

## **INEE-UNRWA workshop final report**

*Amman, Jordan*

*17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> October 2011*

### **1. Context**

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established in 1949 and mandated with responding to the needs of Palestinian refugees. UNRWA provides basic education, primary health care, social services, infrastructure improvement, micro-finance and emergency assistance to approximately 4,820,000 Palestine refugees who have registered with the agency.

UNRWA operates one of the largest school systems in the Middle East. For over 60 years, it has been operating an education programme that provides free basic education for Palestine refugees. Unlike other UN agencies, UNRWA works to a direct service implementation model, meaning that it is responsible for running the schools, determining the content of the curriculum (in conjunction with host countries), and hiring, training and retaining education staff. Today it operates 700 schools for approximately half a million children, along with ten Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), and three Education Science faculties (teacher training) in five fields of operation; Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza.<sup>1</sup>The education programme with 23,000 staff (teachers account for more than 18,000) and expending 50% of the agency budget, it is the largest of UNRWA programmes.

Often characterized by its protracted nature, UNRWA's operating context is actually highly varied, ranging from relative stability in some countries to more complex environments and sporadic flare up of more intense violence and instability. Indeed, in recent years the need for a greater focus on education in emergencies has come to the fore in light of situations such as those experienced in Gaza, occupied Palestinian territory 2008 - 2009, Nahr al-Bared camp in Lebanon (2007) and most recently unrest in Syria (2011).

### **2. UNRWA reform process**

Between February and September 2010, UNRWA's Education Department led a process to develop an agency wide education reform strategy. The strategy is the result of a consultative process with the field, international experts and host governments and provides a road map for key elements of a transformational reform: one which will improve classroom practice through strengthening the teacher work-force, better respond to the

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<sup>1</sup>The education system also comprises 700 schools, 22,904 educational staff, 482,795 enrolled pupils of whom 49.9 percent are female pupils, 10 vocational training centres offering 6,209 training places, three educational science faculties, 1,415 teachers in training, and 1,700 student teachers (data as of Dec. 2010).

needs of all children, facilitate curriculum enrichment, and put evidence-based policies in place. At present, UNRWA is embarking upon this education reform by focusing on the following four substantive areas:

1. Teacher development
2. Curriculum and student assessment
3. Inclusive education
4. Technical and vocational education and training

Furthermore, the following additional support areas have been identified as essential to the implementation of this reform initiative: strengthening enabling frameworks, implementing evidence-based policies, providing capacity development, improving governance structures, building effective communication and advocacy practices, and increasing partnerships.

### **3. Rationale for training and value added of UNRWA – INEE partnership**

In support of UNRWA’s commitment to ensure the right to education even in emergencies, INEE and UNRWA decided upon an initial collaboration to be implemented through a capacity building workshop for those currently managing education provision in a situation of unrest in Syria (including both field staff from Syria and headquarters staff based in Amman). In this way, a practical workshop was designed in order to deal with the immediate need. Additionally this workshop sought to ensure institutional linkages were established, and to identify where emergency education approaches and tools could be aligned with the reform process. Following discussions with UNRWA staff, the workshop sought to address the following key questions;

- *What is INEE and how is it relevant to UNRWA’s work?*
- *What are the INEE Minimum Standards for Education and how can we apply them?*
- *What do we mean by prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in education programming?*
- *What are the INEE Guidance Notes on Teaching & Learning and how can we use them in UNRWA’s work?*
- *What other tools and resources does INEE have and where can they support UNRWA’s work?*
- *How can education in emergencies principles and practices can be integrated into UNRWA’s reform process and what are some concrete next steps to achieve this?*



**Workshop participants.**

Key representatives from the Syria field office and representatives from UNRWA's Headquarters Education Department participated, along with the Deputy Chiefs of education for Jordan and the West Bank. This provided an opportunity for Syria field staff to connect with UNRWA headquarters staff regarding the specific challenges they are facing, and looking ahead, it was hoped that this would ensure that responses implemented at the field level were equally reflected and recognized at the central level. Two key workshop objectives were identified;

- Provide immediate capacity development support for Syria field office staff to cope with the effects of the continued violence and instability on education for Palestine refugees.
- Promote the provision of quality education espoused by the reform process even during times of crisis.

