

Chapter 1

Education in Emergencies

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Summary

This paper reviews the rationale for education in situations of emergency and crisis, and the basic principles for emergency education. It examines how these principles were reflected in some recent emergencies. The intense 1990s debate on education kits is revisited. A final section examines the implications of the study for preparedness and cooperation.

Reasons for education in emergency include the psychosocial needs of children and adolescents affected by trauma and displacement, the need to protect them from harm, and the need to maintain and develop study skills and disseminate key messages such as how to avoid HIV/AIDS, landmine awareness, environmental education and education for peace and citizenship. All these are aspects of the rights of the child.

A key principle for education in situations of emergency and crisis is rapid response, using a community-based approach, with capacity-building through training of teachers, youth leaders and school management committees. Education should support durable solutions and should normally be based on the curriculum and languages of study of the area of origin. Survival and peace-building messages and skills should be incorporated in formal and non-formal education. Programmes must progressively promote the participation of under-represented groups, including girls, adolescents and persons with disability. Ongoing refugee programmes should develop procedures for rapid response to the needs of newly arriving refugee children and adolescents.

Recommendations include the strengthening of institutional commitment and preparedness, in terms of policy, staffing arrangements and training, and funding. There should be no question that UNHCR has a vital role to play in the education sector, along with its UN and NGO partners, since the international community provides it with the physical and human resources for a strong field presence in refugee, returnee and some other situations. Inter-agency cooperation, strengthened by the year 2000 World Education Forum and Inter-Agency Consultation in Situations of Emergency and Crisis, can help emergency education fulfil its humanitarian and peace-building roles.

Introduction

The end of the Cold War did not mean the end of conflict and population displacement. Many of the countries which gained (or regained) their independence in the latter decades of the twentieth century are multi-ethnic in nature and have not yet developed stable systems of governance. The 1990s saw numerous conflicts with an ethnic dimension, which led to suffering and displacement for millions of children and young people, often under horrific circumstances. Their lives were disrupted and their education abruptly terminated.

This has coincided with the enhanced awareness of children's needs and rights, following nearly universal ratification of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child. Graça Machel's *Report on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children* highlighted the needs for education in emergency situations (Machel, 1996). These needs were reiterated at the World Education Forum held in Dakar in April 2000.¹

Education is increasingly viewed as the "fourth pillar", or a "central pillar", of humanitarian response, alongside the pillars of nourishment, shelter and health services (Norwegian Refugee Council et. al., 1999: 26; Midttun, 2000a: 3–4; ICWAC, 2000: 9). Children are vulnerable and dependent, and they are developing, not only physically but mentally and emotionally. "The sudden and violent onset of emergencies, the disruption of families and community structures ... deeply affect the physical and psychological wellbeing of refugee children" (UNHCR, 1994: 5–6). Education provides opportunities for students, their families and communities to begin the trauma healing process, and to learn the skills and values needed for a more peaceful future and better governance at local and national levels.

The present paper, commissioned by UNHCR, is intended to support the updating of the UNHCR guidelines on assistance to the education sector, to better meet the needs of communities displaced by conflict.² The main focus of the paper is on preparedness for new population movements such as refugee influxes, and on rapid response to meet the psychosocial and educational needs of the emergency-affected children and adolescents. This entails a perspective on the longer-term situation, however, since a false step at the beginning can lead to problems later.³

The paper reviews approaches to education in a wide range of emergency situations not limited to refugees. Innovative programmes are being developed for internally displaced populations and for those living in disturbed or temporarily failed states such as Somalia. Some of these new approaches are relevant to refugees. Moreover, UNHCR and other organizations with a refugee service mandate often assist populations that are internally displaced, or in areas receiving returning refugees, or in areas where government has broken down.

1 See the Forum's declaration, Dakar Framework for Action – Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments (World Education Forum, 2000a), and the Thematic Studies published for the Dakar meeting. The Framework includes a pledge to meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability, and to conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance. A follow-up Inter-Agency Consultation on Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis was held in Geneva in November 2000.

2 UNHCR has commissioned parallel research papers on the themes of the quality of refugee education (Brown, 2001, Williams, 2001) and education for peace (Sommers, 2001).

3 UNHCR's recent Briefing Paper on The Education Sector in UNHCR's Programmes, in its section entitled "Emergency educational response", notes the need for inter-agency cooperation, institutional preparedness, standby staffing arrangements, emergency supplies of learning and teaching materials, a phased strategy, and work with refugee and local communities and educators to define needs and design appropriate responses (UNHCR, 2000a).



Refugee and returnee children at school in Madhu, Sri Lanka UNHCR/07.1999/IM. Kobayashi

The paper focuses on education specifically organized for emergency-affected children and young people,⁴ and does not cover the topic of scholarships or other arrangements for displaced children to attend local schools or colleges.⁵ Furthermore, it adopts a descriptive approach, being more a survey of the state of the art than testing hypotheses, not least because there is very little feedback in terms of published monitoring data or evaluation studies with which to verify results.⁶ The underlying hypotheses are as follows:

First: it is possible and psychologically beneficial to refugee and other crisis-affected children and adolescents to participate rapidly in community-based healing activities including elements of education and recreation, with subsequent systematization of these activities. Second: these psychological benefits together with learned knowledge, skills and values can contribute to peace-building and to social and economic development. Third: in many situations, education can serve as a tool of protection and of prevention of harm.

4 Space does not permit the coverage of adult education or vocational training and apprenticeships. For a broader overview of refugee education issues, see UNHCR (1995a), Avery et al. (1996), Retamal and Aedo-Richmond (1998b), and Sinclair (1998a, 1999).

5 As emphasised in the Machel report, individual refugees and internally displaced children and young people can face problems of enrolment in local schools because of lack of proper documentation, not being residents of the area or inability to pay school fees. Bridging programmes may be needed, and ways to lessen harassment at local schools (Machel, 1996: 57). Local schools may need assistance to cope with additional students (UNHCR, 1995a: 14–15).

6 The paper draws on four intensive evaluations, relating to use of education kits in Somalia (Eversmann, 2000) and in Angola (Johannessen, 2000), to psychosocial benefits of emergency education in Sierra Leone (Gupta, 2000), and to pre-schools in Bosnia (Burde, 1999); and on a review of lessons learned in early response in East Timor (Nicolai, 2000) (none of these focused on refugee education). It draws on multi-country overviews by Marc Sommers (1999) on refugee education, and by John Richardson (1998) on psychosocial programmes in the former Yugoslavia.

The paper does not attempt comprehensive coverage of past or ongoing programmes or of implementing agencies. The research was based in UNHCR and draws heavily on information from UNHCR staff and records. Especial thanks are due to staff of other organizations who gave their time for telephone interviews or answered written queries, notably staff of UNICEF, UNESCO, the Norwegian Refugee Council, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). Time did not permit contacting a wider range of agencies, but this is a priority for future research.

The paper attempts to answer five questions. First, why is education necessary in emergency situations and when? Second, what are the basic principles for education assistance in emergency situations? Third, how were these principles reflected in recent emergencies? Fourth, what use should be made of education kits? And fifth, what are the implications of the analysis for emergency preparedness in UNHCR, the sponsor of the study, and for other concerned organizations?

As will be seen, UNHCR did not play a prominent role in the education sector in the two most publicised recent emergencies (Kosovo and Timor), although it will be argued in this paper that it has an indispensable role even in circumstances where another agency takes the lead in the education sector. In order to reflect the role of UNHCR, which has the primary responsibility for refugee education in many of the most desolate locations on earth, the answer to question three includes not only a brief description of education response in the Kosovo and Timor crises but also of refugee education in Tanzania, Pakistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (which received large influxes of refugees in 1999) and of the response to the Eritrean refugees entering Sudan in May and June 2000.

Different uses of the term “education in emergencies”

The term “emergency education” is used at inter-agency level to refer to education in situations where children lack access to their national education systems, due to man-made crises or natural disasters. Its precise interpretation varies, from a concern with emergency education during the first few months after a crisis, to the years taken to restore normal education systems after a “complex humanitarian emergency”. In UNHCR “emergency response” is technically a matter of months, essentially referring to the time required to get the organization’s normal systems in place and operational. However, the tasks set forth in the education section of the UNHCR *Handbook for Emergencies* (UNHCR, 1999a: 106–109) take longer than this. UNHCR also recognizes that mass repatriation, albeit welcome, can create what is termed an “emergency-like situation” requiring “emergency-like” support. Almost all UNHCR education assistance is “emergency education” in the broad sense of the term, as used by many other organisations.

For UNESCO, an educational emergency is a crisis situation created by conflicts or disasters which have destabilized, disorganized or destroyed the education system, and which require an integrated process of crisis and post-crisis response (UNESCO, 1999). For UNICEF “emergencies include natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes, and human-made crises such as civil strife and war”, as well as silent emergencies such as HIV/AIDS, extreme poverty and children living in the streets (Pigozzi, 1999: 1).

As will become evident during the presentation, the term “education in emergencies” increasingly serves as shorthand for schooling and other organised studies, together with “normalising” structured activities, arranged for and with children, young people and adults whose lives have been disrupted by conflict and major natural disasters.

Dimensions of the problem

Comprehensive statistics are not available on the numbers affected by conflict and disaster, and there are serious problems of definition. The 1990s saw new and sometimes very complex displacements, including those arising from the break-up of the Soviet Union and of the former Yugoslavia (UNHCR, 1995b, 1997a). As of December 1999, there were some 15 million refugees in the world,⁷ including about 7 million in populations categorized as “assisted by UNHCR”. Other populations “of concern” to UNHCR included over 2 million refugees who had repatriated during the previous two years; 4 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in areas where UNHCR had been asked to provide support, and over 1 million recently returned IDPs (UNHCR, 2000b).

A decade ago, the countries that had generated the most refugees were Afghanistan (over 6 million refugees), Ethiopia, Iraq, Mozambique, Liberia, Sudan and Somalia (all with over 400,000) (UNHCR, 2000b: 38–39). By 2000, many of these populations had trekked home and begun the difficult task of rebuilding their communities, and the largest refugee groups (over 400,000) were from Afghanistan, Iraq, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Other places generating over 400,000 refugees during the 1990s were Rwanda and Kosovo.⁸ These 12 countries also suffered major internal population displacement and disruption of national services such as education. This is true also of many of the 39 other countries which generated 10,000 or more refugees in any one year during the 1990s.

The world total of internally displaced persons has been variously computed as between 20 million and 50 million.⁹ In a recent study, Save the Children UK estimated that 13 million children have been violently displaced within the borders of their own country.¹⁰ It seems that in the 1990s as many as 1 per cent of the world’s population have been displaced from their home areas by conflict or other disasters, or have returned and are attempting to rebuild their communities under usually adverse circumstances. Populations affected by a breakdown of governance due to conflict, and consequently deprived of national services such as education in their home areas, can be added to this roll-call of emergency-affected populations.

In 1999 alone, a total of 1,688,000 persons left home situations so grim that they were recognized as *prima facie* refugees.¹¹ This included 411,000 in Africa, 409,000 in Asia and 868,000 in southern and eastern Europe. The countries receiving the most new arrivals (in descending order of magnitude) were Albania, Macedonia, Indonesia (West Timor), Tanzania, Pakistan, Bosnia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (UNHCR, 2000b: 24).

7 This figure includes 11.7 million in the UNHCR refugee statistics (UNHCR, 2000b) plus 3.7 million Palestinian refugees under the aegis of UNRWA. The latter benefit from extensive education provision, as compared with more recently displaced refugee populations (see www.un.org/unrwa).

8 Some 500,000 refugees living in the Sudan were reclassified as Eritrean in 1991, when Ethiopia recognized Eritrea’s right to secede. Please note that in this paper all statistics have been rounded.

9 See the website of the Global IDP Project of the Norwegian Refugee Council, at www.db.idpproject.org.

10 From *Children and armed conflict: report of the Secretary General* (United Nations, 2000a: 10), which also cites the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimate that children comprise 75 per cent of the 2.5 million people in Angola displaced since hostilities resumed in December 1998.

11 UNHCR (2000b); there were an additional 176,000 refugees accorded individual recognition. (“*Prima facie*” refers to refugees recognized on a group basis.)



Refugee children line up in front of temporary school tents provided by UNHCR. Until school buildings can be constructed, UNHCR and its partners are providing basic education for refugee children at New Shamshatoo camp. UNHCR/04.2001/L. Boscardi

In many displaced populations, about one in three persons are in the age group for schooling and other child and adolescent activities.¹² Thus in the refugee populations recorded in the 1999 UNHCR Statistical Overview as “UNHCR-assisted” (UNHCR, 2000b: 3), totalling 6.9 million, there would be a total of about 2.3 million in the child and adolescent age group. This may be compared with the total of nearly 800,000 children and young people recorded as beneficiaries of UNHCR-funded education programmes,¹³ to which must be added an unknown number who benefit from other assistance programmes or participate in schooling in the host country without special assistance. These very approximate statistics suggest that one-third of refugee children (excluding infants) and adolescents in populations categorized as “UNHCR-assisted” are in UNHCR-supported schooling,¹⁴ and that perhaps 40 per cent are in school altogether. Girls represent about 40 per cent of UNHCR-funded students (UNHCR, 2000a). These figures reflect the observation of the author and many colleagues that most children in UNHCR-assisted populations do

12 In many developing countries children aged under 16 to 18 years are estimated to comprise about one-half of the population. Looking at an age group of concern for emergency schooling, from 3 to 6 years as the lower limit to 15 to 18 years (with a few who are a bit older) at the upper end, one is looking at about two-thirds of one-half which is one-third of the whole. Given that education starts late in many developing and crisis-affected countries, that schooling is often interrupted by crisis and also that exact ages are not known where birth certificates are missing, there should be no precise upper limit for young persons benefiting from emergency schooling (UNHCR, 1999a: 108).

13 A survey of UNHCR support for refugee schooling in 1999 in 27 major country programmes gave a total of about 754,000 beneficiaries. The total varies according to the pattern of refugee movements, with a figure of 773,000 estimated for all programmes in 1995/6 (UNHCR, 1997b: 11), and a lower figure of 650,000 for 1997/8. The total recorded for 1990 was 330,000. Interpretation of refugee education and population statistics is complex (Sinclair, 1999: 10–18, 50–52; UNHCR, 2000b: 1–4; WEF, 2000b: 16–19).

14 The majority of these students are at primary school level. Most attend refugee primary or secondary schools, but substantial numbers attend local schools (1997c: 13–24). The widespread belief that UNHCR does not support secondary education, or refugee secondary schools, is untrue, although of a total of 77,000 recorded in major programmes in 1999, over half were Afghan students attending government schools in Iran (UNHCR, 2000a: 6).

indeed enrol in school but that many drop out quickly due to poverty and other factors. Refugees are often from poor rural areas with low previous enrolment rates. Often, the adults in the family have not completed primary school and do not press their children to do so.

Education in emergencies: why and when?

Is education needed in emergency situations? Is there a need to do more than feed, shelter and provide medical services to displaced emergency-affected populations? Is there a need to do more than stop them dying? Can displaced children and adolescents be kept in some kind of storage, without harmful long-term effects, until they can return home?

These may seem rhetorically harsh questions, but there are donors and even staff of humanitarian institutions who do not see education as part of a humanitarian intervention, or who do not think that it is urgent, or who do not think that it should be professionally organized and monitored even if their own organization is funding it.

Trauma and child development

Armed conflict affects all aspects of child development – physical, mental and emotional – and to be effective, assistance must take each into account ... *ensuring, from the outset of all assistance programmes, that the psychosocial concerns intrinsic to child growth and development are addressed.* (Machel, 1996: 49, emphasis added)

The strongest reasons for supporting organized activities such as education early in an emergency situation are to lessen the psychosocial impact of trauma and displacement and to protect at-risk groups (see below). UNHCR's *Refugee Children: Guidelines on Protection and Care* emphasises that "refugee children's wellbeing is as important as their physical health". The guidelines note that children have a unique psychological characteristic: their personalities are being formed and their coping skills developed almost daily. The disruption and insecurity inherent in refugee situations can harm children's physical, intellectual, psychological, cultural and social development. And this disruption can lay the foundations for another generation to engage in revenge, conflict and displacement (UNHCR, 1994: 38–39).

The 1990s saw a "take-off" in concern over psychosocial impacts of trauma.¹⁵ Work with child soldiers in Mozambique and with war-affected youth in Guatemala showed the importance of activities such as education and training in promoting psychological healing (Boothby, 1992, 1996; Herbst, 1995). The work of Swedish Save the Children and UNICEF with boys who survived a dangerous trek from southern Sudan to Ethiopia in 1988, and who had to return in traumatic circumstances in 1991, and then move on to Kenya, helped bring the psychosocial needs of refugee children to the fore. Impacts of such experience include withdrawal from social contact and from activities such as playing, laughing and expressing emotions, together with sadness and guilt, aggression, sleeping difficulties, nightmares and bedwetting,

¹⁵ As of 1981, manuals on refugee health did not mention this aspect (Summerfield, 1999). The Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma developed from the Indochinese Psychiatry Clinic, founded in 1981, which was one of the first to work with victims of mass violence and torture (Harvard School of Public Health, 1998).

psychosomatic disorders, flashbacks, and inability to concentrate in school (Zutt, 1994: 37–40; Tefferi, 1999: 17). Schooling was an integral part of the varied activities organized for this group in Ethiopia and in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya (Swedish Save the Children, 1999a).

The break-up of the former Yugoslavia led to numerous psychosocial interventions.¹⁶ Child psychologists at the University of Belgrade found that many refugee children in collective centres were unable to play, and that their parents were unable to provide normal parenting. The psychologists developed programmes of art, clay modelling, storytelling and expressive games and exercises to build children's self-esteem and social interaction, and a sense of mastery over difficult circumstances (Tolfree, 1996).

The UNICEF survey of Rwandan children showing that more than two-thirds of the sample had witnessed someone being killed or injured during the 1994 genocide publicized the fact that war-affected children's psychological development was in danger (UNICEF, 1996). The UNICEF and UNESCO response in Rwanda included support for the rapid restoration of schooling, as a means of mass outreach to children, as well as training of teachers to understand the effects of trauma (Aguilar and Richmond, 1998). The Rwanda experience, and the horrific experiences of children in conflicts such as those in Mozambique, Liberia and Sierra Leone led to the UN study on the impact of armed conflict on children, led by Graça Machel. Her report emphasized that:

All phases of emergency and reconstruction assistance should take psychosocial considerations into account ... Programmes should aim to support healing processes and to establish a sense of normalcy. This should include establishing daily routines of family and community life, opportunities for expression and structured activities such as school, play and sports. (Machel, 1996: 53)

One input to the study was a Save the Children Working Group's enunciation of the principles of a community-based approach. "In addition to family routines, organized activities, especially educational ones, are important for children; even without a school building, lessons and play groups can be held and sports and games organized" (ISCA, 1996: 8). Ellen Lange (1998: 12), reviewing the needs of refugee children newly arrived in Guinea from Sierra Leone, recommended that:

In future refugee emergency situations, some structured recreational as well as educational activities should take place in a school-like setting. School-like settings allow children to (re-)establish a student identity, which should be considered an important step towards a normal child life.

Other psychosocial benefits of early educational response may be noted. Education restores an element of hope: it is forward-looking and constructive, as contrasted to talk of revenge, joining militias or participating in other harmful activities. Moreover, for older children and adolescents, the sudden ending of their studies represents an additional trauma in itself, perpetuating hopelessness, and should be remedied. As noted in the UNHCR Education Guidelines, "the trauma of exile should not be aggravated by the trauma of loss of educational opportunity" (UNHCR, 1995a: 12).¹⁷ Further, the content of structured

16 Agger (1995: 26) categorised these interventions according to a pyramid, moving from help with worrying practical problems, and "task-oriented group interventions" for the many, to psychologically oriented group interventions, counselling interventions and intensive psychotherapy, for smaller numbers. The category of task-oriented group interventions for the many included educational activities, recreational activities and training of staff working with refugees.

17 See also UNHCR, 1994: 111. A review of education following national upheaval by Phillips and colleagues emphasizes "psychological restructuring" on a par with the restoration of physical infrastructure and capacity-building for teachers (Arnhold et al., 1998).

activities and education programmes can be designed to help develop coping skills (see below), much needed in an emergency situation.

Re-establishment of the routine of schooling is felt by many agency staff to have a beneficial effect on the mental state of adults as well as of children. It also has practical benefits, in that mothers are able to concentrate on their tasks, such as queuing for food and water, and so on, without having to worry that their young children will get lost in the camp or come to harm. The parents or other relatives caring for children may initially be depressed and unable to cope with children's emotional needs themselves. For this reason, structured activities for children have an additional importance. Education can partially substitute for poor child–adult interactions in the family, a role which is less important for most children in normal times. This is the reverse of the “macho” philosophy that education is a luxury in emergencies, and not a humanitarian requirement.

When? The importance of rapid action to meet the needs of crisis-affected children was emphasized in the 1997 “Evaluation of UNHCR's efforts on behalf of refugee children and adolescents”, prepared by UNHCR's Inspection and Evaluation Unit in partnership with the International Save the Children Alliance. This crucial document highlighted social and psychological needs not only of younger children but especially of adolescents, “often the age group most psychologically affected by war”. The report recommended community-based “daily structured activities [for] the large majority of children and adolescents” as “an integral part of emergency response ... as soon as a food distribution system is in place”. These structured activities, including education, were seen as the “first line of response for promoting the recovery and wellbeing of children and adolescents who have suffered losses, displacement and often horrific experiences” (UNHCR, 1997c: 18–21). Much of the present paper consists of an analysis of how these recommendations might be implemented quickly and on a sustained basis.

Physical and social protection

Uprooted adolescents are at risk of sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies, mental health problems, violence and substance abuse ... social stigmatization [and] ... recruitment into armed forces or groups. (United Nations, 2000a: 11)

Bringing together children and adolescents for structured activities has a protection role, in early emergency and thereafter. Apart from revealing that some children have severe physical or mental health problems that need specialist attention, a serious attempt to bring all young persons into these activities may reveal children subject to abuse, such as harmful labour, exploitation of foster children for domestic labour (so that children of the household can attend school), and so on. Education can provide a constructive alternative for young people who might otherwise find their fulfilment in joining armed forces or militias, especially if confined to a refugee or IDP camp and without access to employment opportunities.¹⁸ Education is likewise a forward-looking activity that can lessen the incidence of alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancies, prostitution and so on.

