in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nepal, we found examples of evaluations that had been conducted in relation to accelerated learning programmes in each of these places. While each of these evaluations provided useful information, they suffered from a lack of data and insufficient analysis of the overall effectiveness of the programmes. This was due, partly, to the lack of available data with which to document the number of learners who completed full cycles of the programmes and the lack of examination results for entire cohorts of learners (see *Chapter 5* for more information). While it is difficult to trace children and follow up on them when they are not in the programme, efforts in this regard must be incorporated in programme plans in the beginning as part of the monitoring and evaluation component and must become a routine part of all education programmes – demanded by donors as well as parents and communities. Education authorities must be supported in efforts to obtain these data and in designing or redesigning education management information systems to incorporate the results of alternative education programmes, for which children’s learning attainments are monitored and certified. Equally, data on children’s achievements and subsequent behaviour change also need to be recorded so that this can be accessed in the future. The judgement of these achievements and subsequent recognition of them is the next major challenge.

In addition, evaluating these programmes more systematically, perhaps through the use of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria of evaluation (see *Table 6.1* for a summary), would provide a basis for comparison across programmes. It would also address broader issues such as the relevance or appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the programmes, which would help programme designers revise or adapt future programmes based on the intended objectives.

Table 6.1 Summary definitions of the DAC criteria

Criterion	Definition	Main use in evaluations / Sample questions for evaluation of alternative education programmes (AEPs)
Relevance and appropriateness	Relevance is concerned with assessing whether the project is in line with local needs and priorities (as well as donor policies). Appropriateness is the tailoring of humanitarian activities to local needs, increasing ownership, accountability and cost-effectiveness accordingly.	<p><i>All evaluation types, except those with a mainly institutional focus</i></p> <p>Does the AEP seek out and respond to the needs of the learners?</p> <p>Were children and community members consulted with regard to the design and content of the AEP?</p>
Connectedness	Connectedness refers to the need to ensure that activities of a short-term emergency nature are carried out in a context that takes longer-term and interconnected problems into account.	<p><i>Evaluations assessing institutional structures</i></p> <p>Was the ministry of education involved in the initial design of the AEP?</p> <p>What steps were taken to ensure the sustainability of programmes (if appropriate)?</p>
Coherence	The need to assess security and developmental, trade and military policies as well as humanitarian policies, to ensure that there is consistency and that all policies take into account humanitarian and human rights considerations.	<p><i>Joint evaluations, large-scale evaluations and those with a focus on policy</i></p> <p>Are the contents or curricula of the AEP consistent with the longer-term policies and initiatives of the government, such as poverty reduction or national development strategies?</p> <p>Does the AEP use a rights-based approach?</p> <p>Do programme staff implement and practice a rights-based approach with the learners?</p>

Criterion	Definition	Main use in evaluations / Sample questions for evaluation of alternative education programmes (AEPs)
Coverage	The need to reach major population groups facing life-threatening conditions wherever they are.	<p><i>All evaluation types, except those with a mainly institutional focus</i></p> <p>Has a survey of out-of-school children been conducted?</p> <p>Does the AEP respond to the needs of these children?</p>
Efficiency	Efficiency measures the outputs – qualitative and quantitative – achieved as a result of the inputs. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving an output, to see whether the most efficient approach has been used.	<p><i>All evaluation types, where adequate financial information is available</i></p> <p>Is the AEP cost-effective in comparison to formal schools?</p> <p>If the AEP is financially more costly, what other factors justify the need for the programme?</p>
Effectiveness	Effectiveness measures the extent to which an activity achieves its purpose, or whether this can be expected to happen on the basis of the outputs. Implicit within the criterion of effectiveness is timeliness.	<p><i>Single-sector or single-agency evaluations</i></p> <p>Does the programme design specify the intended learning outcomes?</p> <p>How (and how often) are learning outcomes measured?</p> <p>Do learners achieve the intended learning outcomes?</p>
Impact	Impact looks at the wider effects of the project – social, economic, technical and environmental – on individuals, gender and age groups, communities and institutions. The impact can be intended and unintended, positive and negative, macro (sector) and micro (household).	<p><i>Multi-sector, multi-agency evaluations, joint evaluations, sector-wide evaluations</i></p> <p>Does the programme contribute to the MDGs and EFA goals related to access and the completion of quality primary education?</p> <p>Do government reporting systems include AEP results in relation to the country's progress?</p>

