



Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies  
Réseau Inter-Agences D'éducation D'urgence  
La Red Interagencial de Educación en Situaciones de Emergencias

## **Talking Points: Education in Emergencies, INEE and the Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction**

### **Education in Emergencies**

- Wars and natural disasters deny generations the knowledge and opportunities that an education can provide. Education in emergencies, chronic crises and early reconstruction must be seen in a broad context; it is education that protects the well being, fosters learning opportunities, and nurtures the overall development (social, emotional, cognitive, physical) of people affected by conflicts and disasters.
- Education in emergencies is a necessity that can be both life-sustaining and life-saving, providing physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection. It sustains life by offering structure, stability and hope for the future during a time of crisis, particularly for children and adolescents, and provides essential building blocks for future economic stability. It also helps to heal bad experiences by building skills, and supporting conflict resolution and peace-building. Education in emergencies saves lives by directly protecting against exploitation and harm, and by disseminating key survival messages, such as landmine safety or HIV/AIDS prevention.
- Education is a right. This right is articulated in various international humanitarian and human rights instruments, including the Geneva Conventions, which apply in times of war, as well as the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and many regional rights instruments.
- Education is prioritized by communities. Communities often start up some kind of education/school themselves during an emergency. However, maintaining this during a crisis is difficult when there is less local capacity and resources. Emergencies offer opportunities to improve the quality of and access to education.

### **Gaps in the Provision of Quality Education Endangers a Peaceful Future**

- There are many gaps in the provision of education in emergencies. These range from a lack of access, quality and response coordination in general to the exclusion of specific groups within the populations, such as girls or adolescents. Another key gap concerns a lack of funding; traditionally, education in emergency situations has been seen, not as a humanitarian priority, but as a long-term development activity. For instance, according to UNOCHA, education received only 1.6% of total humanitarian aid contributions in 2005.
- The result of these gaps is that education falls through the cracks. Uneducated children and adults are vulnerable to a future of poverty and violence and lack the more complex skills needed to contribute to their society's peaceful reintegration, reconstruction and sustainable development. In particular, without the stability and structure that education provides in emergency situations, children and adolescents are more vulnerable to exploitation and harm, including abduction, child soldiering and sexual and gender-based violence. Educational learning environments (whether formal or non-formal) are one of the most significant social structures in young people's lives. In the midst of loss and change, absence of learning and schooling intensifies the impact of conflict.

### **The Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE)**

- The Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE) is an open network of UN agencies, NGOs, donors, practitioners, researchers and individuals from affected populations working together to ensure the right to education in emergencies and post-crisis reconstruction.
- *History:* At a Strategy Session on Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis at the World Education Forum (EFA) in Dakar, April 2000 a decision was taken to develop a process of inter-agency communication and co-operation in order to improve response to education in emergencies. The Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) was then founded with the aim of promoting access and completion of education of quality for all persons affected by emergencies, crises or chronic instability, within the framework of the Convention on the Rights

of the Child, the EFA Declaration and the Dakar Framework. In order to accomplish this aim, its objectives are to:

- Share knowledge and experience
  - Promote greater donor understanding of education in emergencies
  - Advocate for education to be included in emergency response
  - Make teaching and learning resources available as widely as possible
  - Ensure attention to gender issues in emergency education initiatives
  - Document and disseminate best practices in the field
  - Move towards consensual guidelines on education in emergencies
- INEE was not defined as a distinct agency with bureaucratic functions, but rather as an open network based on the principles of collaboration and information sharing, with specific attention to avoiding needless duplication. INEE supports agencies, organisations, communities and individuals in their ongoing work by collating and disseminating information, learning materials, guidelines, and in some cases, providing training opportunities. As a network, INEE is a flexible and responsive mechanism which brings organisations and individuals together to share resources and experiences, including good practices, tools and research, and, through advocacy, to urge institutions and governments to work together to ensure the right to education of those affected by conflict and natural disasters. INEE also identifies and fills technical resource gaps, encouraging the development of these resources through Task Teams convened by INEE organizational members.
  - As of 2006, INEE has over 1,400 individual members. At the present time, the Steering Group is composed of representatives from CARE USA, Christian Children's Fund, the International Rescue Committee, Norwegian Refugee Council International Save the Children Alliance, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF and the World Bank. In addition to the funding for the minimum standards process, INEE has received funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, CARE USA, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Save the Children Alliance, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNHCR, the US Contribution to UNESCO for Reconstruction of Education Systems, USAID and the World Bank.