¹⁸ It is true that, in some instances, well-established schools can be recruiting grounds for military forces or armed groups. In this case precautions must be taken as appropriate, and students must be educated about their rights under the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child not to be recruited for military activities before they are adults.

Moreover, the act of attending school brings awareness of the wider world and of personal rights, such as the equal right of girls to attend schools and the new roles and lifestyles for women modelled by female teachers. Most schools have elements of human rights in their “hidden curriculum”, and it is increasingly the case that education for peace, tolerance, child or human rights and citizenship are included as explicit awareness-raising features of the school programme.

Sustaining study skills and re-introducing schooling

Displaced communities are normally anxious to reintroduce schooling quickly, as soon as food and shelter are provided. They ask their educated members to start classes for the younger children on a voluntary basis. In many cases people fled without their belongings, so that it is difficult for classes to begin without external assistance. A flexible approach is needed so that students who were in upper primary and secondary school or higher education can also maintain and develop their study skills. There are various ways of doing this, such as involving youth in helping with younger children for part of the time and providing interim courses in languages or other subjects to maintain their study skills until they can resume their courses of study.

Rapid intervention of this kind is important, so that the benefit of past schooling is not lost and time is not wasted. Time is short for many of these young people, especially girls, who often have to leave school at puberty or early marriage, and boys from poor families, who have to work full-time as soon as they are old enough to do so. Trauma can have a negative impact on study skills, as can a long gap in studies. Hence, the restoration of some kind of studies is urgent.

Restoration of schooling brings the widely recognized benefits of schooling as such, including its contribution to productivity and economic development. It can contribute to social stability through engaging young people in sustained constructive activity. There are also long-term implications for social cohesion: it is undesirable for one group of the population to be severely under-educated relative to other groups, especially when there is an ethnic dimension. Schooling for girls leads to lower child and maternal mortality rates and increased female participation in economic and political decision-making.¹⁹

Conveying survival and peace-building messages and skills

In early emergency, camps are dangerous places. Cholera and other diseases can easily take hold. Malaria is often a hazard. In many places, sexual activities including rape can lead to HIV/AIDS. There is usually an incipient environmental crisis, with the neighbouring land being stripped of trees for firewood, construction of temporary shelter and so on. Rapid organization of school-like activities for children and adolescents, working with community volunteers, can provide an excellent channel for conveying survival messages on these matters.

For internally displaced persons, and for refugees who may soon return home, there is often the need for education about landmines and the dangers of unexploded ordnance. Besides mine awareness programmes for adults, the messages need to be skilfully conveyed to children, in ways that will have a lasting effect on their behaviour.

¹⁹ See, for example, the Concept Paper for the UN Ten-Year Programme on Girls’ Education (United Nations, 2000b), as well as the annual UNICEF report, *The State of the World’s Children*.

Conflict-affected people also need help in discussing the situation they are in, and in identifying constructive ways to build a better future. This discussion needs to be attuned to the experiences they have gone through and to be sensitively developed with local educators. For lack of a better name, the ‘participative’ approaches to such discussions developed in recent years are often known as “peace education”, although they can serve to improve much needed coping skills in general. Peace education does not “produce” peace but is an enabling factor. Peace education in the Kenya refugee camps has transformed the way in which many refugees see their situation and their plans for the future (Baxter, 2000: 9–11). There is a need to build on this approach to incorporate elements of citizenship and governance in situations of national reconstruction (see below).

Human rights

The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely ratified human rights document ever, with only two countries not having signed.²⁰ It is binding on states that are party to it and has been adopted as a normative framework by UN agencies. Under the convention, priority must be given to the best interests of the child (Article 3). Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development (Article 27). All appropriate measures must be taken to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of child victims of abuse or armed conflict (Article 39). Children have the right to play, recreation and cultural activities (Article 30). All of these rights have been addressed above: the rapid introduction of structured activities including education can help in meeting these objectives.

The Convention reaffirms that children have the right to education as such (Article 28), supporting the fullest development of their personalities, talents and mental and physical abilities, and promoting peace and tolerance (Article 29). States party to the convention are required to promote and encourage international cooperation in matters related to education, to eliminate ignorance and illiteracy, and to help developing countries achieve better levels of education provision (Article 28) for all children within their jurisdiction regardless of status (Article 2).

Education is a progressive right, and most countries are trying to improve the coverage and quality of education provision for their own citizens. Governments of developing countries, having signed the convention, should not refuse international assistance in providing education to refugees, asylum-seekers or the internally displaced, if they lack the funds to provide it themselves. Denial of access to primary education occurs rarely, but in some locations governments restrict refugee access to secondary education as a matter of policy, which is also contrary to the convention.²¹

20 Somalia and the United States. See also Article 22 of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Other human rights instruments likewise incorporate the right to education: for the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, see www.unhchr.ch

21 For example, there are restrictions on refugee access to secondary education in the DRC; and in Tanzania, formal refugee secondary education is not permitted in the new caseload Burundian and Congolese refugee camps (the refugees themselves organize self-help secondary classes but with inadequate resources).



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UNHCR Geographic Information and Mapping Unit - November 2001
The boundaries shown on this map are those used by the UN Cartographic Section, New York
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



PGDS/GIMU - October 2001

Spurious arguments against rapid educational response in refugee emergencies

Several arguments are advanced for delaying education to newly arrived refugees. The most influential arguments are as follows:

- Education may prevent rapid voluntary repatriation;
- Staff are too busy, there are insufficient vehicles or staff housing;
- Education is not urgent, not life-saving.

In fact, refugees are normally homesick and their return from mass exile in neighbouring countries is delayed primarily by political and economic factors, and security issues. Decisions about repatriation are made by political leaders or tribal or family elders, many of whom have little concern over how young children spend their days.²² The type of education that can take place in the first weeks of a refugee situation is very non-formal, with often unqualified teachers gathering children to play games, learn the alphabet, practice reading, writing and arithmetic, and so forth. It is unlikely to delay repatriation. Any items distributed are portable and can be taken back to the home country. (When refugees have been in exile for many years and a system of primary and secondary education has been established, then the situation is different. In this case, careful planning is needed to ensure that education is quickly developed in returnee areas, or to allow older students to complete their courses before repatriating, so that students are not cut off in the middle of a course of studies.)

Some people imagine that rapid education response means “building schools”, but emergency education frequently takes place under trees or plastic sheeting. School construction may happen later, in months or years (and by then, formal education would have started anyway). The argument that emergency education means “building schools” and will give a “feeling of permanence”, is thus unrealistic.²³

Agency staff are indeed very busy in an emergency. This is one major reason for accepting the services of emergency education specialists from standby rosters such as that maintained by the Norwegian Refugee Council. These specialists (often funded by the Norwegian government) may come with logistical support and with money to spend on educational procurement and teacher training.

Regarding the lack of urgency, as noted earlier, schools represent a mechanism to get “survival messages” to the community and to identify and protect at-risk children. Children are in the process of psychological development, and the best way to provide psychosocial support on a large scale is to introduce structured group activities, including education. This is especially important for adolescents, who may otherwise be prone to engage in militia training and other antisocial activities, or to suffer depression.

Moreover, where the crisis arises due to ethnic conflict, it is crucial for humanitarian agencies to participate in the emergency education process rather than leaving it only to the community. Otherwise, schools can become channels for transmitting hatred to the next generation, leading to new crises in the future.

²² Statement based on the author’s many conversations with refugees, UNHCR and NGO staff. Statistical analysis of the mass repatriation to Afghanistan from Pakistan in 1992 showed that non-repatriants were often from areas with minefields or damaged water supply, or from villages occupied during the war by other tribal groups. Education played little part in decisions to repatriate.

²³ Similarly, it is unrealistic to delay emergency education on the grounds that this could mean host government pressure for “jobs”. Teachers are not paid incentives early in an emergency – this normally takes place later, after a process of professional testing, selection and training.

The stories of Rwandan refugee children in Goma sitting on hard volcanic rocks in front of refugee teachers, neither children nor teachers having any materials, not even slates or a blackboard, are memorable (Rille, 1995: 9; LaPrairie, 1995: 4). They encapsulate the rationale for education as a humanitarian and peace-building response. It is not difficult to imagine that some teachers, lacking any educational materials, would have led songs and told stories reflecting the views of their ethnic group (these camps were under the influence of the leaders of the genocide). In fact, most refugee camps and settlements reflect one side of a conflict. It is thus important to link refugee teachers to the humanitarian community through employment by humanitarian organizations and to provide training to discourage them from using school to reinforce messages of hate.²⁴

Policy commitments to education in emergencies

Support for the re-establishment and continuity of education must be a priority strategy for donors and NGOs in conflict and post-conflict situations. (Machel, 1996: 59)

The United Nations has endorsed the findings of the Machel Report and has appointed a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. The *Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly and Security Council on Children and Armed Conflict*, published in July 2000, in a section headed "Education and adolescents: two neglected concerns", recommends that governments, UN agencies and NGOs,

Should collaborate to ensure that children are provided with educational materials and opportunities, at both the primary and secondary levels, as a priority throughout and after periods of armed conflict; with especial attention to displaced children, adolescents, girls, disabled children, former child soldiers and victims of sexual violence.

States, donors and international NGOs are encouraged to provide the "technical and financial resources required for sustained education for all children, both during and after conflict" (United Nations, 2000a: 17–19).

Relevant organs of the United Nations have integrated these concerns into their programming. UNICEF states that "in emergency situations, educational activities must be established and restored as soon as possible". The activities, though beginning very simply, should be developed professionally so as to help transform education methods and content and help solve the problems that gave rise to conflict (Pigozzi, 1999: 4–6). The World Food Programme often contributes food for students and teachers to maintain education systems in situations of emergency (WEF, 2000b: 25).

UNHCR is committed to education and supports refugee primary and secondary schools, as well as other refugee education programmes. In 1994, the Executive Committee noted that "education programmes for refugee children contribute enormously to their wellbeing and towards finding a durable solution for them", and requested the High Commissioner "to continue her efforts to give higher priority to the education of all refugee children, ensuring equal access to girls". The committee further urged UNHCR

²⁴ In some situations, refugee teachers are employed by the host government, which may likewise tend to restrain the impulse to use schools to inculcate hatred and the desire for revenge, especially if in receipt of funding from donors who emphasise this.

“to identify educational requirements in the early stages of an emergency so that prompt attention may be given to such needs” (UNHCR, 1995b: 6). Rapid educational response in emergencies is stressed in UNHCR’s guidelines on refugee children (1994) and education (1995b: 25–39) and in its *Handbook for Emergencies* (1999a: 106–109).

Among the specialized UN agencies, UNESCO has a mandate based on the assumption that wars begin in the minds of men and that the foundations of peace must be laid there also. The UNESCO Programme for Education in Emergencies and Reconstruction (UNESCO-PEER) has undertaken major emergency education programmes in East, Central and Southern Africa.²⁵ UNESCO has likewise provided technical support for emergency and post-emergency education in other regions, and is seeking to extend this work, including exploration of the possible use of modern technologies for this purpose (Kacem Bensalah, personal communication). UNESCO provides the education component of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

National governments are obliged by the Convention on the Rights of the Child to permit the education of child refugees within their borders. In many countries the government is actively engaged in or supportive of refugee education programmes, while, in contrast, some governments place restrictions on the education of child refugees and asylum-seekers. Within the donor community, some governments and multilateral bodies support education in emergencies, while some hesitate (Sommers, 1999: 19–22); this topic was not researched for the present study but merits detailed review.²⁶

Some donors may not realize that education is the main organized activity in refugee and other displaced communities receiving external assistance. It is the main outreach activity for children and adolescents, and often involves almost every family in the community. Often children and adolescents who had missed out on schooling before displacement enrol or re-enrol and then stay in school for several years, while it is hoped that a new generation of six-year-olds will enter school each year. The resourcing needs thus grow with time, unlike costs for health (which should diminish as preventive health measures take effect), shelter and water supply. Some donor governments now realize that the 1990s concern for children, and for girls’ education, translates into the need for consistent resourcing, and are examining ways of sparing education from the endless financial crises that make the management of emergency education programmes so difficult. The fact that education is in effect a “development” expenditure, an investment with both private and public benefits over the students’ lifetimes, may also be mentioned here.

Regarding the policy commitments of non-governmental organizations, several major NGOs are committed to emergency education as a core activity and strongly advocate rapid and effective educational response, including psychosocial and peace-building elements. And many NGOs implement emergency education programmes in one or more locations.

25 UNESCO-PEER’s activities in Somalia, Yemen, Djibouti, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Sudan are described in UNESCO-PEER (2000).

26 A website-based review of donor policies on another education topic, namely secondary education in developing countries, showed that there was limited public information on the details of education assistance policies, at least on the web (Dampare and McClure, 2000). The list of “eligible expenditure” on the European Community Humanitarian Office website (www.europa.eu.int/comm/echo) includes staff, food, medical, relief items, shelter, water and sanitation, training and other relevant headings, but appears to have inadvertently (?) omitted education, a very serious omission. The ECHO office did, however, support a Psychosocial Unit in the European Community Task Force working in Bosnia and Croatia (after a mission by a female expert to investigate rape), and this too is not listed explicitly as an eligible item (Agger and Mimica, 1996).

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) has made a major impact in the 1990s, largely due to Eldrid Midttun, its Education Coordinator, whose wide travels have made her one of the leading specialists on education in emergencies. Since 1994, NRC has seconded 34 education experts to UN agencies, mostly to UNHCR, UNICEF and UNESCO, for six to 18 months to meet emergency needs and begin local capacity-building.²⁷ In 1998 NRC, Norwegian Save the Children and UNHCR jointly hosted an international conference on the follow-up to the Machel Report, which recommended that in emergency situations education should start immediately, and that education is a professional task, to be handled by educationalists (NRC et al., 1999: 20–22).

The IRC, UNHCR's largest implementing partner, set up a Children and Armed Conflict Unit following the Machel Report, and in 1999 hired an education specialist for this unit. It is committed to rapid education response, and has emergency education projects in 16 countries.²⁸

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) has a strong commitment to refugee education world-wide, with programmes in 13 countries in Africa. It has developed an education resource centre in Nairobi which houses materials on education for refugees and from emergency-prone countries.²⁹ Many other NGOs should also be mentioned here, but space does not permit.



Returnees at the Club Mamans Sportives, a Rwandan Women's Initiative for adult literacy training, Rwanda. UNHCR/12.1998/R. Chalasani

- 27 Since 1994 NRC has had emergency education programmes in Tanzania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Angola, Uganda, Burundi, Zaire/DRC, and Afghanistan, as well as secondments to UN agencies in some of these and other countries (Eldrid Midttun, personal communication).
- 28 IRC has refugee education programmes for children and young people in Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Burundi, Ingushetia/Chechnya, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, East Timor, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia (West Timor), Kosovo, Liberia, Pakistan, Rwanda and Thailand, with psychosocial programmes in some of these countries and in DRC, Sierra Leone and Uganda.
- 29 Angola, Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In different locations these programmes cover pre-primary, primary and secondary education, teacher training, literacy, languages, computer studies and tuition for tertiary distance students. The largest programme is in Uganda, where JRS supports over 9,000 students in pre-school and over 27,000 in UNHCR-funded primary schools (Sister Lolin Menendez, personal communication).

Education in emergencies: what are the basic principles?

Community-based approach and capacity-building

Soon after a displaced community has solved the problems of food, water and shelter, there is usually a desire to restore educational activities. Often refugees or IDPs themselves initiate simple educational activities on a voluntary basis and without any materials. For example, in Peshawar, Pakistan, in 1993 and 1994, newly arrived Afghan refugees from Kabul developed “self-help” community-based schools within weeks, seeking donations of materials such as tents and writing materials from UNHCR and other sources.³⁰ Burundi refugees reaching Tanzania in 1996 were not permitted to start schools at first but established community-run “children’s activity centres” which provided informal schooling, with limited international support. This community-based approach has been replicated in the subsequent response to major new influxes (UNHCR, 1999b; Bird, 1999). Following the large refugee influx into Zambia in 1999 and 2000, community education committees were established to organize recreational activities and prepare sites for emergency schooling.

The involvement of the community in the establishment and management of its schools represents a step forward, from the helplessness of being displaced to gaining control over one element of social function, even if classes have to be held in the open air and are cancelled when there is rain. Because education is a fundamental right, and to ensure that it develops in an orderly fashion and meets humanitarian criteria, these initial schools are later incorporated into an organized system, normally led or supported by an NGO or government agency. This is necessary also because of the value of the resources needed for education, from writing materials and shelter to teacher “incentives” (see below), and because of the need to ensure ethnic and gender balance among teachers.³¹

Training refugee teachers and youth leaders. Community members have a vital role to play in the wider range of “structured activities” needed to involve both children and adolescents (see below). The IRC project proposal for emergency response in West Timor, for example, had specified one community educator and four community youth leaders per 100 refugee children and adolescents, to lead two daily sessions of structured activities including drawings, group discussions, theatre and music, sports, recreation and basic educational activities.³² It is interesting to consider whether these parameters could be of more general application in early emergency.

In some cases, there are many trained and/or experienced teachers among the refugees, as with the intact Rwandan communities which took refuge in Tanzania in April 1994. Almost always there are educated refugees who take up teaching for the first time. In-service teacher training therefore plays a vital role. At the point where education programmes are being systematized, there is (or should be) a selection test to identify teachers for the post-emergency phase. Often there is a brief “new teacher training” and then systematic in-service training and mentoring; there is also, training of mentors and head-teachers (Lange, 1998). After the testing and preliminary training sessions, it is normal to pay “incentives” (in cash or kind)

30 Personal observation.

31 Management by an outside organisation protects community educators from pressures to favour particular community members and groups with jobs or other benefits, under conditions of insecurity and resource scarcity.

32 The proposal mentioned an initial “theme-based” curriculum integrating psychosocial needs, and relevant topics such as health, civics, human rights or conflict resolution, relevant to the Timor situation.

to the selected full-time teachers, to ensure continuity of service.³³ Otherwise, teachers' families will ask them to do petty trade or manual labour to earn cash for basic necessities instead of teaching, and the training they have received will be lost to the system.

Training community members in school management. It is important to prepare communities to play an ongoing role in the management of schools. The school education committee or parent-teacher association can be a grassroots training ground for improved local and national governance (Vargas-Baron and McClure, 1998; WEF, 2000c: 18–23). In many cases this idea is welcomed by programme managers and teachers, but there may be little concept of the role of such a committee (beyond asking for labour on school buildings and for fees).³⁴ UNICEF Somalia has produced an illustrated book for sharing with parents and community leaders, indicating how they can contribute to the quality of school life. The GTZ refugee education programme in Pakistan has recently prepared a manual for community support to schooling, based on the work of its community mobilization unit.

Community members understand the reasons for non-enrolment or drop-out of children, notably children from the poorest families and girls, and can help overcome these problems. They can also assist the school in recruiting students who have disabilities and in coping with ex-combatants. The Community Education Committee can help to bring about changes regarding participation in schooling of teenage mothers and regarding HIV/AIDS awareness and attitudes to students with AIDS. Involvement of the community in school management can facilitate communication of survival and peace-building messages to adults. Since many displaced persons will return to countries and districts where education cannot be adequately supported by government, this is an area for more research and dissemination of good practice.

Community-based rapid response in Zambia

Following the refugee influx in 1999 and early 2000, education committees were organized in all camps to initiate recreational activities and prepare sites for emergency schooling. Learning processes took the form of simple lessons combined with recreation activities. Well-qualified refugee teachers from DRC organized a structured programme for Congolese refugee students, using photocopies of the DRC curriculum obtained from UNHCR Tanzania, where CARE International staff visited to study "education for repatriation arrangements". UNICEF later procured DRC textbooks ... Because of the unavailability of resources for secondary education, some of the refugee teachers have organized private tuition for refugee secondary school students ... Levels of literacy among the newly arrived Angolan refugees in Mayukwayukwa camp are very low, and children aged 7 to 17 registered for schooling have begun emergency education with singing, literacy classes, recreational activities, Portuguese, and a few greetings in English ... In Nangweshi camp, new Angolan refugees have begun classes incorporating elements of the UNESCO-PEER approach (Chanda, 2000: 1–4).

33 "Normal" especially for refugee populations which have limited earnings possibilities. "Incentives" should at least compensate for "earnings foregone" from unskilled work, should be modest enough to be fundable and should preferably not be such as to deter repatriation when this becomes a realistic option (though lack of security in the home area is more often the deterrent nowadays).

34 The author spoke recently to a number of urban Afghan refugee educators who asked what parent-teacher associations or school management committees would actually do (education in Afghanistan had been directed by the state).

Strengthening local education administration. In post-conflict situations, national- and district-level education authorities may be functioning with new staff and without basic office equipment or transport. Yet they may be asked to present strategies to donors and to coordinate the actions of UN agencies, NGOs and community groups. Training as well as modest material assistance should be envisaged in the early stages of reconstruction.



Many of the children are traumatized by the ordeal of their flight. This 3½ year old girl and her family just arrived in Kukes, northern Albania, after an arduous five-day trek inside Kosovo. UNHCR/04.1999/U. Meissner

Some issues for consideration. There is no consistency between emergency education programmes in the importance given to the above capacity-building measures. Much depends on the experience of project staff. Some programmes give teacher training for only 10 days in the long vacation, while for others training is a major feature of the whole programme, with courses and in-school mentoring for teachers, mobile trainers and school clustering arrangements. IRC in Guinea and JRS in Uganda have had good results with a separate teacher training unit, using mobile trainers who are distinct from field supervisory staff (Lange, 1998: 39–40; Tim Brown, personal communication). Some programmes in Pakistan have separate staffing for training of teachers and training of community education committees. Elsewhere, many programmes integrate teacher supervision and training, and community mobilization. The precise arrangements will depend on scale and logistics, but training should be a major feature of emergency education programmes, incorporating the elements mentioned above.

Another dilemma is the sharing of responsibility between the community and the implementing agency, and between international and national or refugee staff. Progressive devolution is desirable, as a capacity-building measure and for reasons of sustainability.

Meeting psychosocial needs of the child–adolescent age group

Psychologists and psychoanalysts working in the field of emergency response are deeply preoccupied with a debate regarding the universality or otherwise of the concepts of psychiatry and psychology in non-Western cultures. For some experts, elements of the Western approach must be used, while for others the focus should be the restoration of supportive social structures broken by conflict and displacement (Summerfield, 1999; Bracken et al., 1997; Parker, 1996; IFRC, 1999).³⁵ The large-scale use of individualized therapies is not practicable in such situations, and a community-based approach is needed. UNICEF's support for community-based psychosocial projects was one of its main interventions during the conflicts in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, following the break-up of Yugoslavia. Local psychologists were hired to train school teachers and primary health care workers in the basics of psychological trauma. A 1998 review concluded that teachers were given valuable information about behavioural changes in their students at an important time and felt better able to cope (Richardson, 1998: 38–40).