Source: *Evaluating humanitarian action using the OECD-DAC criteria: an ALNAP guide for humanitarian agencies* (available at www.alnap.org/publications/eha_dac/pdfs/eha_2006.pdf).

The evaluation of programmes or the elements of programmes should be quantitative and qualitative. As outlined above, the quantitative aspects are difficult to access and even then they often act as proxy indicators of effectiveness. Qualitative evaluation is even more difficult but for alternative subject programmes it is probably the only appropriate evaluation approach that responds to the programme objectives of changed behaviour. The tools required for such evaluations include structured observation, structured interviews and focus group discussions, case studies and longitudinal studies to measure behaviour changes over time. The evaluations should attempt to provide reasonable coverage of the implementation sites (not just the ones that are the easiest to reach or closest to the capital) to ensure geographical and target group coverage. It is the combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses that provides us with a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness and impact of alternative programmes.

Chapter 7

Recommendations

In this chapter, we summarize the recommendations that appear in the body of this study. These recommendations may be implemented by a variety of stakeholders involved in education in emergencies and more particularly, those contemplating or implementing alternative education programmes.

7.1 Planning and design

Develop policies for alternative education programmes. The designers of alternative education programmes have an obligation to develop good policies (educationally) and ensure that these are implemented within the programmes so that they serve as models. This approach may influence national education policy in terms of establishing and communicating policies that make it possible for all children to access education. This may be achieved through the introduction of flexible alternatives for young people, the recognition and certification of the learning attainments of children who successfully complete an alternative access programme, or through the acceptance and implementation of alternative curriculum approaches into the mainstream education programme.

Consider ways for alternative education programmes to improve the quality of education provision. External implementers, together with government education authorities, should use the design and implementation of alternative education programmes to demonstrate the possibilities for achieving quality in formal education systems, as well as in alternative programmes.

Coordinate with government authorities. Genuine coordination is essential between government education authorities and external organizations in order to make sure that programmes are designed and implemented in accordance with the government's long-term educational objectives, to ensure that alternative programmes are not marginalized. Therefore, it is essential that the design and implementation of alternative education programmes are well coordinated to ensure the most efficient and effective use of resources.

Plan for programme sustainability. Sustainability must be measured against the objectives of particular programmes, and programmes should not be discontinued until they have fulfilled the objectives. For example, if a programme is designed to ‘catch’ a large group of under-educated out-of-age children, then the programme needs to continue until all these children have been absorbed into mainstream programmes that are both relevant and appropriate. Equally, if a particular change in behaviour is required, such as an increase in sanitary behaviour or a decrease in violence, then the planning should nominate what percentage change is appropriate and the programme must continue until that degree of behaviour change has occurred.

Plan for the integration of alternative access programmes into the national system, where appropriate. Alternative access programmes (such as community-based schools) that are initially supported by UN agencies and NGOs should be developed with a clear and cohesive strategy for integration and ‘handover’. Such a strategy must be created in partnership with the education authorities and should specify responsibilities at each level of the system. If the programme is a substitute for formal education, then there must be clear indicators outlined in the planning as to when the programme will be subsumed by the formal government response.

Share curricula and materials between and among agencies. UN agencies and NGOs must make an effort to share and utilize already existing curricula and accompanying teaching and learning materials for alternative programmes. This is a more just and effective use of limited resources and it makes it easier to obtain government endorsement and ‘buy in’. It should also be possible to design joint teacher training initiatives that can readily be incorporated into the government’s formal system.

