

# PROTECTING EDUCATION IN COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY CONFLICT

PHOTO: LUCA KLEVE-RUUD / SAVE THE CHILDREN



BOOKLET 5

## Education Policy and Planning for Protection, Recovery and Fair Access

Global  
Education Cluster

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## Front cover

Jarees Primary School  
in the province of  
Thi Qar, Iraq. With  
violence against children  
widespread in this area,  
Save the Children has  
provided the school  
with a safe child-friendly  
space

# Foreword

This booklet is one of a series of booklets prepared as part of the Protecting Education in Conflict-Affected Countries Programme, undertaken by Save the Children on behalf of the Global Education Cluster, in partnership with Education Above All, a Qatar-based non-governmental organisation. The booklets were prepared by a consultant team from Search For Common Ground.

They were written by Brendan O'Malley (editor) and Melinda Smith, with contributions from Carlyne Ashton, Saji Prelis, and Wendy Wheaton of the Education Cluster, and technical advice from Margaret Sinclair. Accompanying training workshop materials were written by Melinda Smith, with contributions from Carlyne Ashton and Brendan O'Malley. The curriculum resource was written by Carlyne Ashton and Margaret Sinclair.

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## Booklet topics and themes

<b>Booklet 1</b>	<b>Overview</b>
<b>Booklet 2</b>	<b>Legal Accountability and the Duty to Protect</b>
<b>Booklet 3</b>	<b>Community-based Protection and Prevention</b>
<b>Booklet 4</b>	<b>Education for Child Protection and Psychosocial Support</b>
<b>Booklet 5</b>	<b>Education Policy and Planning for Protection, Recovery and Fair Access</b>
<b>Booklet 6</b>	<b>Education for Building Peace</b>
<b>Booklet 7</b>	<b>Monitoring and Reporting</b>
<b>Booklet 8</b>	<b>Advocacy</b>

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The booklets should be used alongside the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery*. References to the most relevant standards for the content of each booklet are given in the resources section.

There is also a supplementary booklet, Curriculum Resource: Introducing Humanitarian Education in Primary and Junior Secondary Schooling, which can be used with Booklet 6.

Please feel free to share these booklets with interested professionals working in ministries of education or non-governmental organisations, and others concerned with education for populations affected by armed conflict or insecurity.

If referenced, please use the following text: Global Education Cluster, Booklet 5: Education Policy and Planning for Protection, Recovery and Fair Access, Protecting Education in Countries Affected by Conflict series (2012)

## Introduction

This series of eight booklets is designed to provide:

- an overview of the problem of conflict-related threats to education
- a range of responses that can be made by education clusters, and ministries, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) dealing with education, security, protection, psychosocial support and legal accountability issues.
- a tool to be used with an accompanying set of workshop materials for use in training people in aspects of protecting education in conflict-affected countries.

This booklet focuses on education policy and planning for protection, recovery and fair access.

## Key messages

- Education policy can play a key role in preventing education from fuelling conflict, improving protection and ensuring timely recovery from attacks.
- Promote safe and fair access to education at all levels.
- Use locally relevant prevention and protection measures to keep all students and education personnel safe.
- Build capacity and prepare to respond rapidly to destruction of education facilities and halting of education operations in order to prevent critical long-term degradation of education.
- Address grievances over unequal access to good-quality education by using objective criteria for allocating resources.

# Background



Security must be enhanced to enable good quality education to resume after conflict

**I**n locations affected by conflict areas of response that can reduce the risk and impact of violence on education include: protection, fair access to education, timely recovery and reconstruction to ensure continuing provision, and the use of education to build peace.

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## Ensuring safety and security

Maintaining safety and security during a conflict requires a combination of action by national ministries, for instance of education and defence, regional and district authorities, and local communities, education staff and security personnel (See Case Study 1).

Ministries, UN agencies and NGOs must find ways of building and supporting security at the local level. Students, teachers and other staff must be protected

to enable recovery measures to be taken in safety after attacks or collateral damage have taken place.

In southern Thailand, for instance, contractors would not go into some areas to rebuild schools that had been attacked because they feared being targeted themselves if they carried out the work. (See Booklet 2: Legal Accountability and the Duty to Protect; and Booklet 3: Community-Based Protection and Prevention.)

Protection and recovery measures should not put students, teachers and other education personnel at further risk of harm or put students at an educational disadvantage.

To ensure provision of good quality education can resume, security and safety provisions must be made. Otherwise, serious problems could ensue.