As noted earlier, the 1997 evaluation of UNHCR's programmes for refugee children and adolescents recommended the early introduction of structured activities, tailored to the needs, concerns and resources of the population, and including such elements as "structured play and safe spaces to play; separate sports activities for boys and girls; literacy and numeracy instruction; key health, sanitation and nutrition messages; mine awareness and other safety information; drawing and painting; traditional songs, dance, theatre and story telling; lessons in traditional knowledge and skills; community service activities; and training in such conflict resolution skills as communication, negotiation and decision-making" (UNHCR, 1997c: 18).

Psychosocial issues were to the fore in the Rwandan crisis. In the Lumasi refugee camp, in Ngara, Tanzania, the NGO responsible for community services, Norwegian People's Aid, organized simple recreational activities for children within two months of the arrival of the Rwandan refugees in April 1994. This laid the

35 This has perhaps distracted them from a professional concern with emergency education programmes. Two symposia were held in Washington under the auspices of the Congressional Hunger Committee in March 1999. Some participants in the "Education in Crisis and Transition" meeting stayed on for the symposium on "Psychosocial Effects of Complex Emergencies". But the report of the latter does not discuss education as such, even though at least two key participants were strong supporters of rapid educational response on psychosocial grounds.

foundations for the subsequent inter-agency consensus on phased response to education in emergencies. Phase One focuses on generalized psychosocial response through simple community-based recreational and educational activities, while preparations are made for organized schooling. Phase Two corresponds to simple schooling accessible to all, and Phase Three is achieved with reintroduction of a unified system of curriculum, teacher training and examinations (UNHCR, 1995a: 25–37; Aguilar and Retamal, 1998). The Rwandan refugee schools in Tanzania each had a “psychosocial teacher”, but problems were encountered, not least because the schools were very large and operating on a shift system. The role of the psychosocial teachers was not clear to many refugee staff, but was beneficial (Stolte, 1996: 33). In Rwanda, UNICEF initiated training of teachers in basic trauma theory and appropriate school activities in August 1994, leading to a nation-wide Trauma Recovery Programme, including the training of over 8,000 primary and secondary school teachers (Aguilar and Richmond, 1998: 132–133).

Jacinta Goveas, UNHCR’s Community Services Officer in Macedonia from April to June 1999, commented that children serve as a “release mechanism” for adults’ feelings of anger and hatred, and that the adults’ conscious or unconscious indoctrination of children might lead to renewal of conflict in 20 years’ time. She noted that even in refugee pre-school groups, children were singing songs about blood and revenge. The teachers needed consciousness-raising about this (they responded favourably to her suggestions that such songs might be harmful), and trauma counselling for themselves. She recommended that emergency kits should include materials to help teachers deal with their own post-traumatic problems (Jacinta Goveas, personal communication).

Some issues for consideration. There are vast areas of virgin territory to be explored concerning the effectiveness of structured activities including education in healing the effects of trauma, displacement, breakage of social networks and so on, among child and adolescent populations in emergency situations.^{36,37} Education and social work are often more art than science, however, so that it is better to introduce constructive social activities of the type discussed above rather than wait for “scientific proof” of effectiveness (which will be difficult to achieve, given widely varying situations and cultures, and ethical considerations in establishing valid control groups). Another area to consider is how to bring structured activities to out-of-school children and adolescents as well as to school pupils over the longer term, rather than seeing them as a gap-filler for young children until schools are established.

Carl Triplehorn, IRC’s Education Officer in Kosovo, noted that reconstruction programmes for 2000/2001 include psychosocial training for teachers. He drew attention to the question of whether “psychosocial” experts should train teachers, or whether it would be better for experienced teacher trainers with psychosocial exposure to train teachers in how to bring the psychosocial dimension into their daily teaching. He tended to favour the latter (Carl Triplehorn, personal communication).

36 The territory referred to here concerns child and adolescent populations in general rather than specific groups of individuals such as child soldiers, for whom there is more documentation: see, for example, McCallin and Jareg, 1996, and the ARC Training Module on Child Soldiers (UNHCR and SCA, 2000).

37 The International Children’s Institute has prepared a generic manual on psychosocial programming for children in refugee camps which can be a useful resource in programme development (ICI, 2000). The initial version is designed for, and under trial in, the Balkans, and adaptations are envisioned for other regions.

Psychosocial components of emergency education programmes in Sierra Leone

Pilot education programmes have been developed to meet the psychosocial needs of children in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Following the attack on Freetown in early 1999, with its killings, rapes, amputations and abductions, a joint initiative for rapid education response was developed over the period April to July 1999 and initiated in August 1999 by UNESCO's Gonzalo Retamal, working with the NGO Plan International, the Education Ministry, UNICEF and the Federation of African Women Educators (FAWE). A teacher's guide was prepared which covered two "domains". Domain One comprised core literacy and numeracy. Domain Two comprised six elements: trauma healing, physical education and corporal expression, art, music, drama and peace education. Domain Two began with a trauma healing module of four weeks, comprising "structured trauma activity", plus modelling with clay, songs and music, drama and role playing, local games, cultural dance (one of these activities each morning), and jump-rope, throwing and catching balls, athletics, volleyball and football (one of these each afternoon).

Evaluation of the psychological state of the children before and after the trauma healing module and the literacy/numeracy lessons indicated a dramatic reduction in troubling symptoms, which had persisted for months until the course began. The children had been exposed to very traumatic events (80 per cent lost a nuclear family member, more than two-thirds had witnessed people being killed or attacked, and almost all had expected to die). In a pre-test before the "rapid education" course began, 95 per cent of the interviewed children had reported thinking about the most traumatic event when they did not want to. This number was reduced by 37 per cent in post-test interviews, held two to six weeks after the trauma healing module was completed. In the pre-test, 71 per cent had reported experiencing recurrent mental pictures of the worst event. This was reduced by 63 per cent in the post-test. In terms of arousal symptoms, 80 per cent of children reported difficulty concentrating at the first interview, when the courses had just begun. This was reduced to 10 per cent at the post-test. There was also a 49 per cent reduction in sleep difficulties, a 47 per cent decline in irritability, a 29 per cent decline in startle reactions and 38 per cent reduction in bad dreams. More than half the children stated that they felt a sense of relief while drawing pictures, talking or writing about their bad memories from the war. The limited timeframe and lack of a control group mean that this valuable study needs follow-up by the "psychosocial" community.

The Norwegian Refugee Council and UNICEF initiative for re-insertion of older Sierra Leonean children into schooling was developed in early 2000 by local educators (with facilitation from NRC), drawing on the "rapid education" programme just described and other materials. It comprises six strands: literacy; numeracy; trauma healing; physical and health / AIDS education; religious and moral education; and peace and human rights education. This Rapid Response Education Programme aims to help children aged over 10 years of age re-enter schooling that was disrupted by nine years of conflict. This programme should permit (re-)insertion of children into the regular school system at the beginning of the next school year, or into an accelerated learning programme for adolescents. Due to a general lack of school places, younger children seek to join also. (Gupta (2000), Retamal (1999), Mette Nordstrand and Eldrid Midttun (personal communications)).

Rapid response

A major focus in emergency education policy during the 1990s has been to develop modalities of rapid educational response, to meet the psychosocial and educational needs of crisis-affected children. A working group called “RAPID ED” held a series of meetings in the early 1990s on emergency response.³⁸ Examples of speedy response include education for Kosovar refugees in Albania and Macedonia in 1999, newly arriving Burundi and Congolese refugees in Tanzania since 1996 and recent influxes of Angolan refugees in Zambia. In these cases, and no doubt in many more, there was response to the needs of some new arrivals within the first two months.

As will be seen below, there has been much debate as to whether pre-assembled education kits can contribute to rapid response (as compared to local procurement and distribution of educational materials). Of the above-mentioned cases, UNICEF kits were supplied in Tanzania, Albania and Macedonia, although response may have pre-dated their arrival. UNICEF has recently adopted a core corporate commitment to supply some education and recreation kits by air within a few days and a larger number, as required, by sea or land within a month.³⁹ Deployments from the standby roster maintained by NRC have contributed to rapid education response in sudden crises such as Kosovo in 1999 and Eritrean refugee movements in 2000.

Some issues for consideration. It is often difficult to be precise about the speed of response retrospectively, as emergencies may arise gradually and population displacement may continue over months or years, while education response tends to build up gradually, in terms of geographic coverage and activities undertaken. Hence data was not to hand for the present study systematically to review achievements in speed of response. However, it would be most desirable for future emergency education programmes to document in “real time” the dates of crisis onset and subsequent population movements and crises, of needs assessments and actions taken in the various relevant locations. This would help “ground” the concept of “rapid” response, and perhaps show which factors make for speed and effectiveness.

Relating response to the school year

A welcome trend has been to take note of the timing of an emergency in relation to the school year, and to develop emergency response programmes that not only meet the psychosocial needs of children and adolescents quickly (see below) but also lead to completion of unfinished studies in time for a new school year. As noted below, the Albanian government formulated a plan for “catch-up” classes so that Kosovo refugees could be ready for the new school year in September 1999, whether in Albania or Kosovo. In 2000, the Eritrean government likewise arranged vacation classes for schoolchildren to make up the last three weeks of the school year, disrupted by conflict. This permitted students to sit school examinations needed for promotion to the next year of schooling.⁴⁰ Alternatively there can be a road-map for resumption of formal studies, with an “emergency phase” until the beginning of the next school year, as in refugee programmes in Tanzania (see below).

38 This was a sub-group of the International Multi-channel Action Group for Education (IMAGE), based at the International Council for Distance Education, Oslo.

39 Personal communications from Pilar Aguilar and Peter Buckland (2000).

40 In Rwanda, the school year beginning in September 1993 was extended to December 1994, because of the genocide. The next school year was compressed to run January–July 1995 inclusive, after which the normal timings resumed (Mark Richmond, personal communication).

Some issues for consideration. Initial emergency assessments could perhaps focus more strongly on a detailed understanding of the pre-emergency education system. Educators in the affected population can advise on how to restore a sense of normalcy in terms of school years, examinations and so on, given the practical constraints of the particular situation.

Education for durable solutions

UNICEF has emphasized that long-term education development objectives should guide even the earliest phase of emergency education response (Pigozzi, 1999). Refugee agencies seek durable solutions to refugee problems, namely voluntary repatriation, local settlement in the country of first asylum or resettlement in a third country. Opportunities for local settlement and resettlement are limited, and most refugees in any case long to return to their homeland, if they can do so in safety and dignity. Hence the durable solution for most refugee populations has to be return to their own country; but while this may in some circumstances be possible in a matter of weeks, in other circumstances it can take years or even decades.

At the UN–NGO Consultation on Refugee Education convened by UNHCR after the Jomtien Conference on Education for All in 1990, a major focus was on strengthening the concept of “education for repatriation”. Participants described how the education programme for Mozambican refugees in Malawi and Zimbabwe was being developed on this basis. The refugee schools followed the Mozambican curriculum, using Portuguese as the medium of instruction. Textbook supply, in-service teacher training and school examinations were organized in coordination with the Mozambican Ministry of Education. In consequence the students were in a position to re-enter the school system in Mozambique after repatriation (Smawfield, 1998).⁴¹ The smaller numbers of Mozambican refugees in Zambia and Tanzania, who were following the national curricula there, did not study Portuguese, and therefore may have had to repeat lower primary school classes in Mozambique after repatriation. The other cases presented at the consultation were the education of Afghan refugees in Pakistan (also following the principle of education for repatriation) and emergency education in the Horn of Africa.

The concept of “education for repatriation”, using the home country curriculum, gained recognition during the 1990s (Preston, 1991; UNHCR, 1995a: 14, 28; Retamal and Aedo-Richmond, 1998a). Besides preparing students to re-enter schooling in their areas of origin, it also permits the employment of educated refugees as teachers. Familiar classroom materials and teachers provide a sense of security and identity for the displaced students.

The most important aspect of the curriculum from the viewpoint of repatriation is the language(s) used for study. Thus the Afghan refugees who fled to Pakistan in the 1980s studied in their own language (mostly Pushtu), while following a curriculum based on their religious beliefs, rather than the Marxist curriculum adopted in Afghanistan at that time. They also study Pakistan’s national language, Urdu. This is an example

⁴¹ Gonzalo Retamal and Ruth Aedo-Richmond (1998) describe the attempts of the consultation to establish inter-agency cooperation on refugee education, but the mechanism devised (a UN–NGO Working Group on Refugee Education to meet between consultations) did not prove viable, due to factors such as staff rotation and the inability of NGOs to meet travel costs. Cooperation may be easier in the age of e-mail.

of a curriculum that “faces both ways”, providing needed linguistic skills for children, some of whose families are likely to repatriate and some not.⁴² In the case of refugees from southern Sudan, the previous curriculum had been anglophone, similar to that in Kenya and Uganda, their principal asylum countries. Based on the wishes of the refugees, the refugee schools follow the curriculum of the host country: studies are thus linked to the education tradition of the area of origin rather than to the current national curriculum of the country of origin.

There has in the past been some feeling of national pride, requiring that refugees should follow the host country curriculum.⁴³ This is still the case in the DRC, where students from southern Sudan and from Angola have to follow the francophone national curriculum, even though their own education traditions are based on English and Portuguese respectively. It is true for Sudan, where the government schools for refugees use Arabic medium and the national curriculum.⁴⁴ There are human rights issues to be considered here (see below). In the case of very long-stay refugees there is some rationale for following the host country curriculum plus the language of the area of origin, but a bridging phase is needed to help children make the transition.

Regional approach and certification. The regional approach to Mozambican education has just been noted. In 1994 there was inter-agency cooperation and a regional approach to emergency education from the beginning of the Rwandan emergency. UNICEF and UNESCO-PEER shared an office in Kigali and supported the distribution of education kits and associated teacher training for Rwandan students in Rwanda itself, in Tanzania and in eastern Zaire (Aguilar and Richmond, 1998). Currently, a regional approach to certification of examinations has been developed by UNHCR and UNICEF in Tanzania, working with education authorities in Burundi and DRC (see Tanzania case study below). UNESCO-PEER is leading a process to examine modalities of certification of refugee studies in East Africa (UNESCO-PEER, 2000: 3).

The IRC refugee education programme in Guinea gave early priority to producing a curriculum that incorporated the requirements of both countries of origin, Liberia and Sierra Leone, leading to recognition of school attainments by the education authorities of these countries. The refugee school examinations are administered by the West African Examinations Council. IRC’s strong refugee teacher training programme in Guinea did not meet the precise specifications for teacher qualifications in Liberia, however, and could not be recognized in the early stages of repatriation. After prolonged negotiations, the Liberian Education Ministry agreed that IRC’s teacher training programme in Guinea was acceptable as a qualification for a “C-level” teacher training qualification in Liberia. The refugee teacher training programme in Cote d’Ivoire was deemed insufficient for accreditation. This is an example of how a decision taken early on – to design the in-service training of refugee teachers so that it cumulatively covers the teacher training curriculum of the country of origin – could contribute to a durable solution (Nordstrand, 2000: 13).

42 For a review of current curriculum issues see Education for Afghans: a strategy paper (Rugh, 1998) and follow-up papers in preparation by Ellen van Kalmthout of UNICEF Afghanistan and Andrea Rugh of Save the Children. These papers describe inter-agency collaboration to identify grade-wise “basic competency” objectives and produce shared supplementary materials.

43 Use of the host country curriculum may create more teaching jobs for nationals, but may disempower refugees who could otherwise teach. Use of some host country nationals as teachers, for subjects such as their own language, represents a compromise, but there can be disquiet if they are paid more than refugee teachers.

44 Some refugee families sent their children to informal schools following the Eritrean curriculum (Appadu and Retamal, 1998: 48–50).

Opportunity for positive change. Crisis can provide the opportunity to upgrade education programmes, providing long-term benefits. Don Foster-Gross (2000: 2–4) cites USAID’s support to the Honduran Education Ministry for curriculum revision as well as infrastructure reconstruction after Hurricane Mitch and USAID’s wider efforts to promote participatory planning and local contributions to educational governance. UNICEF emphasizes emergencies as an “opportunity for educational transformation” (Pigozzi, 1999). UNMIK’s “Developing the Education System in Kosovo” (DESK) initiative in Kosovo comprises a system design team of 25 Kosovar educators (inclusive of women and minorities) and 22 international educators working to analyse education problems and develop strategies for transformation to meet the needs of the twenty-first century (Daxner, 2000: 10–11).

Some issues for consideration. UNHCR should look more closely at situations where refugees are forced to follow the host country curriculum, in languages different from their previous languages of instruction. There are several important human rights issues that would support freedom to use the previous medium of instruction (Bruce Abramson, personal communication). Another important concern is to ensure that school studies and teacher training in emergencies are recognized after the emergency is over, for example after repatriation. Regarding emergency as an opportunity for positive change, can norms be developed from analysis of recent emergencies that will encourage major donors to fund renovation of education systems (and not merely reconstruction of buildings)?

Survival and peace-building messages

The difference between education in emergencies and in a normal situation, is that the target group’s needs are taken more into account more than the [normal] curriculum would. Basic learning and basic knowledge for coping mentally and physically is given priority along with knowledge and practice that will help promote a peaceful and values-/rights-based rebuilding of the war-torn communities. (Midttun, 2000b: 2)

Health education. Throughout the 1990s there has been a growing awareness of the need to convey information to crisis-affected communities.⁴⁵ Some senior managers see this as a justification for maintaining refugee education budgets in times of acute funding constraints.⁴⁶ UNESCO-PEER has prepared booklets in Somali on “Cholera Awareness”, “A World without Polio”, “HIV/AIDS and Other Sexually Transmitted Diseases”, and charts on sexually transmitted diseases, acute respiratory infections and diarrhoea, as well as health education textbooks and teacher guides (UNESCO-PEER, 2000).

45 “Supplementary survival packages: Around the basic core of non-formal responses [recreation, literacy/numeracy], important subjects or “emergency themes” are crucial in order to heighten awareness of the affected populations and especially for the children and youth who have been the victims of armed conflicts. The research and assessment of these “generative themes” are an important part of the dialogue between the educators and the populations affected by the humanitarian crisis. These contents constitute the foundation for developing a basic safety net of knowledge and understanding for the populations that are confronted with extreme situations, and the daily threat of land mines, cholera, waterborne diseases, and/or the degradation of the environment ... The theme of becoming aware about the horror of war, the desire for peace and reconciliation, can be ‘generated’ from the active realization of the perils left by these confrontations, such as land mines, cholera, famine, HIV/AIDS etc.” (Aguilar and Retamal, 1998: 33).

46 Kolude Doherty, Director of the Africa Bureau, UNHCR: personal communication.

UNHCR is developing programmes to sensitize refugee communities to the dangers of HIV/AIDS and sexual and gender-based violence, and has prepared a “how to” guide on reproductive health education for adolescents based on the IRC programme in Guinea (Flax and James-Traore, 1998). UNICEF has supported governments and NGOs in developing health education materials in many countries, adapted for emergency situations as necessary, and with especial attention to HIV/AIDS education. The package of HIV/AIDS education materials developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNESCO is a useful resource that should be widely distributed for local adaptation (WHO and UNESCO, 1994).



Returnees from Mozambique in a mine awareness class by a Zimbabwean Demining Company. Espungabera Transit Centre. UNHCR/05.1994/L. Taylor

Environmental awareness. UNHCR and UNESCO-PEER have worked together to prepare environmental education materials for years one to eight of schooling in refugee camps in east Africa; these materials are designed to enrich the teaching of school subjects with key environmental messages affecting children's lives (Talbot and Muigai, 1998).⁴⁷ Follow-up activities are needed to make such materials available in more countries and to ensure that the materials are actually used, despite the difficulties of integration into an overloaded school programme.

Mine awareness. Mine awareness has received much attention recently (Baxter et al., 1997; Baxter and Hoffmann, 1998; Swedish Save the Children, 1998, 1999b; UNICEF, 1999a; UNHCR and SCA, 2000). UNICEF is the designated lead agency within the UN system (see www.unicef.org). The University of Pittsburgh's Global Information Network In Education (GINIE) website has a strong focus on this topic (www.ginie.org).

Education for peace and citizenship. Conflict has become less a matter of geopolitics and more a matter of disputes between neighbouring countries or neighbouring citizens. This has led to increased emphasis on education to build skills and attitudes supportive of tolerance and peace. UNESCO has developed the theme of a Culture of Peace, and is responsible for the Decade of Education for the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001–2010. UNESCO-PEER has worked with Somali educators to develop peace education materials for Somalia (UNESCO-PEER, 2000: 6–7). UNICEF has developed a peace education teachers' training manual (Fountain, 1997) and has worked with governments and NGOs to promote peace education (Fountain, 1999). NRC has produced a Human Rights Education Resource Book, which includes peace education and human rights messages.⁴⁸ Since 1999, the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC) has established a network of 15 sites for its "Exploring humanitarian law" project, which has produced a manual for testing with adolescents in secondary and non-formal education programmes (Tawil, 2000: 590–91).⁴⁹

Thanks to earmarked funding, UNHCR's peace education consultant has been able to work with a multi-national group of refugee educators to develop a set of generic peace education teachers' guides, with a complete set of lesson plans for years one to eight of schooling, and a facilitators' manual for concurrent training sessions in the community (Baxter, 2000). Such foundational materials should in future be supplemented by modules focusing on specific health behaviours and coping skills, environmental behaviour, humanitarian law, and citizenship issues, including an understanding of global human rights dialogue as a guide to building democratic governance locally and nationally. There should be linkage to psychosocial programming, and a guide to phasing, from modules catering to early emergency through to post-crisis situations.⁵⁰

47 For Ethiopia materials see UNESCO-PEER and UNHCR (1999).

48 Originally developed for use in Albania, NRC has introduced the programme jointly with the respective education ministries in Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Angola, and provided it to the OSCE Human Rights Education programme in Kosovo (Midttun, 1999).

49 Humanitarian law is especially relevant for populations in conflict-prone areas, and can be linked to peace education, citizenship education and human rights education, as appropriate to local conditions.

