Global Trends for Education to Support Stability and Resilience: Research, Programming and Finance

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Developments in the area of education and fragility have accelerated rapidly over the last few years as the concept of fragility has developed and impacted on broader trends in global humanitarian and development agendas. A range of agencies including UN agencies, NGOs, research institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors, are increasing attention on improved education responses in situations of fragility. Initiatives and activities are focused on ensuring quality and accessible education in fragile contexts that also supports broader contributions to state-building, peacebuilding and stability. Trends in research, programming and financing relate back to the need to ensure quality and access in education provision in fragile contexts and the idea that education has a role in mitigating fragility.

Furthering the Fragile States Discourse

The terminology of education and fragility is rooted fundamentally in the fragile states discourse, a product of a converging international dialogue which places the need for state stability within a frame of achieving global security and commitments to human development. The impetus of the fragile states agenda lies in a number of developments over recent years that have received increased international attention to the role of the state in ensuring stability including concerns about regional and global security due to weak state control of borders; the presence of rebel groups or other non-state actors; and the spill-over of instability and conflict across borders. There has also been an increased international focus on governance in ensuring economic and social development and recognition of the fundamental role of governments in providing basic services including meeting international development targets such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The most broadly referenced definition, from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development—Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), functionally defines fragile states as those where there is limited capacity and/or will on the part of the state to provide basic services to its population. This definition, classifies states into two categories: declining and stabilising. Within the 'declining' category there are scenarios of arrested development (i.e. stagnation with low levels of effectiveness and legitimacy) and deterioration (i.e. declining levels of effectiveness leading to lower legitimacy, rising risk of violence or collapse). Within the 'stabilizing' category, scenarios exist of post-conflict transition (i.e. low levels of effectiveness, transitory legitimacy, recent violence, humanitarian crisis) and early recovery (i.e. rising levels of effectiveness and legitimacy, declining international resource requirements, emergence from conflict or other crisis) (OECD-DAC 2008). The table below presents further clarification.

Table 1: DAC Categorization of Fragile States

Category	Definition
1. Deteriorating	Conflict or risk of conflict; weakening capacity and/or weakening will
2. Arrested development	Varied capacity; lack of will; state not using its capacity for pro-poor development
3. Post-conflict reconstruction	Post-conflict, perhaps with risk of re-emergence of conflict; low capacity; low or high will
4. Early recovery	Post-conflict; low capacity; high will

Source: OECD—DAC, 2008

The terminology of "fragility," a spin-off from the deeply controversial label of "fragile states," attempts to avoid the problems of labeling states as fragile (i.e. somehow fundamentally high risk for investment of any sort). It aims to be more constructive in articulating the trends, their causes and their locations with which the international community is concerned. The language has therefore shifted to speak of fragile situations or states affected by fragility as opposed to fragile states. This shift in emphasis removes the state as the only unit of analysis – although the role of the states remains critical – and allows for a deeper exploration of dynamics and actors involved in causing and perpetuating conditions that limit the provision of basic services (including security, justice, health and education) to affected populations.

A broadened concept of fragility allows for wider consideration of contexts, not limited to the demarcation of a state's borders. This may include pockets of fragility within states (e.g. one region of insecurity and lack of services within a broadly stable country), cross-border regions or within groups within the diaspora (e.g. refugee populations). Additionally, fragility encompasses not just a conflict or post-conflict scenario, as it is often conceived, but a broad spectrum of scenarios both declining and stabilising as mentioned above. Contexts of fragility are distinguished first and foremost by instability – political, economic, social – which is often coupled with the presence (or risk of) violent conflict. Fragile situations will be marked by any number or combination of conditions or patterns of fragility including poor governance, repression, corruption, inequality and exclusion, and low levels of social cohesion.

