

Education in Situations of Emergency, Crisis and Reconstruction

Emergency
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Education
Strategy

UNESCO STRATEGY



United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization



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The assistance of UNESCO to populations in distress owing to armed conflicts or natural disasters is one of my major concerns. My decisions have been guided by UNESCO's fundamental mission, its moral and legal obligations, its specific mandate within the United Nations System and by the humanitarian concern inherent in our Organization in response to the extent and urgency of human suffering.

It is obvious that the effectiveness of such aid depends firstly on a rational use of the human and financial resources at the disposal of the Organization, and thus this aid has been mainly allocated to our fields of competence, notably to education and culture. A series of actions have been undertaken by UNESCO taking account of its specific role, its own means and those made available by the international community.

As I have already declared on several occasions, UNESCO's action, according to its fundamental mission, should be to intervene before and after situations of conflict, tension or crisis. As a response to the increasing demand from concerned Member States I have taken immediate action to reply to this crucial task.

To implement activities UNESCO cannot act alone but needs to rally civil societies in the countries concerned by conflict. The role of NGOs and professional bodies in this context would reinforce the Organization's action.¹

1. DG/Memo/01/04 of 7 March 2001. "UNESCO facing situations of crisis, conflicts and natural disasters in Member States" (Translation).

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1. BACKGROUND

▲ 1.1 The new challenge: emergency and crisis situations

The end of the Cold War did not bring an end to tension and conflict. Numerous conflicts have arisen within, as well as between nations. Many states are in a fragile situation and at risk of future possible conflict, especially at times of socio-economic hardship. Children in particular are victims of such conflicts, with schools serving as military targets or barracks, children and adolescents recruited as combatants, girls raped, teachers sometimes assassinated, and education systems partially or completely disrupted. Emergency education deals with the consequences of such situations, as well as with the disruption of education caused by natural disasters.

In 2001, the total number of refugees worldwide was estimated at 15.8 million (12 million under the mandate of UNHCR and an additional 3.8 million Palestinians under the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Administration for Palestine and the Near East (UNRWA). Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are estimated at around 25 million worldwide, the majority fleeing conflicts, although some are displaced by natural disasters. In addition, there are millions of persons who have returned to their home areas in recent years, and who face the difficult process of rebuilding their lives; and there are millions more who live in unstable countries or districts, where insecurity has brought the education system to a near standstill. Overall, about 1% of the world population, some 50 to 60 million people, live under emergency conditions or are in the early stages of rebuilding shattered lives.

The UNESCO thematic study on education in situations of emergency and crisis¹ presented at the World Education Forum in Dakar, April 2000, documented the problems of achieving the target of Education for All, while millions of children and adolescents are displaced by war or are otherwise in emergency situations that deprive them from regular schooling. The Dakar Framework for Action includes a pledge to meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict or disasters. One of the six Inter-Agency 'flagship programmes' has been devoted for the achievement of Education for All translating thus the importance of the issue.

1. Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis: Challenges for the New Century, *UNESCO, April 2000.*

▲ 1.2 The right to Education for All

The right to education is set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent human rights instruments. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees with its 1967 Protocols reaffirms the right of refugees to education. In 1989, the rights of children and adolescents to education were strengthened under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by all but two Member States of the United Nations. This Convention makes States Parties responsible for the education of all children within their jurisdiction, regardless of status, thereby including refugees and asylum-seekers under the age of 18 years. Some states have avoided their obligations under these Conventions, for example, through legal or administrative provisions that deny the right to education for young refugees or young asylum-seekers. In other instances, the right of refugees to primary education has been acknowledged but the right to secondary education denied or weakened.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires the international community to assist needy countries in meeting its provisions. Such assistance is especially important in situations of crisis and reconstruction. This requirement also implies that states are obliged to accept assistance in meeting the education needs of emergency-affected children and adolescents, if they are not in a position to meet these needs themselves. The combined resources committed by the international community, the country concerned and the emergency-affected population should be sufficient for emergency education to function effectively and meet the learning needs of emergency-affected students. Emergency educational assistance should be provided quickly, so that simple education activities can begin as soon as basic shelter, health and food supply mechanisms are in place.

▲ 1.3 Education as the fourth pillar of humanitarian response

Restoration of access to education is crucial to the psychological development of war-affected children and adolescents, and those affected by natural disasters. Education provides a sense of normality

to the young and to the whole community, and is a primary means of protection and outreach to traumatized children and young people. Group activities in a school-like setting represent an important tool of healing. Education moreover means hope for the future. It can absorb the energies of adolescents and youth whose alternative options in camp situations might be talk of revenge, recruitment by militias, rape, violence and drugs. Education can redirect students' energies and anxieties into positive channels, towards acquiring knowledge and skills that can build their respective futures and serve as the basis for future economic and social development. Education can and should serve as the channel for survival messages, notably regarding protective measures for personal and community health and environmental care, and for acquiring the skills and universally recognised human values needed for a culture of peace.

