

**REPORT**  
**Education in Emergencies:**  
**Experts' Workshop on Appropriate Humanitarian Response**  
**Paris 20<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> March 2002**



Credit: Jane Lowicki

**Contents**

Standards for Education in Emergencies: Moving Forward	1	
Appendix 1	Suggestions for Moving Forward with a Process to Define Standards	4
Appendix 2	Risks and Opportunities in Defining Standards for Education in Emergencies	5
Appendix 3	Commonalities in Education in Emergencies Programming	7
Appendix 4	Proposed Chapter Outline	9
Appendix 5	Draft Standards and Indicators	10
Appendix 6	Meeting Agenda	14
Appendix 7	Participants' List	17

**Standards for Education in Emergencies: Moving Forward**

***Background***

The issue of standards for education in emergencies has been a going concern on the part of various humanitarian actors who perceive of education as a life-saving intervention in situations of crises and disasters. The key issues for this group are:

- The desire and commitment to ensure quality education for some of the most vulnerable people in the world;
- The frustrations of being “outside” the mainstream humanitarian debate because education is not seen as a priority humanitarian response.

Defining standards will address both of these issues. However, standards cannot be defined by a few, or in isolation. There is the potential for a powerful constituency to be built, particularly at this time in history when there is a global interest in reaching Education For All.

Defining standards for education in emergencies also provides the opportunity to learn from other successful initiatives. Thus, the planning group spoke with Nan Buzard, Manager of the SPHERE Project, about the possibility of adding a chapter on Education to the SHPERE Handbook.

Spurred on by the need to make education a priority for humanitarian response, the group approached the SPHERE Project because it seemed to be an ideal solution to legitimize standards for education in emergencies. (Although SPHERE is widely recognized, there are also other efforts to ensure quality and accountability within the context of humanitarian work<sup>1</sup>.) However, during the next fifteen-month extension of the life of the SPHERE Project, its Management Committee has not agreed to the incorporation of additional sectors, even though the group who spearheaded this initiative lobbied for the inclusion of education. Because the SPHERE Project is a process, and because presumably there will be future editions (beyond the forthcoming second edition) of the handbook, there may be scope for consideration of additional chapters in the future. In the meantime, however, the group was clear that it had to work outside the context of SPHERE in order to move forward with defining standards.

**Steps in the Sphere Process toward Consensus Building for Standards**

1. Focal point
  - leader in sector
  - field expertise
2. Working group 10-12 people
3. Peer group (email) 40-50 people
4. Field consultations
  - all actors in a sector
  - country-wide
  - region-wide

***Experts Meeting***

In September 2001, an *ad hoc* group was formed to plan for a small meeting of primarily NGO-based experts in education in emergencies. This group received advice and support from Nan Buzard, the Manager of the SPHERE Project. Members of the group were: Jane Benbow (CARE USA), Nancy Drost (Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies), Christine Knudsen (Save the Children USA), Eldrid Midttun (Norwegian Refugee Council), Susan Nicolai (Save the Children Alliance), Mike Pozniak (Catholic Relief Services) and Wendy Smith (International Rescue Committee).

This group planned the meeting, and sponsored the majority of costs, including expenses incurred for the facilitator, and for the participants from Tanzania and Afghanistan. The meeting was held from March 20-22, 2002 at UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris. UNESCO's Unit in Support of Countries in Crisis and Reconstruction and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) hosted the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.hapgeneva.org](http://www.hapgeneva.org) is the site for the Humanitarian Accountability Project, previously called the "Humanitarian Ombudsman".

[www.peopleinaid.org](http://www.peopleinaid.org) is the People In Aid site, a response to the Rwanda evaluation seeking to promote a code of best practice in the management and support of aid workers.