Conceptualizing Education and Fragility

The concept of education and fragility is complex and bidirectional, linking the provision of education – from the level of teachers and students to the full system – to the conditions of fragility present in a given context. Education and fragility refers to the delivery of education services within a situation of fragility and the myriad of complex ways in which the delivery of education may exacerbate or mitigate the existing conditions of fragility. The concept and the agenda are rooted in the convergence of the fragile states discourse (mentioned above), the Education for All (EFA) movement and the education in emergencies agenda. The EFA movement embodies the international commitment to achieve universal primary education for all children worldwide by 2015. The education in emergencies (EiE) agenda builds from a human-rights imperative of the right to education by all people regardless of circumstance, promoting the right to and need for provision of education in all situations of crisis. It links strongly to the EFA movement, particularly given that the majority of children out-of-school live in crisis-affected countries and that these countries are often farthest from achieving EFA goals.

Education and fragility shares with the EFA and education in emergencies discourses the imperative of providing quality and accessible education to all children, including those residing in situations of

conflict, crisis and early recovery. The EiE and education and fragility discourses both assert education's critical contribution to reducing the experience and impacts of crisis and conflict by providing physical protection from danger and exploitation; conveying life-saving information; strengthening survival skills and coping mechanisms; and mitigating psychosocial trauma by giving a sense of normalcy, stability, structure and hope for the future. Education and fragility diverges from the EiE discourse somewhat by coupling this imperative – for ensuring quality education provision in fragile contexts – with the added imperative of education's contribution to stability and resilience at the system and state levels. Education and fragility discourse emphasizes the enabling environment for quality education to occur. Peace, economic stability and good governance are all necessary macro-level conditions to ensure education. The education and fragility discourse believes that education can interact with peacebuilding, state-building and stability to break the cycle of conflict and crisis which contributes to limited educational opportunities and hinders quality and access.

Both the concept and agenda of education and fragility posit a number of assumptions about how and why education can address fragility. Education and fragility presumes that the entire education system plays critical and varying roles in exacerbating or mitigating fragility (from primary to secondary to tertiary as well as other components of the system such as early childhood education and vocational training). The discourse posits that the state must assume responsibility for ensuring the right to education, which means that the state must play some basic and consistent role in ensuring effective delivery (Rose and Greeley, 2006). The discourse also asserts that education plays political, economic and social roles in any country or society (e.g. developing individuals to play a role in governance; contributing to economic development and growth; shaping a shared understanding and identity). Within this frame, the education and fragility agenda focuses on shaping policy and practice for education in fragile situations.

Concerted Action for the Education and Fragility Agenda

As the education and fragility agenda has developed over the last few years, international actors (donors, researchers, policymakers, practitioners) involved in these issues have been pushing towards concerted action in this field. In recent years, a number of disparate activities were undertaken independently – which often duplicated efforts unnecessarily, prompting a push towards greater coordination. From 2005, the OECD-DAC Fragile States Group (now merged with the DAC Network Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation, and known as the DAC Network on Conflict and Fragility) developed a work stream on service delivery in fragile states, including education. A year later, the EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI) developed a Task Team on Fragile States to address issues of support to fragile states to meet EFA. At the same time, bilateral donors, such as the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and other agencies were developing research, strategies and tools for work in fragile states and specific to education (e.g. the development of the USAID Education and Fragility Assessment Tool released in 2006).

Recognizing the need for coordinated action, these and other stakeholders began a series of discussions in October 2006 for the establishment of a single locus of coordination, communication and collaboration. Based on consensus among the main supporters, among them various bilateral donors, NGOs, and UN agencies, the mechanism of an international working group was decided upon. This group would be housed within the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), a global, open network of NGOs, UN agencies, donors, practitioners, researchers and individuals from affected populations working together to ensure the right to education in emergencies and post-crisis reconstruction. The INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility

was subsequently established and held its first meeting in April 2008, involving 21 member agencies from donor, research, NGO and UN communities.[1] This was a major step forward and locating the Working Group within INEE has rooted it strongly in education in emergencies and the EFA movement, as well as within a network with a proven record of successful collaborative advocacy and policy coordination.

