ILET

Improving Learning Environments Together in Emergencies

Save the Children

NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Developed by Save the Children Norway, Improving Learning Environments Together (ILET) is a package using assessments for improving learning environments in humanitarian contexts through community participation.

Save the Children is a key player in the humanitarian sector, and an implementer of Education in Emergencies (EiE) programs. Based on the organization's knowledge and experience of EiE and quality basic education, Save the Children has developed the Improving Learning Environments Together in Emergencies project (ILET). This project was funded by ECHO and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

This document presents an overview of ILET. While providing the background, summary and purpose of the package, this overview document may serve as a reference and guide to the overall ILET package.

PURPOSE OF THIS OVERVIEW DOCUMENT

By reading this framing document you will:

- Know the purpose of the ILET package.
- Understand the decision-making process for deciding when and where ILET can be applied, asking 'is it right for our context, at this time?'.
- Recognize the philosophy and approach that underpins ILET.
- Be familiar with the 'steps' of the ILET process.
- Know the specific tools found within the ILET package and the purpose of each.
- Understand how ILET relates and links to national and international frameworks and platforms.
- Be familiar with some lessons learned, based on where ILET has been piloted.
- Know how to find additional, supplementary resources that may be useful when implementing ILET.

This document can be used:

- To orient program staff about the package in its entirety (its purpose, the philosophy, the steps and tools that make up the package).
- To explain the approach to school[1] and learning space communities (such as head teachers, teachers, parents).
- To disseminate the concept/resource amongst partners and key education stakeholders such as authorities and inter-agency working groups.
- As an advocacy tool (for example, when explaining the process and the benefits to donors).

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1 Please note that the terms 'school' and 'learning space' are used interchangeably throughout this document.

A BRIEF HISTORY

The concept of the Quality Learning Environment (QLE) was born in 2009, led by the desire for a common articulation of quality in education programming across Save the Children, with a focus on development programs. Between 2009 and now it has transformed into the Quality Learning Framework (QLF), which outlines five foundations that provide a basis for wellbeing and learning for all children: emotional and psychosocial protection, physical protection, teaching and learning, parents and community, and school leadership and management.

Following the development of the initial QLE package, the need for a similar tool for emergency contexts was recognized; one that was adaptable and flexible enough to use in different phases of a crisis. With the desire to better respond to the need for more and better evidence of what works in EiE programming, and a recommendation for localization of the humanitarian response, the ILET project was launched in June 2016 with funds from ECHO and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Besides the development of an assessment package and programming tools, one beta and two pilots were run; the beta pilot in Greece in January 2017, the first proper pilot in North West Syria from May 2017, and a second pilot in Uganda from July 2017. The aim was to test the approach and package and collect evidence on successes and needed improvements. The ultimate goal is to improve access to quality learning opportunities for children affected by humanitarian crises in environments that are physically safe, support children's wellbeing, promote active learning and engage parents and communities.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

It is estimated that 65 million children are affected by emergencies and protracted crises in 35 countries, and that approximately 37 million primary and lower secondary age children are out-of-school in crisis-affected countries[2]. While the number of out-of-school children has fallen by almost half since the turn of the millennium, the number of out-of-school children in emergencies is increasing both in total and relative numbers, and is predicted to continue to rise in the future due to large-scale protracted crises.

Save the Children understands Education in Emergencies as the "provision of uninterrupted, high-quality learning opportunities for children affected by humanitarian crises. It is about making sure children can learn regardless of who they are, where they live or what is happening around them."

Quality education can increase children's learning potential and improve their ability to break out of the poverty cycle. Education is life-saving, and the best mechanism to protect children from psychological trauma, recruitment into armed groups, child marriage and gender-based violence. Moreover, when asked, education is mentioned as the key priority by children, their parents and communities,[3] making investment in education an integral part of our accountability towards affected populations. Schools and other learning spaces are often at the heart of the community, and symbolize opportunities for future generations and hope for a better life. Learners and their families have aspirations, and education is the key to increasing each person's ability to participate fully in the life of their society — economically, socially and politically[4].

2 ODI, 2015. Education in emergencies and protracted crises: toward a strengthened response

3 Numerous Hear it from the Children reports have confirmed this. These reports can be found at
    https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net

4 INEE Minimum Standards, 2010

ILET helps to address a number of challenges that have been widely acknowledged and formally documented in humanitarian contexts. These include:

Challenges in measuring quality in EiE:

- Frequent absence of reliable and real-time education data.

- In case of available data:
  - Lack of tools appropriate for emergency contexts that can analyze existing data efficiently and measure quality.
  - It is narrowly focused on output level (e.g. number of text books, number of children enrolled, number of teachers trained, etc.) rather than comprehensive needs as seen from the perspective of affected populations.
  - It is mapped on macro-level (sub-district or district) where the voices of teachers, parents and students become less visible.

Challenges in measuring quality in EiE settings can lead to:

- Difficulties in mobilizing communities around unclear depth and scale of needs.

- Limited engagement of school communities, children, teachers, head teachers and local actors in earlier phases of assessment and planning.

- Lack of systematic and transparent mechanisms for sharing findings from assessments with the school community and local education authorities.

- Top-down decisions and interventions not well-rooted within schools and learning spaces.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM: THE ILET PACKAGE

ILET is a package that helps tackle the above issues in a practical way. The primary aim of ILET is to empower communities to improve the quality of the learning environment through a participatory process. The ILET package is comprised of several tools. See figure 4 for an overview of the documents and tools in the package. These include:

- Guidance documents: Overview document, Step-by-Step Guide and Training Manual.

- Data management: Data Management Platform, Data Management Handbook and Data Collection Tools.

- Program templates: Findings Cards Templates and School Improvement Plan Template.

