

EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES IN SRI LANKA

(2001–2010)

LESSONS LEARNED





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List of Abbreviations

ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme
BECAre	Basic Education for Children in Disadvantaged Areas
BESP	Basic Education Sector Programme
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CCHA	Committee Coordinating Humanitarian Affairs
CFS	Child Friendly School
CNO	Centre for National Operations
CUE	Catch-Up Education
DMCs	Disaster Management Committees
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DS	Divisional Secretary
EEPCT	Education in Emergencies and Post Crisis Transition
EiE	Education in Emergencies
ELC	Early Learning Center
EPRP	Education Preparedness and Response Plans
GIZ	German Development Cooperation
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NIE	National Institute of Education
NMAC	National Mine Action Centre
PSC	Psychosocial Care
PTF	Presidential Task Force
SACs	School Attendance Committees
SCISL	Save the Children in Sri Lanka
SDCs	School Development Committees
SDSPs	School Disaster Safety Plans
SDSs	School Development Societies
TERM	Tsunami Education Rehabilitation Monitoring Trust
TLSS	Temporary Learning Spaces
VCRMCS	Village Child Rights Monitoring Committees

INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka has experienced two major emergencies in the period under review – the final phase of a protracted civil war of over 30 years, which ended in May 2009, and the Asian tsunami in 2004. Of a population of just over 20 million, hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced multiple times, injured or killed during the course of the war. The humanitarian crisis was at its height during the final phase of the war, with the military push by the government to gain control of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) territory in the east in 2006–07 and in the north in 2009. The Asian tsunami in December 2004, devastated most of the country's eastern and southern coastline with over 35,000 people killed and over a million displaced.

Overall, the Sri Lankan experience in providing emergency education has been a relative success. Several factors contributed to the education response during the conflict and following the tsunami. Through both major emergencies, a wide range of actors – including state, non-state and international agencies, and community members – joined forces to ensure that education services were resumed within the shortest possible interval and with minimal disruption. While education services are not considered to be life-saving, there has always been a strong commitment to education among the people, public servants and decisions makers that contributed to its success.

During the war, the government and the LTTE maintained a space for education to continue even within LTTE controlled areas in the north and east of the country. Education officials, teachers and learners remained committed to continuing education even at the height of the war and from inside internally displaced person (IDP) camps. Following the tsunami, community involvement in post-emergency recovery helped set up temporary learning spaces (TLSs) where education could resume. International agencies provided training and supported education facilities, including psychosocial support.

This Lessons Learned review was undertaken in order to detail and analyze Sri Lanka's experience in providing emergency education through the war and after the tsunami and identify key lessons that may be useful for future practice not only in Sri Lanka but also in emergency contexts around the world. The lessons learned discussion is framed in 10 sections corresponding largely to the *INEE Minimum Standards*

for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery. It is important to note that while the INEE Minimum Standards are reflected in the Sri Lankan experience, the standards were not available to local practitioners and officials during most of the period under review (2001-2010).

METHODOLOGY

This Lessons Learned document was prepared as part of a larger review of Sri Lanka's education response in emergencies during the period 2001-2010. It draws primarily on the findings and 'Learning Review & Preparedness of Education in Emergencies in Sri Lanka' report on 10 years of programming on Education in Emergencies (2001-2010) produced by EML Consultants (Pvt) Ltd for SCiSL in mid 2013, which was based on desk research and also field interviews conducted in the Galle District (Southern province), Batticaloa and Amapara Districts (Eastern Province) and the Vavuniya District (Northern Province). In addition, supplementary desk research, field visits in the Northern Province and key informant interviews with Ministry of Education officials, international agency staff, zonal education officers, principals, teachers and aid workers were conducted in late 2013 by a three-person team of researchers tasked with preparing guidance notes on the application of INEE Minimum Standards and this Lessons Learned review. Given the scope of the data-gathering process and the limited available documentation of EiE initiatives during the decade under review, this document does not claim to be a comprehensive account of EiE responses in Sri Lanka. However, it does reflect considerable breadth of work, and therefore offers valuable insights about 'lessons learned' for future responses.

CONTEXT

Sri Lanka has faced two major emergencies that have shaped its education response in the period under review – the war and its aftermath and the devastation caused by the Asian tsunami in 2004.

During the war, the government continued to support education services in LTTE controlled areas. However the quality of education was lower than in other parts of the country. The breakdown of the ceasefire agreement between the government and the LTTE and the escalation of fighting in the north and east culminated in the capture of the east by

government forces in 2007 and the final military defeat of the LTTE in the north in May 2009. Both victories came at a massive cost to civilians caught up in the conflict. Education services were repeatedly disrupted due to fighting and multiple displacements. Of the 1,020 schools functioning in the Northern Province, 111 schools were closed due to the conflict situation, especially between December 2008 and May 2009. Buildings, materials and public property were destroyed in the fighting. Worse, an unspecified number were killed and injured during this period, including children, teachers and their family members. Following the war, up to 300,000 people were held in government controlled IDP camps. A key focus in the education response was on the support of teachers and learners in coping with the trauma and distress they had suffered and the immediate resumption of education services.

In 2004, the Asian tsunami resulted in massive destruction of property and loss of life within the span of a few hours. Over 35,000 people died while 15,000 were injured and over a million people were displaced, with an estimated loss of physical assets worth about US\$1.5 billion. The 2004 tsunami affected schools in a similar fashion to the conflict in that it caused massive destruction of property and loss of life but it did so in a shorter time period of time. Seventy educational institutions were severely damaged and 93 partially damaged throughout Sri Lanka's coastal area. The highest numbers of schools damaged were in the districts of Ampara (38), Batticaloa (33) and Galle (24). Of the total number of students in schools in coastal areas, 79,016 (5.1%) students and 3,263 teachers were affected. Despite the devastation, the immediate focus was on resuming classes, and education services were set up in TLSs within a few weeks of the emergency.

The emergency education response in Sri Lanka has also been forced to contend with a number of comparatively smaller natural disasters in the form of floods, cyclones, landslides and droughts, all mainly due to atmospheric disturbances. A major drought in 2001, flooding in the Sabaragamuwa Province in 2008 and throughout Sri Lanka due to Cyclone Jal in 2010, and a high number of landslides in 2006 affected Sri Lanka to differing degrees. The emergency preparedness programme of the government is aimed at preparing schools to respond to such emergencies in a cohesive and coordinated manner.

LESSONS LEARNED DISCUSSION

1. Government Policy on Education in Emergencies

Although the INEE Minimum Standards have not directly informed government policy and decision making on emergency education, the key features of the Sri Lankan experience in emergency education correspond with many INEE Minimum Standards, particularly with respect to coordination through the cluster system, ensuring equal access, addressing the needs of a wide section of learners and psychosocial support. Despite these positive experiences, the absence of an overall policy framework for education in emergencies (EiE) has been a drawback.

The lack of a national policy on EiE is a drawback in the education response:



To date, there has been no official national policy on EiE in Sri Lanka, and the education response in the period under review was carried out without an explicit policy framework related to EiE. However, a national policy incorporating the INEE Minimum Standards is expected to be released in 2014. The lack of such a policy framework has resulted in gaps in terms of institutional arrangements, including proper assessment, resource allocation and consistency in approaches. However, despite this, the state education system and its policymakers have often prioritized quality and relevant EiE, as evidenced through government guidelines, circulars and implementation during the review period.

Key examples of the Sri Lankan policy level initiatives that were supportive of EiE

Equal Access – Support Education Services in Conflict Areas:

A key policy which shaped equal access to education has been the support of education services and public examinations in LTTE controlled areas during the war. Zonal officers coordinated within LTTE areas to supervise and support teachers and learners. Teacher salaries, textbooks and other learning materials were supplied and public examinations, which are crucial in determining admission to free university education, were conducted in LTTE controlled areas simultaneously with other parts of the country.

Support for education services continued even after the breakdown of the ceasefire and despite intense fighting between government forces and the LTTE. Government zonal officers continued to support education for displaced communities and conduct examinations until the last three months of the war.

