UNICEF

March 2016

LEARNING FOR PEACE
Advancing Learning. Building Peace.

The Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding

Executive Summary

The Integration of Education and Peacebuilding

Synthesis Report on Findings from Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda

Authors: Alan Smith, Simone Datzberger, Alan McCully

#pbearesearch

US
University of Sussex
Centre for International Education

UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Ulster University

Executive Summary

The purpose of this synthesis report is twofold. First, it examines how education is included in peacebuilding and development frameworks in four distinct conflict-affected environments (Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda). Second, it compares, summarises and critically reflects how education policies and governance contribute to the peacebuilding process. In doing so, we pay close attention to aspects of redistribution, representation, recognition and reconciliation (see: Novelli et al. 2015). Throughout the report we deliberately distinguish between explicit and implicit forms of peacebuilding through education. The former refers to activities such as peace education, peacebuilding training for teachers, programmes and initiatives purposely put in place for a conflict-affected society to come to terms with the legacies of a conflict. The latter, refers to policies, activities and programmes that may not be intentionally designed to build peace but indirectly impact processes of social transformation and change, necessary for sustainable peace and development.

Analytical Framework and Methodology
The methodology for this report builds on:

- The consortium's 4Rs theoretical framework: the role of key processes of redistribution (equity in the distribution of resources - economic), representation (participation in decision making - political), recognition (affirming the diversity of identities) and reconciliation (healing across divides) within peacebuilding and education sector planning and policy;
- The report is informed by an initial literature review on the integration of education in to peacebuilding (Smith & Ellison 2016) and a desk review of policy documents and mapping analysis. Our review of relevant peacebuilding, development and education-related policies included: National Development Plans, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, National and International Peacebuilding Plans (if existent), UNDAF and any other relevant UNCT plans, Education Sector Plans and Reforms, Curricula, any other documents relevant for the specific case study (e.g. policies about decentralisation of education sector)
- This was followed by semi-structured interviews (individual and small group) with various actors at country level, including: government officials, UNICEF and any other UNCT staff, representatives of international donors and INGOs, academics, civil society organisations, schools officials and any other country- and context-specific actors.

Four Country Case Studies: Pakistan, Myanmar, South Africa and Uganda.
The four country case studies (Pakistan, Myanmar, South Africa and Uganda) represent a variety of contexts relating to the relationship between education and peacebuilding, in terms of geographical diversity, the nature and temporality of the conflict and the drivers and root causes that underpin them. South Africa, emerged out of the struggle against apartheid, a conflict rooted in racism and social exclusion, whose legacies and

inequalities remain more than two decades after conflict. South Africa provides us with a rich resource to reflect more historically on the challenges and possibilities for the education system to contribute to promoting sustainable peacebuilding. Uganda, another country in Africa, remains divided between a peaceful South and Central Region and a Northern region that has suffered a series of punctuated armed conflicts for almost three decades. Pakistan, located in South Asia, is a large country that has suffered from a series of conflicts in recent years, linked to instability in Afghanistan, the global 'war on terror', regional tensions with its neighbour India, internal political and civil unrest and terrorism. Finally, Myanmar, presents us with a case study from South East Asia, of a country on the brink of entering a post-conflict period after decades of highly authoritarian military rule, challenged by a range of armed and non-armed ethnic and political movements. The rich diversity of research sites emphasises the need for conflict sensitive, contextually coherent approaches to enhancing the role and potential of education in peacebuilding processes in each context, while serving to enrich globally relevant insights and reflections on the differing challenges, possibilities and potentials of education, as a key social sector, in the promotion of sustainable peace-promoting societies.

Synthesis of Findings and Implications for Future Policy and Research

The Role of Education in Peacebuilding and Development Frameworks

No matter the degree of state fragility, within macro-peacebuilding and/or development plans and frameworks, education is in the main equated with aspects of redistribution (for example, mainly identified as an economic driver), thereby disregarding the transformative potentials of representation, recognition and reconciliation within and through education. In particular two main elements are not fully exploited in all four country contexts, namely: a), how to increase agency and voice in decision-making processes affecting the education sector and peacebuilding process as a whole; b) the potential of education (with the exception of South Africa) in mitigating past and persisting conflict drivers in the long-term - not to mention strategies or macro-educational policies.