Program staff use the ILET package as they support communities in humanitarian situations. The package can be applied in different ways in different phases of an emergency. Through a participatory process, the community is supported to examine the school or learning environment, analyze the findings, and then develop and implement a School Improvement Plan (SIP). In addition to building capacity in data management, ILET also generates and builds capacity at the community level for dynamic and sustainable action in school improvement and development.

ILET: A UNIQUE, INNOVATIVE APPROACH

Access and use of findings = increased accountability

When there are challenges in measuring quality and when poor community engagement undermines pathways for accountability at all levels, ILET can be applied. Accountability starts when school communities, including children, parents and teachers, are informed of the needs of their school, their rights to access a quality environment, and the responsibilities of the agencies providing educational services for them.

While program staff provide close support to the learning space throughout the entire ILET process, empowering the community to take ownership of the assessment findings, and also the planning and implementation of the SIP, is crucial. ILET includes a reliable, comprehensive data collection and management system. The process itself generates reliable school-level data, which is then used for analysis and planning purposes. Sharing the visualized findings and discussing them with the school community increases accountability, as different actors become aware of strengths and gaps and take a shared responsibility to enact improvements in the school community.

Meaningful participation = community empowerment

Community and child participation lies at the heart of ILET. The process empowers the community, encouraging ownership of assessment, analysis, planning and implementation processes. Program staff are trained to help deepen their understanding of the different levels of participation. The success of ILET rests upon meaningful community participation at the school level throughout the entire process, from the initial consultation with

the school/learning space, to the assessment process, through to the implementation of the SIP. Child participation is an imperative aspect of the ILET, including students at all levels of the program approach. More information on how to include children can be found in the Step-by-Step Guide. All staff working with children should be trained on child safeguarding policies, or the equivalent.

Mobilizing local resources = transferable improvement

Education communities are equipped with immediate access to real-time data about their learning environment. This is in the form of visualized results and automated reports generated by a Data Management Platform. This efficient use of data enables and empowers education communities to discuss, plan for and implement informed, low-cost improvement plans capitalizing on available resources that can have lasting impacts on the learning environment. This "transferable" aspect is especially relevant in emergencies when people are on the move, or prone to recurrent waves of displacement. The low-cost activities and the skills and knowledge gained through training and community discussions are transferrable and light to bring to new destinations.

Applying a new approach = innovation

ILET adopts an innovative focus by incorporating SIPs in humanitarian contexts. Traditionally, SIP is considered feasible in more stable, development contexts. However, ILET presents the SIP concept in humanitarian settings through facilitating the use of data for action planning with minimal resources through efficient data collection tools (available in both paper and digital forms), real-time analysis and visualization via a user-friendly web-based platform with offline data collection features.

WHAT DOES ILET DO FOR THE LEARNING SPACE COMMUNITY?

The school/learning space community can:

- Quickly identify gaps, needs and strengths of their learning environment through a participatory, school/community-based assessment process.

- Quickly access a preliminary analysis of data about the school environment, presented in a clear, concise, visual 'snapshot' format. This is helpful for fast analysis, identifying priorities and designing interventions.

- Review and analyze the data gathered through a participatory, community-based discussion involving a large group of education stakeholders, including end-users.

- Plan appropriate interventions for the improvement of the school learning environment (directly linked to the Quality Learning Framework).

- Participate throughout ILET, leading to increased empowerment to manage the implementation and monitor progress of the SIP.

- Increase participation in school improvement. The process supports community discussion, reflection and review of the needs and issues pertinent to the quality of the education environment within their school.

The agency is able to:

- Have access to reliable, valuable data to inform programming and intervention design. It also allows the agency to track progress on the different elements of the QLF based on **self-set** thresholds.

- Promote increased school community participation.

- Efficiently compile, interpret and disseminate data in a visually appealing format amongst communities, authorities and other education actors.

- Support and facilitate development of localized SIPs.

- Use reliable data for high-level dialog about the education needs and context, for example when communicating with donors.

- Contribute to important data collection processes and contribute to other education-focused processes (such as assessments, appeals etc.) through the education cluster.

The outcomes of ILET

- Increased capacity at the school/learning space level to improve the quality of the education environment.

- Increased community engagement in improving the learning environment.

- Improved access to and experiences of quality learning opportunities for students in humanitarian contexts.

- Increased capacity of agencies and partners (including the Ministry of Education) to provide quality, timely support to EiE.

- Learning generated through the ILET approach can inform lessons learned for the entire sector, and may shape or contribute to the conversation around EiE approaches to school improvement planning.

THE QUALITY LEARNING FRAMEWORK
– A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF QUALITY FOR ILET

The ILET embraces Save the Children's conceptual framework of quality education, which was adopted in 2017 across development and humanitarian programming. This is the Quality Learning Framework (QLF). Recognizing a holistic, child-focused and child rights informed approach to education, the Quality Learning Framework outlines five foundations that provide a basis for the wellbeing and learning of all children: emotional and psychosocial protection, physical protection, teaching and learning, parents and community, and school leadership and management.

Furthermore, 19 components of quality span the five foundations, as outlined in Figure 1[5]. ILET operationalizes the framework by translating the five theoretical foundations into simple questions. To that end, ILET further breaks down the QLF school-level components into two more layers: sub-components and question labels. The final layer, question labels, is then used to generate questions across the five data collection tools. In other words, assessment questions are based around the QLF foundations and its components. This means that when students, teachers, parents and head teachers are consulted about their views and experiences of the learning environment, their response is 'measured' against Save the Children's understanding of quality (QLF). The five layers are illustrated in Figure 2.