50 At a key RAPID-ED meeting in 1995, the working group on education for conflict resolution and peacebuilding, facilitated by Eldrid Midttun, suggested that, "Initial peacebuilding curricula for refugees should include stress reduction, communication skills, information management, information on the refugee camp and refugees' rights. Curricula for refugees while in exile should include dealing with conflict and conflict resolution, mediation skills and an attempt to create normalcy through activities such as sports and music. Curricula designed to prepare refugees for repatriation should include reconciliation skills, education for democracy-building and human rights education" (Tilson, 1995).

Peace education in practice

UNHCR peace education materials are used in all refugee schools in Kenya, where some 42,000 children have a peace education lesson period each week and where more than 3,000 young people and adults have followed the community training (12 half-day sessions plus periodic follow-up sessions). Peace education has a separate lesson period, and separate well-trained teachers, since it requires a different, skill-based approach, compared with the rote learning or “chalk and talk” approach used in most refugee schools (Baxter, 2000). Peace education “lessons” in fact give many students and teachers a first insight into participative methods in education, which are strongly emphasized in the peace education teacher training. “The peace education teachers are now considered to be the best-trained teachers in the camp and they have taken on roles which were not envisaged, such as peer training, counselling and mentoring” (Baxter, personal communication).

Young people can be confined to the camps for many years, with little intellectual stimulation, and the opportunity should be taken to prepare the next generation for seeking ways of rebuilding their societies rather than perpetuating conflict.

The skills included in peace education programmes are also known as “life skills”. They include active listening, understanding emotions, cooperation, problem-solving, prejudice reduction, negotiation and mediation, and are developed through class activities followed by discussion. As noted during an inter-agency meeting convened by the World Health Organization, these skills are needed for positive goals such as gender equality, democracy and peace, as well as for prevention of HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, racism, environmental damage, depression, suicide and conflict (WHO, 1999).

Some issues for consideration. Making room for these messages and for skills training in emergency education situations is not easy. In a developing world situation especially, teachers are often under-educated and under-trained, reference books for teachers and students are few, hours of study are often limited by a shift system or lack of school lunches, studies are examination-oriented, and much time is needed for students to copy notes down from the blackboard, the normal means of knowledge transfer. Much emphasis is laid on rote-learning, and many teachers lack professional questioning skills and awareness of the value of discussion in the classroom. Given resource and teacher limitations and the overloaded curriculum, the Western approach of “integrating” messages and skills into the teaching of normal subjects can be difficult. On the other hand, it is difficult to find a classroom period for a new topic. From the point of view of programme management, it is easier to do the latter, since it is a one-off decision and relatively easy to monitor. It can be acceptable to the teachers and community if the topic is deemed important, such as health or peace education.

Another question is whether to use special teachers. IRC’s health education programme in Guinea and UNHCR’s peace education programme have used this approach, so that there are staff with skills and motivation (their job) to give most or all of their time to health or peace respectively. Another requirement for effectiveness is to reach out-of-school peers and adults, so that the messages are reinforced: this can be problematic where a topic is introduced in a national education system.⁵¹ After-school clubs, vacation workshops, and youth clubs or study circles are other ways of reaching children and young people.

⁵¹ As in the tolerance education programme developed for young adolescents in government schools in Kyrgyzstan with support from UNHCR (Jenkins, 1997). There is now some wider outreach through the Kyrgyz NGO Foundation Tolerance International (Barbara Smith, personal communication).

Broadening the concept of education

As is evident from the above examples, key agencies now identify “education in emergencies” with the range of activities needed to normalize the state of traumatized and/or displaced children and adolescents. In some cases (in refugee camps in Tanzania, for example), the same organization looks after “Community Services” and education, and arranges recreational, cultural and other healing activities for young refugees, without having to draw a boundary between what is “education” and what is something else. In some cases, however, an organization which does not specialize in education and children’s programming is given a budget for “education”. The agency may not be aware that “education” in emergency has the wider dimensions noted above, even for its own school students. And there may be no organization to support non-formal education and recreation, cultural and other healing activities for out-of-school children and adolescents. It may be argued that non-formal education should be a “default” responsibility of the NGO responsible for schooling, if no other agency is systematically covering the needs of out-of-school children and adolescents.

Questions for consideration. Some of the leaders in the field of “emergency education” have moved to this broader approach, and hopefully others will follow. This may require a clearer focus in the policy guidelines of donor and implementing agencies. It will be desirable to include “real-time evaluation” in these innovative programmes, so that lessons learned can be quickly shared elsewhere.



Attention to specific groups: gender, early childhood, adolescents, minorities, children with disability, separated children, ex-combatants

Education programmes can easily overlook the special needs of specific groups. Under-representation of girls is widely reported and discussed (Stromquist, 1997; WEF, 2000d). Belated attention has been paid to the needs of adolescents. In some emergencies, special measures are needed to promote the access of minority group children to education. Special measures may be needed to bring children with disability, separated children and ex-combatant children into the education process. Efforts of this kind are important as examples of human rights in practice for crisis-affected populations that may have suffered from human rights abuses.

Refugee children from Mali at a school in M'Berra Camp, Mauritania. UNHCR/10.1996/JJ. Brigou

Gender. A growing international consensus on the importance of girls' education led the UN Secretary-General to devote most of his opening speech at the Year 2000 World Education Forum to this topic, at which he launched a special UN Girls' Education Initiative. Gender equity, or promoting the participation of girls, features as an objective in almost every emergency education programme.

Many of the issues affecting girls' education in poor countries affect refugee girls also. The most prominent reason for the under-representation of refugee girls in school affects boys also, namely family poverty. However, the poverty factor has a gender bias.⁵² In some cultures, the most traditional families hold back from girls' education or withdraw their daughters from school before puberty.⁵³ There are many ways in which girls' participation in schooling can be promoted in refugee and other emergency situations (Sinclair, 1998b). For example, older girls are reluctant to attend school if they do not have clothing that preserves their decency, and they need soap and sanitary materials. Where adolescent boys have to work, special late afternoon classes can be held for them, as in the GTZ refugee programme in Pakistan (GTZ, 1999a: 3).

A broader concept and wider outreach

"Structured normalizing activities for children and adolescents that address their protection and developmental needs" is the key objective of the "Consortium" programme in East Timor, the consortium comprising Save the Children/US, Christian Children's Fund and IRC. Many children and adolescents in East Timor are out of school (sometimes out of reach of school, since many schools were destroyed and many teachers have left). The project "trains community adults and youth leaders [to lead] appropriate games and activities for children and youth in post-conflict settings", issuing each with a "psychosocial kit" comprising "basic education supplies, recreation and sports equipment". There is support for parent-teacher associations or education committees (to help restore schooling), support and capacity-building for youth clubs and organizations, training of youth to work with younger children or vulnerable peers, and so on. The project goal is "to enable East Timorese children and adolescents to resume healthy development through community-based protection, psychosocial and reconciliation programmes"(CPPPS, 2000: 1). These "normalizing" programmes can not only help children recover from trauma and move forward, but provide a training ground for youth and adults to learn the skills of constructive participation in the work of civil society, in the competencies needed for democratic local and national governance.

52 Investment in boys' education is seen as bringing greater long-term benefits to the family. Poverty also means that girls have more household chores than boys, since many of the chores confronting poor families are very time-consuming and are seen as female tasks. WHO's provision of a monthly tin of edible oil to Afghan refugee girls attending school regularly in Pakistan, has had a dramatic positive effect on girls' attendance (Geert van der Castele, personal communication).

53 In many societies there is concern that girls will be sexually active or harassed if they attend school after puberty. There are often strict rules against the participation of pregnant girls or teenage mothers in school, but in some locations an effort has been made to overcome this tradition. Special measures may be needed to prevent harassment by teachers and students in school, and by students or others on the way home from school.

Early childhood. There are several views on pre-school education in emergency settings. For some, it seems a luxury. The best way to overcome this problem is to help the community organize simple kindergarten or pre-school activities, as happens in many refugee situations. This can sometimes be done even in the midst of conflict, as shown by the work of Save the Children in Bosnia (Nuttall, 1999, Burde, 1999).⁵⁴ It is preferable to train community volunteers for this work, so that it can continue when funding is no longer available. Training, supervision and the supply of simple materials need to be funded, however, to ensure effective programme development. These issues need to be discussed with the community in the context of promoting girls' education. Girls commonly have to look after younger siblings, which is especially important in the confusion of early emergency. Hence, the introduction of simple kindergarten and pre-school activities can contribute to girls' enrolment and retention in school.

Adolescents. Adolescents are at a particularly vulnerable stage of their personal development in psychological terms, as well as at risk of being raped, forced into early marriage, recruited into militias and so on. There has been a tendency in emergencies to ignore them: it is much easier to organize classes for very young children.⁵⁵ Influenced by the children's lobby seeking to promote the wellbeing of persons up to 18 years of age (the age group covered by the Convention on the Rights of the Child) and by the Machel Report, with its explicit concern about the neglect of adolescents, agencies are now attempting to broaden the initial response to crises, to provide educational and related activities for adolescents (Lowicki, 2000: 12–18; UNHCR, 1997b, 1997c; UNHCR, 2000c). As noted above, the "Consortium" programme in East Timor provides for outreach to adolescents. The same is true, for example, for the IRC project "Emergency education and psychosocial support for Chechen children and adolescents in Ingushetia"⁵⁶ and the Save the Children/US programme in eastern Ethiopia.⁵⁷

In many developing countries, education begins late or has been interrupted, with the consequence that many of the children in primary school are adolescents. For older adolescents needing to begin schooling, special classes separate from very young children are sometimes arranged. For example, an accelerated learning programme for adolescents, which covers the first six years of schooling in three years, initially developed in Liberia, has recently been adapted by the Ministry of Youth, Education and Sports in Sierra Leone (Mette Nordstrand, personal communication).

It is not always easy to attract the intended age group to an activity. NRC reports that some students following its emergency school programme in Angola are at the lower end of the intended age bracket of 6 to 14 years, although one objective had been to promote the insertion of older children into regular schooling (Johannessen, 2000: 12–13). Likewise, in Sierra Leone, the programme intended to support re-insertion into schooling of children aged 10 to 13 (or older) is "finding it difficult to avoid children under 10 when regular schooling is insufficient" (Mette Nordstrand, personal communication). For more educated

54 For examples of early childhood work with refugees in Guatemala and Zambia respectively, see Dagnino (1996) and Fozzard and Tembo (1996).

55 For recreational, cultural and voluntary service activities for adolescents, promoted by UNHCR Community Services staff in Rwandan refugee camps in Tanzania, see Blomquist (1995: 23–26).

56 The objectives specified in the project document are "to rapidly provide normalising structured education activities for children and adolescents that address their cognitive and developmental needs", to establish "Parent-Education Committees", and "to respond to the protection and psychosocial needs of vulnerable adolescents through the establishment of theme-based clubs and the promotion of positive leadership roles".

57 The multisectoral UNHCR-funded programme includes under "education" activities the promotion of youth education centres, sports and cultural activities for youth as well as training for primary school teachers and other activities.

young people the creative writing workshops developed by Carl Solomon and Naomi Flutter working with refugees in Nepal have led to ongoing writing and community education activities by participants, with the age group 15 to 30 showing the greatest commitment to follow-up (Solomon, personal communication).⁵⁸

Minorities. In some emergencies, minorities have to be protected by separation, as in the case of mixed-marriage Hutu–Tutsi Rwandan refugee families in Tanzania. In Kosovo UN agencies and OSCE are currently promoting schooling for minority families which are threatened by the Kosovo Albanian population. In one area the peacekeeping troops had to start patrolling a local school road to allow Roma children, who were harassed by other children, to resume school attendance. In another area, a survey on access of Roma and Ashkalija children to school was postponed due to their families' fear that they would be harassed.⁵⁹ UNHCR undertook a needs assessment for Roma education and developed a plan of action for raising the education level of this community (Lange, 1999a).



A mutilation victim receiving help at the National Pediatric Center in Conakry. UNHCR provides therapy and medical aid, including artificial limbs, to dozens of the victims who fled to Guinea from Liberia and Sierra Leone. UNHCR/06.1999/P. Stromberg

Children with disability. In principle the emergency education approach of working with the community should facilitate the participation of children and adolescents with disability. During her mission to refugee schools in Guinea in 1998, Ellen Lange had noted that parents of disabled children often did not choose to send them to school, and stressed the importance of discussing these issues with the community.⁶⁰ In Bhutanese refugee schools in Nepal, there is systematic provision for the education of children with disability (Brown, 2001).

⁵⁸ See their Creative Writing Manual (forthcoming), and Nepal creative writing project evaluation report (forthcoming).

⁵⁹ See Kosovo Humanitarian Update, February 2000.

⁶⁰ A volunteer informed her that there were students with reduced eyesight among the refugees, who could see by day and not by night and would have difficulty seeing the blackboard inside the often dark school rooms. Eyesight and hearing issues need attention (Lange, 1998: 32–33).

The UNHCR adviser for education in Kosovo (seconded by NRC) focused on disability and minority issues. She recommended that the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities were taken into account in the reconstruction of schools destroyed by conflict or damaged by use as residential centres (Lange, 1999b).

Separated children. There have been unfortunate experiences in which orphanages established in emergency situations have led to family separations, as parents place their children there for food security, access to education or for other reasons. Where possible, the policy of placing separated children with families in the community and providing guidance and support is much preferred (UNHCR, 1999a: 102–104). However, this does entail monitoring that the fostered children have access to education equally with other children.

Ex-combatants:

Education [for child soldiers], and especially the completion of primary education, must be a high priority ... to normalize life and to develop an identity separate from that of the soldier. The development of peer relationships and improved self-esteem may also be facilitated through recreational and cultural activities ... Former combatants may have fallen far behind in their schooling, and may be placed in classes with far younger children. Specific measures may then be required, such as establishing special classes for former child soldiers who can then progressively be reintegrated into regular schools ... Many teachers and parents may object to having ex-combatants enrol in school, fearing that they will have a disruptive effect. Programmes must address these wider community concerns ... For older children especially, effective education will require strong components of training in life skills and vocational opportunity. (Machel, 1996: 20)

In Liberia, 77 per cent of demobilized soldiers stated that their foremost desire was to return to school. UNICEF helped supply primary schools with materials, train teachers and support peace education (in Monrovia up to 60 per cent of school children were reported to be former child soldiers, who often resorted to violence). UNICEF's Support for War Affected Youth (SWAY) project provided a regular day programme of counselling and vocational and literacy training, in three accessible counties. Graduates of the Zion Community College three-month course in trauma healing were used as counsellors. An accelerated curriculum was developed for child soldiers and others whose education had been disrupted by the conflict.⁶¹

Key requirements for ex-combatants are the re-establishment of trust, self-esteem, identity and attachment, self-control (rather than aggression), and recognition of their own resources and strengths. Save the Children/UK, working with Liberian child soldiers, stressed the need to create a normalized setting and wait until the children are ready to talk. The talk would not be of "trauma healing" but issues of suffering, loss, loneliness, terror and anxiety. Community members were trained to hold "supportive

⁶¹ The accelerated learning project condenses the six years of primary schooling into three. The curriculum focuses on skills development, and teaching methods are pupil-centred. The success of the programme lies in the students' motivation, their readiness to learn because they are older, and support from their families and communities. In Sierra Leone, the UNICEF Children Associated with War (CAW) demobilization process included access to a six-month programme of education, group counselling, play, recreation, vocational skills and apprenticeship training. (From UNICEF's assistance to ex-child soldiers, at www.ginie.org)

conversations” (avoiding the stigmatization of “trauma counselling”). It was found useful to have a goal in mind, such as controlling aggression or increasing concentration in class. Such practical discussions and goals enable children to gain gradual control of the problem.⁶²

Some of the lessons learned in demobilization and similar education programmes could be useful in helping schoolteachers deal with conflict-affected students and ex-soldiers. In Guinea, IRC teachers reported motivating young fighters who came out of the forest to stay in school, rather than returning to fight. They also reported violent incidents involving former child soldiers unable to cope with their situation. Being able to talk to teachers unconnected with their former military life may be a crucial factor in the students’ mental development, but their confidences can endanger teachers. Moreover, teachers need support when faced with claims from one student that another is responsible for the death of his or her family members (Lange, 1998: 32).

Children and adolescents involved in substance abuse or prostitution. These are important problems in current emergency situations, but have not been well documented in relation to emergency education.

Some issues for consideration. There are often simplistic approaches to estimating how many children are missing out on education, based on statistics comparing enrolment and population estimates. These give misleading results when there is a backlog of unmet demand for education and when population statistics are weak. Based on his experience with refugee programmes in Uganda, Tim Brown recommends that linkages should be built to the community to find out who is *not* in school (personal communication). Emergency programmes should have a systematic plan to extend progressively the coverage of schooling, based on local circumstances. Insights into local culture and the situation of poor families are vital here: this is an area where sensitive researchers with an anthropological methodology could make a contribution.⁶³ The broad understanding that participation is limited by poverty could be fine-tuned, for example, leading to locally workable ideas for action.

Reaching out to less accessible and insecure places

In many war-torn and insecure places such as Angola, southern Sudan, DRC, Sierra Leone and Chechnya, there are major problems of access and security. Some places become accessible for a time and then perhaps less accessible again. An example from the year 2000 was the arrival of about 100,000 refugees from DRC in remote and insecure parts of the Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. Even the most basic assistance is difficult under such conditions, and it is not clear whether NGOs will be willing or able to implement education programmes in such locations. Another example is the situation of refugees from East Timor, confined to camps in West Timor, and without international support at the time of writing, due to security concerns. In such situations efforts may be made to assist self-help or local government schooling through distribution of education and recreation kits, although the monitoring of their distribution and use may be difficult, and pilferage probable. There are many questions for consideration here and no easy answers.

⁶² From the Action for the Rights of the Child (ARC) training module on child soldiers (UNHCR and SCA (2000).

⁶³ Such research is to be funded in 2001 by the Mellon Foundation.

Preparing ongoing refugee or IDP programmes to receive new arrivals

Often, refugees or internally displaced persons arrive in locations where emergency programmes are already in place. For example, refugees continue to arrive in Tanzania, Pakistan, Zambia and Guinea (respectively 142,000, 93,000, 38,000 and 23,000 new arrivals in 1999), countries with well-established refugee education programmes. In contrast, the continuing arrival of refugees in DRC (65,000 in 1999) presents more problems of response, since even ongoing refugee education programmes (and national schools) face problems due to lack of access to insecure areas as well as funding constraints.

From the personal viewpoint, an emergency occurs when the life of an individual or family is threatened or disrupted. It is therefore important to prepare existing refugee or IDP programmes to meet promptly the psychosocial and educational needs of new arrivals. Ellen Lange's mission to study the well-established IRC refugee education programme in Guinea included a review of the education situation of the newly arrived refugees from Sierra Leone. Teachers felt that they lacked the competence and resources to meet the psychosocial needs of the recently traumatized students. They were uncertain how to cope with incidents of violence in the classroom linked to the newly arrived students, and noted that the admission of these students could revive feelings of trauma among fellow students. Based on this experience, Lange recommended training existing teachers in appropriate response, in identifying and reporting students with special problems, and in ways to ask for and use assistance from the refugee community when necessary. She stressed that this should be a standard component of emergency response, helping the students and preventing the teachers from feeling incapable of addressing a major problem. She suggested that girls who had been raped would benefit from even a short time in a peer group led by an experienced person (Lange, 1998: 31).

Discussions with NGO staff implementing refugee education programmes in Pakistan⁶⁴ indicated the need to balance rapid access to education for newly arrived children and the problems of introducing children to a class in the middle of the school year, which could disturb the progress of the other students and increase class size. If a large number of new arrivals enter a camp or settlement together, then for some grades new schools or classes can be started, even during the school year, and the opportunity taken to meet the special needs of these students. But what should be done when the number of new arrivals seeking admission to a given year of schooling is insufficient to justify starting a new class? Headteachers need guidance on this.

Some issues for consideration. Education NGOs need to develop policy guidelines on response to new arrivals, in consultation with their programme managers. For example, all in-service teacher training could include training on the psychosocial needs of newly arrived refugee or internally displaced children. Headteachers could be trained on the approaches needed and to ensure that education opportunities are made known to newly arrived families. If admission mid-year to ongoing classes is not considered advisable, then separate multi-grade new arrivals classes with trauma healing and basic study skills components may be appropriate. Programmes could carry a stock of books and materials sufficient to permit distribution to newly arrived students during the school year. Monitoring and reporting activities could also indicate the numbers of newly arrived or newly displaced children. Likewise, community and youth volunteers could develop complementary programmes for newly arrived out-of-school children and youth. Donors should be sensitive to requests for additional funding to meet the immediate needs of newly arrived children and adolescents. These points are further discussed in the case studies of Tanzania and Pakistan below.

⁶⁴ Salimah Ikram and S. Junaid Shah, personal communications.

Principles for the longer term: improving quality, coverage and management

The principles presented above, mostly in the context of early emergency for displaced populations, need to be enriched to cover the longer term and a wider range of emergency education and post-crisis situations. Over the longer term, there should be progressive improvement in the quality and coverage of emergency education, and upgrading of the capacity of local professionals⁶⁵ to manage the programme. The 1997 internal evaluation of UNHCR's education programmes set out prototype guidelines and resourcing standards for refugee primary and secondary schooling and in-service teacher training (UNHCR, 1997b). The primary education standards are reproduced in the discussion document by Pilar Aguilar and Gonzalo Retamal (1998), which sets out further important principles and standards for each phase of response, including the need for an "educational development centre" with a heavy-duty Gestetner to make copies of educational materials. Schools should gradually collect textbooks, supplementary reading materials, education aids, basic science equipment, sports equipment and so on. Programmes should develop and equip teachers' centres, and resource centres open to students and teachers.⁶⁶ In-service training and certification of teachers should be systematically developed.

This paper focuses on principles that are relevant from the early stages of an emergency. More work is needed to develop a more comprehensive set of principles covering the various types and phases of education in situations of crisis and post-crisis reconstruction.

Inter-agency cooperation

An inter-agency consultative process, supported by field research, is needed to establish principles, standards and best-practice models covering the field of emergency education, from early crisis to post-crisis reconstruction and transition. The Inter-agency Consultation on Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis, held in November 2000, led to the establishment of an Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, which will undertake this work.⁶⁷

Often there is a communication gap between different agencies working at field level. In the best instances, there are regular coordination meetings of field project staff, chaired or attended by the local education authorities, and concerned UN agencies. These may need to be weekly in new emergencies. The mature refugee education programme in Uganda has quarterly education coordination meetings, including the concerned government departments, NGOs implementing programmes, UNHCR (convenor) and UNICEF. Particular themes are discussed as well as current issues. In some cases, there is a lack of dialogue between organizations working for refugees and those working to support national and local development programmes of the host country. This can be a deliberate policy of the host country, if there is a fear that refugees may not repatriate, as in the case of Pakistan. The strengthening of field-level partnerships will be considered in the follow-up to the Inter-Agency Consultation.

