



## **REGAINING A FUTURE?**

LESSONS LEARNED FROM EDUCATION OF  
YOUNG PEOPLE IN FRAGILE SITUATIONS

*Birgitte Lind Petersen*

DIIS REPORT 2013:16

*A DIIS ReCom publication*



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Danish Institute for International Studies, DIIS  
Østbanegade 117, DK 2100 Copenhagen  
Ph: +45 32 69 87 87  
Fax: +45 32 69 87 00  
E-mail: [diis@diis.dk](mailto:diis@diis.dk)  
Web: [www.diis.dk](http://www.diis.dk)

Cover photo: © Birgitte Lind Petersen  
Layout: Allan Lind Jørgensen  
Printed in Denmark by Vesterkopi AS  
ISBN 978-87-7605-582-0 (print)  
ISBN 978-87-7605-583-7 (pdf)  
Price: DKK 50.00 (VAT included)  
DIIS publications can be downloaded  
free of charge from [www.diis.dk](http://www.diis.dk)  
Hardcopies can be ordered at [www.diis.dk](http://www.diis.dk)

*This report is part of the Research and Communication Programme (ReCom) on international development cooperation, funded by Danida (Danish Development Agency) and Sida (Swedish Development Agency), and undertaken by a number of institutions including UNU-WIDER and DIIS. For more information on the programme, please see <http://recom.wider.unu.edu/> and <http://www.diis.dk/recom>.*

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## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank several people for their time and input to the report: Bo Tovby-Jørgensen from Save the Children, Denmark; Karina Kleivan and Benth Jahns from IBIS; Anne Sørensen, coordinator of the Danish Network for Education; Katrine Wold and Dean Brooks from the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); Helge Brochmann from NORAD; Sonja Moissidis from the Division for Education, Health and Social Protection in the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ); Frank Rothaus Jensen, Jesper Andersen and Henning Nøhr from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DANIDA; Catherine Howgego from the Department for International Development, UK (DFID); Morten Sigsgaard from IIEP-UNESCO; Shiva Bhusal (former Education Programme Officer at the Danish Embassy in Kathmandu); Poul Erik Rasmussen from Pouras Consult; and Nauja Kleist, Signe Cold-Ravnkilde and especially Lars Engberg-Pedersen from the Danish Institute for International Studies.

## **Executive summary**

This report examines experiences in providing educational aid to young people in fragile situations. It forms part of the Research and Communication Programme on Foreign Aid and falls under the theme of ‘Governance and Fragility’. The study analyses experiences with three different, yet overlapping forms of education supported by a variety of multilateral and bilateral donors and agencies, as well as NGOs: secondary schooling, accelerated learning/second chance education, and vocational/technical skills education.

The research has been directed by the following objectives:

- Assessing the impact of educational interventions for youth (specifically formal secondary schooling, second chance/accelerated learning and vocational training) in preparing for and ensuring work and income opportunities, as well as further education.
- Assessing educational interventions in terms of their ability to reduce violence, challenge the inequalities underpinning conflicts and creating new values, ideals and social relations.
- Based on the above, discussing what practices support peace-making, state-building and young people’s involvement in these processes.

Based on the academic literature, reviews and evaluations, secondary literature and expert and practitioner interviews, the report discusses the available impact documentation and the main lessons learned from educational programmes aimed at young people in fragile situations. The programmes discussed have been selected according to their relevance and the existence of impact documentation. There are some excellent evaluations and reports that focus partly on impact, but also many more or less well substantiated papers providing general insights. Therefore, the report does not provide an exhaustive overview of education interventions for young people in fragile situations, but analyses the available qualitative documentation of impact. In terms of lessons learned regarding support to and the implementation of such programmes, there are several larger studies, as well as compilations of findings making possible conclusions which are relevant beyond the context of the few examples.

## **Main findings**

Youth and education are severely affected in situations of fragility, especially in conflict, and both are seen as main agents and arenas for people's hopes and aspirations for better livelihoods, peace and development. With immense unemployment, insecure livelihoods and unpredictable political transitions in many fragile states, governments and donors are arguing the need to train and educate young people as tomorrow's citizens. There is a fear of destructive and violent reactions from a growing number of young people who lack opportunities to secure their livelihoods, reintegrate into social life and contribute to their societies.

### *General concerns for donors*

At a general level, the report identifies a need for plentiful and long-term funding. Aid to youth education has been seriously under-prioritised in fragile situations, though the available documentation reveals that youth education can positively impact livelihoods, peace and development. Nonetheless, insufficient funding, scattered programmes and short-term interventions are limiting the positive impacts. Besides increased funding, there is a need for donors to pay attention to bridging the humanitarian–development gap. Education was until recently outside the realm of humanitarian work. Several humanitarian organisations have now acquired good levels of experience, but they work short-term, and there is a lack of connection to the long-term development work of which education has to be a part. Good practices are emerging, and donors should ensure and strengthen coordination and cooperation, as well as pooled funding, which has produced better alignment and more sustainable interventions. It is now possible for donors to use the New Deal as a basis for providing support to youth education in fragile situations, to direct funding through the Global Partnership for Education and to support the Education Cluster to ensure that the different implementing organisations coordinate with each other and align with government priorities. Currently, the International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) has emerged as a global best practice in ensuring coordination, providing qualified advice and producing documentation regarding education in fragile situations. In several countries, national, context-specific versions of the INEE Minimum Standards have been formulated to ensure that general lessons learned are directed to benefiting context-specific practice.

### *Findings of relevance to all forms of youth education in fragile situations*

The report shows that those educational youth initiatives that have had a positive impact in contributing to livelihood, peace and development have not only prepared young people for livelihood opportunities and income generation but also challenged



inequalities and discriminations that have underpinned and fuelled fragility. Therefore, if they are to aid change, educational initiatives need to provide alternative ideals and form social relationships that provide real alternatives to the past.

General experience from education in fragile situations shows that, for interventions to have an impact, there is a need for thorough assessments of the context of fragility and of young people's lives, and for building on local priorities and capacities. This takes time, which can be frustrating in a situation where needs are urgent. Nonetheless, there is a great risk of perpetuating fragility, violence and instability if such analyses are not carried out. Initial analyses, when done in collaboration with local authorities and community leaders, can not only create a nuanced picture of needs and existing resources, but also serve the vital purpose of creating ownership and support. This turns out to be the most fundamental key to success, regardless of whether it is a matter of formal education in Afghanistan, vocational education through a youth education programme in Liberia or a semi-governmental Accelerated Learning Programme in South-Sudan.

Evidence also shows that there is a need for visible results and pragmatism; hence donors should balance the tension between ensuring direct service delivery (through support to various organisations) and building up the capacity of the state to do so. All major reports call for donors to prioritise long-term involvement as well as thorough monitoring and follow-up, which have all proved essential for interventions to have lasting impact. A main problem arising in several evaluations is the fact that NGOs may have really good impact experiences from targeted education programmes but that these reach only a very few young people. Hence there is a need for mechanisms ensuring that NGOs' experiences are fed into the general policy and implementation coordination process, for example, through support to the education cluster. In terms of state building, it is interesting to note that prioritising schooling enhances the state's legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens, and it does not matter who the actual providers are on the ground. What is most important is the delivery of acceptable-quality education.

A final general finding concerns documentation. For a long time, donors and governments have focussed on educational outcomes in terms of enrolment and attainment, not skills acquired, educational content or impact for the young people attending. In other words, educational support, especially in fragile situations where documentation and pre-project data collection is notoriously weak, has been guided by anticipations of impact and has rarely considered young people's actual experiences. The evalua-

tions, reports and practitioners consulted for this study all emphasise a great need for longitudinal, qualitative impact documentation. Donors should consider prioritising support to making such documentation, taking into account the need to base aid on more than just anticipations.

### *Secondary education*

Secondary schooling is official schooling for young people who have already finalised primary school and performed well enough to spend several years on full-time education. Thus, it is primarily an option for young people whose lives have not lost all sense of normality. Evidence shows that young people can regain a trust in the future and adopt new ideals of equality and peace. Secondary schooling thus provides them with an identity and a status as 'schooled', which legitimises them as citizens, also confirming the centrality of the state in their lives and in their futures as adults.

Since secondary schooling is part of the official school system, support is mostly provided through various pooled arrangements, direct bilateral support and to a lesser extent by organisations strengthening specific parts of the system.

Lessons learned reveal that it is important to ensure access and safety and prioritisation of a secure learning environment, including inside the classroom. This has to be closely aligned with ensuring that content and methods are changed to promote equality, peace and development. Donors have focussed overwhelmingly on access and enrolment but, considering the potential impact, far too little on what is taught and how. Books and teachers have an enormous influence, and without prioritising a thorough revision of content and methods, they risk fuelling conflict. Bold symbolic changes are used to provide assurance that change is happening and to encourage students to support these changes. Successful programmes have prioritised the training, recruitment, distribution and support of teachers, so they can appear as potential role models for new values, practices and knowledge. In terms of content, it is vital to ensure that secondary schooling is linked to young people's worlds outside school. It has to be relevant – for example, by including locally appropriate vocational subjects such as agricultural skills – and it must be linked to further education or some form of work. Lessons learned reveal that local involvement, ownership and accountability are fundamental elements to ensure that such changes are supported and have a lasting impact.

The greatest challenge is for donors to allocate enough funding for secondary education on a long-term basis and ensure that they work closely with the system to

make qualitative changes so that secondary education has a positive impact on young people's lives.

### *Accelerated learning*

Accelerated learning programmes (ALP) give war-affected young people who missed out or never entered schooling a new chance. ALPs are highly relevant to support because they cater to a large part of the young population in fragile contexts, especially in areas with former combatants, refugees and a lack of schooling alternatives for those beyond primary-school age. Several evaluations document how ALP provides young people with self-esteem as well as hope for and trust in the future. A concentrated primary-school programme generally produces much better learning outcomes than the same level in normal schools. Several major reports urge donors and governments to prioritise ALP, and there are indications that it has an important impact on reducing violence and improving young people's handling of their lives, as well as their social status. When it is available, it seems that many students continue in secondary schooling. Finally, ALP can have a great impact for marginalised groups, especially girls (young mothers), when special support, such as child care, is provided.

Donors can support ALP through the education system even though it is officially a government responsibility. Most often, aid can be directed through various international and local organisations that implement ALP in various areas.

Evidence shows that it is important for donors to ensure that ALP is integrated into the education system and formally owned by the Ministry of Education (MOE) even when implemented by various organisations. Several organisations have good experiences with close cooperation with governments at the regional level, which contributes to creating ownership and ensuring alignment with government priorities. It is important to ensure that salaries and incentives correspond to those in the school system. ALPs have been well accepted and have served to build up the official education system when they have been located in existing school buildings, been upgraded and used existing primary-school teachers. This is not always possible if ALP is the only education on offer. ALP graduates should be given official certificates, and the likelihood of their using an ALP after the end of examinations depends on a smooth transfer to secondary school or vocational training. Otherwise ALPs risk creating great frustration by stimulating hopes that cannot be fulfilled. Evidence shows that it is worth supporting a variety of organisations with specific capacities. Humanitarian organisations have expertise in quickly setting things up,

and bridging organisations can continue this work with a longer term commitment and thus more thorough teacher training and follow-up, for example. In supporting both policy formulation and implementation, it is important to note that local involvement, capacity-building and ownership are the keys to success. Evidence shows that parents, communities and local authorities need to understand the relevance, show an interest in and provide support to allowing young people to enter this relatively demanding form of education and to make ALP sustainable. Similarly, curricula and teaching should include not only condensed primary-school content, but also address some of the issues that are urgent for young people. Topics such as life skills, HIV/AIDS and peace education, for example, are highlighted as important, as providing support for child care and child meals for young women, for example. Finally, teachers are central in accelerating learning for young people. Supporting organisations with a good track record in teacher training and facilitating their close coordination with the education system seem to be the most efficient and sustainable ways forward.

