Three Steps to Conflict Sensitive Education

**STEP 1**
Understand the conflict context

**STEP 2**
Analyze the two-way interaction between the conflict context and the education programmes and policies

**STEP 3**
Act to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of education policies and programmes on conflict

For guidance and suggested strategies, utilize the INEE Conflict Sensitive Education Pack and Training Materials available on www.ineesite.org/EN/Conflict-Sensitive-Education and www.ineesite.org/CSE

- INEE Guidance Note on Conflict Sensitive Education
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Note: This definition has been adapted from that found on www.conflictsensitivity.org
STEP 1
Understand the conflict context

Collect and consider information from a broad and diverse group on these four components of conflict analysis.

PROFILE
What is the history of the conflict?
What role, if any, did education play?
What are the political, economic, socio-cultural, environmental and political characteristics of the conflict?
What are the characteristics of the geographic area most affected by conflict?

ACTORS
What groups are involved in the conflict?
What are the relationships between the groups?
What is the relationship between these groups and your organization?
What divides these groups?
What connects these groups?
What are their positions, interests and needs?

CAUSES
What was/is the conflict about?
What are the root, or structural, causes of conflict?
What are the proximate causes, or escalating factors, of conflict?
What are the triggers, or single events that spark violent conflict?

DYNAMICS
Does conflict get worse at a certain time of year (e.g. elections, election results announcements, national holidays)?
Does conflict get worse at a certain period (drought, floods, cattle raids)?
Are there any windows of opportunity when actors put aside their disagreements and work together (e.g. response to a natural disaster)?
What conflict scenarios are likely to occur in the future?

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of questions, which may vary according to context and method.

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Analyze the two-way interaction between the conflict context and the education programmes and policies

Once you know the conflict context, think about how it interacts with the education programme and/or policy

**WHEN**
will the education programme be delivered?

*How* long is our intervention going to last? Is there an exit strategy?

*Have* there been programme delays that might cause grievances?

*Does* the intervention harmonise with the national education system?

*Which* holidays are observed by the school? Could this contribute to intergroup tensions?

**WHERE**
will the education programme be delivered?

*Why* these schools and not those? What criteria did we use?

*Are* we on one side of the conflict line or both?

*Is* there any way our programme could become caught up in land disputes?

**WHAT**
will be delivered?

*What* are the resources we will bring in? (money, training, vehicles, radios, office rent etc.)

*How* might this impact conflict dynamics?

*What* language(s) are we planning to work in?

*Which* groups will be excluded?

**WITH WHOM**
will you partner?

*What* process and selection criteria will be used?

*Who* is left out and why?

**WHO**
will deliver the education strategies?

*Who* will we hire? What process and selection criteria will be used?

*What* is the proportion of staff from the different identity groups?

*Who* is left out and how might this contribute to tensions?

**WHOM**
will the education strategies target?

*What* process and selection criteria will be used?

*Who* is left out and why?

Note: This set of questions has been adapted from the Do No Harm Tool of Collaborative Development Action. More resources may be found on their website. http://www.cdacollaborative.org/programs/do-no-harm/

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Analyze the two-way interaction between the conflict context and the education programmes and policies.

There are many conflict sensitive education strategies; you should select those that are most appropriate considering the findings of your conflict analysis. Here are a few examples drawn from INEE Guiding Principles on Integrating Conflict Sensitivity in Education Policy and Programmes.

**ASSESS**

Conduct an education and conflict analysis to review:

- How education might contribute to conflict
- How education can mitigate the conflict dynamics
- How conflict affects education
- The broad conflict status or risk of conflict and the historical links between education and conflict

**DO NO HARM**

Education interventions in conflict-affected and fragile contexts are not neutral; they may reduce or increase the risk of conflict. Ensure that:

- **Policy** priorities, plans and programmes are based on a comprehensive conflict analysis
- **Education** is not manipulated to promote exclusion and hate
- **Education** does not reflect and perpetuate gender and social inequities
- **Education** programmes respond to diverse local priorities and prioritize community participation

**PRIORITIZE PREVENTION**

- Protect learning environments, teachers and students from attacks
- Protect girls and boys, young women and men from abuse, exploitation and recruitment into armed groups
- Provide alternative education for youth, including life and employability skills
- Build emergency preparedness through conflict risk reduction

**PROMOTE EQUITY and the Holistic Development Of the Child as a Citizen:**

- Promote equitable distribution of services across identity groups (ethnic, religious, geographic, gender)
- Deliver teaching and learning for peace through pedagogy, curriculum and materials that are free of gender and social prejudices and build competencies for responsible citizenship, conflict transformation and resilience
- Involve parents, communities, civil society and local leadership

**STABILIZE,**

- Rebuild or Build the Education System:
  - Strengthen institutional systems, such as the system of supplying, training and paying teachers and the Education Management Information System
  - Ensure the teaching force reflects the diversity of their societies (different ethnic and religious groups, and gender)
  - Provide safe, relevant, appropriate, continuous education to children and youth in accordance with the INEE Minimum Standards and aligned with national priorities

**DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS**

Should Act Fast, Respond to Change, and Stay Engaged Beyond Short-term Support:

- Develop flexible education financing mechanisms to adjust to changing conflict context
- Adjust assistance programmes to eliminate negative impacts on the context and to improve contributions to peace
- Coordinate with the Education Cluster and/or Local Education Group
- Respond to national priorities and jointly prepare exit strategies

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EDUCATION IS A RIGHT

It’s a fact: education is a right. This right is documented in the Millennium Development Goals, the Education for All Goals, and other international agreements – for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

THIS RIGHT TO EDUCATION IS NOT BEING REALIZED IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED COUNTRIES

50% of the world’s total out-of-school primary children live in conflict-affected countries. (EFA-GMR, 2014, Policy Paper 14)

30% of the world’s total young adolescents out-of-school live in conflict-affected countries. (EFA-GMR, 2013, Policy Paper 10)

EDUCATION AID CAN CONTRIBUTE TO CONFLICT, FOR EXAMPLE:

- Hiring teachers away from the local public school to run a temporary learning space in a refugee camp can create conflict with the local school community.
- Constructing a school in an area controlled by only one faction of the conflict and expecting it to serve children from both sides can spark tension between the two groups.
- Procuring school furniture from a neighboring country can cause tensions with local carpenters.
- Hiring a security firm aligned with a faction of the conflict for the aid agency’s compound, housing and offices can lead to a perception that the agency is not neutral.
- Promoting a language of instruction that corresponds with one ethnic group or an historical colonial power can contribute to inter-group conflict.
- Using a history curriculum that refers to certain groups with derogatory language can promote hatred and exclusion.

THEREFORE WE MUST WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE THAT EDUCATION IS CONFLICT SENSITIVE!

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