#### 4. Training

In light of the above, content was balanced between information sharing, and activities that focused on ensuring that participants familiarized themselves with INEE Minimum Standards and tools, and as the training went on, on identifying where there were synergies with INEE tools and resources and the reform process at the levels of policy, strategy and field operations. More specifically, when considering the last question of linkages with the reform process, it was recognized that while UNRWA has perhaps one of the richest histories of any agency with regards to emergency education (the first school tents being erected in the late 1940s through an UNRWA-UNESCO collaboration), and the agency continues to undertake many good practices when it comes to education in emergencies, INEE has not yet been institutionalised within UNRWA, nor have UNRWA staff been formally initiated or acquainted with the network. For instance, throughout the workshop, participants repeatedly commented that this was the first workshop they had attended with a focus on education in emergencies. The mutual benefits of establishing cooperation and sharing learning between the two entities was therefore stressed throughout the workshop sessions. A particular emphasis was placed on the synergies between the UNRWA Reform process and the INEE Minimum Standards/Guidance Notes on Teaching and Learning/additional resources given the current and very tangible nature of the reform, for which quality is the central consideration. Moreover, in recognition of UNRWA's unique mandate that covers all levels of education planning and provision for both basic education and TVET, the relevance of INEE's tools and resources as they related to all levels of its operations, including school based practices and teaching and learning activities and crucially, how to maintain the quality of education provision during emergencies (the main priority of the



Group work presentation.

reform process) was stressed.

Participant expectations were also solicited during the first session and where needed were built more explicitly into the content of the agenda. Participant expectations covered the following broad areas;

- How to involve the **local community** in emergency response and planning?
- **Appropriate curricula** during emergencies (necessary adaptations)
- To **improve preparedness** for emergencies
- Gain a better knowledge of the **tools and resources to support education in emergencies**
- How to ensure that the **quality of education** is continued during an emergency
- Learn about practices and examples of education in emergencies in other countries including psychosocial programming, protection and education practices and distance learning
- Ensure that education is **central to emergency response** in UNRWA
- To be well acquainted with INEE, and to **link INEE to UNRWA's education reform** and standards.



Skype call with Gaza.

The training itself was structured as per the agenda below:

	<b>DAY ONE</b>
8.00-8.30	Registration
8.30-9.00	Welcome & Introductions
9.00-10.00	Session 1: What is INEE?
10.00 – 11.30	Session 2: Relevance of INEE to UNRWA
11.30 – 12.00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
12.00 – 1.30	Session 3: INEE Minimum Standards
1.30 – 2.45	Session 4: INEE Minimum Standards related tools
2.45-3.15	Reflection and feedback
	<b>DAY TWO</b>
8.30-8.45	Review of Day 1
8.45 – 10.00	Session 5: the INEE framework: from micro to macro
10.00-11.30	Session 6: Quality education and the INEE teaching and learning initiative
11.30 - 12.00	<i>Coffee break</i>
12.00 – 1.30	Session 7: Guidance notes on teaching and learning (general)
1.30 – 3.00	Session 7: Continued: Guidance notes on teaching and learning (teachers)
3.00 – 3.15	Reflection and feedback
	<b>DAY THREE</b>
8.30-9.00	Review of toolkit and resources
9.00-11.30	Session 8: Contextualisation of the INEE Minimum Standards and the teaching and learning guidance notes
11.30 – 12.00	<i>Coffee break</i>
12.00 – 12.30	Session 9: Learning from practice; discussion with Gaza
1.00 – 2.30	Session 10: Roundtable on taking the INEE MS and Teaching and Learning Guidance notes forward
2.30 – 3.00	Next steps and action planning
3.00 – 3.15	Reflection/Closing Remarks

At the beginning of the day review sessions were used as an opportunity to go over participant expectations, questions and feedback from the previous day(s). Based on the questions that followed some of the sessions, some of the planned activities were cut from the schedule in order to allow for more in depth discussion time. However, these activities were handed out to participants to consider outside of the workshop agenda, and were included on the CD of training materials that was prepared for them to take away from the training.