#### *Technical and vocational training and education*

This is the shortest form of education for young people in fragile situations, is directly targeted at work and employability, and is greatly desired by many young people. Like the ALP, it is often provided in war-affected areas to a mixture of refugees, former combatants and fragile local youth. Holistic and well-designed Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), programmes have significantly improved livelihood and employment opportunities for young people, positively influencing their self-esteem, as well as their standing in their communities. Several evaluations show that TVET has reduced aggressive behaviour and local violence and that many young people contribute to their local society after being enrolled. TVET has also facilitated a change in gender relations.

TVET is expensive and thus rarely forms part of the education system. Donors can promote government recognition of the importance of TVET through policy formulation. As TVET is implemented by organisations, donors may support a variety of international NGOs with different capacities, preferably those that apply a holistic approach catering to the whole of young people's lives.

Evidence shows that, in order to have a positive impact on young people's livelihoods, the training should be designed after thorough market analysis and close examination of local needs and trainer capabilities, as well as in alliance with local authorities and with the involvement of the local community. It is also important

to ensure the involvement of local businesses to fund skills training according to their needs and to provide apprenticeship opportunities and employment after training ends. Many donors and organisations have now realised this, but many practices need to be reformed accordingly. Support for campaigning to enhance the prestige of manual work can also increase the acceptance of TVET-trained young people and financial support. When it comes to the design of the TVET programme, holistic approaches increase the likelihood of skills training having an impact. ‘Hard’ technical and manual skills must be taught alongside other subjects or ‘soft’ skills, which are equally important for young people to run a proper life. Trauma counselling, health and education in life skills and citizenship in combination with vocational training has been shown to give young people the necessary support to transform themselves from, for example, former combatants to become productive and constructive future citizens. For young women, child-care facilities or child food support are important to make any form of skills training feasible. Such programmes also create groups where the young people support each other and work together. Long-term supervision and follow-up can ensure that young people find lasting employment. Local community involvement is a prerequisite to ensure that TVET has the intended impact on employment, youth behaviour and gender relations.

A main challenge for donors is funding. There is a need for long-term, or at least medium-term support for TVET to have a lasting impact, because follow-up appears to be a main key to success. However, programmes in fragile situations are often run by humanitarian organisations and are only short term. Donors have to be careful in selecting the right partners because programmes are expensive. Nonetheless, it may well be worth the cost when TVET succeeds in creating employment and at the same time provides ‘soft skills’ that enable young people to reintegrate into their society and be accepted as important members of it.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations constitute the overall results of the present analysis. It is important to note that the specific context will determine to what extent these recommendations can be followed. In situations where the entire education system has been destroyed by war or is virtually non-existent, recommendations related to integration and alignment with the formal system may not be immediately feasible. Still, such alignment should constitute an important aim for the future while immediate implementation is being supported.

The report identifies the following areas to be considered by donors:

### *General recommendations*

- Prioritize a strengthened focus on to youth and education in fragile situations, with increased funding
- Ensure that funding and support are joined up, coordinated and closely aligned with the recipient government
- Provide sufficient and long-term support to education to support both young people and state-building
- Consider ways to bridge the humanitarian–development gap by, for example, supporting a variety of actors
- Balance support to delivery of education with a strengthening of the system to do so, and, even when almost entirely implemented by organisations, make sure the government at the minimum embraces the intervention in policy
- Support qualitative and longitudinal documentation through the International Network of Education in Emergencies (INEE), selected research and studies, and as integrated parts of specific interventions

### *Secondary Education*

To play an important role in supporting secondary education, donors should:

- Support a more equal balance in the education system between primary, secondary and tertiary education
- Ensure that the revision of content and methods is a strong priority, as these are fundamental to creating new values and ideals after conflict
- Encourage linkages between local needs, national needs and subjects taught to ensure that secondary schooling is useful for young people's lives

### *Accelerated Learning Programme*

ALP is an important intervention in fragile situations, and donors should:

- Ensure that ALP is made part of the education system and not supported as an informal intervention or a parallel system
- Support close coordination between implementing NGOs and the education system, especially at the regional level, to ensure that the best practices of NGOs can be adopted and replicated by the education system
- Ensure that linkages and support to future education or work is an integral part of ALP

### *Technical and Vocational Education and Training*

TVETs are expensive, often scattered, yet important for young people in fragile contexts. Donors should:

- Support the official recognition and policy incorporation of TVET in fragile situations, possibly including support to public campaigning
- Fund organisations that run holistic TVET programmes, in which training in ‘hard’ skills must be accompanied by training in ‘soft’ skills that cater to the various needs of young people and their society
- Ensure that TVET is based on demand through market analysis, the involvement of local stakeholders and links to apprenticeships, employment and local basic needs for food production, for example





## I. Introduction

*We can imagine the desperate, hopeless situation of ...youth... in an emergency situation as drowning with no lifeboat. Their fate and perhaps their loyalty may be decided by which boat comes first to 'rescue' them – the armed group, criminals, an extremist group, prostitution – or the school. If no school boat comes or does not have room for all school-aged youth, chances are that others will provide the only, often destructive and forced alternative.*

Eldrid Midttun 2006

Young people and school systems are heavily affected in situations of armed conflict and fragility. A large number of young people have missed out on education and feel lost with no opportunities to earn an income and enter the expected economic, social and political roles of adults. At the same time, young people are assumed to be the main agents in establishing peace and democracy after a conflict, and schooling is perceived as the means to equip them to this end. In the last decade, security and the focus on fragile states has entered Western countries' aid priorities. Preventing young people from being diverted into destructive activities, supporting them to improve their lives and enabling them to play a positive and constructive role in their societies are now major concerns. With immense unemployment, insecure livelihoods and unpredictable political transitions in many fragile states, governments and donors are arguing the need to train and educate young people, tomorrow's citizens. Several donors prioritise service provision and education in fragile situations,<sup>1</sup> but according to recent documentation (e.g. UNESCO 2011, Save the Children 2009, 2010a) many more ought to follow because there is still a vast level of under-funding. It is therefore a good time to take stock of the documented impact of the aid that has been provided to youth education in fragile situations and see where aid can make a difference.

This report provides an analysis of aid-supported education initiatives for young people in fragile situations, with a specific focus on the impact of secondary schooling, accelerated learning and technical and vocational training. It examines lessons learned and challenges, and provides recommendations for donors and programmes that provide youth training and education. The study is a part of the Research and

<sup>1</sup> As examples, Denmark and the UK specifically prioritise support to social service provision in fragile situations, while the Norwegian government has recently allocated an additional 75 million kroner specifically to education in fragile situations.

Communication Programme (ReCom) on Foreign Aid commissioned by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The overarching aim is to provide documented answers to the question: ‘What works in development aid?’. To answer this, ReCom is divided into five themes; this study falls under the theme of ‘Governance and Fragility.’<sup>2</sup>

## Objectives

The main objectives of the study are to:

- Assess the impact of educational interventions for young people (specifically formal secondary schooling, second-chance or accelerated learning and vocational training) in preparing for and ensuring work, income opportunities and further education.
- Assess educational interventions in terms of their ability to challenge the inequalities underpinning the conflict and creating new values, ideals and social relations.
- Based on the above, identify interventions that support peace-making and state-building, as well as young people’s involvement in these processes

Another ReCom study by Abby Riddell (2012) addresses ‘The Effectiveness of Foreign Aid to Education’ and assesses overall learning generated by aid to education. The present report is different but also supplementary in two ways: first, it provides a specific account of a highly relevant combined focus on youth, education and fragility; and secondly, it does not attempt to quantify because, as Riddell also concludes, there is a need to focus more on the qualitative aspects and to go beyond numbers, asking what the outcomes of education aid are for the young people at the receiving end. This is what the present report attempts to answer, though choosing what is relevant for the focus on young people, three specific forms of education and situations of fragility inevitably leaves omissions.

## Relevance

To indicate the increasing importance of and focus on the theme of the report, USAID has just published a Youth and Development Policy (USAID 2012). Similarly, the past two years’ Global Monitoring Reports for Education for All produced by UNESCO (2011, 2012) have focussed on education in conflicts, and on youth

<sup>2</sup> See UN-WIDER website for more information, <http://recom.wider.unu.edu/>

and skills respectively, while the World Development Report 2012 concerns itself with jobs.<sup>3</sup> In addition, bilateral donors, especially DFID, GIZ, DANIDA, SIDA, NORAD and USAID, prioritise issues of governance and fragility and of support to social-service provision in fragile situations. Several conferences have been held (and attended) as the report was being written: 'Education and fragility: research meets practice' in GIZ Bonn, November 2012; the EFA-Global Monitoring Report 2012 launch and conference 'Youth and skills: putting education to work' in Copenhagen, November 2012; a DANIDA seminar on 'The role of social service provision in fragile situations', December 2012; and the 'Turning the tide for African Youth' conference put on by the Education and Youth networks in Denmark in February 2013. There is thus a vast interest amongst practitioners in sharing experiences, but actual impact documentation remains scarce.

### **Choice of three forms of youth education**

The report covers three forms of aid-supported educational practices for young people in fragile situations: Secondary Schooling, Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALP), and Technical and Vocational Training (TVET). These three have been selected for several reasons: secondary schooling is the main form of official schooling for young people, the one which qualifies them to access the formal job market, as well as aiming at citizenship training (UNESCO 2012). ALPs and TVETs are the most highly promoted forms of other types of youth education for those who cannot access standard schooling or need alternatives to it. Therefore, the report does not analyse, for example, rehabilitation programmes for former combatants (although also containing educational elements), though it does cover educational programmes in which ex-combatants take part. It also leaves out all the different forms of immediate humanitarian aid such as emergency education in refugee camps, but draws on experiences in so far they are relevant for development aid. Likewise, experiences with peace education are dealt with as they appear relevant to the three forms of education.

### **Methodology**

The report is based on a desk study supplied with interviews. It draws on available evaluations, reviews and various aid-related reports, position papers and popular publications from organisations, alongside scholarly work. A wealth of position papers

<sup>3</sup> Employment has become a major focus for donors and organisations, as emphasised in several recent global reports. For an overview and discussion of these reports, consult King 2013.

currently exist, as do evaluations and reviews that concentrate on efficiency in aid delivery and statistical outputs. However, impact evaluations that explore how educational aid programmes affect young people's future lives are few and far between. First of all, supporting young people in fragile situations is a relatively new phenomenon. Secondly, most support so far has been short term (often humanitarian aid), and the effects can only be assessed in the longer term. Finally, a main shortcoming in fragile situations, not just within the field of education, is monitoring and documentation. Some recent major reports concerning young people in education and education in fragile situations provide a patchwork of insights and findings, including the Global Monitoring Reports for Education for All 2011 and 2012 produced by UNESCO, the World Development Report 2011, an INEE-initiated synthesis report and four country studies on Education and Fragility (INEE/UNESCO/IIEP 2011a, b, c, d, e). The literature is supported by evaluations and reviews by aid organisations, networks and leading research institutions, as well as interviews with some relevant experts and experienced program staff in aid agencies and NGOs, because in this field, 'most of the expertise is currently in the heads of practitioners' (INEE 2011:7). Programme staff from DFID, NORAD, Norwegian Refugee Council, PRIO, IBIS, Save the Children (UK and DK), the Danish Education Network, INEE (general staff and the author of Afghanistan study) and GIZ have been consulted and interviewed. A research trip to Oslo was undertaken because several donors and organisations had praised the youth education work of the Norwegian Refugee Council, and their evaluations stand out because they qualitatively assess impact for young people. The trip also entailed a consultation with NORAD, which has recently attributed earmarked funding to education in fragile situations.