<div align="center">Trends in International Action Related to Education and Fragility</div>

Developments in the area of education and fragility have accelerated rapidly over the last few years as the concept of fragility has developed and impacted on broader trends in global humanitarian and development agendas. A range of agencies including UN agencies, NGOs, research institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors, are focusing attention on increased and improved education responses in situations of fragility. This includes both efforts to improve practice and to expand the knowledge base to support such improvements in implementation. From both a humanitarian and development perspective, international NGOs, such as CARE, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Save the Children, and multilateral agencies, such as UNICEF and the World Bank, are working to improve and expand their education programming in a range of fragile contexts. Research institutes are undertaking projects on a range of education issues in fragile contexts from macro-level effects of fragility on teachers, students and schools, to broad, cross-sectoral issues of fragility and stability at the system level.

Internally, many agencies around the globe are shifting their conceptual focus for development and humanitarian response to a framework of fragility. A number of agencies are strengthening their internal strategies, policies and systems for appropriately and effectively responding to education in fragile contexts. The European Commission has developed policy documents outlining European Union responses to fragility including education and has undertaken internal trainings for staff located in states affected by fragility. The World Bank is prioritizing states affected by fragility by including it as a priority in the six "Strategic Themes" announced by World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick in October 2007. As part of this focus, the Bank is reconfiguring internal systems including the development of the State and Peace-building Fund, merging the former Low Income Countries Under Stress (LICUS) Trust Fund and the Post-Conflict Fund, which supports governance improvements and institutional performance to help countries emerge from crisis or reduce the risk of falling into conflict. UNESCO is similarly building its capacity to support education in fragile contexts via its Post-Conflict, Post-Disaster Section in the Education Sector, which provides specialized policy advice and technical assistance to governments and other agencies in crisis-affected contexts, with the aim of strengthening national capacity to manage system-wide educational recovery and reconstruction and to provide quality education for all. A fragile states position has also been created in the technical assistance unit of the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP/UNESCO).

Above all, increased advocacy is making the case for greater attention to education in fragile contexts. A number of organizations are taking the lead in advocating for more attention to education

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1 Members of the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility include: Academy for Educational Development (AED); Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID); CARE International; Center for International Education at University of Massachusetts-Amherst; CfBT Education Trust; Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); Center for Universal Education, Council on Foreign Relations; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ); DFID; Dutch Ministry for Foreign Affairs; Education Development Center (EDC); European Commission (EC); FTI Secretariat; International Rescue Committee (IRC); Reach Out to Asia (ROTA), Qatar Foundation; International Save the Children Alliance; UNICEF; UNESCO; UNESCO Center at University of Ulster; USAID; the World Bank. More information on the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility can be found at www.ineesite.org/educationandfragility.

and fragility issues. INEE has been a prominent voice in this field for almost a decade, particularly in developing and promoting the use of *the INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction*, which serve as an inter-agency, inter-sectoral tool and an initiative whose goal is quality and accessible education in the most challenging situations. While INEE has been at the forefront of advocacy related to education in emergencies and fragile states, other organizations also tackle the issue. The Center for Universal Education at the Council on Foreign Relations has held a number of public forums on the topic. The International Save the Children Alliance has undertaken a major advocacy effort with its 5-year global campaign, "Rewrite the Future" which runs until 2010 and involves all members of the Save Alliance. The campaign focuses on "securing quality education for the millions of children out of school due to war and armed conflict."[2] "Rewrite the Future" is promoting awareness of both the effects of conflict on education and the transformative power of education; as part of this campaign, Save the Children developed "Where Peace Begins," a report detailing education's role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Explicitly or implicitly, this range of initiatives and activities focuses on ensuring quality and accessible education in fragile contexts that also supports broader contributions to state-building, peacebuilding and stability. Beyond this, a number of trends in developments related to education and fragility can be discerned. These trends – in research, programming and financing – relate back to the need to ensure quality and access in education provision in fragile contexts and the idea that education has a role in mitigating fragility.

