



# Contextualizing the INEE Conflict Sensitive Education Training in North Kivu, DRC: A Case Study



Inter-agency  
Network for Education  
in Emergencies

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This case study presents the strengths and weaknesses of a series of three INEE Conflict Sensitive Education (CSE) workshops held in November 2019 (Training 3) and November 2020 (Training 4 and 5) as part of the Never too Late to Learn consortium in DRC. Given the work provided to tailor the content of the training pack to the participants' needs and abilities, this case study looks at the extent to which training adaptation, contextualization, and co-creation, ensured concrete and improved, positive impact on trainees' work and institutionalization.

The three 3-day workshops took place in Eastern DRC (Mweso, Kitchanga, and Rutshuru). Those locations are at the heart of conflict and physical access is difficult due to the challenging landscape and fragile infrastructure. Kitchanga is host to refugee and internally displaced populations. The three locations were identified as high-priority for a CSE training and providing more localized trainings allowed a higher participation of local actors.

The overall objectives were the same for the three trainings: to increase participants' knowledge of the INEE Minimum Standards, build skills on the topic of conflict-sensitive education to increase use of the INEE CSE Pack, and strengthen its institutionalization.

The final training was conducted in a hybrid format with in-person and pre-recorded facilitation. Participants of all three trainings had a background in EiE but not all had previous knowledge of INEE and its tools, they were mainly organizations' staff, Primary, Secondary and Technical inspectors, education advisors, and other education staff.

Post-training questionnaires were disseminated to participants via email and WhatsApp for the first training, and in-person via focus group discussions held by the co-facilitators for the second and third trainings.



Reading activity, Rutshuru © Edmond Shamba

# EVIDENCE AND OUTCOMES

The three trainings gathered a total of 93 participants. 96% of participants rated the training between good and excellent. Overall 89% of participants of all three trainings stated their learning needs were met throughout training with 96% of Training 5 participants noting their learning needs were met. As one Training 5 participant reflected, “this workshop is of utmost importance because it was really needed (so much) for us to be equipped to improve and correct the mistakes we make during our interventions.” This testimony shows that Education in Emergencies (EiE) stakeholders can easily identify their needs and appreciate the content of INEE trainings and are willing to work on their own progress to benefit the people they work with.

Participants increased their understanding of EiE and the [INEE Minimum Standards](#) and improved upon their knowledge of where to seek resources and technical support, whereas they referred to some knowledge of the INEE Minimum Standards before training, without being able to know how to use them or how to apply CSE in their context. Reflections from two participants provided encouraging feedback on the project’s outcomes and learning objectives: “Before the workshop we were in the dark, we could apply some standards, but randomly” and “this knowledge will allow us to manage conflict situations as a manager, starting with the understanding of the context, in order to reduce the vectors and create a sustainable peace, using the different INEE strategies.” What the participants summarized here are in fact the training objectives and an indicator that they were well met.

## WHAT HAPPENED AFTER?

The training was focused on learning about CSE as a concept, rather than as a training of trainers. However, participants were encouraged to share their learnings with colleagues and provide training information sessions within their organizations.

The post-training questionnaire was completed by 45% of participants, the highest percentage of all Never too Late to Learn INEE CSE component activities. This was likely because the facilitators held in-person feedback sessions to complete the questionnaire on paper and didn’t have to only rely on remote surveying. Participants noted they had shared their newly acquired knowledge and skills with 931 people. Obtaining precise data and reports on these sessions or workshops was very challenging, and although participants shared numbers, 12% of questionnaire respondents didn’t provide the numbers of attendees. Three types of post-training information sessions held by participants were identified as:

1. Small group briefings to colleagues within their organizations, adult schools, mediator groups, and awareness agents (staff who work on raising awareness). Some were held ad-hoc, while others were during meetings or school visits. Institutionalization of CSE concepts occurred via word-of-mouth, informal conversations, and in-person meetings when lack of financial resources prevented larger sessions.
2. Internal workshops conducted through pre-existing trainings or meetings, particularly in school settings.

3. Workshops organized specifically on CSE. Participants varied from organization staff, school directors, school managers, cluster's subdivisions, local leaders or "chefferies", local education authorities, and teachers. These workshops were led by the trainee via their institution/organization or with support from another institution or organization. To provide workshops, participants relied on existing structures and systems to set up events and to share back key CSE learning points. We observe that when trainings take place outside of Goma in an attempt to maximize access and participation, the impact is higher in terms of institutionalization. Trainees manage to mobilize a greater number of EiE colleagues in their area, despite security threats and altered physical access to offices or meeting venue.

The success of institutionalization reported in this case studies sadly is the expression of the pressure experienced by the participants who are living in acute emergency, their demand is high and their reactivity matches it: "[our organization] has to add additional workshops quarterly for the territory to support children of conflicts and various clashes access education." There are multiple crisis in one same area, causing extreme stress on EiE actors and when there is a training opportunity actors want and need to be trained to respond more adequately. There is an urgency for improvement of their own professional skills and undeniable efforts towards it; "We suggest not stopping this training and doing more for us to perform for this affected population especially in the education sector." this testimony conveys the reality experienced and the high priority of those contexts.