For example in Afghanistan in 2001

thousands of children returned to study in school buildings that were unsafe due to bombing or other war damage.<sup>1</sup> During India's Naxalite conflict, when children were sent to residential schools away from the fighting, many dropped out because these schools did not teach in their mother tongue.

Military personnel posted at schools to guarantee security may be unaware of the dangers posed by their presence in schools. It can put students and education personnel at risk of abuse, including sexual abuse, or lead to parents withdrawing students from school. It also heightens the risk of enemy attack, including if the military becomes involved in rebuilding damaged schools.

### Continuity of education provision

In emergencies and post conflict the priority of education authorities must be to ensure continuity and recovery of good-quality education.

This includes free and inclusive access to schooling as set out in the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards for Education Policy (Standards 1 and 2).

These standards state that education authorities must develop and implement plans which prepare for and respond to future and current emergencies; that education should be protected and continuous; and that regulations must be in place to ensure rebuilt or replaced facilities are safe. In many countries such plans are written at the regional and local levels, where they are financed.

In areas where the local and national authorities cannot or will not ensure continuity of education provision, the international community must step in.



School children inspect the rubble at Ban Payo Elementary School, Pattani, Thailand which was set alight in January 2010

### The importance of a timely response

Timely response to ensure rapid recovery from the effects of conflict or direct attacks is vital. Conflicts in less developed countries last on average 12 years<sup>ii</sup>. This means short-term effects can easily evolve into longer-term problems for education, such as:

- war-damaged schools being left to deteriorate for many years due to insecurity.
- teachers leaving an area or quitting the profession, due to insecurity and irregular salary payments.
- entire age groups of children missing out on all or part of their education or experiencing very low-quality education for years<sup>iii</sup>.

The impact of conflict on education creates difficult challenges at a time when

governments face financial difficulties and are struggling to achieve stability.

But ensuring timely recovery of education and improvements in access can be an important step towards building peace. It gives families whose lives have been torn apart by the fighting hope for the future. And it re-establishes the fundamental human right to education.

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### **Making access fair**

A party to a conflict may have a legitimate complaint about its children and young people having poorer access to education at different levels.

The quality of education they receive might also be poor compared to other parts of the country.

Corruption may also be present and undermine trust in education. This could include theft of funds and resources that are being distributed, payment of ‘ghost teachers’, or false claims for attacks on schools.

Clear and fair criteria for allocating resources are vital to help end grievances over access. At local level, school management committees should ensure transparency and avoid discrimination or favouritism regarding access, scholarships, fee waivers and employment.

At national level, planning should involve using quantitative criteria to allocate resources fairly to different groups.

Disaggregated statistics are needed that show current and planned resource allocations and enrolment ratios, as well as education achievements and transition rates to higher education levels, according

### **CASE STUDY I**

#### **Iraq: Security measures to protect examinations**

In Iraq in 2007, widespread disruption of national school exams was caused by militants entering exam halls and killing students and teachers. In 2008, a repeat of this problem was prevented by moving the exams into much larger halls on university campuses. With the co-operation of the army, police and security forces, students and teachers could be more easily protected there than if the exams had been spread out among different schools.<sup>iv</sup>

to geographic locations (districts, sub-districts) or for different ethnic, religious or other groups.

### **Breaking the cycle of violence**

Targeting education of youth through Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration programmes can be crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty, recruitment and violence. This may require making support of non-formal education programmes or secondary education a priority.<sup>v</sup> But it is an area that is too often ignored by policymakers.<sup>vi</sup>

Non-formal programmes that provide literacy and vocational skills such as vehicle repair, construction or tailoring, and sponsored apprenticeships to learn these and other skills, offer young people a route towards employment when the alternative might include working for a military group or warlord.

Other relevant non-formal programmes include accelerated learning for children who have missed years of schooling as a step towards reintegration into the formal education system.<sup>vii</sup>

Classes in a relevant international language, such as English or French, can help prepare for resuming formal studies and can increase employability.

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### **Ensuring informed responses**

Monitoring and reporting of incidents of violence and the impact of conflict by ministries involved with education is essential to guide measures for protection, prevention, rapid response and rehabilitation.

This information can help tackle the root causes of the conflict and attacks on education. The development of an effective education management information system (EMIS) is critical to ensuring appropriate responses are made.

