



Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
Réseau Inter-Agences pour l'Éducation en Situations d'Urgence
La Red Interagencial para Educación en Situaciones de Emergencia

INEE Good Practice Guide:

Assessing Resource Needs and Capacities in an Initial Emergency

Assessment of Out-of-School Youth and Youth Leaders

During times of crisis, the number of children (specifically youth not attending school) may increase. These young people are not only missing out on an education, but are missing the vital psychosocial support and protection that is integral for their well-being and survival. As a starting point, an out-of-school youth assessment must assess whether or not:

- Young people want to go to school
- Educational programs exist for them
- The obstacles to attending, such as cultural prejudices against the education of girls, the need to work, or that they are considered too old to attend school.

Once the obstacles are identified, strategies should be developed to facilitate access to educational services for young people. For youth who are not interested or not able to attend school, it is necessary to assess their interest in literacy and numeracy programs, vocational skills training, and life-skills education. These potential activities should be put into the context of existing youth organizations, sports clubs and social activities and their leadership.

Strategies

- **Support young people to express and address their own needs**

Unlike younger children, youth with support and guidance can assist themselves. Assessment and the subsequent development of programs should actively involve youth, as well as local youth organizations and their leadership. Specific areas of interest may include exploring the position and roles of youth within the community, identifying the needs of different youth (e.g. street children, minorities), as well as youth-positive cultural practices and coping mechanisms. Additionally, it is important to identify specific spaces for youth that are separate from younger children and adults to provide them the mental space to freely process their experiences with their peers.

- **Provide special consideration for young women to access educational programs**

Given the global bias against the education of girls and culturally imposed limitations on their social activity, it is necessary to consider out-of-school girls as a separate category. Aside from access to school and literacy/numeracy, an assessment should be conducted of girls' desire and need for vocational skills training, especially in areas of non-traditional roles, and non-formal education in how to prevent unwanted pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, and provide child care and immunization. Many of the issues relating to girls accessing education must be addressed through the building of community dialogue and awareness, which can be supported through youth groups, women's groups and PTAs.

- **Build youth leadership and capacity of youth organizations**

In areas of emergency, youth often feel unempowered and hopeless about their future. Supporting youth initiatives, as well as youth organizations and their leadership, enables young people to exert some control over their environments, and thereby increase their feelings of esteem and self-worth. Additionally, this support enhances the sustainability of the activities and can enhance the building of social capital, civil society and citizenship.

Checklists

Barriers to Education

- Legal barriers - in some countries, national laws may exist which barr adolescents from entering primary school.
- Social Pressures - Fourteen-year-olds may be laughed at when they attend school with eight-year-olds; it is humiliating for a 14 year-old to read more poorly than an eight-year-old.
- Economic factors - large families often cannot afford to send all of their children to school and have to make choices as to who will attend. Older adolescent boys in particular are pressed to produce economically. Adolescent girls of any age may be expected to perform domestic chores.
- Cultural factors - war-affected communities themselves may not expect or value education for young people. Education must be seen to lead to gainful employment or an improvement in livelihood.
- Child-headed households/early parenthood/early marriage- Often young people are not able to complete their education due to having to take on the responsibility of providing for a household or children due to death of their parents, early marriage or parenthood. In many cultures there is pressure for girls to marry early. Additionally, there may be a lack of childcare for the young parents.
- Relevance- formal education after a crisis frequently does not address the reality that children must live with. Are young people interested in vocational training and income generation? What programs exist? How is the training recognized? Identify gaps within the young people's knowledge of life skills issues such as HIV/AIDS, birth control, and parenting skills
- Other obstacles- lack of sanitary supplies and fear of embarrassment or humiliation may deter girls from attending school, as well as lack of lavatories.
- At-risk groups of young people
 - Persons with disability, including victims of the conflict
 - Participants in the war/child soldiers
 - Street children
 - Orphans
 - Unaccompanied children

Capacity

- Identify existing educational potential educational facilities including secondary schools, and trade schools.
- Identify where young people get their information from i.e. newspapers, radio, peers, television, as well as where they gather for information.
- Identify educated adults and youth leaders who could organize educational and other activities for young people.
- Locate local trades people (blacksmiths, tailors) who would be willing to offer training or apprenticeships for local young people.
- Assess governmental bodies that assist young people, including the Ministry that addresses youth issues (usually either a Ministry of Youth and Sport or Youth and Culture). Care must be taken with these groups, as they are frequently aligned or supported by specific political parties or ethnic groups.
- What youth activities are occurring at the village/district/national level? Are there youth organizations such as Boys/Girls Scouts, agriculture organizations, and student organizations? What topics do they focus on?
- Is there a meeting space for youth in the community? Which groups have access to this facility?

Resources

- *Youth Field Guide: Care and Protection of Children in Emergencies*, Save the Children USA, Marc Sommers, 2001
- *Developing Education and Youth-promotion Measures With Focus on Peace-building and Conflict Prevention*, GTZ, Stephanie Schell-Faucon, 2002
- *Work with Young Refugees to Ensure Their Reproductive Health and Well-being: It's Their Right and Our Duty* (UNHCR, 2002). A Field Resource for Programming With and For Refugee Adolescents and Youth
- *Untapped Potential: Adolescents affected by armed conflict* Women's Commission, 2000. For more information about the project, please visit the web site:
<http://www.womenscommission.org/projects/children/index.shtml>
- *Adolescence: A Time that Matters*, UNICEF, 2002
- *Meeting the Youth Employment Challenge: An Employers Handbook*, From ILO
- *Enterprise-Based Youth Employment Policies, Strategies and Programmes*, Initiatives for the development of enterprise action and strategies by Simon White and Peter Kenyon

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