Evaluations rarely distinguish between children and young people, except in relation to specific youth policies (e.g. USAID 2012). Although the three forms of education that are the main focus of this study all primarily aim at youth, some of the lessons learned and recommendations made build on evaluations and insights from education programmes that encompass, for example, both primary and secondary schools, or ALP as one part among several different interventions that are not clearly distinguished. Again, such evaluations tend to focus on statistical outcomes, efficiency and effectiveness, and indications of impact may occur only sporadically. The present report attempts to draw out the relevant findings from such bricolages and add insights from the researcher's own in-depth research from rural Nepal in the aftermath of the war there.<sup>4</sup> Therefore,

<sup>4</sup> PhD research on the role of secondary schooling in forming young people's values, future aspirations and practices in the first years after the end of violent conflict in Nepal.

each chapter (3-5) on the impact of a specific form of education is based on one or a few examples selected according to relevance and the available impact documentation. The discussion of each example is supplemented by evaluations and studies that provide insights into general programme issues (what makes programmes run well) in other fragile contexts, although without necessarily revealing any information on impact. This, of course, means that the report provides what is available, namely qualitative stories to learn from, and *not exhaustive or generalisable findings on impact*. However, in terms of *lessons learned* from *support to* and the *implementation of* such programmes, there are several larger studies and compilations of findings (e.g. by UNESCO and INEE, as well as general education sector studies and overall country programme evaluations) that enable conclusions which are relevant beyond the context of the few examples provided. The material used will briefly be discussed in each of these chapters.

Most importantly, the report shows that there is an immense need for some qualitative impact studies, especially post-training/education studies that trace young people and also evaluate the 'soft effects' on the communities concerned (levels of violence, peace, involvement of young people, etc.). These are difficult to pursue in fragile contexts and thus cannot be expected to be carried out on a large comparative scale. Nonetheless, it is through the more in-depth qualitative documentation that we can learn the most (Flyvbjerg 2001) and make it possible to qualify donor assumptions about the effects of various forms of education on young people's prospects in finding work and becoming involved in peace-building, democracy and development as citizens.

### **Behind the concepts**

The report draws on specific understandings of the rather broad concepts of youth, education and fragile situations.

#### *Youth*

Youth, adolescents and young people – several terms are used to denote people ranging somewhere in age between 12 and 34 years. Most agencies follow the UN's definition of young people as those between 15 and 24 years of age, while the World Bank defines young people to be 12-24 years. The African Union, building on context-specific insights, broadly terms young people as anyone in the age range 15-34. While programmes tend to need fixed definitions of target groups, it is important to be aware that the category of youth is more than a matter of age. Youth is a specific period in life between childhood and adulthood, and neither the end of childhood

**Box 1. USAID definition of youth needs by age and context***Consider context-specific youth*

Identify country-specific indicators with social, economic and political contexts. The existence of a significant number of unemployed young people, for example, suggests a need for workforce readiness, livelihood creation and entrepreneurship projects for youth. Fragile, conflict, post-conflict or disaster environments must include young people in stabilization and humanitarian efforts and peace building. High rates of early pregnancy and/or HIV infection among young people suggest the importance of reproductive and sexual health education and services.

*Incorporate needs by age*

*Early Adolescence (10-14 years).* This is a critical time to build on previous investments in child health, nutrition and education, and to lay the foundations for life skills, positive values and constructive behaviour. The onset of puberty makes reproductive health and maturity an important area of focus. As the brain is now primed to learn new skills, developing critical thinking skills is essential. Vulnerabilities, especially for girls, may be particularly acute, so protection efforts should be emphasized. Appropriate interventions will include preventing child labour, school dropouts, early marriage, pregnancy and sexual exploitation, and expanding learning opportunities, promoting gender awareness and tolerance for diversity.

*Adolescence (15-19 years).* These years are critical in sustaining and expanding health and education gains, protecting young people against rights' abuses such as trafficking, exploitation or hazardous work, and prepare them for citizenship, family life and work. Programming includes health education for healthy lifestyles, the promotion of positive gender norms, the provision of youth-friendly reproductive health services, academic retention and vocational education, financial literacy and saving, soft skills and service learning, mentoring peer networking, civic engagement opportunities and legal rights' education. Second-chance opportunities that allow disadvantaged young people to reconnect or reintegrate into school and society are particularly important.

*Emerging Adulthood (20-24 years).* As behaviour forms with the latest brain development, programs should continue to support positive and constructive decision-making and build resilience. Second-chance opportunities are still important. Examples of relevant programs include advanced education and job-specific training, life and leadership skills, livelihood and citizenship opportunities, asset accumulation, reproductive and maternal health, and family support.

*Transition into Adulthood (25-29 years).* Although physical maturity is largely complete, learning continues. Programs should link young people to employment and civic engagement opportunities, as well as enable them to build assets and provide economic, health and social support for family life (housing, for example). In postconflict situations, programs that provide accelerated learning opportunities to make up for lost years due to war and psychosocial support programs are often needed.

*Source:* USAID 2012. Youth in Development Policy.

nor the beginning of adulthood is defined by a specific age in most contexts. It is rather a constant movement between different positions of power and authority (Christiansen et al. 2006). While youth may start at puberty, the onset of adulthood is related to a range of factors such as marriage, having work and an income, contributing and having a voice in the community, and gaining independence economically and in terms of decision-making. In many low-income countries, but even more so in fragile situations, a large group of young people are 'trapped in youth' and feel lost (Christiansen et al. 2006, UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007), unable to acquire what is needed to achieve adulthood. This is captured by the longer age span in the African Union definition, according to which almost 35% of the population in Sub Saharan Africa are young. USAID, in its new Youth and Development Policy (2012), attempts to differentiate four characteristics of age groups within the general youth group and to combine it with attention to their age-specific needs and abilities according to the particular context (see box 1). This is a useful attempt to be systematic with regard to the fluidity and context-specificity of youth.<sup>5</sup>

When creating education support to young people in specific fragile situations, it is thus vital to acknowledge that, depending on context and age, they experience specific physical, cognitive, emotional and social changes that influence their needs, identities, behaviour and opportunities (USAID 2012).

Besides being a period between childhood and adulthood, in most contexts youth also designates a specific kind of agency characterised by unpredictability, danger and wildness on the one hand, and the potential for change, innovation and development on the other. This perception and the sheer number of young people involved have attracted donor interest. Hitherto, children have been the primary focus for development aid, and for good reasons: they suffer immensely during conflict, and Education for All focuses on primary education. Nonetheless, it is young people who are able to aid reconstruction and development immediately if they receive the right support. Therefore, this report pays specific attention to their education and future.

<sup>5</sup> In 2011, the UN convened an Expert Group to develop quantitative indicators of performance against its World Program of Action on Youth. From 2003-2005, the UN convened a group to standardize measurement of youth development based on the Human Development Index. Using four indicators: Health (percentages of the population with access to potable drinking water, as well as knowledge of HIV/AIDS); Knowledge (literacy rates and completion of a secondary education); Decent Standard of Living (youth unemployment rates and the number of young people living on less than \$1 a day); and Participation (national voting age and the presence of representative national youth organizations), a Youth Development Index (YDI) was drawn up, though never formally adopted.



## *Education*

Education is used here as an umbrella term for programmes that provide young people with new insights, awareness and skills, whether theoretical or practical. It thus follows a definition similar to that applied in the World Bank's new Education Sector Strategy 2020 'Learning for All' (2011; Collins and Wiseman eds. 2012). Just as the strategy argues that we should go beyond access and focus on the content and quality of different kinds of learning, so this report analyses the different forms of youth education in terms of its content and how it enables young people to take care of their own lives and contribute to the wider society. The report assesses the channels through which different forms of education are provided in specific contexts, rather than following a formal/non-formal distinction, because there are several blurred areas and overlaps between interventions (Smith 2011).

## *Fragility/fragile situations*

The problems of unemployment, frustration and violence among youth, and the potential for them to change norms and values, as well as to aid development, are all exacerbated in situations of conflict and fragility. Fragility is a rather vague concept deriving from the notion of 'fragile states', states with a limited capacity and/or political will to provide basic services to the population (OECD-DAC 2008, INEE 2011a).<sup>6</sup> Various social, economic and political instabilities characterise fragile contexts, and fragility is often linked to the presence, recent conclusion or risk of violent conflict. Although a generalised term, it is central to pay attention to nuances and the uniqueness of each context of fragility (INEE 2010a). Moreover, there are differences between experiences of emergencies, early recovery and reconstruction, yet overlaps and drawbacks make clear demarcations difficult. This study concentrates specifically on experiences of youth education in fragile situations, in countries coming out of armed conflict or oscillating in and out of conflict, and in various stages of early recovery and reconstruction.<sup>7</sup>

## **Structure of the report**

The report is divided into six chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 discusses the situation of youth education in fragile situations, asks how youth, education and fragility are related, and examines donor interest and the general

<sup>6</sup> OECD-DAC broadly defines a fragile state as being 'unable to meet its population's expectations or manage changes in expectations and capacity through political process' (2008: 12).

<sup>7</sup> OECD-DAC (2009) and INEE (2010a) distinguish between various stages or forms of fragility.



priorities, actions and lessons learned from educational support to fragile states. Three thematic chapters then follow: Chapter 3 on secondary education, Chapter 4 on accelerated learning programmes, and Chapter 5 on technical and vocational education. These are all structured so as to describe the form of intervention first, then to analyse donor interest and existing programmes, providing boxes with details on selected examples of impact for young people, and finally lessons learned. The report is finalised in Chapter 6, which contains a concluding discussion followed by recommendations.

## **2. Youth education in fragile situations: the challenges**

Youth and education are severely affected in situations of fragility, especially in conflict, and similarly, both constitute main agents and arenas for people's hopes and aspirations to secure peace and development. This chapter briefly outlines the common challenges of and interfaces between fragility, youth and education, and analyses recent donor interest, priorities and overall lessons learned that are relevant for the three forms of education analysed in the remaining parts of the report.

### **Youth and fragility: multiple challenges and potentials**

The world's youth population is larger than ever and growing rapidly. Half of the world's population is under the age of 30 (USAID 2012), and in developing countries there were over a billion young people aged 14-25 in 2010 (UNESCO 2012). A serious problem for many young people is their lack of education, and this is further aggravated in situations of fragility. In fact, 42% of the world's out of school children and young people live in countries affected by conflict and fragility (Save the Children 2012a). Worldwide 71 million adolescents were out of school in 2010, and three out of four live in South and West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, a majority in countries affected by violent conflict (UNESCO 2012). A large section of young people should be in secondary school, but enrolment rates for secondary schools were nearly one third lower in 2008 in conflict-affected fragile states than in other low-income countries (48% compared to 67%), and far lower for girls (UNESCO 2011). The literacy rate for young people shows a similar picture, being 79% in fragile conflict-affected contexts compared to 93% in other developing countries (UNESCO 2011). One of the main reasons is that in conflict-affected fragile contexts young people have grown up during war. Some have fought or been affected by the fighting, and many more have been prevented from going to school either because schools were destroyed or closed or because they risked being abducted on the way or were threatened if they went.

