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MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES, CHRONIC CRISIS, AND EARLY RECONSTRUCTION

A UGANDA CASE STUDY

Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crisis, and Early Reconstruction

A Uganda Case Study

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Acknowledgments

Section 1: Research Overview

1.1 INEE Minimum Standards: An Overview

In December 2004, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) launched the Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crisis, and Post-Conflict Reconstruction (MSEE). The Minimum Standards, which articulate the minimum level of educational service to be attained in emergencies through early reconstruction, have been developed by stakeholders from a variety of levels, including households and communities, local authorities, ministries, funding agencies, and implementers. The Standards provide guidance for responding to education needs in crisis and post-crisis environments and a framework to coordinate the education activities of funding agencies and other development partners.

In 2005, the INEE Minimum Standards Application and Analysis Group, with assistance from the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children and Creative Associates International, Inc., developed a Minimum Standards evaluation plan with "the objectives of facilitating dissemination and awareness, systematically assessing utilization, and for the continuing revision and improvement of the standards."[1] The research protocol has three tiers:

- Tier One: A qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the use and impact of the Minimum Standards, with baseline and end line measures;
- Tier Two: Evaluation tools provided to INEE members to carry out own studies, drawing on Tier One methods and results; and
- Tier Three: Self-evaluation of the Minimum Standards by INEE members.

In 2003, local consultations were held in the conflict areas of Uganda with community members, local authorities, and other stakeholders as part of a broader process to inform the development of the Minimum Standards. Currently, a variety of organizations are implementing formal and nonformal education programs in the conflict-affected districts of Uganda. To better respond to such needs, some organizations are using the Minimum Standards to plan, implement and/or monitor education initiatives.[2] This research, following the protocol developed by INEE, was undertaken to gain a better understanding of how these organizations are using the Minimum Standards.

1.2 Research Questions

The guiding research focus of this study is *to gain a better understanding of how organizations are using the Minimum Standards, with a focus on the crosscutting themes of gender and HIV/AIDS, in a chronic crisis setting.* The overarching research questions included:

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[1] See INEE *Research Plan for Case Studies on the Utilization of Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction* for more information.

[2] See INEE Monitoring and Evaluation Web Page < http://www.ineesite.org/page.asp?pid=1066> for more information.

- Are the Standards being implemented in Uganda? If so, how are the Standards being implemented by organizations working in Uganda's conflicted-affected districts?
- Based upon the experiences of the organizations using the Standards in Uganda, how can they be improved?

Minimum Standards Levels of Implementation

For purposes of the research, the following levels of implementation have been used:[3]

- *Awareness:* Are members and/or clients of organizations aware of the Minimum Standards? How did they learn about them?
- *Utilization:* Are the Minimum Standards being used? How? What factors facilitate the use of the Minimum Standards or inhibit their use?
- *Institutionalization:* Have any Minimum Standards been institutionalized in the policies or procedures of an organization?

1.3 Research Methodology and Data Collection

This research study employed an inductive (qualitative) approach because the most potent factors involved in the review and analysis of the minimum standards cannot be compartmentalized and examined solely in accordance with a deductive (quantitative) paradigm. The interpretive nature of qualitative research allows the "voices" of those who are implementing the standards to be heard. It is their stories and experiences that provide critical insight into the ways the minimum standards are used and how they assist conflict-affected communities in the implementation and monitoring of education programs.

A collective case study approach was used to allow for several mini-case studies to be conducted. Data gathered was cross-analyzed to develop a holistic picture of the Minimum Standards' implementation in Uganda's conflict areas. A collective (or multi-site) case study examines a "number of cases jointly in order to inquire into the phenomenon, population, or general condition….A (collective) case study can usefully be seen as a small step toward grand generalization" (Stake 1994, pp. 237-238).

It is not unusual for researchers to base their selection of case studies toward "those cases that seem to offer opportunity to learn" (Stake 1994, pp. 237-238). In this instance, research funding for the Uganda case study was available solely to study how organizations in conflict-affected areas of Uganda are using the Standards. Therefore, in order to collect the maximum amount of information about Standards usage in Uganda, interviews were conducted with organizations and/or individuals that indicated, at a minimum, an awareness of the standards. The data collected is part of a broader effort to establish a Minimum Standards baseline.

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[3] See *Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies Working Group on Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies: Research Plan for Case Studies on the Utilization of Minimum Standards of Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises, and Early Reconstruction* for more information.

Primary data collection methods consistent with a collective case study approach were used. This included the collection of written and oral data.

Written Material Data Collection

Mute evidence—written documents that endure physically in the form of public documents, e.g., Government of Uganda national polices—was collected and reviewed (Hodder 1994, p. 393). The literature review focused on Government of Uganda (GoU) and Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) policies and national implementation guidelines as well as research undertaken by various education organizations. This review had two purposes: 1) identify key education issues in the conflicted-affected districts of Uganda through a gender lens; and 2) gain a better understanding of how these are addressed through existing policies, guidelines, and implementation.

Oral Data

There are multiple dimensions to the collection of oral data, ranging from brainstorming—i.e., non-directive, very unstructured and exploratory exchange—to focus discussions with an individual or group— i.e., directive, structured, and set exploratory exchange (Frey and Fontana, 1994, p. 367). Oral data were collected through primary informant interviews (e.g., nongovernment organizations' personnel) to understand and elicit their experiences in the utilization of the minimum standards. For purposes of this research, a primary informant semi-structured key interview protocol was developed for initial data gathering.[4]

1.4 Data Analysis

Unlike a quantitative evaluation, there are no set formulas or calculations to analyze qualitative data. Qualitative data analysis is about relationships and identifying key themes that emerge from these concepts. Data analysis in a broad sense refers to "anything one does in the management and reporting of data" and more narrowly defined as "systemic procedures in order to identify essential features and relationships" (Wolcott 1995, p. 24).

For this study, the first layer of data analysis was horizontal, i.e., individual organization's levels of MSEE implementation were analyzed to understand and record emerging data patterns. The second level of analysis focused on cross-analyzing the implementation data to note areas of commonality and divergence.

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[4] See Annex 1—Uganda Research Protocol—for additional information.