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5 See Save the Children's EiE Framing document: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/sites/default/files/documents/eieerp_framing_document_1030.pdf
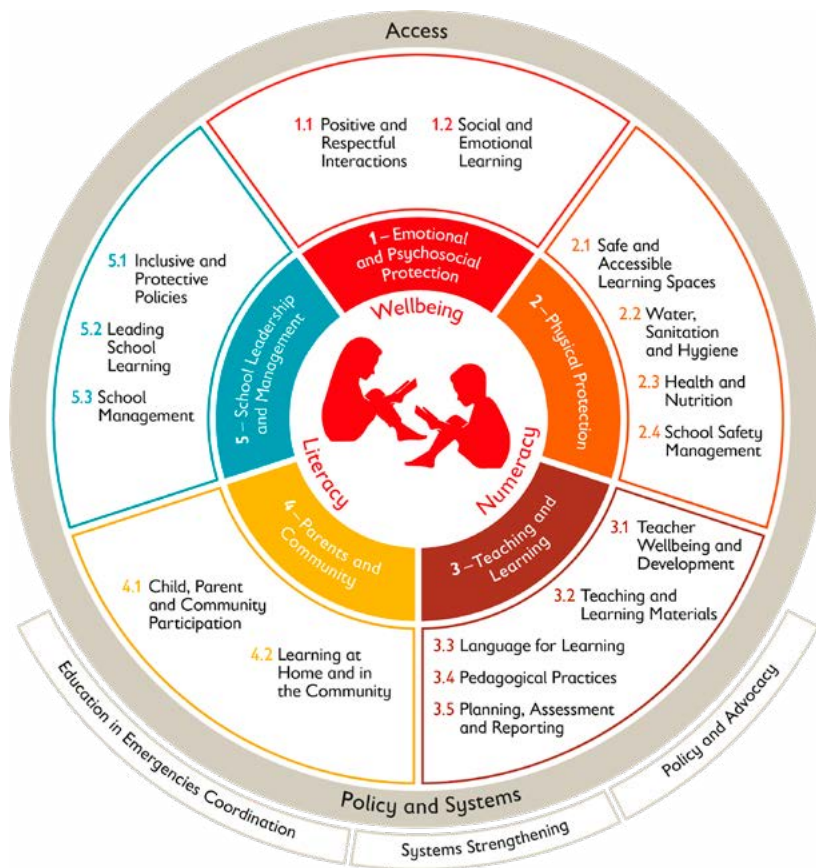
FIGURE 1. *This is an illustration of Save the Children's Quality Learning Framework, including outcomes, foundations and components, with adaptations for emergencies.*

FIGURE 2. *Five layers of the framework. Moving from foundations in QLF to questions*

LAYER 1: FOUNDATIONS	LAYER 2: COMPONENTS	LAYER 3: SUB-COMPONENTS	LAYER 4: QUESTION LABEL	LAYER 5: QUESTIONS
1 Emotional and Psychosocial Protection	**2.1** Safe and Accessible Learning Spaces	**2.4a** A school safety plan exists	**2.4a Q1** Safety posters exist	Examples of questions:
2 Physical protection	**2.2** Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	**2.4b** A school safety management system is functional	**2.4a Q2** School safety plan exist	**Students tool:** *"As we said, we all work to keep our schools and the students safe and happy. Have you all learned what to do in case of any emergency at your school? (For example, where you will go, what to do and what not to do)."*
3 Teaching and Learning	**2.3** Health and Nutrition	**2.4c** Students and staff practice safety drills		
4 Parents and Community	**2.4** School Safety Management			**Teachers and head teachers tools:** *"Does the school / learning space have a school safety plan?"*
5 School Leadership and management				

The boxes illustrate how the ILET assessment is based on Save the Children's conceptual framework of quality education.

1. Emotional and psychosocial protection

Emergencies increase children's vulnerabilities and disrupt their social, peer, family and community support systems, attachment relationships, ability to regulate and express emotions and to focus – all of which inhibits their ability to learn to read and do math. Save the Children's approach to EiE provides children with social and psychological support, as well as social emotional learning skills to manage emotions, set and achieve goals, feel and show empathy for others, maintain positive relationships, and cope with stress and challenges.

Examples of questions under component 1.1: positive and respectful interactions

- Does the teacher call you and fellow students by your names?
- Did the teacher use any positive reinforcement action?

2. Physical protection

Emergencies can destroy and damage schools and escalate threats to children's safety and health, disrupting their learning. Tackling these wellbeing-related issues is a pre-requisite to active engagement in learning, leading to improved outcomes in literacy and numeracy. Save the Children's approach to EiE enables safe and protective routes to schools and temporary learning spaces including water, sanitation and hand-washing stations – and links to other life-saving services such as: child protection, health and nutrition, food security and livelihoods and shelter.

Examples of questions under component 2.2: water and sanitation and hygiene

- Is the drinking water clean, odorless, colorless, in a clean container? (water tank cleanness).
- Are there separate latrines for boys and girls?

3. Teaching and learning

Emergencies disrupt teachers' compensation, support systems, professional development and personal lives, while at the same requiring them to teach in challenging and under-resourced environments. Children are taught by newly recruited teachers who haven't been trained to effectively teach children how to read or do math, or effectively manage a classroom in an emergency.

Examples of questions under component 3.5: planning, assessment and reporting

- Do teachers teach according to a lesson plan?
- Are lesson plans adapted to accommodate children's different needs, e.g. learning difficulties, seeing or hearing impairments, concentration difficulties etc.?

4. Child, parental caregivers and community

Emergencies disrupt caregivers' abilities to support children's wellbeing and learning, such as by reading at home or providing a rich home literacy environment. Save the Children's approach to EiE promotes parent or caregiver engagement in refugee camp education committees, school and temporary learning space management committees, creation of learning materials, supporting home-learning, management of book banks, establishing and maintaining schools as zones of peace, ready-for-school camps and back-to-school campaigns.

Example of questions under component 4.1: child, parent and community participation.

- Is there a Parent Teacher Association (PTA)/Parent Teacher Committee (PTC) in the school? If yes, how often do members of the PTA/PTC meet?