Education is a basic right and is likewise a means to the achievement of the basic rights to life and to health. It is therefore now seen as the fourth pillar of humanitarian assistance to victims of conflict and of natural disasters, alongside nourishment, health services and shelter.

2. THE COMMITMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

▲ 2.1 The Dakar Framework for Action

At the World Education Forum (Dakar, April 2000), it was recognized that one of the barriers to attaining Education for All (EFA) was the existence of countries and districts affected by current or recent conflicts, or natural disasters. Education is important for children and adolescents wherever they are, even if they are affected by man-made or natural disasters, and the Dakar Framework provides for this. Education in emergency situations has been made an important component of the EFA process.

Dakar pledge to support education in emergencies and reconstruction

'We the governments, organizations, agencies, groups and associations represented at the World Education Forum pledge ourselves to:

(i) mobilize strong national and international political commitment for education for all, develop national action plans and enhance significantly investment in basic education;

[...]

(v) meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict;'

(Dakar Framework for Action, paragraph 8)

▲ 2.2 UNESCO's role

UNESCO's *Medium-Term Strategy, 2002-2007*, affirms that UNESCO's role, as the international lead agency for education, the sciences, culture and communication is to serve as:

- *a laboratory of ideas,*
- *a standard-setter,*
- *a clearing house,*
- *a capacity-builder in Member States, and*
- *a catalyst for international cooperation.*

UNESCO was established with a preventive task that sets the agenda for its work in the field of education. Its Constitution states ‘That *since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.*’ Education is fundamental to building the defences of peace, among the citizens of every country, but especially so among citizens of societies that have recently experienced war or civil conflict. Hence UNESCO is required to promote and help shaping educational activities in situations of emergency, instability and reconstruction.

UNESCO’s mandate has led to its role in United Nations-led post-conflict situations in different parts of the world including the long term contribution of its Regional Programme for Education for Emergencies and Reconstruction (PEER) in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region.

UNESCO’s strategy is the result of the specific contributions, to bring education to the displaced, to people in countries affected by chronic low-level conflict, to populations in post-conflict situations and to those affected by natural disasters. UNESCO should contribute ‘value added’ to the efforts of UN agencies, based on its mandate², particularly in searching for renewal and innovations, strengthening national capacity-building and promoting education for peace.

2. Cf. DG/Memo of 7 March, 2001.

▲ 3.1 Ensuring the strategic function in promoting education in situations of emergency, crisis and transition

The strategic objectives for education outlined in the Medium-Term Strategy have a direct relevance to education in situations of emergency and renewal.

UNESCO's Strategic Objectives for Education, 2002-2007

- *Promoting education as a fundamental right in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*
- *Improving the quality of education through the diversification of contents and methods and the promotion of universally shared values*
- *Promoting experimentation, innovation and the diffusion and sharing of information and best practices as well as policy dialogue in education.*

The objective of *promoting education as a fundamental right* presents challenges in that some donors and field staff of humanitarian agencies do not recognize yet the urgency of restoring access to education to children affected by crisis. Children cannot be stored like tents or blankets, awaiting an end to war and conflict before beginning or resuming their education; this is the recipe for a 'lost generation', who have identified themselves with conflict and seek the earliest opportunity to take up arms against their perceived enemies.

The objective of *improving the quality of education* is important even in situations of emergency and crisis, to meet the psycho-social and developmental needs of war-affected students, and help them build a better future for their own societies.

The objective of *promoting experimentation, innovation and the diffusion and sharing of information and best practices* is necessary in a field facing such large challenges as emergency education and education for reconstruction.

■ Policy research and information sharing on education for crisis-affected populations

There is a need to build up a multidisciplinary network of researchers who study the ways in which education has sometimes contributed to the outbreak of violent conflict and the ways in which education can prevent such conflict or its recurrence. Solutions are being sought through diverse macro and micro level programmes, seeking to inculcate universal values of peace and tolerance, and these programmes need to be analysed and built upon, so that there can be scaling up of successful approaches to meet the needs of education in the twenty-first century. UNESCO will build up such a network. It will further support the development of databases on education for peace, and on education for crisis-affected populations.

■ Emergency education in EFA national plans for action

Education in emergencies has tended to be treated as separate from the work of education planners, who have now been required to include this component in their EFA national plans of action. This will require a new approach, as emergencies cannot easily be predicted. UNESCO will prepare guidelines to help Member States address the emergency component of their plans. UNESCO will train its field staff in this area and will seek resources to provide such training to concerned national decision-makers, planners and managers of education.