Section 2: Overview of Uganda's Conflict-affected Districts

2.1   Conflict-affected Districts: Contextual Elements

This section provides an overview of Uganda's conflict-affected districts. The chart below (Figure 1) provides a brief synopsis of Uganda's conflict-affected districts' contextual elements: conflict phase, military and political structures, social issues, protection/security, education, and economic environment.   Due to the limited timeframe for this study, information for the profile was synthesized from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre report, "Uganda: Relief Efforts Hampered in One of the World's Worst Internal Displacement Crises: A Profile of the Internal Displacement Situation," December 12, 2005.[5]

Figure 1. Contextual Elements of Uganda's Conflict-Affected Districts

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Conflict Phase	Chronic Crisis: According to UNOCHA (September 2005), almost 2 million people are internally displaced and 1.7 million people are receiving some form of food assistance in the conflict-affected areas of Uganda. In January 2006, the UN Security Council passed a resolution that recognizes the regional threat posed by the conflict in northern Uganda and calls on the Government of Uganda (GoU) to protect its population.
Military and Political Structures	The conflict in the northern districts of Uganda is primarily a guerrilla war waged between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and GoU. The LRA began in1988 as a movement to rebuild the Acholi nation (in northern Uganda) and provide leadership to ensure that Uganda is ruled in accordance with the biblical ten commandments and the Government of Uganda. A recently re-elected President Museveni informed a visiting U.S. delegation (March 2006) that only 120 rebel fighters were remaining and most had fled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The conflict in the northeastern Teso region is due primarily to cattle-rustling among the semi-nomadic Karamojong clan members, an ethnic group that has a long history of inter-clan warfare.
Social Issues	According to the Uganda Ministry of Health, each week more than 1,000 die, primarily from malaria and HIV/AIDS. HIV prevalence is higher in the conflict areas (9.1%) than in the rest of Uganda (national average is 7%). The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre - Uganda report states that "access to health care, water, education, land, and shelter and the denial of freedom of movement remain primary concerns and have contributed to a situation which has yielded a mortality rate which is above emergency thresholds and nearly double the mortality rate of Darfur; the conflict is generally considered the worst humanitarian crisis in Africa" (IDMC 2005, p. 9).

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[5] Source of UN OCHA Map: **http:// www.internal-displacement.org** (Uganda maps).

Protection/Security	Since the insurgency began (1988), nearly 25,000 children have been abducted to serve as fighters, porters, and sex slaves. This has resulted in an estimated 40,000 night commuters (young people who commute from their homes to secure evening shelters—e.g., schools, youth centers, churches, etc. (*Sunday Vision*, March 26, 2006). "Girls, women, boys, and men amongst the night commuters and staff report that sexual harassment and rape continue to occur along transit routes and in sleeping spaces in the town centers. The roads that lead to the sleeping centers remain unlit and perilous for the unaccompanied children… The night commuters remain at a high risk of exposure to infectious diseases, HIV/AIDS, and early pregnancy" (IDMC 2005, p.107).
Education	The National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) states that "the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Local Governments shall insure that Internally Displaced Persons, particularly displaced children, have the same access to education as children elsewhere in Uganda." Education activities in the country are lead by the MoES at the national level and at the decentralized level by the local government and district education offices. There are also a variety of coordination and information-sharing groups, including the Northern Region Education Forum and the Emergency Education Coordination Working Group, which provide foras for civil society input into policy dialogues. Statistics reveal the challenges faced in conflict areas. "An estimated 25 percent of children of primary-school-going age are out of school in the north. Sixty percent of the approximately 1,200 primary schools in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Lira, and Apac districts have been displaced due to insecurity" (IDMC 2005, p. 148). According to a Government of Uganda report (2005), the education policy adapted to the internally displaced persons' situation in Lira District has not been successful. The study indicates that violence in Lira District has forced school communities (63 percent of the primary schools and 58 percent of the secondary schools) to be totally abandoned. By local government mandate many of these schools re-open as learning centers, primarily in IDP camps, and many fail due to a lack of accountability. The learning centers' leadership, administration, and organizational structures are not adequately planned, and learning centers' ineffectual management sponsors competition between the displaced schools and the host schools (IDMC 2005, p. 149).
Economic Environment	"Lack of access to income and potential sources of income is a significant problem faced by IDPs. Most people used to depend on selling crops as a source of income, but this was disrupted by displacement. Subsistence agriculture was and still remains the main source of livelihood, however, it declined tremendously—from 81 percent to 56 percent—after displacement. People's ability to sell crops as a source of livelihood has fallen 10 times after displacement. More people (23 percent) are currently engaged in casual labor as a form of survival during displacement compared to only 1 percent before….Those who entirely depend on others for survival have increased from 3 percent to 11 percent after displacement….The changes in the household economy have also led to changes in economic and domestic roles. More than ¼ (54/190) of the women interviewed are now heads of household due to death of husbands or separation, while many men reported to be now responsible for child care than before after losing or separating with their wives" (IDMC 2005, pp.161-162).

2.2 Internally Displaced Persons Camps in Northern Uganda

The map in Figure 2 shows districts in Northern Uganda and the numbers of camps and IDPs in each. Note that 144 camps, with over 1.4 million IDPs, are receiving relief food in 2006.