Coordination – Education Cluster:



The Education Cluster is the result of a policy decision to set in place an institutional mechanism for coordinating EiE based on an international standard. The cluster, which was led initially by SCISL and UNICEF in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and other stakeholders, improved coordination, cohesiveness and ultimately the quality of the emergency response. The MoE took ownership over the cluster in 2010 until it was de-clustered in 2012. The MoE is currently formulating the terms of a new institutional mechanism under the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group, with technical support from SCISL and UNICEF.

During the tsunami, the government established the Tsunami Education Rehabilitation Monitoring Trust (TERM) to coordinate the education sector response and to organize and supervise the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the infrastructure facilities of the tsunami affected schools of the island, especially on projects funded by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and other foreign funded organizations.

Minimizing Disruption to Education:

A common feature in the government's emergency response has been a keen focus on minimizing disruption and resuming education services at the earliest. To this end, guidelines have been issued allowing affected children access the closest school without documentation or other restrictions. There has also been a practice to resume classes wherever children and teachers are gathered within or outside IDP camps through TLSs.

Quality and Relevant Education:

Government policy has also aimed at providing quality and relevant education – new curricula relevant to the emergency context have been introduced and innovative teaching methods adapted to suit the learning needs of a wide cross-section of learners – particularly aimed towards bridging the learning gap created by the disruptions faced by students preparing for public examinations. Policy with respect to non-formal education however would require further attention.

Learner Well-being:

The well-being of children affected by an emergency has also been a priority in government policy. The Child Friendly School (CFS) concept – which focuses on child rights, child protection and the overall well-being of the child within and outside the school environment – has had a significant impact in shaping the emergency education response. The independent but related recognition of psychosocial counselling and the training and appointing of counsellor teachers has been a major feature in the government policy response to emergencies during the period under review. More effort must be taken in operationalizing the policies with respect to the minimum number of counsellors in schools.

Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction:

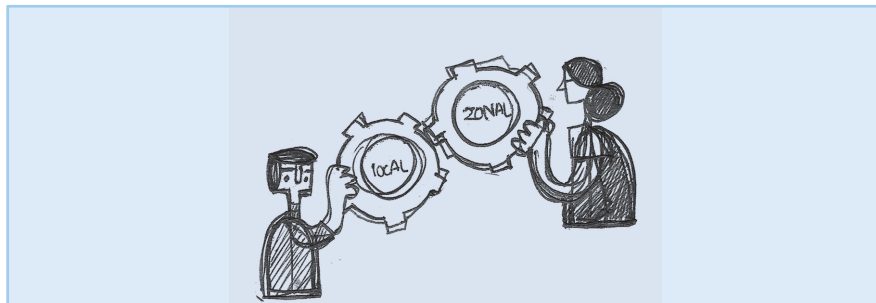


Initiatives in these areas were introduced as a priority for all schools following the end of the war. The aim was to improve the capacity of schools and develop a coordinated response to emergency situations. The establishment of the new disaster risk reduction (DRR) working group within the MoE may indicate the direction of government policy in this area.

2. Coordination

Key features of the Education Response Coordination in Sri Lanka during the period under review are discussed below:

The government bears the primary responsibility for the education response:



In Sri Lanka the primary responsibility for education response rests with the government. Education authorities organized at the national, provincial and zonal levels, coordinate education services including those in areas that were controlled by the LTTE during the war. The administrative setup for the education response involves zonal, provincial and national systems.

Nationally, the MoE works with several agencies including the National Institute of Education (NIE), School Safety Committee working groups, Mine Action and Recovery Coordination for mine risk reduction (facilitated by the National Mine Action Centre [NMAC]) and the Mine Risk Reduction Working Group (facilitated by NMAC and UNICEF), and School Safety Coordination facilitation mechanism set up by INGOs (e.g. the German Development Cooperation [GIZ, formerly GTZ]) in accordance with the National School Safety Guidelines and MoE focal points at national, provincial and zonal levels.

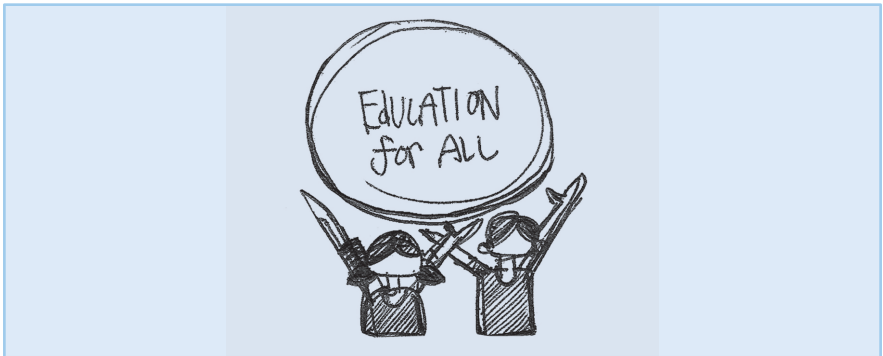
At the provincial level the emergency response is led by the Provincial Education Cluster Coordination under the provincial department of education that is responsible for coordinating with zonal authorities, and formulating and implementing policy and responses to emergency situations.

Zonal coordination is led by zonal directors who coordinate with sector

stakeholders, the District Disaster Management Committees attached to divisional secretary (DS) offices and monthly meetings with school principals. In Sri Lanka, the Zonal Directorates of Education were devolved several powers for making urgent ground level decisions regarding the emergency response.

The emergency focal point system at the national, provincial and zonal level, set up in 2007 for the north and east, has helped to respond to emergency education needs, monitor the ground situation, gather and disseminate information, and improve the capacity for future interventions based on INEE Minimum Standards.

In LTTE controlled areas, coordination required cooperation with the LTTE:



An important feature in the Sri Lankan context is that the government continued to support education services to LTTE controlled areas during the war. General administration, the supervision of teachers and learners, the payment of salaries for teachers and staff, and teacher training were coordinated through zonal authorities. Public examinations, including the Ordinary and Advanced Level examinations, were held in LTTE controlled areas. This required a high degree of coordination with the LTTE administration, which for the most part supported the government education system. During the final phase of the war, coordination was vital in responding to an ever-changing ground situation and dealing with the sudden influx of IDPs at the tail end of the war.

It is important to note in this context that throughout the war, including during its final phase, the LTTE maintained strict control over people

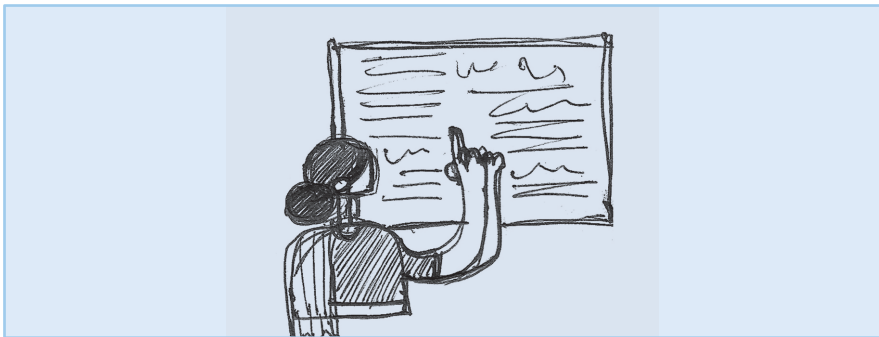
travelling into and leaving its territory. Many civilians were trapped and unable to leave LTTE territory and those wishing to enter or leave had to obtain a 'pass' from the LTTE administration. In addition there were strict security checks by both parties to the conflict.

In Vavuniya, the zonal education office for northern part of the Vavuniya district, which was under LTTE control, was located in the southern part of the district, which was under government control, until the end of the war. Zonal officers regularly entered LTTE controlled territory and visited schools, met with teachers and learners, supervised teaching methods, coordinated donor support for schools including the supply of facilities and coordinated public examinations.

The LTTE administration for its part cooperated with the zonal officers and did not disrupt the government education system. Zonal officers reported that the LTTE actively encouraged education and pressured officers to provide better services.

