**Introduction**

This case study analyses the utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction (INEE Minimum Standards) by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). It also identifies lessons learnt, good practices and recommendations for consideration and application by other donor agencies.

INEE hired a team of researchers from InterWorks, Columbia University and George Washington University from September 2006 to June 2007 to work closely with the INEE Working Group on Minimum Standards to develop and run a survey to determine the awareness, utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards by INEE members. A key recommendation in the final report was to conduct further analysis with representatives of bilateral donor agencies, foundations and national governments to gain a better understanding of their awareness, utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards.

This case study was undertaken to understand how the INEE Minimum Standards are being implemented by the Canadian International Development Agency and what lessons can be learned by other governments and donor agencies wanting to implement the INEE Minimum Standards in their own organisation. It is based on document analysis and phone interviews with CIDA staff at Headquarters.

**Background**

**CIDA’s commitment to education in emergencies, conflict, post-conflict and fragile states**

CIDA, Canada's lead agency for development assistance, aims to reduce poverty, promote human rights and increase sustainable development. Its aid priorities include democratic governance, private sector development, health, basic education, equality between women and men, and environmental sustainability.

A number of CIDA’s policies emphasise that education is not only a human right but also a critical component of open and democratic societies. In particular, education for girls and boys in emergencies, conflict and post-conflict situations is highlighted in Canada’s International Policy Statement and in CIDA’s Sustainable Development Strategy 2007-2009. In fact, it is one of CIDA’s four priority areas in the education sector and the agency seeks to “work to improve coordination among partner countries and organisations, and provide more immediate access for children living in crisis situations to safe, secure and child-friendly formal and/or non-formal basic education programs.” CIDA is therefore committed to an array of basic education programming in emergencies, conflict, post-conflict and fragile states including in Afghanistan, Haiti, Colombia, and Sudan.

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CIDA's involvement in and contributions to INEE

In order to operationalise this commitment, CIDA engages in global initiatives on education in emergencies and other challenging situations, in particular with the UN Girls’ Education Initiative, the Fast Track Initiative, the UNAID's Inter-Agency Task Team on Education, and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). CIDA recently joined the INEE Gender Task Team which coordinates diverse activities and catalyses collaborative action on gender and education, as well as the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility which was established early 2008 and comprises of 21 institutions who work together to strengthen consensus on what works to mitigate state fragility through education while ensuring equitable access for all; support the development of effective quality education programs in fragile states; and promote the development of alternative mechanisms to support education in fragile states in the transition from humanitarian to development assistance. As an active member of this group, CIDA contributes strong research and programming expertise with a gender equality focus on conflict affected children, including girls in fighting forces.

In addition, since the start of the Network CIDA has been a strong supporter of INEE and of the INEE Minimum Standards. CIDA's first financial contribution to INEE was made in early 2004, through CARE Canada, in support of the Regional Africa Consultation to develop the INEE Minimum Standards. In 2006, CIDA first provided funding to INEE to cover core costs as well as the implementation process of the INEE Minimum Standards. CIDA’s contributions to the Network’s core costs continued in 2007 and 2008. After co-sponsoring the 2006 INEE policy roundtable, CIDA also supported the 2008 INEE policy roundtable.

Awareness of INEE and INEE Minimum Standards

Awareness across the agency’s sections

The case study revealed that CIDA staff in different sections of the agency are aware of the INEE Minimum Standards. Greatest levels of awareness of the INEE Minimum Standards were naturally found amongst CIDA education specialists working in the various geographical branches as well as amongst gender and humanitarian specialists who have participated in training workshops on the INEE Minimum Standards. CIDA staff working in policy or program areas related to education in emergencies, conflict, post-conflict and fragile states were also often familiar with the INEE Network and the INEE Minimum Standards. Additionally, as of 2007, three CIDA senior managers in the Strategic Policy and Performance Branch and three colleagues in contracting who participate in policy discussions and authorise trainings at CIDA, are aware of the INEE Minimum Standards.

Awareness fostered by training and promotion activities

At CIDA’s Headquarters in Québec, 21 employees have participated in one of two tailored two-day training workshops on the INEE Minimum Standards, which took place in September 2007 and March 2008, and were conducted in English and French respectively. Both workshops included CIDA staff as well as partner Canadian NGOs working on education. In addition to these formal training workshops, CIDA creates or seizes strategic opportunities to promote the utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards. For example, a mini-training was provided to CIDA and the Canadian Global Campaign for Education (CGCE) as a follow up to the CIDA-CGCE Learning Forum on education in conflict-affected fragile states on 28 April, 2008. The INEE Minimum Standards Toolkit was also shared with seven Africa-based CIDA colleagues and two HQ-based Africa Education Specialists during CIDA’s Africa Regional Education Specialists workshop on 2 May, 2008.

