Conflict Sensitive Education Training and Institutionalization:

SUMMARY FINDINGS FROM A 2017-18 RESEARCH STUDY ON THE OUTCOMES OF AN INEE CSE TRAINING WORKSHOP

In 2014, INEE launched a Conflict Sensitive Education (CSE) Pack containing training materials for education actors working in crisis and conflict contexts. However, due to resource constraints, stakeholders' engagement with the pack was not systematically monitored. As a result, evidence of its effectiveness remained limited.

To address this, a group of INEE Working Group members, named the "CSE Subgroup", set out to:

1. Support education practitioners and policy makers to take ownership of the CSE Pack and to adapt it to use in their specific context;

2. Document learning on the use of the pack in different contexts—especially on the ways it was integrated into education program design and implementation; adapted in national education policies; and implemented in education systems.

One strategy to accomplish these objectives was to offer a CSE Training of Trainers workshop to experienced trainers within existing INEE member organizations that had ongoing education operations in crisis and conflict-affected environments. These organizations and trainers would then be expected to further offer CSE training to others in their local environments. A four-day TOT workshop was held in Amman, Jordan in July 2017 and was facilitated by INEE Secretariat and CSE Subgroup members (from 6

organizations), and attended by 40 participants from 18 organizations. The specific objectives of the TOT were to:

1. Build participants' CSE knowledge and awareness so that they may better support CSE strategies and application in their work;

2. Provide participants with concepts, methodologies, materials and planning tips to undertake CSE capacity building and institutionalization of CSE practices within their organizations;

3. Develop a multi-agency plan for the cascading of CSE training across a region;

4. Connect participants to a more extensive network of education professionals who can provide CSE support during the implementation of localized CSE trainings.

A second strategy was to hire a researcher who would both study the literature related to CSE institutionalization, and follow the TOT and subsequent CSE trainings over a period of 18 months, in an effort to better understand the CSE capacity building and institutionalization process that took place. This research was presented to INEE in 2019 in the form of a detailed final project report. Summary findings from the detailed project report are presented below.

The Research Approach

In summary, research focused on one central question: How successful was the CSE ToT in promoting processes and mechanisms for the contextualization and appropriation of CSE at an organizational level? To better understand this, the research asked the following sub-questions:

1. What are the key factors that influence institutional change for CSE within humanitarian and development organizations?

2. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CSE TOT (and the materials on which it was based) in relation to promoting the institutionalization of CSE?

3. How useful is cascade training in disseminating CSE concepts for institutionalization?

4. What are possible opportunities for change in support of CSE within organizations and to what extent can INEE CSE concepts be adapted, internalized and institutionalized into policy and practice of organizations and government agencies?

The researcher, Dr. Kelsey Shanks, attended and observed the TOT, then engaged in follow-up interviews and surveys with TOT participants, in addition to following three organizations more closely (two in Iraq and one in Ukraine), to develop case studies regarding the CSE training and institutionalization experience. In addition, researchers from three universities conducted a literature review related to institutional change for conflict sensitive education.

Research Findings

Regarding the **key factors that influence institutional change for CSE within humanitarian and development organizations**, the literature highlighted the following six requirements for organizations adopting conflict sensitivity:

- Commitment and motivation within an organization
- An enabling organizational culture
- Capacity development
- Internal organizational capacity
- Accountability
- An enabling external environment allows uptake of new processes

Regarding the **strengths and weaknesses of the CSE TOT and materials in relation to promoting the institutionalization of CSE**, the research determined the following **strengths:**

1. The INEE CSE training materials provide a comprehensive overview of CSE, and the modules unpack education's relationship with conflict and provide space to reflect on how education programs can mitigate or exacerbate conflict dynamics.

2. The training enhanced and spurred advocacy efforts for increased commitment and motivation to undertake CSE within organizations.

3. The training increased staff understanding of CSE.

4. The training fostered favorable external environments for the uptake of CSE.

The research determined the following TOT and materials **weaknesses:**

1. The training and materials did not sufficiently address conflict analysis as a topic.

2. The training and materials did not sufficiently address the critical importance of, nor approaches to, contextualization and operationalization of the materials and concepts for local environments and actors.

3. The training and its certification process did not adequately consider the politically sensitive nature of CSE, to enable participants to move forward in a sensitive manner.

Regarding the **utility of the cascade training model for disseminating CSE concepts for institutionalization**, the research found that the aforementioned weaknesses limited the ability of the program to influence systematic operational changes toward operationalizing CSE practices. The research found that, within the study period, there were no notable registered mechanisms or procedures within the organizational capacity of participant organizations to allow for ongoing conflict analysis processes and no increase in organizational accountability in terms of achieving CSE. As such, the impact of the training remained in the realm of awareness-building and did not cross over into increased operational activities or organizational practices.

Regarding **opportunities for change**, the research made the following **recommendations**:

1. The CSE ToT should be a longer training program or a pre-training online course should be delivered to establish shared understandings of key concepts in advance of the workshop. In addition, topics like 'facilitation techniques' could be covered online to create more space in the training for CSE content.

2. Participant facilitation is not recommended for use in future trainings. However, if it is used, then attention should be paid to creating space for greater feedback and guidance on content delivery and facilitation style.

3. The training should look beyond advocating at a policy level, and focus on how CSE policy would be actionable in practice. Current modules have an academic orientation that does not provide sufficient space for guidance on the implementation of CSE.

4. Participants found the INEE CSE pack too dense, and guidance is required to aid adaptation for different audiences.

5. Organizers need to differentiate between ensuring that humanitarian interventions are delivered in a conflict-sensitive manner and creating a national education system that is conflict-sensitive.

6. The politically sensitive nature of CSE requires greater acknowledgement within the ToT. Future trainings should provide space for discussion and idea sharing about the political elements of CSE.

FIND OUT MORE

Ensuring conflict sensitivity in education, particularly in crisis and conflict-affected environments, is essential. But it also requires careful planning, design and monitoring. For more information about this important topic please consult the USAID Education Links website (**www.edu-links.org**), and the **ECCN** and **INEE** websites.