

CHECKLIST FOR CONFLICT SENSITIVITY IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS



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DISCLAIMER

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

N.	TRODUCTION	I
CH	HECKLIST FOR CONFLICT SENSITIVITY IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS	5
	SECTION I. COMMITMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY	5
	SECTION II. STRATEGY	7
	SECTION III EQUITABLE ACCESS	9
	SECTION IV. CURRICULA, TEACHING & LEARNING MATERIALS, & METHODS	. 13
	SECTION V. CAPACITY BUILDING — EDUCATION SECTOR PERSONNEL	. 15
	SECTION VI. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	. 19
	SECTION VIL MONITORING AND EVALUTATION	21

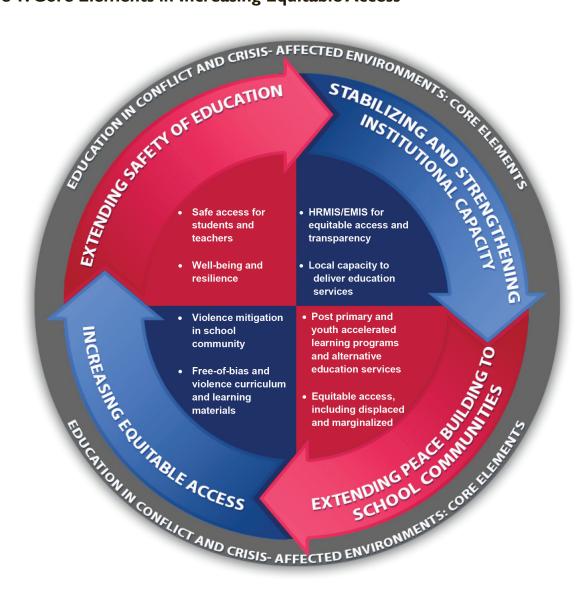
INTRODUCTION

Under the USAID Education Strategy, programs should ensure equity of access to education by explicitly addressing inequalities. Inequalities in access to learning opportunities may be a consequence of any number of factors. For example, disparities in access to education can be localized or systemic, arising from consistent inequalities in policy frameworks or exclusionary practices. Inequalities can and often do lead to feelings of marginalization and grievances.

The Checklist for Conflict Sensitivity in Education Programs will assist USAID education programs in effectively and efficiently meeting Goal 3 of the USAID Education Strategy: Increase equitable access to education in conflict and crisis environments. Applying conflict sensitivity to program design, implementation, and monitoring will improve education programs by making them more equitable, effective, efficient, and sustainable.

The Core Elements of programs that increase equitable access are illustrated below. (See Figure 1.) These represent the building blocks of programming under Goal 3.

Figure 1: Core Elements in Increasing Equitable Access



What is the purpose of the Checklist for Conflict Sensitivity in Education Programs?

The Checklist offers a practical framework for analyzing the operational and technical aspects of education programs. This ensures the reduction of conflict and tensions, which promotes equity and social cohesion and builds peace.

With this Checklist, USAID expects Missions to develop and maintain a deeper, context- specific understanding of the underlying sources of conflict and their interaction, influence on, and impact within the education domain.

What is conflict sensitivity in education and why is it important?

Conflict sensitivity in education includes:

- Understanding the context in which the organization or program is operating, particularly inter-group relations;
- Understanding the interactions between interventions and the context/group relations; and
- Acting upon the understanding of these interactions in order to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of a program or other intervention.

When education increases social tensions or division, it can contribute to conflict. For instance, if children or youth from one ethnic group have less access to education than those of other groups, or if a history textbook favors the dominant group, then this can increase tensions that may contribute to conflict. Conflict sensitivity requires diagnosing these elements and taking actions to remedy them.

Education that is conflict sensitive encompasses policies, activities, and approaches that promote equitable access to educational opportunity and curricula based on skills and values that support peace and social cohesion.

Conflict sensitivity as "do no harm"

A minimum requirement of being conflict sensitive is to "do no harm"—keeping in mind the impact of education assistance on conflict. This requires making all decisions with an awareness of how they could affect power relations and inter-group relations that may contribute to conflict. For example, there should be enough awareness of the context to ensure that new programs do not favor one side of a conflict through language of instruction, teacher recruitment, or location of schools.