Figure 2. UN OCHA Map of Northern Uganda Internally Displaced Persons Camps
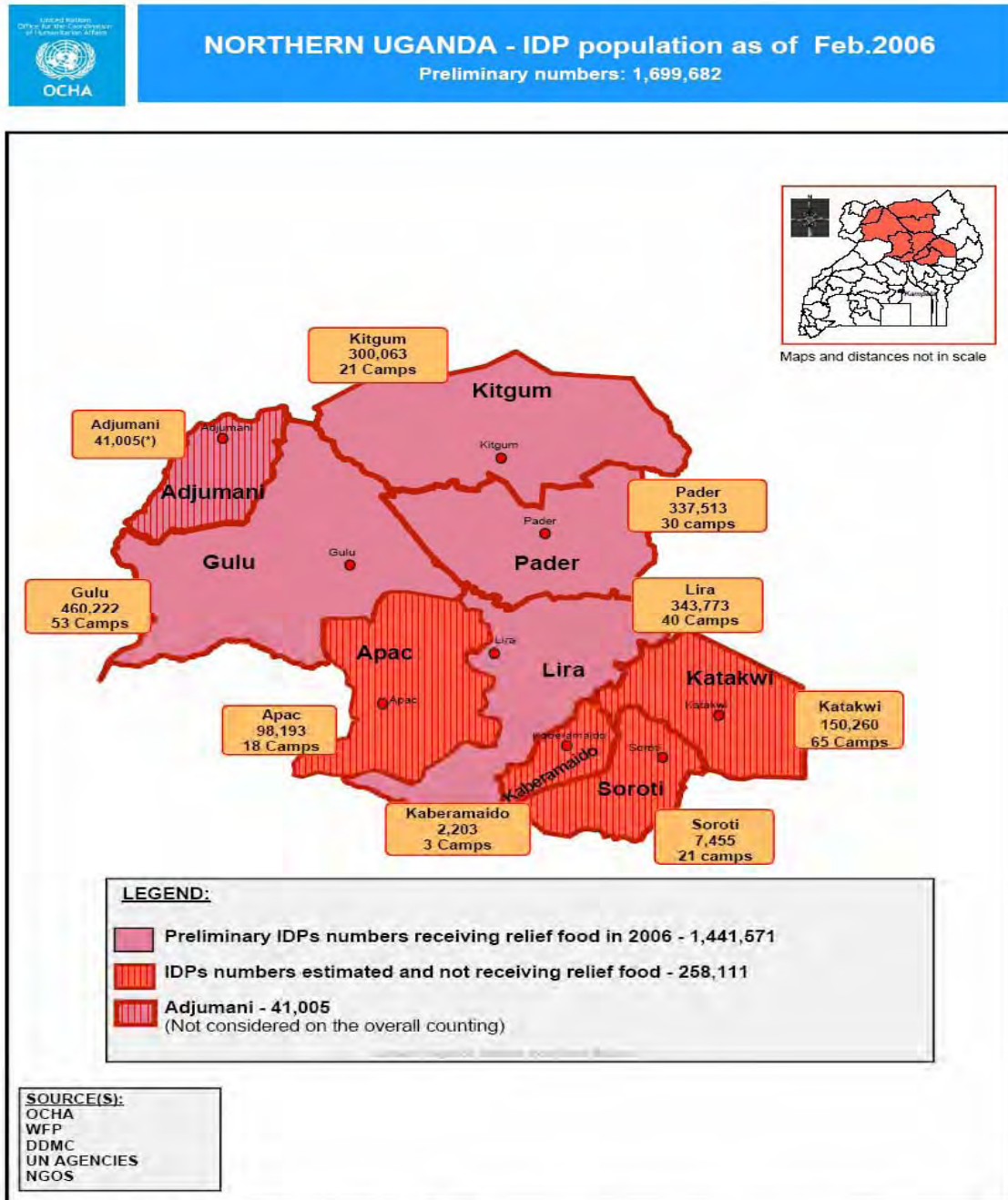
Section 3: MSEE Case Study Findings and Applications

3.1   MSEE Implementation in Uganda's Conflict Areas

This section summarizes the individuals interviewed (in March 2006), level of Minimum Standards usage, and recommendations for Minimum Standards revisions and/or additions, where applicable. Responses were analyzed to identify one of three previously mentioned levels of implementation: awareness, utilization, or institutionalization.

Figure 3. Minimum Standards Implementation in Uganda's Conflict Areas

Organizational Affiliation	Individuals Interviewed	Implementation Level	Comments
Christian Children's Fund (CCF)	Wendy Wheaton Global Child Protection Advisor	Awareness	At an institutional level, CCF has education standards and guidelines that are currently being reviewed in order to gain a better understanding of how these institutional standards may be linked to the MSEE. CCF's objective is to have a single set of standards and indicators to guide their programming and demonstrate their contribution to a global effort.
Commonwealth Education Fund	Henry Nickson Ogwal CEF Coordinator	Awareness	Coordinator is aware of standards.
Gulu University	Okelle, R.C.M. Master's Student	Awareness	The master's candidate is aware of standards and has used them as a general resource in development of thesis data collection tools, but has not directly utilized any specific standards or indicators.
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	Nina Papadopoulos Education Advisor	Awareness	MSEE has been shared in awareness-raising activities (e.g., community resilience psycho-social training) and has been used as an informal guide in the administration of a UNICEF-funded assessment on education structures in Pader District. There has been no direct utilization of standards.
Save the Children in Uganda	Gabriel OlingOlang Gulu District Manager George Genu Acting Program Manager Basic Education Sector	Awareness	Standards are not directly being applied (i.e., not formally part of a project), but are being used as a guide/informal checklist for project implementation.

Organizational Affiliation	Individuals Interviewed	Implementation Level	Comments
UNICEF/Uganda	Sheila Parvyn Wamahiu Head, Education Technical Cluster Innocent Najjumba Mulindwa Project Officer, Education	Awareness	UNICEF/Uganda is aware of standards, but is not currently using them in education programming. The program is considering ways they may be integrated into emergency-education programs.
World Vision KURET Project	Marjorie Lagen, Project Manager Nelson Katabula M&E Officer	Awareness	The project is aware of the standards; currently not using them in the implementation of the Department of Labor-funded KURET Project.

Study Limitation:
- After an extended period of restrained implementation activity (due to national elections), education personnel were out in the field and many were unavailable during the data collection phase of this research. This limited the quality and quantity of data collected.

3.2 Lessons Learned

The information in this section has been collected directly from the field. Findings from the MSEE interviews have been synthesized to identify key lessons learned.

- *Level of Minimum Standard implementation.* Uniformly, the organizational personnel interviewed indicated that they are at the *awareness level* of implementation, i.e., individuals have received training or through some other sensitization activity have learned about the Minimum Standards, but they are still in the early stages of deciding how best to actively "utilize" the Standards in their programming. Most agreed that the Standards are a good general reference guide, and some have used it as an informal checklist for program implementation or monitoring. None of the individuals interviewed provided specific examples of how they consciously "utilized" the Standards and/or indicators.

  A key lesson learned is that moving from awareness to utilization of the Standards takes time and models, e.g., examples of tools that have incorporated the Standards and perhaps a brief explanation about the approach used. As mentioned in Section 1, the INEE Minimum Standards Research Protocol lists the following definitions for the three levels of Minimum Standards implementation:

  - *Awareness:* Are members and/or clients of organizations aware of the Standards? How did they learn about them?
  - *Utilization:* Are the standards being used? How? What factors facilitate the use of the Standards or inhibit their use?

- *Institutionalization:* Have any standards been institutionalized in the policies or procedures of an organization?

It is recommended that the INEE Analysis and Application Group (AAG) review these definitions and expand the criterion for what constitutes awareness, utilization, and institutionalization. The expanded definitions should be included in the INEE Minimum Standards feedback questionnaire to help capture, in a more consistent manner, the level of standard implementation.[6] It is further suggested that organizations indicating that they are utilizing or institutionalizing the Standards share, if possible, the tools/ documents developed to serve as models for others to refer to in their quest to understand how to implement the standards.