Partnerships between local and international NGOs can be particularly effective in collecting information for programming and advocacy, and in supplying it to the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism for Children and Armed Conflict (MRM)<sup>viii</sup> and other reporting bodies.<sup>ix</sup>

For example, The Partnerships for Protecting Children in Armed Conflict (PICC), established in Nepal in 2005, is a good example of this. (See Booklet 7: Monitoring and Reporting) Good monitoring and reporting systems are also essential for improving accountability for violations, for instance via the MRM, Human Rights Council, International

Criminal Court or national courts (see Booklet 2: Legal Accountability and the Duty to Protect).

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### **Information to support advocacy**

Monitoring and reporting also has a vital role to play in supporting advocacy.

For instance, in countries where there is a law protecting schools from military use, collecting information on the number of schools occupied by military forces and the number of days of schooling lost as a result can be used to advocate with defence chiefs and military commanders to ensure their forces do not overstep the law.

Disseminating information through the media – without breaching confidentiality protocols – can be an effective advocacy vehicle. Partnerships with the media can sometimes also be effective (see Booklet 8: Advocacy).

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### **Building local capacity**

Capacity-building can help education ministries incorporate conflict-related (and disaster-related) issues into their education plans.<sup>x</sup>

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### **Actions to consider**

It is important to establish whether the ministries of planning, education and higher education, as well as other education providers and coordination mechanisms/clusters, can adapt their policies to take account of different conflict risks, as outlined below.

## CASE STUDY 2

### Sierra Leone: Lack of capacity to rebuild prolongs denial of access

Unequal access to education due to uneven development was one of the rebels' declared motives in Sierra Leone's war (1991–2002). Remedying these inequalities and restoring good-quality provision presented a serious challenge at a time when damage to schools was widespread.

In just two incursions into Freetown, the capital, in 1999, 70% of schools were destroyed according to the Ministry for Youth Education and Sport. By 2001, only 13% of the country's schools were judged usable. More than a third of all school buildings needed full reconstruction and over half needed repairs.

Only one in four teachers had a table or chair. One in ten pupils had a table, and there were several children for every chair.<sup>xi</sup>

There was a lack of data on how many schools were closed and for what length of time during the conflict, or on the rate of repair during or since the conflict.

In 2001, the World Bank estimated that only up to 200 of Sierra Leone's 3,152 schools could be repaired or reconstructed every year under its programme to assist the government in re-establishing education services.<sup>xii</sup> By 2004, three years after the fighting ended, 60% of primary schools and 40% of secondary schools still needed major rehabilitation or reconstruction. In some districts, more than 80% of schools still required this level of support.<sup>xiii</sup>

The loss of teachers was also affecting the quality of education. In some districts, up to 70% of teachers had not returned to their jobs by 2004. Meanwhile, the national enrolment of students had doubled. Pupil:teacher ratios reached an average of 66:1 in primary schools nationally in 2004/5 and 78:1 in Northern Region.

## I For conflict preparedness: Keep students and education personnel safe

- Security arrangements for education institutions are key. To put these in place, consult relevant ministries or authorities of the state/province/department (such as for defence or security) about providing physical protection, such as armed or unarmed escorts, providing unarmed guards at schools and universities, or arming teachers. Consider special

security arrangements for national exams and paying salaries (see Booklet 2: Legal Accountability and the Duty to Protect.)

- Ensure that schools and universities offer physical protection. Consider policies for establishing boundary walls, multiple exits in classrooms and buildings for ease of escape, use of non-flammable or less flammable building materials (eg concrete instead of wood) to reduce impact of attacks, safety training for students, and relocating teachers' housing to more secure areas. Ensure schools possess first

aid kits and organise emergency drills for students and teachers.

- Encourage community protection, such as establishing school defence committees that can organise patrols, posting night guards and other security measures at schools or on the approaches to schools (see Booklet 3: Community-based Protection and Prevention).
- Where safe to do so encourage negotiations between local people and groups who attack schools and universities. Seek agreement to respect schools and universities as zones of peace, including no political or military use of, or attacks on, education buildings (see Booklet 3: Community-based Protection and Prevention).
- Ban military use of schools, which causes damage and makes buildings into targets. Prevent any military use of education buildings while students are present. This avoids putting children at risk from fighting or abuse (see Booklet 2: Legal Accountability and the Duty to Protect).
- Consider moving education activities to safer sites, or modifying delivery through mechanisms such as distance learning.

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## **2 Strengthen education providers' capacity to respond to conflict**

- Build the capacity of local education planning and statistics departments so they have the necessary background data when emergencies happen. This

### **CASE STUDY 3**

#### **Mexico: Safety guidelines for schools caught up in gun battles**

In July 2010, all schools in Nuevo León state, Mexico, were given guidelines for preventing students and staff being hurt in shootings by armed drugs gangs. There had been at least nine shootouts close to schools in Mexico in the previous nine months.