■ Providing leadership and strategic vision in major crisis and post-conflict situations

Emergency education response is often fragmented, due to the limited mandates of the United Nations agencies concerned. Only UNESCO has the mandate to advocate for system wide and value-based renewal and reform in post-crisis situations. It is vital that UNESCO undertake this function in all major crisis and post-conflict reconstruction programmes, with a special emphasis on activities not sufficiently covered by other agencies. Key activities for stabilization and for national reconstruction include secondary, vocational and higher education. These activities also support the process of EFA, through provision of teachers, as well as providing high-level manpower for social and economic development, often badly needed after the emigration of educated people during a

conflict. Negotiation of curricular reform and innovation to promote universal values is another key area for UNESCO involvement.

In order to ensure the strategic vision for educational reconstruction, it is necessary to bring government institutions, United Nations agencies and civil society together to promote dialogue and to empower national institutions and professionals to develop a shared vision, in which education contributes to peace, stability and prosperity. This should result in complementary proposals for action in specific sub-sectors by specific agencies, following the principle of capacity-building, and with credibility and attractiveness to international assistance bodies.

▲ 3.2 Ensuring the restoration and reconstruction function

In situations of reconstruction after conflict or natural disaster, there is an opportunity to rebuild the education system to avoid the weaknesses and faults of the past, and to promote social harmony, individual fulfilment and sustainable national development. Situations of reconstruction may provide the opportunity to reconceptualize curriculum and methodology over the longer term, through curriculum development work drawing on national professionals and through strengthening systems of in-service and pre-service teacher training. The period of reconstruction should also permit reorientation of textbooks, to remove messages leading to ethnic or religious division, hatred and intolerance, and to provide positive models of peaceful conflict resolution behaviour.

▣▣▣ Institutional development at the national, regional and local levels

Effective management in post-conflict situations requires reinforcement of national planning and management capacities for education, as regards institutional, physical and human resources. In a situation of reconstruction, Education Ministries and regional and local institutions are often lacking in the most basic resources, and staff may lack management, education and pedagogic expertise.

Human resources need strengthening, especially in the key fields of education planning and management (including coordination of international assistance); curriculum, textbooks and national examinations;

and teacher training. Reconstruction further requires the strengthening of district and municipal education institutions, without which much assistance is wasted and reforms are neglected. In many situations, the evident lack of absorptive capacity has inhibited long-term donor support. UNESCO should seek to ensure that, in a major crisis, there are experienced technical advisers in these fields working within the Education Ministry to strengthen its capacity. These advisers could be made available through training and they will be in charge of installing functioning systems and team-building. This is the most catalytic assistance that can be provided in the context of reconstruction, meeting UNESCO's criterion of 'value added'.

Basic education

After an emergency, the initial steps towards restoration of schooling are often taken by community groups. Teachers, youth and adult educators should be drawn from the community, providing psycho-social benefits to the learners and to the community as a whole. Capacity-building for the community's role in school management should begin with in-service training of teachers and training of school management committees, from the earliest stage of the emergency. Many agencies are likely to be involved in supporting the restoration of pre-school and primary school education, and UNESCO's role should be complementary, drawing on what are, or should become, its strengths notably in education planning and management, curriculum, textbooks and examinations, and teacher training.

Secondary education

Secondary education will play an increasing part in emergency education programmes, since lower secondary education is now widely recognized as an essential part of effective basic education (especially so in print-poor environments, where children study in a language which is often not their mother tongue, and where reversion to illiteracy is a constant threat for primary school graduates). Urgent needs include funding to cover school reconstruction, textbooks, supplies and equipment, including science and sports equipment, and payment for teachers. Major issues of concern to UNESCO include certification of studies, when examination systems have collapsed, or in refugee situations; and the review of curriculum and textbooks, including modernization of content and reorientation to promote tolerance, peace and universal human values.

► Technical and vocational education and training for young people

Employment opportunities are often very limited in emergency situations. Hence it is important to carefully assess the fields of technical and vocational study that should be supported in emergency education programmes. In post-conflict situations, there is often scope for skilled employment in construction and other sectors. A combination of institution-based training and work-place training is desirable. UNESCO should include crisis-affected communities in innovative development programmes, and recommend similar measures to multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental agencies working in this area.

► Higher education and teacher training

Rehabilitation of universities and teacher-training institutes is a key area for UNESCO support, and can play a crucial role in harnessing the energies and talents of educated youth and academics to promote national renewal and a new vision for society. Innovative approaches need to be explored to increase outreach, including distance education programmes, especially for acknowledging teachers gained competence and upgrading them quickly in the perspective of reconstruction.

► Promoting non-formal education for conflict- and disaster affected populations

Recent emergencies have seen innovative programmes for out-of-school youth and for promoting the re-entry of youth to formal schooling. Such programmes have not been implemented on a systematic basis and have indeed been cut back due to general underfunding of humanitarian operations in recent years. UNESCO will promote the establishment of clear guidelines on education for youth, including young demobilized soldiers, girls and the marginalized, for example through accelerated basic education and vocational training for social reinsertion. UNESCO will identify and review best practices in non-formal education for women in conflict-affected populations. UNESCO will review innovative programmes in this area, preparing training guides and educational materials and reinforcing partnerships between key actors in this field. UNESCO will sensitize its partners to the possibilities of sharing information about innovative approaches to non-formal education, taking place in non-crisis locations, with ongoing emergency and reconstruction programmes.

