

## Working Group on Minimum Standards – Outcome Document

### INEE's Minimum Standards as a Tool for Donors: Potential Uses, Challenges and Recommendations

This document represents a summary of the framing paper on potential donor use of INEE's Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction (INEE Minimum Standards), together with the additional recommendations and suggestions made during the working group discussions at the policy roundtable.<sup>1</sup> The recommendations address different challenges for donors that were identified in using the INEE Minimum Standards: need for contextualization; internal divisions within agencies; budget support/SWAPs strategies; limited awareness, limited capacity, and differing levels of institutionalization; general skepticism towards the standards.

#### Potential Uses of the INEE Minimum Standards for Donors

**To improve internal coordination:** The INEE Minimum Standards can serve as a tool to promote collaboration and coordination between departments within large agencies (e.g. education sector, emergency sector, child protection sector, humanitarian action, policy, multilateral, partnerships etc), and also between the additional divisions which operate between different geographical regions, between HQ and the field.

This may include/require the following actions:

- Map information about who/which unit is responsible for education in emergencies, and if it does not exist, create a mechanism for bringing together various units/branches;
- Nominate a focal point for the standards (distributing the handbook and related policies /widely), participating in INEE activities and INEE Minimum Standards trainings, organizing internal agency inter-sectoral meetings/discussions etc;
- The standards enable policy/program actors to utilize a common framework across departments as they explore the various mechanisms for working together and moving the process through the system.

**As a tool for internal advocacy:** The INEE Minimum Standards can provide a concrete demonstration of education's position as a humanitarian sector, and of the important role that education plays in times of crisis; this can then create the necessary political will for policy development and for increased funding allocations earmarked for education

This may include/require the following actions:

- *Process:* Internal campaigns and mobilization of the different departments/units working in the above, as well as building a diverse coalition of actors within agency, including non-program sections, such as finance, to make the case for the standards. This may require significant intra-organizational learning to understand the priorities and work strategies of other departments;
- Even if not directly involved in the work, non-operational departments and non-like minded departments (e.g. finance) are briefed on education in emergencies and the Standards as a tool.

**To build capacity and technical expertise:** The INEE Minimum Standards can be used explicitly as a training and capacity building tool within the agency and for partners working with it.

This may include/require the following actions:

- Briefings for all new staff on the standards during orientation;
- INEE Minimum Standards modules included in in-house knowledge development/organizational learning processes (e.g. intranet);
- INEE Minimum Standards materials are used within staff training systems (at various levels) and included within training materials;
- A nominated Focal Point for the standards takes a lead on dissemination/training activities and also monitors training and capacity building on the Standards and its impacts.

Recommendations were made that INEE develop a package of on-line training and capacity building materials on education in emergencies, and that complementary materials on the INEE Minimum Standards be tailored to donors.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from paper written by Jackie Kirk for the CIDA-INEE Policy Roundtable, June 2006.

***To develop policy:*** The INEE Minimum Standards can serve as a framework for developing stand alone and/or integrated policies relating to education in emergencies, fragile states and reconstruction contexts (education, humanitarian response, protection) that promote rights-based programming and establish relevant linkages to child protection.

This may include/require the following actions:

- Use the standards as a checklist to review policy in development;
- Use standards as a framework around which to structure new policy;
- Endorse the INEE Minimum Standards within policy, and explain why the agency endorses the standards, their complementarity to existing policies, and how they should be applied;
- Explicitly say ‘use the INEE Minimum Standards’ in the policy document;
- Education policy is disseminated to staff at all levels and partners, as appropriate.

***To coordinate internal funding streams:*** The INEE Minimum Standards represent global consensus on good practice and necessary interventions as well as a blueprint for quality education spanning emergency and development phases; once different units are working together around the standards then it is hoped that longer-term and better coordinated programs and more continuous funding streams will be established.

This may include/require the following actions:

- Use standards as a framework for analysis of different funding schemes regarding timing and sequencing, compatibility, gaps, etc;
- Use standards to guide the sequencing of funding and promote internal coordination in order to bridge stages of response and longer-term concerns (e.g. use the standards to bridge potential funding interruptions between humanitarian, protection, and education sections);
- Use information gained through initial assessments to prepare and share across departments and use information/knowledge for preparing funding channels for the future.

***To promote preparedness capacity of the agency and its partners to respond to and mitigate emergency situations in and through education:*** The INEE Minimum Standards can be used as a basis to develop preparedness before emergencies.