5. School-level leadership and management

Emergencies disrupt and stress the remaining school leadership and management as they adapt to new student populations, limited resources, and multiple new demands on the school. Save the Children's approach to EiE supports school leaders to set inclusive and protective policies, support and motivate teachers, establish emergency preparedness and contingency plans, and effectively manage the school.

Examples of questions under component 5.1: inclusive and protective policies

- Does this school/learning space have a school code of conduct/school rules and regulations?

- Is there a complaints mechanism to report complaints and violations of the school's code of conduct?

WHEN TO USE ILET?

Before you start, how do you decide if ILET is the right package to implement in your programming? These are some criteria that can be considered.

Can ILET be implemented at any time, in any program and in any context? Program staff can consul the criteria below to help them decide whether they can and should go ahead with implementing ILET.

☐ Level of emergency: level 1, level 2, level 3[6]

ILET can be appropriate for any level of emergency. In principle, this approach might seem more fit for level 1 or level 2 emergencies, since they imply more stable conditions that might be more appropriate for longer-term SIPs. However, since some protracted crises are categorized under level 3 for several years, it is difficult to make the decision solely based on the level of emergency. Rather, the phase of emergency is more salient to look at before making a decision. Please see the next item.

☐ Phase of emergency

While the QLF as a conceptual framework can be applied for planning purposes, the ILET package rests on the assumption that learning spaces are already established and children have access to schools/learning spaces. It is therefore recommended that you start using the ILET at least after the fourth week of the onset of a disaster, and after the cluster rapid assessment is exhausted, as demonstrated in figure 3. If the emergency is still during the early phases (0-4 weeks) then this is **not** the right approach for you. At this stage, we recommend you start with the cluster Rapid Joint Education Needs Assessment (RJENA)[7].
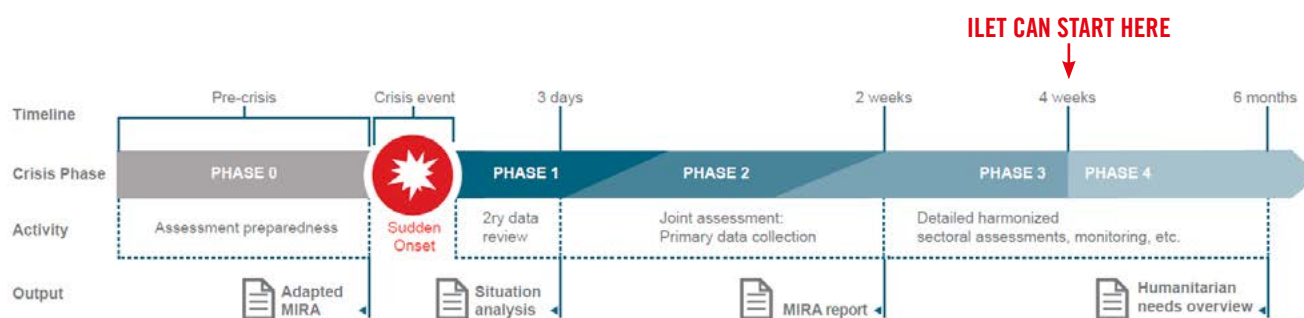
FIGURE 3: *Coordinated assessment approach and phases. Source: MIRA guide, 2015, page 3[8].*

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6 A level 1 response is when the country office can respond with its own resources and usual HQ/ regional office support; level 2 is when the country office requires additional support to scale-up, and level 3 is a an agency-wide response to an emergency. The Save the Children categorization system uses cat 1, 2 and 3.

7 You can download the short guide to Rapid Joint Education Needs Assessment from the global education cluster website: http://educationcluster.net/lpresources/the-short-guide-to-rapid-joint-education-needs-assessments-gec-2010/

8 For more information, see Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Assessment Guidance - Revision July 2015: https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/programme-cycle/space/document/multi-sector-initial-rapid-assessment-guidance-revision-july-2015

☐ **Resources available in the program in terms of staff, funding and time**

ILET requires high involvement from at least one EiE/education advisor and one MEAL/information management officer and other support staff (see Table 2). Depending on the scale of the implementation – i.e. the number of schools – the time and number of staff increases. Funding required also depends on whether you want to provide small school-based grants to incentivize the School Improvement Planning.

☐ **Involvement of local authorities (government if applicable)**

ILET assumes that the government (if in place) is not providing the necessary support to improve the quality of learning in learning spaces. However, if the government in your context is taking onboard full implementation of efficient and effective SIPs, then you do not want to take forward the ILET package.

☐ **Time of the school calendar year**

The approach capitalizes on efficient use of real-time data. It is unwise to collect data and then wait for a couple of weeks before analyzing or making use of it. Therefore, it is recommended to start implementing ILET at the start of the school's academic year, if schools/learning spaces are planning to close soon for the summer or winter holiday.

HOW IS ILET IMPLEMENTED? WHAT ARE THE STEPS?

The implementation of ILET is in five logical, chronological steps. Each step has further 'sub-steps'. In some contexts, where agencies are already equipped with information, it may be possible to start the process from step 3. However, implementation is usually most effective and smooth if the five steps are followed in the right order. Also, it is possible to repeat the cycle again from step 3. This implies a second round of data collection to be completed followed by steps 4 and 5 again to a) assess whether there have been any improvements over time in the learning environment after the implementation of the SIP activities; b) to see if the SIPs and their implementation have been successful and; c) to use the data to apply for more funding if needed, especially if you see that there are crucial gaps in the learning environment that were not covered in the first round of the SIP. Thus, the cycle can be repeated unlimitedly, which can be relevant in a protracted emergency with few resources. It is recommended that two rounds of data collection, feedback, SIP and analysis (step 3 to 5) take place, if relevant, in one school year for each school/learning space.

The Step-by-Step guide explains in detail all the steps and substeps. Table 1 summarizes the five steps.