► Enhancing preparedness: developing standby capacity for educational reconstruction

UNESCO needs to provide leadership and local capacity-building in situations of crisis and reconstruction in the fields below:

- (i) educational planning, management and administration, including the coordination of international assistance;
- (ii) strengthening and reorientation of the formal education system, notably curriculum, textbooks and examinations;
- (iii) in-service and pre-service teacher training;
- (iv) non-formal education and activities for out-of-school children, youth and adults, especially at-risk groups; and,
- (v) in some circumstances, physical infrastructure and education equipment in collaboration with concerned partners.

The unpredictability of emergencies and of their transition to the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase means that United Nations agencies must rely heavily on the use of ‘standby’ arrangements as well as experienced experts. It is important therefore to identify and train standby personnel who can work in the phase of post-conflict reconstruction. Some NGOs and government institutions have made a major contribution to emergency response through their standby secondments to United Nations agencies, for emergencies, and in some instances for reconstruction³.

UNESCO will enter into discussion with international organisations, regarding the development of enhanced standby capacity for work in this field, including its staff as well.

Training for standby panels in education for reconstruction will follow the model of a one-week training course in the country concerned and a one-week training course in UNESCO headquarters, a regional bureau or a specialized institute, e.g. the International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP). Where possible, there will be short-term deployments to provide relevant field experience in advance of a stand-alone assistance deployment, or participation as a sub-sector specialist in a major reconstruction programme.

3. For example, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and CARE.

▲ 3.3 Ensuring the normative function: basic principles, norms and standards

Development of new norms and standards

Most agencies working in the field of emergency education have developed or are developing independent sets of guidelines and standards. This situation is unsatisfactory, leading to confusion at field and donor level, when different standards are used in adjacent locations. Recent and forthcoming international seminars have sought or will seek to identify basic principles to be observed for education in situations of emergency. UNESCO will refine these norms and standards further, proceeding to the level of detailing specific indicators and guidelines, concerning, inter alia:

- protection of at-risk children, child and staff security
- schools (reconstruction/rehabilitation of buildings, including disaster reductions and climatic hazards)
- education supplies and equipment
- curriculum and methods
- assessment and certification
- in-service and pre-service teacher training
- gender equity and sensitivity.

This work will be undertaken in collaboration with the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies⁴ (INEE), with consensual standards and guidelines. These guidelines may feed into the 'Sphere project', which documents minimum standards in disaster response accepted by the NGO community and by concerned United Nations agencies. This will be linked to the development of norms and standards within the framework of the UN Disaster Reduction Initiative.

UNESCO is working with UN agencies and INEE to develop a reference library of good practice teaching/learning materials and manuals, suited for use in situations of crisis and post-conflict reconstruction, education for peace and citizenship, health education (HIV/AIDS awareness), environmental education, and the training of teachers and youth educators in situations of crisis and emergency. UNESCO will support the work in this area, hosting experts' meetings editing guidelines and improving learning/teaching materials development.

4. *The steering Committee of INEE is composed by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNHCR, NRC, CARE, and Save the Children. INEE includes over 500 non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, individual researchers, and other bilateral and multilateral agencies.*

▲ 3.4 Ensuring the preventive function

UNESCO's work on Education for Peace represents a key component of the United Nations strategy for a culture of peace. In crisis and post-conflict situations it is especially important to promote skills and values education for non-violent conflict prevention and conflict resolutions. Preventive education likewise should be directed to improving the health of young people and protecting them from HIV/AIDS. Education for landmine awareness is important in many conflict-affected locations. Protection and rehabilitation of the environment and ecosystems is crucial in locations devastated by war or by refugee camps.

▣ Education for a culture of universally shared values and support for the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010

Most citizens of conflict-affected populations long for peace but are affected also by the sentiments of hatred and revenge for past events that were activated by their leaders during the conflict. It is essential to intervene with life skills-based peace education that helps children and adults understand how conflicts arise and how to work towards peaceful non-violent solutions to the underlying problems. UNESCO will sensitize its partners to this issue and encourage them to participate in peace education programmes. This initiative will build upon past efforts of concerned United Nations agencies and NGOs.

It will be a major contribution to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World which includes a component on education for disarmament and non-proliferation in accordance with the General Assembly Resolution 55/33E, 12 January 2001.

