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جامعة نيويورك أبوظبي
NYU Abu Dhabi

Outcome Report

INEE Evidence for Education in Emergencies Workshop:

Setting an INEE Learning Agenda

MARCH 2019

Acknowledgments

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The Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is an open, global network of representatives from non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, donor agencies, governments, and academic institutions that are working together to ensure the right to a safe, good-quality education for all people affected by crises. To learn more, please visit www.ineesite.org.

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Summary

On 28 September 2018, the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies ([INEE](#)), together with the Journal on Education in Emergencies (JEiE) and NORRAG, held a workshop at New York University on evidence for education in emergencies (EiE). This event brought together a select group of public and private sector policymakers, practitioners, funders, and researchers to share updates on research and learning agendas, highlight evidence gaps in the field, and discuss the development of an INEE Learning Agenda that could be used to track evidence creation and build consensus around research gaps and themes for investigation (*see Annex I: Workshop Agenda and Annex II: List of Participants*). This was the first in a series of inter-agency workshops with a focus on evidence for the field of EiE.



The Time is Right for an INEE Strategic Research Agenda

Though humanitarian actors increasingly acknowledge the [critical importance of education](#) in crisis contexts, the international aid community is faced with [substantial shortfalls](#) in education funding, and a [lack of robust and accessible evidence](#) as to what works to promote safety and learning for children and youth in such contexts. While the sector needs to move beyond the narrative that EiE has no evidence on which to build programming and interventions, it stands that much of the existing evidence is program- or agency-specific and not widely accessible. It therefore remains vital that new research produces quality global public goods and that the limited funding available to EiE supports evidence-based and evidence-generating interventions and programs. Workshop participants highlighted that the lack of an accessible, robust evidence base has resulted in the sector investing time and money in projects that may not be effective, and that it is time for stakeholders to think about the cost of *not* doing adequate research.

In fact, an exciting new wave of research and learning partnerships are underway. Workshop participants highlighted the following research initiatives, among many others: the [Evidence for Education in Emergencies \(E-Cubed\) Research Envelope](#) (Dubai Cares and INEE); [USAID's Learning Agenda](#) for its EICC work; the [Accelerated Education Working Group's Learning Agenda](#); the [Connected Learning Consortium](#); the [Teachers in Crisis Contexts INEE Collaborative](#); Building Evidence in Education (BE2); the IRC-IPA collaboration on impact evaluations; the [research partnership](#) between ECW, Global Education Cluster, INEE, and UNHCR; the [Education Equity Research Initiative](#); [Education in Emergencies: Evidence for Action](#) (3EA: NYU Global TIES and IRC) and the 3EA MENAT measurement consortium; [Whole of Syria Education Focal Point](#) (NYU, UNICEF, Save the Children – 17 collaborating experts); ECCN's [Safer Learning Environments](#) Working Group; etc.

Given the sector-wide momentum that these new research and learning initiatives bring to strengthening the existing EiE evidence base, participants agreed that *now* is an opportune moment for INEE to convene a discussion and develop a shared learning agenda in collaboration with its members and partners. The diversity in the room at the workshop - spanning a broad range of practitioners, academics and funders - also reflects the spirit of INEE: individuals coming together to move forward a collective agenda.

The starting point for the discussion of an INEE Learning Agenda is that it would present a joint framework for:

1. An inventory of research/ learning that stakeholders have completed, plan to take forward, or are currently engaged in. This would include links to the evidence that eventually emerges from the research.
2. A chart of remaining key knowledge gaps, categorized within thematic areas, across the education in emergencies spectrum.

As such, an INEE Learning Agenda would aim to build collective consensus around research gaps, themes, and guiding questions for investigation. It would help stakeholders build on and connect with existing evidence, leverage comparative advantages in the field, and reduce duplication of work with the aim of inspiring key stakeholders to engage in complementary research and learning agendas, and activities. INEE recognizes that a learning agenda must remain flexible and responsive to changing needs and priorities in the sector. It would therefore seek to develop both a learning agenda as well as produce a tool such as a curated online EiE data and evidence repository to increase access to existing resources and enable users to identify their own evidence gaps through this repository. Ultimately, the INEE Learning Agenda could be a key resource for INEE members and other partners, such as practitioners, policymakers, and funders, interested in engaging in, learning from, and taking up sound research, as well as academics, students, and researchers who wish to produce relevant research for the field of education in emergencies.