According to an SCiSL staff member, while the LTTE ran a few parallel schools and specialised educational centres, most children – including the families of LTTE members and leaders – attended government schools. Therefore until the final phase of the war, where the forced recruitment of children and youth intensified, schools and learning centres were largely maintained as safe spaces, even in LTTE controlled areas.

The commitment of education personnel in conflict areas:



Local educational personnel, mainly teachers and zonal officers in former conflict areas, were essential in maintaining education services throughout the war. They negotiated with the LTTE for access to schools

and learners and for the administration and coordination of education in these areas. Their sensitivity to the conflict and context and success in coordinating between the government, the military and the LTTE was an important factor in the education response.

Zonal officers worked under extremely difficult conditions. Access to LTTE controlled areas was difficult due to the lack of proper transport, and security checks by the military and the LTTE. Officers used their own transport and lived in schools since there were no facilities to support them inside LTTE areas. There were also significant risks to their safety and the risk of being caught in crossfire or denied permission to leave by the LTTE.

For example, officials in charge of Vavuniya North education zone continued to support the education response, even after the entire population was displaced (around September 2008) to escape the shelling and fighting during the final phase of the war. Despite the risk and difficult conditions, every effort was made to ensure that education was not disrupted. Children from Vavuniya North were accommodated at Oddusudan Maha Vidyalyaya (a school in an area then controlled by the LTTE, to which people had been displaced). At great personal risk, zonal officers took steps to enable displaced students to sit for the Ordinary Level public examination along with the rest of the country. As fighting intensified in December 2008, two senior zonal officers from Vavuniya North, who had travelled to Oddusudan to supervise the public examination were trapped with the civilians, and were unable to return to government controlled territory.

The systematic coordination of the education response and the commitment among educational authorities, particularly zonal officers at the frontline, to prioritize continued education has been a major factor in Sri Lanka's emergency education response.

The education cluster approach improved coordination and systematic response:

In responding to emergencies – particularly to war related displacement from 2007 to 2008 in the east and in 2009 in the north, and the tsunami in 2004 – educational authorities ensured a high degree of coordination between state and non-state (international and local) education service providers and other government sectors. Despite overwhelming and often chaotic humanitarian response to the 2004 tsunami, with support

from long-term partners such as Unicef, the various levels of educational administration – from the central MoE to sub-district zonal levels – were able to improve the coherence of the aid response to schools and the education system.

A significant feature in the Sri Lankan education response was the setting up of an institutional mechanism for coordination under the cluster coordination system. The cluster approach followed the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) model and, in Sri Lanka, was led initially by UNICEF and SciSL in close collaboration with the government of Sri Lanka and UN organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) at national and sub-national levels. The MoE and emergency education officers were trained in cluster coordination, creating better understanding and awareness of the mechanism and its role.



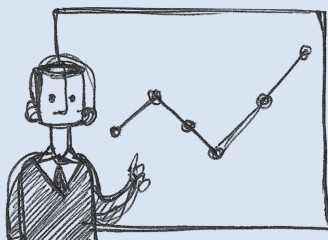
The Education Cluster helped develop a cohesive approach to the emergency, particularly in coordinating responses and dealing with the humanitarian crisis during the final stages of the war from 2007 to 2009. The cluster received emergency related information from the MoE and from the government through the Committee Coordinating Humanitarian Affairs (CCHA), of which both the ministry and UNICEF were members. The cluster also held regular meetings with provincial/district level officers and NGOs from 2007 to 2009.

The cluster has achieved significant improvements in the quality of coordination and, as stated in the education in emergencies and post crisis transition (EEPCT) assessment, the operational experience provided by the cluster is considered to be of great value, particularly by the national-level stakeholders. Biannual meetings with provincial and zonal authorities helped to draw attention to local priorities and issues at the national level. It identified gaps in services and supplies and also helped build multilevel linkages, which contribute to the flow

of information on the changing ground situation to national authorities. The cluster has also helped to build horizontal linkages between the government education sector and non-governmental partners contributing to the transfer of knowledge and skill and improving the overall quality of service provided to beneficiaries on the ground.

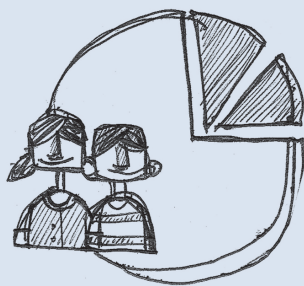
In 2010, the government took over leadership of the cluster, which was a significant step in ensuring government responsibility and ownership, and institutionalizing the process. While the cluster system was formally de-activated in 2012, the government, supported by UNICEF and SCiSL, is currently formulating a new institutional mechanism under the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group to prepare for and coordinate emergency responses within the education sector.

3. Assessment and Analysis



Obtaining ground level data in post-emergency situations has proved difficult and assessments were conducted mainly based on the information provided by zonal officers, NGOs and other stakeholders. Following the tsunami, timely assessments were hampered by the scale of the devastation and the breakdown of communication and transport links in affected areas. During the war, particularly during the final phase, the changing ground situation and the limited information released by the government, even to key partners, regarding the scale of the humanitarian crisis made it difficult to conduct a credible assessment of needs and priorities at the outset.

According to an SCISL official, international agencies have rarely been permitted to conduct independent assessments of emergency contexts within the education sector and therefore must depend on government reports for their work. This has led to difficulties for such agencies in planning and responding to their donors on the credibility of findings and the nature of their interventions. The cluster coordination approach (from 2007–09) contributed significantly to the flow of information from the government to its partners but was not adequate in the context of the overall needs.

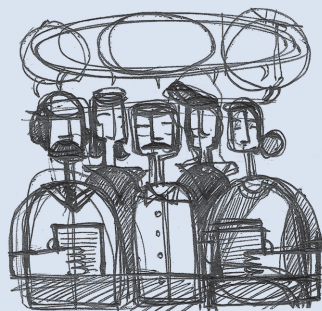


According to the EEPCT report, some informal situational assessments had been carried out via the Education Cluster membership and other UN organizations. Situational information from humanitarian agency staff located in impacted areas was another major contributing source – government officials in these areas could mobilize district-level coordination meetings with the participation of partner organizations to assess the situation, identify immediate needs and see how partners could help the address them.

For the most part, programme interventions were designed based on information and limited evidence drawn together from available sources and from learning generated by ongoing activities on the ground.

In this context, formal assessment processes were of significant value, such as the UNICEF assessment of learner education levels, conducted in 2009 and published in 2010, which contributed to the design of the accelerated learning programme (ALP) and remedial teaching.

4. Community Participation in the Education Response



Community support, and crucially the priority given to education amongst nearly all communities and groups in Sri Lanka, has been critical in ensuring the success of the education response through the war and following the tsunami. Community participation and resources, organized mainly through CBOs and community leaders, have played an important role, particularly in early recovery, setting up TLSs, and supporting teachers and learners to resume education. Community participation in the emergency education response involved the active participation of community members, not only in early recovery but also in assessment, identifying education needs and priorities, and planning and implementing responses to ensure continued quality education.

The emergency response should have involved a wide group of community groups and members:

The community in this context involves a wide cross-section of peoples and groups based on gender, caste, ethnicity, age, and economic, social and political power. In many instances, the war and the tsunami aggravated existing divisions and polarized communities, further complicating the dynamics of community participation. A key lesson from Sri Lanka is that any response that engages communities must be sensitive to existing tensions and ensure that any intervention does not exacerbate the situation. In addition to CBOs and community leaders, the community traditionally includes ground level service providers, including village administrative officers, welfare and health officers, and local business and political representatives.

While communities were often the first responders, they had a limited role in long-term planning:

In Sri Lanka, local communities are often the first responders in the case of disaster or calamity. During the war and after the tsunami, the widest level of community participation took place in the immediate aftermath of the emergency. Community members played a vital role in early recovery, including clearing school premises, setting up TLSs and setting in place basic services required for normalcy and the resumption of education.