TABLE 1: Overview of steps in ILET

1 PROGRAM DESIGN

Step 1 helps program staff (for example the program manager and colleagues) explore and understand why the ILET package is relevant and appropriate to your context, and which model of operation suits best. This step involves internal discussion, context analysis, writing a proposal and recruiting staff:

- **1a.** Agency internal consultation
- **1b.** Participation and child safeguarding
- **1c.** Proposal and staffing

2 COORDINATION AND TRAINING

Step 2 involves coordinating with EiE stakeholders, training staff on the package, and developing a project work-plan.

- **2a.** Informing and coordinating with the education community
- **2b.** Delivering training to all staff
- **2c.** Initial ILET work-plan

3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Step 3 is all about the data: preparing for data collection, making arrangements with schools, collecting and analyzing the data. Once the data has been collected it will be entered into the Data Management Platform and processed very quickly. The results will be produced on Findings Cards ready for interpretation and discussion internally within the organization.

- **3a.** Preparing for data collection
- **3b.** Data collection
- **3c.** Data entry and quality assurance
- **3d.** Data analysis for developing school Findings Cards

4 FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION

Step 4 equips program staff with a good understanding of the results. They will be clearly presented on Findings Cards ready to share with the learning space community. Program staff will prepare for and conduct a feedback and discussion session, held at the school/learning space.

- **4a.** Feedback and discussion with education stakeholders
- **4b.** Feedback and discussion with the school community

5 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Step 5 involves the formation of the School Improvement Planning Team and development of the SIP itself. Once the plan has been developed, it will be disseminated within the school community so they can help implement activities, as well as monitor progress.

- **5a.** Forming the SIP team
- **5b.** Developing the SIP
- **5c.** Disseminating and approving the SIP with the school community
- **5d.** Implementing the SIP and follow-up
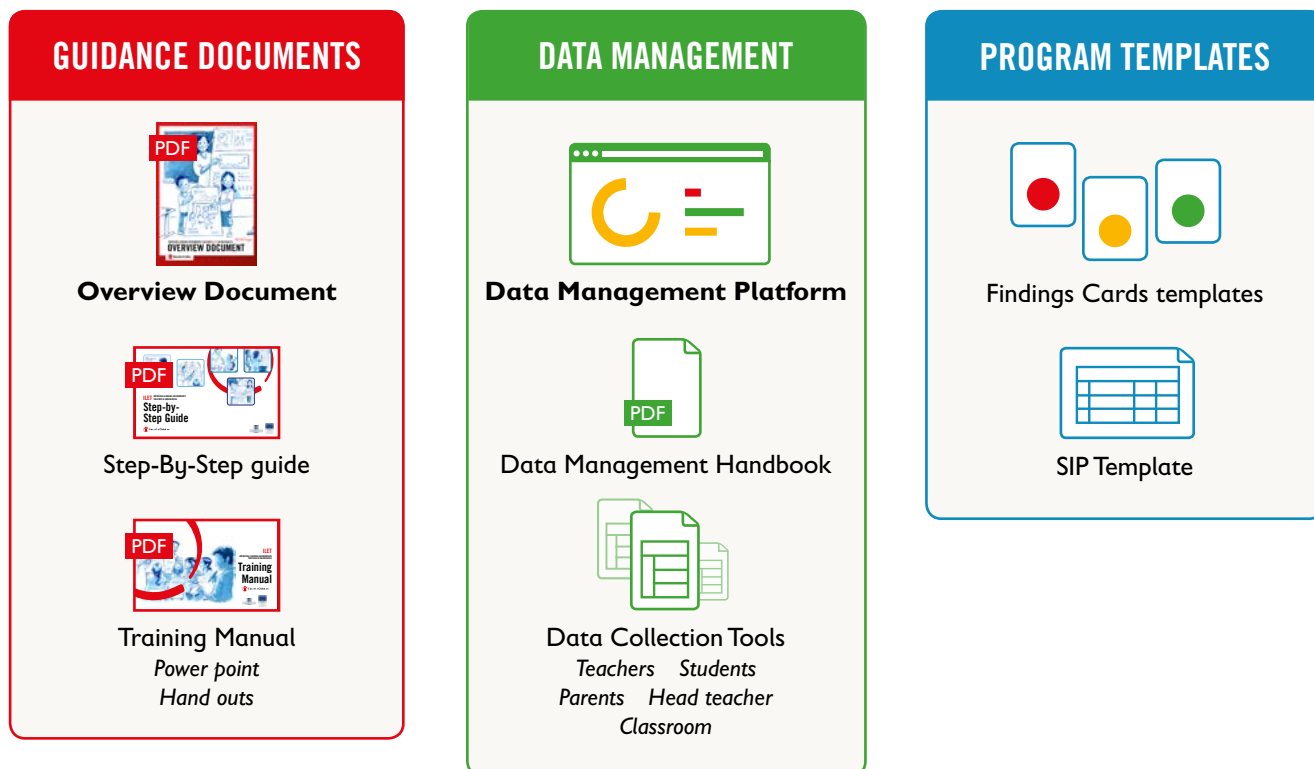
WHO SHOULD USE THE ILET PACKAGE?

The ILET package should be used by the program staff who comprise the ILET team. That might include program managers, education officers, data collection officers, managers and administrators of the database and other support staff. Also, individuals from partners outside the organization may be involved in supporting the community through the ILET process, for example, education officers from the Ministry of Education or representative staff from the education cluster.