Workshop Group Work

Prior to the workshop, participants were asked to consult with colleagues on key EiE evidence and knowledge gaps and then answer four questions accordingly:

1. List the research and learning activities that you/ your research institution and/or organization and/or inter-agency group are involved with (or planning to work on).
2. Describe any links that you/your research institution / organization has to other existing research or learning agendas.
3. After consulting with research partners in your organization, rank the top 5 knowledge gaps for the EiE field (thematic areas) that should be prioritized within the INEE Learning Agenda and explain why.
4. Within each thematic area that you have prioritized in your response to question #3, what research question(s) is/are the most important for the INEE Learning Agenda and why?

This information was compiled and shared at the workshop, forming the basis of an [EiE Evidence Gap Chart](#) including evidence and knowledge gaps, as well as relevant research and/or learning that is planned, on-going, or completed within thematic areas.



According to pre-workshop questionnaire responses, the top 5 knowledge gaps (based on a tabulated mention of gaps) are:

1. Evaluation practices & research methods
2. Teachers (professional development, training, etc.)
3. Best practices in translating theory into practice, including program models and implementation

4. Early Childhood Development
5. Refugees and IDPs

Other thematic areas mentioned included: child protection, social and emotional learning, peacebuilding, information and communication technologies and education, and the humanitarian-development nexus etc.

The knowledge gaps identified within the Gap Chart are organized around the domains of the [INEE Minimum Standards](#) since the standards provide a common framework and language for the EiE sector, including for its practitioners and researchers:

Domain 1: Foundational Standards (Coordination, Participation, Analysis) & **Domain 5:** Education Policy

- Knowledge gaps & discussion themes: *System strengthening, integration, scale, sustainability, humanitarian/development coherence*

Domain 2: Access and Learning Environment

- Knowledge gaps & discussion themes: *Access, equity and inclusion, protection and well-being, cross-sectoral linkages*

Domain 3: Teaching and Learning

- Knowledge gaps & discussion themes: *Curriculum, SEL, instruction and learning processes, assessment of learning outcomes, technology*

Domain 4: Teachers and Other Education Personnel

- Knowledge gaps & discussion themes: *Teacher management and support, professional development, well-being and motivation, resilience*

This chart was used as the foundation for workshop small group discussions, during which participants discussed, refined and added to the proposed knowledge gap thematic areas and questions as well as noted additional research that is being carried out or planned for each thematic area but not yet captured in the chart. Participants also discussed which stakeholders (researchers, institutions, initiatives, funders) were not represented at the workshop and ways to connect with and incorporate them into the learning agenda development process. These discussions and additional questionnaire responses are also captured in the [EiE Evidence Gap Chart](#). This chart presents a foundation for a mapping of research and learning initiatives, and knowledge and evidence gaps, which INEE and its partners could build upon and refine during development of the learning agenda.

Setting a Path Forward: Workshop Recommendations

The INEE 2018-2023 Strategic Framework includes a strategic priority to *provide, curate, and organize knowledge to inform policy and practice*. Efforts to develop an INEE Learning Agenda therefore directly support INEE's Strategic Framework. One important outcome of the workshop was strong participant support for INEE to lead the development of a learning agenda in collaboration with partners. As a neutral and trusted convener in the EiE sector, it was felt that INEE was well placed to take such an initiative forward.

The workshop resulted not only in this overarching support for an INEE Learning Agenda process to move forward, but also in specific recommendations on the process and scope, which are described below.

Recommendations on Process

It was noted several times that this workshop is only an *initial* convening to begin a conversation and action toward developing an inventory of research and evidence gaps. Moving forward, INEE could convene a series of workshops in collaboration with partners. INEE could also conduct a membership-wide consultation via the INEE website and listserv, in order to reflect on, refine, and further develop the recommendations for an INEE Learning Agenda.