## **HOW ARE NEW SKILLS USED?**

Participants shared that they came "to understand that education programs can mitigate or minimize conflict dynamics.", in other words, they became aware of education and conflict's interactions. They also are conscious that their ways of working can directly influence the dynamics of conflict and referenced using CSE tools to "strengthen the principle of 'do no harm'." Additionally, participants were able to reflect on their own impact on education and conflict by using the self-reflection exercises on bias.

In each of the trainings, participants mentioned tribal conflict explicitly, when other training participants mentioned "no discrimination" without being specific about tribal exclusion and conflict: "in the recruitment of agents and selection, we give the chance to all the resident tribes of the community and we make sure that the recruitment does not pose or feed the existing conflict." further showing the positive impact CSE has on communities.

CSE concepts and steps are now used to improve and strengthen social cohesion: "since this workshop, I learned a lot of knowledge because I did not know how to unite the members in the same house or in the population, now, I can do something to solve the conflict in the population," noting the training has shed light on issues that were recurrent and left unaddressed because trainees didn't have the tools and skills. Newly acquired CSE skills are used at program level too. Trainees are more sensitive to issues related to recruitment and selection, and needs assessment or initial evaluations: "we are at a stage of sensitizing our current members, but also applying transparency in recruiting new staff in our organization." By doing this, people make their education response more sensitive to conflict.

## WHAT CSE TOOLS ARE USED?

3 tools of the [INEE CSE Pack](#) were all covered during the training: the [Guidance Note](#), [Guiding Principles](#), and the [Reflection Tool](#). 21% of participants noted they use all 3 resources regularly to refresh their memory, identify strategies, or look for guidance or a checklist. Of the individual tools, the Guiding Principles was reported to be used the most with 40%. The second most used tool is the reflection tool with 19% followed by the Guidance Note with 7%. However, upon further questioning, it appears participants mix up the Guidance Note and Guiding Principles as both resources have 'guide' in the title, particularly when using the French Translation. When describing how they used the Guiding Principles, participants were actually describing the Guidance Note. Thus, the usage statistics taken from these trainings are most likely not accurate.



Group work activity using INEE tools, Rutshuru  
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# CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

## RECURRING CHALLENGES

50% of respondents didn't organize a training information session or a workshop due to lack of financial resources, COVID-19, or lack of human capacity. It was also reported that camp security prohibited gatherings for capacity building.

## NEW CHALLENGES

The challenges brought by COVID-19 implied that the facilitation team adapted content and facilitation was supported via pre-recorded videos and shared on a screen. This teaching mode was difficult to grasp for trainees who had no or very little experience of working/learning with various technologies, such as a projector. Additional technological

issues such as poor sound or unstable video led to the facilitator repeating key points the videos should have covered. These challenges varied widely between the different trainings as some had few to no problems with the technology.

Participants found the practical activities of the training easy to understand, but the theoretical ones posed much more of a challenge. By adapting content or illustrating tasks with local or contextual examples, trainees can relate to what they learn and are more likely to share back and move towards institutionalization.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

- Training sessions planned and delivered to EiE stakeholders outside of large cities or urban centers enable access for EiE stakeholders affected by high-security risks and/or poor physical access, furthering knowledge dissemination and a wider reach.
- Setting up a facilitation team of EiE/CSE specialists who liaise with the INEE Secretariat for training materials and technical support on how to conduct CSE training is beneficial to the quality and structure of the training.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Allocate a specific budget for training information sessions and guide trainees on how to lead training information sessions or feedback (content, facilitation tips...) as it would offer better learning opportunities and wider institutionalization of tools.
- Provide a prompt, in-person follow-up session and/or workshop where trainees can ask questions directly to the facilitator. This also supports a transition away from relying solely on technology for data collection.
- Provide a pre-training session on new technologies to cohorts that are not familiar with technology.
- Assess the IT tools available and proceed to testing them prior to training.
- Contextualize theory with concrete examples.

This case study was commissioned by INEE and written by Emeline Marchois, INEE French Language Community Facilitator, with support from Edmond Shamba, Project's Focal Point in DRC and co-facilitator, and review by INEE Knowledge Management Coordinator, Sarah Montgomery. Design provided by 2D Studio. Funded by the European Union (DG INTPA).

This case study is part of a compilation of three case studies on INEE CSE workshops in [Goma, DRC](#); [North Kivu, DRC](#); and [Tanzania](#).

### **About the Never too Late to Learn project**

INEE took part in the Never Too Late to Learn project, a four-year programme led by NRC and funded by the European Union (DG INTPA) within the [BRICE \(Building Resilience in Crises through Education\)](#) initiative. The programme aims at providing displacement affected children with quality and protective alternative education in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania. The project has a strong focus on out-of-school children and girls, supported also through a holistic community-based approach to enhance their safety and well-being. A comprehensive Teacher Professional Development programme is also embedded to increase quality, sustain attendance and ensure protection of vulnerable children. Included is also a research component on accelerated education and academic resilience to broaden the evidence for education in diverse crisis contexts, a capacity building component, and collection of best practices and lessons learnt on conflict sensitive education. Consortium partners include: NORCAP, Babawatoto Centre for Children and Youth Trust, Mouvement International des Droits de l'Enfant, de la Femme, de l'Homme Veuf et de leur Promotion Social (MIDEFEHOPS), War Child UK, Child Resilience Alliance, and the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE).



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