### **Development of Global Minimum Standards: Building from the Ground Up**

To promote education as a key pillar of emergency response as well as develop a tool for effective action to meet the education rights of affected populations, INEE facilitated a consultative process in 2003 and 2004 involving over 2,250 individuals from more than 50 countries, including students, teachers and staff of NGOs, UN agencies, donors, governments and universities, to develop global education standards. This process was undertaken in an effort to complement the Sphere Project's standards which focused on the following sectors, but excluded the delivery of education services: water supply and sanitation; food security, nutrition and food aid; shelter and site management; and health services. The Sphere Project's model and lessons learned were used to inform INEE's process and to strengthen the ties between these two sets of standards. In December 2004, INEE launched the *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction*, the first global tool to define a minimum level of educational quality in order to increase coordination, transparency and accountability.

- The INEE Minimum Standards are founded upon the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Dakar 2000 Education for All (EFA) goals and the Sphere Project's Humanitarian Charter and the Minimum Standards in Disaster Response. They hold the humanitarian community accountable for providing quality education without discrimination.

- **CONTENT:** Quality education is an effective and essential form of protection during emergencies, and the INEE Minimum Standards establish guidelines/a framework to protect and improve learning opportunities by linking education programs to psychosocial support, shelter, health, water supply, sanitation, nutrition and security. The minimum standards cover five categories:

- **Minimum Standards Common to All Categories:** focuses on the essential areas of community participation and utilizing local resources when applying the standards in this handbook, as well as ensuring that emergency education responses are based on an initial assessment that is followed by an appropriate response and continued monitoring and evaluation.
- **Access and Learning Environment:** focuses on partnerships to promote access to learning opportunities as well as inter-sectoral linkages with, for example, health, water

and sanitation, food aid (nutrition) and shelter, to enhance security and physical, cognitive and psychological well-being.

- **Teaching and Learning:** focuses on critical elements that promote effective teaching and learning: 1) curriculum, 2) training, 3) instruction, and 4) assessment.
  - **Teachers and other Education Personnel:** focuses on the administration and management of human resources in the field of education, including recruitment and selection, conditions of service, and supervision and support.
  - **Education Policy and Coordination:** focuses on policy formulation and enactment, planning and implementation, and coordination.
- The INEE Minimum Standards are not new; rather that they are a consensus on best practice around the world. They provide a practical framework and detailed good practice guidelines, following the Do No Harm philosophy, that governments, humanitarian workers and others at all levels can readily use to promote quality, consistency and equity and assess performance at the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of education program development. They can help to regulate and standardize the quality of education programs and help hold donors accountable as they build capacity to monitor and ensure quality.
  - INEE's standards serve as a starting point -- presenting a common language and framework-- for the international community in providing guidance and tools on how to reach a minimum level of educational quality.
  - The establishment of standards that articulate the minimum level of educational service to be attained, along with indicators and guidance notes on how to reach the standards, give government and humanitarian workers the tools that they need to work toward the Education for All and UN Millennium Development Goals. It is the first step toward ensuring that education initiatives in emergency situations lay a solid and sound basis for post-conflict and disaster reconstruction.
  - Evaluation feedback reveals that the INEE Minimum Standards are being used in over 80 countries to:
    - Frame and foster inter-agency policy dialogue, coordination, advocacy and action on how to reach a minimum level of quality, access, accountability and coordination
    - Guide and develop advocacy and policy making
    - Plan, implement, monitor and evaluate quality and relevant education, protection and psychosocial projects
    - Promote education as a priority humanitarian response internally and externally to humanitarian organizations, governments, donors and populations affected by crisis
    - Build capacity and technical expertise to enhance education management and effectiveness, including strengthening the capacity and resilience of education ministries
    - Enhance accountability and predictability among humanitarian actors
    - Improve coordination among partners, including education authorities