TABLE 2: Suggested description of ILET core team staff for ILET program in 10 schools

Position	Role within ILET
Program manager (20-30% position)	Taking strategic decisions and keeping overall oversight on the ILET project. Essentially, involved in the initial decision-making about whether ILET is appropriate and timely for the context, current education program and organizational strategy.
Education advisor or officer: (100% position)	Providing technical guidance and advice on the approach, including contextualizing the questionnaires and other materials. May work closely supporting other staff to ensure quality throughout.
Data management officer: (100% position)	Ensuring the effective management of the data; supervision of data collection process and team, administration of the Data Management Platform, including data analysis and production of Findings Cards in close collaboration with program staff (i.e. education officers).
Data collectors/ enumerators: two teams of two: one facilitator and one note taker (temporary: during data collection and entry)	Collecting data at the learning space/school, enter data into the Data Management Platform.
Training facilitators (temporary: during the training, can be external)	Planning and facilitating the training to all other staff in ILET.
Logistics officer (20% position)	Providing logistics support throughout (travel, procurement, materials production) and especially during the SIP implementation

Once it has been agreed that ILET is appropriate and will be implemented, the program will need to form a team of people who will oversee, manage and help implement the whole ILET process. Each individual involved will need to participate in the ILET training. After completing the ILET training, this team will have the knowledge and resources to provide the appropriate level of support to all education stakeholders involved in the project at the school or learning space. These usually include students, parents and caretakers, teachers, head teachers and other education personnel. Education officers from local authorities may also participate in the ILET training or the planning process at community level.

FIGURE 4: Overview of the different docs within the package

GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS	DATA MANAGEMENT	PROGRAM TEMPLATES
Overview Document	**Data Management Platform**	Findings Cards templates
Step-By-Step guide	Data Management Handbook	SIP Template
Training Manual *Power point* *Hand outs*	Data Collection Tools *Teachers Students* *Parents Head teacher* *Classroom*	

WHAT IS IN THE PACKAGE AND WHAT IS IT FOR?

The ILET package is comprised of a set of tools. These tools help guide the ILET team through the participatory methodology. The tools provide specific guidance on what to do and when. Some of the tools are instruments with a specific purpose, to be used at a specific time (for example, the assessment questionnaires or the Findings Cards – as you will see below).

A summary of the main tools found in the ILET package

Overview document

Overview Document

This document presents an overview of ILET, providing the background, summary and purpose of the package.

Step-by-Step Guide

Step-by-Step Guide

The *Step-by-Step Guide* is for program staff facilitating the ILET process. The ILET staff/team can refer to this guide throughout the whole process. It is organized into five main steps (with sub-steps) that follow a logical, chronological sequence, each organized into two main sections "Things to know" and "Things to do". It provides specific guidance on how to support learning spaces and the community in assessing the learning environment, how to use this assessment actively and efficiently to develop their own SIP, and then how to manage and monitor the implementation of those plans.

Training Manual

The *Training Manual* is for those planning and conducting training for others about ILET. The first session, the Facilitators Handbook contains details about how to plan for the training: what to prepare for and do before the training, and things to remember during and after the training. The second section, the Training Sessions Guide provides you with detailed guidance for each session of the whole training (where the methodology for each session is clearly outlined). There are 14 sessions for a three-day training, the aim of which is to prepare and equip program staff with the information, knowledge and skills needed to support the community throughout the entire ILET process. The guide is complete with the content, methodology, handouts, relevant links and tools for each session.

Training Manual

Data Collection Tools

There are five main assessment tools (questionnaires and classroom observation checklists) used to assess the quality of the learning environment. The first people to use these are ILET staff, who will contextualize and translate the questions to ensure they are relevant to the context of the learning space.

The questionnaires are mainly comprised of close-ended questions that will be used when interviewing students, parents, teachers and head teachers. The content of the questionnaires and checklists have been generated based on the QLF and against the INEE Minimum Standards of Education in Emergencies. Within this package, there are different versions of these data collection tools in terms of their comprehensiveness, which is to accommodate the different needs and resources of different contexts.

Data collection tools can be found in the Data Management Platform.

Data Management Platform

The Data Management Platform is a web based tool for real-time data collection, processing and storage. It is managed by data management officers. Other staff, such as data collectors and program staff, will also be involved in using or navigating the platform to view and analyze results. The Data Management Platform is able to quickly process and produce 'Findings Cards', showing a visualization of the data gathered in the learning space. In the form of Findings Cards, the data is useful for different education stakeholders including program managers, education officers as well as school actors. The stakeholders then use this information for the design of SIPs to improve the quality of the learning space.

Data Management Handbook

The Data Management Handbook is for staff involved in the data collection, entry and interpretation process. The handbook provides specific guidance on ILET data management processes and the calculations behind them. It gives concrete tips and detailed information about step 3 of the ILET process: data collection and analysis, including instructions on the use of the ILET online platform, and therefore goes hand-in-hand with the Step-by-Step Guide. Used together, the two will help you understand, prepare for, organize and effectively facilitate data collection, processing and analysis.

PHOTO: HANNAH MAULE-FFINCH/SAVE THE CHILDREN

Program Templates
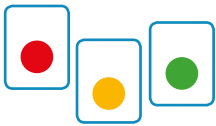
Findings Card template

Once the data has been collected, entered into the Data Management Platform and processed, the platform produces and generates the results of the assessment in the form of Findings Cards. The cards present the findings in a visual, color-coded format that shows the key findings in a way that is easy to interpret, analyze and use for planning. Each result or item on the card is visualized with a color: Red: not quite there yet! Yellow: getting there! Green: got there!

Not quite there yet!

Getting there!

Got there!

SIP template

This planning template is available for the community for planning and managing the school improvement process (although the community may prefer to use their own planning tool should they have one). It outlines the school improvement activities to be undertaken, who is responsible for the task and when, against a calendar to help check the progress of its implementation.

Other program templates are included in the package. Please see the *Step-by-Step Guide* for more information.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Gender: ILET is committed to ensuring equal and equitable opportunities for both males and females in two ways. First, gender is an important consideration in the ILET assessment and school planning processes. This means that there is close attention paid to ensuring equal participation of boys and girls, men and women in the assessments, and also in the school improvement processes. Secondly, gender is an important theme examined in the assessment itself. For example, each of the assessment questionnaires includes a range of questions that seek to assess equal opportunities for boys and girls.