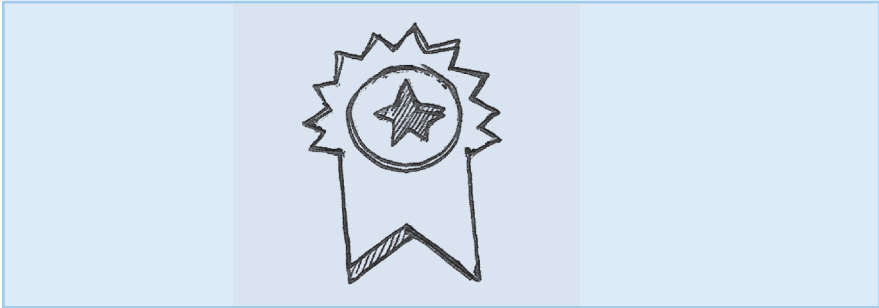
As government involvement and external aid increased, the role of communities gradually reduced. While the responsibility for the education responses rests with the educational authorities, there has been a general lack of interest in involving communities in medium- to long-term planning and decision making on emergency education.

The community contribution was perceived as being limited to manual labour or material assistance and rarely extended to substantive input. Effective participation required communities to be involved at all levels of decision-making. There has also been minimal effort to build community capacity and skills for effective participation and to ensure wider participation in the education response, including that of hard to reach / marginalized groups.

The role of school based committees for community engagement:

School Development Committees/Societies (SDCs/SDSs) were a significant formal mechanism for sustained community participation in the education sector. The SDC/SDS is a school based committee comprised of parents, students and teachers, headed by the principal. The SDC/SDS meets monthly and its main purpose is to assist in the management of the school. Its effectiveness as a mechanism for meaningful or broad participation is largely dependent on how the committee is constituted and the capacity, attitudes and vision of those who serve on it.

Community capacity building / training for effective participation:



International aid organizations, such as SCiSL, have contributed towards improving the capacity of SDCs through trainings and technical support for SDC/SDS members, and working with school authorities to ensure regular meetings and effective functioning of the SDC/SDS. Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) and School Attendance Committees (SACs) were also forums through which communities could participate in the education response.

In the immediate aftermath of the emergencies, SDC/SDS were involved in TLS construction and post-tsunami reconstruction. They played an active role in identifying locations for relocating schools. Even post-emergency SDSs continues to be involved in minor repairs of the school premises. Under current regulations, SDCs/SDSs can manage any work valued at under Rs.2 million.

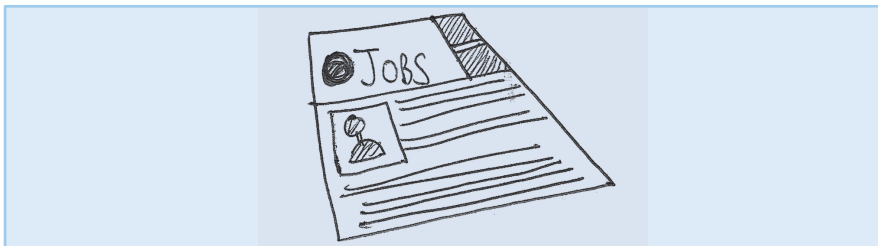
The community contribution to school safety:

Communities have been involved in ensuring the safety and security of schools. For example, under the kumara pavura programme (initiated by the government in response to perceived terrorist threats against schools) parents and community members were involved in providing school security.

Village Child Rights Monitoring Committees (VCRMCS) established under state child protection structures and supported by international and local NGOs were sometimes able to play an important role in organizing parents and community members at the village level to look into child safety and protection, address school drop-outs and refer cases to local service providers and officials.

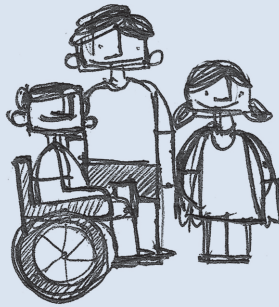
The community contribution to alternative teaching methods:

Community support (from family, neighbours and volunteers) has also contributed to the success of alternate learning methods (such as ALPs, catch-up education [CUE], home based learning) particularly for learners facing public examinations where an emergency prevented schools from functioning normally.



While the Sri Lankan experience provides useful models and avenues for community participation it also highlights the limitations and barriers to participation locally. The capacity of community members and the attitude of school authorities and education personnel have both created and limited space for effective community engagement in the education sector. Further efforts must be taken to ensure the representation and participation of 'hard to reach' marginalised groups to ensure an inclusive education response.

5. Ensuring Equal Access to Education



Efforts have been made to ensure that all learners have equal access to education without discrimination or prejudice on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status or disability.

Barriers to school admission, in terms of criteria and documentation requirements, were removed during emergencies related to the war and the tsunami:

In the immediate aftermath of major displacement events, government circulars were issued with the instruction that all children should be given access to the closest unaffected school without the requirement of documents (such as a birth certificate, school certificate or grama niladhari verification). Affected teachers were also required to resume duties at the closest unaffected school.

Priority was given to addressing the education needs of a wide range of learners:

A key focus of the emergency education response has been towards resuming formal education. Particular attention was given to students preparing for public examinations, such as the Year 5 scholarship examination and the Ordinary and Advanced Level examinations. However, to ensure equal access, the education response had to cater to the needs of a wide range of learners, including drop-outs, those whose education had been disrupted for extended periods and children with special needs. Education services during the war (particularly during escalated conflict in 2007 in the east and in 2008-2009 in the north) were also forced to respond to an ever-changing ground situation, the

influx of large numbers of IDPs into camps and host communities, and the trauma and distress of teachers and learners and their impact on host schools and communities.

Curricula and teaching methods were adapted to the emergency context through innovations such as CUE, ALPs, drop out education and home schooling for formal education.

Efforts were made, wherever feasible, to deliver psychosocial support, recreational and extracurricular activities (including theatre, music, arts and sports) and child friendly spaces in camps and learning centres to help reduce the psychosocial distress suffered by learners and teachers.

Vocational training was also provided:



At community centres and in IDP camps, for school leavers / drop-outs. Training included life skills, literacy and numeracy lessons. Non-formal education is a significant tool in empowering learners, particularly youth, through skills training and increased livelihood and employment opportunities. More attention must be paid to improving

the effectiveness of this model, including making it more accessible to learners at the village/community level. During the war, and even during the ceasefire, learners were unable to access vocational training since it was located mainly in the towns, and youth, particularly those from LTTE controlled areas were afraid to travel into towns to attend classes.

Special needs education and the training of teachers in special needs took place during the war and in its aftermath:

In the north, in 2009, special education classes were conducted inside the Menik Farm IDP camp. Due to a shortage of trained teachers, classes were held by external resource persons, including the former Zonal Director of Vavuniya South. The success of these measures rest on the system's ability to cater its response to different forms of disability and challenges, and also to motivate parents to send children with special needs to school. A lack of awareness, as well as the difficulties of transport and access to special needs units, may limit attendance. Similar measures were also in place following the tsunami in many of the affected coastal districts.

Emergency education has focused particularly on needs of children affected by the war:



The government continued to support education in LTTE controlled areas, including the maintenance of schools, the training and recruitment of teachers, the payment of teacher salaries and the provision of textbooks and other facilities for learners and teachers. The LTTE also did not disrupt the provision of education services. Efforts were undertaken for the release and reintegration of child soldiers recruited by the LTTE and other armed groups through cooperation of UN and humanitarian agencies with the Sri Lankan government. Children and youth released under this programme were admitted to schools and learning centres, provided with CUE and the facilities to encourage integration into formal education.

Specific measures were in place to address the issue of drop-outs and drop out education:

School attendance committees have played an important role in identifying and addressing the issue of school drop-outs at the community level. Reasons for dropping out included security, the loss of livelihood and poverty, the lack of basic facilities and stigma in the cases of children who entered school at a level below their age group. Former child soldiers, particularly girls, dropped out due to ostracism by teachers and fellow students.

Drop out education supported by SCiSL and UNCIEF aimed at preparing children for re-entry to the normal school system. Children whose education was disrupted during the war and children from former LTTE controlled areas, where the quality of education was reportedly lower, benefitted under this programme. Teachers trained in multi-grade teaching were used for the programme and classes were held in regular schools during school hours so that children became accustomed to the school routine. The drop out programme typically ran for 10 months, from January to October, and children were prepared by November or December to enter regular school in January of the following year. Children who did not wish to enter the formal education system were provided vocational training, although the success of this programme was limited due to the reasons identified above.