In fragile situations, with high levels of poverty, insecurity and violence and bleak work prospects, young people are struggling for ways to manage their transition into adulthood. Vast unemployment and a lack of livelihood sustaining opportunities are among the greatest challenges for the younger generation today (World Bank 2012, ILO 2012). One in eight people aged 15-24 is unemployed in developing countries, and a large number work in dangerous and unpleasant occupations. Again, the number is higher in fragile situations (UNESCO 2012, ILO 2012), due to the disruption

and chaos created by war, which destroys labour markets and causes psychosocial problems in young people that hamper their ability to make a stable living. Field studies (e.g. INEE/UNESCO/IEEP 2011a,b,c,d,e, UNICEF 2011, DANIDA and Particip/Niras 2012) show that across different conflicts and contexts, people are highly concerned to provide education for their children and young people, this being among their highest priorities, exactly because this is perceived as helping to restore and provide what conflict has destroyed or made impossible.<sup>8</sup>

Despite evidence of the severe effects of war on young people and the documented risks and potentials of their agency, their specific needs and abilities have often been lost amidst other competing priorities in post-war transitions (INEE 2011). There is a great risk of frustrated youth being diverted into violent and criminal activities if they are not provided with future opportunities that have a real impact on their everyday lives (USAID 2012, Vigh 2006). As conflicts often disrupt the social fabric, extra vulnerable groups among young people, such as ex-combatants, displaced people and marginalised ethnic or low-caste groups, are even more at risk (INEE 2010a). Without being able to run their everyday lives, young people are unlikely to be able to contribute to their society (USAID 2012). There are proofs of the usefulness of education: for example, Williams (2011) shows that livelihood training is recognised as an important means to reduce fragility in Liberia. Increased good-quality education reduces conflict (Save the Children 2010), and for boys, each additional year of formal schooling reduces the risk of becoming involved in conflict by 20% (Collier 2000). However, if there are no jobs, even for those with education, the choice for young people may be joining a rebellion (Dupuy 2008, Vigh 2006, Midttun 2006, UNESCO 2011). This is important, as education is argued to be a barometer of the relationship between the state and its citizens (Rose and Greeley 2006), and re-establishing education after a conflict can (re)establish the legitimacy of the state, while if it leaves young people without opportunities, it can have the opposite effect.

### *Education: site of conflict, arena for peace and development*

Education is adversely affected by fragility and conflict. Progress is held back (UNESCO 2011) and conflicts exacerbate inequalities, destroy schools and put teachers and students at fundamental risk because schools constitute ideological battlegrounds

<sup>8</sup> Fragile situations have been analysed in terms of grievance (Collier and Hoeffler 2004, INEE 2011a), which means that the fundamental reasons behind conflicts and instability are believed to be poor and deprived people hoping for better lives. A major grievance is people's wish for education for their children. Education is a symbol of hope and of the future, and it provides skills and knowledge and thus empowers people to encounter grievance.

and are sometimes major targets (UNESCO 2011, Save the Children 2010). Sites that should be safe havens for the younger generation are often main targets, leading to growing fear among students of attending school, among parents of sending them and among teachers of teaching them (Save the Children 2010, UNSECO 2011). In Afghanistan, for example, 2,450 attacks on schools and 457 attacks on or killings of teachers were perpetrated from March 2006 to February 2008 alone. In Nepal, Maoist propaganda programmes, recruitment and abductions, as well as threats from the army and actual fighting, took place in many schools during the conflict, especially in the western parts of the country (Vaux et al. 2006, Petersen 2011). UNESCO (2011) and Save the Children (2007) contain overwhelming documentation of such occurrences in all conflict-affected fragile situations.

A World Bank study (Buckland 2005) based on data from 52 countries and extensive case studies of 12 countries reveals that conflicts tend to affect *young people* and *schooling at the secondary level* most severely. Moreover, disadvantaged groups, especially girls, suffer disproportionately by being prevented from having an education at all, or being exploited if they do attend (Save the Children 2010a). The following sums up the main problems faced by education in conflict and fragile situations:

- Attacks on students. In places like Afghanistan, where the Taliban have declared war against Western education, with killings, acid attacks, the poisoning of juice bricks etc. are among the violent attacks on students (UNESCO 2011, Geist, A, S Gjerding and C. Aagaard 2011). For girls, rape and sexual violence are major risks (UNSECO 2011).
- Political manipulation of education systems and curricula: in many instances education is used as a means of indoctrination and propaganda (INEE 2011a, Miller-Grandvaux 2009). Officials, administrators and teachers may be appointed depending on bribes and sexual favours, school funds are misappropriated, and schools are used to benefit elites or specific political groups (UNESCO 2011).
- Attacks on schools: from January 2007 to July 2009 education was disrupted in at least 31 countries by attacks on school buildings, students or teachers. By prioritising support to education, the 'hearts and minds' approach followed by countries that combine military and development aid risks making education more susceptible to attacks because schools become targets in counter-insurgency strategies (UNESCO 2011, DANIDA 2012).
- Recruitment and abductions from schools: schools constitute a main arena for recruitment, either through inciting young people through propaganda pro-

grammes or directly abducting them as fighters. A survey of the recruitment of children by armed groups identified 24 countries where this was happening from 2004 to 2007 (Coalition to Stop Use of Child Soldiers 2008).

- Threats, abductions and killings of teachers: teachers usually have a special position as those with knowledge within a community. They convey the dominant ideology that insurgent groups are often reacting to, or, as was the case in many Maoist-dominated areas of Nepal, they supported the Maoists and risked being targeted by the army for indoctrinating students. In conflict-affected areas, teachers often flee or absent themselves because of fear.
- Occupation and use of school buildings: army and rebel groups use school buildings as bases and training grounds in many conflict-affected countries (UNESCO 2011).
- Diversion of funds from education into military spending, widespread corruption and bad management, absent officials and administrators, malfunctioning at all levels (UNESCO 2011).

While some of the most obvious impacts of conflict-affected situations of fragility on education are now being recognised, the multiplicity of the devastating effects of warfare on education have gone largely unreported, as has the potential for education to fuel violence (UNESCO 2011). As a recent INEE paper has emphasised (2011a), ‘the most critical interfaces between education and conflict or fragility are the most subtle’. The establishment of formal peace does not automatically lead to a change in dominant ideals and values, inequalities or disproportionate social relations.

Several major evaluations and monitoring reports conclude that education has proved fundamental in achieving post-conflict restorations, peace-building and state formation (Kotite/IIEP 2012, UNESCO 2011, World Bank 2011, Buckland 2005, INEE/UNESCO/IIEP 2011). Data from the study of 52 conflict-affected countries mentioned above (Buckland/World Bank 2005) and four recent studies (INEE/UNESCO/IIEP 2011a,b,c,d,e) of countries in transition (Liberia, Afghanistan, Cambodia and Bosnia-Herzegovina) show that the education systems in most of these countries were based on elite values and reproduced certain privileges and inequalities. Here conflict and disruption provides *opportunities* for new beginnings and fundamental reforms, even when the conflict has had a devastating effect on the education system, teachers and students.<sup>9</sup> Yet, several studies (INEE 2010a, Save the

<sup>9</sup> The notion of students is used for all the different learners whether in secondary school, accelerated learning programmes or technical and vocational education and training.

Children 2011, Davies 2004, 2006) also show that, without careful consideration of context and especially the way access, content and method are practised, education may at worst start or fuel new conflicts. Amidst all the challenges, it is imperative to note that in many places communities 'often display remarkable resilience in conflict situations', particularly to maintaining education (UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007: 4, Davies 2004).

When conflicts formally end, earlier dominant elites are often removed from power, and new regimes seek to distance themselves from their predecessors. Educational reform is a visible way of doing this. Moreover, most post-conflict reconstruction is financially supported from the outside and thus influenced by international donors, who also tend to favour such reforms. Yet, as critics argue, we cannot assume that education will necessarily bring about positive changes, without considering the context and situation (UNESCO 2011). In Sri Lanka, Sørensen (2008) found that young people perceived the school as a highly political field and synonymous with conflict, thus symbolising the exact opposite of reconciliation, peace and development. Another disturbing case is Burundi, where the education sector has remained unreformed in the task of countering the historically imbued inequalities and discriminations perpetrated against the Hutu population. Education serves not only as a divider, an institution that increases inequality between those who attend and those who do not, but actually produces and fuels tensions, potentially leading to renewed conflict. There are no mechanisms to prevent the recurrence of conflict (Obura 2008). The case of Nepal is different, with several examples of a reinforced focus on equality after the conflict (which nonetheless is also a source of conflict). The end of the war resulted in the formerly insurgent Maoists literally coming out of the jungle to enter mainstream politics. Their agenda of equality and strong focus on the rights of girls, women, low castes and Dalits have enabled a hitherto unseen self-awareness among unprivileged students that they have equal rights to the privileged. Teachers with Maoists sympathies can now openly support Dalits and girls because it is no longer a rebel discourse but adopted policy to include marginalised groups (Vaux et al. 2006, Petersen 2011).<sup>10</sup> These examples reveal the need to consider the nuances and specificities of each fragile context and the diverse effects on young people and education when designing intervention (INEE 2010a). Based on the experience of several conflicts, educationist Lynn Davies (2004) argues that, against re-construction as restoration, the fundamentals must be changed. She highlights two aspects

<sup>10</sup> Inequalities and discrimination have not vanished entirely, but attempts are being made, and marginalised groups are becoming intensely aware of their rights.

of education that are vital for young people in transition contexts, namely its *ability to cease reproducing the inequalities* and frustrations that underpinned the conflict, and *its ability to prepare for a new future*.

### **Donors' emerging concerns with youth education in fragile situations**

Many donors, such as the World Bank, USAID, DFID, GIZ, SIDA and DANIDA, prioritise giving aid to fragile situations<sup>11</sup>, in which cases support to education is usually part of the general aim to support social services. At the same time, a specific concern with young people is on the increase: for example, DANIDA (2005) formulated a focus on youth, and USAID (2012) recently launched a 'Youth in Development' policy that emphasises young people as a pertinent focus, not only for service delivery, but for active involvement in designing and implementing initiatives. Nonetheless, prioritising education specifically directed at young people in fragile situations, with their specific challenges, needs and potentials, is a relatively new activity followed most consistently by organisations such as UNICEF, Save the Children, the Norwegian Refugee Council and IBIS. The importance of education in restoring society and building democracy after a violent conflict is emphasised by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Education for All (EFA) and the Global Partnership for Education (previously the Fast Track Initiative or FTI), multilateral agencies such as the World Bank, UNICEF and UNESCO, and bilateral donors such as DANIDA, SIDA, NORAD, DFID and GIZ, as well as receiving governments in various fragile situations. The donor interest has evolved alongside the integration of security and aid or 'the securitisation of development aid' (e.g. UNESCO 2011, Saferworld 2011). UNESCO shows how educational support to fragile states has been distorted by the security agenda, making a few countries, such as Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq, prioritised for receiving by far the most aid (UNESCO 2011).

Because of the difficult circumstances in which education for young people is provided in fragile situations, most aid is provided through programmes run by local or international NGOs. When it comes to prioritising what areas and what measures to focus on and the relative urgency of each when conflicts end, approaches greatly vary. Table 1 outlines some of the main players.

<sup>11</sup> The Netherlands used to be a large donor but has withdrawn.