Inclusion: ILET is also committed to an inclusive approach to education. As with gender, this happens on two levels. First, ILET pays close attention to ensuring an inclusive approach to the assessment process itself, and also to school improvement planning. This means that special attention is paid to ensuring equal participation of boys and girls, male and female adults in the interviews. Secondly, inclusion is an important theme examined throughout all of assessment questionnaires. For example, the questionnaires explore the percentage of girls/boys with disabilities enrolled in the learning space. The questionnaires also examine the ways in which learning is made accessible to children with disabilities (students with hearing, visual impairments, students who cannot read and write, children with mobility difficulties). It also examines if the school/learning space – and also learning experiences in school – are made accessible and enjoyed by students of different race, religion or ethnic backgrounds.

Resilience: emergencies disrupt the ability of individuals and systems to cope. Children may lose the caring, warm relationships of their support networks, as well as safe and stable home and learning spaces. ILET promotes psychosocial support so that children and their families can navigate and recover from emergencies.

HOW DOES ILET RELATE TO AND LINK WITH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND PLATFORMS?

ILET links and has synergy with other important frameworks, platforms and systems in the sector. These include the INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, the national Education Management of Information System (EMIS), and the education cluster.

INEE

ILET and the INEE Minimum Standards both aim to ensure and address issues of quality in the learning environment. While the INEE Minimum Standards are a normative framework for EiE staff, ILET can be applied as a supporting tool to assess the learning environment aiming at ensuring quality, community participation and accountability. As the INEE Minimum Standards are developed to ensure quality, coordinated humanitarian responses on a broader level, ILET is developed to ensure a quality learning environment at the school/learning space level. Thus, ILET is a practical tool for working towards and reaching the Minimum Standards at a lower level through community participation.

ILET builds upon the INEE Minimum Standards in two fundamental ways: the process itself adheres to INEE Minimum Standards, such as the underpinning foundations of com-

munity participation. Community participation lies at the heart of ILET, as the process of identifying gaps and developing and implementing the SIP is driven by the community. Secondly, through ILET methodology, program staff and the school community are strongly encouraged to coordinate with other education stakeholders about the activities and results of ILET.

Beyond the foundational standards, ILET empowers schools to assess the quality of the learning environment against the Minimum Standards. In other words, the questionnaires themselves are firmly rooted within the five domains of the Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies.

Linkages with INEE MS

Domain: Access and Learning Environment
Standard 1: Equal Access
Standard 2: Protection and Well-being

ILET explores the barriers affecting access to the school or learning space including whether all boys and girls and all sub-groups of children enjoy inclusive access. It examines whether the learning environment is safe for all learners and whether all students can enjoy learning in a safe and secure environment. The questions explore whether access routes to and from the school are safe and also whether teaching and learning is respectful at all times for all students.

Domain: Access and Learning Environment
Standard 3: Facilities and Services

ILET explores the linkages with the services and facilities that secure the health and well-being of the students, including their psychosocial wellbeing. In addition to assessing the safety of the school structure, it explores whether schools are free from violence including gender based violence

Domain: Teaching and Learning
Standard 1: Curricula
Standard 2: Training, Professional Development and Support
Standard 3: Instruction and Learning Processes

ILET explores if teachers are trained, It also examines whether the learning materials and learning methods and practices (such as language of instruction) are of relevance and appropriate for the students

Foundational standard: Community Participation and Coordination
Community participation
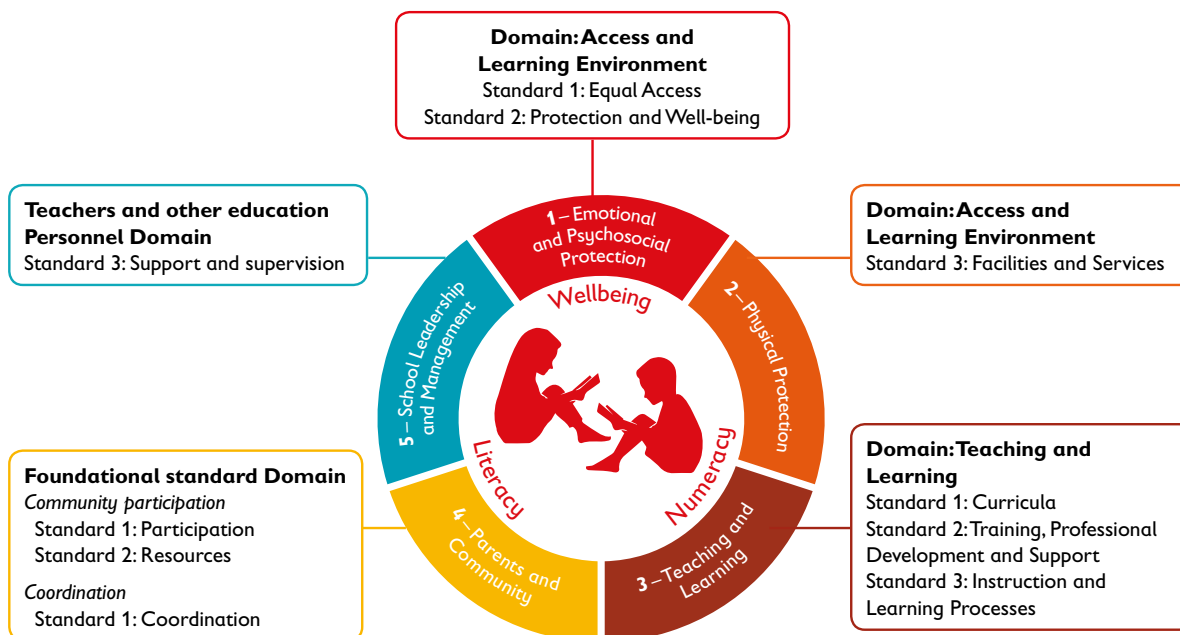**Standard 1:** Participation
Standard 2: Resources

Coordination
Standard 1: Coordination

Community consultation and community empowerment lay at the heart of the ILET. Through the methodology, programme staff and the school community are strongly encouraged to **coordinate** with other education stakeholders (partners, cluster, government) about the activities and also results of ILET.