Special initiatives were also taken to address poverty: by linking parents with livelihood options (such as in Vavuniya North), subsidizing exam fees, providing stationary and bicycles, and other facilities to encourage school attendance. These sorts of approaches have however been relatively rare, with most conventional initiatives to promoting equality of access being limited in their capacity to address underlying structural factors (i.e household-level poverty, risks of forcible recruitment or discriminatory social practices) that existed in communities.

6. Facilities and Services for the Early Resumption of Education

A key priority in emergency situations during the war and after the tsunami has been to resume schools/classes as early as possible and minimize the disruption to education. While the community played a vital role in the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, both state and non-state agencies adopted a coordinated approach towards ensuring that facilities, including TLS and services, were available for the early resumption of education services. The key lessons from this experience are outlined below.

Using school facilities and learning spaces as shelters and military camps disrupts education, overburdens school authorities and compromises learner safety and security:

The use of school premises as shelters or military camps disrupts education for both the host community and IDP children. Education services already overburdened with the influx of IDPs are forced to contend with the additional challenge of setting up and functioning within temporary spaces. During the war and the aftermath of the tsunami, school buildings in unaffected areas were often identified as IDP shelters due to their space and accessibility. There were also several instances where school buildings were reportedly used by the military as a temporary base.

Following the tsunami, schools taken over as shelters for IDPs were later taken over by the military and continued to be occupied for many years. Similarly, in the north, some schools were occupied for several years and, in Vavuniya South, a school space was also used as a detention/rehabilitation centre. An important lesson from the Sri Lankan experience is that every effort must be made to avoid using schools for any other purpose besides education. In the absence of alternatives, schools taken over in emergencies must be returned for teaching at the earliest possible opportunity.

TLSs provide an important means of resuming education:

Schools in Vavuniya South, such as Poonthottam Maha Vidhyalaya and the Thandikulam School that were taken over at short notice to accommodate the huge influx of IDPs into the area, resumed classes in temporary spaces within a week or two of relocation. Community

members helped to transport the school facilities to new locations and set up TLSs. Classes were also held in private 'tutories' and community halls at no cost.

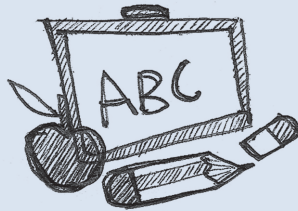
Communities, as the first responders, support the process of setting up TLSs by clearing debris, transporting furniture and other facilities to temporary spaces, and setting up the learning spaces as separate TLSs, in community halls or other structures in unaffected areas. At the outset, school principals, teachers and other community leaders take the lead in coordinating these activities. Once communication and links are established, education authorities and international agencies take on the responsibility of providing teaching and learning spaces and ensuring continued education.

Temporary learning centres were used in Jaffna in 1995 and again, in a more coordinated way, after the tsunami in 2004. After the tsunami, the TLS programme played an important role in continuing education wherever students and teachers were gathered until schools could be repaired/reconstructed. In densely populated coastal areas, constant displacement made it necessary to build mobile structures that were easily transportable. As the recovery progressed, the focus shifted towards semi-permanent structures.

In 2009, the TLS model was replicated in the large IDP camp units of Menik Farm. Since communities from different divisions were housed together in the camps, TLSs were set up and classes were conducted separately for each school and coordinated by their relevant zonal authorities. Educational authorities from the affected zones of Vavuniya North, Mullaitivu and Killinochchi had their offices at Gamini Maha Vidhyalaya in Vavuniya South.

Teachers and educational personnel inside the camps were involved in resuming education. Once they were released from the camps, teachers continued to teach inside the camps, travelling long distances daily from the town to the camp. Displaced children who were released from the camp and hosted in nearby communities were given access to the closest local school. By late 2010, all displaced children outside the camps were transferred to Gamini Maha Vidhyalaya, a school in Vavuniya South.

Education supplies and learning materials are important for resuming classes and act as an incentive for teachers and learners to return to school:



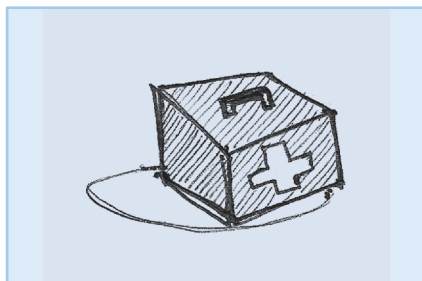
A large number of international and local agencies – including UNICEF, SCiSL and even smaller community-based organizations – contributed to education facilities and services during this period. Supplies were coordinated by the zonal department of education. In the case of the massive 2004 tsunami disaster and response, supplies were coordinated centrally in the capital Colombo by the Children’s Desk at the Centre for National Operations (CNO) established specifically for that disaster. Displaced teachers and learners were given supplies and aids to motivate and resume classes. Learning materials included teaching kits, school kits, school-in-a-box, stationary, and the learning material, textbooks and model question papers for students preparing for public examinations.

In Jaffna, once the main A9 access road was closed in 2006, zonal education officers personally undertook to load, unload and obtain security clearance for transporting textbooks and other essential materials from Trincomalee to Jaffna. Furniture, equipment and other supplies to assist in setting up classrooms were also provided. After the tsunami, furniture and equipment in most schools were replaced within a relatively short period (2–5 weeks) given the scale of the devastation.

Basic supplies and services are essential for an environment conducive to learning:

In addition to setting up learning spaces and facilities, the education response must also take into account the basic needs of affected populations. For teachers and learners to benefit from the teaching/learning experience, their survival, safety and dignity must be assured. During the war and after the tsunami, local and international donors

provided food and non-food supplies (such as clothes) to teachers and learners.



Health and nutrition facilities must be factored in when resuming teaching/learning and preparing learning centres. The provision of midday meals to learners under the World Food Programme contributed to the nutrition levels of learners and served as an incentive to increase school attendance. Safe drinking water and sanitation facilities must be available in all learning centres.

While these facilities are present in most schools in Sri Lanka, interviews identified gaps where certain newly resettled schools lacked safe drinking water and students were compelled to carry up to five litres of water a day to school. The education response must include the support of medical professionals and psychosocial counsellors to address the physical and mental health needs of teachers and learners.

Transport facilities or having a reasonable distance between schools is important for access:

Care must be taken to ensure that communities are provided with quality education facilities within a reasonable distance. TLSs and reconstructed schools must bear in mind safe access for teachers and learners. The lack of safe access and transport is a major contributing factor to dropping out from schools, particularly for girls. In newly resettled schools in the Jaffna district, teachers and learners walk up to five kilometres to school. Some solution may be provided by the provision of bicycles, community support in ensuring safe routes and local government assistance to improve school transport.

The repair and reconstruction of schools and learning spaces requires a coordinated approach:

In the long term, schools affected by the tsunami and the war (including schools used to shelter IDPs) have been repaired/reconstructed with the help of international and private donors, under the guidance of the MoE. Each school was allocated by the MoE to selected donors for assistance.

A coordinated approach to reconstruction is important to ensure sustainability, promote a child friendly ethos and provide inclusive education to all learners, including those with disabilities and special needs. After the tsunami, recovery and rebuilding was coordinated by the TERM, which was set up under the MoE and funded chiefly by UNICEF, SCiSL and World Vision. In the north, post-war reconstruction is regulated by the Presidential Task Force (PTF) together with the MoE. The use of well established guidelines by such coordination or regulatory bodies in guiding this work can promote appropriate reconstruction.