- *Standard quantification:* Several of the individuals indicated that the Standards are "not specific." This leaves them open to different interpretations and potentially dilutes the quality of the Standard and/or indicator. Several of the interviewees further indicated that they would like to see a more prescriptive approach taken, such as specific numbers for pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) indicator, pupil-textbook ratio, and pupil-desk ratio. Such explicit Standards and indicators would empower them to demonstrate that the current situation in the IDP camps is unacceptable and form a platform for advocacy. For example, in Pader District at the Omiya Pachwa learning center, there are 253 pupils for every classroom. In an assessment of 10 learning centers in Pader District, the average PTR was 153:1. As one education program manager said, "Even if the standard is not achievable, it is good to have a guide to set a level…..on the ground people want to have something tangible to aim for."

- *Support to field offices to implement Minimum Standards.* An education program manager stated, "It would be beneficial if head offices asked field offices/programs what help they needed to implement the minimum standards." While several organizations have indicated that they received awareness (sensitization) training on the Standards, it appears that none have received assistance from headquarters offices to design tools, programs, etc. that utilize the standards. This relates back to the suggestion that tools and other documents (e.g., matrices linking standards to other international guidelines such as the matrix identifying linkages between the Sphere standards and INEE Minimum Standards or INEE Minimum Standards linkages to the IASC HIV/AIDS Guidelines for Education in Emergency Settings) be shared as part of the Minimum Standards training and sensitization workshops to give individuals some concrete resources to refer to.[7]

- *Minimum Standards vis-à-vis a country's education standards.* The Uganda MoES has a national uniform set of basic requirements and Minimum Standards for education institutions. These are used for education institutions in both conflict and non-conflict

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[6] See MSEE Initial Feedback on Use and Implementation http://www.ineesite.org/page.asp?pid=1079 for additional information.
[7] See Annex 2—Minimum Standards Linkages to Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for HIV/AIDS interventions or http://www.ineesite.org/minimum_standards/HIV_AIDS_tool_jso.pdf

settings and do not take into consideration the special circumstances surrounding the conflict-affected districts. Several of the individuals interviewed indicated that since Uganda already had a set of education standards, the INEE Minimum Standards may not be as relevant and that the standards are most applicable in settings where there are no standards, e.g., a refugee camp. Other individuals interviewed indicated that it would be useful to review the Uganda education standards, using the MSEE as a resource guide, to see how the Uganda education standards may be contextualized to the conflict-affected areas.

Conflicting information emerged as to the applicability of the Minimum Standards in a country that has education standards. It is suggested that the MSEE Working Group further discuss how or when the Minimum Standards should be used and provide more detailed guidance on this in the MSEE introductory chapter.

3.3 Recommendations for MSEE Revisions

As part of the research data collection, a literature review was conducted to identify significant education issues in the conflict areas of Uganda. The issues were reviewed with MoES staff and members of the Education Conflict Working Group to validate their importance. The matrix on the following page (p. 11) identifies gender issues that are not addressed in the Minimum Standards indicators or guidance notes and provides suggestions for how they may be incorporated. The recommendations provided on the following pages have been provided by the study's author based upon the critical education issues identified and verified by MoES personnel and members of the Education Conflict Working Group.

Figure 4. Recommendations for Minimum Standards Revisions

MSEE Category: Access and Learning Environment Addressed	
Standard 1: All individuals have access to quality and relevant education opportunities.	
Indicator—Discrimination refers, but is not limited to, obstacles imposed because of poverty, gender, age, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, political affiliation, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, geographical location, or special education needs.	**Issue: Girl-child Mother Participation in Education Program.** The issue of girl-child mothers (pregnancy) is not addressed in the standards. In conflict-areas, the girl-child faces an increased risk of becoming a child-mother due to the intertwined issues of insecurity, sexual exploitation, and poverty, among other factors. Many countries do not have a pregnancy policy, and it is not uncommon for females to be excluded from education opportunities because of their parental status. **Recommendation:** In the indicator and/or in supporting Guidance Notes 1 or 2, the issue of pregnancy should be addressed. International conventions that support the right of girls and women who become pregnant to participate in education programs include the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. This issue may be cross-referenced with Education Policy and Coordination Standard 1, Guidance Note 3 (marginalized groups).
Standard 2: Learning environments are secure, and promote the protection and mental and emotional well-being of learners	
Indicator—The nutrition and short-term hunger needs of learners are addressed to allow for effective learning to take place at the learning site.	**Issue: Food Programs.** Research shows that, if used properly, food is a powerful incentive to improve female retention in education programs. In conflict areas, girl OVCs, and in particular girl-child-headed households, would benefit from increased access to take-home rations or other guaranteed forms of food aid to feed siblings/other household members. Without take-home rations, girls often drop out of school to find employment or other means to secure food resources. **Recommendation:** Guidance Note 7 (nutrition) addresses the importance of food resources being provided to vulnerable female population groups. In addition, fees associated with school feeding programs should be waived or minimalized for the most vulnerable of population groups.
Standard 3 (Facilities): Education facilities are conducive to the physical well-being of learners.	
Adequate sanitation facilities are provided, taking account of gender, and special education needs and considerations, including access for persons with disabilities**.**	**Issue: Sanitation and Hygiene.** The issue of appropriate sanitation facilities, which is relevant for girls, also is relevant for teachers, especially female teachers, to promote retention of female teachers who serve as valuable role models and are often key in promoting girl learner participation and retention in the learning environment. **Recommendation:** In Guidance Note 2 (maintenance), the issue of gender inequalities in maintaining school facilities, particularly latrines, should be addressed. It is often the girls' responsibility to clean the toilet areas. Girls may have to miss classes to perform this chore. In addition, the cleaning of toilets also exposes girls to sanitation-related diseases. Guidance Note 3 (sanitation) should also include a reference for separate latrines/toilet blocks for teachers to ensure that female teachers also have access to appropriate facilities.