Table 1. Important players in youth education in fragile situations

| <i>Major players</i>                          | <i>What they do</i>   |
|---|---|
| <i>Global Partnership for Education (GPE)</i> | Coordinates support and promotes collaboration between all parts, and specifically prioritises primary and secondary education in situations of fragility (one among nine focus areas).   |
| <i>INEE</i>                                   | Ensures cooperation between donors and organisations. Draws up global standards. Collects documentation and ensures its dissemination. Elevates education to centre stage. Central network for education in fragile situations. Building bridges between emergency and development in fragile contexts.             |
| <i>World Bank</i>                             | Largest supporter of education worldwide; no specific focus on education in fragile situations (although work take place there).  |
| <i>Bilateral donors</i>                       | USAID, DFID, GIZ, SIDA, CIDA, NORAD and DANIDA, among others, support education in fragile states through pooled modalities and organisations, often prioritising capacity-building within the Ministry of Education and following national priorities, but several donors find it too risky to support government. |
| <i>UNICEF</i>                                 | Lead agency in education in many emergency programmes (head education cluster alone or together with Save the Children).  |
| <i>UNESCO</i>                                 | Overall support to both formal and accelerated education, central for monitoring; produces the annual Global Monitoring Report for Education for All.   |
| <i>Save the Children</i>                      | Often co-heads education cluster in emergencies. Broad experience in vocational education and in empowering education programmes in fragile situations.   |
| <i>NRC</i>                                    | Important organisation prioritising education; founder of holistic education programme for youth in emergencies and fragile situations (YEP), used by various NGOs  |
| <i>IRC</i>                                    | A large emergency organisation, covering most emergency aspects and often involved in emergency education such as ALP.  |
| <i>IBIS</i>                                   | Danish NGO specialising in education and now using its expertise within the field of emergency/fragility, building bridge from emergency organisations like NRC to development aid.   |

There are currently a growing number of reports and conferences discussing education in fragile situations, but this concern still has to be backed by increased aid and improved practice.<sup>12</sup> For donors there are three overall issues that are fundamental regarding support to youth education in fragile situations: the current underfunding, the lack of a bridge between humanitarian and development assistance, and the need for strong coordination, which attempts are being made to strengthen through various recent initiatives.

<sup>12</sup> Several reports outline recommendations similar to those put forward in the often cited, and still relevant, study by Rose and Greeley, 'Capturing lessons and identifying good practices for education in fragile states' (2006).



### *Serious underfunding: a donor challenge*

Despite the increased attention being paid by donors to education in fragile situations, the area is seriously underfunded. According to Save the Children UK (2007), in 2006 only four percent of ODA to conflict-affected states went to education. While this has been on the rise (UNESCO 2011), Save the Children documents (2010) a serious shortfall in funding to education in fragile situations: for example, in 2008 donors committed only 10% of what was needed, and provided even less. Also UNESCO (2011, 2012) points to the serious underfunding as arguably the single most problematic aspect of aid to education in fragile states. It *takes plentiful and long-term funding* to ensure education for a young generation, especially if the aim is for them to help get the country back on track.

The realisation among donors and organisations of the need to prioritise education in fragile situations has been slow to result in fast and timely action and support. As a consequence UNESCO's Education For All-Global Monitoring Report of 2011 recounts four systematic failures to be considered by donors (see Box 2). The second and the third failures concern how donors should work, whereas the first and the fourth failures are related to priorities in designing education programmes.

In addition to the general lack of funding to education in fragile situations, the selection of forms of education is distorted. Hitherto, educational development interventions, including in fragile situations, have concentrated on primary education. While this

#### **Box 2. Four failures of aid to education in fragile situations**

- Failures of protection: of schools, teachers, students and their communities.
- Failures of provision: education is the most neglected and under-financed area of humanitarian assistance.
- Failures of early recovery and reconstruction: windows of opportunity created by peace settlements rarely acted upon in time due to lack of a bridge between humanitarian and development assistance.
- Failures of peace building: education can play a vital role, as 'war is made in the minds of men and peace is created in the minds of men'. An inclusive education and curriculum focusing on peace, tolerance etc. can change attitudes and decrease violence.

*Source:* UNESCO 2011. The hidden crisis: armed conflict and education.

is an important field, several reports (Buckland 2005, INEE 2010a, Davies 2004) document a *lack of research on and interventions aiming at young people and secondary education*, even though these have proved vital in forming citizens and new ideals in the aftermath of armed conflict. UNESCO's Global Monitoring Report of 2011 argues a strong case for continued and prioritised support to primary education, not least in post-conflict situations. At the same time, it states the importance of ensuring immediate and tangible impacts in order to prevent a return to conflict and a disillusioned generation of young people being diverted into violent activities. In the Global Monitoring Report for 2012, this is followed by a call for donors to prioritise funding to secondary education and second chance programmes, both to ensure that young people are targeted.

### *The humanitarian–development gap needs bridging*

Another challenge that donors face in supporting education in fragile situations is the gap between humanitarian aid and development aid. Education in fragile situations falls within and between two traditional fields of expertise: humanitarian aid, which tends to have the sole responsibility in the immediate aftermath of violent conflicts; and development aid, which is expected to take over when a situation is considered post-conflict (UNESCO 2011). Humanitarian aid has only gradually been receptive to the argument that education also needs to be seen as an immediate need, especially because it can have a healing effect by helping to restore a sense of normality in chaotic circumstances. Here, the International Network of Education in Emergencies and its 'Minimum Standards' have proved to be a catalyst in pushing for education to be part of emergency responses. Where education is part of such immediate after-war responses, it is run by humanitarian organisations who by definition work with short time spans of one to two years, three at the maximum. Bridging such interventions with longer term development interventions which are required both to re-build an education system and to ensure that *enough young people get enough education* creates problems for youth education. The Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO 2011: 19) states: 'Education is the poor neighbour of a humanitarian system that is underfinanced, unpredictable and governed by short-termism. And education is exactly the opposite: 'long term and in need of predictability'.

Development aid often has no experience with immediate and urgent actions, and the processes of planning, defining, preparing and then implanting educational interventions are far too time-consuming to enable enduring educational interventions to be initiated in times of emergency. In conversations with staff from both donors and implementing organisations (DFID, NORAD, NRC, Save the Children, IBIS),

the gap and compartmentalisation between humanitarian and development modes of working was mentioned as a main problem in terms of planning and delivering education on a larger scale, for a longer time and of comparable good quality.

*Joint Efforts: The New Deal, the Global Partnership for Education and the Education Cluster*

Across contexts, one major finding is the need for close cooperation and partnerships when providing education in fragile situations (UNSECO 2011, Nicolai 2009 a, b). There are now some established new practices that aim at exactly this.

In November 2011, a large number of donor countries and fragile states agreed on a New Deal for engagement in fragile states. The New Deal aims to further coordination and partnership, carry out thorough fragility assessments to create one overall plan, and encourage governments and donors to focus jointly on five main Peace and State-Building Goals, aiming among other things at employment creation and accountable and fair service delivery. A very important focus for the New Deal is to let countries take decisions and lead their own way out of fragility. Denmark has led the way in implementation of the New Deal and has collaborated in developing the 'UN's role in Afghanistan post-2014', which incorporates the New Deal at its heart by encouraging the Afghan government to work more consultatively with its partners. The UK has fully endorsed the framework in several countries (Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and South Sudan).<sup>13</sup>

Another initiative that was also launched in November 2011 is the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), which was established to process the Fast Track Initiative (FTI). The aim is to ensure sufficient and coordinated education support to reach the EFA, but also to be better at coordinating efforts in fragile situations. The GPE is an attempt to strengthen coordination and pool funding, the need for which is supported by DFID country evaluations in nine fragile states. It argues for a mixture of pooled funding (which is preferred but often time-consuming) and earmarked funding (Chapman and Vaillant 2010). Both GPE and the New Deal are now used in several fragile states. DANIDA is among the countries to channel its support through the GPE. An example is Nepal, where the relatively successful Education Sector Support Programme is being phased out in 2013, after which all education funding will be provided through the GPE.

<sup>13</sup> There is a need for cautious optimism. Fragile countries that are part of the New Deal may be so due to the commitment of a few key individuals, not the entire system.

The evidence is that the better the coordination of education aid in fragile situations, the better the results. One example is Afghanistan, where there has been a concerted effort to undertake joint funding, planning and implementation with the relevant national ministries. Here evaluations (e.g. Rasmussen et al. on SIDA 2013, Particip/Niras on DANIDA 2012, NORAD 2012, Bennet et.al. on DFID 2009) list several successes, arguing that coordination and close alignments with government priorities are the main causes, even before the New Deal was launched. The evaluation of DANIDA's aid to education in Afghanistan (Particip/Niras 2012) shows that, while coordination and alignment with Afghan priorities is common to all donors, USAID and CIDA, for example, have not channelled any support directly through the MOE. DANIDA, conversely, is the largest donor directly supporting the MOE and is accordingly praised by Afghan officials as a highly trusted donor. Many donors find this form of support to be too risky, but working with the New Deal, the hope is for greater alignment and primary responsibility to receiving countries.

A third example of joint effort is the Education Cluster. In 2006, the Education Cluster was established as an important step towards having education recognised as a vital area of intervention in emergencies. As the only cluster, it is headed by a partnership of UNICEF and Save the Children. Despite some initial problems, an external review (The Partnership Initiative/UNICEF and Save the Children 2010) concluded that the cluster is perceived as very useful and that it sends an important signal of strong cooperation in education, as well as being an example of systematic coordination and thus of building trust between multilateral agencies, governments and NGOs. By January 2010, the education cluster model had been established in 37 countries in various emergency, early recovery, reconstruction or post-conflict situations (Save the Children 2010). The review also shows that the cluster has successfully ensured faster and better delivery of education aid (the partnership Initiative/UNICEF and Save the Children 2011, Save the Children 2012a).

#### *The INEE and minimum standards: establishing global best practice*

In 2000 the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) was founded to support, train and enable information-sharing between organisations working on education in fragile situations. The INEE has played a strong role in advocating increased donor support and resource allocation for the education of children and young people in fragile situations. It is currently funded by UNICEF, UNESCO, UNHCR, USAID, DFID, NORAD, CIDA and Save the Children, among others. The INEE has two special working groups on Education and Fragility, and Minimum

### **Box 3. INEE minimum standards**

#### *Foundational standards: prerequisites for other education standards*

*Standard 1:* Community participation: involvement of community, identification of community resources.

*Standard 2:* Coordination: local and national level.

*Standard 3:* Analysis: timely assessment, appropriate response strategy, regular monitoring and impartial impact evaluations.

#### *Access and Learning Environment Standards*

*Standard 1:* Equal Access: all individuals have access to quality and relevant education opportunities.

*Standard 2:* Protection and Well-being: learning environments are secure and safe, and promote the protection and psychosocial well-being of learners, teachers and other education personnel.

*Standard 3:* Facilities and Services: education facilities promote the safety and well-being of learners, teachers and other education personnel and are linked to health, nutrition and psychosocial and protection services.

#### *Teaching and Learning Standards*

*Standard 1:* Curricula: culturally, socially and linguistically relevant curricula are used to provide formal and non-formal education, appropriate to the particular contexts and needs of learners.

*Standard 2:* Training, Professional Development and Support: teachers and other education personnel receive periodic, relevant and structured training according to needs and circumstances.

*Standard 3:* Instruction and Learning Processes: instruction and learning processes are learner-centred, participatory and inclusive.

*Standard 4:* Assessment of Learning Outcomes: appropriate methods are used to evaluate and validate learning outcomes.