Conflict sensitivity as promoting inclusion and equitable access

By collecting and analyzing data, we can determine who does and does not have access to education and why. Once this is determined, we can design and monitor our programs to meet education needs of marginalized and vulnerable population groups, thereby making education more inclusive and equitable.

A conflict-sensitive education program may also work to actively transform tension and support peace by teaching respect for diversity, as well as local, national, and global citizenship.

Why a Checklist?

Oversights in programming occur for two main reasons: (1) lack of information, and (2) misuse of the information that we have. Many of the oversights made in education programs in conflict and crisis environments reflect the second error due to the complexity of working in these contexts.

This checklist can help reduce unnecessary and harmful actions. It serves as a guiding framework, providing the key steps to promote inclusion and increase equitable access to education in conflict and crisis environments.

^{1.} Gawande, Atul. The Checklist Manifesto: How to get things right. 2009.

How is the Checklist structured?

The Checklist is divided into 7 categories:

Category	What it Measures
Commitment and accountability	Whether and how the organization and key stakeholders maintain up-to-date knowledge about conflict dynamics.
	Whether the education strategy demonstrates an understanding of the conflict context and its interaction with the education domain.
Strategy	Whether contracts and grants include requirements to apply tools and processes that routinely analyze and assess the interaction between conflict and the education domain.
Equitable access	Whether and how the education program is designed and carried out based on equity and inclusion, and whether it systematically ensures safety and protection.
Curricula, teaching and learning	Whether learning materials are vetted for inclusion of content on safety and protection, crisis prevention, peace building and social cohesion; whether methods promote inclusion; and whether language of instruction is unifying rather than divisive.
Capacity building	Whether management decisions regarding education personnel including recruitment, placement, qualifications, and compensation are sensitive to sex, race, ethnicity, and power dynamics.
Community engagement	Whether the approach to community engagement aims to rebuild social cohesion, mitigate conflict, and promote peace and stability.
Monitoring and evaluation	Whether indicators that measure the relationship between conflict mitigation and peace-building are identified and measured. Whether data that identifies who is and is not accessing education is collected and analyzed based on age, ethnicity, sex, location, religion, etc. Whether Education Management Information System (EMIS) and Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) collect data on students and teachers based on inclusion and equity; and whether decisions are made based on analysis of this data.

Who is the Checklist for?

USAID education personnel, implementing partners, and partner government counterparts should utilize the checklist when planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating education programs.

When is the Checklist used?

Planning – Utilize the checklist to guide assessments and data gathering during the program design phase. This can help to identify key categories where more attention is needed.

Implementation – During project start up, apply and fill out the checklist to develop a baseline for conflict sensitivity within the education program. Use this baseline to identify the main areas where the education program is particularly conflict blind or conflict sensitive. Plan for actions to improve conflict blind aspects and

build on strengths, develop indicators to monitor these actions, and incorporate them into the project work plan and performance management plan (PMP).

Monitoring and evaluation – Once a project is being implemented, the checklist can be used to (I) gauge progress in conflict sensitivity from the baseline, (2) bring key education actors together to revisit initial project assumptions, and (3) reflect on recent events both within and peripheral to the education domain that may affect project implementation or results. Events that could alter program activities include outbreaks of violence, forced migration or displacement, natural disasters, a change in country or education sector leadership, changes to curriculum or education-related policies, and economic strains that affect resources for education, to name a few.

How the Checklist is used?

Step 1: Fill out the Checklist

Bring key education actors together in a workshop setting for at least two days. During this period, group participants by project, location, or organization; instruct the participants fill out the Checklist individually.

Step 2: Reach consensus

After filling out the Checklist, have individuals meet in groups to discuss their rationales for answers and any disagreements.

Step 3: Score

After consensus is gained, tally points, and use scoring table to interpret the level of conflict sensitivity.

Step 4: Take action

Some of what we learn after applying the Checklist will require adjustments in project implementation or data collection practices and systems. Much of what we learn will require systemic actions at a national level.

What to be careful about?

Conflict-sensitive education strategies can be controversial. Strategies are more likely to be sustainable if they are based on a broad dialogue and buy-in from a wide range of education actors. Further, such strategies may require more political traction, and donor and stakeholder coordination than the Education Ministry alone can generate.