Thirty-one participants attended the Experts Meeting (see Appendix 7). Those invited were primarily from the NGO community, since defining standards for education in emergencies was conceived as an NGO-led initiative. However, one representative from each of the four key UN agencies was also invited. The facilitator was Ivan Scott, Executive Director of the International Health Exchange, based in the UK. Ivan's familiarity with the SPHERE process and his long experience in both humanitarian and development work allowed him to identify the pitfalls in the process before they occurred. He kept the meeting moving through its clear objectives and brought it to a satisfactory and inspiring conclusion.

The purpose of the meeting was to determine the feasibility of developing and implementing a set of standards for education in emergencies (See Appendix 6). As well, if it were to be determined that defining standards was feasible, the other significant purpose of the meeting was to ensure that all participants would agree to support the process. Before decisions were made, the group looked at the implications of what was involved from the example of SPHERE. Then, having understood the complexity of the process, the group was asked to identify the risks and opportunities stemming from engaging in such a process (see Appendix 2). The group decided that the opportunities outweighed the risks, although there were compelling arguments on both sides.

Moreover, several exercises were accomplished so that the participants could simulate the experience of coming to agreement on commonalities and best practices in programming (see Appendix 3), drafting headings for an outline of a publication on standards for education in emergencies (see Appendix 4); and finally defining standards and indicators (see Appendix 5). This was a tremendous amount of work, which could form the basis for the next steps in the process.

### ***Key Decisions and Results***

The decision by the participants was an unequivocal "YES" to designing standards for education in emergencies. It was decided to learn from and build on SPHERE formats and processes as models. As well, support would be sought from a wide range of networks and actors, with INEE as the major vehicle for information dissemination. A number of suggestions about the process were offered (see Appendix 1). At the end of the meeting, the Planning Team was appointed as the Transitional Team (names above) to take decisions related to the start-up of the process toward defining standards in education in emergencies. The first task of the Transitional Team is to set the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Team on Standards, as well as set guidelines for the participation in this team. The timeline set for this task is three months—until the end of June 2002.

## **Appendix 1: BRAINSTORMED SUGGESTIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD WITH A PROCESS TO DEFINE STANDARDS FOR EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES**

### **What players would your group recommend to take this forward?**

- A broadly international group (more European and Southern NGOs)
- Organizations that have significant geographic coverage
- Practitioners, both UN and NGO
- Suggestion for the composition of the team:
  - 2 North Americans, 2 Europeans, INEE Coordinator, 2 UN Agencies and 2 Southern NGOs
  - Group of only 3 people (2 NGOs and 1 UN).

### **What would this group actually do, within the next year?**

A transition group could provide interim leadership to help define the process, and identify a working group.

One suggestion is that a group of 3 would identify a core group of experts with field and consensus building experience, and who are also familiar with the SPHERE process. Other criteria: professional competence, technical expertise, and a willingness to commit time and accomplish work. They would set in motion the process of developing draft standards and indicators. The group of 3 would grow larger and act as a steering committee that would work on drawing in a wider constituency (UN for support and advocacy, links with SPHERE, political and donor network, other NGOs). 1-3 months for this phase.

Use the output of the Experts Meeting as a substantive basis to begin.

Use the process and format of SPHERE.

Spend energy on the process of gaining consensus from a significant consultation, rather than lobbying for inclusion within SPHERE

Link up with other initiatives with similar aims, i.e. the Dakar Follow-Up, etc.

INEE and others could be the major vehicles for information dissemination.

### **What other people/networks/actors could be mobilised to contribute and in what ways?**

INEE	Inter-Agency groups
ICVA	VOICE
FAWE	Save Alliance
ACBAR	PARNAC
InterAction	IASC WG
EFA WG	INGOs
Local NGO networks	SCHR
Global Campaign for Education	Basic Education Coalition
IETC	

## **Appendix 2: RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN DEFINING STANDARDS FOR EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES (brainstorming)**

### **General concerns about defining minimum standards:**

- How to overcome the life-saving argument? Is education life saving?
- How do we go from “minimum” to “maximum” standards?
- The ‘wrong thing’ is promoted as a standard. When standards are inappropriate, they undermine the purpose for quality education.
- We may equate all standards as equal when they may not be.
- For the sake of defining clear standards, they may not have enough nuances.
- Standards should be related to the context -- if they are disproportionate to the context, they can cause protection issues
- Standards for whom? The answer to this question becomes clear by analyzing the process by which they are founded.