UNESCO will further initiate a broader programme of education for peace in situations of crisis and post-conflict reconstruction, which will review the curriculum as a whole. This programme will develop tools for negotiating new curricular approaches in the aftermath of conflict, drawing on recent experiences in conflict-affected regions. The programme will likewise develop tools for an audit of existing materials and for reconceptualizing curricula and textbooks in post-conflict situations. Curricula and educational materials need revision, to eliminate messages of mistrust and hate, and to

promote values of peace, tolerance, gender sensitivity and environmental conservation, and to introduce, model and reinforce the life skills needed for peacebuilding in crisis and post-conflict situations. UNESCO will convene or sponsor a series of expert workshops, at global and regional levels, to identify and evaluate experience to date. It will create a network of academic and research institutions and specialists, including institutions and practitioners from affected countries and regions.

▣▣▣▣▶ **Preventive education for health and in response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic**

Health education is especially important in situations of emergency and reconstruction, where food and clean water may be scarce and sanitation poor. Emergency situations place young people and adults at especial risk of HIV/AIDS, through rape used as a tool of war and in post-conflict situations, and due to the breakdown of social structures. Efforts are being made to introduce HIV/AIDS prevention programmes in emergency situations, but require skilful use of participative approaches among the numerous communities.

Regarding mental health and child development, the trauma of war or natural disasters and the breaking of social bonds caused by violent death and displacement can harm children's and adolescents' psychological, social and intellectual development. This disruption can lay the foundations for another generation to be unsettled and perhaps to engage in new conflict. The psychosocial needs of the large numbers of students, teachers and out-of-school young people are best met through restoring access to education and through providing access to sport, cultural and other recreational activities. Teachers and youth leaders need to be trained to identify severely affected students, for referral for more specialized help.

▣▣▣▣▶ **Education for a sustainable future**

Under this heading, UNESCO plans to support not only environmental sustainability, but objectives such as cultural and linguistic diversity, and quality of life issues such as sport and preventive health measures. In the field of emergency education, there have been several initiatives to promote environmental sustainability, including joint UNESCO-UNHCR programmes for refugee schools in East Africa (i.e. PEER).

Refugees should initially study in the language of their area of origin, if schools are set up for homogenous refugee groups. This is for reasons of familiarity to permit the use of refugees as teachers, and to facilitate reintegration into the education system of the home country after repatriation. More attention is needed to bridging courses and supplementary language courses for refugee students not able to use the languages spoken or used for schooling in their home areas.

The provision of sports and cultural opportunities for displaced adolescents and youth is of special importance since they often lack access to employment, especially if they are confined to crowded camps. Sport, in particular, provides a positive outlet for the energies of adolescents and youth who may have time on their hands due to the disruption of normal economic activity. UNESCO will seek to create institutional linkages between emergency educators and actors in the field of sports, drawing on its experience in this area.

▲ 3.5 Ensuring the right to education in situations of emergency and crisis

The right to education in emergency situations has not been fully recognized in the past. The Dakar Framework for Action thus represents a step forward for the international community. UNESCO will advocate with donors to include education among the priority sectors for humanitarian response. UNESCO will sensitize all partners to the need to pursue the right to education in emergency situations with concerned governments of Member States and with national institutions. Linkages to country-level reporting on children's and women's rights under relevant human rights instruments would be helpful here.

▣▶ Refugees and asylum-seekers

UNESCO should advocate for refugees and asylum-seekers to enjoy their right to education under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments. UNESCO field offices should facilitate the recognition of studies previously undertaken by refugee students and asylum-seekers, so that they may gain admission to

education institutions in their country of asylum. UNESCO should further advocate for refugee students to be admitted free or at the same fee level as national students, rather than at the higher fee levels sometimes charged to foreigners. UNESCO will work with other agencies to establish a database or observatory regarding the application of the right to education in situations of crisis and post-crisis reconstruction. This will include the application in different countries of human rights conventions to the education of refugees and asylum seekers.

Poverty alleviation

Lack of education is a major cause of poverty, at personal and societal level, and poverty is likewise a major reason why children fail to enrol in school or quickly drop out. The situation is aggravated in situations of crisis and instability. Poor families often give priority to boys' education, as possibly increasing future family income, but many boys from poor families themselves have to drop out of school to earn income. UNESCO will identify, and disseminate information on ways in which crisis-affected communities have managed to help children from poor families to participate in schooling; and to alleviate poverty through non-formal education and skills training, including self-employment and micro-financing systems.

Gender

Emergency situations create special challenges to Education for All. Insecurity may discourage parents from permitting their children, especially girls, to attend school, since protective mechanisms which work in stable situations may fail in times of emergency and disruption. There may be reversion to older traditions. Poverty often directly limits girls' participation in schooling, due to lack of adequate clothing, for example, or of sanitary materials. UNESCO will work to include the emergency dimension in the work of the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI). Given the strong focus on girls' primary education by sister agencies, UNESCO raise awareness on the need to promote access to post-primary education, so that girls can be prepared, inter alia, to work as teachers.