### **Implementation of the INEE Minimum Standards**

- Since their launch, INEE Minimum handbook has been translated into ten languages (Spanish, French, Arabic, Dari, Japanese, Bahasa Indonesian, Portuguese, Bangla, Urdu, Khmer) and they are being used in over 80 countries around the world for programme and policy planning, assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as advocacy and preparedness. Users relate that the INEE Minimum Standards provide a common language, facilitating the development of shared visions between different stakeholders, including members of affected communities, humanitarian agency staff and governments. They are being used as a training and capacity-building tool: over 200 educational, protection and emergency trainers have been trained on the standards, and are training hundreds of others through a cascade training model. The standards are also being used to promote holistic thinking and response and to frame and foster inter- and intra-agency policy dialogue, coordination, advocacy and action for the provision of quality education in emergencies, chronic crises and early reconstruction.
- Training Materials and Workshops: Modular Training Materials, modeled on the Sphere materials, were developed in 2005 and are being used in 2006-2008 in a series of 11 INEE Training of

Trainers (ToT) workshops on the INEE Minimum Standards, organized regionally and linguistically: Anglophone Africa, Francophone Africa, South Asia, Southeast and East Asia, South America, Central America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, North America, the Indian Ocean and Europe. As a result, more than 225 trainers have been trained in nine ToT workshops that have been held thus far. Each trainer who is trained at an INEE ToT workshop is required to conduct a minimum of 2 local, national or regional trainings for managers and practitioners in education and emergency work in the 12 months after the INEE workshop. Consequently, over 1000 follow-up workshops have been carried out as a result of these ToTs, with dozens more planned in 2007-8. For more information on the trainings and updated training materials, please go to: [www.ineesite.org/training](http://www.ineesite.org/training)

- The IASC Education Cluster, established at the end of 2006 and co-led by UNICEF and the Save the Children Alliance with the participation of an Advisory Group (UNESCO, WFP, UNHCR, International Rescue Committee, Christian Children's Fund and INEE), has adopted the INEE Minimum Standards as a guiding common framework for work at global and country levels. As such, the implementation and institutionalization of the INEE Minimum Standards will be carried out in partnership with the IASC Education Cluster, providing INEE with an opportunity to bring the standards to a wider audience in a more systematic way. The work of the IASC Education Cluster will serve to strengthen capacity and preparedness of humanitarian personnel and government authorities to plan, co-ordinate and manage quality educational programmes in emergencies.

### Next Steps in Implementation

Based on evaluations in Uganda, Pakistan and Darfur, recommendations from INEE Minimum Standards training workshops and feedback received from members globally, INEE is prioritising the following activities:

- *INEE Minimum Standards Toolkit*: INEE has created a CD-Rom and web-based Toolkit on the INEE Minimum Standards, containing the INEE Minimum Standards handbook and Training Materials, including all translations, as well as a toolkit to help field staff and Ministry of Education officials operationalise the standards. The toolkit contains a select group of the most practical field-friendly tools, guidelines, checklists, case studies and good practices linked to specific standards for help in contextualising the indicators within that standard. The toolkit is being finalised now and will include a pull-out reference guide to the standards. This package will be distributed to INEE members and rolled-out in the INEE Regional Capacity-Building workshops and within the IASC Education Cluster.
- *Capacity-Building*: A series of INEE Regional Capacity-Building workshops in 2007 and 2008 will strengthen the regional and national capacity of education and humanitarian workers to ensure the effective application of the INEE Minimum Standards. At these workshops, delegates will share challenges, good practices and lessons learned in the training and implementation of the INEE Minimum Standards, and receive an introduction to the Toolkit and other new materials developed to aid in implementation of the standards.
- *Institutionalisation*: INEE has created a series of *Adoption Strategy Checklists for organisations using the INEE Minimum Standards* for NGOs, for UN Agencies, and for donor and government agencies (<http://www.ineesite.org/page.asp?pid=1056>), which articulate a variety of suggested actions that organisations can utilise when applying the standards internally and in bi- and multi-lateral work

INEE encourages all organizations and individuals to be involved in the promotion and implementation of the minimum standards. INEE's website and listserv present a forum for communication and networking, facilitating members' access to a clearinghouse of relevant publications, training materials, good practice guides, lessons learned, case studies, policy briefs, country profiles and other helpful links. While the main language of network is English, INEE posts materials in all languages and its members communicate in Spanish, French and Portuguese via Language Communities, which establish mechanisms for information-sharing, feedback and collaboration across different linguistic groups. To become a member of INEE and receive bi-monthly resource updates and contribute to our community go to: [www.ineesite.org](http://www.ineesite.org)