⁶⁵ In this paper the term "local professionals" includes refugee professionals.

⁶⁶ For an account of resource centres in Uganda see Sesnan (1998: 69–71).

⁶⁷ For details see www.ineeweb.net or contact the Network Coordinator (e-mail: n.drost@unesco.org).

Were these principles reflected in recent refugee emergencies?

In 1999, eight countries each received new refugees numbering more than 20,000: Albania (435,000), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Indonesia (West Timor), Pakistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Tanzania, DRC, Zambia and Guinea.⁶⁸ The places from which most of the refugees came (Sierra Leone, Angola, southern Sudan, Republic of Congo, Burundi, DRC, Kosovo, East Timor and Afghanistan) suffered internal turmoil also, with internal displacement and disruption of normal government services; many of these flows continue in 2000. In May 2000 there was a new flow of refugees from Eritrea into Sudan, this time displaced by international conflict. Some aspects of education response to various of these emergencies have been touched upon above. The following brief case studies may give a further picture of the reception accorded to some of the new refugees (including also education in the early post-conflict situations in Kosovo and East Timor). A brief note is added on the Eritrean refugees who entered Sudan in May and June 2000.

Psychosocial response for children and youth in a “popular” emergency

“CRS organized drawing activities in Tirana, Kavaj and Durres District as part of their PTSD screening, extending their services to Elbasan and Fier. SCF Alliance started its Non-Formal Education (NFE) in Kukes and plans to do the same in Kavaja, Fier and possibly Korce. Albanian Centre for Human Rights is also preparing for summer school activities in Tirana, Durres, Kruja and other districts. Relief International just started its children’s activities (recreation/sport) in Korce. More and more agencies for this category (NFE or children) are being identified in recently built camps, including CARE and MED-AIR ... Sports associations have received various offers: ... Albanian Olympic Committee with IOC funds plans cross-country races and with funds from Italian Olympic Committee has organized one. European Football Association and International Volleyball Association made similar offers, facilitated by UNHCR” (Shimizu, 1999).

It has proved difficult to find comprehensive data on emergency education response even for these refugee programmes. Data on non-refugee emergencies is often much less accessible than for refugee situations, and time did not permit case studies of such programmes, although these are badly needed.

The Kosovo crisis

The Kosovo crisis began in 1998, and UNICEF and UNHCR cooperated to supply education kits to vulnerable or internally displaced Albanian communities. During the NATO campaign from late March to early June 1999, more than 750,000 ethnic Albanians fled Kosovo, mostly to Albania (435,000, joining 22,000 who had arrived in 1998), Macedonia (355,000) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (72,000). Many refugees stayed with families or in collective centres, while others stayed in camps. Following a UN Security Council resolution on 10 June, K-FOR troops arrived in Kosovo on 12 June, and within three weeks 500,000 Kosovar refugees had returned. By November 1999 more than 800,000 had returned (HIWG, 1999: 1; UNHCR, 2000b). The Security Council resolution established the UN Interim Administration Mission in

⁶⁸ Data from UNHCR (2000b). Kenya could be mentioned here also, but the statistics are ambiguous.

Kosovo (UNMIK), coordinating a humanitarian assistance pillar (led by UNHCR and with UNICEF as the lead agency for education), a civil administration pillar (with UNESCO responsible to UNMIK for the education sector), a democratization and institution-building pillar (led by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)) and an economic development pillar (managed by the European Union).⁶⁹

Damage assessment in Kosovo was divided between UNHCR (homes) and UNICEF (schools). A July 1999 UNICEF/NGO assessment showed that 37 per cent of schools were destroyed or in very bad condition. As of January 2000 a total of 362 buildings had been fully repaired, funded mainly by the European Community Humanitarian Office (111 school buildings), UNHCR (96) and UNICEF (43); with more than 400 buildings still in the process of being repaired or awaiting repair, UNESCO was undertaking a school mapping exercise and developing standards for future school construction (Daxner, 2000: 7–8).

Community-based approach and capacity-building. UNHCR funded many “Community Services” activities for Kosovo refugees, including recreational and other activities benefiting children. A lead actor was Catholic Relief Services, which in the field of education had been promoting “parent–school partnerships” in Albania since 1996. The Soros Albania Education Development Project (AEDP) had likewise been promoting teacher–parent organizations in Albania for five years, as well as other aspects of school excellence.⁷⁰ These and other agencies promoted a community-based approach to refugee education. In Macedonia, the Norwegian staff seconded to UNICEF worked with communities to achieve rapid education response (see below).

Meeting psychosocial needs. As noted by one of UNHCR’s Community Services Officers, psychosocial activities (recreation, sport, culture and non-formal education) were organized by many agencies and were of especial interest to donors. Some agencies made arrangements through UNHCR while others were funded bilaterally, making coordination difficult. UNICEF promoted the concept of “child-friendly spaces” (described below), where conditions permitted. After the return to Kosovo, similar programmes were introduced there, and UNMIK produced psychosocial guidelines for staff of relevant organizations, and promoted the training of teachers in psychosocial methods (Daxner, 2000: 10).

Rapid response. Mark Richmond, comparing his experience in the Kosovo emergency with that of Rwanda, noted that many of the lessons learned during the 1990s were applied in the Kosovar refugee camps, such as phasing of response, with an emphasis on early introduction of structured activities (personal communication). The NATO intervention began part-way through the school year, and the Albanian Ministry of Education and Science proposed a three-phased approach: preparatory (April–May 1999), summer “catch-up” schools (June–August), and return to school, in either Albania or Kosovo (September). Textbooks originally intended for Albanian children were instead given to Kosovar children attending the summer schools.⁷¹ Coordination of education response in Albania was led by the Ministry, assisted by AEDP.

69 See www.un.org/peace/kosovo. UNMIK set up a Regional structure with five Regional Administrators and 30 Municipal Administrators, plus central departments such as the Department of Education and Science. On 15 December it set up the Joint Interim Administrative Structure to share responsibility with representatives of all of Kosovo society. Each of the Administrative Departments is led by two heads, a Kosovar official and an UNMIK official.

70 See Albania update: May 1999 at www.ginie.org and AEDP (1999).

71 See Albania update: May 1999 at www.ginie.org; MOES (1999); Ruka (2000). The summer schools had no specific teachers’ guide for working with refugee children, as they were furnished with regular Albanian textbooks and were supposed to run “catch-up” classes (Ellen Lange, personal communication).



Returns arrive at their heavily damaged homes or schools in Mitrovica, Kosovo. UNHCR/06.1999/R. LeMoyné

In Macedonia, UNICEF served as the lead agency for education and achieved rapid education response. Secondment of five education specialists to UNICEF by the Norwegian Refugee Council enabled education response to begin in a matter of weeks. The NRC staff moved quickly, identifying and mobilizing teachers, space, tents and chairs.

Education as a concern and necessity was introduced a couple of weeks after the exodus/influx and was being organized one month after the bombing started. Evaluations among our educators who went there, and comments from the refugees, leave no doubt that these activities considerably brightened and relieved the minds of the teachers and the children and had a positive effect on the families as well – even with the restrictions placed by the host government. (Eldrid Midttun, personal communication)

UNICEF also supplied materials to assist the already strained education system in Bosnia-Herzegovina in coping with the influx of Kosovar refugees.

Backpacks of student materials were supplied during both the refugee and the returnee phases, by UNICEF (using their normal international procurement system) and to a lesser extent, UNHCR. UNHCR contributed to school textbooks and school rehabilitation.⁷² IRC Kosovo's Carl Triplehorn commented to the author that backpacks have high psychosocial benefit, establishing a personal space for private writing and so on, but take time to assemble.⁷³

Soon after the return to Kosovo many teachers held classes outdoors or in tents, if schools were badly damaged. Non-formal schooling and related activities started early, not least because a condition for being paid a stipend (by UNMIK) was that a teacher had resumed teaching. Many Albanian teachers "took back" the place they had lost in 1989, and others resumed the activity they had performed in the parallel school system.

Relating response to the school year. The "catch-up" second phase of the refugee education response in Albania was designed specifically to enable refugee children to cover studies interrupted by the outbreak of hostilities in the middle of their school year.⁷⁴ Similar "catch-up" studies were organized informally by teachers in Kosovo, as just noted.

Education for durable solutions. During the 1990s there had been a parallel system of education in Kosovo, run by Kosovo Albanians (Davies, 1999: 5–10). Hence there was no curriculum problem when refugees arrived in Albania, and most refugees used the same system in Macedonia. The curriculum adopted in Kosovo for the new school year commencing October 1999 was based for practical reasons on the existing school textbooks. UNICEF and UNESCO staff met teachers' organizations, government educators and others to agree on curriculum principles, notably to avoid materials harmful to ethnic relations, while the process for curriculum renewal was put in place.⁷⁵ Jennifer Ashton, UNHCR's Senior Community Services Officer, in an internal e-mail from Kosovo dated August 1999 stated:

UNMIK has agreed that for the next year ... textbooks in Serbian will be obtained from the Ministry of Education in Belgrade, Albanian textbooks will be those from the parallel system ... the latter were developed in Tirana but printed in Kosovo in the past ... UNMIK is drawing together a consortium of donors who can fund textbook production this year ... and will screen all textbooks for offensive material.

Survival and peace-building messages. Given the tasks for coping with a much larger number of refugees than had been foreseen and the speedy repatriation to Kosovo, UN agencies did not have time to promote emergency-wide strategies for conveying survival and peace-building messages. These would have been present in many locations but subsumed under "psychosocial" and health interventions. There is a need to work towards education for tolerance, peace and human rights in Kosovo, but this must be developed participatively and sensitively (Davies, 1999: 21–22). After many years of Serb–Albanian conflict, about 58 per cent of Kosovar Albanian men and 56 per cent of women felt extreme hatred (86 per cent

72 For example, UNHCR received a donation of \$1,000,000 from the "Pavarotti and Friends" June 1999 concert, disbursed for 50,000 backpacks of student supplies, establishment of two youth centres and reconstruction of 33 schools.

73 In future, they should have luminescent strips for road safety reasons, especially in latitudes where the journey back from school may end in the dark.

74 In some localities in Albania, children were bussed daily from refugee camps to national schools (Jon Rothenburg, personal communication).

75 This approach had been used earlier in South Africa, where apartheid books were used during the slow and political process of post-apartheid transition (personal communication from Peter Buckland, who led UNICEF's initial work in Kosovo).

and 89 per cent respectively felt either “extreme” hatred or “a lot of” hatred), while 50 per cent of men and 43 per cent of women had feelings of revenge all the time or a lot of the time (CDC, 1999: 7–8).

The multi-agency Psychosocial Assessment Mission to Kosovo in September 1999 noted that “hatred is an accepted norm, a value passed from adults to youth”. They cited a poem recited proudly by a six-year-old girl which demonized Serbs; she had learned it in school. The Mission commented that talk of reconciliation would be premature and that “It is more appropriate now to focus on steps toward reconciliation, such as building tolerance and respect for human rights [and] critical reflection on what Kosovar society is becoming” (IRC, 1999: 7).

Attention to specific groups: gender. Gender appears not to have been a major concern in the education sector during the brief duration of the refugee emergency. Education among the Kosovar Albanians had been co-educational. In Kosovo there may be gender issues such as the earlier withdrawal from school of girls as compared with boys among poor families, for economic reasons (Davies, 1999: 23). In rural areas where girls have to travel a long distance to school, the participation of girls at secondary levels is said to be poor.⁷⁶

Pre-school age group and adolescents. There were many NGO projects catering to early childhood, and to adolescents and youth. UNICEF promoted the creation of Kosovar Youth Councils in six refugee camps near Kukes in northern Albania in May 1999, which organized sports, music, cleaning the camps, helping to integrate new refugees, fund-raising for the poorest families, setting up camp schools, disseminating information on landmines, organizing psychosocial and recreational activities for younger children, and influencing decision taken by camp managers (e.g. asking for increased patrolling to improve security). These activities were discussed each week at meetings of the six councils (Bainvel, 1999). There was no specific report available on secondary education for Kosovar refugees in Albania, but in principle government activities also covered education at this level.⁷⁷

Minorities. A major UNMIK concern in Kosovo has been the security and access to education of the ethnic minority groups, such as Croatian Serb refugees, Serbs, Roma, Ashkaelia, and a Turk minority. UNHCR’s seconded Education Officer made suggestions for the development of education for Roma and related minority groups, recommending in-service training of Roma teachers and other measures to build an interest in formal education (Lange, 1999a).⁷⁸

Trauma and disability among Kosovar refugee children

“The largest group of refugee children with special needs during the crisis were the traumatized children ... problems with concentration among students, and students reporting problems with sleeping at night ... According to the teachers at Kavajes the heavily traumatized children were given education in small groups in private homes ... [they] reported no children with physical or mental disabilities among refugee students, ... probably related to disabled students not being included into Albanian schools.” (Lange, 1999c: 2)

⁷⁶ Cited from an internal UNHCR memorandum from Ellen Lange, 4 Aug. 2000.

⁷⁷ “According to oral reports from UNHCR staff and NGOs, the drop-out rate of adolescent Kosovars from school in Kosovo was substantial. This is probably related to the fact that the parallel Kosovar education system reportedly concentrated mainly on primary level” (Lange, 1999b:1).

⁷⁸ Gradual progress in minority education has been reported in the monthly Kosovo Humanitarian Update (www.reliefweb.int).

Children with disability. Lange (1999b) noted that access to schools for physically disabled students in Kosovo needed to be significantly improved, and recommended that participation of students with disability be included in education statistics.

Progressive improvements in quality, coverage and management. The international community is working to restore and improve education in Kosovo, including school reconstruction, teacher training, curriculum review and the “DESK” programme mentioned above (Daxner, 2000).

Lessons learned. This was an unusual emergency, and exceptionally well-resourced, with “warehouses full of toys and clothes” (Jacinta Goveas, personal communication) and many agencies seeking to help. At one level, this reflected genuine concern stimulated by massive television coverage, while at another level it reflected political commitment to the NATO action and the desire of European governments to avoid a massive flow of refugees into western Europe. It is difficult to quantify how quickly refugee children had access to structured activities and education, due to their diverse situations and the many organizations involved. However, many refugee children benefited from emergency response, and more would have done so if repatriation had been delayed. Education response after return home was quite rapid. It may be noted here that the education programmes of UNMIK illustrate a new role for the UN, helping to create a new education system in an area affected by conflict, working with local counterparts to permit handover and sustainability. A similar situation obtains in East Timor.

Two international staff (one UN, one NGO) with long emergency experience commented to the author in confidence that there were insufficient international education staff on the ground in Kosovo after the repatriation, and that they were overwhelmed with issues such as “physical resources and teachers: rehabilitate schools, get furniture in, hire teachers back” and unable to attend quickly to issues such as the needs of the population, trauma and teacher training. Relevant here was the need to meet time pressures because of the approach of the new school year, which should perhaps have triggered stronger “standby” staffing inputs.

It may be noted further that education coordination was something of a problem in Albania, where the government gave technical leadership but lacked UNHCR’s experience of coordinating large numbers of NGOs.⁷⁹ However, the education officer seconded to UNHCR by NRC reached Tirana only on 16 June, after repatriation had begun.⁸⁰ This is understandable given the difficulties experienced in the whole operation (Suhrke et al., 2000), but would have been avoided if there had been an automatic “trigger” mechanism for a deployment request when the number of refugees exceeded a certain threshold (see below).

The Timor crisis

The referendum on independence for East Timor in August 1999 was followed by violence, internal displacement, and the voluntary and forced movement of about 280,000 residents of East Timor to camps in West Timor. Access to these camps was difficult, and at the time of writing became impossible, for security reasons. About 15,000 children attended local schools in West Timor, which in some areas

⁷⁹ As mentioned in an internal UNHCR Community Services situation report dated 13 May 1999.

⁸⁰ Internal UNHCR correspondence indicates that NRC had offered in early April 1999 to second an Education Officer at no cost to UNHCR, that the busy Community Services Officer in Tirana assumed that this was proceeding (personal communication), was “desperately wanting” an Education Officer (e-mail of 25 April 1999) and drafted terms of reference for such a deployment on 29 April 1999.



The homes and schools of many East Timorese were devastated during the militia rampage following the August 30 ballot on self-determination. UNHCR is supplying timber, nails and plastic sheeting to help returnees build shelters. Dili, East Timor. UNHCR/10-11. 1999/M. Kobayashi

increased schools' student numbers by a factor of five times the normal enrolment. UNICEF and other agencies provided tents and other support, but an estimated 12,000 children of primary school age remained out of school.⁸¹

In East Timor itself there was an educational emergency, with many internally displaced and repatriating refugees returning to their home areas in East Timor to find that infrastructure such as schools had been destroyed. Many teachers had returned home to Indonesia or were in West Timor. UNICEF has been the lead agency for education and community services within the UN Transitional Administration for East Timor (UNTAET), providing education kits to the UNTAET schools, and convening regular inter-agency Education Coordination Meetings and Psychosocial Coordination Meetings.⁸²

Community-based approach and capacity-building. As noted earlier, a "Consortium" of agencies, funded by the US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration and other NGOs have worked to support community-based recreational and cultural activities, in cooperation with the CNRT (National Council of Timorese Resistance). IRC has documented the experience of its start-up project, based mainly in the enclave of Oecusse. At the assessment stage, local organizations, especially youth groups, came forward

⁸¹ Based on an e-mail reporting on the Community Services Working Group meeting in Kupang on 24 February 2000, which noted that some organizations were leaving and asked "will UNHCR urgently fund simple education activities for [out-of-school] refugee children?".

⁸² As in Kosovo, UNHCR was made the lead agency for shelter.

with ideas for action, leading IRC to direct its support through existing community organizations. Subsequently, the project provided training for youth leaders in sports management, grant applications and study circle materials development (Nicolai, 2000: 18–19).

Meeting psychosocial needs. UNICEF convened the regular inter-agency Psychosocial Coordination Meetings, and quickly provided three-day trainings for teachers and community workers on trauma identification in children. UNHCR's East Timor programme had the benefit of a series of community services specialists, seconded by Swedish and Norwegian Save the Children. They had advised that UNHCR should contract international NGOs to undertake capacity-building, focused on trauma healing and psychosocial needs, for local NGOs. This was cancelled due to the UNHCR budget crisis (Eva Nordernsjold, personal communication).

The NGO “Consortium” focused strongly on meeting the psychosocial needs of children and adolescents, especially through support to local NGOs. For example, the IRC project quickly helped the local young women's group to provide daily structured activities for 400 pre-primary children, including recreation, music, art and health care, at a children's centre established in Oecusse. It provided supplies that enabled about 2,500 children and youth to play soccer, basketball, volleyball and jump-rope through a male youth group and development of organized sports practice and tournaments for younger children and girls.

UNICEF is working with NGOs to promote the concept of child-friendly spaces, at least one per district, physically bringing together health care, and activities for primary school children after school and for adolescents, including non-formal education, and recreational and peace-building activities.⁸³

Rapid response. Susan Nicolai (2000: 12) noted that “communities took surprising initiative in opening schools, with most starting instruction within 1–2 months of returning. Although some teachers were not qualified and none were initially paid, classes for primary school ages were taught in homes or under trees for several hours a day ... language study of Tetum, Portuguese or English taught from memory ... Part of the reason for this rapid community-led response was the fact that the East Timorese were a repatriating rather than a refugee population” and that most had not been absent from their homes for long.

Lack of school materials was a constraint. After on-the-ground consultation, IRC ordered materials from Darwin, which took time because of the necessary paperwork, purchasing, shipping and delivery. Nicolai concluded that the materials ordered were not much different from what would have been ordered prior to local consultation, and suggested that,

Factoring in the time-consuming procurement process, it would have been better to place an order for materials immediately upon arrival. Using perhaps one third of the materials budget for generic items such as notebooks and balls straight away would have speeded the arrival of a first order of materials and still left a significant portion to be identified by the community. (Nicolai, 2000: 27)

Delays in access and delivery were caused in some locations by the rainy season.

⁸³ Personal communications from Pilar Aguilar, Wendy Smith, Susan Nicolai.

Education for durable solutions. Choice of the future language of instruction and curriculum is a politically sensitive issue in East Timor. Thus the year 2000/2001 is to be a transitional year in terms of curriculum, using the previous textbooks while curriculum strategies are developed and decisions taken.

Survival and peace-building messages. Activities promoting awareness of HIV/AIDS and promoting reconciliation and peace were included in the planned emergency response (United Nations, 1999: 96–110). IRC's Nicolai notes that instead of the original plan to provide workshops for young people, it seemed better to work with the local tradition of youth study circles.

In partnership with six local groups, curriculum materials were developed in topics including reconciliation, indigenous culture, traditional story writing, literacy campaigns, gender and conflict resolution. Designed as simple interactive and discussion-based activities, the 18 lessons were prepared at a level easily understood and led by a facilitator without much background in the subject ... they will be used by youth groups in organizing and facilitating study circles in their home communities. (Nicolai, 2000: 24)

Lessons learned: IRC start-up project in East Timor

- Emergency education operates best under a set of guiding principles allowing room for the design of context-appropriate interventions;
- Procurement of capital goods and a small amount of programme materials prior to staff arrival will greatly speed assessment and implementation; an initial order of basic education and recreation materials should be placed [before detailed need assessments are made on the ground];
- Involvement of local groups in conducting assessments and the participation in project planning [benefit the project and the groups];
- Repatriated communities will often take the lead in structuring activities for their children and youth but may lack the material resources to do so;
- Capacity among local populations for care of children and youth may be high, but assistance is needed to organize and communicate that knowledge;
- Systems of monitoring and evaluation, including decisions on project indicators, should be established with input from local beneficiaries or partner groups.

Selected from the Project Coordinator's list of lessons learned (Nicolai, 2000: 34–35)

Broadening the concept of education. The East Timor “Child Protection and Psychosocial Programs Consortium” project was cited earlier as an example of the broader concept of education, covering a wide range of structured activities for children and young people and helping to meet their psychosocial and learning needs (CPPPC, 2000).