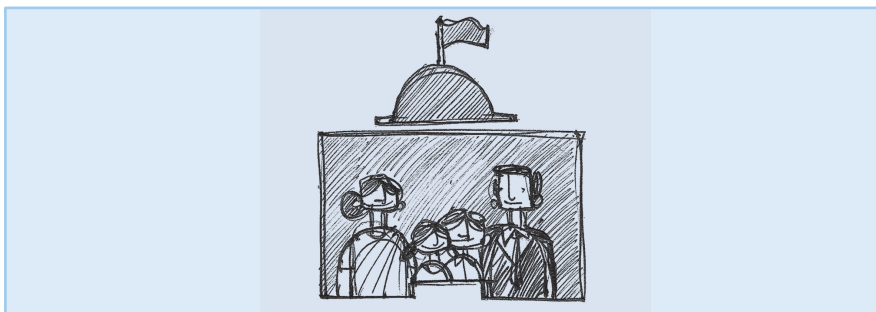
In the post-tsunami context, the reconstruction process was beset with several challenges and delays due to multiple reasons including political interference, cancellation of reconstruction contracts and the taking over of schools as IDP shelters. In certain areas, reconstruction was delayed due to community objections to the location of the new school buildings. The EEPCT assessment indicates that some measures taken to ensure educational facilities were not practical and that the physical environment (such as toilets, space in classrooms and the water supply) was not up to standard.

A major issue that must be considered in future practice is the maintenance of school buildings and facilities. Principals face difficulties in maintaining buildings constructed following the tsunami due to the unavailability of government funds or any other sources of finance. The EEPCT report states that, "The high quality of newly constructed schools has worrying implications for sustainability without additional recurring cost contributions".

7. Ensuring School Safety and the Protection of Learners

The safety and security of schools and learning spaces has been a priority in Sri Lanka, mainly due to the war. For the most part, over the 10 year period under review, both the government and the LTTE did respect the security of learning spaces and learners, despite some serious exceptions. Following the tsunami there has been increased awareness on the impact of natural disasters and an overall focus on disaster preparedness at the school level. Programmes focussed on improving teachers' and learners' capacity to respond to disaster have been implemented in schools with the support of international agencies. Child protection mechanisms are also in place to prevent the exploitation and abuse of learners. Combined, these initiatives are meant to secure school premises and provide a safe environment for teachers and learners.

School Safety



Both parties to the conflict generally viewed schools as protected spaces; where schools or learners were threatened, education was disrupted:

Throughout the armed conflict schools were generally viewed as protected spaces by both government forces and the LTTE:

However, there have been instances of government attacks on schools in LTTE controlled areas and an anticipated threat in the south of LTTE attacks against major national schools. There are also several instances where the LTTE has been accused of forcibly conscripting children on the way to school or of compromising school safety by operating close to learning spaces.

There have also been several reports (including some after the war

ended) of students in the north being threatened by the military who have accused them of being involved with the LTTE. Fears of such threats have prevented some parents from sending children to schools in town due to concerns about their safety.

The community was involved in school security initiatives:

In response to the threat against national schools, the government initiated the Kumara Pavura programme, aimed at providing a coordinated response to militant threats against schools. Under this programme, parents and community members supported school authorities in implementing security measures in schools.

Failing to separate schools from military bases and installations compromised learner/school safety:

A major factor contributing to safety and security is the separation of schools and learning spaces from military bases and armed groups. In Sri Lanka however there are several examples of school premises being used by the military for camps, and detention and rehabilitation centres. For instance, the Tamil Maha Vidhyalaya in Vavuniya South, was a well-known military base during the war and part of the school was used as a rehabilitation centre even after classes were resumed.

Schools used for other purposes, such as shelters or military bases, should have been cleared before being handed over for education:

When schools in affected areas are returned for education purposes, great care must be taken to ensure that the school premises and surrounding areas are cleared of all hazards including mines and unexploded ordnances.

Child Protection

Education was linked to child protection and information on child protection was clearly visible in schools and other public spaces:

In Sri Lanka, education is linked to child protection mechanisms. Information on child protection is displayed in schools, other places of learning, at medical service centres and at public venues. Such information material provides awareness on a range of potential threats such as health risks, violation of child rights, exploitation, bullying and distress.

Despite these measures, incidents of child abuse and exploitation continue to take place, particularly in a post-emergency context. Many cases of child abuse remain unreported. Teacher counsellors and probation officers dealing with these cases have also faced threats from the perpetrators. Processes to respond to child survivors of abuse are not always child friendly, and issues like stigma and lack of confidentiality remain a serious concern – with survivors often compelled to leave education or relocate.

The lack of safe access to schools was a major risk factor for learners:

Many learners in remote areas are forced to walk long distances to and from school. Where parents are unable to accompany children and where there is no secure method of transport, children, particularly girls, are exposed to the risk of abuse or sexual harassment. Zonal authorities state that while every measure is taken to protect children inside the school, it is difficult to guarantee their safety en route.

Disaster preparedness:



Mobilizing school based disaster mitigation education and disaster management mechanisms is an important element that improves children’s, parents’ and teachers’ sense of safety and security. UNICEF provided training to teachers, zonal education officers, principals on the education preparedness and response plans (EPRP) and mine risk education in an effort to increase the capacity of school authorities to respond to future emergencies. School Disaster Safety Plans (SDSPs) have been introduced in all schools to ensure preparedness among teachers and learners. The SDSP was expected to identify potential hazards and formulate response strategies in consultation with communities, local authorities, teachers and learners. The national disaster management has taken several measures to mainstream

disaster management systems with the support of UNICEF.

The EEPCT evaluation indicates that while training and technical support have contributed to emergency preparedness at the national level, the impact at the local/school level has been limited.

Few schools in fact have a disaster response plan/strategy in place or conduct regular drills etc. to prepare teachers and learners. GIZ introduced the DRR programme for education formed of a network of agencies to coordinate school safety together with the MoE and develop a school safety strategy. According to one provincial department official in Jaffna, every school must have in place a Disaster Risk Reduction Committee and a school DRR plan.

The success of these initiatives depends on the motivation among principals, teachers and learners to set in place a disaster preparedness plan and response strategy. More awareness must be created regarding potential hazards and the importance of safety plans, which have the potential to save lives in an emergency.

8. Promoting Well-being and Psychosocial Support to Teachers and Learners

A major challenge in the education response to emergencies is coping with the trauma and distress faced by the affected community (including: learners, teachers, parents and educational personnel). In both major emergencies, the tsunami and the war, the education response had to be measured against the immense cost to human life and the suffering experienced by affected communities. In the east, and parts of the Vanni, the same communities that were affected by the tsunami were also severely affected by the war. Psychosocial support, the child friendly approach, and recreation and extra-curricular activities all played an important part in addressing the distress of learners and ensuring the success of the emergency education response.

Teachers were trained to identify signs of distress and address the needs of learners through psychosocial support and counselling:



Training of teachers to respond to psychosocial distress in children has taken place for two decades in areas of Sri Lanka affected by armed conflict. This training was often localized or sporadic, and was poorly institutionalised. Although there was a 2001 government circular mandating the appointment of a full time counsellor teacher for every school with over 300 students and a part-time counsellor teacher for smaller schools, it was only after the 2004 tsunami that Psychosocial Care (PSC) were systematized for the entire education sector. Drawing on the content and approaches from interventions in the conflict-affected north and east, as well as utilising new tsunami-related assistance, the MoE, with support from international agencies, provided regular training for teachers and counsellors and established a unit at the MoE and provincial resource centres for developing and promoting psychosocial services.

Teachers trained as ‘befrienders’ and counsellors worked in the field after the 2004 tsunami to support learners and community members, and in 2005, a significant number of counsellor teachers were formally appointed by the government, regularizing PSC work at the school level. In many schools, however, full time counsellor teachers were not appointed and PSC responsibilities were allocated to subject teachers who have reported difficulties in managing counselling duties along with the pressure to finish syllabuses and prepare children for examinations.

PSC training in tsunami and conflict affected areas also continued with the support of several international agencies, with the aim of building the skills of counsellor teachers as well as equipping other teachers with the capacity to carry out classroom based activities that promoted psychosocial wellbeing. Principals were also provided leadership training and sensitized to PSC issues.