Of note, there was significant discussion around the notion of what constituted an “emergency” and how this related to UNRWA’s work. Perhaps somewhat reflective of the stable situation in some of UNRWA’s fields of operation, participants seemed reluctant to classify UNRWA’s work as emergency focused. Extra time was therefore taken to breakdown the dichotomy of emergency versus development, notably as it related to

protracted situations such as those experienced by UNRWA across the region. Particular emphasis was placed on the need to mainstream education in emergencies approaches into UNRWA's education planning, through the notions of prevention and preparedness, in order to better deal with the ebbs and flows of crisis that affect its fields of operations. Other participants expressed concern that the materials would be too dense to use in the often chaotic initial period of an emergency, and requested shorter time efficient 'how to respond' tools. While it was stressed that there was no 'one size fits all' response plan, and that effective and efficient response were intrinsically linked to prevention and preparedness activities, the checklists that could be developed from the Guidance Notes on Teaching and Learning and the INEE Good Practice Guides were also highlighted as being potentially useful for front line responding staff. Throughout these discussions, the importance of UNRWA staff in providing such feedback and where available content to the network (through case studies and already developed materials), was also underlined.

The training also included a number of practical activities designed so that participants familiarized themselves with the tools, while undertaking some elements of response planning and contextualization. In this way, it was hoped that the activities would spark increased momentum for the follow up to the workshop. In addition to an initial role-play activity on the first day, designed to set the scene for emergency response by highlighting the various issues that are raised during emergencies as well as the variety of stakeholders affected, the following activities were conducted;

- **Mapping of the synergies** between the INEE MS and tools and the 8 core areas of the reform process (group work with feedback to plenary)
- **Developing a workshop plan** for UNRWA teachers based on the Guidance notes for Teaching and Learning (group work with feedback to plenary)
- **Contextualization of the INEE MS** for teaching and learning domain (one group per standard with feedback to plenary)

There was also a session dedicated to hearing about how the INEE MS and tools have been used for education programming in Gaza. As one of UNRWA's five fields of operations, it was felt that this practical example of how Gaza educationalists - including at least one UNRWA school - have used INEE to support their work, would provide tangible examples of the value added of INEE's tools and resources to UNRWA's work. Following a Skype presentation by a Gaza based INEE member and

UNRWA field staff, there was a question and answer period that allowed participants to enter into more detail regarding the types of activities and actions that were taken in Gaza. This session also sought to implicitly raise awareness about the very practical value of the network and sub-groups (specifically the Arabic Language Community).

## **5. Outcomes**

Prior to the workshop, overall objectives were noted as 1) raising participant awareness on INEE, its existing tools and support mechanisms and how to use these tools in their day to

day work – especially in emergency contexts; 2) equipping participants with the knowledge and skills to develop action plans for enhancing and expanding INEE knowledge and application to their fields of operation. Based on the feedback received, participants did gain a much better knowledge of tools and resources that could support their work. With regards to the second objective during the discussion periods and activity sessions, the following actions were identified as part of UNRWA's next steps to apply the minimum standards and other tools to its work, in a way that was coherent with the reform process. This was also collated during the final session 'roundtable' when participants prepared for the plenary discussion by splitting into four groups, with each group taking two areas of the reform, and brainstorming activities and actions that could be undertaken to ensure that education and emergency principles are integrated into the reform process. Planned outcomes for each of the eight areas of the reform are listed below

### 1. TVET and Youth

- Networking with Ministries and NGOs (both local and international), for example through partnerships with GIZ
- Developing education in emergency plans that deal with a range of scenarios and corresponding response options that may be implicitly integrated within reform activities or explicitly added
- Establishing the needs of youth in emergency contexts through a market survey and job link system and conducting training courses to respond to the identified needs

### 2. Curriculum and student assessment

- Analyse curricula materials and enrich through review of INEE case studies on education in emergencies
- Consider developing virtual curricula and self study materials for children who are unable to access schools and identify means of outreach for out of children and youth who have been pushed out of the formal system during the emergency period
- Develop a toolkit for student assessments that looks at various means of assessing learning outcomes and conduct trainings on this through the school based teacher development programme which is a core area of the reform
- Enrich existing materials to include key content related to education in emergencies (namely relevant protection and life saving messages)

### 3. Teacher development and school empowerment

- Create a team of EiE/ INEE trained trainers who can pass on EiE knowledge and application
- Assess teacher needs with regards to emergencies and train teachers
- Link the reform strategy, school based plans and school based teacher development programme to the INEE standards and principles
- Prepare substitution plans for teachers affected by emergencies
- Increase the involvement of parents in emergency planning
- Prepare case studies of good practices
- Make sure that INEE MS and education in emergency core principles are integrated into other cross cutting areas of UNRWA's work