#### *Teachers and Other Education Personnel Standards*

*Standard 1:* Recruitment and Selection: a sufficient number of appropriately qualified teachers and other education personnel are recruited through a participatory and transparent process, based on selection criteria reflecting diversity and equity.

*Standard 2:* Conditions of Work: teachers and other education personnel have clearly defined conditions of work and are appropriately compensated.

*Standard 3:* Support and Supervision: support and supervision mechanisms for teachers and other education personnel function effectively.

#### *Education Policy Standards*

*Standard 1:* Law and Policy Formulation: education authorities prioritise continuity and recovery of quality education, including free and inclusive access to schooling.

*Standard 2:* Planning and Implementation: education activities take into account international and national educational policies, laws, standards and plans, as well as the learning needs of affected populations.

*Source:* INEE 2010 Minimum standards for education: preparedness, response, recovery. Available at <<http://toolkit.ineesite.org/toolkit/Toolkit.php?PostID=1002>>

Standards respectively, as well as several task teams, for example, one on Adolescents and Youth.<sup>14</sup>

One important outcome of the INEE is the now widely applied *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crisis and Early Reconstruction* (INEE 2004). This is by far the best researched and most widely acknowledged set of principles foregrounding any type of educational aid in fragile situations. It has been developed for use in emergencies but is highly relevant for, and often applied to, any type of fragility, as it indicates all the areas that it is important to consider and specify according to context (see Box 3).

Taking as its point of departure OECD-DAC principles for support in fragile states (OECD-DAC 2007)<sup>15</sup> and adding experiences shared by the many member organisations, the INEE minimum standards provide the basis for the design and thus the evaluation of the appropriateness of education interventions for young people in emergencies and fragile situations. The aim is to promote alternatives to conflict actively by using aid interventions to circumvent the conditions and ideals underlying the conflict. While many donors and NGOs stress the importance of considering minimum standards when carrying out their programmes, few countries have formulated minimum standards aimed at the entire education system.

One example of the success of international coordination merged with strong advocacy from the INEE is the contextualised outcome of the minimum standards adopted in two of the conflict-affected countries that receive considerable aid: Afghanistan and South Sudan. To date these are the most deeply entrenched attempts to be serious about conflict, fragility and context-specificity in designing education. In South Sudan the minimum standards were formulated by a range of stakeholders from the Southern Sudanese Ministry of Education, INEE representatives, various UN agencies and NGOs in the Southern Sudanese education cluster. While actual implementation and impact will only become clear with time, this is

<sup>14</sup> The working groups consist of members of UN agencies, international and national NGOs, and members of research institutions, constituted on a two-year basis. The INEE Adolescent and Youth Task Team (AYTT) is made up of committed individuals from UN agencies, international and national NGOs, practitioners, researchers and policy makers who work collaboratively on technical tasks to ensure a coordinated, accelerated and expanded, evidence-based response to the educational rights, needs and aspirations of adolescents and youth affected by crisis. <http://www.ineesite.org/en/task-teams/adolescents-and-youth> accessed 06.03.2013.

<sup>15</sup> The principles are: take context as a starting point; do no harm; focus on state-building; prioritise prevention of crisis and conflict; recognise links between political, security and development objectives; and promote non-discrimination (OECD-DAC 2007).

nonetheless an example of strong coordination and of the involvement of NGOs in policy formulation, as well as of the ability of international standards to be contextualised and put into practice and of fragility (and humanitarian experiences) being taken seriously when formulating long-term development policies. Besides these examples of national minimum standards, many implementing organisations apply these standards when designing their programmes.

### **Lessons learned and challenges**

There is a need for more, as well as more consistent donor support to education in fragile situations. To support processes of peace and development, donors can support INEE and organisations like UNICEF in helping governments formulate national standards. There are a few overall lessons learned, emphasised by the INEE minimum standards that all reports and evaluations point to, regardless of the form of educational intervention. They are outlined here to indicate the relevance for the three specific forms of education dealt with in the forthcoming chapters.

#### *The need for assessment and building on local priorities and capacities.*

One conclusion arising from experiences with aid to education in fragile situations but also from studies of service delivery in general is the importance of *assessing the context in terms of needs, priorities and capacities and aligning aid in accordance with and in cooperation with these*. Danish support to education in Afghanistan (DANIDA 2012) is an example of closely alignment with government priorities. The government has increasing access as a main aim, and DANIDA has accordingly supported construction of school buildings and been a main contributor to creating a suitable curriculum, as well as printing large quantities of textbooks.

Alignment with government priorities is emphasised in the INEE minimum standards. Education is strongly desired in many fragile situations, but as it is also a potential source of conflict, approaches need to draw on general lessons from fragile situations, but always aligned with the local context. UNESCO (2011) therefore recommends that *carrying out credible needs assessments* is absolutely vital for the provision of education in conflict-affected communities to ensure that interventions build on solid knowledge and local priorities.

#### *The need for visible results and pragmatism*

There are some characteristics of fragile states that require careful and pragmatic approaches. There is a notorious lack of data, which of course makes interventions



and monitoring extremely difficult. Evaluations all point out that thorough analysis in the selection of aid priorities is of the utmost importance (Cox and Hemon 2009). Major donors have argued that a high priority should be placed on producing feasible, modest, but immediate and visible results. These results must be politically significant, help overcome divisions and actively support peace (Cox and Hemon 2009). In terms of education, the very concrete issue of enabling access through school building and by promoting equal rights to schooling are vital first steps in fragile contexts. Afghanistan is an example of this, and several donors report the immense increase in access as a success story of aid (e.g. Rasmussen et al./SIDA 2013, DANIDA 2012, Bennett et al./DFID 2009, NORAD 2012). Visible results seem more important than who delivers. Interestingly, in Afghanistan a 2010 national survey (Asia Foundation 2010) revealed that 85% of respondents find the government's performance in education good or very good, despite many shortcomings, failures and the fact that a lot of implementation is being carried out by a lot of different organisations. This indicates the need for donors to balance the tension between ensuring direct service delivery and building the capacity of the state to do so (Chapman and Vaillant 2010).

#### *The need for long term engagement*

*Donor support must be sufficient and sufficiently long term.* UNESCO urges, 'start early and stay engaged!' (2011: 232). Based on multiple experiences, INEE/UNESCO/IEEP (2011a) and UNESCO-UNEVOC (2007) among others argue the need to consider education fundamental for recovery and development, as it provides young people with a meaning in life, with something to do which helps their recovery and restores a sense of normality, and with knowledge and skills that may provide them with the ability to earn an income. Experiences from emergencies and refugee camps, for example, show that the routine of going to school and acquiring a sense of direction is vital for young people suffering from loss and trauma. This means that education must be supported immediately but not only be short term, like much humanitarian aid. An extensive World Bank (Buckland 2005) study shows that embarking on the transformation of a school system requires thorough considerations of the timing and extent of reform, as well as of national and local changes respectively. It also reveals that education reform has been most successful where it has been seen as a development activity and thus part of a long-term strategy. This implies a constant refinement and a long-term process that runs conjointly with other social and political changes in the country.

#### *The need for monitoring and documentation*

Finally, there are consistent calls for better *monitoring and follow up* to counter corruption and enhance accountability (DFID 2010, Particip/Niras 2012). As is



clear from the few impact studies referred to in this report, there is a need for impact evaluations, especially for *longitudinal, qualitative impact documentation*. Although the support to the education sector in Afghanistan is regarded as a success, evaluations tend to focus only on activities and processes rather than outputs, and while the risks are noted, the extent to which they affect the actual impact is not dealt with. For example, as DANIDA celebrated the success of education support in Afghanistan, a Danish newspaper cited leaked documents revealing the existence of a systematic threat that was undermining the actual functioning of schooling in many areas (Geist et al. in Information 2011). Clearly, such documentation is needed to assess the work. The problems of documentation are equally relevant for other service sectors, and the call for the strengthening of an official monitoring system, especially locally by the partners involved (schools, parents, communities, local authorities), is greatly needed.

Using these general concerns regarding support to education in fragile situations as a basis, the following three chapters will analyse the impact and lessons learned from three particular types of education intervention in different contexts.

### **Additional literature**

- INEE 2010. *The multiple faces of education in conflict affected and fragile contexts*. INEE Working group on education and fragility.
- UNESCO 2011. *The hidden crisis: education and armed conflict*. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011.
- UNESCO 2012. *Youth and skills: putting education to work*. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012.
- Nicolai, S. ed. 2009. *Opportunities for change: education innovation and reform during and after conflict*. UNESCO and IIEP.
- Save the Children 2010. *The future is now: education for children in countries affected by conflict*. London, Save the Children UK.
- Zeus, B and Chaffin, C. 2011. *Education for crisis-affected youth: a literature review*. INEE Adolescent and Youth Task Team.
- Tebbe, K. 2009. Global trends for education to support stability and resilience: research, programming and finance. *Journal of Education for International Development*, 4(1).

### 3. Secondary schooling

Secondary schooling follows on from the end of primary schooling, usually from classes 6 to 10, and sometimes up to class 12. In some countries the school system is being changed in order for primary or basic schooling to include classes 1-8. In Nepal, for example, the curriculum and content of the formal school system has been reconstructed as a result of the political transition after the abolition of the monarchy and the end of the conflict. Primary and lower secondary schooling are now integrated into eight years of compulsory basic schooling. Secondary schooling is thus not a fixed notion, and several aid programmes, especially those working through government systems, combine their support for primary and secondary education.

Secondary school enrolment rates in countries affected by conflict and fragility are nearly one third lower than in other developing countries, and for girls the enrolment is far lower (UNESCO 2011, Save the Children 2012a). In Afghanistan, for example, only 5% of the students enrolled in secondary school are girls (the number is one third in primary school). Aid to secondary education has been seriously under-prioritised, not least because of the intense focus on the Education for All Millennium Development Goal (EFA) prioritising having all children enrolled in primary school (Save the Children 2010a, UNESCO 2012). Fragile and conflict-affected countries also under-spend themselves on secondary education, using on average 24% of the education budget compared to 30% in other low-income countries (Dolan and Brannelly 2010). Secondary schooling is the entry point into the world of further education, and in many countries it is the key to being acknowledged as a worthy citizen (Petersen 2011), required to enter any type of formal employment (UNESCO 2012, World Bank 2012).

Education systems have strong symbolic value in (re)establishing state legitimacy, as this often constitutes the main site for state interaction with the population in rural areas (INEE 2010a, UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007, Petersen 2011). For individuals and communities, it is where the state reveals its commitment to people and where behaviour, attitudes and ideals are formed. Secondary schooling is where students are supposed to move beyond basic literacy and numeracy and to acquire knowledge to equip them as future citizens and skills that enable them to enter the job market or further education. To have implications for state building and development it is important to reach as many as possible, including in remote areas (Rasmussen, conversation 2013). Access is often limited. Compared to primary

schools, secondary schools are far fewer and inaccessible to many young people who cannot walk, for example, ten kilometres each way every day (as is the case in many places, for example, Liberia (INEE/UNESCO/IIEP 2011d) and Nepal (Lind and Agergaard 2010).

Secondary schooling follows a national standardised curriculum, and although practical skills may be included, it is often academic or theoretical education not targeted at any specific job or employment but providing broader general learning. The curriculum usually includes history and geography and thus often provides a dominant reading of the country's past and territory. These are potential sources of exclusion and conflict. The curriculum normally also covers health and sexual education and has a focus on adolescence, often with moral lessons outlining the dangers of youth, as well as some form of civic education setting out what young people are supposed to acquire as proper behaviour and obligations.