### **Risks – mainly over time scale:**

- Can be used as a bureaucratic tool
- Application of “rule” rather than “principle”
- Dulls creativity
- There are too many fundamental differences between educators that need to be addressed and bridged
- Not inclusive enough
- Unable to measure impact effectively – complex programmes, including psycho-social and protection issues
- Trade-offs may occur which may be counterproductive in the end, such as concentrating funds on one aspect while others suffer
- Could cause “one-up-manship” between educationists and psychosocial specialists
- Standards do not necessarily ensure quality or positive changes
- Focus on children and schooling rather than education
- Causes tension between the rapid impact approach desired by donors, and the long-term impact goals of NGOs
- Will standards reflect the aims of long-term sustainability?
- Could bring about conflict with host government
- Creates a situation in which the target population and the local population have unequal services
- Standards may be too low – some saying “hey this is easy”
- A reductionist approach, with an over-emphasis on materials provision.
- Standards may not sufficiently politicize education, and the need to advocate for Education For All
- Lack of coordination
- If funding is not sufficient, standards may not be reached.
- Potential misunderstanding could occur. Schools not able to meet standards might be marginalized.
- Communities may be frustrated if they are not able to understand the rationale for or reach standards
- Will our process be really representative, open, and inclusive of Southern NGOs and communities?
- Assessment procedures may be too complex and standards too difficult follow

- Politicization of intervention...eg complexities of language of tuition
- Confusion over “education” and “schooling”
- Politics and finance issues are too complicated—everyone has different agendas
- No success for “political” reasons and a waste of resources
- Danger of only building the capacity of NGOs and creating parallel systems

### **Opportunities:**

- We have a relatively blank sheet – defining standards for education in emergencies is a new and interesting idea
- We can make it a living document – we are unbound by bureaucracies
- Helpful DME tool
- May increase coordination and coverage, both in process and in practice
- Articulates “quality”
- Standards may promote sound practices, push reflection and sharpen focus
- It’s a learning process for the education community in creating new models
- Emergencies offer opportunity for innovation in education
- New ways for parents, families and communities to be involved
- Community involvement in achieving standards may lead to increased community action and ownership
- Standards and indicators help us answer the question, “What is a good school?”
- Flexible standards could relate well to community needs in emergencies. We can use different types and levels of indicators for different phases of emergencies
- A 3-6 month standards approach can help link to development-oriented models
- Defining educational relevance in new ways
- Allows us to identify appropriate indicators to address quality and relevance; increased time on task, and number of teachers using lesson plans
- Helps us advocate for increased resources, both in and outside of our own organizations
- We can focus our messages, and engage in a dialogue of best practices
- Developing and implementing standards can further “good process” and not just outcomes.
- Promotes the sector of education to other sectors and their specialists, and causes them to interface
- The political process will broaden the consensus between implementing agencies and communities
- Standardized assessments and greater coordination will occur
- Networks will become larger and more inclusive
- Emphasis on integrated approach
- Affected governments can also use the tool
- Will include psycho-social and protection aspects and other cross-sectoral issues
- Gives legitimacy to non-formal education and life long learning
- Provides a better bridge to recovery than other sectors
- Promotes a better knowledge and understanding of rights
- We can further work toward fulfilling people’s rights affirmatively and progressively
- Prevents further trauma and promote protection.