- Develop an M&E system to follow up on aforementioned activities

#### 4. Inclusive education

- Sensitise the inclusive education team to INEE MS and tools
- Assess the current EiE needs related to inclusive education
- Based on needs, prepare and enrich current materials on inclusive education
- Train teachers through the school based teacher development programme
- Ensure linkages between inclusive education, human rights and key issue of quality
- Prepare case studies on UNRWA's work
- Increase parental involvement and train parents on inclusive approaches
- Establish an M&E system for the activities

#### 5. Strategic planning and M&E

- Add to the current list on INEE and UNRWA resources that will support the inclusion of EiE through a mapping of additional resources that also complements the strategic research agenda. This may include resources that are related to the specific host country curricula as well as other resources linked to the reform
- Develop host country plans
- Learn more about the work of UN sister organizations with regard to prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, to facilitate partnership
- Develop an overall strategy for EiE and a corresponding M&E system

#### 6. Partnership and communications

- Improve networking within UNRWA as well as other organizations, on EiE practices
- Develop a communications and advocacy strategy for EiE
- Develop a funding and partnership strategy in line with INEE advocacy materials and the guide to external financing
- Utilise the intranet, newsletter, media and donor communications to discuss EiE work
- Undertake contingency planning

#### 7. Research development and EMIS

- Map existing resources and data and share within UNRWA (potentially through the e-library project)

#### 8. Governance

- Review Education Technical Instructions (ETIs) to see if it includes education in emergencies, INEE MS, and INEE resources and tools. If they are not adequate then prepare new ETIs for emergencies to cover teachers, learning processes and psychosocial concerns within emergencies. Within this it will be important to reference scenarios and response possibilities. This should also include micro-emergencies that could deal with recent cases such as a teacher who died while school was in session, as well as cases of children with swine flu for which there are currently no planned instructions on how to proceed with education.

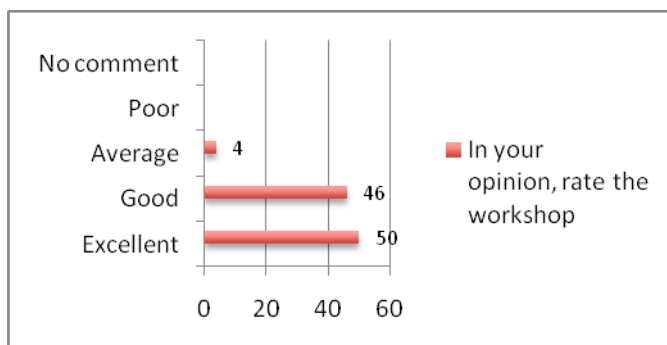


More specific follow up was also identified for the Syria field office. Participants expressed a desire to take trainings ahead at the field level through the creation of an action plan (to be developed by the Chief of the Syria field office). The action plan would cover all four elements of EiE (prevention, preparedness, response and recovery) and would incorporate the follow suggestions of activities;

- Establish a committee for developing /adapting Arabic language training materials
- Create a team for training for preparedness
- Identify schools that require immediate support
- Train teachers in these schools
- Integrate INEE MS and T&L guidance notes into the school plans and ensure the inclusion of responses for emergencies
- Enrich the curriculum in line with INEE MS
- Involve the local community and parents in school based response planning
- Conduct activities to prepare students for emergencies (e.g. first aid training and evacuations)
- Conduct a workshop for teachers on how to manage emergency situations and how to seek partnerships with other agencies to support this process
- Prepare M&E tools
- Guide teachers to reflect the INEE MS and T&L guidance notes in their school based development plans
- Undertake a sensitisation of teachers and the community on the importance of EiE
- Plan how to incorporate the INEE MS and tools into other trainings that are being undertaken at the field level

## 6. Feedback on the workshop

Overall feedback on the workshop was positive as expressed in the chart showing the percentage of participants rating the workshop from excellent to poor;



More specific feedback was also elicited as per the table below;