MSEE Category: Teacher and Other Education Personnel	
Standard 4: Teachers and Other Education Personnel (Conditions of Work): Teachers and other education personnel have clearly defined conditions of work, follow a code of conduct, and are appropriately compensated.	
Indicator: Compensation and conditions of work are specified in a job contract, and compensation is provided on a regular basis, related to level of professionalism and efficiency of work.	**Issue: Teachers' Salaries.** Teachers in communities without banking facilities must commute to other communities/districts with a bank to receive their salaries. This may entail travel over dangerous routes. **Issue: Teachers' Housing and Access Route to School.** Although schools are located within IDP camps, teachers' housing is often located outside of the camps. The route between teachers' housing and the school is often dangerous. **Recommendation:** Teacher compensation and conditions of work are not addressed directly in the standards. However, they are critical in the retention of teachers, especially female teachers, in conflict-affected areas where access routes are often mined or there are significant levels of insecurity. It is suggested that consideration be given to adding an additional indicator under the Conditions of Work Standard to take these concerns into consideration. Possible wording of indicator may be: "Mechanisms to address teacher, especially female teacher, retention are identified and implemented as part of teacher compensation package." In addition, a guidance note should be included to address the issue of payment of teacher salaries through a safe and secure mechanism (e.g., mobile banking) and location of teacher housing (may also be linked to Community Participation Standard 2 (Resources)). **Issue: Teachers' Food Rations.** Some food programs do not allocate food rations to individuals who earn a salary. This creates difficulties for teachers in places where food is extremely limited and the community cannot provide food stuffs because they are dependent on food rations. **Recommendation:** This issue is not addressed directly in the standards, but is essential in the retention of teachers, especially female teachers, in dangerous areas. It is suggested that consideration be given to including this issue either under Access and Learning Environment Standard 2 (facilities) the nutrition indicator, under Community Participation Standard (resources), or under Teachers and Other Education Personnel Standard (conditions of work).

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Annex 1: Research Protocol for Uganda Minimum Standards Case Study

1. Overview of Conflict-affected Districts in Uganda[8]

For the past 19 years, northern Uganda has experienced one of the world's longest internal conflicts. Approximately 2 million people are internally displaced, and each week more than 1,000 die, primarily from malaria and HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS prevalence is higher in the conflict areas (9.1%) than in the rest of Uganda (national average is 7%) (IDMC 2005, p. 9). According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre "access to health care, water, education, land and shelter and the denial of freedom of movement remain primary concerns and have contributed to a situation which has yielded a mortality rate which is above emergency thresholds and nearly double the mortality rate of Darfur, the conflict is generally considered the worst humanitarian crisis in Africa." (IDMC 2005, p. 9).

Research shows that the ongoing conflict is eroding the gains of the (Government of Uganda) Universal Primary Education (UPE) Program and adversely affecting access and completion of basic education levels. Approximately 60 percent of the primary schools in conflict-affected districts remain displaced due to insecurity; at least 25% of the children (of school-going age) living in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps are not attending classes; and primary school completion rates in eight war-affected districts are as low as 1.3% compared to a national average of 22.5%. According to a Government of Uganda report, the education policy adapted to the internally displaced persons' situation in Lira District has not been successful. The study indicates that violence in Lira District has forced entire school communities (63 percent of the primary schools and 58 percent of the secondary schools) to be totally abandoned. By local government mandate many of these schools re-open as learning centers, primarily in IDP camps, and many fail due to a lack of accountability. The learning centers' leadership, administration and organizational structures are not adequately planned and learning centers' ineffectual management sponsors competition between the displaced schools and the host schools (IDMC 2005, pp.148-149).

A variety of organizations are implementing formal and nonformal education programs to meet the needs of the Ugandan conflict-affected populace. To better respond to such needs, some organizations are using the *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises, and Early Reconstruction* (MSEE) to plan, implement and/or monitor education initiatives. The Minimum Standards, which articulate the minimum level of educational service to be attained in emergencies through early reconstruction, have been developed by stakeholders from a variety of levels, including households and communities, local authorities, ministries, funding agencies, and implementers. They have evolved out of crisis and post-crisis environments, and provide guidance in responding to the needs of the society at the most important level—the community—while providing a harmonized framework to coordinate the education activities of funding agencies and other development partners.

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[8] For purposes of this research study, the situation in northern Uganda has been classified as a chronic crisis.

2. Research Questions

The guiding research focus of this study is *to gain a better understanding of how organizations are using the Minimum Standards, with a focus on the cross-cutting themes of gender and HIV/AIDS, in a chronic crisis setting.*

Key sub-research questions are:
- How are the standards being used by organizations working in Uganda's conflicted-affected districts?
- Are the standards helping the education organizations working in conflicted-affected districts improve the quality of their education programming?[9]
- Based upon the experiences of the organizations utilizing the standards in Uganda, how can they be improved?

3. Research Methodology

Qualitative Paradigm

This research study employs an inductive (qualitative) approach because the most potent factors involved in the review and analysis of the Minimum Standards cannot be compartmentalized and examined solely in accordance with a deductive (quantitative) paradigm. The cultural, social, political, and economic factors which influence how the standards are contextualized, and are key components of the study, will emerge through interviews and review of written documentation. The interpretive nature of qualitative research allows the 'voices' of those who are directly impacted by the standards (e.g., learners, teachers, educationalists, parents, and other stakeholders) to be heard; it is their stories and experiences that provide critical insight into the ways Minimum Standards assist conflict-effected communities to obtain an education.

This study will use an ethnographic collective case study approach. The ethnographic component will focus on exploring and understanding first-hand the usage of the standards in their natural setting, i.e., (select) conflict-affected areas of Uganda. The collective case study approach will allow for several mini-case studies to be conducted; data gathered will be cross-analyzed to develop a holistic picture of Minimum Standards implementation in northern Uganda. A collective (or multi-site) case study examines a "number of cases jointly in order to inquire into the phenomenon, population, or general condition….A (collective) case study can usefully be seen as a small step toward grand generalization" (Stake 1994, pp. 237-238).

Research Parameters: Selection of Organizations and Research Sites

It is not unusual for researchers to base their selection of cases studies toward "those cases that seem to offer opportunity to learn" (Stake 1994, pp. 237-238). Currently, research funding for the northern Uganda case study is available solely for a baseline measure. Therefore, in order to collect the maximum amount of information about Minimum Standards usage in Uganda, mini-case studies will be conducted with organizations which are currently aware of and implementing the standards. The data which emerge from these mini-studies will be synthesized and collated into a collective northern Uganda case study report.

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[9] For purposes of this study *quality* refers to the components of access to, participation in, and/or completion of basic education levels.

Selection criterion for organizations participating in the study includes, but is not limited, to the following factors:

- Organizations are aware of the Minimum Standards and are using the standards in one or more areas of their work; and,
- Organizations are willing to participate in the study and preferably have one or more research sites (e.g., learning centers) which the research team may access.