Research Trends

Research on education and fragility is the latest step in a general topical progression of research on education in emergencies and conflict which began with a review of the destructive impacts of crises and conflict on education provision (i.e. access, quality, management, etc.) and has developed to embrace a more nuanced recognition of the "two faces of education" and education's potential for exacerbating social unrest and conflict (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000). From a deeper understanding of education's contributions to social divisions and conflict comes the belief in education's potential for mitigating conflict and fragility both at the micro-level (i.e. individuals, teachers, students) and the macro-level (i.e. sector or system-wide, state-wide). This latest step towards education and fragility research attempts to tease out and develop evidence on the bidirectional relationship of education and fragility. Researchers are exploring linkages between education and governance, transitional justice and political participation. Issues of youth and secondary education are gaining interest as well as other components of education systems beyond primary are considered in contexts of fragility. [3]

With this progression in thinking and research, major gaps exist in evidence of education's potential to mitigate fragility and, conversely for education's capacity for exacerbating it. Much of the research that does exist is anecdotal and lacks strong, substantive evidence (INEE, forthcoming). A 2008 study by the Conflict and Education Research Group (CERG) at Oxford University synthesized the available data on education and fragility by how the provision of quality education can mitigate

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[2] "Rewrite the Future, Campaign Background." http://www.savethechildren.net/alliance/what_we_do/rewritethefuture/background/index.html. International Save the Children Alliance. Accessed 27 January 2009.

[3] Some researchers on these topics include individuals at the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (on transitional justice), University of Sussex (on political participation) and Oxford University (on youth).

fragility and contribute to peace building, peace dividends, state building, the resilience of institutions and state stabilization (CERG, 2008). Findings from the study outlined both the micro- and macro-level contributions of education to mitigating fragility including:

- state educational provision is a necessary condition for overcoming fragility;
- education can enhance stability by contributing to social cohesion;
- secondary education is an effective contribution to overcoming state fragility;
- education can measurably reduce the risk of civil unrest and violent conflict;
- the perception of inadequate educational service often becomes a grievance that exacerbates state fragility;
- education systems can be a prime site of corruption and a suitable place to establish transparency;
- political manipulation of educational provision and content may increase state fragility;
- education is highly desired by populations affected by state fragility; and
- peace education can have positive effects on students' attitudes.

The major conclusion was, however, that insufficient empirical data exists regarding specific correlations and causations and for how policy and programming can be improved to lessen negative impacts of education on fragility and serve for fragility mitigation. A strengthened base of high quality quantitative and qualitative data is required to effectively influence policy and practice.

A number of agencies are answering the call to expand this evidence base on a number of specific topics within education and fragility. On issues of teaching and learning, GTZ and UNESCO's International Bureau of Education have recently released a major tool for peace education programming – "Learning to Live Together: Design, Monitoring and Evaluation of Education for Life Skills, Citizenship, Peace and Human Rights" – that compliments the previously developed "Learning to Live Together" publication on improving teaching and learning for life skills, citizenship, peace and human rights. Recent and ongoing work by the World Bank and INEE (with the development of the *INEE Guidance Notes for Teacher Compensation in Fragile States, Situations of Displacement and Post-Crisis Recovery*) is focusing on teacher issues including policy, compensation and management. GTZ is also developing macro-level focused research on capacity development for education systems in states affected by fragility, as is IIEP/UNESCO in terms of educational planning and implementation. Similarly, the European Commission has recently commissioned a major field-based study on linkages between education and governance in fragile situations to develop strategies for improved sector governance. Finally, the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility is commissioning major field-based data collections that will synthesize existing tools to interrogate the bidirectional relationship of education and fragility in three situations of fragility. Though the evidence base remains weak, major steps are being taken to remedy this and build knowledge to improve policy and programming.