Ensure the recognition of teacher training. The planning involved in ensuring the recognition of teachers should look to separating training from employment options so that these two issues can be dealt with and supported separately. Because teacher training institutions are semi-autonomous in many countries, discussions about the recognition of training are more appropriately held with these institutions rather than with the employer-to-be (generally, the ministry).

Ensure sufficient funding for alternative education programme teachers. The international commitment to ensure that “no countries

seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources” (UNESCO, 2000: 8) must be authentic rather than rhetoric and ensure that teachers can be paid a living wage. This would help to raise the level of professionalism so that the expectation of high-level pedagogy and integrity, and good knowledge of content and rights-based approaches, is not unrealistic. Donors must realign their view about teachers’ remuneration to consider it not as a high-cost item, but as an income-generation programme and support for the rebuilding of the economy. This will require close liaison with different international organizations, such as the United Nations Development Programme or the International Labour Organization.

7.2 Implementation

Design alternative education programmes that set an example for community participation and transparency. Alternative programmes should be designed and implemented with the view that they should serve as ‘role models’ for various aspects of quality education, including transparency and the involvement of the community, as well as qualitative aspects such as a rights-based approach and true experiential learning.

Encourage the involvement of ministry staff in implementing alternative programmes. The supervision and support provided (at least initially) by the agencies implementing alternative programmes can and should involve the regular supervisory staff of ministries. This is to assist with the monitoring as it serves as a capacity development strategy whereby government officials also learn new pedagogical and/or supervisory techniques, which can be applied in the formal system as well.

Conduct teacher training using methodology that is practical and relevant. Teacher training materials must utilize the methodology they are advocating and while doing so, they must take into account the true level of the teacher, both in terms of academic achievements and exposure, and the fact that the teacher has also been affected by the conflict and the deprivations arising as a result. Therefore, the training must be both practical and relevant, rather than theoretical and academic.

Set realistic timelines and processes for implementation. Designers of alternative programmes must withstand the pressure to commit to unrealistic timelines. Insufficient time to internalize new content and methodology (for the trainers and teachers), training groups

that are too large for an interactive and experiential approach to be used appropriately, and materials that are ‘cobbled together’ are not the basis for a successful intervention.

7.3 Monitoring and evaluation

Conduct cost and achievement comparisons between formal and alternative education programmes. A cost and achievement comparison between formal education and alternative education programmes, taking into account the psychosocial needs of the children and youth, would make it easier to justify the implementation of alternative education programmes such as accelerated learning programmes in post-conflict situations.

Ensure comprehensive data collection on alternative education programmes. There must be systematic collection and reporting on the results of alternative education programmes, including the number of learners who complete these programmes, the number who drop out before completing and the number who subsequently enrol in secondary school. Gathering this type of information will allow programme planners and implementers to design or re-design programmes so that they are better meeting the needs of young people affected by conflict and truly filling a needed gap in the provision of education.

Follow up on students who have dropped out of alternative education programmes. Efforts to trace and follow up on children who are not in the programme – either dropouts or graduates who do not re-enter the system, or even those who never enrol – must be incorporated as part of the monitoring and evaluation, and must become a routine part of all education programmes.

Use the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria. These criteria, which were referenced in *Chapter 6*, should be used to establish an evaluation framework during the programme design phase. Using the criteria will also serve as a checklist to ensure that programmes are designed and evaluated based on their ability to respond to the right to education for all children in an effective and efficient manner.

7.4 Conclusion

The recommendations made in this chapter target a variety of stakeholders. There are recommendations for each stage of the project management cycle: planning and design, implementation, and monitoring

and evaluation, with a view to improving alternative education programmes and making them more effective. This study has indicated that alternative education programmes can ‘fill a gap’ with regard to meeting the educational needs of children and youth affected by conflict. To date, however, this gap has not been filled comprehensively and lessons learned have not been applied systematically. By implementing the above recommendations, alternative education programmes can be designed better and implemented more effectively to meet the needs of children who are most at risk of being denied their right to education. By doing this, governments and their partners will be able to make greater progress towards the Millennium Development and Education for All goals.