### **Appendix 3: COMMONALITIES IN EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES PROGRAMMING (brainstorming)**

#### **CURRICULUM**

- Developmental approach
- Safety concerns
- Progression towards learning outcomes
- Integration of psychosocial and recreational aspects
- Necessity of context analysis
- Maintenance of school year cycle
- Curriculum of country of origin necessarily starting point
- Adaptation of curriculum to meet special needs (adolescents, child soldiers, adults) including structured activities
- Curriculum enrichment and supplementation: health, peace and environment education, and landmine awareness
- Implementation of both formal and non-formal education
- Community participation
- Government engagement
- Secondary and vocational education and pre-school sometimes neglected

#### **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

- Some type of PTA, School Committee or community-based education group
- Ensuring wide-ranging participation and equitable representation from youth and the affected ethnicities
- Ownership
- Using existing structures
- Starting where you intend to finish (taking a developmental approach)
- Capacity building
- Awareness raising (engaging community resources and capacity)
- Needs assessment
- Building linkages
- Participatory methodologies (PLA)
- Promoting voluntary participation

#### **PARTNERSHIPS**

- We manage a range of levels of partnership

##### **Government--we all work with the authorities:**

- As a means of transition, turnover/capacity building
- For their coordination mechanisms
- For legitimacy

##### **Inter-Agency:**

- Challenges of operational/implementing partnerships and divesting responsibility
- Gap in academic standards, courses, published materials, teacher training
- Challenges in mandates/assumptions, humanitarian imperative, impartiality

#### **TEACHER TRAINING**

Approach to teacher training is contextual and designed to assure that minimal learning outcomes can be achieved with the available pool of teachers and teacher training

In-service, on-the-job, on-going support for teachers

Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation, and informal teacher assessments

Importance of context in choice of teachers

'Due diligence' to reduce political repercussions

Training inclusive of content, methodology, community relations, school management

Teachers as agents of change

Teachers' roles in psychosocial work and protection



## **Appendix 4: PROPOSED CHAPTER OUTLINE**

### **Prologue**

- Rationale
- Concepts
- Principles (needs of the learner are paramount, basics education needs of the population are met, quality, relevance, durability)
- Scenarios
- Timeline
- Cross-cutting issues, intersectoral issues

### **Analysis**

- Assessment
- Design, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Participation

#### **1. Access to Education (targeting)**

- Types of schooling and levels
- Special Needs
- Gender, Equity and Non-Discrimination
- IDPs
- Refugees
- Multiple ethnicities and groups

#### **2. Learning (content and methodology)**

- Origin of Curriculum
- Language of instruction
- School-in-a-box
- Psychosocial issues
- Learning Processes
- Materials

#### **3. Learning environment and resources**

- Health and Nutrition
- Facilities and Construction
- Supplies
- Protection

#### **4. Employment and training of teachers and other educational actors**

- Recruitment of teachers
- Payment of teachers' salaries
- Project Managers
- Support services

#### **5. Community participation and institutional framework**

- Government
- Community Participation
- School Management
- Awareness Campaigns

## **Appendix 5: DRAFT STANDARDS AND INDICATORS**

Five groups attempted to develop standards and indicators to determine whether educational programming lent itself to the same delineation of standards as the other sectors in SPHERE Handbook.

### **1. ACCESS TO EDUCATION (TARGETING)**

Standard 1: Population has access to appropriate educational services

Indicators:

- Needs assessment (including protection problems and needs of targeted populations) to identify barriers to access to education is carried out
- Educational activities take place within reasonable walking distance
- Educational activities take place in a secure environment, and the way to the education facility is also safe
- A pre-determined percentage of the population is able to obtain services
- Awareness campaigns promoting education opportunities are held in the communities
- Appropriate learning opportunities are available for all age groups to promote life long learning
- Specific barriers are addressed: fees, uniforms, supplies, food, hygiene
- Language of instruction is that of target population's

Standard 2: Quality of educational programming is sufficient to meet the population's needs

Indicators:

- A pre-determined percentage of the population completes the course of study
- Participant and community assessment processes are in place
- A reasonable teacher-learner ratio exists
- The curriculum is relevant to learners' needs

Standard 3: Girls and boys, women and men, all have equal access to basic education services

Indicators:

- Analysis of gender-based barriers to education has been accomplished and is ongoing
- Action plans are made to address these barriers
- Statistics are disaggregated by age and sex
- Awareness campaigns, designed and implemented with the community, are mounted on the importance of education for girls and boys

Guidance Notes:

List of 'special needs' groups, emphasizing that children with special needs have a right to education too;

Overview of gender analysis and how it informs programme design and implementation.