Programming Trends

In general, significant developments are underway at a host of agencies around the world to improve the way that they "do business" in fragile contexts, aligning particularly with such global commitments as the OECD-DAC Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations, which aim to catalyzing behavior change specifically among donors engaged in fragile contexts. Two trends can be discerned: a) building capacity of those engaged in education in fragile contexts to improve their skills for planning and programming and b) incorporation of conflict

sensitivity or fragility mitigation in education programming. Both trends have the potential for improved practice and enhanced education provision in fragile contexts.

The push towards skills building for those individuals working in situations of fragility is a positive step. Internally, some agencies such as the European Commission and UNESCO are conducting staff trainings for both field-based and headquarters-based staff to increase their ability to appropriately plan, develop internal policies and systems, and implement programming for education in fragile contexts. IIEP/UNESCO is also focusing its 2009 Summer School on education and fragility including national and international policy issues and the implications for planning that relate to education and fragility. Representatives from Ministries of Education around the world will be trained on planning, capacity development, implementation, monitoring and resource mobilization that takes into account the fragile contexts in which education occurs and the need to (re)build resilience.

The broad attention to education's role in fragility has spurred the development of a number of education and fragility specific tools meant to incorporate sensitivity and mitigation into programming. The incorporation of fragility mitigation within programming also serves to link education explicitly and substantively with conditions of fragility. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) released its Education and Fragility Assessment Tool in 2006 which serves as a sector-wide assessment of education provision (including access, quality, relevance, equity and management) via various domains (economic, governance, security, social) and conditions (public disengagement, corruption, insufficient capacity, organized violence, transitional dynamics, exclusion) of fragility. The Education and Fragility Barometer, released by CfBT Education Trust and Save the Children, is an early warning tool that identifies trends and developments within education provision at both school and national levels that link to broader indicators of fragility and provide indication of worsening conditions. Use of this tool to gauge education implementation's impacts on fragility not only facilitates conflict prevention but also focuses programming on education to reduce fragility. Finally, the Fast Track Initiative (FTI) Progressive Framework has been developed by the Task Team on Fragile States to facilitate interim sector planning in fragile contexts and develop those states' capacity to reach EFA goals. As a planning instrument, the Progressive Framework serves educational planners in fragile contexts to diagnose the interlinked education and fragility issues in their context and develop appropriate measures that respond to the enormous educational needs while incorporating fragility mitigation and conflict sensitivity.

The extent and depth of these trends is not fully discernible. While it is clear that agencies working more directly with governments are looking at both sides of the education and fragility relationship, it is less clear how, and to what extent, the daily operations and activities of NGOs and other organizations focused on educational provision on the ground have been impacted. Whether global, and perhaps headquarters-based, initiatives and trends have influenced operations in situations of fragility in a way that adjusts activities to improving practice both for provision and mitigating fragility is an open question. Answering it requires further investigation and evaluation both internally to organizations and from outside sources.

Financing Trends

Perhaps the most substantive progress for the education and fragility agenda has been related to education finance in states affected by fragility. These developments have linked the education and fragility agenda to the aid effectiveness agenda and global commitments such as the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, resulting in shifts in policy and practice. The strong

focus on financing responds to low and declining rates of aid provided to fragile states overall, situated within a growing recognition that education is a critical component of humanitarian responses and can serve longer-term goals of economic growth and stability in fragile contexts. Financing therefore, must both be increased and delivered more effectively in order to ensure and improve education service delivery in fragile situations.

Extensive activities have been undertaken to advocate for increased aid to education and to develop strategies for improved effectiveness given the myriad of constraints and challenges in fragile contexts. For example, Save the Children's groundbreaking report *Last in Line, Last in School: How donors are failing children in conflict-affected fragile states* first released in 2007 and updated in 2008, (re-titled *Last in Line, Last in School: How donors can support education for children affected by conflict and emergencies* in 2008). This report was released as part of its "Rewrite the Future" campaign and reviews trends in the quantity and target locations of aid from a comprehensive list of major bilateral and multilateral donors. It highlights the underfunding of education in fragile contexts which does not meet the needs of the 37 million out-of-school children who reside in 'conflict affected fragile states'. Recommendations include aligning aid to education in "conflict-affected fragile states" with the levels provided to other low-income countries and including education in all humanitarian responses and policies. A further edition of the report will be released in 2009.