Attention to specific groups. As already mentioned, support was given to activities for adolescents and youth of both sexes, empowering local youth groups through training and provision of needed resources, including a scheme for young women, under the guidance of teachers, to work with pre-school children.

In East Timor, there has been a tradition of sending children away for schooling, to boarding schools and so-called orphanages. This tradition has been reinforced by the recent crisis. The education and other social systems have been disrupted on the one hand, and there is donor sympathy for “orphanages” on the other, so that there are now schools linked to “orphanages” serving non-orphaned children. However, there does not seem to be any danger of these children losing contact with their families.⁸⁴

Lessons learned. The emerging principles noted in this paper were reflected in the actions of the humanitarian community in the Timor emergency. Information is not available, however, on the proportion of the population reached by initiatives of the type described above, or the timeframe for their wider outreach. Information is likewise lacking on the situation in refugee camps in West Timor.

Tanzania

Tanzania ranked fourth in terms of the prima facie refugee arrivals for 1999. (It had been fourth in 1998 also, with a smaller influx). There were 64,000 new refugees from Burundi and 76,000 from DRC. There are no statistics on how many of these refugees entered school. However, in December 1999 the total number of children, adolescents and youth (aged 3 to 25) enrolled in pre-school, school and other education programmes was 131,000 or one-third of the refugee population. This included 49,000 boys and 43,000 girls in refugee primary schools. There were also 25,000 children (about 12,000 boys and 13,000 girls) in pre-schools and 8,000 in self-help secondary schools (not recognized by the government).

Community-based approach and capacity-building. In Tanzania, each camp has an NGO implementing both “community services and education”, supporting many non-formal education, recreation, cultural and peace-building activities as well as formal schooling.⁸⁵ NGOs encourage refugee communities to undertake these activities on their own initiative. When large numbers of refugees arrived in 1997 and the government delayed permission for formal schooling, education activities were conducted by the communities for a full year with voluntary teachers, in “children’s activity centres” that subsequently became schools. Post-primary and pre-school classes continue to be run by the community on a voluntary basis, with guidance from the NGOs. Capacity-building includes a comprehensive training programme for unqualified teachers.

⁸⁴ Eva Nordenskjold, end-of-mission debriefing, August 2000.

⁸⁵ The programmes are implemented by NGOs, namely Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service, UMATI (Chama Cha Uzazi na Malezi Bora Tanzania), Diocese of Western Tanzania, Africare Tanzania, Dutch Relief Agency and Christian Outreach, Norwegian People's Aid and Southern Africa Extension Unit.



Peace education for refugees from Burundi and Rwanda, Ngara Camp, Tanzania. UNHCR/08.2000/L. Boscardi

Meeting psychosocial needs. According to the Senior Community Services Officer:

The training of teachers includes lessons on how to cope with the psychosocial needs of newly arrived refugees. We hope to organize more structured activities in this area through UNICEF. In all the camps new students are admitted throughout the year and the teachers are trained to cope with this. (Ethel Nhleko, personal communication)

Rapid response: preparing ongoing programmes to receive new arrivals. The refugees arriving in 1999 were accommodated in existing camps (and the children in existing schools) until these were full to overflowing and then in Karago camp, established in December 1999, for Burundi refugees and Lugufu camp for Congolese refugees. Following the procedure established earlier, the refugee community in each new camp was mobilized to help establish schools. In Karago camp, with about 40,000 new refugees, some 10,000 students were immediately registered for schooling by the NGO UMATI, which already implemented the community services and education programmes in another camp. Before the end of the first month 71 refugees had been identified to serve as teachers and had received a 10-day introductory training, coordinated by UNICEF and given by trainers from neighbouring camps. UNICEF supplied emergency classroom kits and contacted schools in other camps to loan textbooks. The emergency phase led on to a "curriculum phase" at the beginning of the new school year in September 2000, with about 8,000 students and 96 teachers. As in many refugee schools, there is a two-shift system.

Education for durable solutions and regional approach. The refugee students follow their home curriculum and, as noted earlier, continuing efforts and cross-border missions by UNHCR and UNICEF staff have enabled them to sit their national examinations. In May 2000 the grade 6 Burundi examination papers were taken by 1,874 students, two days after their counterparts had taken them in Burundi. A team of five persons from Burundi (education officials, UNICEF and UNHCR) supervised the process. The results have been issued on an unofficial basis: UNHCR and UNICEF are advocating for formal certification. The Education Inspector from Lumumbashi in DRC took grade 6 and grade 12 examination papers to Tanzania, where 1,577 refugees sat the former and 444 the latter (Nhleko, 2000: 2–6). There are continuing efforts to obtain more textbooks and teachers' guides from the education authorities in Burundi and DRC.⁸⁶

Survival and peace-building messages. Non-formal and informal education events conveying preventive messages related to health, sexual and gender-based violence, environmental awareness and so on, take place regularly, assisted by the combined NGO mandates for community services and education. Health personnel visit schools to educate the students on HIV/AIDS. A strengthened HIV/AIDS information campaign is planned for 2001, and funding is currently being sought to involve refugee youth in developing posters and leaflets relevant to their age group (Nhleko, personal communication).

Refugee schools in Tanzania use environmental education materials developed under a UNHCR–UNESCO-PEER project. Ethel Nhleko (personal communication) comments:

There should be somebody to coordinate the project. A consultant should be hired to work on a proposal which should handle the implementation and monitoring aspect. We do not have the capacity to handle this ... there is only one officer to cover both community services and education at each field office, and both are large fields on their own.

Following a UNHCR- and UNICEF-sponsored workshop in 1996, led by Susan Fountain, there have been a number of community-based workshops and special events promoting the concepts of peace and conflict resolution.⁸⁷ A technical team of refugees, facilitated by UNICEF and UNHCR, has developed a teachers' manual and a student "catalogue" including songs, poems, short plays and artwork, which will be used in refugee schools in 2001 (Nhleko, personal communication).

Broadening the concept of education. Due to the restrictions on post-primary education in the camps, an open-learning "distance" education programme was introduced for the study of English language. Graduates from this course can enter distance education programmes for Tanzanian nationals, and have also entered vocational training and obtained jobs with NGOs. Some have been awarded UNHCR "DAFI" scholarships for higher education. Youth centres have been constructed in the camps, and youth groups are involved in skills training, sports, culture, debates and social service (UNHCR, 1999b: 7).

Special groups. Efforts are made to engage adolescents in formal schooling and other activities, as mentioned above. Girls' education is promoted through meetings of leaders, parents' committees and so on. In each school two female teachers serve as focal points for the promotion of girls' education. Lack of

⁸⁶ See also Bird (1999), UNHCR (1999b, 2000), and Eric Eversmann's unpublished 1999 report for UNICEF on quality aspects of the programme.

⁸⁷ The workshop was for Rwandan and Burundi refugees. The initiative was continued by Burundi refugees, supported by UNICEF and UNHCR, after the repatriation of Rwandan refugees in late 1996.

decent clothing is one of the main causes of drop-out; funds are needed to buy cloth for school uniform projects and sanitary supplies for older girls (Nhleko, personal communication). Parents are encouraged to send children with disabilities to school and each primary school has a class for those who cannot join in normal classes.

Progressive improvement in quality, coverage and management. Under-resourcing of the Tanzania programme means that textbooks are in short supply and that there is often a delay in payment of incentives to newly hired refugee teachers. The equipment at the “educational development centre” in Ngara, left from the earlier Rwandan refugee programme, permits heavy-duty copying of textbooks but is too slow to meet the needs. The school examinations show that most students reaching grade 6 have low achievement levels, though two pupils achieved marks of over 90 per cent. Lack of recognition of secondary education by the host government is a disincentive to achievement in primary school. There are self-help secondary schools, but they lack resources and the teachers are unpaid: this situation should be remedied.

Lessons learned. Overall, the Tanzania programme is well attuned to the needs of newly arrived refugee students, including training of teachers to meet their needs and the existence of a range of non-formal education and recreational activities for out-of-school youth. The programme has suffered greatly from lack of resources, and from an inability to access additional funds during the year to meet the needs of extra students. Communities are quick to make mud-brick walls for classrooms, but the UNHCR budget is insufficient to pay for corrugated sheet roofs, leading to oversized classes. There have sometimes been delays in paying incentives to new teachers and shortages of educational materials. The post-primary classes need official permission to operate and then resourcing to permit payment of incentives and provision of education materials. This will help improve performance and retention in primary schools (as students work to qualify themselves for secondary school) as well as in the secondary schools themselves.

Pakistan

Pakistan received the fifth-largest number of new refugees in 1999 (92,700). There were already large and long-established UNHCR-funded refugee education programmes in Pakistan at primary level, mostly catering to Pushtu-speaking refugees. The refugee schools had initially been managed by the respective provincial governments, but management was transferred in 1996 to GTZ, Save the Children/US and Ockenden International, with the intention of developing a more community-based approach. UNHCR had (controversially) discontinued its support to middle and secondary refugee education in 1995, due to perceived donor pressure to phase down assistance to long-term refugee populations and to immediate budget constraints. Some of these schools have been kept operating by a special refugee fund, administered by the government.

Several other organizations support refugee schools. The Female Education Programme of IRC, established during the 1990s, provides secondary education to Afghan girls as well as primary education to boys and girls, in 30 schools in and around Peshawar, with classes in Dari and Pushtu languages of instruction. Many of the new refugees have settled near Peshawar and those who were from Dari-speaking regions have benefited from the Dari-medium schools run by IRC. The large number of urban refugees, mostly from Kabul, means that many children attend poorly resourced Afghan private schools while children from the poorest families often have no schooling.

Community-based approach and capacity-building. In the early 1980s newly arrived refugee communities began their own small schools, according to tribal, religious and political affiliation, and those wishing for UNHCR support were then grouped into more viable and cost-effective entities (Khalid Mahmud Shah, personal communication). After these schools were transferred from management by the provincial governments to NGOs, steps were taken to prepare communities for participation in school management. The NGOs employ community animation staff to help establish and train school management committees (GTZ, 1999b).

As mentioned earlier, new schools for urban refugees were established in and around Peshawar on a self-help basis during the 1990s; many were subsequently supported and absorbed by larger programmes. The Social Welfare Cell of the North West Frontier Province Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees still motivates newly arrived refugee communities, or those with a new interest in girls' education, to form "self-help" schools for the early classes of primary school, again with the need to link with larger programmes to have access to materials, teacher training and so on.



An estimated 170,000 Afghans have fled to Pakistan since September 2000, escaping both war and drought. The majority are housed at two large sites near the city of Peshawar, Shamshatoo and Jalozaï. Refugees prepare pit latrines at the New Shamshatoo camp. UNHCR/04.2001/C. Shirley

Psychosocial needs. A recent World Bank study of teacher training needs gave as its first recommendation the development of a teacher training module on meeting the affective needs of Afghan refugee students (Spicer, 2000: 34). This is all the more important for newly arrived refugee children.

Rapid response: preparing ongoing programmes to receive new arrivals. When a new camp is established, one or more of the education-sector agencies is assigned responsibility for schooling and it can start at any convenient time. For example, a planning meeting for Akora Khattak New Camp in 1998 assigned GTZ to establish a Pushtu-medium school and IRC to establish a Dari-medium school. As noted earlier, the arrival of new families in existing camps presents different problems. There is concern about balancing the desire of these families for schooling and the possible deleterious effect of children entering existing classes during the school year. This problem needs to be solved, with measures ensuring some kind of education access for newly arrived children, and training of headteachers and teachers accordingly.

The Afghan Social Animators working with the Social Welfare Cell could usefully be sensitised to the psychosocial and educational needs of newly arrived students.

Education for durable solutions. The curriculum in all Afghan refugee schools is a variant of the pre-war curriculum of Afghanistan. In the 1980s there were several curriculum development initiatives, leading to different sets of textbooks and supplementary materials. An inter-agency workshop in 1990 led to the adoption of the “University of Nebraska” textbooks for use in UNHCR-funded schools, but since then the emphasis has shifted towards workbooks prepared by GTZ’s Afghan educators.⁸⁸ Refugees in UNHCR-funded schools also study Urdu (the national language of Pakistan) as a subject. As noted earlier, the curriculum thus supports repatriation but provides language skills for students who stay in Pakistan.

Regional approach. There was an inter-agency meeting in 1998, for exchange of experience between education programmes for Afghans in Pakistan and Afghanistan (see Rugh, 1998). This has led to an inter-agency effort to develop supplementary learning materials, aligned to “basic competency” objectives, led by UNICEF Afghanistan in cooperation with Save the Children/US. These materials, initially covering mathematics and mother tongue for grades 1 to 6, have been developed in writing workshops attended by educators from NGOs aligned to the Taliban authorities in Afghanistan as well as from Western NGOs. Through avoiding depiction of living beings, the materials meet the strict religious views of some participants. This work provides technical skills and materials that can be a useful input to the future development of education in Afghanistan. A programme for pilot testing of the new materials is planned for 2001 (Ellen van Kalmthout, personal communication).

Survival and peace-building messages. The Pakistan refugee programme developed a network of community health supervisors, attached to clinics, and volunteer community health outreach workers. Health messages form a large part of the science curriculum in the “Nebraska” primary school textbooks. Social Animators from the Social Welfare Cell sponsor child and adolescent groups in some of the refugee schools, which convey health messages including information about HIV/AIDS. Considerable attention is given to environmental awareness, through tree-planting days and so on. An independent Afghan NGO

⁸⁸ The author co-facilitated this workshop. The “Nebraska” materials were prepared by a group of Afghan educators from all the seven Afghan political parties recognized by the Pakistan government. They are acceptable to the Taliban authorities and therefore widely used. They have strong points, eg. health education, but have gaps in content. The accompanying teacher guides were not updated and are not in use.

based in Peshawar is developing peace education programmes on a pilot basis in 30 private and NGO schools in and around Peshawar, under a capacity-building grant for Afghan NGOs. Consideration might be given to the development of a programme reaching a larger number of students, perhaps drawing on the UNHCR peace education materials as well as on the UNHCR tolerance education materials from Kyrgyzstan and the initiative just mentioned. The complex political issues would require a very sensitive approach, however, perhaps integrating environmental and health messages also.

Attention to specific groups. Coverage for girls has increased dramatically since the mid-1990s, thanks to a range of measures and perhaps general social change, possibly the desire of educated young refugee men for literate wives. It was much helped by the decision of the World Food Programme to provide about 4 kg of edible oil per month to girls who attend school regularly. This helped to overcome the perception that it is pointless for Afghan girls to attend school, and too costly for poor families, in terms of requirements for decent clothing and so on. There is heavy drop-out of boys from poor families, since there is no restriction on participation in the labour market by Afghans; and the youngest boys earn money for their families by scavenging. As noted earlier, GTZ runs late-afternoon basic education classes for working boys. The Social Welfare Cell has promoted the participation of children with disability in non-formal or regular education activities.



An income-generating project for women at the Kunduz Refugee Dpt., Kunduz Province, Afghanistan. UNHCR/05.1995/A. Hollmann

Progressive improvement in quality, coverage and management. The refugee education programme has benefited from various teacher training initiatives, including a massive GTZ teacher training and materials development programme. All children receive a complete set of locally printed textbooks or workbooks. Other steps taken to improve quality include the achievement testing used in Baluchistan Province, which helped justify a decision to eliminate unsuitable teachers, and the development of supplementary course materials aligned to basic competencies, as described above. Programmes are almost exclusively staffed by Afghan professionals, who benefit from internal and external training programmes.

Lessons learned. Overall, the refugee education programme in Pakistan refugee camps is well developed, and there is an inter-agency initiative to improve programmes both in refugee camps and inside Afghanistan. However, there is no systematic approach to the educational needs of newly arrived refugees, except where they arrive as a large group and are assigned to a particular camp. In many locations, there are several schools supported by different agencies, and no single agency or school feels responsible for scattered groups of new arrivals. Hence there is a situation where parents have to bargain with individual heads of school when requesting admission of their children during the ongoing school year. Under such circumstances there may be little attention to psychosocial needs or bridging arrangements. Since there has been a continuing stream of new arrivals over the years, dispersed over a wide geographic area, it would be useful to develop a policy on new arrivals and train school heads accordingly. Recent NGO efforts to upgrade the many (mostly under-resourced) private Afghan refugee schools in Peshawar and Islamabad could also include sensitization on these issues.

Democratic Republic of Congo

DRC received the sixth-largest number of new arrivals in 1999 (65,000). (It was third in 1998, with 52,500.) During 1999 some 49,000 refugees arrived in DRC from the Republic of Congo but most of them repatriated by year's end. 1999 also saw the return to Aru district in northern DRC of many south Sudanese, who had left in 1998 due to conflict. "As these are long-staying refugees located in rich agricultural areas, UNHCR will implement a local settlement programme which will also benefit local communities, including education." (UNHCR, 2000f). In an innovative programme, over 200 post-secondary students in this district are studying English by "open learning" or "tele-education", using video-cassettes and local tutors to obtain a diploma from the University of Quebec (Gueye, 2000:11).

Operational conditions in DRC are very difficult, with some areas inaccessible due to conflict. Government services such as education are no longer state-funded, parents having to pay teachers themselves. In these circumstances UNHCR pays fees for some refugee children to attend state schools and constructs schools in camps. The number of students supported at primary level in 1999 was 23,000, while for 2000 it was 25,000. Secondary education enrolments are limited to 1,800, since high fees have to be paid (\$184 per year), and there are restrictions on refugee admission to government secondary schools. Within its limited budget UNHCR also provides education materials, school furniture, school repairs etc. No additional funds are provided during the year on account of new arrivals.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ The implementing agencies in the various locations include World Vision, IFRC, three religious bodies, Association pour le Développement Social et la Sauvegarde de l'Environnement and the NGO HDW.

As noted earlier, the national curriculum is followed even in refugee schools. So far it has not been possible formally to introduce Portuguese language as a subject for Angolan refugees (as happens in Zambia) or English in schools for south Sudanese. Much remains to be done to improve refugee education in DRC, depending on improvement in security and access, and on the availability of sufficient funding; support for education for internally displaced young people is needed also.

The Eritrea crisis

In Eritrea, the outbreak of renewed hostilities with Ethiopia in May 2000 happened about three weeks before the end of the school year. Internal displacement increased and some 90,000 refugees crossed the border into Sudan, where three refugee camps were established. Many refugees repatriated within a few months. Refugee communities discussed education, but there was not much action since this was school vacation time. Among the Muslim boys and younger girls, there was daily traditional religious instruction at the mosques, providing a structured group activity.

The Eritrean government decided to reconvene schools during the summer vacation to enable students to prepare for and sit their end-of-year examinations, so that they could be assigned to the appropriate class for the next school year. UNHCR was supporting repatriation and felt that refugees could return in safety to Eritrea to take advantage of these arrangements. It was planned that refugees who do not return to Eritrea will be relocated to an older camp in the same locality (where there is refugee schooling that follows the Sudanese curriculum). At the time of writing this relocation has been delayed by insecurity.



Somali refugees and returnees at the Emkulu Camp, Eritrea. UNHCR/09.2000/W. Rapoport

There was considerable discussion within UNHCR field offices regarding the possible need for education officers in Eritrea and the three refugee camps, especially as NRC had offered to make these specialists available at no cost to UNHCR. Given the pattern of repatriation, a decision was finally made to deploy a single Norwegian education specialist on secondment to UNHCR in early August 2000, to assist in meeting the needs of children remaining in the camps (Susanne Kindler-Adam, personal communication). However, debriefing of this secondee on 12 December 2000 revealed that he and his Community Services colleague had been instructed not to promote any child or adolescent activities in the camps because there had been strong repatriation in July, although it became clear after a while that the repatriation had slowed down. Refugee parents were requesting education or other activities to occupy their children. In this situation, the education and community services specialists undertook repatriation-oriented community-based activities, of which the education component included documenting the resourcing needs of schools in returnee areas. However, the limited funding required by these schools was not made available.

How can assistance organizations prepare for emergency educational response? The debate on kits

The establishment of emergency activities for children and adolescents often requires a major feat of organization. Sometimes refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs) arrive in remote locations with poor access by road or air, and in the middle of a rainy season. Sometimes a country has been badly affected by war, and there is a shortage of basic materials. In such situations, what procedures should be adopted for the procurement and distribution of educational and recreational materials? Should this be achieved through the use of kits? This has been the subject of heated debate during the 1990s, and thus merits a separate section here. It should be emphasized that, as far as refugees are concerned, the use of kits has not been and should not be a major feature of refugee education, since local procurement of materials through NGOs is normally a better option. There may, however, be some difficult refugee situations where kits could be of use, and they are found helpful for some non-refugee situations of chronic emergency, where normal procurement and distribution systems have failed.

This section begins with a brief history of some 1990s kits, and then reviews some strengths and weaknesses of the kit approach, in relation to refugee and non-refugee situations.

The UNESCO “Teacher Emergency Package”. The civil conflict and breakdown of government in Somalia in 1991 led UNESCO to send a refugee education specialist, Gonzalo Retamal, to Mogadishu to organize emergency education programmes. A “Teacher Emergency Package” (TEP) was developed, which could be transported to any community group willing to establish a simple school. Disruption of education during the previous decade meant that there were few qualified teachers and that most students would be complete beginners. Retamal collected examples of education materials such as cloth alphabet charts from other refugee programmes to guide local production of similar materials. A teacher’s guide for initial literacy and numeracy was prepared by Somali educators. The TEPs, each comprising a box of education supplies for one classroom and a shoulder-bag of teacher materials, were assembled by suppliers in Nairobi. Kits were distributed to community schools after the teachers had received a four-day training (Retamal and Devadoss, 1998: 81–3).

This Somalia operation, which began in 1993, became the first activity of UNESCO’s Programme for Education for Emergencies and Reconstruction (PEER). In June 1994, UNESCO-PEER worked with Rwandan

educators to prepare a Rwandan version of the teacher guide, and the TEP was used with Rwandan refugees and in Rwanda. By March 1995, some 7,400 TEPs had been distributed in Rwanda and 1,300 in refugee camps in Tanzania, and in Goma and Bukavu in eastern Zaire (now DRC) (DANIDA, 1996: IV, 56–57).

The TEP has been adapted for use in conflict-affected areas of Angola (Midttun, 1998). A TEP has also been prepared with a teachers' guide in Uduk language, for use in Ethiopia. A Kirundi version is in use in rural Burundi (Midttun, 2000a: 5). In a recent pilot project initiated by Gonzalo Retamal and Plan International, a TEP kit was flown from Nairobi to Freetown, Sierra Leone, to facilitate local design and production of a rapid response kit for use in Plan's work for internally displaced children (see www.ginie.org).