## **2. LEARNING (CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY)**

Standard 1: A process of discernment has been undertaken to determine learning activities that reflect the best interests of the child and takes into consideration best practices and the will of the community

Standard 2: Learning activities are of high quality, and respond to the specific needs of learners in crisis.

Standard 3: Flexible and innovative approaches are used to address the range of learners' experiences, the specific circumstances of learners in crisis, and their learning needs.

Standard 4: Content and methodology reflect the specifics of the process of transition from conflict to stability

Guidance Notes:

The relevance of the existing curriculum should be evaluated.

Teaching/learning materials should reflect issues such as survival and life skills and individual and social development, as well as academic learning.

Quality should be evident in the teaching/learning content, methodology and environment, and reflected in the rates of attainment.

## **3. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES**

Standard 1: Teachers and learners are adequately supplied with materials to achieve learning objectives

Indicators:

- Teachers and learners have access to adequate numbers of appropriate textbooks for lesson preparation and learning [guidance note : minimum one book for 3 learners]
- Learner and teacher supplies are sufficient to meet the requirements of the curriculum (including recreational equipment)
- Appropriate seating and writing surfaces are sufficient for the number of students
- Lockable storage facilities are available for laboratory and other valuable equipment
- Library and reference facilities are sufficient to meet teachers' and students' needs for supplementary reading and resource materials
- Special classrooms and facilities are available for students and teachers (laboratory, workshops, staff room)
- Clothing and shoes, soap and sanitary materials are provided to students in schools
- School feeding takes place in situations in which students require meals to obtain optimal benefit from the teaching/learning environment

Standard 2: Learning environments are safe, healthy and conducive to teaching and learning

Indicators:

- Learning activities take place in sound structures or buildings

- Journey to and from learning activity is safe
- Water supply, latrines, lighting/shade, heating/ventilation requirements are consistent with those of SPHERE standards
- Facilities are accessible for persons with disability
- Staff are counseled in appropriate behavior to learners, and the code of conduct/ethics for teachers and education officials are well enforced

#### **4. EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL ACTORS**

Standard 1: A sufficient number of female and male teachers are recruited and trained, who are able to facilitate learning for the target groups

Indicators:

- There is a gender balance (at least 30 % male and female trained) within the teacher population
- Class size allows for a pupil/teacher ratio which is known to be effective for optimal teaching/learning.

Guidance Notes: Strategies to improve teaching/learning effectiveness with large class sizes

Standard 2: Potential teacher candidates have a certain level of education prior to training

Indicators:

- At least 50% of teachers have formal teacher qualifications
- At least 50% of the teachers are from target communities

Guidance Notes:

In situations in which equitable recruitment of women or other special groups requires educational attainment, requirements are lessened, but commensurate in-service training increased

Training plans should include a target date for reaching 50% qualified teachers or equivalent (NGOs cannot award qualified teacher status). [NGOs cannot award qualified teachers status; so the wording must be flexible, to cope with cumulative in-service training of unqualified teachers, e.g. in refugee/ IDP camps and remote areas]

Standard 3: Teachers and other educational actors have minimum conditions of employment and support to enable them to work effectively

Indicators:

- teachers are receiving standardized remuneration as agreed within national context
- in-service and continuing training is regularly provided to build local capacity

## **5. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK**

Standard 1: Communities participate meaningfully in design and management of educational activities in support of learning

Indicators:

- Community Education Committees (PTAs, SMCs) exist and are active
- Community Education Committees are inclusive, equitable and representative
- Actions of Community Education Committees are consistent with HR and humanitarian principles
- Committees activities include planning and support for learning objectives