INEE, long an advocate for including education in humanitarian response, has also taken the lead in advocating increased aid to education in states affected by fragility. In October 2008, the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility convened the 2008 INEE Policy Roundtable on Education Finance in States Affected by Fragility, hosted by the European Commission in Brussels. A framing paper for the event, developed by CfBT Education Trust, reviewed financing modalities for education and their effectiveness in relation to the Paris Declaration. The event brought together a diverse group of 45 representatives from donor agencies, UN and NGO practitioners, government representatives, and researchers/academics to review existing and new financing modalities for education in situations of fragility and chronic crises. The aim of the Roundtable was to determine how these modalities can better respond to the challenges faced by the sector, including the most effective mix and phasing of modalities.

 Other recent events have similarly drawn attention to the issues of financing education in fragile situations and are helping to solidify key messages. In the lead up to the EFA High Level Group meeting in Oslo in December 2008, a Norwegian EFA Forum entitled "Financing of education in fragile situations: Challenges and innovation" was organized by the Norwegian National Commission for UNESCO, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norad and the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research in early November 2008. This event built on the inputs and outcomes from the INEE Policy Roundtable, as did a further event in Doha in late November 2008. A high level discussion on financing education in conflict affected areas was convened on the occasion of the Doha follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. This event concluded with a statement on the right to education in situations affected by conflict with a recommendation to donors and governments to increase funding to implement EFA in conflict-affected areas. Additionally, the EFA High Level Group meeting took up the issue of financing for education in states affected by fragility and included it in their final declaration from the meeting in December 2008.

Impacts to Date of the Education and Fragility Agenda

Specific impact of the increased attention to education and fragility are difficult to distill. It could be said that the exponential growth in attention to these issues is in itself a major step forward. With more agencies and individuals (including researchers, donors, practitioners) better attuned to the complexities of education in fragile situations, these challenges are considered and acted upon as part of policy and programme responses.

One of the most substantial impacts already noted is related to financing. A primary recent achievement is the creation of an Education Transition Fund to provide financing to states affected by fragility to reach EFA. The creation of the Education Transition Fund is the result of corresponding and converging efforts and actions by a multitude of actors recognizing that the practical limitations of certain countries affected by fragility to develop and implement credible education sector plans essentially locks them out of FTI endorsement and Catalytic Fund financing. These challenges were analyzed at length by the FTI Task Team on Fragile States, exploring possibilities for how these countries could be better engaged. When recommendations were presented by the Task Team at the October 2008 FTI Steering Committee meeting, decisions were taken to develop an Education Transition Fund that would focus on funding interim education sector plans of states affected by fragility. The Fund builds on work started through a major donation from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to UNICEF for education in emergencies activities. Currently, FTI and UNICEF are developing the operational arrangements for the Fund, to be administered by UNICEF, which will take shape over the course of upcoming months. Meanwhile, a number of other major donors including DFID, the European Commission, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and AusAID have already signaled their intention to contribute to the Education Transition Fund.

Also finance-related, INEE is undertaking a major initiative to consolidate knowledge and lessons learned in order to build the capacity of country-based actors (governments, donors, etc) to make effective decisions regarding financing modalities. This initiative responds to a major recommendation from the 2008 INEE Policy Roundtable that country-based actors often lack the capacity and knowledge to make effective decisions about the use and implementation of different financing modalities in contexts of fragility given the varying constraints and challenges faced. The INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility will therefore develop and widely disseminate further analysis and guidance on the use of specific financing modalities for education in fragile contexts that would enable appropriate engagement and informed decision-making on finance by national governments and partners on the ground. INEE will work through the 21 member agencies of the Working Group as well as engage other stakeholders including the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) to develop and roll-out "INEE Guidance Notes on Financing Modalities in States Affected by Fragility."

