

A tool for conflict-sensitive education policies – with actions an education ministry can take

Margaret Sinclair (Education Above All) and Morten Sigsgaard
(consultant)

Meeting of the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility
John Knox Center, Geneva, 26 March 2012

- We look at country studies and other relevant materials, triangulated with education staff interviews
- Focus on specific actions (policy and programming decisions) that an education ministry and other actors can take to reduce conflict risks ('do no harm') and where possible contribute to peacebuilding
- Target audience: (a) national officials (or UN or NGO staff members) concerned with policy development and (b) donors considering support for a national education programme.
- Two planned outputs: (a) two-page policy brief; and (b) a more detailed think-piece

Collaboration with INEE WGEF

- Builds on recent WGEF work
- Aims to complement current WGEF work
- We wish to draw on your expertise
- Further discussion over lunch at 12h30-13h30

Why, What and How to do 'it'...

Who: Aims at convincing policymakers (Heads of Department and above – also outside of MoE)

- **Why:** why conflict sensitivity is a good investment
- ...using economic, security, governance arguments along with rights-based reasoning
- **What:** practical steps for high-level policymakers
- **How:** Concrete country examples where these actions have been tried, and their effectiveness

The Matrix

<i>What action?</i>	<i>How to do it? (How has it been done?)</i>	<i>Where and when has it been done?</i>	<i>What is the evidence that it works?</i>
1. WORK TOWARDS A NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON EDUCATION REFORM SUPPORTIVE OF PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT			
2. COLLECT DATA TO UNDERSTAND HOW EDUCATION MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO HOSTILITY AND TO DESIGN CHANGES THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO PEACEBUILDING			
3. REDUCE BIAS IN ACCESS (etc. – currently 7 pages)			

- **1. WORK TOWARDS A NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON EDUCATION REFORM SUPPORTIVE OF PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**

- **2. COLLECT DATA TO UNDERSTAND HOW EDUCATION MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO HOSTILITY AND TO DESIGN CHANGES THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO PEACEBUILDING**
 - 2.1 Disaggregate education statistics to district or sub-district level as needed, or otherwise
 - 2.2 Conduct qualitative or semi-quantitative studies of factors cited as grievances, such as...

- **3. REDUCE BIAS IN ACCESS**
 - 3.1 Allocate resources (teachers, money) more fairly between districts/groups
 - 3.2 Fund special programmes to (a) progressively remedy historic inequalities (caused by poverty, lack of influence, etc.); and (b) ensure more equitable access to higher levels of education at transition points (e.g. primary/secondary; secondary/tertiary):
 - 3.3 Analyse national policies and plan documents and coordinate donor assistance so that it doesn't favour previously powerful groups but helps reduce bias (e.g. avoid focus on "secure areas" that are occupied more by one faction than another)
 - 3.4 Adjust teacher recruitment, training, deployment and pay/allowances to reduce inequalities in access
 - 3.5 Adjust examination/selection methods to minimize inequalities
 - 3.6 Language and curriculum issues (see below)
 - 3.7 Build capacity of School Management Committees, Parent-Teacher Associations, and Student Councils , including to respect diversity and build peace

- **4. REDUCE BIAS IN CURRICULUM, TEXTBOOKS AND TEACHING**
 - 4.1 Develop capacity on curriculum, textbook and pedagogy for diversity
 - 4.2 Appoint a Committee on Curriculum and Textbooks to review bias and strengthen peace, human rights and/or citizenship content of curricula; as well as a Technical Team
 - 4.3 Renew textbooks and other materials to reduce bias and/or enrich with peace, human rights and/or citizenship
 - 4.4 Introduce this new content as a core component of teacher training

- **5. ADJUST LANGUAGE POLICIES THAT CAUSE TENSION**
 - 5.1 Introduce mother tongue in early years; Introduce multiple languages, as needed/practicable

- **6. ENSURE ACCESS TO AND RELEVANCE OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**
 - 6.1 Ensure equitable access to post-secondary education
 - 6.2 Relate TVET to realistic labour market assessments

- **7. REMEDY BIAS IN EDUCATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

- **8. STRENGTHEN LOCAL CAPACITY TO REDUCE RISKS RELATED TO CONFLICT AND INSECURITY**

- **9. DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION (DDR)**

WHY INVEST IN EDUCATION?