Domain: Access and Learning Environment
Standard 1: Equal Access
Standard 2: Protection and Well-being

Teachers and other education Personnel Domain
Standard 3: Support and supervision

Domain: Access and Learning Environment
Standard 3: Facilities and Services

Foundational standard Domain
Community participation
  Standard 1: Participation
  Standard 2: Resources

Coordination
  Standard 1: Coordination

Domain: Teaching and Learning
Standard 1: Curricula
Standard 2: Training, Professional Development and Support
Standard 3: Instruction and Learning Processes

Domain: Teachers and other education Personnel
Standard 3: Support and supervision

ILET explores the type of training teachers have received and their level of experience. It also explores whether support mechanisms are in place or not for them.

The education cluster

One of the main objectives of the cluster is to develop co-ordination capacity and mechanisms for improved education sector response in humanitarian crises. ILET can complement cluster assessment and monitoring, thus ensuring that ILET findings from the school level/learning space assessments is inter-operable with and informs a comprehensive information base for the sector. Staff administering ILET, including education officers and local partners, are encouraged to orient the cluster on ILET and determine if the package and data management tools developed, or part of these, could be useful to the wider partnership to assess the learning environment in targeted schools. In any case, ILET findings from various schools of intervention will be useful to share with the education cluster and other education coordination groups.

Education Information Management Systems (EMIS)

An Education Management Information System is a key requirement for national authorities in order to assess, implement and monitor the education system. The primary aim of an EMIS is to collect and analyze relevant information to inform better decision-making within and for the education sector. Both EMIS and ILET data captured during the assessments is collected at the school level. While EMIS data informs the national education system, the results from the ILET assessments can provide important data to the school community – who can use the data to improve areas and aspects at the school/learning space level. In addition, EMIS feeds into ILET; it provides an information basis, which is helpful prior to ILET assessments.

TWO BRIEF CASE STUDIES

Case study 1 – Uganda

The ILET package was piloted in five schools/learning spaces in Adjumani, North West Uganda, between July 2017 and February 2018.

Background The pilot was incorporated into the then relatively recently established EiE response for South Sudanese refugee children.

Timeline The pilot was led by a full-time ILET coordinator and an information management officer. The first round of data collection took one week and was completed in early August, while data analysis took three weeks. Feedback sessions were delivered to the five learning spaces during the first week of September, and all SIPs were developed by the end of September. Round two of data collection was completed in February upon the opening of schools.

Achievements Findings from round two showed improvements in all schools across all foundations. Also, the pilot in Uganda built on strong partnerships and mobilization among local communities. The District Education Office delegated its coordinating center tutors and district inspector of schools to participate in the data collection and SIP planning. The findings from the pilot also fed into advocacy efforts with the District Education Office, and were built into other proposals. Parents and community members volunteered and came up with low-cost activities such as cleaning the compounds and setting up volleyball playgrounds. ILET was also very well-received by other EiE actors who expressed an interest in scaling-up the same approach in all the schools they were supporting, as they could see the noticeable improvements in the five piloted learning spaces while valuing the community mobilization and participation elements.

Way forward The Uganda office is working in a consortium scaling-up the ILET program to 31 schools in three districts in the North West region, in a new ECHO-supported project running from April 2018 until April 2019.

A School Improvement Planning session with teachers and parents in Adjumani, Uganda.

Case study 2 – Syria

The ILET package was piloted in five schools/learning spaces in Idlib and Aleppo governorates, North West Syria, between May 2017 and May 2018.

Background The pilot was incorporated into the four-year-old EiE response in North West Syria, covering permanent schools and temporary learning spaces catering for host and IDP children.

Timeline The pilot was led by Save the Children International's education program manager, who was coordinating the implementation through our partner inside Syria. Due to limited human resources, the first round of data collection took a total of five weeks and was completed in early August. In September, schools were temporarily closed due to airstrikes for six weeks, and homeschooling was introduced. The pilot was then resumed in October where feedback sessions were delivered to the five learning spaces, and all SIPs were completed by the first week of November. Round two of data collection overcame the challenges faced by the first round, and a team of 12 enumerators was trained. Data collection was completed in one week by the end of January.

Achievements Findings from round two showed improvement in all schools across all foundations. The pilot in Syria has, for the first time in years, introduced a comprehensive, practical and evidence-based package for delving deeper into assessing and planning quality education. The project was well-received by implementing agencies inside Syria, where more than 118 participants attended the launch event in April 2018 in Idlib organized by Save the Children International's implementing partner. Representatives of the different agencies expressed the urgency and relevance of such a package that allows for community mobilization and a comprehensive discussion around quality education.

Way forward The Syria team is scaling-up the pilot to 20 learning spaces as part of their planned EiE response during the 2018/2019 year.

Children in a school in North West Syria during the data collection process

ILET COMPONENTS

GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

Overview Document

Step-By-Step guide

Training Manual
*Power point
Hand outs*

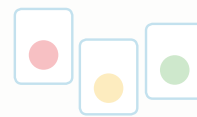## DATA MANAGEMENT

Data Management Platform

Data Management Handbook

Data Collection Tools
*Teachers   Students
Parents   Head teacher
Classroom*

PROGRAM TEMPLATES

Findings Cards templates

SIP Template

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ILET

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