The Role of Peacebuilding within Education Sector Plans and Macro-Reforms

Our synthesis revealed that also national macro-education policies and reforms prioritise aspects of redistribution over representation, recognition and reconciliation – with South Africa (at least rhetorically) placing a much greater emphasis on the transformative role of education than all other countries. Education sector plans place either a strong weight on access to free education (in particular Myanmar and Uganda) or portray education as a key ingredient towards economic growth (Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda). Such strategies clearly favour a rigid peacebuilding and development through 'modernization' approach as opposed to regarding education as a tool of and for social transformation.

Financing for Education

Three of the countries (Myanmar, Pakistan and Uganda) seem to follow the pattern in other conflict affected contexts whereby the percentage of GDP and allocation

"No matter the degree of state fragility, within macro-peacebuilding and/or development plans and frameworks, education is in the main equated with aspects of redistribution (for example, mainly identified as an economic driver), thereby disregarding the transformative potentials of representation, recognition and reconciliation within and through education."

"Our synthesis revealed that also national macro-education policies and reforms prioritise aspects of redistribution over representation, recognition and reconciliation – with South Africa (at least rhetorically) placing a much greater emphasis on the transformative role of education than all other countries."

of government spending to education falls below recommended levels. This means that even if peacebuilding were prioritised, it would struggle to compete with other demands on education budgets – a vicious circle where countries most in need of peacebuilding efforts are also those with the least resources to implement peacebuilding policies. Even where there is a higher percentage of GPD and allocation of government spending on education (as in South Africa), this does not necessarily mean that transformation is achieved and deeper structural challenges in terms of segregation and inequality persist. Financing therefore is only part of the solution and there may be additional political economy factors that make it more difficult to effect change.

Education Governance

A more transformative approach to peacebuilding through education needs to be both implicit and explicit by addressing change at individual, institutional and systemic levels. However, the lack of political will, poor implementation practice or coherence as well as the overall political economy context of a country frequently impedes systemic and institutional change and therefore long-term transformation nourished through education (this point is also corroborated by Novelli et al. 2015).

In contexts where education policies are developed at the national macro level to support peacebuilding through equity, social cohesion or reconciliation, one has to acknowledge that these are unlikely to be successful when they are undermined by a political economy that is resistant to transformation and change. This may be further complicated by political domination by elites and flawed decentralisation processes in education.

In regard to growing privatisation trends in education, questions about what kind of new forms of education governance will emerge can no longer be avoided. There is a pressing need to further examine what aspects of governance make education policies more effective or ineffective in contributing to sustainable peace.

Lastly, there is a striking absence of donor and multi-lateral policy strategies addressing the weaknesses of conflict-affected governments to coherently implement education policies that foster implicit and explicit peacebuilding in the longer term.

Equity

The distinction between equality and equity is often poorly understood, but of crucial importance for peacebuilding since it determines whether education policies (for example, to address access, resources or outcomes) are applied equally to all regions and populations (thereby replicating existing inequalities), or are applied in an equitable way (that is in a differential and targeted way, to redress historical inequalities).

It is also important that inequalities are monitored in terms of access (enrolments and retention), resources (pupil/teacher ratio and infrastructure) and outcomes (completion, attainment and employment). However, there are two main shortcomings within current approaches that are vital for the link between equity and peacebuilding.

"Three of the countries (Myanmar, Pakistan and Uganda) seem to follow the pattern in other conflict affected contexts whereby the percentage of GDP and allocation of government spending to education falls below recommended levels. This means that even if peacebuilding were prioritised, it would struggle to compete with other demands on education budgets – a vicious circle where countries most in need of peacebuilding efforts are also those with the least resources to implement peacebuilding policies."