From a policy perspective, the increased visibility of education and fragility issues on the global education scene is encouraging. This is particularly true for the EFA agenda, with the increasing recognition that states affected by fragility are generally those farthest from achieving EFA goals by 2015. The 2009 Global Monitoring Report chose as its theme "Overcoming inequality: why governance matters." The report concludes that good governance is imperative in order to overcome the persistent inequalities that limit progress towards EFA. Issues of education governance and the need to overcome educational inequalities are at the heart of education and fragility challenges; not surprisingly, the 2009 report includes numerous references to fragility. The planned 2010 GMR topic of marginalization will also address issues of substantial relevance to education and fragility.

Similarly, the declaration released by the EFA High Level Group following its December 2008 meeting in Oslo – and signed onto by Ministries of Education, multilateral/bilateral agencies, civil society and private sector organizations worldwide – focused attention on education and fragility issues of financing and capacity development as fundamental to reaching EFA in these contexts. The statement also built off of the recommendation from previous events (INEE Policy Roundtable, EFA Forum and Doha discussions) that aid for states affected by fragility should "use more flexible, timely and innovative mechanisms."

<div align="center">Gaps and Remaining Challenges Moving Forward</div>

Despite increasing attention and increased impact, a myriad of challenges remain. A new concern on the international scene is the impact of new and emerging global crises – financial and economic, food, climate, etc. – in exacerbating fragility and contributing to a new set of challenges for education in fragile situations. At this point, the strongest messages related to global crises are recommendations to maintain funding for education (and other service delivery sectors) despite the financial crisis and global economic downturn.

Cross-sectoral linkages must be increased between the education and fragility agenda and a range of other sectors. The ability to envision and practically explore these linkages is critical for putting education on the table within a macro-level perspective of state stability and development. Particularly important is the link between governance and education which deserves (and is beginning to receive) much greater attention. The linkage within service delivery exists between education and many other sectors, such as health, security or justice; overlaps and complementarities for policy, finance and programming should be considered with these and other sectors from a service delivery perspective. The peacebuilding and state-building communities, including the UN Peacebuilding Commission, are additional major new audiences with which the education and fragility community should engage. Education and fragility should reach outside the box – beyond, for example, the benefits of peace education – to consider a range of other contributions education could make to both peacebuilding and state-building from school to sector-wide levels.

Above all, the evidence gap – the need for strong empirical evidence regarding education's relationship with fragility at both the micro- and macro-level – remains a serious stumbling block for the field. A wide range of research questions are emerging that need to be addressed about the serious complexities of the relationship between education and fragility. For example, how does education provide increased opportunities to individuals in fragile contexts while also perhaps increasing the vulnerability of these individuals? How does the relationship between education and fragile situations, which are both heterogeneous, vary depending on context and objectives of education? How can a pool of educated citizens impact long-term economic growth but also have a potentially destabilizing effect caused by an educated but disenchanted population without short-term options for using their education? Without deeper, quality evidence about these relationships, strategies, planning, programming and finance cannot be improved. Lack of evidence regarding education's role in fragility also limits the ability of the education and fragility agenda to link cross-sectorally and with the peacebuilding and state-building agendas. Educationalists must be able to point to concrete, evidence-based linkages between education and fragility in order to facilitate communication and coordination with these communities; to date, these linkages are less than concrete.

Critical to success in improved policy and practice for education in situations of fragility is an adequate understanding and constant attention to complexities. There are no easy answers,

unencumbered assumptions, clear linkages or straight trajectories. Education cannot and will not be a panacea for fragility and conflict and we must be realistic about these limitations. However, the belief that we can do better in ensuring quality education provision within these constraints must be at the heart of any and all actions and activities regarding education and fragility.

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