4. Data Collection

Primary data collection methods will be consistent with an ethnographic collective case study approach; this includes written and oral data collection techniques.

Written/material data collection

Mute evidence, written documents that endure physically in the form of both organizational and public (Uganda national polices and USAID) documents, will be collected and reviewed. Organization project documentation which may be reviewed includes, but is not limited to:

- Project concept papers/proposals
- Project work plans
- Project monitoring and evaluation plans
- Project reports

A literature review of relevant USAID documents and Ugandan Ministry of Education national policies will also be conducted to identify areas/components where research findings may be applied.

Uganda policies which will be reviewed include, but are not be limited to the following:

- Basic Education Policy and Costed Framework for Educationally Disadvantaged Children
- National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons
- Operationalization of National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons
- The National Orphans and Vulnerable Children Policy
- Universal Primary Education in Uganda Policy

USAID/Uganda documents which will be reviewed include:

- Education strategy documents
- Education results framework and performance monitoring plan
- USAID Fragile States Strategy, and if available, USAID/Uganda Fragile States Strategy

Oral data

There are multiple dimensions to the collection of oral data ranging from brainstorming (i.e., non-directive, very unstructured and exploratory exchange) to focus discussions with an individual or group (i.e., directive, structured, and set exploratory exchange) (Frey and Fontana 1994, p. 367). Oral data collection for this study will include both key informant and focus group interviews. Interviews will be conducted with primary informants (organizational personnel) and secondary informants (organization's beneficiaries—learners, parents, and/or

other education stakeholders) to understand and elicit their experiences regarding the utilization and effectiveness of the Minimum Standards.

For purposes of this research, primary informant interviews will be semi-structured key informant or focus group interviews and will be carried out with organizations' personnel who are actively involved in utilizing the Minimum Standards. Secondary informant focus group interviews will be primarily unstructured, exploratory exchanges and conducted with beneficiaries of the Minimum Standards, e.g., learners, educationalists, teachers, PTA members, parents, etc. Please refer to Annexes 1-3 for additional information about the interview protocols.

5. Research Management Plan

The matrix (below) outlines the research study timeframe. Given the fluid nature of the Uganda situation and current travel restrictions, the activity timeframe may need to be adjusted. Representatives from Creative Associates International will be in regular communication with USAID/Uganda about any potential adjustments to the activity schedule and deliverables deadlines.

Figure 1: Research Activities and Deliverables Schedule

Activity	Deliverable	Deadline
Detailed design phase	Research Protocol, including data collection instruments	January 20, 2006—to share with MSEE WG January meeting.
Field work and Consultation phase	Data matrices outlining organizations' usage and suggested MSEE revisions	March 10-24, 2006
Preliminary Report Presentation	Debriefing with case study partners, USAID, and other interested stakeholders	March 28, 2006
Final Report Analysis and Writing	Final Report: MSEE Northern Uganda Case Study	March 27-April 4, 2006
Final Report	Presentation to USAID	April 2006

6. Research Data Quality

The quality of data collection is essential to the credibility of any research project. A critical requirement to keep in mind is the need to balance academic research rigor with in-the-field realities. Overall data quality will be ensured in the following ways:

- Multiple researchers/data collectors: In all situations there will be at least two individuals, perhaps more, collecting the data.
- Multiple sources: Data will be gathered from more than one informant and more than one source.

Data validity and reliability for this research will be ensured in the following ways:

- Interview protocol and guidelines have been established in English for acceptable and unacceptable variations in the administration of the interview protocols.

- The research protocol will be reviewed by Creative Associates International (Washington D.C. Headquarter and Uganda) staff to ensure data administration, collection, and analysis is realistic given the on-the-ground realities. The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies MSEE Focal Point, MSEE Working Application and Analysis Group, and personnel from the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children will review the research protocol to ensure, to the extent possible, consistency in data administration, collection, and analysis with the Darfur and Southern Sudan MSEE case studies.

- The researchers' roles and relationship will be described in the final write-up to note areas of potential bias in data collection and analysis. Any anomalies encountered in the collection of data will also be noted.

- Organizing and analyzing the qualitative data will expand and extend beyond a purely descriptive account with an analysis that processes in a careful, systematic way the identification of key factors and the relationships among them. To ensure validity of qualitative data, information will be collected from multiple sources and will be checked with the various members of the team studying this question to verify each data collector's interpretation of the data before it is synthesized into a final report.

7. Data Analysis

Unlike a quantitative evaluation, there are no set formulas or calculations to analyze qualitative data. Qualitative data analysis is about relationships and identifying key themes that emerge from these concepts. Data analysis in a broad sense refers to "anything one does in the management and reporting of data" and more narrowly defined as systemic procedures in order to identify essential features and relationships" (Wolcott 1995, p. 24).

For this study, the first layer of data analysis will be horizontal, i.e., individual organization's levels of MSEE implementation and impact will be analyzed to understand and record emerging data patterns. The second level of analysis will focus on cross-analyzing the organizations implementation and impact data to note areas of commonality and divergence. This will be the basis for the collective case study theme development. The themes will be the basis for suggestions for revising the Minimum Standards, if required, as well as suggestions for how the Minimum Standards may be included in critical national policies and USAID/Uganda education programming.

8. Data Write-Up

It is anticipated that data will be organized following an analytical framework approach (see Annex 6 A) and written up using a progressive focusing approach. The data analysis map is a framework which imposes structure on the descriptive account so there may be systematic comparisons between the various organizations participating in the Uganda case study and among the collective multi-site (Darfur, northern Uganda and Southern Sudan) cases studies. Once the data have been organized, a progressive focusing approach will be used to write-up the information. A progressive focusing approach is built around a carefully specified problem or question, for example, how are the standards being used by education organizations in Uganda's

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conflict-affected districts? The information presented will either move from a broad context to a more narrowly defined context or vice versa (Wolcott 1995, p. 24). The research findings will determine the best way to present emerging themes and supporting information.

Final Report
The final report will focus on *how organizations are using the Minimum Standards, with a particular focus on the cross-cutting themes of gender and HIV/AIDS, in the chronic crisis setting of northern Uganda.* It is anticipated that the report will include the following sections:

- Section 1:   *Uganda context factors*: this will include a descriptive account of the military, political and governance structures, social, economic, and protection and security elements in northern Uganda. (See Annex 1 for additional details.)