CHECKLIST FOR CONFLICT SENSITIVITY IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

I. COMMITMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY			
	Yes	Partly Yes	No
A. My organization is well-informed about the dynamics and effects of conflicts and crises at the			
I. National level			
2. State or provincial level			
3. Local level			
4. Cross-border level			
B. My organization undertakes or collaborates on periodic assessments of conflict and crisis and education.			0
C. Implementing partners regularly analyze and report on the implementation context:	following a	spects of the	
I. The causes of conflict			
2. The dynamics of conflict			
3. The actors involved in conflict			
4. How the conflict affects a current or planned intervention			
D. Documents produced by consultants and implementing par unit to ensure that analysis and reports reflect:	tners are ve	etted by the edu	cation
Understanding of the context in which the program is operating, particularly inter-group relations			
Understanding of the interactions between the program and the context/group relations			
3. Action upon the understanding of these interactions, in order to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of the program		0	
Section Total			

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE

II. STRATEGY			`
	Yes	Partly Yes	No
A. The education strategy incorporates the findings of country conflict assessments			
B. The education strategy or program demonstrates an unders	standing of:		
I. Issues that drive conflicts			
2. Actual or potential actors who drive conflicts			
3. Actual or potential actors who can build peace			
Socio-cultural elements that connect people in a positive way			
5. Opportunities for transforming conflict in a positive way			
How education services and resource allocation may unintentionally exacerbate conflicts			
7. How education services and resource allocation may have positive effects on a conflict-affected context			
C. The theory of change or development hypothesis is clear at	oout:		
I. The expected effects of programming on conflict.	0		0
The expected effects of conflict on education programming			
D. Procurement documents and contracts include specific expectations about how and when to review the interaction between conflict and the program throughout the program cycle.			
Section Total			

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE

III. EQUITABLE ACCESS					
	Yes	Partly Yes	No		
A. Data is collected to enable a clear understanding of who is and is not accessing education based					
I. Age					
2. Ethnicity (if possible)					
3. Sex					
4. Religion (if possible)					
5. Location (urban/peri-urban/rural)					
6. Disability type					
B. The interventions increase protection of learners and education school from:	ation perso	nnel in and out o	of		
Forms of sexual and gender-based violence					
2. Insecurity					
3. Exploitative and hazardous work					
4. Risks associated with natural disasters					
5. Abduction					
6. Trafficking					
C. The equitable access approach addresses supports learners':					
1. Physical protection			0		
2. Emotional well-being					
3 Cognitive development					

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III. EQUITABLE ACCESS (continued)					
	Yes	Partly Yes	No		
D. The equitable access approach includes an emergency preparedness plan that is:					
I. Documented					
2. Updated regularly					
3. Monitored, assessed, and evaluated					
Section Total					

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE		

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE	

IV. CURRICULA, TEACHING & LEARNING MATERIALS, & METHODS						
	Yes	Partly Yes	No			
A. A standardized framework is used to ensure the content of curricula and teaching/learning/training materials by checking for:						
I. Political bias	I. Political bias					
2. Ethnic bias						
3. Religious bias						
4. Gender bias	0					
5. Bias against people with disabilities						
6. Violence						
B. Curricula and teaching/learning/training materials:						
Accommodate learners from different language backgrounds when possible		0				
2. Foster a sense of belonging						
3. Are provided equitably						
4. Accessible (affordable and available)						
C. The following themes are included in the curricula and teac	hing/learnir	ng materials:				
1. Protection and safety						
2. Emergency preparedness						
3. Peace-building and social cohesion						
4. Non-violent conflict resolution						
Section Total						

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE	

V. CAPACITY BUILDING — EDUCATION SECTOR PERSONNEL				
	Yes	Partly Yes	No	
A. Management decisions about recruitment of education pers	sonnel are f	air based on:		
1. Power relationships	0		0	
2. Gender norms				
3. Qualifications	0		0	
B. Management decisions about recruitment of education pers	onnel do n	ot discriminate b	ased on:	
I. Ethnicity (or tribe, clan)				
2. Sex				
3. Age				
4. Place of origin				
5. Religion				
6 Disability				
C. Management decisions about placement of education perso	nnel are fai	r based on:		
I. Power relationships	0		0	
2. Gender norms ²	0		0	
3. Qualifications	0		0	
4. Age	0	0	0	
5. Location		0		
6. Security and safety	0		0	
7. Emergency preparedness				
D. Management decisions about placement of education perso	nnel do no	t discriminate ba	sed on:	
1. Ethnicity (or tribe, clan)				
2. Sex				
3. Disability				

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^{2.} Male/female teacher roles within school community.

