

# **Providing Education in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings**

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# Terms

- Formal schooling will be emphasized, though other types of education take place during conflict
- Armed conflict: open, armed clashes between two or more centrally organized parties, with continuity between the clashes, in disputes about power over government and territory

# Impact of Conflict on Provision

- Availability, opportunities restricted:
  - Infrastructure, materials, urbanization, funding, depletion of trained teachers
  - Impacts quality and learning outcomes
- Demand is affected, shifts
  - Insecurity, recruitment, lost incomes, displacement
- Systemic impact: coverage, governance, physical and human capital, etc. affected

# Impact of Conflict on Education

- Lots of young people living in conflict-affected countries are out of school
- But educational provision is often restricted long before conflict breaks out: education is a key site of social exclusion
- Conflict can result in provision of new educational opportunities to those previously excluded

# Provision During Conflict?

- Restriction of education, context of insecurity, short-term perspective: how to provide education during conflict?
- Nature of the conflict matters: intensity
- Support educational provision as 4th pillar of humanitarian assistance; prioritize education
- Current practices and models: refugee/IDP education, support existing system

# Provision During Conflict?

- Why provide education during conflict?  
Mitigating effects of conflict or exacerbating it?
- Behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, norms
- Tolerance and respect
- Critical thinking: question hatred, myths
- Survival skills; physical control?
- Normalcy, protection, deal with trauma
- Are these deliverable through current education systems in conflict-affected countries?

# Nepal

- Ten year conflict between Maoist guerillas and government
- Education a major grievance: private schooling, lack of access, exclusion of and discrimination against lower caste peoples fed into reasons for support → promise of free schooling for all, stop private schooling
- The educated unemployed: anger also fed into recruitment as well as promise of job

# Engaging Young People in Nepal

- Child clubs in schools and communities: avenues of participation and agency, encouraging entry, changing attitudes?
- Children and Schools as Zones of Peace: providing protection and security?
- Codes of Conduct: changing behavior, relationships?
- Peace education groups: new knowledge/skills?

# Engaging Young People in Nepal

- Young people involved in child clubs, peace education groups reported:
  - Increased self-confidence, active roles (awareness)
  - Influenced and assisted poor and conflict-affected out-of-school young people to enroll in school
  - Combated discrimination, both by belonging to the group and by influencing change in community attitudes and discriminatory practices
  - Challenged violence against young people
  - Resisted pressure from Maoists to align with them, pressured to release kidnapped young people

# Engaging Young People in Nepal

- Provision: not only structural elements (existence of schools, teachers)
- Provision : mitigating conflict impact through practices (trauma, safety, etc.)
- Provision: actively providing opportunities thru practices to facilitate entry and retention, equip with participatory skills and opportunities
- Conflict as a window of opportunity to challenge and change the existing structure, content, and practices of the education system that can play role in outbreak and dynamics of conflict

# **Post-Conflict Provision: Focus Areas**

- Resume provision, long-term perspective
  - Peace dividend: lay down arms, hope for future, restore faith in government
- Address conflict-created issues in the education system
  - Child soldiers, returned forced migrants, rebuild
  - ALP models, vocational training, academic school
- Reform system to address conflict connection?
- What and who guides post-conflict reform? Peace agreements, government, international actors?

# Peace Agreements and Ed

- 55% of all (accessible) post Cold War peace agreements mention education, 70% in full agreements
- Few lay out detailed plans for reform, and these view education as socio-political issue to be addressed after the conflict
  - Guatemala, Philippines, Bangladesh, DRC, Mexico, Macedonia, Burundi
- Implementation, guiding post-conflict phase?

# Post-Conflict Provision: Liberia

- Improving access to school to rectify pre-war inequalities, address issue of youth: building schools, free-er primary education
  - 80% of schools closed during the war; displacement
  - Centralization of education services pre-war: 60% tr. teachers, 33% ed spending in capital, low enrollment rates and poor distribution of schooling
- ALP programs to integrate thousands of over-aged and out-of-school youth
- Short-term vocational training programs such as tailoring, hairdressing offered

# Post-Conflict Provision: Liberia

- Curriculum reform: addition of peace studies
- Participatory management of schools: PTA and LSMC
- But...girls, rural areas remain underserved: schools, materials, governance personnel, teachers, etc.

# Post-Conflict Provision: Liberia

- Desire for academic schooling and for secondary schooling, not only vocational
- Also a conflicting view of Western education as responsible for the war, yet that education is needed for conflict prevention & peace: awareness, knowledge, opportunity cost
- Poor quality education: no books, furniture, lack of trained teachers
- Practices: physical, sexual abuse and paying the teacher for grades

# **Provision: Conflict and Post-Conflict**

- Continue provision, mitigating impact?
- Addressing factors behind outbreak and dynamics of conflict and building peace through education reform?
  - Improved access, inclusion: pre-war exclusion (grievances), involvement of youth in conflict
  - Over-centralization , discrimination, content and language of the curriculum
  - Lack of participation, violent practices at school
  - What about the educated unemployed?