▣▣▣▣ Inclusion of at-risk groups

In crisis situations, there are new at-risk groups. Early childhood education has a special significance when normal family life has been disrupted, and parents and other adults may not interact sufficiently with young children. Adolescents and youth are especially vulnerable, and for some the trauma of discontinuation of education can be as traumatizing as the emergency itself. It is important to keep the ladder of educational opportunities open for young people and to develop innovative programmes of outreach to out-of-school youth.

Education for persons with disability receives professional attention in some emergency programmes and little attention in others. They should be integrated into schools and training programmes to the extent possible, and otherwise provided with meaningful learning opportunities.

UNESCO will survey programmes and materials developed to meet the needs of ex-combatants. UNESCO through its field offices and partners will convene regional and sub regional activities in this sphere to share examples of good practice and develop plans for local and national collaboration.

▲ 4.1 Decentralization

UNESCO action is based on the principle of decentralization as a management tool. UNESCO's field offices can play a vital role in promoting education in emergency and post-conflict situations. Field staff may not be well equipped to interact with other agencies during emergencies and to provide the needed leadership in the systemic areas in which UNESCO alone has the mandate for action. They will be given support and orientation, so that they can contribute to emergency and reconstruction programmes. They will be sensitized to the various dimensions of education in emergencies and crisis, and of the resources they can call on, within and outside UNESCO, to assist in response and recovery. Strategically located UNESCO cluster offices can be assisted to develop a special expertise in this field.

Actions to strengthen UNESCO's own field response capacity will include:

- (i) Preparation of a user-friendly handbook for field offices on UNESCO's field role in emergency response and reconstruction. This will include issues such as promoting the right of access to education of refugees and young asylum-seekers and technical support for emergency programmes on such matters as certification of studies, as well as key issues in education for reconstruction.
- (ii) One-week regional workshops to introduce the first edition of the handbook and to identify priority issues in the region concerned and good practice models of response.
- (iii) Strengthening expertise in education for crisis and reconstruction in selected cluster offices, if requested.

▲ 4.2 Participation

Education planning has tended to follow the conventional development planning model even when countries are affected by instability, internal displacement, hosting of refugees or expectation of the return of refugee populations from countries of asylum. There is no systematic guidance

on how a national government should develop a plan of action in such circumstances, or of how to report on the education situation of refugees or to plan for repatriation. UNESCO will develop a user-friendly guide to inclusion of the emergency and prevention dimensions in national plans and strategies for EFA.

UNESCO will focus especially on the reconstruction and strengthening of education institutions as well as specialized institutes such as curriculum development centres and institutions of higher education.

Through the Education for All process, but also more broadly, UNESCO champions the greater involvement of civil society as a set of voices to be heard in policy-making, service delivery (especially when government does not have the capacity) and innovation. The community-based approach to education in emergencies and reconstruction provides an avenue for the development of civil society, for democratic process and for wide popular participation supporting education. School management committees and parent-teacher associations represent potential training grounds for local and national governance.

▲ 4.3 Information and communication

Poor security conditions, destruction of infrastructure, lack of electricity and other factors limit the direct use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for educational purposes in many emergency situations. Where possible, however, educational ICTs should be introduced for secondary and post-secondary students, in order to increase their employability, especially in the context of assistance organizations requiring computer-literate staff.

UNESCO will cooperate with INEE in the development of its website. This will serve as a tool for bringing together best practice and generic educational materials designed for use in emergency situations, as well as data on current programmes.

UNESCO will participate in the ongoing technical discussions regarding standardized reporting formats and the development of databases on emergency education programmes. It will provide support to the database development of INEE and to the ongoing database construction being initiated by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children.

▲ 4.4 Advocacy

UNESCO will continue to play a leading role in advocacy for increased support to education in emergency and post-crisis situations. It will facilitate linkages between these activities initiated by INEE and the activities of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).

UNESCO will work with the United Nations Special Rapporteurs for children affected by armed conflict and for the right to education, to create wider awareness of unmet needs for education in situations of emergency and reconstruction. UNESCO will meet with donors to promote enhanced funding for this key activity and the linkage between humanitarian assistance and reconstruction programmes within a long-term vision.

▲ 4.5 Capacity-building

Capacity-building is a key feature of education in emergencies and reconstruction. At grass-roots level, it is necessary to train teachers and head-teachers in new skills related to the unusual and stressful situation, and often to train many inexperienced teachers in the basics of education. Project management staff and education advisers drawn from national or refugee communities need guidance and training, with the objective of increased self-reliance and/or effectiveness. Ministries and district education offices need material assistance as well as training and guidance to re-establish functioning after periods of crisis. At the level of implementing agencies and field staff of the United Nations, there is a need for greater awareness of the special features of education in situations of emergency and in post-conflict situations. There is also a need to strengthen international standby capacity, especially in respect of education for post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction.