In Nepal, as in many other countries, the exam (School Leaving Certificate or SLC) ending secondary education is a fundamental separator of the educated from the uneducated (Skinner and Holland 1996, Petersen 2011). Without passing the publically defined 'Iron Gate Exam' (which until recently a vast majority of students did not), there are no opportunities for further education or any type of formal job. This highlights the social importance of a completed secondary education.

### **Donors' interest and existing programmes**

Aid to secondary education has had a lower priority than to primary education until recently, especially in fragile situations. When supported, it is as part of general education support, and the impact of such support is very difficult to discern (conversations with Drachman from NORAD and Howgego from DFID). The Global Monitoring Report for 2012 shows how aid to primary and post-secondary education has been more or less similar in relative size from 2002 to 2010, when both gradually increased, whereas support to secondary education has been about a third of that to each of the two other. The lower priority given to secondary education is also evident in DANIDA's annual report for 2011, which shows that 343.5 million kroner were allocated to primary, 116.8 million to tertiary and only 57.4 million to secondary education (DANIDA 2012). The 2012 Global Monitoring Report for Education for All (UNESCO 2012) argues that it is absolutely crucial to support secondary education to aid development in low and middle income countries, especially in situations of fragility.

Donors provide aid to secondary education as budget support, or pool funding, channelled through the Ministry of Education (MOE), or as earmarked funding to the MOE, and international or local organisations may also implement targeted programmes. At the same time, donors fund numerous international and local NGOs who support specific schools with materials, scholarships, teacher training courses etc., often in a highly uncoordinated fashion (UNESCO 2011). Most support is directed at primary schools, though this may benefit secondary schooling too if the two are combined.

For a long time, donors and governments have focussed on outcomes in terms of enrolment and attainment, not skills acquired, educational content or impact for the young people attending. In other words, educational support, especially in fragile situations where documentation and pre-project data collection are notoriously weak, has been guided by anticipations of impact and has rarely considered young people's experiences (Howgego DFID, interview 2012, Kleivan and Jahns IBIS, interview 2012, Bo Tovby Save the Children Denmark, interview 2012, INEE 2011).

There are very few evaluations that measure the impact of secondary education for young people. A recent joint evaluation (DANIDA 2012) from a secondary education programme in Nepal is an exception. It focuses partly on impact, and in combination with qualitative research on secondary school students in rural Nepal during transition (Petersen 2011), it constitutes the main example explored in this chapter (see Boxes 4 and 5). These insights are supplemented with insights from UNICEF and Save the Children's findings regarding support to a specific peace programme in schools in Nepal, evaluations of education in Afghanistan (Particip/Niras 2012, Rasmussen et.al. 2013, NORAD 2012) and general evaluations and reports providing some, if few, insights on secondary schooling: these include a large study of education in fragile situations by UNESCO 2011, four situational analyses of education and fragility from Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia and Liberia (by INEE/IEEP 2011), four framing papers from round-table discussions in INEE, a synthesis paper from the INEE working group on Education and Fragility, two research papers on education and fragility in the *Journal of Education for International Development* (Tebbe 2009, Miller-Grandvaux 2009), a lessons learned and good practice paper made for the DAC Fragile States group (Rose and Greeley 2006) and a DFID evaluation report on lessons learned from engagement in fragile situations (Cox and Hemon 2009). These are further supported by interviews. The discussion of secondary schooling's impact on young people is therefore not exhaustive, but based on the few documented examples of impact, supported by insights from general evaluations and studies.

#### **Box 4. Secondary Education Support Programme in Nepal**

The Secondary Education Support Programme (SESP) in Nepal was initiated in 2003, financed with 74.8 million USD basket funding. It is being implemented by the Ministry of Education and is supported by DANIDA and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). DANIDA's support will be phased out in 2013. The SESP targets grades 6-10 and has four components:

- 1) Learning environment: mainly focussed on construction
- 2) Curriculum development, Assessment and Instruction Materials
- 3) Teacher Education and Development
- 4) Institutional Management and Capacity-Building

#### **Improvements during the SESP period**

##### *Access*

Parents, students and teachers found the construction and improvement of buildings as well as scholarships to be the most important, and accordingly access has increased from 60% in 2003 to almost 80% in 2007 in lower secondary school and from 46% to almost 56% during the same period in secondary school.

##### *Enrolment*

Girls' enrolment has increased more than that of boys, indicating a narrowing of the gender gap, especially in lower secondary school, with a marked increase from 2006, when the conflict ended. Enrolment of the highly marginalised Dalits has increased by 36% and of Dalit girls by 73% in lower secondary school in the period, while in secondary school the figures are 56% and 65% respectively. Also the enrolment of various ethnic groups has increased.

##### *Repetition and exam passing*

Repetition rates have been reduced by more than 50% and drop-out rates in class 9 reduced by 20%. The pass rate for the final examination, the School Leaving Certificate (SLC), has doubled from 2002/3 to 2007/8 (from 32% to 64%) and for girls it has increased more than fivefold (from around 10% to almost 50%). This may indicate an increase in quality, but considerable pressure and cheating are also reported.

##### *Curriculum: content and method of teaching*

In terms of inclusion, improvements are clear in curriculum and textbooks, but they are still not practiced at the school level. Dalits and other marginalised students (especially those from remote villages) always sit in the back of the class and receive less attention from the teacher. Teachers still speak of students in terms that indicate that some are of lesser worth than others, and discrimination still occurs in a more or less subtle manner between teachers and students, as well as among peers.

The Curriculum Development Centre reports that, although the curriculum has been revised, most teachers do not use it. Research found that, several years after its introduction, many schools still did not have a copy of it.

The curriculum has become more inclusive and representative of the various groups, areas and cultures of Nepal, but there is a great concern among schools and parents that it is too theo-

retical. They want it to be more practical and locally suitable by including more on life skills and technical skills, for example, agriculture skills in a farming district, or tourism skills in a tourist district to enable young people to take up a job after the end of schooling.

#### *Teacher education*

There are indications that quality is increasing, and students consistently reported that teacher behaviour is starting to change towards more interactive methods and in some places also a reduction in corporal punishment. Students say they find teaching more interesting. Nonetheless, the Education Training Centre and observations show that only very little teacher training is actually practiced, and not at all at the level indicated by the increase in passing SLC.

SESP has contributed significantly to increasing the number of trained teachers, especially in grades 9-10. The quality of the training, however, is reported to be of immensely low quality, and although teachers show an awareness of new teaching methods, they did not apply them in class. One reason may be the fact that student : teacher ratio is 69:1 in lower secondary schools, for example, making group work and interactive methods difficult for the teacher to apply.

#### *Local involvement increases the likelihood of success*

Educational support has been most successful where schools and communities have been involved in the process of procurement, as misuse of funds has been minimised and the local commitment to build, restore and maintain schools enhanced.

#### *Impact for young people*

There is limited information on whether students have acquired the competences and qualifications necessary for the job market and national development. A government tracer study indicates that 68% of students chose to pursue more education after passing SLC, but that a majority of them find the school subjects irrelevant for their further studies and would have preferred skills that enabled them to study. SLC graduates proceeding to a job felt they had not gained the skills and competences they needed in the job market. Partly as result of SESP, an increasing number of young people are likely to find employment for higher wages, compared to the situation before 2003.

#### *Challenges*

Books are printed, but they do not reach the remote areas, where performance is already falling behind. This aggravates the inequalities between rural (remote) and urban areas because remote areas do not have access to other media, information or learning opportunities, and at the same time these are areas where the conflict was most severe and where new ideals are therefore most urgently needed.

Inclusion in curricula and books is not matched by practice. Issues of peace education and discussions of the conflict are not included.

*Source:* DANIDA 2009. Joint Evaluation of the Secondary Education Support Programme in Nepal 2003-2007

Although unusually the joint evaluation provides some indications of impact for young people, long-term research carried out during the implementation period in one of the priority districts provides more insights (see Box 5).

### **Box 5. Secondary school students regaining a future in Nepal**

A nine-month ethnographic study carried out over two periods in 2007 and 2008/9 in the far west of Nepal found that secondary schooling played a central role for young people.

#### *Optimism and trust in the future*

'We can think of a future now' – that was how many of the young students (classes 9 and 10) expressed the main difference between the time before and after the end of war. There was an immense optimism and a sense of having regained a future among secondary school students. During the conflict 'there was no future', but for students who have experienced the disruptions of war, the end of it and the symbolic changes instil a trust in the future. They pulled the old history and royal pages out of the school books but the sense of change and optimism faded when the new books failed to arrive and teachers had to teach from the old ones.

#### *Change agents and the school as an arena for change*

Young people believed their generation will be the one that is able to change inherited social systems of gender and caste inequalities. There were several friendships across caste divides, which is very unusual (and disregarded) in this part of the country. New ideals of equality and practices of gender equality where the girls speak equally with the boys were practiced inside the school premises, but students maintained separation and even discrimination outside. 'We cannot change this until we are the generation who decides'. Many students were highly political in their approach to creating change and contributing to development, yet they despised anything 'political' as corrupt and destructive, equating it with party politics. Secondary school students, teachers and educated and non-educated from the communities all spoke of those acquiring SLC as those who can create change for their communities and the country. Young people and their families all assert that education is absolutely the most important asset for young people, despite the fact that it does not provide sufficient or appropriate skills. There are no alternatives, however, and bad education is better than no education.

#### *New ideals and citizens with rights*

Students have appropriated the new focus on equality, young people's obligations as citizens and those leading the nation's development, and many defined their future aspirations in terms of 'giving back to the country' or 'using my knowledge to help my village'. There were several examples of male Dalit students filing demands for proper access to water in Dalit villages and asserting their right to enter places that were normally not permissible for Dalits. Those few teachers who had abandoned corporal punishment and practiced equality and student-centred learning were used by students as examples of 'how things should be'. The support that girls and Dalits received from such teachers was enough to give them a firm belief that things will change in the next generation, even though most teachers and the local community still maintained discriminatory practices.

#### *The importance of access*

Access was a main issue for students from villages located far from a secondary school. A large number of students of secondary-school age were out of school in these villages, and those attending were more absent, had less time for homework and were much more exposed to danger



on their daily walks to school, which resulted in higher levels of exam failure, dropping out and lower scores in general.

*Citizens of Nepal: appropriating rights and obligations*

Some content of the books (the history of Nepal and civic education) was immediately removed when the conflict ended, but new content did not arrive so readily (the new constitution has been five years in the making and has still not been finalised). As a result, teachers sought to explain their own understandings of the constituent assembly and political events in the new Nepal. Students' perceptions were unclear, but most realized that they are citizens, have rights and must contribute to their country.

Teachers and students both drew on the pervasive discourse of development and equality promoted by donors and NGOs and conveyed through the school books. This was used to create an identity among secondary school students as those who have the opportunity and responsibility to build a 'New Nepal'. Knowledge about development and development organisation takes up considerable space in the school books, and clearly students' collective desires to 'give back to our country', 'develop our village' and to 'do social work' shows how strong an impact the development discourse has had.

They clearly distinguished between those who acquire secondary schooling, and therefore will ensure development, those who will lead their 'backward' villages, and the uneducated, who have no knowledge or say.

*Source:* Petersen 2011. Becoming citizens: youth, schooling and citizenship in post-war rural Nepal.

