

Case Study on the Utilization of the INEE Minimum Standards: Inter-Agency Coordination in the aftermath of the Tsunami

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Organisation: **Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies**

Location: **Aceh, Indonesia [based in New York, USA]**

Date of programme: **2005**

Case Study Themes: **Coordination of educational activities between key stakeholders.**

All referenced materials are available online: www.ineesite.org

They can also be found in the INEE Toolkit CD Rom, to request a free copy contact: minimumstandards@ineesite.org

BACKGROUND

Indonesia sustained the worst human losses and physical damage in the tsunami and earthquake of 26 December 2004. In the province of Aceh over 44,000 students and 2,500 teachers and education personnel were killed. Some 2,135 schools were damaged, including kindergartens, primary, junior and senior high schools and universities, and 150,000 students lost access to proper education facilities. Schools opened again on 26 February, two months after the tsunami. In many locations, makeshift tents were used, or students and teachers from destroyed schools were absorbed into surviving ones.

INEE members responded immediately to this disaster. In particular, members of the INEE Working Group on Minimum Standards such as the IRC, Save the Children and UNICEF were able to utilize our network and their experience in developing, disseminating and implementing the Minimum Standard to respond to this disaster in a coordinated and collaborative way.

HOW THE INEE MINIMUM STANDARDS WERE USED IN THE PROGRAMME:

There was a coordinated inter-agency response to the disaster. The IRC, Save the Children and UNICEF distributed the Minimum Standards handbook to their staff in Aceh, who used it to develop and coordinate their education and child protection responses. The Minimum Standards relating to Education Policy and Coordination were crucial, particularly Standard 3 and the accompanying Indicators and Guidance Notes: “There is a transparent coordination mechanism for emergency education activities, including effective information sharing between stakeholders” (Minimum Standards p. 77).

Guided by the Minimum Standards, local authorities and international agencies formed an Education Coordination Committee, which met regularly in Banda Aceh: “When the education authority is not present or is unable to lead coordination, an inter-agency coordination committee provides guidance and coordinated of education activities and programmes” [Minimum Standards, p. 77]

Inter-agency coordination was also facilitated by the formation of a Minimum Standards Working Group in Banda Aceh, which worked to further train agency staff on the Minimum Standards and deepen their understanding of their use in this particular context through the sharing of experiences and good practices. The INEE Minimum Standards were also swiftly translated into Bahasa Indonesian (funded by UNICEF). Copies of the handbook were then requested and used by the Aceh Provincial Ministry of Education. This translation is now available to the entire INEE network via the website: www.ineesite.org.

INEE’s Minimum Standards provided a valuable and relevant design, implementation and coordination tool during the emergency phase. The standards were widely accepted, and provided a common framework,

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shared between all agencies, enabling a greater level of coordination and improved practice. The framework guided early discussions and actions, leading to more effective emergency education responses that laid the groundwork for long-term quality education systems.

CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS

There were challenges in implementing a coordinated, quality emergency education response. The continual state of flux inherent in the emergency phase made it difficult to schedule meetings, and scheduling conflicts were common. High staff turnover in international agencies meant that several Minimum Standards Working Group meetings had to focus on orientation. In addition, several key advocates for the INEE Minimum Standards left Aceh, thus decreasing momentum and increasing the burden on staff that remained.

LESSONS LEARNT AND GOOD PRACTICES

Discussions on implementing the INEE Minimum Standards should be introduced in coordination meetings right at the outset of the response, including dissemination of the handbook and discussions on how to best utilise this tool within the local context. Translating the handbook into local languages should be a priority part of this process.

Staff continuity is important for maintaining the pace of coordination and implementation. A greater degree of institutionalisation of the Minimum Standards within INEE member organisations would aid the application of the Minimum Standards in situations where high staff turnover is unavoidable. The systematic inclusion of Minimum Standards trainings in the orientation of new staff is one measure that could have a significant impact on improving coordination in such an emergency contexts. For other suggested actions to help systematise your organisations' use of the INEE Minimum Standards please see the Institutionalisation Checklists for [NGOs](#), [UN Agencies](#), [Governments and Donors](#) and [Inter-Agency Education Clusters](#) available in the INEE Toolkit: www.ineesite.org/toolkit.