One is that rarely is education data collected and disaggregated by religious, cultural or ethnic background (yet it is these identities that are often mobilised around conflict). The reason for not collecting this data is often cited as concerns about causing intergroup tension and sometimes districts or regions are used as proxies for these identities. A second shortcoming is that education policies do not currently monitor links between education inequalities and levels of violence at sub-national levels, for example, through cross referencing with other national datasets such as crime statistics and social surveys. On both these fronts, it is difficult to see how the linkages between education inequalities and education policies that support peacebuilding can be evaluated.

Poor quality education and segregation based on social class or wealth thwarts equal opportunity and social transformation in all four case studies. Structural violence pervades the educational system in several ways thereby affecting social cohesion and reconciliation processes.

The long-term consequences of how unequal access to high quality education impacts social transformation in conflict-affected societies remains by and large unexplored.

"While all countries under our examination do have their own context-specific and socio-historical causes of segregation in education, we found that they share two broad commonalities that impact processes of "vertical" and "horizontal" social cohesion through education in several ways. These are: Segregation based on socio-economic status and national unity versus cultural diversity."

The interplay of gender, education and peacebuilding requires approaches that go far beyond providing equal access to educational services. In this regard, educational institutions and programmes have to be regarded as unique platforms that develop and re-negotiate identities and reflect upon deeply seated cultural norms. In other words, schools are an essential entry point to enable boys and girls to contribute equally and positively to peacebuilding and social transformation.

There is a need to thoroughly interlink aspects of inequality in education with social cohesion and not to analyse or assess them in isolation from one another. In the scope of this study we hardly encountered research or empirical data acknowledging how both social cohesion and inequality in education are closely intertwined. In part this can be explained by the fact that it is much easier to measure indicators of inequality than social cohesion.

Social Cohesion

More knowledge and generation of evidence is necessary to better understand the importance of institutional and systemic change. There is a need to move away from a sole preventative 'peace-education' approach towards exploring implicit forms of peacebuilding that encompasses a society and its respective institutions at large.

While all countries under our examination do have their own context-specific and socio-historical causes of segregation in education, we found that they share two broad commonalities that impact processes of "vertical" and "horizontal" social cohesion through education in several ways. These are: Segregation based on socio-economic status and national unity versus cultural diversity.

Segregation based on socio economic status largely reflects what has been already discussed in our section under 'equality', namely that the political context of a

society determines equal opportunities in education. Restricted access to high quality education widens social segregation based on wealth and the creation of a two-tiered society in all of our case studies. Perhaps even more important, it showcases how inequality and the lack of social cohesion within and through education are closely intertwined. Not surprisingly, this also affects remote and/or rural areas as well as specific urban regions (for example, townships in South Africa).

Moreover, there is a general tension in all countries to promote notions of national unity through education alongside the need to also cherish diversity with regards to ethnic background or religious views (for example, differences in Islamic thought and practice in Pakistan). Besides, language of instruction policies weaken processes of social cohesion across all cases, yet national policies and context-specific challenges vary tremendously between each country. Whereas in Uganda and South Africa religion does not appear to be a major conflicting impediment towards social cohesion within and through education, in Myanmar and Pakistan religion can be a basis of exclusion. Also the marginalisation of ethnic minorities varies from country to country.

Across all countries the following challenges towards integration of refugees through education persist: a) different educational backgrounds, in some instances even language barriers, disadvantage refugee children in their educational progress; b) advocacy work for special treatment of refugees in providing them better access to education is challenged by the fact that many nationals frequently struggle with poverty or low socio-economic status as well; c) there is a scarcity of resources for urgently needed psychological support in schools; d) with the exception of Uganda, tensions with local host communities affect social integration of IDPs and refugees (also through education).

Lastly, we found that non-formal education (NFE) programmes can have a greater potential to address societal transformation (in reference to redistribution, representation, recognition and reconciliation) and social cohesion more explicitly than nationwide formal education initiatives (e.g. Uganda). However, their success largely depends on the country context, history of conflict and political as well as religious motivations by its implementers/designers. More research is necessary on whether and how NFE programmes address societal transformation and peacebuilding more explicitly than nationwide formal education initiatives at regional and country level. More importantly, the implications for formal education sector planning in post-conflict environments need to be further explored. This includes discussions on the limitations of appropriating a Western-style educational model to non-Western contexts, conflicts and everyday realities.