As may be seen from the foregoing, there is a substantial workload in the coming years to permit the needed development of the field of education in emergency and reconstruction. The strategic dimension, assessment and capacity-building are in general neglected. There is a clear gap that UNESCO can fill, focusing over the longer term on capacity-building, development of training materials and training teams in field operations. UNESCO will therefore seek to promote capacity-building within the Organization itself, within the United Nations system and in the field.

▲ 4.6 Assessment and evaluation

▣▶ State of the art studies

UNESCO led the inter-agency assessment of emergency education in 1999, leading to the *thematic study on Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis: Challenges for the New Century* presented at the Dakar World Education Forum⁵. Given the need to seek out grey literature and often personal testimony, preparation of such studies is time-consuming. A top priority is to conduct state of the art studies on education for reconstruction in major recent, complex, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters, and in unstable country situations.

▣▶ Real-time evaluation of education response to major crisis and recovery

There has been inadequate evaluation of education response in complex emergencies. As regards education reconstruction, the Inter-Agency evaluation of responses to major crisis situations suggested weaknesses in strategy and response⁶. Follow-up and real-time studies are needed of major crises, since data are otherwise lost and research findings are too little and too late. UNESCO will encourage partners to sponsor a coordinated set of real-time longitudinal evaluations of the education situations, in particular in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa, West Africa, Central Asia (including Afghanistan), the Caucasus and Colombia. The same approach could usefully be applied to natural disaster response and prevention activities in the education sector.

These long-term studies would make possible the development of a substantially more efficient approach to future crisis and reconstruction programmes. At present there is no solid foundation for policy in such situations. The new state of the art studies would provide progressively improved basic tools for all subsequent emergency response.

Academic or research institutions should be associated in priority to these activities. The studies could be funded by various sources and coordinated by UNESCO which would provide technical support and convene workshops to review issues of methodology and exchange of findings.

5. More recently UNHCR has prepared also a state of the art study on education responses in early emergency.

6. The case of Rwanda in 1994, for example.

▲ 5.1 Coordination and partnership linking crisis to reconstruction programmes

The primary role of UNESCO is to contribute to intellectual leadership and resources, rather than to manage education programmes, although the latter may sometimes be appropriate. There is a wide space for UNESCO's leadership in the field of education in emergencies. Sister United Nations agencies work in this field, with very specific mandates. For example, UNICEF's main focus is on restoring basic education in situations of crisis, notably through provision of supplies and support for teacher training. UNHCR's main focus is on education for refugees, working through implementing partners. The World Food Programme (WFP) provides vital inputs and has an especial focus on girls' education. A large number of NGOs conduct emergency education programmes in a variety of locations. Only UNESCO, however, has the global mandate to promote education and training from early childhood to adulthood, from pre-school to university level, in both refugee and non-refugee emergency and post-conflict situations.

UNESCO's role is clearly to support the plurality of multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental organizations and government institutions working in emergency situations with holistic technical support and to provide leadership in the sector-wide reconstruction of education systems that will provide a framework for peaceful and sustainable national development.

UNESCO can play an important role in bridging the so-called 'relief – development gap'. Compartmentalization between 'relief' or 'humanitarian assistance' and 'development aid' still continues in many forms, including donor funding and agency mandates. UNESCO can help to build the bridge through education, which is a necessary component of early emergency response, but which has developmental consequences.

▲ 5.2 Role of inter-agency cooperation

UNESCO will continue to provide support and play a leading role in inter-agency cooperation in the field at two levels:

- Through its own field Offices Network for education in situations of emergency and crisis network (OFNET) constituted by education “focal points” specialized in situations of emergency, crisis and post-conflict reconstruction process. It is a decentralized tool playing an important leading role with all partners including Member States authorities and civil society, in terms of operational assistance, technical support, policy dialogue, strategic planning and coordination mechanisms.
- Through INEE as a new mean of action, which will improve the development of guidelines and standards to support education in emergencies.⁷ These standards will be shared with the “Sphere Project”, which documents and provides training in ‘minimum standards for disaster response’ widely accepted by the humanitarian community but not yet including the education sector. INEE will develop also generic guidelines and materials on specific topics jointly with NGO partners.

This approach represents a quantum step forward compared to the past. UNESCO will support these activities and encourage the development of cooperation with all actors at local, national, regional and international levels.

7. *The first joint meeting of experts took place in Paris, 20-22 March 2002.*

ACTIONS REQUIRED

Some of the key actions needed for the implementation of this strategy are summarized below. Some of these activities will require additional funding through regular budget and extrabudgetary mechanisms.

▣▣▣▣▶ **Restoration and reconstruction functions**

All the measures in the strategy contribute to the reconstruction function, but the following is of special importance:

- The possibility of establishing external ‘standby’ arrangements will be explored, for specialists with relevant experience (notably administration, planning and management; curricula, textbooks and examinations; pre-service and in-service teacher training) to undergo orientation and training, and to be ready for deployment to Education Ministries in situations of reconstruction.

