



Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
Réseau Inter-Agences pour éducation d'urgence
La Red Interagencial para Educación en Situaciones de Emergencia

Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction **Promotion and Implementation Summary (January – May 2005)**

A handbook of *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction* was launched at INEE's Second Global Inter-Agency Consultation on Education in Emergencies and Early Recovery, in Cape Town, South Africa (2–4 December 2004). The standards, which were developed with the participation of over 2,250 individuals from more than 50 countries, are first step toward ensuring that education initiatives in emergency situations lay a solid and sound foundation for post-conflict and disaster reconstruction. The establishment of standards, along with indicators and guidance notes on how to reach the standards, gives government and humanitarian workers the tools that they need to realize the Education For All and UN Millennium Development Goals. The standards are flexible enough to be a practical guide for response at the community level, while also providing national governments, other authorities, funding agencies, and national and international agencies with a harmonised framework to coordinate their education activities.

Evaluation feedback from the initial assessment of the awareness, use and relevance of the Minimum Standards reveals that they are being used extensively – in over 60 countries – and to great effect. The INEE Working Group on Minimum Standards has received dozens of examples of their positive use in, and relevance for, project planning, assessment, design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programmes around the world. They are being used as a capacity-building and training tool to enhance education quality, including strengthening the capacity and resilience of education ministries. Users relate that the Minimum Standards framework provides a common language among staff, agencies, affected community members and governments and thus a common starting point in providing guidance and tools on how to reach a minimum level of quality, access, accountability and coordination. They are also being used for inspiration to guide advocacy and policy making and serve as a concrete advocacy tool with which to promote education as a priority response to humanitarian organizations, governments, donors and populations affected by crisis.

Demand for the Minimum Standards handbook has been high. In the first four months after their launch, the bulk of the first printing of 7,500 copies was sent around the world. In May and June 2005 another 10,000 copies were ordered and distributed. This widespread distribution, promotion and use highlights a growing interest among humanitarian agencies in education in emergencies that extends beyond the minimum standards themselves. Indeed, the Minimum Standards process has been a vehicle for broadening and deepening the engagement of individuals and agencies, including donors, in this field.

The following are select examples¹ of the diverse ways in which the Minimum Standards are currently being promoted and used around the world in order to increase quality, access and accountability.

Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation

- ⇒ **The assessment form has been particularly useful**, and we've used it while conducting needs assessments for emergency education. This led to the creation of a tool that could be used during needs assessment as programme priorities. (IRC/CARDI Aceh, Indonesia)
- ⇒ The standards are being used to **develop quality criteria needed during the monitoring of the improvement of the quality of education** of the schools funded by RET. (RET Pakistan)

¹These are quotes received from Minimum Standards users; INEE added the bold emphases.

- ⇒ A key lessons learned from our experiences using minimum standards is that **the participatory needs assessment** guarantees acceptance, participation and ownership of activities and programmes. (CARDI, Indonesia)
- ⇒ We are using the standards to **help us balance the teacher learner ratio and hold community awareness meetings to encourage full participation of community members.** (IRC Kenya)
- ⇒ We are using the minimum standards in our programme by checking our activities against the MSEE to **evaluate and improve it.** (NRC-DR Congo)
- ⇒ The minimum standards, indicators and guidance notes are useful and provide a **tool for monitoring and evaluating** the achievement of the education project. They provide the project with a **framework to analyze the impact** of the project on the affected population. (IRC Uganda)
- ⇒ We have adapted **the MSEE for use in monitoring quality and child-friendliness of schools** using the rights-based approach to school and community capacity development for equity in basic education. (UNICEF Zimbabwe)

Planning and Preparedness

- ⇒ I have been using the Minimum Standards as a reference document to **create UNESCO and UN Nepal's Education Emergency Contingency Planning.** (UNESCO Nepal)
- ⇒ The office is using the Minimum Standards in the **preparation of a curriculum for in service training** of Afghan refugee teachers in Pakistan. (UNESCO Islamabad)
- ⇒ The tool is excellent and **will be adapted for use for HIV/AIDS Lifeskills, OVC and girl's education programming within the Quality Child-friendly Schools Framework.** (UNICEF Zimbabwe)

Training

- ⇒ CARE Burundi used the MSEE during a **training session in project cycle management and gender.** We went to the community to discuss these indicators with the project participants. This helps us to involve the community to adjust some indicators and approve them. (CARE Burundi)
- ⇒ The minimum standards have been used as **training tools to enhance the supervisors' management capacities.** (RET Pakistan)

Ministry of Education Capacity-Building

- ⇒ Our office has been using these standards in planning and policy and project formulation and in particular in all our activities related to **capacity building of the MOE in Iraq.** (UNESCO Iraq Office, Amman)
- ⇒ In the preparation of the current Sector Review process, where UNESCO provides **its technical assistance to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE),** selected minimum standards, such as “access and learning environment” and “education policy coordination” have been introduced. (UNESCO Ramallah)
- ⇒ The MSEE is very useful in our endeavor in **assisting the Indonesian Ministry of National Education in Supporting Community Education and Mainstreaming Teachers** in the Post –Tsunami Recovery Phase in the tsunami-destroyed areas of Aceh and North Sumatra. We use it to guide our counterparts in providing education base. (UNESCO Jakarta)

Advocacy

- ⇒ The minimum standards have been **an excellent concrete reference and advocacy tool, which CIDA has been consulting in developing its policies and strategic reviews.** They have brought greater attention to the need to address education in situations of emergency within the agency and government-wide. In part, due to our involvement with the standards, the Government of Canada gave education in situations of emergency prominent mention as one of four education priorities in its 2005 International Policy Statement. (Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Canada)
- ⇒ I am using the **standards to raise awareness and advocate** within interagency meetings, in regional forums and during international humanitarian training sessions. (Artistes pour l'Humanite, DR Congo)