Sustainability – PSC initiatives and the government response depended largely on the commitment of a few key personnel:

Despite significant progress over the past 10 years, there is still reportedly a lack of awareness and acceptance at the ministry, provincial and zonal levels of the importance and significance of including PSC in education response. At present, the success of PSC initiatives appears to depend on the continued support of a few key agencies, the leadership of key MoE officials and the personal capacity and commitment of individual officers at the zonal level, which raises concerns about their sustainability. Although now institutionalized, more also needs to be done to assess the quality and impact of psychosocial support mechanisms at the school level.

There are sometimes risks associated with PSC work:

There is a risk associated with PSC work, for instance when child abuse cases are reported in court, the teachers/counsellors who are involved in the case may face threats from the accused parties. A strong support network among PSC workers has helped to counter the risks and encourage counsellor teachers to continue their work. The referral system, where identified cases are referred to services outside the education sector (ie. health or child protection) for further counselling or clinical help, has also contributed to the success of PSC interventions.

There has been a lack of focus on the psychosocial needs of teachers themselves:

Many teachers in emergency situations have suffered the same experience as learners, and many have children of their own who are affected by experiences of conflict and disaster. The PSC interventions have largely focused on learners and there has been no systematic method of addressing the needs and distress suffered by teachers. While some teachers say that informal peer counselling has helped, other actors state that teachers are unlikely to confide in colleagues due to the stigma and fears of breached confidentiality. Stigma plays a large role in preventing teachers from coming forward to seek help, as they occupy an important role in the school and wider community and acknowledgement of personal difficulties may impact this status.

The CFS concept has been a major feature of Sri Lankan education response and has been applied nationally as well as in war affected areas.

The concept has been adopted by the NIE in the curriculum and teaching materials, and orientation and teaching programmes have been conducted for teachers and principals on the CFS approach.

Child rights and protection in school and in the community is an important aspect of the CFS approach. This, coupled with an emphasis on child friendly behaviour and a child friendly ethos, has produced positive results in improving the teaching and learning experience and improving the overall well-being of learners.

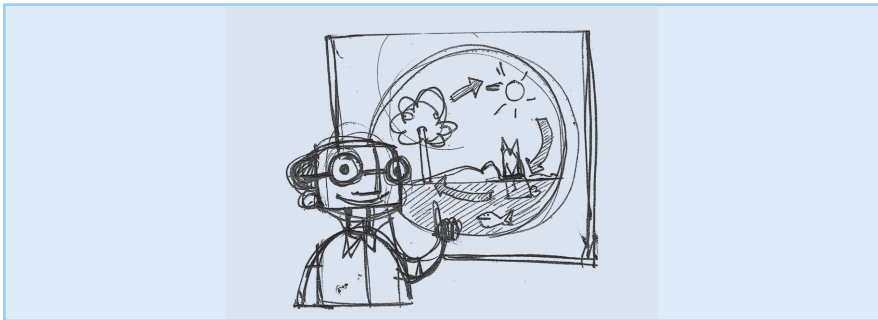
The setting up of child friendly spaces in camps and schools and encouraging non-violent classrooms and positive reinforcement in teacher-child interaction has also contributed to the safety and well-being of the learning experience.

9. Adapting Curricula, Teaching Methods and Assessment to the Education Context

The success of the Sri Lankan education response can be attributed in large part to the flexibility of education authorities and teachers in adapting curricula and teaching methods, particularly in order to fit the education context. Innovations, such as ALPs and CUE, were used to address the learning gaps identified in learners whose education had been disrupted due to an emergency and the related displacement. This approach helped reach a wide range of learners and address education needs through formal and informal education systems.

Challenges remain in addressing specific issues, including the overburdening of teachers and identifying the most suitable system of implementation. However, overall, the EEPCT report and interviews with zonal officers and principals indicate that these programmes helped ensure continued education and overcome the effect of disruptions caused by the war and the tsunami.

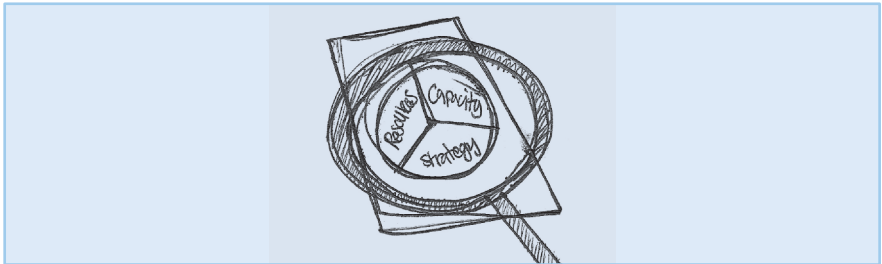
Flexibility in adapting curricula relevant to the emergency context is an important feature of the education response in Sri Lanka:



Responding to emergencies during the war and after the tsunami, education authorities have included new curricula on emergency preparedness, DRR and mine risk education at the school level. Psychosocial services to address emotional distress and psychosocial problems have also been mainstreamed in schools. However, more could be done to revise and adapt curricula to local contexts and ensure that existing texts do not further exacerbate community sensitivities and divisions.

In order to accommodate the learning needs of all learners whose education has been disrupted, curricula have been condensed and modified under the ALP and CUE programme. Quality is ensured by using the MoE's Essential Learning Competencies standard, encompassing academic achievement (writing skills, reading skills, mathematics, etc.) and the social and emotional skills necessary for holistic development that children should achieve in each grade in school.

Innovative teaching methods – such as home schooling, ALPs, CUE, drop out education and vocational training – have helped to the education sector to respond to the learning needs and priorities of a wide cross-section of learners affected by emergencies:



The Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) is an innovative intervention to help students who have faced long-term disruption reach their age-appropriate learning competency. The ALP involves multi-grade and multi-level teaching and allows students who have fallen behind in education to enter the programme at the appropriate, assigned competency level irrespective of age. The design was based on an assessment conducted in 2009 that revealed that most war affected children's competence was nearly one and a half to four years below the normal level. The programme uses a method of merged curricula based on selected special activities. Teachers were provided training in multi-level and multi-grade training and in using the merged syllabus. In a post-emergency context, the curricula may be used as a guide to teachers for remedial study.

The ALP model with a merged syllabus was first introduced in Jaffna, following the displacement in 1995, although it wasn't referred to by the same term. During this time education authorities in the north were cut off from national authorities and designed a merged syllabus to address the pressing needs of learners preparing for public examinations.

CUE is another innovation / teaching strategy aimed at helping students facing short-term disruption to integrate with formal education systems appropriate to their age. In the south, following the tsunami, the review indicates that the need for an ALP did not arise since the disruption to education was for a short period of time. CUE and classes were however conducted for students preparing for public examinations.

Screening for CUE was conducted by teachers, by routine classroom assessments along with term test marks. Students were identified who were unable to achieve the essential learning competencies relevant to the class appropriate to their age. While initially a centre based approach was followed, where children were taken in the afternoons for catch up classes in a centre, this subsequently changed and catch up classes were conducted in the school itself. Children who attained the required competencies were then able to rejoin normal classes.

As overseen by Basic Education for Children in Disadvantaged Areas (BECAre) and the Basic Education Sector Programme (BESP), the CUE project has been very effective in the north and east of Sri Lanka, where it was implemented.

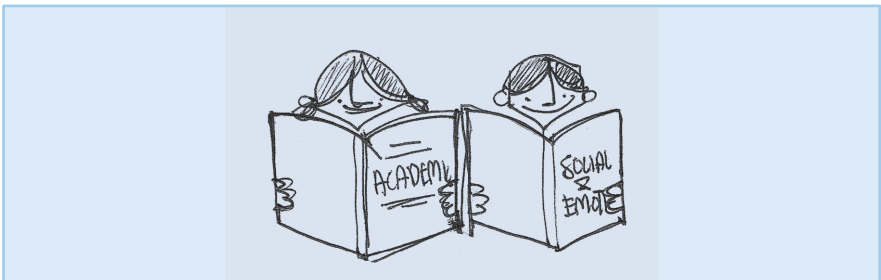
A major challenge to the implementation of ALPs and CUE was teacher shortage:



The programme made significant demands on the number of teachers. As the emergency progressed and the number of IDPs increased it was clear that there were an insufficient number of teachers to meet the need. Since it was important that parallel classes were held within school hours, teachers were forced to conduct multi-level teaching within a single classroom, putting added pressure on teachers. A further issue was that parents were unhappy with children being identified as ‘weak’ students who required special attention.