This may include/require the following actions:

- Ensure that education is always included in country contingency plans;
- Use the standards to identify conflict prevention/disaster preparedness activities in education sector to prioritize for funding;
- Use the standards in dialogue with Ministries of Education to promote and provide examples of disaster preparedness planning in the sector;
- Ensure that all education staff in all country programs (even development programs in apparently stable countries) are familiar and able to work with the Minimum Standards (rather than waiting for emergencies to occur).

***To frame and foster inter-agency policy dialogue, coordination, advocacy and action (through the program cycle):*** The INEE Minimum Standards provide an overall framework for coordinated efforts across different agencies and stakeholders in the education sector that makes it much easier to identify funding gaps and priorities.

This may include/require the following actions:

- Use the standards as a framework for joint analysis of a situation and coordination around which actions will be taken up by which actors, where, when, etc. For example, use of the standards within cluster processes and as a framework for Joint Assessment Missions (JAMs);
- Use the holistic nature of the INEE Minimum Standards to help target/prioritize funding gaps, to make sure key components are funded;
- In specific country contexts, agencies develop a white paper on education in emergencies, and link with other policy agendas about how the standards fit in with various initiatives. For example, paper would look at the underpinnings of INEE Minimum Standards, how these fit within country policy frameworks (e.g. EFA linkages, poverty reduction, vulnerability reduction);
- Donors, in bilateral negotiations with partners, work in a coordinated way to promote the use of the standards;
- Use the standards to understand capacity and to support organizational analysis of potential partner capacity.

***To promote quality and relevance in donor-funded programs:*** The INEE Minimum Standards provide a practical framework and detailed good practice guidelines, following the Do No Harm philosophy, that donor agency staff at all

levels can readily use to promote quality, consistency and equity and assess performance at the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of education program development. They can help to regulate and standardize the quality of education programs and help hold donors accountable as they build capacity to monitor and ensure quality.

This may include/ require the following actions:

- Use the standards to refine funding proposal guidelines;
- Ask for potential recipients of funding to explain how they will use the standards in proposals;
- Use the standards to inform program design;
- Use the standards to assessment, monitoring and evaluation;
- Give input to INEE feedback process about the standards content, which will inform the revision (2008);
- Allocate resources to additional research studies and tool development, linked to/building upon the standards, in order to inform and drive forward the field of quality and relevant education in emergencies. An identified priority are case studies of good practice for presenting the standards as a tool for governments, and for partnering with governments;
- Match policy statements with institutional mechanisms to ensure that funding is available for all the key components of education activities as highlighted in the standards.

***To promote accountability:*** The INEE Minimum Standards provide transparent, aspirational good practice norms for all stakeholders to know and utilize, and as a resource for constructive feedback and self-correction by implementing agencies, donor monitoring and external evaluators. As people become aware of the INEE Minimum Standards, and they become normative, donors themselves will be accountable for meeting the standards.

This may include/require the following actions:

- Using the standards' right-based format for assessment, design, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting activities (of agency and implementing partners);
- Use the standards as a common framework for reporting;
- Dialogue with other stakeholders to select and commit to contextualizing and working on specific indicators;
- Use the standards to encourage/advocate for beneficiary/ community participation;
- Ask for potential recipients to incorporate the standards in proposals, particularly those around accountability. Also use the standards as a guide for opening up a discussion on accountability – using indicators;
- Expect to receive from partners on the ground a map/menu of indicative indicators that can help to set specific indicators for projects/what is relevant (based on contextualization of the standards);
- Expect and support matching/comparison of local/national standards and the INEE Minimum Standards from implementing partners;
- Work with governments to compare government standards with the INEE Minimum Standards, and identify areas of convergence for collective attention (including monitoring);
- Use the standards to ensure continuity of funding and programming and thereby maximize impact of aid for financial efficiency/aid effectiveness.

#### ***Other Recommendations to INEE which will support donors' use of the INEE Minimum Standards***

- INEE should prioritize fundraising for evaluation studies in order to help counter the 'general skepticism' to the standards;
- INEE and FTI (and others) should work together to produce case studies that illustrate how implementation of the INEE Minimum Standards can help meet the Education For All goals.
- INEE should implement a strategic advocacy plan around the standards that emphasizes the fact that the INEE Minimum Standards are not new; rather that they are a consensus on best practice around the world. Some of the different stakeholders INEE should engage with in relation to advocacy around the standards are:
  - Governments (i.e. donor governments and recipients governments, especially Ministries of Education, but also other ministries and departments)
  - World Bank and other International Finance Institutions
  - Private donors/foundations
  - Regional bodies (such as ADEA)
  - Continental and regional NGO/ NGO networks (i.e. FAWE, Global Campaign for Education, Cooperation Sud)
  - UN agencies
  - Multi-donor funding mechanisms (i.e. FTI)
  - Universities