Standard 2: Educational activities are developed and coordinated by all stake-holders within institutional frameworks and operational guidelines

Indicators:

- Coordination mechanisms exist and function at appropriate levels
- Relevant stake-holders regularly participate in coordination mechanisms
- Students' education is recognized, or at least documented, as meeting accepted standards
- Teachers' training is recognized, or at least documented, as meeting accepted standards in countries concerned
- Institutions meet accepted standards for management, reporting and accountability

Standard 3: Community school committee members and educational officials are provided opportunities to develop their capacity to manage and advocate for education activities

Indicators:

- Training is provided in the areas of education management and project management
- Follow up and support are provided as an integral part of training
- Responsibility is progressively transferred from external agencies

**Appendix 6: Meeting Agenda**  
**Education in Emergencies: Experts' Workshop on**  
**Appropriate Humanitarian Response**  
**Paris 20<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> March 2002**

**Objective for the workshop:** To determine the feasibility of developing and implementing a set of standards for Education in Emergencies

**Agenda: Day One**

**Session One objective:** To give participants the opportunity to introduce themselves, table expectations, and learn about the origins of this process

**9.00-9:45** Welcome to UNESCO  
Participant Introductions  
Expectations  
Objectives for the Workshop

**9:45-10:30** Background to the Education in Emergencies discussions  
How and why have we got to here?  
What is our shared commitment?

**10:30-10:45 Coffee Break**

**Session Two objective:** To introduce participants to the concepts and processes behind the SPHERE project

**10.45-12.30 Presentation**  
The history of the project and process  
How and why it came about, who was involved  
The concept of minimum standards  
Questions and discussion on issues arising

**12:30–1:30 Lunch**

**Session Three objective:** To gain an understanding of progress on the SPHERE experience so far, examining the successes and challenges facing the project in order to inform the education debate

**1.30-3.00 Presentation and group discussion**  
Issues of implementation  
Standards and indicators  
What difference has it made?  
Questions and discussion on issues arising

**3.00-3.45 Coffee Break**

**Session Four: To reflect on the learning from the SPHERE experience and debate the opportunities and risks for the education community in seeking to define and implement standards in emergencies**

**3.15-4.45 Practical groups working on:**  
What are the key opportunities and risks?  
Presentations to plenary

**4.45-5.30** Closing discussion

## **Agenda: Day Two**

9.00-9.30 Summary of previous day, clarification of intended outputs for day 3.

**Session One objective: To gain an understanding of the common principles and practices operating in current emergency education programmes**

a) Small group exercise, mapping common practices in:

- Target groups
- Range of activities

**10:30-10:45 Coffee Break**

**10.45-12.00** Continue with exercise and report back to group on findings from session one

**12.00-12.30** Preparation and briefing for the afternoon

**12:30–1:30 Lunch**

**Session Three & Four objective: To give participants the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in crafting standards for education work**

**1.30-3.00 Practical group exercise**  
5 groups x 6 participants:

- Assessment
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Human resources
- Access to services – general population
- Access to services – special needs population

**3.00-3.15 Coffee Break**

**3.15-4.45** Continue with exercise and report back to plenary

Discussion on findings from process

a) Closing discussion

### **Agenda: Day Three**

9.00-9.30 Summary of previous day, clarification of intended outputs for today

**Session One objective: To determine participants' views on the appropriateness of moving forward on developing standards for education in emergencies**

**9:30-10:30 Small groups followed by Plenary Discussion: do we move forward from here and if so, by what process?**

**10:30-10:45 Coffee Break**

**Session Two objective: To define and agree a plan of action for taking the process forward**

Based on the decision of the previous session, participants will generate a recommended plan covering preparations, actions and timelines for:

**10.45-12.30 Planning for Next Steps**



**Appendix 7: PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING THE EMERGENCY  
EDUCATION EXPERTS MEETING, March 20-22, 2002**

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