Investing in education is the single most effective means of reducing poverty. Overall, the global education story has been positive in the past decade, with the number of primary school-aged children not attending school decreasing from over 100 million to 67 million.

However, it is too easy to take this progress in education for granted, particularly in the face of widespread concerns about global health, the environment and food security. Investments in education may take several years to bring measurable returns but the impacts are extremely powerful in terms of improving health, raising income, promoting gender equality and reducing poverty.

INCOME, GROWTH AND POVERTY REDUCTION:

Education is the key to unlocking a country's potential for economic growth.

- Each year of schooling translates into a 10% increase in an individual's potential income. At a national level, each year of additional schooling leads to a 1% increase in annual GDP.
- 4 years of primary schooling can boost a farmer's productivity by nearly 9%.
- An increase of one standard deviation in student scores on international assessments of literacy and mathematics is associated with a 2% increase in annual GDP per capita growth.
- 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty if all students in low-income countries left school with basic reading skills – equivalent to a 12% cut in global poverty.

IMPROVING HEALTH:

The most effective investment for achieving long-term health benefits is educating girls and women.

- Every 10% increase in girls' enrolment in secondary school in low-income countries will save approximately 350,000 children's lives and reduce maternal mortality by 15,000 every year.
- Girls' education often turns out to be the single most powerful factor affecting various health outcomes such as infant mortality, maternal mortality, the propensity of mothers to seek modern birth options, the supply of those options due to higher availability of trained birth attendants, the rate of riskier teenage births and the number of children she will have.
- Worldwide 700,000 HIV cases could be prevented each year if all children received a primary education.
- In 2011 an estimated 1.8 million children's lives in sub-Saharan Africa could have been saved if their mothers had had at least a secondary education.

GENDER EQUALITY:

Education is key to women's rights, self-expression and civic engagement.

- Every extra year of schooling for girls reduces the fertility rate by 10%.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, investing in the education of girls has the potential to boost agricultural output by 25%.
- For a girl, each additional year of primary education increases her potential income by 15%, while a 1% increase in the number of women with secondary education can increase annual per capita economic growth by 0.3%.

Conflict has negative impacts on education:

- reduced attendance due to insecurity, family poverty, attacks;
- reduced government and donor education budget;
- reduced mobility of education supervisors/trainers

Grievances about previous education arrangements can contribute to conflict

- grievances over education opportunities and employment opportunities
grievances over identity (forced assimilation into a different identity group; stereotyping in textbooks; language of instruction);
- grievances over political set-up that keeps out potential teachers;

Education can contribute to future conflict without being based on perceived grievances, e.g.:

- curriculum praises war and aggression;
- curriculum entrenches stereotyping (of vulnerable groups not necessarily involved in the hostilities e.g. lack of capacity due to disability, gender, age);

1. Conflict-sensitivity/peacebuilding should be a cross-cutting issue alongside gender, environment, HIV/AIDS: **A lens for all policy decisions**

2. Each MoE division should identify and implement “do no harm” and positive actions to promote peacebuilding/stability

3. This will reduce education’s contribution to instability, help promote stability and help ensure that the more of the “regular” benefits of education are attained

Country list – preliminary

Countries that will be looked at in more detail may include:

- Sri Lanka
- Nepal
- Sierra Leone & Liberia
- Cote d'Ivoire, Chad, Burkina Faso
- Afghanistan
- Burundi, Rwanda
- Colombia
- South Sudan

Request: Country case suggestions are welcome!

For your reflection...

- Our investment case for conflict sensitive education should convince:
 - Heads of department and above in MoEs
 - Donors
 - Ministry of **Finance**
- How do we succeed in this?
- The g7+ and the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States – a window of opportunity?

Request...

We need your support to get examples of good practice, e.g. countries where has there been:

- A clear effort to **reduce bias in access to primary schooling** in order to reduce tensions that may cause conflict?
- Ditto for **reducing bias in access to secondary or higher ed?**
- **Textbook analysis** to identify and remove bias that may contribute to conflict?
- **Sustainable efforts** to introduce skills-based peace/HR/citizenship in **textbooks** or otherwise and in **teacher training?**
- Conflict-sensitive policies on **language, teacher deployment** etc. and on **general system management? Other?**