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Annex 1

Example of teaching the constructivist approach (Sierra Leone)

Different facilitation techniques

Objectives: By the end of this session participants will:

- understand that there are advantages and disadvantages of the various facilitation techniques;
- be aware of which facilitation techniques are most suitable for given situations.

Timing allocation

Introduction	5 minutes
Activity 1: Techniques, styles and needs	50 minutes
Conclusion	5 minutes
Total	60 minutes

Materials needed for the session

Flip chart paper and markers, workbooks, prepared index cards with one style written on each: lecture, drama, roleplay, video presentation, guided discussion, small group discussion, small group activity, whole class game, small group game, research, paper exercises, revision tests, unstructured discussion, free play. [There should be enough cards for each participant.]

Introduction [5 minutes]

Note: Using masking tape and four large cards, reproduce the quadrant areas on the floor as shown.

Explain to participants that in this workshop they will experience a variety of facilitation techniques. This session is to find out which techniques are most appropriate for different situations.

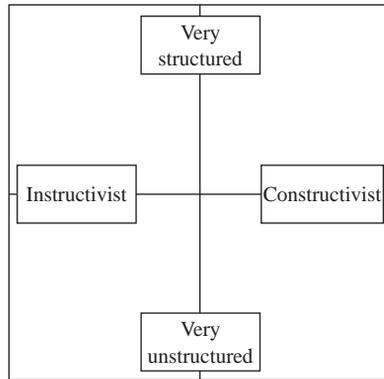
Activity 1 Techniques, styles and needs [50 minutes]

Ask participants to stand on the line marked 'very structured' and 'very unstructured', where they feel most comfortable when facilitating.

Ask if anybody feels the need to move along the line and change positions according to the situation.

Explain that in fact they should be moving up and down the line. Ask why teaching styles should vary. [Because learners learn differently, a

variety of styles allows each learner to learn in a way most suitable to them; to avoid boredom and create 'pace' in the lesson; because active learning is the only way for people to internalize the learning.]



Now ask the participants to stand away from the quadrant diagram so that everyone can see it. (Stand outside the square.) Ask the participants what they think instructivist means. [To instruct; to tell]. Then ask what constructivist means. [To help construct or build knowledge.] Explain that it is possible not only to be structured as a facilitator; it is necessary to provide constructivist learning activities. It is also possible to be unstructured as a facilitator but provide instructivist learning activities. Constructivist means to think about how people learn and to build the activities and discussion so that this learning can take place effectively: it is about understanding and preparation.

Unprepared facilitators tend to be unstructured (unprepared) and so they rely heavily on instructivist learning techniques as a way of keeping control. All constructivist learning techniques require a great deal of structure from the facilitator.

Hand out the prepared cards, one to each participant. Ask the participants to look at the activity on the card and think carefully about where it belongs within the quadrants.

Explain that if they think it is very instructivist but unstructured, then it should go into the outer part of that quadrant. If it is instructivist and very structured, where would it go? Tell the group that they may have to justify their decision to the rest of the group.

After the participants have placed their cards, choose *a few cards* and ask the group why they think that they are placed appropriately. Discuss with the group if there is any disagreement about the placements.

Conclusion [5 minutes]

Explain that another reason for using a variety of teaching styles, in addition to the reasons given earlier, is to match to the type of learning. Some information will need to be told to the whole group. This makes it instructivist and structured, and that is fine. Think carefully about why you are using a particular method because this influences the way you approach the work and will influence the learning that occurs.

Annex 2

Contents of the UNICEF Emerging Issues programme for teacher training in Sierra Leone

The topics across the five themes have been organized so that they mutually reinforce each other across the themes, and so that there is a logical structure. This also takes into account where the practice teaching sessions are placed so that the relevant topics from ‘principles and pedagogy’ occur just prior to the practice teaching, for both the second and third years.