The ALP and CUE indicate that providing additional help in a systematic way enables learners to gain lost educational experiences. It also demonstrated that a systematic procedure to assist weak students could work satisfactorily. Further innovations, such as home based teaching, were developed in 2005 to deal with disruptions in conflict affected areas due to curfew periods and increased security threats. These also proved useful in ensuring minimal disruption to education:

Children were provided with the materials for self-study and guided by teachers in nearby locations who conducted classes and provided guidance close to where children were located. This programme particularly targeted children preparing for public examinations. In 2008 a home based education manual was prepared and distributed to children in conflict affected areas. In Vavuniya the zonal director introduced an activity card based literacy programme in 2009 that was designed to teach children at their own competence level.



During the conflict, school based assessments were conducted in a flexible manner to accommodate the disruptions and emergency context:

ELC standards were useful in assessing the academic and holistic development of children through continuous assessments.

Public examination including the Grade 5 scholarship examination and the Ordinary and Advanced Level examinations were held on schedule and affected students were prepared to sit for these examinations. Students preparing for public examinations were supported with extra classes, model papers, seminars and guidance related to the syllabuses, free book allocations and an in-service adviser system to help fill teacher shortages in schools.

10. Support for Teachers and Educational Personnel

The personal commitment and dedication of teacher and zonal educational personnel played a large part in the success of the education response. During the war and following the tsunami, teachers worked under difficult conditions to resume school education despite security concerns and personal challenges. In many locations, teachers worked double shifts, conducting lessons for children of both the host and displaced communities.

The contribution of particular educational personnel in responding and adapting to emergency situations has also been significant. For instance, the zonal director in Vavuniya South in 2009 was credited with spearheading the emergency response and addressing the needs of IDPs and host communities for education. She personally met teachers and learners inside and outside the camps and motivated teachers to resume classes at the earliest possible opportunity for the benefit of learners.

Throughout the period under review, teachers have been provided with opportunities for systematic training and professional development in subject areas, in new curricula and teaching methods (including CUE, ALPs, and multi-level and multi-grade teaching). There has also been an increased focus on the importance of psychosocial counselling and support, and teachers have been trained to identify and address the PSC needs of learners.

However more effort should have been made to address the issues and problems faced by teachers, who have also been affected by emergencies and to address issues of teacher shortage and the overburdening of teachers during the emergency.

Teacher salaries were paid by the government:

All teacher salaries, including those of teachers working in LTTE controlled areas, were paid by the government. Salaries continued to be paid even during emergency periods, although arrears on other allowances are only now being adjusted for war affected teachers.

There has been no official compensation for extra work done by teachers:



Apart from regular payments, there has, to date, not been a consistent compensation package for extra work undertaken by teachers during the tsunami and war related emergencies. However, teachers conducting ALPs, CUE and attending training workshops did receive some compensation from international and local agencies.

All teachers under the Sri Lankan education system are professionally trained and are required to pass relevant competency standards. In addition to pre-service training, teachers are provided with in-service training and skills development in subject areas, new curricula and teaching methods, particularly with respect to emergency education needs:

During the war, UNICEF supported training and capacity building for teachers to teach under difficult conditions (with the challenges of not having textbooks or an ideal environment), as well as dealing with 'traumatized' and stressed children. As the emergency subsided and resettlement began, teacher training became focused on providing the necessary technical support to adopt and implement the new child-centred syllabuses and assisting the introduction of modern teaching techniques and materials, and the development of appropriate lesson plans. Teachers were trained – by provincial and zonal departments of education with the support of UNICEF – in the use of home/schooling modules, ALPs, CUE, child-centred methodology, CFSs and school management. Teachers were also trained in multi-level/-grade teaching in order to overcome teacher shortages and to prepare handbooks for ALPs. In 2009, teachers and principals in Vavuniya South were provided training by the zonal department on how to manage the relocation of schools and handle children during displacement and in relocated schools. This training was put to use when schools in Vavuniya South were relocated shortly after to make space for IDP shelters and had to accommodate an influx of displaced students from the Vanni.

Teachers were also trained in new curricula introduced in the emergency context, including EPRPs and DRR, life skills, mine risk education, and psychosocial awareness. The EEPCT report indicates that training in DRR for teachers (and the community) has not been adequate and therefore school level DRR planning has not been sufficiently incorporated into SDSs (or other school level institutions) generally throughout the country.

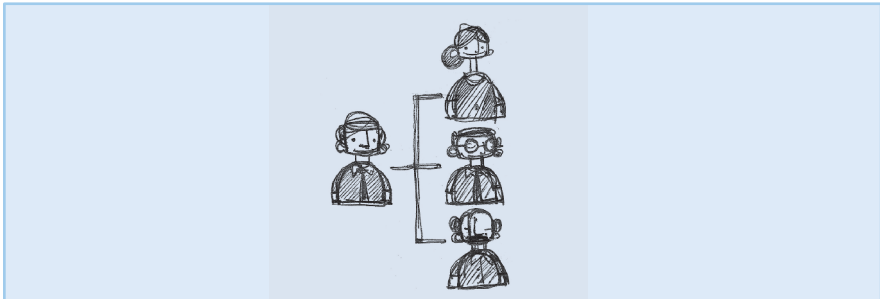
Special needs training continued in different emergency contexts in order to encourage greater attendance of differently abled children in an effort to make education more inclusive.

The above trainings and opportunities would have had a wider impact if there was an increased focus on roll out through the training of trainers and identification of master teachers who could share knowledge and skills within the school community. At present only actual participants benefitted from the training with no measurable outcomes at the school level.

Teacher shortages have been a major issue affecting EiE contexts:

Areas formerly controlled by the LTTE continue to face acute teacher shortages for core subjects. The lack of trained teachers affected the sectors ability to successfully conduct remedial classes and programmes, such as ALPs and CUE, that were crucial in helping students to overcome disruptions and prepare for examinations.

To overcome this problem, teachers from unaffected areas were deployed to meet urgent needs. During and in the aftermath of the conflict, teachers from Jaffna were transferred to Vanni areas to meet the demand for teachers. Many were reluctant to take up these posts due to the lack of facilities and safety issues. In some cases community



volunteers were recruited to meet emergency needs. Graduates from the community helped support teachers during and immediately after the war. While some volunteers have been absorbed into the regular teacher cadre, this practice has now been discontinued.

Multi-grade teaching was another mechanism used to overcome the challenge of teacher shortages, particularly in implementing the ALP and the CUE programme. However, this system put a heavy burden on existing teachers who were forced to handle many different levels of students in a single classroom while dealing with pressure to cover the syllabus from principals who were in turn pressured by zonal authorities.

The overburdening of teachers is a major issue, visible in all emergency contexts, mainly due to the priority given towards minimising the impact of an emergency and the disruption to learners:

There were increasing demands on teachers to organize and conduct double shift classes, and to ensure meeting the diverse learning needs of children. Principals in the host schools were required to manage limited human resources (teachers' time and effort), infrastructure (the space in which to conduct classes) and other resources to meet the educational needs.

As discussed above, multi-grade teaching is difficult in a context where teachers are required to focus on finishing a syllabus. The results oriented approach at the zonal level puts undue pressure on principals, and in turn teachers and learners, to cover syllabuses and ensure high performances at national level examinations. Particularly in post-emergency contexts this prevents teachers from developing a holistic approach to teaching, learning and catering teaching methods through mechanisms to meet the specific needs of learners.

The struggle for teachers has been to balance learners' needs with the new child friendly mechanisms introduced in an emergency context with the pressure to cover syllabuses and prepare children for examinations. In the height of an emergency there is more space for teachers to use new techniques and their training to focus on holistic education, to address signs of distress and cater to the specific learning needs of students. However, as normalcy is restored this becomes more and more difficult, due mainly to the performance/results oriented approach at the zonal level.



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