Workshop participants recommended that co-convenors working together with INEE involve not only education in emergencies sector stakeholders, but also those from others sectors who have undergone similar processes, such as in health, protection, and security.

There was overwhelming support for a return to 'INEE's roots' in terms of lifting grassroots voices from around the world to identify knowledge gaps and develop an inventory of evidence. It was noted, however, that such a broad consultative process, like the one used in the development of the INEE Minimum Standards, would be lengthy and costly, and would therefore require significant investment and active cost-sharing by INEE members and partners.

Some of the initial next steps as well as ways of participating are laid out in Annex III. Several workshop participants noted the importance of keeping the momentum moving forward, as this learning agenda has the potential to influence decision-making and funding in the field, such as the development of ECW's Acceleration Facility.

Recommendations on Scope

There was some difference of opinion as to whether the INEE Learning Agenda should present a prioritization of gaps or simply be an inventory of research and evidence, identifying who is doing what and noting where there are gaps. In support of the latter, several participants expressed that it would be difficult to build consensus about prioritization of gaps among a diverse group of individuals and organizations. However, others noted that now is the time for INEE to adhere to its Strategic Priority to *provide thought leadership and global advocacy*, and urged INEE to take a stronger voice and prioritize gaps, while recognizing that academics and

organizations will adhere to their own research agendas as well. Regardless of prioritization, it was agreed that a learning agenda could help to identify gaps, surfacing under-researched and under-funded critical questions, and mapping who is doing what to ensure complementarity amongst academics and practitioners and to help funders identify where to allocate funds.

Several workshop participants recommended the learning agenda include a focus on crises everywhere, including disasters, natural hazards, and epidemics, in an effort to bridge the divide between the global North and South and better link humanitarian and development programming. It was also recommended that the agenda should not only track research and identify gaps in evidence, but also help to guide research toward the *kinds of questions* which are most likely to lead to meaningful change. This includes understanding successful implementation (the how) and evidence on cost effectiveness. Several participants noted that ultimately the purpose of developing an evidence base should not just be for accountability to funders, but also to learn how to improve interventions and learning outcomes for the affected population. Related recommendations pertaining to the scope of the learning agenda included:

- Guidance on methods, priorities of approach and what constitutes “good and rigorous” research in terms of the type of research that will contribute to the field and strengthen practice, building upon what has already been written.
- Guidance on research ethics for members to use when they conduct research, building upon what has already been written.
 - Who is involved in conducting the research: co-creation of research helps to integrate uptake and visibility of issues on the ground such as disability.
- Guidance on implementation research to determine if the program was implemented well and how to adapt and scale interventions. This includes understanding dosage effect, scaling, and M&E, in an effort to create faster feedback loops to better understand how interventions can be adapted for effect in EiE.
- Guidance on what categories of research best fit the various research topics/themes, such as descriptive data, exploratory research, and explanatory research.
- Guidance on applying the research cycle to the EiE field, including first identifying gaps and then moving to replicating studies. In order to make sure that findings are available for other contexts, the field needs to improve research dissemination and uptake of learning, including organizational learning. This stresses the importance of defining and implementing strategies for advancing research and then translating it into practice, rather than just a laundry list of research topics.

The workshop ended with a summation of key points raised throughout the day, speaking to INEE’s key role in capturing evidence gaps in research and curating research, highlighting who is doing what and what others have done in order to ensure that an INEE Learning Agenda becomes a tool for evidence-building and learning in the EiE field.

Find the workshop agenda, participant list, and proposed development process in the annexes below.

Annex I: Agenda

Annex II: Participant list

Annex III: Proposed learning agenda development process

Annex I: Agenda



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NYU Wagner
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Annex II: Participant list