- Section 2:   *Key findings*: this section will address the answer the three key research sub-questions:
   (i) How are the standards being used by education organizations in Uganda's conflicted-affected districts?
   (ii) Are the standards helping the education organizations working in conflicted-affected districts improve the quality of their education programming?[10]
   (iii) Based upon the experiences of the education organizations utilizing the standards, how can the standard be improved?

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[10] For purposes of this study quality refers to the components of access, participation, and/or completion.

Annex 2: Minimum Standards Linkages to Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for HIV/AIDS Interventions

Relevant Inter-Agency Response Actions	Corresponding Minimum Standard (and Indicators) for Education in Emergencies
→ **Establish coordination mechanism** *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Determine coordination structures ▪ Identify and list partners ▪ Establish network of resource persons *Minimum Response* ▪ Establish coordination mechanism *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Strengthen networks ▪ Enhance information sharing	**Education Policy and Coordination Standard 3:** There is a transparent coordination mechanism for emergency education activities, including effective information sharing between stakeholders. *Indicators* ▪ Education authorities establish an inter-agency coordination committee for current and future emergency response, which assumes the major role in planning and coordinating emergency education activities. ▪ When the education authority is not present or is unable to lead coordination, an interagency coordination committee provides guidance and coordination of education activities and programmes. ▪ A transparent and active mechanism exists for sharing information across sectors and between key national and international stakeholders.
→ **Raise funds** *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Raise funds *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Continue fundraising	**Education Policy and Coordination Standard 3:** There is a transparent coordination mechanism for emergency education activities, including effective information sharing between stakeholders. *Indicator* ▪ Authorities, donors and other agencies establish financing structures that are coordinated with and support activities of education stakeholders.
→ **Develop plans** *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Prepare contingency plans ▪ Include HIV/AIDS in humanitarian action plans and train accordingly relief workers *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Link emergency to development HIV action ▪ Work with authorities	**Education Policy and Coordination Standard 2:** Emergency education activities taken into account international and national educational policies and standards and the learning needs of affected populations. *Indicators* ▪ Emergency education programmes are planned and implemented in a manner that provides for their integration into longer-term development of the education sector. ▪ Education authorities and other key actors develop national and local education plans for current and future emergencies, and create a system for their regular revision. ▪ During and after emergencies, all stakeholders work together to implement a plan for education response that is linked to the most recent needs assessment and builds upon the previous education experience, policies and practices of the affected population(s). ▪ Planning and implementation of educational activities are integrated with other emergency response sectors.

Relevant Inter-Agency Response Actions	Corresponding Minimum Standard (and Indicators) for Education in Emergencies
→ **Assess baseline data** *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Conduct capacity and situation analysis ▪ Develop indicators and tools ▪ Involve local institutions and beneficiaries *Minimum Response* ▪ Assess baseline data	**Analysis Standard 1:** A timely education assessment of the emergency situation is conducted in a holistic and participatory manner. ▪ An initial rapid education assessment is undertaken as soon as possible, taking into account security and safety. ▪ Core stakeholders are involved in identifying what data need to be collected; in the development, interpretation and refinement of indicators; and in information management and dissemination. ▪ A comprehensive assessment of education needs and resources for the different levels and types of education, and for all emergency-affected locations, is undertaken with the participation of core stakeholders, and updated on a regular basis. ▪ Education is part of an inter-sectoral assessment that collects data on the political, social, economic and security environment; demographics; and available resources, to determine what services are required for the affected population. ▪ The assessment analyses existing and potential threats to the protection of learners, using a structured risk assessment of threats, vulnerabilities and capacities. ▪ Local capacities, resources and strategies for learning and education are identified, both prior to and during the emergency. ▪ The assessment identifies local perceptions of the purpose and relevance of education and of priority educational needs and activities. **Analysis Standard 2:** A framework for an education response is developed, including a clear description of the problem and a documented strategy for the response. ▪ Baseline data are collected systematically at the start of a programme. ▪ Valid benchmarks and indicators are identified to monitor response on children, youth and the whole community.
→ **Set-up and manage a shared database** *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Set-up and manage a shared database *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Maintain database	**Analysis Standard 1:** A timely education assessment of the emergency situation is conducted in a holistic and participatory manner. ▪ A system is established for sharing assessment findings and storing education data. **Analysis Standard 3:** All relevant stakeholders regularly monitor the activities of the education response and the evolving education needs of the affected population. ▪ Monitoring systems and databases are regularly updated on the basis of feedback to reflect new trends and to allow for informed decision-making.

Relevant Inter-Agency Response Actions	Corresponding Minimum Standard (and Indicators) for Education in Emergencies
→ **Monitor activities** *Minimum Response* ▪ Monitor activities *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Monitor and evaluate all programmes ▪ Assess date on prevalence, knowledge attitudes and practice, and impact of HIV/AIDS ▪ Draw lessons from evaluations	**Analysis Standard 3:** All relevant stakeholders regularly monitor the activities of the education response and the evolving education needs of the affected population. ▪ Systems for continuous monitoring of emergency situations and interventions are in place and functioning ▪ Women, men, children and youth from all affected groups are regularly consulted and are involved in monitoring ▪ Education data are systematically and regularly collected, starting with baseline information and following with tracking of subsequent changes and trends. ▪ Personnel are trained in data collection methodologies and analysis to ensure that the data are reliable and the analysis is verifiable and credible. ▪ Education data are analysed and shared with stakeholders at pre-determined regular intervals. ▪ Data that identify changes, new trends, needs and resources are provided to education programme managers on a regular basis. ▪ Programme adjustments are made, when necessary, as a result of monitoring. **Analysis Standard 4:** There is a systematic and impartial evaluation of the education response in order to improve practice and enhance accountability. ▪ Evaluation of policies, programmes and outcomes of interventions is conducted at appropriate intervals against overall response strategies, specific educational and child protection objectives, and minimum standards. ▪ Information is sought on the unintended effects of the intervention. ▪ Information is collected in a transparent and impartial manner from all stakeholders, including the affected populations and partners from other sectors. ▪ All stakeholders, including marginalised groups, community education committees, national and local education officials, teachers and learners, are included in evaluation activities. ▪ Lessons and good practices are widely shared with the broader national and local community and humanitarian community, and are fed into post-emergency advocacy, programmes and policies to contribute to national and global education goals.
→ **Protect orphaned and separated children.** *Minimum Response* ▪ Protect orphans and separated children *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Strengthen protection for orphans, separated children, and young people	**Access and Learning Environment Standard 2:** Learning environments are secure, and promote the protection and mental and emotional well-being of learners. ▪ Teachers and other education personnel are provided with the skills to give psychosocial support to promote learners' emotional well-being. ▪ The community is involved in decisions concerning the location of the learning environment, and in establishing systems and policies to ensure that learners are safe and secure.