Reconciliation

Notably, in the case of Pakistan the term reconciliation is not used at the official level. In such circumstances we opted to apply the term reconciliation (in alignment with our theoretical framework) to specific issues, such as the role of education in nurturing relationships of trust or how history is taught and reflected school textbooks – to name but a few examples.

"Restricted access to high quality education widens social segregation based on wealth and the creation of a two-tiered society in all of our case studies."

"there is a general tension in all countries to promote notions of national unity through education alongside the need to also cherish diversity with regards to ethnic background or religious views."

With the exception of South Africa, whose TRC made explicit mention of the role of education towards social transformation; all three other cases share one commonality: School curricula fail to thoroughly address the historical and contemporary injustices linked to conflict and structural forms of violence. In a broader sense, educational systems and programming do not embrace peacebuilding as a process that comes to terms with past and present grievances and conflicts. This may change in the course of the peace process in Myanmar, and equally needs more time and investment in Pakistan and Uganda, where social injustices, past and current grievances are still to a large extent silenced in schools.

"There is a pressing need to move away from a sheer preventative 'peace education' approach, and instead use education as a mechanism to also come to terms with the root causes and dynamics of conflicts."

The way in which the root causes of past and/or present grievances and conflicts are subject to (public) debate could potentially generate new tensions if not revive former divisions. This is not to imply, however, that there is not space for educational approaches to co-create a 'social truth' that acknowledges multiple experiences, narratives, perspectives and interpretations of past and present conflicts and grievances. In fact, there is a pressing need to move away from a sheer preventative 'peace education' approach, and instead use education as a mechanism to also come to terms with the root causes and dynamics of conflicts (Bush & Saltarelli 2000; Lopes Cardozo 2008). Probably, the biggest challenge towards this endeavour is the political context in which curricula reform or educational programming are formulated, as well as the difficulty to acquire skilled and 'neutral' teachers or facilitators that are not perceived as a threat by those in power.
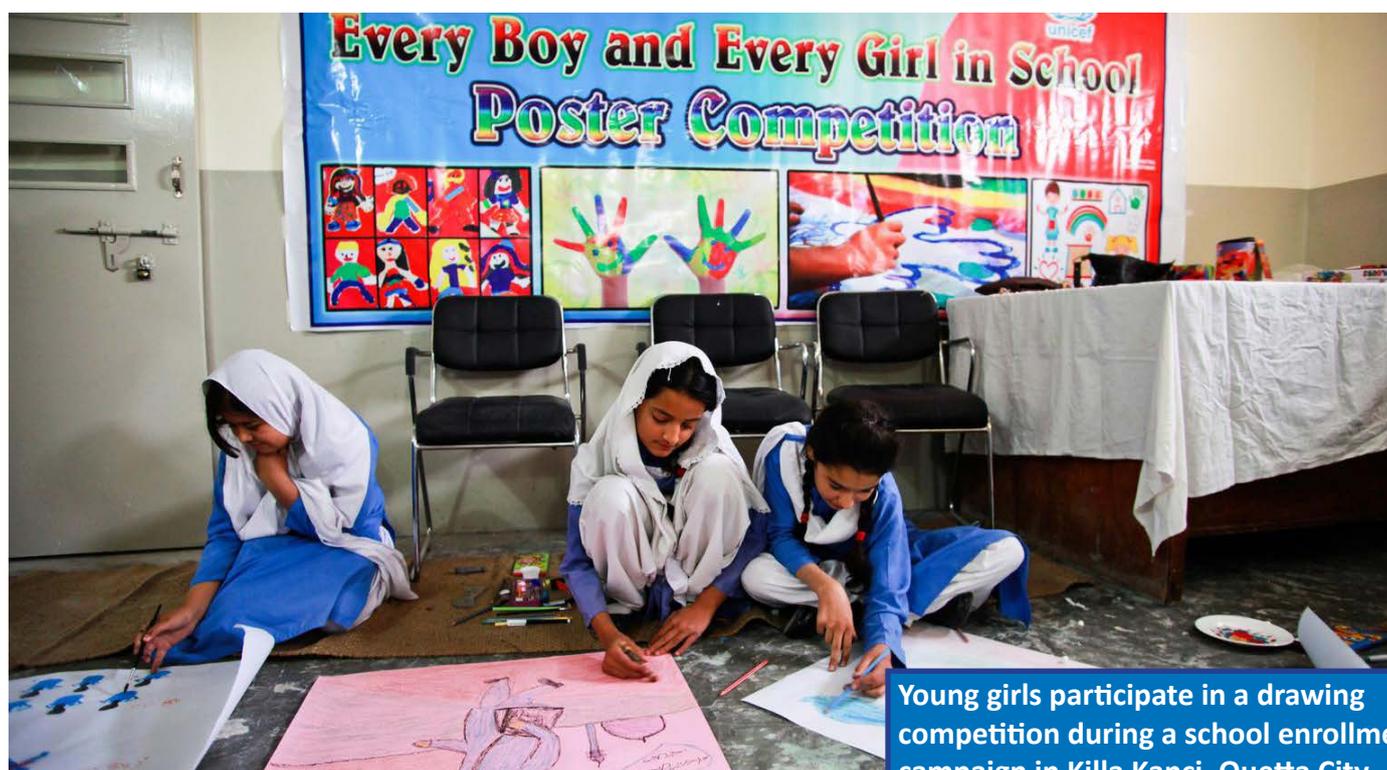
Young girls participate in a drawing competition during a school enrollment campaign in Killa Kanci, Quetta City, Balochistan Province, Pakistan ©UNICEF/Zaidi

The Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding

Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), University of Amsterdam

The AISSR Programme Group Governance and Inclusive Development (http://aissr.uva.nl/programmegroups/item/governance-and-inclusive-development.html) consists of an interdisciplinary team of researchers focusing on issues relating to global and local issues of governance and development. The Research Cluster Governance of Education, Development and Social Justice focuses on multilevel politics of education and development, with a specific focus on processes of peacebuilding in relation to socio-economic, political and cultural (in)justices. The research group since 2006 has maintained a particular research focus on education, conflict and peacebuilding, as part of its co-funded 'IS Academie'research project with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Centre for International Education, University of Sussex

The Centre for International Education (CIE) (www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cie) was founded in 1989 on the premise that education is a basic human right that lies at the heart of development processes aimed at social justice, equity, social and civic participation, improved wellbeing, health, economic growth and poverty reduction. It is recognised as one of the premiere research centres working on education and international development in Europe. The Centre has also secured a prestigious UK ESRC/DFID grant to carry out research on the Role of Teachers in Peacebuilding in Conflict Affected Contexts, which aligns directly with the research strategy of the PBEA programme and will form part of the broader research partnership.

UNESCO Centre at Ulster University

Established in 2002 the UNESCO Centre (www.unescocentre.ulster.ac.uk) at the University of Ulster provides specialist expertise in education, conflict and international development. It builds on a strong track record of research and policy analysis related to education and conflict in Northern Ireland. Over the past ten years the UNESCO Centre has increasingly used this expertise in international development contexts, working with DFID, GiZ, Norad, Save the Children, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, providing research on education and social cohesion, the role of education in reconciliation and analysis of aid to education in fragile and conflict affected situations.

General Inquiries

Marielle le Mat
University of Amsterdam,
PO Box 15629,
1001 NC Amsterdam
The Netherlands

Email: m.l.j.lemat@uva.nl

https://educationanddevelopment.wordpress.com/rp/research-consortium-education-and-peacebuilding/

Consortium Directors

Dr Mieke Lopes Cardozo (University of Amsterdam)
Email: T.A.LopesCardozo@uva.nl

Professor Mario Novelli (University of Sussex)
Email: m.novelli@sussex.ac.uk

Professor Alan Smith (Ulster University)
Email: a.smith@ulster.ac.uk