Name	Organization
Alice Wuermli	NYU Global TIES for Children
Allison Anderson	Columbia - SIPA
Allyson Krupar	Save the Children
Amber Heuvelmans	INEE
Amy Kapit	Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack
Anna Azaryeva Valente	UNICEF
Annina Mattsson	Dubai Cares
April Coetzee	War Child Holland
Arianna DiCicco	Journal on Education in Emergencies
Ash Hartwell	ECCN / Center for International Education, UMass
Ben Steiner	INEE
Carina Omoeva	FHI 360
Carine Allaf	Qatar Foundation International
Claudia Segura	Journal on Education in Emergencies
Cornelia Janke	USAID ECCN Support Team, International Development Division, Education Development Center
Daisy Vazquez	Porticus
Dana Burde	NYU (JEiE)
Dean Brooks	INEE
Deborah Osomo	Journal on Education in Emergencies
Devon McLorg	BRAC USA
Elisabeth King	NYU
Emily Travis	DFID / Education Cannot Wait
Emily Varni	Teachers College, Columbia University
Garnett Russell	Teachers College, Columbia University
Gita Steiner-Khamsi	NORRAG
Graham Lang	Education Cannot Wait
Haider Fancy	NYU
Jamie Weiss Yagoda	IRC
Jennifer Sklar	IRC
Jennifer Kotler Clarke	Sesame Workshop
John Gershman	NYU Wagner

Kate Lapham	Open Society Foundations
Kelsey Shanks	GCRF
Kim Foulds	Sesame Workshop
Laura Davison	INEE
Lauren Gerken	INEE
Leigh Watts	NYUAD
Linda Jones	UNICEF
Lindsey Fraser	INEE
Maria Agnese Giordano	Global Education Cluster
Mark Ginsburg	University of Maryland
Mary Mendenhall	Teachers College, Columbia University
Nathan Thompson	Journal on Education in Emergencies
Nessa Kenny	Innovations for Poverty Action
Peter Hyll-Larsen	INEE
Rahma Alshamsi	Dubai Cares
Rebecca Wolfe	Mercy Corps
Rena Deitz	NYU / IRC
Ruth Naylor	Education Development Trust
Sabrina Taveras	NYU Wagner
Sarah Smith	IRC
Sneha Bolisetty	Journal on Education in Emergencies
Sonja Anderson	INEE
Sonya Temko	Ecological Approaches to Social Emotional Learning (EASEL) Laboratory, Harvard Graduate School of Education
Susan Ayari	Creative Associates International
Thea Abu El-Haj	Barnard College, Columbia University
Zeena Zakharia	University of Massachusetts, Boston

Annex III: Proposed learning agenda development process

Process:

In line with the NY Workshop recommendations noted above, INEE proposes the following process through which to develop an INEE Learning Agenda.

Recognizing INEE's strength as a network and neutral convener, it is recommended that the learning agenda be developed through a consultative process, involving workshops as well as INEE membership-wide consultation via the INEE website and listserv. Funding permitting, the development of an INEE Learning Agenda would be lead by INEE and taken forward by a consultant, with input from an expert reference group. Overseen by the INEE Evidence Coordinator, and supported by the INEE Data & Evidence Collaborative, the reference group would include roughly 8-10 individuals from INEE working groups as well as external experts who are willing to give their time to this endeavour. The reference group would provide feedback and strategic guidance on the consultant's work.

Consultation workshops have been proposed by NORRAG and Dubai Cares, in Geneva and Dubai respectively during 2019-2020. The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) has also proposed a series of regional engagements the first of which was held in Amman (February 19-20, 2019).

The purpose of these workshops would be:

- To provide varying levels of global, regional, country-level consultation in order to diversify audience and gather input to the creation of an INEE Learning Agenda
- To identify thematic focus/foci of the INEE Learning Agenda
- To provide opportunities to test a data & evidence repository

It is proposed that the learning agenda process have two main outcomes.

1. An INEE Learning Agenda strategy produced by the consultant and reviewed by the expert reference group.
2. An online EiE Data & Evidence Repository potentially housed on the INEE website to increase access to existing evidence and provide a platform through which to identify gaps in the evidence base. The INEE Data & Evidence Collaborative would lead on this work with input from the consultant and expert reference group.

Suggested Timeline:

It is expected that workshops taking place in 2019-early 2020 will inform the development of an INEE Learning Agenda, which would be carried forward from 2020, at least through to the end of INEE's current Strategic Framework period in 2023. It should be noted that the development of such a agenda, which will require hiring a consultant, is pending funding. There is currently no specific donor support dedicated to this initiative at INEE.