▣▣▣▣▶ **Guidance on including emergency and crisis response in EFA plans**

- A booklet will be prepared on how to include emergency and crisis issues in national EFA plans, and will later be revised in the light of field experience.
- Related training will be offered to UNESCO field staff, national educators and civil society actors, as requested and as resources permit.

▣▣▣▣▶ **Normative function: establishment of norms and standards**

- Support to the INEE process of establishing consensual norms, standards and guidelines for education in crisis and reconstruction will continue, including hosting experts’ meetings, follow-up of key issues, and publishing final products.
- Support will be provided to the INEE process of collecting and creating generic guidelines and materials on for use in emergency situations, including user-friendly generic materials relating to teacher training,

health education (including HIV/AIDS awareness), education for ex-combatants and other topics to be identified; and finalized materials will be published.

▣▣▣▣ ▶ **Preventive function: education for universal values and peace-building**

- Support will be provided to INEE's Peace Education Programme, as a major vehicle for strengthening education for peace in crisis and post-conflict contexts. UNESCO field staff will be encouraged to promote the take-up of the Programme and UNESCO will publish the teaching/learning materials and associated reports.
- UNESCO will develop tools for supporting the negotiation of, and refocusing of, curriculum in crisis and post-conflict situations, in support of the broader concept of Education for Peace. A state-of-the-art study will be prepared on assessing and re-designing school and non-formal education curricula to eliminate negative messages and enhance positive elements in support of peace-building, in situations of crisis and reconstruction. Tools will be developed through global and regional expert seminars, and a network of practitioners will be created.

▣▣▣▣ ▶ **Ensuring the right to education**

All the elements of this strategy will contribute to observing the right to education in emergency situations but of special importance is the role of UNESCO in enunciating this right:

- UNESCO will advocate for the right to education on behalf of emergency-affected populations in international forums and at national level, including government and civil society.

▣▣▣▣ ▶ **Decentralization**

- A handbook will be prepared for UNESCO field offices, sensitizing them to the issues of education in crisis and post-conflict situations.
- Training opportunities in this field will be developed for UNESCO field staff, including regional workshops and, subject to availability of resources, other forms of more intensive training.
- UNESCO cluster offices in strategic locations will be assisted in developing expertise in emergency education and education for reconstruction.

▶▶▶ Promoting participation

- Systematic training programmes will be provided for Education Ministry and district level officials in major programmes of educational reconstruction, together with the training of trainers in school management and community or parent-teacher education committees.

▶▶▶ Promoting information sharing and communication

- Inter-Agency initiatives to prepare a consolidated database on education in emergencies will be supported.
- Best practices in emergency education will be disseminated through the INEE website and listserv, with support from UNESCO as required.

▶▶▶ Advocacy

- Linkages with the United Nations Special Rapporteurs for children affected by armed conflict and for the right to education will be strengthened, with a focus on the right to education in emergency and post-conflict situations.
- Education in emergency and crisis situations will be linked more directly to the work of the International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP)⁸, ADEA and other relevant partners.
- Donor awareness will be raised, with an emphasis on education as a bridge between the ‘relief’ and ‘development’ perspectives, through formal and informal channels, inputs at international forums and, possibly, experts and governmental meetings.

▶▶▶ Capacity-building

- Research and training programmes will be developed for all actors in the education sector, from United Nations staff to national governments, regional education institutions, teacher-training centres, and NGO programmes.
- Start-up of these programmes and implementation of this strategy depends on qualified specialists in emergency education at UNESCO Headquarters and in field offices.

▣▣▣▣▶ Assessment and evaluation

- State of the art studies will be undertaken, notably on education for reconstruction.
- Real-time longitudinal (five-year) evaluations of education response in major emergencies and for reconstruction will be undertaken in coordination with all partners concerned.

UNESCO is increasingly called upon to provide education in response to emergency and reconstruction settings. As a result of armed conflict, chronic instability and natural disaster, the right to education is challenged in many countries. Though apparently similar, each situation in fact has its own specific demands, requirements and expectations.

Emergency actions for restoring education systems are different from long-term reconstruction programmes. In most cases, the prevention of emergency situations, the end of crisis and the process of reconstruction need a strategic vision based on a range of complex and interrelated parameters.

UNESCO has produced this reference document which is based simultaneously on its own experience, on the growing demands of Member States, on relevant United Nations resolutions and on recommendations from international conferences relating to the situation of children affected by wars and crises. The document defines UNESCO's line and framework of action in the highly sensitive area of its mandate which is Education. This contribution is intended to convey an added value to the efforts of the international community – in particular the Organization's sister agencies of the United Nations system – operating in the field.