1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Course background	Developmental psychology revisited	Rights-based quality education
Introduction and expectations	Compound learning	Environmental hygiene
Principles of learning	Higher-level questions	Appropriate assertiveness
Education theory I	Education of the girl child	Drug abuse
Education theory II	Good governance	Causes and effects of drug abuse
Experiential learning	Child labour	Teaching assertiveness
Behaviour change programmes	Responding to child labour issues	Prevention and rehabilitation of drug abuse
Teachers as change agents	Representative democracy and government	Breaking the silence
Code of conduct	Road safety	Deforestation
Implementing a code of conduct	Types of communication	Minimising deforestation
Concept development	Communication and miscommunication	Gender and poverty
Developmental psychology I	Pollution	Feminisation of poverty
Developmental psychology II	How do we deal with pollution?	Natural disasters
Essential and non-essential information	Corruption	Disaster management
Effective listening	Planning a lesson	Responding to disasters
Overcoming challenges	Classroom management	Principles of problem solving
Questioning skills	Constructive classroom management	Psychosocial well-being
Effective teaching	Motivation in the classroom	Principles of problem solving II
Basic principles of human rights	What is reproductive health?	Building resilience
Civics and democracy	Causes of corruption	Record keeping – an example of transparency and accountability
Gender concepts	Sexual abuse and exploitation	Record keeping II
Health and hygiene	Sexually transmitted infections	Principles of problem solving III
Provisions of the UDHR	Dealing with corruption	
What is peace?		
Values		
Values and human rights		
Web of conflict		

1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Communicable diseases Rights of the child Conflict management theory Similarities and differences Inclusion and exclusion Handwashing Perceptions Best interest determination Waste management Challenges for the implementation of child rights Trust How do we deal with HIV and AIDS? Bias cycle What do we know about HIV and AIDS now? Gender discrimination Child participation Civics and citizenship Introduction to discrimination against women The importance of child participation You and your medicine Citizenship Gender-based violence Vulnerable and excluded children Effects of gender-based violence Buying and storing medicine Civic rights and responsibilities Support for vulnerable and excluded children Nutrition education Teaching citizenship and democracy Taxation for self-reliance Violations against women Child abuse and exploitation Nutrition-related illnesses	Gender and socio-cultural practices Gender and socio-cultural practices II Sanitation Specific negative sociocultural practices Developing a conducive learning environment Corporal punishment Different facilitation techniques Prevention of sexually transmitted infections Child marriage and teenage pregnancy Consequences of and responses to teenage pregnancy HIV and AIDS What do we know about HIV and AIDS? Honesty and transparency Accountability Human trafficking Effects of human trafficking	Gender and development Gender and development II Climate change Effects of climate change Code of conduct revisited Workers' rights Reconciliation Human rights

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Alternative education

Filling the gap in emergency and post-conflict situations

The book



Children and youth have a wide range of educational needs in emergency situations, especially when affected by conflict. They may have missed part or all of their primary education or have had their education disrupted. They require specific skills to help them deal with the world they now live in. Older children may want to access education but may not be able or

willing to attend primary school with younger children.

In response to this diversity of needs, alternative education programmes are increasingly implemented in emergency and post-conflict situations. They can contribute to achieving the goals of Education for All, including the improvement of educational quality.

This book reviews some alternative education programmes, including those providing alternative access, such as accelerated learning programmes and home-based or community-based schools. It also examines programmes that are alternative in curriculum provision, offering non-traditional subjects such as HIV and AIDS prevention or landmine awareness, and those that provide an alternative pedagogy, using more learner-centred and participatory techniques.

Studies from Kenya, Nepal and Sierra Leone provide recommendations for sustainable planning and coordination on the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of alternative education programmes.

The authors

Pamela Baxter is a freelance consultant in the field of emergency education. She has worked with UN agencies and NGOs primarily in curriculum development and teacher training.

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