If teachers hear gunshots, the Safety School Manual of Nuevo León Department of Education advises them to:

- immediately order students to lie chest down on the floor
- prevent anyone leaving the classroom until the authorities arrive
- wait until the administrator gives the all-clear
- keep children away from windows
- ensure that children avoid eye contact with the gunmen
- prevent children from filming or taking pictures of the gunmen
- help disabled children to follow the procedure.

A key action was warning children not to make themselves targets by looking out of the window or trying to take pictures, which they typically try to do.

Gunmen may mistake the shape or reflections from cameras or mobile phones for weapons, and shoot.<sup>xiv</sup>



Girls studying in a tented classroom in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 2005

includes information such as student enrolment and attainment data for each district and region, teacher numbers and qualifications. Such departments can then support needs assessments and coordinate donor support.

- Create monitoring and reporting requirements for field staff regarding damage to or attacks on education buildings, students or staff, and related short-term and long-term effects. Implement assessments to check classrooms and buildings for dangers after conflict or disaster.
- Strengthen administration, especially of teacher salary payments. Keep good personnel service and payment records, storing back-up copies elsewhere. Establish an effective teacher tracking system in areas where teachers were employed and places to which people have fled, as many teachers may have travelled with the local community to another area and need to be reassigned there. Establish a contingency plan to pay teachers as quickly as possible in

areas they have moved to in order to avoid disruption of education services in that place.

- Strengthen management of education supplies and stocks of materials. Keep an emergency stock of educational materials for schools affected by conflict or disaster. Tents and plastic sheets could also be supplied for the starting of temporary schools. Consider creating an emergency supplies department or team.
- Update the curriculum, textbook development, teacher training departments and institutes to address tensions within the country or region. This can help remove bias in education content and support peace-building and responsible citizenship (see Booklet 6: Education for Building Peace).
- Train and equip district education staff and offices and field education administration and teacher supervision units and staff (including budgets for staff visits to schools) to carry out school safety plans. Training should include strengthening school management committees and formulating school safety and security plans (these should cover not just the risk of armed violence but also risks of disaster and other hazards, eg gender-based violence and harassment).
- Negotiate for the briefest possible use of schools as shelters for internally displaced people.
- Build the education ministry's capacity to implement, supervise and monitor

#### **CASE STUDY 4**

#### **Pakistan: Prioritising girls' education after targeted attacks**

Hundreds of schools were destroyed or damaged in Swat District, north-west Pakistan, between 2007 and 2010. When the Taliban briefly controlled the area they banned girls' education and female teachers. Afterwards, Save the Children pushed to make girls' education a priority, to counter the effects of the attacks. The Taliban had not only halted girls' education, but also undermined its value. So Save the Children proposed:

- mobilising community policing of school routes to encourage parents to send their children to school
- broadcasting radio messages explaining new safety measures and urging children to return to school
- offering stipends (small regular payments) to parents whose daughters regularly attend school
- giving teachers special training in psychosocial support
- providing training and incentives for teachers to help children rebuild their lives
- special incentives for female teachers to work, including safe transportation
- recruiting staff to fill the gap created by the ban on hiring teachers in Swat (giving priority to rural areas which, as former Taliban strongholds, were most neglected).<sup>xvi</sup>

building construction, repairs and maintenance. Classrooms should be conducive to a good learning environment. Buildings should be disaster-resistant and offer protection during conflict. By building better buildings before crises occur, some effects of conflict and disaster can be averted or reduced.

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### **3 Strengthen coordination for emergency preparedness and response**

- Develop emergency preparedness plans and train national, district and school staff on their implementation. Training should reinforce the roles of school management committees. Drills should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure crisis preparedness.
- Implement Education in Emergencies training in conflict-affected areas for government as well as local and international NGOs.

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### **4 For conflict risk reduction: Address grievances of disempowered groups and use objective criteria for allocating resources**

- Investigate grievances related to education that may have contributed to the conflict and require policy changes.<sup>xv</sup>
- When possible build forums for dialogue that lead to national agreement about

## Useful resources

reforms. Investigate disparities in enrolment data, drop-out and attainment rates, and geographic proximity of schools to school-attending populations for different ethnic, religious and regional groups, and groups at risk of conflict. Compare data on teacher and staff appointments and facilities.

- Study bias in education material such as curricula, textbooks and language of instruction.
- Form a national education commission to build a national consensus on policy changes that can address grievances and build peace. The commission must fairly represent all groups. Consult among teachers/academics and seek agreement between government and opposition groups.