Awareness raised through advocacy efforts

Moreover, Save the Children Canada and UNICEF Canada invited the INEE Coordinator for Minimum Standards to the meeting of the Policy and Action Group on Emergency Relief (PAGER) in January 2008 to give a presentation on education in emergencies as a key humanitarian response and the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook as an essential tool to ensure the quality and accountability of these interventions. The meeting - which was attended by PAGER members including Save the Children, UNICEF, Care, Plan International, CIDA, DFAIT, and the Red Cross - contributed to raising the profile of the INEE Minimum Standards with CIDA’s International Humanitarian Assistance Division and the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, which are less familiar with education in emergencies issues and tools.
Utilisation and Institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards

The use of the INEE Minimum Standards by CIDA Headquarters: a criterion for funding education programmes

While CIDA policy documents, proposal guidelines or other education programming tools do not explicitly mention the INEE Minimum Standards, CIDA officers and education specialists who review proposals from partner NGOs and other civil society organisations do advise them to refer to the INEE Minimum Standards and to use them in their overall education programming as a “reference document” and an “analytical framework”. The study revealed that there have been a number of positive discussions between CIDA officers and implementing partners that led to the integration of the INEE Minimum Standards in education programming, particularly with regards to monitoring and evaluation tools.

The use of the INEE Minimum Standards in CIDA’s Colombia programme: a holistic programming framework

CIDA’s Colombia programme used the INEE Minimum Standards in its overall children’s rights and protection strategy as well as for guidance on education programming, monitoring and evaluation. In this connection, CIDA has recently secured the approval of a $10 million CDN education initiative to be implemented by Save the Children Canada and the Norwegian Refugee Council, two lead members of the INEE Working Group on Minimum Standards, in Nariño, an area on the border with Ecuador highly affected by conflict and internal displacement. The project makes specific use of the INEE Minimum Standards as a framework for implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Of note, members of the IASC education sector group in Colombia (which includes the Ministry of Education, Save the Children, NRC, UNHCR, IOM, OCHA, UNICEF, the Foundation for the Refugee Education Trust, Fundación dos Mundos and other local organisations) are actively discussing the education in emergencies issues highlighted in the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook. CIDA is seen as a key donor to engage in this discussion and further support coordination efforts related to education in emergencies and the INEE Minimum Standards.

The use of the INEE Minimum Standards by CIDA’s Afghanistan Task Force: an analytical tool and planning guide

Through the Afghanistan Task Force (ATF), CIDA currently supports a substantial education sector programme in Afghanistan. The ATF uses the INEE Minimum Standards as a tool for analysing unsolicited proposals and relies on the Handbook as a guide for planning in the sector. The ATF at headquarters has worked with CIDA colleagues in the field, including locally engaged staff, to ensure familiarity and practical application of the INEE Minimum Standards in country.

Lessons Learnt, Good Practices and Recommendations

Utilisation and institutionalisation are supported by training

Given the successful impact of its promotional activities on the INEE Minimum Standards so far, and the need for increased staff capacity on education in emergencies and post-crisis recovery, CIDA is planning more awareness-raising and training opportunities for its staff and partner NGOs and CSOs. This was highlighted as a real need by CIDA officers who took part in the study. At least one more training workshop is therefore planned for the fiscal year 2008-2009.

Institutionalisation is supported by whole-government Awareness

Training on the INEE Minimum Standards has also been offered to other CIDA departments outside the education sector; however, the study showed that interest among non-education staff is lower as they do not see the potential value of the standards for their work. Whole-government awareness, i.e. across relevant departments and institutions, is key for institutionalisation and it is recommended that CIDA continues to involve the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and other governmental departments in meetings, policy discussions and training workshops on the INEE Minimum Standards.

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Institutionalisation by donor agencies strengthens inter-agency collaboration at the national level

CIDA is committed to working through inter-agency collaboration mechanisms at the global and national level to promote education in emergencies and fragile contexts, including through the implementation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards internally and by implementing partners. At the country level, donor agencies play a key role in shaping and supporting the national education sector and CIDA’s Colombia education programme is a great example of the impact of the agency’s institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards on inter-agency sectoral coordination for quality education.

Conclusion

CIDA is currently looking at ways to further institutionalise the INEE Minimum Standards, including the possibility of developing tools to assist its staff and partners in incorporating the standards in various aspects of their work on education in emergencies, conflict, post-conflict and fragile states. CIDA’s efforts to translate the good practices enshrined in the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook into concrete, relevant and tailored application strategies at headquarters and country level is a model for other organisations, including other donor agencies, who are committed to using the INEE Minimum Standards to build the capacity of their staff and enhance their support to quality education programmes in emergency and post-crisis settings. As the utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards by CIDA moves forward, it will be important to carefully document and follow-up on this experience so as to identify additional lessons applicable to the agency’s other country programmes as well as other donor organisations.

In turn, CIDA plays an essential role in promoting the utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards in educational programming by local and international NGOs, UN agencies and Ministries of Education, which has contributed to raising the profile of the agency as a committed and efficient donor for education in emergencies. Clearly, the institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards is a helpful and positive process for donor agencies, both at headquarters and country level, as well as internally and externally.