The use of kits by UNICEF. UNICEF has been providing educational and recreational materials to developing countries and in emergencies for many years, as part of its mandate to help children. It has a large warehouse in Copenhagen, which issues a price-list for all items stored there. Field offices normally procure supplies from Copenhagen, unless the UNICEF Supply Division has authorized local purchase, on the basis of proven cost-effectiveness.⁹⁰ In accordance with its current move towards a predictable minimum response to emergencies, UNICEF has recently defined standard kits, which can be shipped from its Copenhagen warehouse in the first days or weeks of an emergency. These include a classroom kit, a recreation kit and an early childhood kit. For the long-term support needed in Somalia, UNICEF has recently worked with Somali educators to design a "teachers and school kit" and a "pupils' supplies" classroom kit, procured in Nairobi (Geeta Verma, personal communication). In some situations, UNICEF supplies individual "student kits".

Mention may be made also of UNICEF's work with the government of Zambia to develop "Zedukits", linked to training of unqualified volunteers under the "sPARK" project, to help develop community schools, and to cope with the loss of teachers due to the AIDS emergency. Zedukits, given to schools not run by the government, contain the official textbooks (Barry Sesnan, personal communication).

The healing role of various forms of play has led to the concept of issuing a recreational kit to support organized recreational activities in the earliest weeks of an emergency, as a first step leading to the restoration of schooling. A kit was developed in Rwanda with UNICEF support, incorporating local games and costumes as well as volleyballs, skipping ropes and so on, together with an instructor's guide. This model, not extensively used in Rwanda, was advocated in Aguilar and Retamal's 1998 discussion paper, which suggested the contents of a recreation kit and recommended that it be issued (preferably) after a short training of those who are to organize its use. It has now been adopted by UNICEF as a standard component of rapid emergency response.

From kits to child-friendly spaces

UNICEF, working in collaboration with NGOs such as Save the Children/US, has recently adopted the concept of Child-Friendly Spaces or Safe Spaces for Children, with its broader approach to emergency response, including the creation of a sense of security for mothers and children. The child-friendly space recommended by UNICEF Albania includes a minimum of four tented spaces of 70–75 sq m for pre-primary and lower primary classes, three similar spaces for upper primary classes, a play area of 50 sq m, a well baby area of 50 sq m, a water point, and a small women and children's "adult" area, all set in 1,700 sq m for a population

⁹⁰ See www.supply.unicef.dk/specialprojects.htm

of 2,500 refugees (UNICEF, 1999b: 9). This approach was adopted in several locations, where space permitted. The schools were supplied with UNICEF classroom and recreation kits, similar to those used elsewhere.

Other kits. As mentioned above, the Norwegian Refugee Council uses an adapted version of the TEP in Angola, for “TEP schools”, which are established in villages where no normal school is operating. The TEP programme is implemented jointly with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education. In 1999–2000, NRC has collaborated with the Ministry of Education in Sierra Leone and UNICEF to develop a Rapid Response Education Programme kit for use with children aged 10 to 13 whose schooling has been interrupted. The aim is to prepare them for re-entry to primary school. This kit integrates both classroom supplies and recreational materials (as do UNICEF’s new kits for Somalia, mentioned earlier).⁹¹

Should supplies be pre-assembled into kits?

The normal procedure in times of peace and with efficient distribution mechanisms is to send cartons of exercise books, cartons of chalk, cartons of balls and so on to schools and youth centres, according to their particular needs. What are the advantages then of preparing kits suited to a single classroom, youth group or student?

“Kitting” can be helpful when there is no established or efficient system for supplies procurement and distribution. This can be the situation in some early emergency situations and in some situations of chronic emergency. In his study of kit use in Somalia over recent years, Eric Eversmann (2000: 17) notes that kits have the advantage of keeping related items together. Some field staff stated that they preferred pre-packaged materials, as “staff did not have to deal with the physical and time demands of assembling materials from individual boxes across a warehouse or storage centre for distribution”.

Eversmann adds, however, that “Given sufficient personnel, UN and NGO staff both felt that it would be more efficient to send bulk materials”. This comment reflects the chronic under-supply of basic education materials. NGOs reported that when there were insufficient education kits to meet the needs of all schools, some kits had to be disassembled in the warehouse, so that the contents could be distributed fairly between the schools that they were supporting. The same kind of disassembly of classroom kits occurs if a school receives fewer kits than there are classes. He comments that “This means that the expenses incurred in packaging the materials into kits in the first place have been lost and the programme is rendered increasingly inefficient”.

In resource-poor contexts, the pre-assembly of kits has the advantage of discouraging diversion to the local market of valuable and compact items, such as boxes of pencils or scissors, and tins of blackboard paint. Nevertheless, some of the kits in Angola arrived in the school already opened and lacking various items. Teachers did not always communicate to supervisors that items were missing or that the actual number of students meant that more items were required (Johannessen, 2000: 20). In a further measure to limit pilferage, UNICEF Somalia presents education kits to the receiving school during a ceremony to which community members are invited, so that parents are aware of the items transferred to the schools, such as slates for their children (Geeta Verma, personal communication).

91 The Sierra Leone NRC kit includes: 40 pencils, 40 exercise books, 40 erasers, 40 slates, 3 boxes of chalk, a cloth number chart, a cloth multiplication chart, a cloth alphabet chart, a clock face, 5 sets of small wooden “scrabble cubes”, a measuring tape, 3 pencil sharpeners, a football, a softball, 4 short skipping ropes, 2 long skipping ropes, a whistle, a football pump and 5 packets of crayons (and for the teacher an attendance register, a notebook, a can of blackboard paint with paint brush, 5 ballpoint pens, a packet of coloured chalk, a bag and a padlock). For other kit specifications, catering to 80 students in two shifts, see Aguilar and Retamal (1998) and UNHCR (1999a: 116–117).

Pre-assembly of kits also has the advantage that materials in the kit boxes are protected from rain and other damage when in transit, even when handled by workers unfamiliar with such materials. Supervised preparation of kits including books can help avoid the situation where books are left for months or years in warehouses, and the situation where the wrong items are delivered to schools (e.g. the primary school that received enough textbooks, but they were all for year 1).⁹²

Pre-assembly of standard kits makes for complexity in respect of “refills”, however, if the kit approach is used on a prolonged basis. The diverse items in the kits described earlier need to be replenished or replaced at different rates. UNICEF Somalia’s new school and teacher kits are designed to meet the start-up needs of new classes or schools. There is a hope that replenishment of consumable items will be undertaken at community level, but schools in situations of “abject poverty” will require external support. NRC kits shipped to Angola from Nairobi require replenishment through additional in-country purchase of chalk, exercise books and pencils during the school year.

Inflexibility of pre-assembled contents in relation to different users

A major problem is that pre-designed kits never quite fit any user situation.⁹³

Class size. Kits mostly assume that there are 40 students per class (25 for NRC’s programme in Angola), while the real figure may be much higher than this. Yet the kit should not be designed in a way that signals approval of over-sized classes. This is a major problem of using the classroom kit approach, and could be used to argue in favour of individual “student kits”.

Slates. There is wide variation in the use of slates and chalk in primary schools. Some school systems use them extensively, while others regard them as suited only to pre-school, or to grades 1 or 2 of primary. Since francophone systems may use slates throughout primary school, UNICEF plans to make slates an optional component of its emergency education kit. UNICEF Somalia has included slates in kits for students in years 1 and 2, on sustainability and pedagogical grounds (Geeta Verma, personal communication). The NRC evaluation consultant in Angola noted that some teachers had absorbed the training on the use of slates more effectively than others, and emphasized that slates were superior to notebooks for the first four to five months of the TEP year (Johannessen, 2000: 28). “Slate pencils” as available from UNICEF Copenhagen have certain advantages, but cannot normally be replenished locally, which constitutes a disadvantage.

Exercise books. The amount of exercise book space required by students increases steadily throughout primary and secondary school. The TEP, and UNICEF’s standard “education kit” as described earlier, provide the same amount of writing space for every child, which tends to be unsatisfactory above grades 2 or 3. In many countries, education above this level relies extensively on pupils copying notes from the blackboard, and students at higher levels need at least one exercise book per subject per year, possibly one per term, depending on the number of pages.

⁹² Great Lakes example, cited by Barry Sesnan (personal communication).

⁹³ Comment by Peter Buckland (personal communication).



"Quick Impact Projects" (QIPs) funded under UNHCR's Cross-Border Operation include the rehabilitation of schools as well as "Food for Work" schemes and training for teachers. Bardera Camp, Gedo Region, Somalia. UNHCR/01.1994/B. Press

Two approaches have been advocated to overcome this problem. One is to purchase additional supplies locally, to supplement standardized kits. (However, this presents problems if procurements need to go through a lengthy approval process.) Another is to develop separate kits for each grade and situation, as for grades 1 to 4 in Somalia (see above).

Recreation materials. The problems of local appropriateness are even more acute with recreational materials. Forms of recreation vary widely, as do the discrepancies between activities considered appropriate for girls and for boys. UNICEF "recreation kit" specifications indicate that musical instruments should be procured locally and distributed with the kit. In Sherkole camp, Ethiopia, Swedish Save the Children has organized refugee youth production of leather footballs, which are cheaper than those in the market and well used. This may be worth exploring more widely, given that balls deteriorate when used on rough ground, and need replacement (Lobo, 2000).

Sanitary materials. Kits have not so far addressed the issue of sanitary materials, which are important if older girls are to attend regularly. Schools often lack soap, even though they teach about washing hands after using the toilet.

Clothing. Lack of decent clothing is a barrier to participation in schooling and other activities for older children in displaced communities. UNHCR's "peace packs", donated by the Girl Guide movement, include tee-shirts, but these have not normally been included in emergency response.

Shelter, blackboards and school furniture. These are not normally supplied in education kits but are procured separately, providing work for local craftsmen or businesses. Sometimes refugee craftsmen prepare school furniture, with refugee youth as apprentices receiving training. Blackboards are included in

the kits being supplied by UNICEF for Somali schools, although not in the main “package” box. The TEP and the UNICEF emergency kits include tins of blackboard paint, for painting surfaces or packing material to serve as blackboards.

Other materials. In his description of “dream kits” for southern Sudan, Barry Sesnan (n.d.) lists what are really specifications for reasonable equipment of emergency schooling, including a school establishment pack, a classroom supplies pack, a teacher’s pack and personal pack, a pupil’s pack, a science and mathematics (very basic) pack, a sports pack, an income generation (very basic) pack, an English-language pack, a mini-library pack and “awareness messages” packs. Unfortunately there are few crisis-affected or refugee schools with all the basic items listed by Sesnan. Education assistance programmes should try, however, to identify locally relevant resourcing needs in this fashion, and meet them through local or regional procurement, “kitting” them for distribution if this is helpful.

Sourcing and costs

UNESCO-PEER typically contracts suppliers in Nairobi to assemble kits. Local materials are used, meaning that standards are comparable in quality with items for sale locally (diminishing the risk of diversion to the local market). There will be no disappointment at a later date when imported items are not available. On the other hand, there can be problems of quality, such as slates that are or become difficult to clean.

The TEPs for the Somali and Rwandan emergencies were transported by road from Nairobi. Transport costs add substantially to the cost of the kits themselves. Nevertheless, NRC found in 1996 that the costs of procuring TEPs in Angola would be higher than procurement from Nairobi and shipping by container to Luanda.

The current cost of a TEP for Angola, if procured from Ryman in Nairobi, is about \$280, or \$3.50 per student (this assumes 80 students using the kit during two shifts). The cost of shipping a container of 230 kits to Angola is about \$4,000, or \$17 per kit. Air freight of the 40 kg TEP kit from Nairobi to Luanda would cost about \$80 per kit (which would raise the cost to \$4.50 per student). UNESCO-PEER policy is now to conduct a local market survey and to produce some kit components locally, where possible (Mudiappasami Devadoss, personal communication).

As noted above, UNICEF’s procurement procedures are centralized at its Copenhagen warehouse, although efforts are being made to decentralize. Time is needed to gain approval for local procurement, meaning that emergency response tends to use materials from Copenhagen. If air freight from Copenhagen is used, this adds costs of the order of \$1 per kilogramme. Freight costs can be much higher in conflict-affected areas, however, due to insecurity. The current cost of the UNICEF education and recreation kits are \$287.80 and \$269.36 respectively. If the education kit is used by 80 students in two shifts this means a per student cost of \$3.60. The recreational kit could be shared by more children and adolescents and therefore has a lower cost per user (Pilar Aguilar, personal communication).

Purchase in the country or region of use is commendable in terms of supporting local markets. In terms of purchase costs, however, there is not necessarily any saving. Comparison of costs of typical items included in PEER and UNICEF kits shows that some are more expensive in Nairobi than through UNICEF Supply Division procurement procedures, and vice versa.

Printed materials and education aids: should they be included in the kits?

A distinguishing feature of the TEP is the inclusion of a teacher's guide and other printed materials such as cloth wall-charts and small wooden cubes that can be used for word formation games such as "scrabble". Where possible it also includes or is accompanied by "supplementary survival messages" (Aguilar and Retamal, 1998: 33–44). The teachers' guide was initially developed in 1993 in Somalia, where the level of education in rural areas was very low and where classes were being taught by inexperienced teachers (Retamal and Devadoss, 1998: 74–83).

The Somali teachers' guide was used as the model for the Kinyarwanda teachers' guide prepared by Rwandan and Somali educators employed by UNESCO-PEER in summer 1994. The guide became somewhat controversial at this point. One reason was that the Rwandan refugees in Ngara, Tanzania, included almost intact populations who had crossed the border to avoid the approaching army of the Rwandan Patriotic Front. Hence the population included trained teachers and even school inspectors. As they crossed the border, a humanitarian worker overheard a school inspector asking "What can we do? It is time for the school examinations."⁹⁴ Another difference from Somalia was the presence of a considerable number of students who had been attending upper primary classes.

There was thus resistance to the TEP guide from some teachers, who were reported as saying, "Why are you giving us [TEP]? It is not Rwandan." (Sommers, 1999: 9). The level of suggested activities was deemed inappropriate by teachers of older children and by some teachers in Rwanda when TEPs were issued there. Of course, the function of the kit as a source of writing materials was valid, even if some teachers were uninterested in the emergency guide. The TEP initiative in Ngara and Karagwe camps, in Tanzania, permitted the re-establishment of schooling in October 1994, with as many as 58,000 students in 40 refugee schools by March 1995, just before the first anniversary of the genocide (Aguilar and Richmond, 1998: 137).

The inter-agency evaluation of the Rwandan emergency noted "serious shortcomings" in the TEP response in Rwanda. The emphasis in the TEP approach and teacher's guide on introductory literacy and numeracy meant that the package was distributed mainly to lower primary classes, whereas writing materials were needed by all classes.

The TEP was distributed only to the lowest grades, covering about three-quarters of the children ... In June 1995, the TEP packets were still being distributed to some communes despite the fact that more substantial education programmes had since been established. Second, this late diffusion underscores questions about the TEP's appropriateness to begin with. The programme attempts to shape a prefabricated intervention to needs of the country. For instance, the limited teacher training that accompanies the TEP enables teachers to use the packet; however, that training should be adapted to the needs of the country's existing programme. Children in Rwanda would have been better served if the international community had focused on rehabilitating the indigenous education system rather than investing scarce resources in the TEP programme, particularly so many months after the emergency. (DANIDA, 1996: IV, 92)

⁹⁴ Narrated to the author by a UNHCR field staff member in 1994.

A feature of the TEP approach has been the provision of at least two days initial training for teachers on the use of the teachers' guide and the TEP materials (Aguilar and Retamal, 1998: 26). The Angola version of TEP incorporates enriched teachers' guide and a longer period of initial training (five weeks), due to the low level of education of the rural population from whom teachers are recruited (Midttun, 1998: 6). The training and guide do not always lead to the use of child-centred teaching methods, as intended, but there is more success when groups of teachers prepare their lessons together (Johannessen, 2000: 27). The Angola TEP project has been extended to include grades 1 to 4 in some locations, and additional training has therefore been given (two-week training courses for each of grades 2 to 4), and textbooks and supporting materials supplied for grades 1 to 4 (Midttun, 1998: 5). In other cases, TEP students are encouraged to enter regular government schools – and there is then the problem of these students transferring at appropriate levels (Johannessen, 2000: 17–18). In Sierra Leone NRC has recently begun courses for children over 10 years of age, using the TEP Angola manual, translated and adapted by US and British educators to introduce literacy in English. Enrichment modules from its Rapid Response Education Programme are also being used with these students (Mette Nordstrand, personal communication).

With the increasing emphasis on rapid response, and to meet the needs of diverse operational situations, agencies have tended to separate the supply of kits from the processes of developing the educational and recreational programmes themselves. The development of materials for NRC's Rapid Response Education Programme for older children in Sierra Leone took approximately three months, including needs assessment, cooperative design of curriculum outlines, and teacher recruitment and training (Mette Nordstrand, personal communication). It is difficult to move faster than this. UNICEF, for example, has decided to separate the supply of emergency materials from the process of teacher training:

The reason that we [UNICEF] have moved away from the name "school-in-a-box" is that, despite its appeal to donors, it tends to create the impression that the box contains a school, when it can only contain supplies. No amount of kits will replace all the other work that it takes to get education going – community mobilization, identifying an appropriate curriculum, obtaining or developing learning and teaching materials, identifying, orienting and training teachers, monitoring standards and so forth.⁹⁵

UNICEF Somalia is combining the distribution of the education kits with a brief training of principals and teachers on their use. A "user's manual" of a few pages explains the contents of the kits.⁹⁶ Despite initial training where TEP has been used, evaluation of the programmes in Somalia and Angola have shown that unfamiliar items such as the "scrabble cubes" and cloth charts have been under-used, by teachers used to blackboard-based teaching (Eversmann, 2000: 27–30; Johannessen, 2000: 28).

Intended duration of use of "kitted" items

The UNESCO-PEER kit was designed to serve the needs of lower primary children and to last for a few months. The duration of use was controversial in the Rwandan refugee camps in Tanzania, where teachers complained that they had "finished the TEP", meaning that they had finished using the teachers' guide that came with the kit. It was intended that textbooks would be in place within a few months, but these were delayed, and interim materials were developed by refugee educators.

⁹⁵ Peter Buckland, personal communication. UNICEF plans to develop a start-up workshop manual for initiating this collaborative process early in an emergency.

⁹⁶ Details supplied by Geeta Verma, UNICEF, Somalia.

In contrast, kits (and replenishment packages) are seen as a long-term approach in situations where there is no established and reliable distribution system in place, as in the case of UNICEF Somalia and NRC's work in Angola and Sierra Leone.

Preparedness

There has been much discussion of the issue of "preparedness". This is an area where UNICEF Copenhagen is able to benefit from its dual role in supplying development programmes and emergency programmes. Suppliers are often willing to promise emergency supplies provided that there is an ongoing annual procurement. Thus, UNICEF Copenhagen has the capacity to respond to emergency demands for the types of item needed for its education and recreation kits. Likewise, UNESCO-PEER in Nairobi is able to procure education kits quickly, by dealing with known suppliers, who have valued its substantial past orders.

Advantages of standby stocks. In some cases it is not possible to procure the needed items quickly from the local market. In some cases there may not be a known implementing partner that could quickly make the local purchases. In these circumstances pre-assembled materials may reach crisis-affected communities more quickly than would be possible with local procurement. In practice it may not be possible quickly to increase the budget line for education in an agency's programme. An existing education budget may have been used up, and/or the emergency may be too small to justify budget revision to accommodate new arrivals. If standby stocks can be used, budget issues can be handled later.

Managers in an emergency situation may be more willing to say "yes" to a Headquarters' request to receive pre-assembled activity kits for children than to initiate immediate local procurement. Moreover, preparedness may create awareness. The existence of kits to meet the needs of children and adolescents for structured activities may create a positive climate of opinion among agency staff, reminding them that children and adolescents have special needs to restore their wellbeing after trauma and displacement. And kits are widely considered to be attractive to donors.

Disadvantages of standby stocks. A classroom education kit is like a large heavy suitcase or trunk. This can mean high storage costs and high transport costs. Also, deterioration may be a problem. Some materials deteriorate with storage (especially in hot climates). Paper may become mouldy, ball-point pens may dry up. Moreover, it is hard to predict the nature and location of future emergencies, which means that the volume and type of supplies needed are uncertain, and it is difficult to know what emphasis to give to possible regional storage sites. If a small volume of supplies is needed, they can probably be purchased in the local capital. If a large volume of supplies is needed, then this would exceed the likely capacity of standby stocks.

Another factor that is uncertain is access to emergency sites. If road conditions are poor and air access is overloaded with other relief goods, it may take time before bulky trunks of educational materials can be given space on crowded flights or road transport schedules. By the time access becomes practicable, it might have been possible to procure the items in the affected country or region.

When to use kits. It may be concluded that there is a rationale for the large-scale use of imported, pre-assembled kits, when procurement and distribution are the responsibility of a government system that is not reliable, or where there are security problems. At the other extreme, there will rarely be a justification for imported kits when one or more efficient NGOs are already on the ground and able to make local

purchases.⁹⁷ Whether such local purchases would be “kitted” in the location of purchase or field office or are distributed item by item to schools would depend on local circumstances, as would the contents of such kits.

Experience suggests that having samples of education and recreation kits to show to local educators (and craftsmen) can facilitate decision-making early in emergency situations on items needed and on whether they can be assembled locally. It could be useful therefore for agencies such as UNHCR to have a limited stock of kits that could be sent to new emergencies for demonstration and trial use, while local supply mechanisms (“kitted” or otherwise) are decided upon. UNHCR might consider developing a standby agreement with UNICEF Supply Division (see below).

What are the implications for humanitarian response? Preparedness and cooperation

International consensus is needed on the principles of educational response in crisis situations. The “Sphere” consultative process which produced a Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response set an unfortunate example here by limiting itself to the fields of food and water, health and shelter. Resource and time constraints led the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response to focus only on the above-mentioned topics (Joel McClellan, personal communication). However, the Sphere standards, on their own, could give the impression that humanitarian assistance to a population escaping from conflict or oppression means keeping everyone physically alive (but with young people not constructively occupied and breeding thoughts of revenge). This is despite the first principle in the associated Humanitarian Charter, “the right to life with dignity” (Sphere Project, 2000: 1–10)!