SPECIFIC FEEDBACK					
Facilitation	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Presentations and discussions were useful	7	16	1		
The composition of participants was satisfactory	11	13			
Time was used in an effective manner for presentations and discussions	8	10	2	4	
PERCENTAGE AVERAGE	36%	54%	4%	6%	
Impact of the workshop	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Workshop objectives were met	11	11	1		
The workshop helped with my understanding of INEE	13	9	1		
The workshop will be useful in going forward with putting in place an UNRWA EiE strategy	7	16			
PERCENTAGE AVERAGE	45%	52%	3%		
Organization	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Purpose of the workshop was clearly communicated	14	9			
Participants had sufficient time to prepare	9	10	5		
Methodology used for the workshop process was suitable	9	10	3	1	
Materials and templates used were satisfactory	10	11	3		
PERCENTAGE AVERAGE	45%	43%	12%		
Environment	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The venue was suitable for the purpose of presenting and discussing	12	9	1	2	
Appropriate logistical arrangements were undertaken for participants	8	15	1		
The number of participants during sessions was satisfactory	11	13			
PERCENTAGE AVERAGE	43%	51%	3%	3%	

Additional qualitative feedback was also provided with participants providing comments on the evaluation form. Some of the recurring themes of this feedback are listed below;

- This is a very good orientation on the resources that exist in INEE and how to link between UNRWA resources and INEE resources
- The workshop could have been shorter - just two days
- These INEE Minimum Standards should be widely disseminated across the whole agency and all education staff made aware of the tools and resources
- It was a good networking opportunity
- The group discussions were very informative
- Put a time limit on participant presentations
- The use of role play and video was good and could have been increased
- There should have been more presentation of real examples and practiced responses
- Direct interpretation would have been good

## 6. Recommendations

In recognising that the UNRWA Education department has a rich experience responding to emergencies (see for example the UNRWA education department response strategy for Gaza post Operation Cast Led), an appropriate focus could now be in the areas of **prevention and preparedness**. As was highlighted during the workshop this could include approaches adapted from **disaster risk reduction programming** including **curriculum enrichment** and **contingency planning** (at the school as well as the field level).

Secondly, while recognising that a key area of reform is decentralisation and that decentralising decision making during emergencies can ensure more effective response that builds on existing coping mechanisms and community resources (as is already occurring in Syria), it nevertheless remains important to complement and strengthen this through a **centrally based institutionalisation of emergency education principles**. Specifically, integrating EiE into the central levels of planning, policy and headquarters support, will help ensure that activities take place in line with the reform process, can improve internal information sharing of good practice between the five fields, and may also facilitate garnering broader support and resources. In this regard the establishment of an **education in emergencies strategy** at the headquarters level (based on the INEE MS) and contextualised to the five fields is recommended. The contextualisation process may also support the practical implementation of the reform process as it could highlight specific issues and gaps in response at the field and local levels that require redress.

Finally, as was stressed throughout the workshop, the relationship between INEE and UNRWA should be a **mutually supportive** one. Certainly, INEE resources and tools, the Arabic language community and task teams have a key role to play in supporting UNRWA programming and emergency response. It is also crucial however to recognise the wealth of information and practice contained within UNRWA. As previously mentioned, UNRWA's work in emergency education response - which comprises over 60 years of education programming in mutually occurring situations of protracted instability and conflict, military occupation, civil war, long term displacement, secondary displacements and immediate onset acute crisis- needs to be brought to the fore globally. UNRWA staff have much to offer the network and to inform EiE discussions – not least of all the current quality initiative now underway with the Quality Education Task Team.



Participant joins the INEE network.

In addition to encouraging UNRWA participation through distinct activities such as the submission of case studies, participation in task teams and working groups etc., the establishment of a **memorandum of understanding between INEE and UNRWA** that seeks to build upon the concept of mutually supportive activities, could be an additional consideration. As an example, recently, NRC entered into a regional agreement with UNRWA that seeks to strengthen their cooperation.<sup>2</sup> As a result, NRC was able to approach donors and share this agreement, which has consequently led to increased funding for NRC programs in support of UNRWA. There is a great deal of potential not only in terms of fundraising, but also in terms of strengthening the work of both organizations through mutual collaboration and shared learning.



**Presentation of Certificates of Completion.**

<sup>2</sup> More information available on NRC's website at the following: <http://www.nrc.no/?did=9592119>