V. CAPACITY BUILDING — EDUCATION SECTOR PERSONNEL (continued)					
	Yes	Partly Yes	No		
E. Management decisions about professional development opportunities are fair based on:					
Existing qualification					
2. Gender norms					
3. Location					
4. Power relationships					
F. Management decisions about professional development oppor	tunities do	not discriminate	based on:		
I. Ethnicity (or tribe, clan)					
2. Sex					
3. Place of origin					
4. Religion					
5. Disability					
G. Management decisions about compensation/salary are fair b	ased on:				
Existing qualification					
2. Gender norms					
3. Location/hardship posting					
4. Teaching load					
H. Management decisions about compensation/salary do not d	iscriminate	based on:			
I. Ethnicity (or tribe, clan)					
2. Sex					
3. Place of origin					
4. Religion					
3. Disability					
Section Total					

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE	

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE		

VI. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT			`
	Yes	Partly Yes	No
A. Community engagement programs/interventions incorporate the following:			
I. Identification and strengthening of non-violent, conflict resolution mechanisms			
2. Inclusion of diverse community members			
Community monitoring of issues and actors driving conflicts that affect education services			
4. Definition of the role of youth (in and out of school), students, girls, and women as positive change agents		0	
B. The education community is responsive to emergencies in the following ways:			
Hosting displaced populations			
Addressing the education needs of displaced children and youth			
3. Other (list and describe)		0	
Section Total			

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION					
		Yes	Partly Yes	No	
of cont	toring system is in place to ensure periodic analysis extual changes that directly impact program ss (e.g., rolling assessments).		0		
	gram collects data that is disaggregated by location grisk indicators:	and by sex	(where relevant)	for the	
	ber of schools closed and/or operating at reduced city due to conflict. ³				
2. Num	ber of academic calendar days lost due to conflict				
3. Num confl	ber and type of education personnel affected by				
4. Num	ber of learners negatively affected by conflict				
	ber of education personnel affected by sexual and er-based violence				
	ber of learners affected by sexual and gender- d violence				
C. The pro	ogram collects and reports on qualitative data related	to:			
I. Perce	eptions about safety and security				
2. Perce	eptions about inclusion and exclusion				
	eptions about school-level governance sparency, accountability, legitimacy)				
	on Management Information System (EMIS) exists the following:4	nat generate	es sex-disaggrega	ted data	
I. Net	enrollment rates				
2. Com	pletion rates				
	tion of schools (urban, peri-urban, rural, pastoral, as per context)				
4. Ethni	city				
5. Langi	uage of instruction				
6. Disal	oility type				
•	nanhood and reasons (e.g., parent is casualty of nce, HIV-AIDS, other epidemic)				
8. Displ	acement and reasons ⁵				
9. Num	ber, type, and condition of education institutions				

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^{3.} Flare-ups, insecurity, or crisis including epidemics

^{4.} There may be additional variables that are important for your context.

^{5.} Reasons should include, at a minimum: targeted attacks on students, targeted attacks on teachers, targeted destruction of education infrastructure, random destruction of education infrastructure, take-over of education infrastructure, generalized insecurity, localized conflict flare-ups, war.

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION (continued)				
	Yes	Partly Yes	No	
E. A Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) exists that generates the following sex-disaggregated annual data on education personnel:6				
I. Compensation				
2. Age				
3. Nationality				
4. Ethnicity				
5. Qualifications including training received				
6. Socio-economic status				
7. Disability type		0		
8. Location (urban, peri-urban, rural, pastoral, other per context)		0		
9. Type of education institution				
10. Grade level and subject focus				
F. An electronic education Financial Management Information System exists that ensures:				
I. Financial transparency				
Timely delivery of funds to all levels of the education system		0		
3. Timely identification and resolution of issues				
Section Total				

 $[\]ensuremath{\mathsf{6.There}}$ may be additional variables that are important for your context.

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE

NOTES/ACTIONS TO TAKE	

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