There are many agencies engaged in emergency education, and some have limited awareness of current best practice.⁹⁸ They request funds from donor personnel who are non-specialists and who cannot advise them on improving their proposals. Ways are needed therefore of establishing international principles and standards. The matter was raised at the recent Inter-Agency Consultation on Education in Emergency and Crisis, and follow-up activities may permit some progress in this direction.

The core principles identified in this limited study may be viewed as possible elements of the emerging international consensus.

- ***The right of access*** of all children and adolescents to education, including post-primary education, needs to be reiterated, since some governments refuse to acknowledge this.
- ***The community-based approach to education*** represents an investment in future capacity and in sustainability, a training ground for working together in civil society. Training of teachers, headteachers and school education committees is crucial. Involvement and training of youth leaders is needed for reaching out-of-school children and adolescents.

⁹⁷ Two senior Africa-based emergency educators have recently communicated to the author their frustrations about the cost and inappropriateness of importing UNICEF kits in situations where competent NGOs implementing refugee programmes could have purchased materials in the country of asylum.

⁹⁸ And, due to staff turnover, their project managers are often new to the field.



Young adolescents and their teacher at Madhu, Sri Lanka. UNHCR/07.1999/M. Kobayashi

- **Meeting the psychosocial needs** of children and adolescents through a range of structured activities such as education, recreation, expressive activities and community service, is a humanitarian duty and should be a “default” responsibility of the organization(s) responsible for schooling, unless other agencies are providing the needed services on a widespread basis.
- **Rapid response** is vital to meet psychosocial and protection needs. Where local materials procurement or distribution is likely to be difficult, pre-assembled imported kits may be helpful
- **Relating response to the school year** is important in meeting the concerns of the affected communities and in showing the importance of emergency education to policy-makers and donors.
- **The principle of education for durable solutions**, primarily refugee education in the languages of study used in the area of origin, should be internationally accepted. A regional approach, embracing countries of origin and asylum of refugees, can help solve problems of textbooks and certification and promote a durable solution. Emergency programmes should provide the foundation for positive change.
- **Including survival and peace-building messages and skills** in emergency education programmes can help save lives (health education and mine awareness) and prepare the coming generation of young adults to work for reconciliation, responsible government and sustainable development.

- *The concept of emergency education should be broadened* to embrace all the above-mentioned concerns, including both school-based programmes and programmes for out-of-school children and adolescents.
- *Ensuring the participation of special groups* including girls, adolescents, persons with disabilities and others is a primary concern, to be tackled jointly by education programme staff, other humanitarian programmes, community groups (leaders, youth, women, religious and other groups) and community education committees.
- *Ongoing refugee education programmes* should make special arrangements for rapid and broad-based response to the needs of newly arriving refugee children and adolescents.
- *Efforts should be made to provide schooling* for children and adolescents, even in less accessible and insecure places.
- *In prolonged emergencies*, there should be steady improvement in education quality, coverage and management.
- *Vigorous field-level partnerships and coordination mechanisms* are needed to achieve the above objectives.⁹⁹

The most controversial of these principles among policy-makers concerned with refugees is likely to be rapid response to the needs of newly displaced populations, for fear that this will deter return. The solution here is to emphasize the broader approach to meeting psychosocial needs that is envisaged. Policy-makers should understand that a “real” emergency education system takes at least a year to establish, more often several years.

The most controversial of these principles among educators is likely to be the integration of responsibility for organized child and adolescent activities in general into the sphere of “emergency education”. It is argued here that “structured normalizing activities for children and adolescents that address their protection and developmental needs” (see the case study on Timor above), including education, should be what emergency educators are talking about and doing. Donors fund “emergency education” programmes which have to be within walking reach of every child. Given current funding constraints, these programmes must assume “default” responsibility for the broader agenda of child and adolescent or youth activities.

In general, it is probably wise to keep the title “education” for this broader approach, as has been done by the Norwegian Refugee Council, for example, especially since teachers and classroom materials account for the bulk of the costs. However, in situations where emergency schooling is being tackled (often partially) by host governments, or where newly arrived refugees may be still thinking about an immediate return home, it may be more diplomatic to use a term such as “child and youth activities”.

UNHCR’s role

The roles of the UN agencies concerned with emergency education should build on their strengths. UNESCO has special expertise in supporting national education programmes in situations of chronic crisis and of reconstruction, for example. There is a Memorandum of Understanding between UNHCR and

⁹⁹ For another, similar, list of principles see Retamal et al. (1998: 213–214).

UNICEF on situations and sectors of mutual concern, based on their strengths and mandates. It assigns the primary role to UNHCR in refugee situations, and to UNICEF for in-country situations, but allows for flexibility. This flexibility has meant that UNICEF has largely handled humanitarian education in the recent high-profile crises in Kosovo and Timor (likewise in Tanzania, where UNICEF took an active role in the education of the large numbers of Rwandan and subsequently Burundi refugees, in cooperation with UNHCR). UNHCR, however, continues to be actively responsible for the education of almost a million refugee children.

UNHCR's responsibilities for education cannot be abdicated, as they relate to its field presence. The international community expects UNHCR to be present in almost every location where refugees need protection and assistance, and equips the agency with field offices, field staff, vehicles and communications equipment accordingly. In most of these locations, therefore, it is cost-effective for UNHCR to be the lead agency for emergency educational response.

The invisible activity

Although education is one of the main activities in refugee camps over the longer term, it is sometimes almost invisible in the discourse on policy. An examination of UNHCR evaluation reports in recent years (see www.unhcr.ch) shows little mention of education except for specific evaluations on children and education. The DANIDA-led multinational evaluation of the international response to the Rwanda emergency made only passing reference to education in the refugee camps, some 37 words in a detailed four-volume report (DANIDA, 1996), and these words were in the chapter on reconstruction inside Rwanda, not in the discussion of refugee operations.

The international community provides these resources to UNHCR in areas of repatriation and in specific internal displacement scenarios also. In such situations, UNHCR is not normally the lead agency for education, but UNHCR's field resources and protection mandate mean that it should attend to the specifics of ensuring that children "of concern" have access to school, without discrimination.¹⁰⁰ Returnee teachers should likewise have access to employment, without discrimination. UNHCR frequently gives funds for physical reconstruction, and these funds should support enlightened educational response, including education materials and teacher training as well as school buildings. (They should not be used for a few expensive school buildings benefiting the elite.) UNHCR should represent the interests of returnee districts in discussions of the allocation of donor funds generally (UNICEF in this case has country-wide responsibilities and has to build a long-term relationship with the central government, which may favour other districts).

All these responsibilities mean that UNHCR staff in general need an awareness of emergency education issues; and that specialist education officers are needed for major refugee programmes and for the initial period after repatriation (see below).

¹⁰⁰ UNHCR refers to non-refugees benefiting from its protection or assistance as "persons of concern".

Strengthening institutional policies

Institutional policy is not always clear, since decisions derive from different sections within a headquarters bureaucracy. Moreover, organizations such as UNHCR and UNICEF decentralize interpretation of policy as much as possible, to take account of the very different regional and national situations affecting refugees and children respectively. Matters are complicated further by the frequent job-rotation and sometimes high staff turnover in field-oriented humanitarian organizations. This can lead to inconsistent application of policy within countries over time and between countries. As noted above, UNHCR's Inspection and Evaluation Service found gross disparities in UNHCR's resourcing and speed of response to the education and psychosocial needs of children and adolescents (UNHCR, 1997b, 1997c). There cannot be rapid education response, or adequate subsequent emergency education unless there is a clear institutional commitment from the top, not just to the word "education", but to specific principles and standards and to giving feedback to donors if these standards cannot be met.

Institutional support for rapid response. UNICEF's "core corporate commitments" include shipment of the first emergency education and recreation kits within 72 hours. Norwegian Refugee Council standby educators are likewise available for deployment within 72 hours, which has greatly improved the capacity of the UN system for emergency response: funds have been obtained from the Norwegian government to provide quickly educators with relevant experience to UNHCR, UNICEF and UNESCO.

In the case of UNHCR, there is, or should be, a debate regarding the possibility of inclusion of an education specialist in the earliest stages of emergency response, to undertake needs assessment, prepare plans and help communities with early structured activities for children and adolescents. Currently, a Community Services specialist is included in the first emergency response team, often through a deployment from the standby team led by Swedish Save the Children.¹⁰¹ In most situations, however, the Community Services Officer is busy with identifying and briefing NGOs to work with separated children, women victims of violence and rape, elderly refugees and so on. In these circumstances the officer is expected to indicate the need for an education specialist to support the development of activities for children and adolescents. This can be difficult, however, if there is a hesitation at management level to begin "education" because of the belief that it might deter an expected immediate repatriation.¹⁰² Hopefully, this paper helps to clarify that emergency educators are expected to have important "soft" emergency response skills for working with the community, and are not about to build costly school classrooms enticing people to stay.

If UNHCR is to live up to its policy commitments to rapid education response, it needs to avoid the situation where e-mails about the possible "rapid deployment" of an education officer go back and forth for weeks or months, between overloaded staff (who are not educators) – as happened with Albania 1999 and the Eritrean crisis, 2000. UNHCR senior management should review the issue and consider adopting a trigger mechanism whereby the movement of more than 15,000 (or some other number of) refugees would automatically require deployment of a standby emergency education expert.¹⁰³ The trigger mechanism should also ensure the immediate dispatch (or immediate local procurement) of basic educational and

¹⁰¹ A total of 39 such deployments have been made since January 1996 (up to August 2000), of whom one-third were from Norwegian Save the Children.

¹⁰² Regarding the objection that education may delay voluntary repatriation in an early refugee emergency, see comments earlier in this paper.

¹⁰³ This topic could be discussed by the UNHCR Executive Committee's Standing Committee in its regular reviews of child policy issues.

recreational materials, based on population estimates; which would be deployed under the guidance of the emergency education specialist.

Accessing supplies in early emergency. As noted above, UNICEF has developed standardized emergency kits and has suppliers contracted to supply more kits at short notice. UNHCR, having the advantage of working often through competent NGOs, relies on local purchasing by these NGOs for the bulk of its education supplies.

The best form of rapid response is indeed for a competent organization to start working with the refugee or internally displaced community as soon as possible, and to purchase simple supplies locally. However, there is not always a competent implementing partner on the spot, and large-scale local purchases can be difficult. UNHCR might therefore consider procuring and stocking a small stock of emergency education and recreation kits, which could be dispatched to small emergencies and, as part of the start-up process, to larger ones (but unless there is NGO back-up, the kits sent to crisis-affected locations may get lost). The kits would cover only about three months of initial operation and would not be a substitute for normal local procurement. The kits could be used quickly without waiting to establish an education budget line. If the emergency is large, feedback would indicate whether to order more and whether modifications are necessary. Local production may often be possible, once samples of the kits are available.

One option for refugee emergencies would be to design a combined education and recreation kit, to save space and to avoid the impression that permanent schools are being established for newly arrived refugees who may still be considering return home. The kits could be called some variant of “Child and Adolescent Activity Kits”, and the initial centres of activity could be called something like “Child and Adolescent Activity Centres”.¹⁰⁴ On balance, however, it would probably be simpler for UNHCR to develop institutional arrangements to procure the standard UNICEF education and recreation emergency kits, through an arrangement with UNICEF Supply Division.

Rapid access to funds. Regarding donor policy, Nicolai (2000) commends “up-front” seed money given by the Banyan Tree Foundation for IRC to start its programme in East Timor, as contrasted with situations where need assessments for early emergency interventions lead to the submission of proposals to donors and finally to the receipt of funds when the time for “phase one” interventions is past (Wendy Smith, personal communication). The high-speed response of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to funding requests from NRC is also noteworthy. The lack of effective mechanisms in UNHCR for meeting mid-year additional funding requirements for education of newly arrived refugee children and adolescents has been noted above.

Institutional commitment to maintaining and improving standards. Consistency of institutional support is another huge challenge. UNHCR and many NGOs operate under perpetual resource constraints and insecurity of funding. UNHCR, for example, raises almost all its resources through fund-raising from governments during the current calendar year. Field budget proposals are effectively limited in advance to an estimate of the funds that donor governments may be willing to provide during the coming year, rather than indicating what is needed to achieve agreed minimum standards. Information on the actual needs of education and youth programmes rarely reaches headquarters, or donors.

¹⁰⁴ The “resource box for recreational and other activities” proposed in the 1999 edition of UNHCR’s Handbook for Emergencies, is of this type (UNHCR, 1999a: 116–17).

Additionally, agencies such as UNHCR normally experience funding crises during the year, when programmes are asked to reduce their budgets due to an expected shortfall of resources.¹⁰⁵ NGOs likewise often operate on faith alone, unsure whether the next tranche of funding will arrive until the last moment or even later! Under no circumstances should teacher posts be cut with the constant ups and downs of budget projections and crises, otherwise education will not be worth the name and teachers and children will not learn the lessons of orderly institutional management and trust that they often badly need.¹⁰⁶ The impact of financial crises should be limited to temporary reductions in infrastructure budgets, which should be part of every education project after the initial phase, if only for this reason.

The incipient donor interest in multi-year funding is very necessary in the field of education (and should be on a rolling basis, so that there is always a two- or three-year future funding profile). As noted earlier, donors have also begun earmarking funding for refugee education programmes in several African countries to give a secure resource base. It is hoped that these donors will invest in a study of the true resourcing needs of these programmes, in ongoing monitoring and reporting and in periodic independent evaluation of programme achievements (as well as solving problems of budget structure that can constrain expenditure of the donated funds).

Attitudes to staffing the education function. Humanitarian organizations have few staff with expertise in education in situations of emergency and crisis. The most lacking is UNHCR, which has only one senior post for education, despite a case-load of over two million children and adolescents in refugee populations assisted by UNHCR.¹⁰⁷ Many of the educators working within UNICEF and UNESCO lack emergency experience. And the NGOs which undertake front-line work in this field have difficulty in retaining international staff to work in difficult field locations.

In UNHCR, the lack of international education posts at field level means that UNHCR cannot properly fulfil its coordination and monitoring role in this sector, and cannot actively promote quality improvement and certification of schooling or dissemination of life-saving messages (including HIV/AIDS education, and environmental and peace education). Moreover, without specialist staff, there is no professional advice to non-specialist field programme officers on how to minimise the impact of the frequent budget cuts on education programmes. Steps are needed to overcome this ambivalence about education, such as the creation of posts of Regional Education Officer, and the deployment of seconded education experts at country level.¹⁰⁸

Linkages between education and related specialists. It is vital to make good linkages between education, youth services, community services and child policy specialists. All have a concern with the

¹⁰⁵ The author conducted training for UNHCR field staff on programming to meet the resourcing standards set out in the 1997 education sector evaluation. Within weeks, the usual spring announcement of a financial crisis meant that education budgets had to be reduced. This meant a reduction in books and education aids, since there is usually an attempt to preserve teachers' incentives. "Progress" has meant that in November 2000 there was already an assumption of 20 per cent under-funding of approved budgets for 2001.

¹⁰⁶ The year 2000 saw a new "low" in this respect, with some teacher posts being cut.

¹⁰⁷ This position needs to be restored to "specialist" status, lost during an interval of 20 months when there was no senior post at all, due to restructuring during a funding crisis. In addition to the one senior specialist, the German funding for higher education scholarships includes a non-specialist post funded to administer the scholarships. And there is a United Nations Volunteer Education Adviser post in UNHCR Kampala. Some years back some field offices had Junior Professional Officers for the education sector, seconded by their governments, although this mechanism often led to the deployment of social scientists rather than educators. Donors should be requested to reactivate this arrangement, but with recruitment of education specialists.

¹⁰⁸ NRC has deployed some education specialists to non-acute emergency programmes. See also the previous footnote.

programmes discussed here. The post-Machel establishment of units relating to children affected by armed conflict in NGOs such as Save the Children/US and IRC is a big step forward in this direction. In UNHCR, the Regional Child Policy Officers and Regional Community Services Officers have an important role to play in promoting earlier, better and more comprehensive approaches to emergency education.

Staff training. Training needs include those of staff directly managing education in emergency situations and staff at management and programme level who influence education policy and budget allocations. The ARC (Action for the Rights of Children) training materials, developed jointly by UNHCR and the Save the Children Alliance, include a module on education (UNHCR and SCA, 2000). Other training initiatives are under consideration, such as a distance education module linked to the GINIE website (Maureen McClure, personal communication).

Inter-Agency cooperation

Sharing teaching-learning materials, guidelines and manuals. Many organizations have produced education materials for use in emergencies, in the early phase and during subsequent periods. These materials tend not to be published and hence vanish when there are no longer funds to keep them in use, or when their authors or promoters move on. This can lead to waste and duplication and to slow or less than optimal results. There has been discussion about a repository of emergency education materials at least since the "RAPID-ED" meeting in Washington in 1995 that led to the establishment of the GINIE database. The JRS Regional Resource Centre in Nairobi represents a regional resource of this type.¹⁰⁹ Copies of certain documents have been hand-carried to certain emergencies, or downloaded from GINIE, but there has been no comprehensive approach to this matter.¹¹⁰ The recent Inter-Agency Consultation included a working group discussion on this topic and a Task Team is being established to identify materials for sharing. Another Task Team will work with GINIE on web-based approaches to sharing.

There is a strong case for bringing together a set of resource materials to assist in the development of emergency education programmes. Some education materials are generic and easily adaptable to new situations, while some mention a particular country or group, but could serve as models and handy reference materials. A first step would be to review existing education materials (other than national textbooks) and prepare an annotated bibliography. The languages in which the materials are available should be documented, and in some cases translations may be felt to be useful. This activity was envisaged as part of the follow-up to the November 2000 consultation.

In a stronger version of the sharing process, some core materials could be adapted for inter-agency use, published with multiple logos, and made commercially available (at least in UNESCO and UNICEF bookshops), so that they are available to a wider range of users, are not dependent on individuals for their continued existence and become part of the public record. A useful starting point could be peace education in humanitarian situations, where UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO and other agencies have developed materials in recent years, rather similar in approach but with slightly different orientations. The author's

¹⁰⁹ For contents of the Resource Centre see JRS (2000).

¹¹⁰ As in Sierra Leone in 1999, when psychosocial and peace education materials were downloaded in Freetown (see www.ginie.org/SierraLeone). In many places, Internet access and printing of long documents might be difficult, although print-outs can be made by international staff before departure.

experience of visiting an Afghan NGO in Peshawar, which was translating American school textbooks to serve as a model when developing a peace education programme for Afghan refugees, reinforced this idea, since the UNHCR materials had already been structured to meet the concerns of displaced Third World populations (including Muslim as well as Christian religious leaders in the Kenya refugee camps).

Sharing information about needs and programmes. It has proved difficult to conduct the present research on education in emergencies because much of the relevant information is either lost in the mists of time, and/or scattered in files across the globe. It was extremely difficult, for example, to find out what programmes were in place at the beginning of a year and what changes were made during the year to meet the educational needs of new arrivals.¹¹¹ Difficulties in profiling emergency education world-wide were experienced by the working group convened by UNESCO in 1999 to develop the Thematic Study on education in situations of emergency and crisis.¹¹²

As discussed at the recent Inter-Agency Consultation, there should be a database on emergency education programmes, using a standard format. The database should be relatively simple, so that field staff have time to assemble and present the required information. Because emergency situations are so diverse, and education programmes so different, the database would be rather misleading unless there were qualitative documentation widely available to back it up. The easiest way to make such qualitative information available would be for organizations implementing emergency education programmes to put their quarterly and annual reports, and occasional evaluations and special studies, routinely on to their own or the GINIE website (excluding sensitive information).

GINIE itself needs multi-agency endorsement and input; an arrangement of this type is likely to be instituted in 2001, through the follow-up to the recent Inter-Agency Consultation. GINIE performs a useful but limited function in the field of emergency education at present, pending a stronger and more secure funding base. If the site is to provide the information services required in the field of education in crisis and transition, there is work initially for two educators with emergency experience (and different language skills) to meet the backlog of documentation work and to build networks, and on a continuing basis thereafter for at least one.

Field and headquarters inter-agency cooperation. Until recently, communication and cooperation between agencies has been weak. One consequence has been that a core group of technical specialists from each major player does the rounds of prominent new emergencies, looking at issues of education, child protection and gender. They often do not share their experiences outside their own agencies. Sometimes, but not always, the agencies are competing for funds. With the greater cooperation now envisaged, it may be possible to establish a "hotline" for communications, such that the multiplication of uncoordinated visits and initiatives could be avoided. This hotline might also be used to promote attention to the needs of "unpopular" and less "mediatized" emergencies, where education may otherwise be tacked on to the assignments of an organization whose primary concern is shelter, camp management, or water and sanitation.

¹¹¹ It became clear during the present research that this exercise could not be conducted at UNHCR Headquarters, due to the decentralization of preparation of sub-agreements (and revisions thereof) with implementing partners and of records generally.

¹¹² As observed by the present author, the difficulties ranged from knowing which organizations to contact, and non-response, to lack of standardized interpretations of basic parameters such as "duration of project" (overall duration versus current funding cycle(s)).

Plans for inter-agency cooperation in sharing materials and sharing information about ongoing programmes have been noted above. It will be a challenge for this inter-agency work to avoid being labelled a “headquarters” exercise, and to find ways of reaching deep into the field staff networks of the various partner organizations. It is hoped that there will be emergency education networks at regional level also. And the importance of inter-agency cooperation at country level has been stressed earlier in this paper.

Education as a humanitarian pillar, a human right and a cornerstone of peace-building

Education in emergencies is a pillar of humanitarian assistance, enabling services to be provided to children and young people from early in an emergency onwards. Speedy access to education and other activities which help to restore the child’s development after trauma is a human right which must be respected by agencies, guided by a normative framework based on international human rights law. And education in crisis and transition can be enriched (if certain minimal resources are available) to serve as a cornerstone for building a new social order, promoting mutual respect and tolerance, peaceful discussion and problem-solving at local level, and an understanding of the role of law and of representative and honest systems of governance in problem-solving at national level.

A cornerstone is a lesser part of the whole than a pillar. Many factors contribute to the future of a country, and education, preferably peace-oriented education, is only one. But in the long run it is the next generation who will determine a country’s pain or gain. And the foundations of future response to present troubles are being laid in the daily lives of emergency-affected children and young people cared for or neglected by the international community. May donors concerned with humanitarian values, human rights, long-term development and non-fissiparous governance work together to fund education in emergency, crisis and reconstruction, following principles developed through professional discussions to which this paper is a humble contribution.

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