Policy issues to consider include:

- removing unfairness in access to education and in the quality of education provided at all levels.
- removing biased content from learning materials, and adding education on tolerance and understanding and responsible citizenship. Establish a balanced committee to guide textbook review and revision, and approve new publications.
- using children's mother tongue in early years' schooling, and resolving other language issues.
- Issue a policy document detailing goals such as equal access to good-quality primary, secondary and higher education, and curricula that help build peace and national unity.

The INEE Minimum Standards most relevant to this booklet are:

- Community Participation Standard 1: Participation
- Access and Learning Environment Standards 1 and 2: Equal Access, and Protection and Well-being
- Teaching and Learning Standard 2: Training, Professional Development and Support
- Education Policy Standards 1 and 2: Law and Policy Formulation, and Planning and Implementation

Education Above All (2012).

*Conflict-sensitive education planning: a discussion paper.*

UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (2011) *Guidance Notes for Educational Planners: Integrating conflict and disaster risk reduction into education sector planning*, UNESCO. [www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/News\\_And\\_Events/pdf/2011/IIEP\\_Guidancesnotes\\_EiE\\_en.pdf](http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/News_And_Events/pdf/2011/IIEP_Guidancesnotes_EiE_en.pdf)

UNESCO (2011) 'The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education, and Background Papers', in Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011.

# Notes

<sup>i</sup> Brendan O'Malley, 'Tale of destruction across two cities', 7 May 2002, *The Times Educational Supplement*

<sup>ii</sup> *The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education*, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011, UNESCO

<sup>iii</sup> Brendan O'Malley, *The longer-term impact of attacks on education on education systems, development and fragility and the implications for policy responses*, Background paper for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011, UNESCO

<sup>iv</sup> Brendan O'Malley, 'Baghdad battles for better education', 17 January 2009, *South China Morning Post*

<sup>v</sup> Yolande Miller-Grandvaux, Education and Fragility: A New Framework, *Journal of Education for International Development 4:1*

<sup>vi</sup> Simon Reich, Establishing Safe Learning Environments, *Even in Chaos* op cit, p181-2

<sup>vii</sup> Brendan O'Malley, *The longer-term impact of attacks on education on education systems, development and fragility and the implications for policy responses*, Background paper for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011, UNESCO, p30

<sup>viii</sup> The UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism, set up in 2005, reports on six grave violations against children's rights

in armed conflict. This is primarily a system of monitoring and reporting for accountability and is used to force offending armed groups and armed forces to draw up action plans to end violations. (See Booklet 7: Monitoring and Reporting)

<sup>ix</sup> Zama Coursen-Neff, 'Attacks on Education: Monitoring and reporting for prevention, early warning, rapid response and accountability', in *Protecting Education Under Attack: A State-of-the-Art-Review*, UNESCO, 2010

<sup>x</sup> UNESCO, *Guidance Notes for Educational Planners: Integrating conflict and disaster risk reduction into education sector planning*, IIEP, 2011

<sup>xi</sup> National School Survey Report, cited in World Bank, *Project Appraisal Document for a Rehabilitation of Basic Education*, 2003, p7

<sup>xii</sup> World Bank, *Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Grant in the amount of US\$20 Million Equivalent to the Republic of Sierra Leone for a Rehabilitation of Basic Education*, 2003, p7

<sup>xiii</sup> World Bank, 'Education in Sierra Leone: Present challenges, future opportunities', *Africa Human Development Series*, 2007, p68

<sup>xiv</sup> Chris Hawley, 'Mexico schools teach lessons in survival', 8 July 2010, *USA Today*, and Brendan O'Malley, *The longer-*

*term impact of attacks on education on education systems, development and fragility and the implications for policy responses*, Background paper for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011, UNESCO

<sup>xv</sup> A useful matrix for analysing the context before making policy changes is provided by INEE. See: [http://www.ineesite.org/uploads/documents/store/Analytic\\_frameworkof\\_Education\\_and\\_Fragility.pdf](http://www.ineesite.org/uploads/documents/store/Analytic_frameworkof_Education_and_Fragility.pdf)

<sup>xvi</sup> Erum Burki (2010) *Militants target education to terrorise*, Save the Children UK, p15



## **Project partners**

**Education Above All**

**Education Cluster**

**Child Protection  
Working Group**

**Inter-Agency Network  
for Education in  
Emergencies (INEE)**

**Mental Health and  
Psychosocial Support  
Reference Group**

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