Relevant Inter-Agency Response Actions	Corresponding Minimum Standard (and Indicators) for Education in Emergencies
→ Include HIV considerations into water/sanitation planning *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Train staff on HIV/AIDS, sexual violence, gender and non-discrimination. ▪ *Minimum Response* ▪ Include HIV considerations in water/sanitation planning. ▪ *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Establish water/sanitation management committees. ▪ Organize awareness campaigns on hygiene and sanitation, targeting people affected by HIV.	**Access and Learning Environment Standard 3:** Education facilities are conducive to the physical well-being of learners. ▪ Basic health and hygiene are promoted in the learning environment. ▪ Adequate sanitation facilities are provided, taking account of age, gender and special education needs and considerations, including access for persons with disabilities. ▪ Adequate quantities of safe drinking water and water for personal hygiene are available at the learning
→ Promote appropriate care and feeding practices for PLWHA *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Contingency planning/preposition supplies ▪ Train staff on special needs of HIV/AIDS affected populations *Minimum Response* ▪ Plan nutrition and food needs for population with high HIV prevalence. *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Develop strategy to protect long-term food security of HIV affected people.	**Access and Learning Environment Standard 2:** Learning environments are secure. ▪ The nutrition and short-term hunger needs of learners are addressed to allow for effective learning to take place at the learning site.
→ Establish safely designed sites *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Ensure safety of potential sites ▪ Train staff on HIV/AIDS, gender, and non-discrimination *Minimum Response* ▪ Establish safely designed sites (take into account distances to services, e.g., schools)	**Access and Learning Environment Standard 2:** Learning environments are secure, and promote the protection and mental and emotional well-being of learners. ▪ Schools and other learning environments are located in close proximity to the populations they serve. **Access and Learning Environment Standard 3:** Education facilities are conducive to the physical well-being of learners. ▪ The learning structure and site are accessible to all, regardless of physical ability. ▪ The physical structure used for the learning site is appropriate for the situation and includes adequate space for classes and administration, recreation and sanitation facilities.

Relevant Inter-Agency Response Actions	Corresponding Minimum Standard (and Indicators) for Education in Emergencies
→ **Ensure children's access to education** *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Determine emergency education options for boys and girls. ▪ Train teachers on HIV/AIDS and sexual violence and exploitation. *Minimum Response* ▪ Ensure children's access to education *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Education boys and girls (formal and non-formal) ▪ Provide lifeskills-based HIV/AIDS education ▪ Monitor and respond to sexual violence and exploitation in educational settings.	**Access and Learning Environment Standard 1:** All individuals have access to quality and relevant education opportunities. ▪ No individual is denied access to education and learning opportunities because of discrimination. ▪ A range of formal and non-formal education opportunities is progressively provided to the affected population to fulfill their education need. **Teaching and Learning Standard 1:** Culturally, socially, and linguistically relevant curricula are used to provide formal and non-formal education, appropriate to the particular emergency situation. ▪ Curricula and methods of instruction respond to the current needs of learners and promote future learning opportunities (Appropriate learning content should draw on skills-based health education including HIV /AIDS). **Teaching and Learning Standard 2:** Teachers and other education personnel receive periodic, relevant and structured training according to need and circumstances. ▪ Training corresponds to prioritised needs, objectives of education activities and learning content (Training curricula may include life skills for teachers (including HIV/AIDS).
Ensure children's access to education *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Train teachers on HIV/AIDS and sexual violence and exploitation. *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Monitor and respond to sexual violence and exploitation in educational settings.	**Teachers and Other Education Personnel Standard 2:** Teachers and other education personnel have clearly defined conditions of work, follow a code of conduct, and are appropriately compensated. ▪ The code of conduct and defined conditions of work are developed in a participatory manner, involving both education personnel and community members, and there are clear implementation guidelines ▪ The code of conduct is signed and followed by education personnel, and appropriate measures are documented and applied in cases of misconduct and/or violation of the code of conduct.

Relevant Inter-Agency Response Actions	Corresponding Minimum Standard (and Indicators) for Education in Emergencies
→ **Provide information on HIV/AIDS prevention and care** *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Prepare culturally appropriate messages in local languages ▪ Prepare a basic BCC and IEC strategy ▪ Involve key beneficiaries ▪ Conduct awareness campaign ▪ Store key documents outside potential emergency areas *Minimum Response* ▪ Provide information on HIV/AIDS prevention and care *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Scale up BCC/IEC ▪ Monitor and evaluate activities	**Teaching and Learning Standard 1:** Culturally, socially, and linguistically relevant curricula are used to provide formal and non-formal education, appropriate to the particular emergency situation. ▪ Curricula and methods of instruction respond to the current needs of learners and promote future learning opportunities (Appropriate learning content should draw on skills-based health education including HIV/AIDS). ▪ Curricula address life skills, literacy, numeracy and core competencies of basic education relevant to given stages of an emergency. ▪ Learning content, materials and instruction are provided in the language(s) of the learners and the teachers, especially in the early years of learning. ▪ Curricula and methods of instruction respond to the current needs of learners and promote future learning opportunities. **Teaching and Learning Standard 3:** Instruction is learner-centered, participatory, and inclusive. ▪ Learners are provided with opportunities to be actively engaged in their own learning. ▪ Participatory methods are used to facilitate learner involvement in their own learning and to improve the learning environment. ▪ Parents and community leaders understand and accept the learning content and teaching methods used. **Teaching and Learning Standard 4**: Appropriate methods are used to evaluate and validate learning achievement. ▪ Differentiated continuous assessment and evaluation methods are in place to assess learning periodically and appropriately. Procedures are in place to use this information to improve the quality of instruction.
→ **Prevent discrimination by HIV status in staff management** *Emergency Preparedness* ▪ Review personnel policies regarding the management of PLWHA *Minimum Response* ▪ Prevent discrimination by HIV status in staff management *Comprehensive Response* ▪ Establish workplace policies	**Teachers and Other Education Personnel Standard 1:** A sufficient number of appropriately qualified teachers and other education personnel is recruited through a participatory and transparent process based on selection criteria that reflect diversity and equity. ▪ A selection committee, including community representatives, selects teachers based on a transparent assessment of candidates' competencies and considerations of gender, diversity and acceptance by the community.