## Impact for young people

Evaluation and research from Nepal reveals that support to secondary schooling can have several positive implications in a fragile political transition. The programme has been successful in *increasing access, enrolment and exam results* in the areas supported, and although students find the subjects they have been taught irrelevant for further studies, *many chose to pursue further education*. Because of the social status of School Leaving Certificate graduates in Nepalese society, those continuing on to the job market are *likely to receive better pay* if they are employed. There are no indications whether those who pass secondary schooling find jobs afterwards, and in fact in many rural areas most young people return to support their family in farming. Very few become teachers, usually only those whose father is already a teacher at the local school. There was a loud demand from some students, and many parents and teachers, to have locally relevant skills, such as agriculture, included in the curriculum.

Providing young people with a secondary education in fragile situations installs *a great trust in the future*. The combination of the ending of war and their return to school



and a revived hope of passing the SLC made many Nepalese students assert that ‘We can think of a future now’. Students felt they were lucky to have the opportunity to become educated and had a firm belief that they must use this education to support not only their families but their societies as well. Despite disillusionment with politicians and everything political, they wanted to ‘*give back to their society*’ and also wanted democracy, not in a political sense, but in terms of providing marginalised groups with equal rights.

*Secondary schooling enhances self-esteem by providing a schooled identity.* Due to their revived involvement in secondary school and the prospects for them to become ‘educated’ (the identity acquired once the School Leaving Certificate exam is passed at the end of class 10) in a New Nepal, as the school books, media and teachers constantly reminded them, gave students a firm belief in the future and in their own role in providing for their families, their communities and their country. Quality mattered less. *School successfully sells new ideals – ‘we are all equal’.* Due to the status attached to having a schooled identity, the norms and ideals set out in secondary school are almost uniformly adopted by students. In Nepal, all students were very aware of the new ideals conveyed through the school, and they perceived their awareness that ‘everyone is equal’ as something belonging to those who have become educated. Many students still practiced caste separation and even discrimination outside the school premises, arguing that they would be punished by their parents and neighbours if they tried to act as equals. Girls and Dalits, who were the most marginalised in the research area, most strongly displayed a belief in equality and that their generation would change systems of inequality and discrimination ‘when we become those who decide’.

*Giving back: secondary schooling and state building.* In Nepal ‘development’ ‘bikaas’ is a term everyone knows, and it has become closely aligned with being educated. Secondary school books urge students first and foremost to support their families and their country. The focus on democracy and the ideals of equality and of altruistically ‘giving back’ were strongly appropriated by students, regardless of their backgrounds. Parents, teachers and students all made a close connection between schooling, development and democracy, indicating the immense importance not only of the school institution in providing the state with legitimacy, but also the importance of educated citizens as the outcome of schooling in creating the ‘New Nepal’. Students in Nepal equated conflict with the loss of a future, which is a common perception (UNESCO

2011). Similarly, resuming schooling and potentially passing the SLC exam signifies a regained future (Buckland 2005; Lynn Davies 2006) confirm that secondary schooling is important for peace and development after conflict across different contexts.

### **Lessons learned and challenges**

Secondary education is still under-prioritised by donors and governments. However, it is relevant for young people in fragile situations for three main reasons: first, it restores a sense of future and normality in their lives. Secondly, it can provide new ideals regarding gender, caste, peace, sexuality and generation that can be practiced in school because the school premises are a different space which makes students adopt them. Thirdly, secondary schooling is an important institution linking young people to state-building. It is a local manifestation of the state and its norms and ideals, and it provides students with an enhanced status that is directly connected to contributing to the development of the country.

#### *Ensure access and safety*

An initial finding in evaluations is that prioritising aid to create access and safe learning environments is fundamental for secondary schooling to have an impact. Such support can be channelled through the MOE, as well as organisations like UNICEF and Save the Children, who, because they co-lead the education cluster, are closely aligned with the education system.

*Creating access is central to secondary school support.* In the example from Nepal, students, teachers and parents all agree that new and better classrooms are important alongside scholarships that enable access to hitherto deprived young people. It is important to reach as many as possible, not least in less accessible areas, where the risks to recruitment are high. Supporting approaches such as setting up hostels for girls and boys respectively in the rural areas of Nepal helps to ensure that those who live too far from a secondary school to access it daily are still given a chance (Petersen 2011). Another way of doing this is by using home-based or community-based schooling, as several organisations have done in Afghanistan, which is one major reason for the immense increase in girl's enrolment (Rasmussen et al. 2013). In order to get young people enrolled, UNICEF and Save the Children, among others, have facilitated youth clubs and peer support, for example, in South Sudan (see Box 6).

**Box 6. 'Go to School' in South Sudan**

The Go to School initiative launched by South Sudan and supported by UNICEF is an example of an integrated approach that has supported the education system but also enabled young people to support each other in accessing schools and to use their schooling to give themselves a voice. UNICEF supported access through information campaigning, quality by establishing teacher training and the distribution of many materials, the capacity-building of officials, formulating a national teacher training strategy, creating a national institute of education and a learning assessment system, promoting accountability through facilitating an Education Management Information System, improving coordination and transparency among donors and stakeholders, and setting up 600 youth clubs (especially for girls). Children's and youth voices are increasingly present in the media.

UNICEF found that a main reason for the immense success in increasing the enrolment of young people, especially girls, into ALP programmes and schools (400,000 annually) were the campaigns and especially the 'social mobilisation of young people by young people'. Out-of-school young people were also mobilised through youth clubs and peer-to-peer interaction.

*Source:* UNICEF 2010 Education in conflict and transition contexts: case studies.

*Prioritising a safe learning environment* is fundamental for secondary schooling if it is to have an impact upon young people. In Nepal, for example, students risked abduction during the conflict, and in many places young girls especially are at great risk if schools are not in the proximity of their homes (e.g. in Liberia, Sierra Leona; UNESCO 2011). UNICEF and Save the Children supported a successful attempt to create peaceful schools in Nepal, where the key was to involve all stakeholders locally (Box 7). The impact has been widely acknowledged (UNESCO 2011), and they are now considering replicating this in other fragile contexts. In Afghanistan, home-based and community-based schooling has made learning safer, especially for girls. In fact, a new evaluation of Swedish support to the education sector in Afghanistan (Rasmussen et al. 2013) finds that community-based education, where teachers and teaching are local, is the safest and most successful way of providing education in the most insecure areas. The classroom must also be a safe environment. Relations between teachers and students and among the students themselves are central to creating a secure learning environment.

### **Box 7. Schools as Zones of Peace**

In Nepal, UNICEF and Save the Children worked closely with the local authorities, NGOs and schools, as well as with communities in conflict, to establish schools as zones of peace. As in many conflicts, schools were central arenas for propaganda, recruitment, abduction and even actual fighting between Maoists and the royal army during the conflict. The organisations involved and informed all stakeholders in the process of ensuring that students and schools were no longer targeted, nor used as part of political propaganda. As a result, such schools managed to stay open for fourteen days more on average in 2010 than non-project schools in the areas (Save the Children 2012). More importantly, teachers, students and parents felt much more at ease in continuing young people's schooling in periods of tension and conflict.

The schools received support in producing codes of conduct that were written on large posters on the outer walls of the schools to remind everyone that weapons and alcohol, for example, are not allowed in school. As a part of this code of conduct, basic rights were taught and discussed with students. The involvement of various local stakeholders has helped to facilitate respect around schooling and to create a peaceful environment.

A main element for success has been effective and strong partnerships with well-established organisations, the acceptance and support of education officials and a strong emphasis on public awareness through campaigning and visible posters.

*Source:* UNICEF 2010, Save the Children 2012.

### ***Content and methods: the neglected but central elements of change***

A second element that requires specific donor attention is *what is conveyed inside classrooms, and in what way*. When supporting secondary education it is important to ensure that content and methods are changed to facilitate new ideals of equality, peace and development (UNESCO 2011, INEE 2010a). These changes have to occur at an overall systemic level, and both donors and implementing organisations agree that capacity-building at all levels is necessary to formulate and implement such new methods.

### ***Bold symbolic changes provide assurance and support***

While changing fundamental, historically constituted values may be crucial, experiences from the countries adopted as case studies in a World Bank report (Buckland 2005) reveal that some immediate action that has tangible impacts at the local level is important. Besides getting the system functioning so that young people can return to school, it is vital to provide bold symbolic actions, especially regarding textbooks,

which often exert more influence on classroom practice than official curriculum documents. Symbolic changes have to be carried out while larger changes are being planned. Since biases, prejudices and offences are often strongly manifested through specific language and symbols, removing content or skipping the worst parts gives an instant feeling that changes are already occurring after the conflict. In Nepal students were told to tear out the pictures of the King and Queen when peace was officially announced and monarchy abolished, the chapter on history was also removed, and in the following year new content was added on the republic, constituent assembly and constitution (which has still not been written). Many students had heard the new terms but were not able to explain what they meant. The example from Nepal also shows that content matters to young people's perceptions of and expectations regarding their own agency, and yet, even when quality is low, just being part of the 'schooled community' qualifies to be acknowledged as a citizen and gives hope to their families for future development.

Based on data from 52 conflict-affected states, Buckland (2005) finds that curriculum and textbook revisions and reform have to meet two objectives to help end the violence and promote students' involvement in creating change. First it must fulfil the requirement of teachers and students to witness immediate change, especially symbolically. Secondly, it must provide the basis of and be closely linked to the overall development and political aims of the country, as has been the case in Nepal and Afghanistan.

#### *Fostering a democratic peaceful culture and equality*

A major factor that needs reforming is the philosophy behind the school system, its main objectives and its practical manifestation in the curriculum and textbooks. Several donors have supported this by directly working with the government. Moreover, UNICEF (2010) states that 'quality education serves as a critical peace dividend in post-conflict societies and as a platform for rebuilding young lives and for rebuilding systems and institutions.'

Nepal is an example of a young school system (only a little more than fifty years old) which was formed in accordance with elite values, designed to create citizens who were loyal to the King and the nation, and conveying high-caste ideals and ways of living as the only correct ways. These aspects have been changed in the new textbooks, a priority of the multi-donor supported Secondary Education Sector Programme. Books now contain sections that teach students to appreciate diversity and give information about rights. School-going girls and Dalits, for example,

now know they have equal rights. These are not always exercised in practice, but the fact that textbooks announce this equality led students in the research project to argue that 'discrimination will no longer exist when we become those who decide.' A synthesis of findings from UNICEF's work in Lebanon, Nepal and Sierra Leone (UNICEF 2011) found that prioritising equality and inclusiveness is more important than introducing peace materials for creating a peaceful culture. This supports a general finding from education in fragile situations (as argued in Chapter 2), namely that a main donor concern must be to ensure that education challenges the inequalities that lay at the heart of the particular conflict. Involving conflicting and local parties in creating a code of conduct, as in the UNICEF- and Save the Children-run 'Schools as zones of peace' programmes, can be a way to create a more peaceful culture.

In terms of methods, several studies (UNESCO 2011, Save the Children 2010) argue the need to change methods where corporal punishment is the norm, as is the case in most contexts. It is important to ensure that the methods used mirror the content taught. Experiences across various contexts (UNESCO 2011, INEE 2011a) show that this takes a long time to change, but when a culture of equality and non-violence is supported and is part of teacher training, students are likely to change their ideals and perceptions and often also their behaviour, at least within the school premises, as is the case in Nepal (Petersen 2011).

Lynn Davies (2005) lists four specific aspects that have been successful in supporting the formation of democratic and peaceful (that is, conflict resolving) citizens in post-conflict situations: preparing young people for participation in civil society, legal education, information and using the public space, and citizenship education. This can be supported both at a systemic level through the general education sector support, and through organisations improving specific aspects and practices.

### *Teachers are central to change*

A third element that is fundamental to creating a real impact for young people is to ensure there are enough, and good enough, teachers at the secondary level. Besides providing general support to the education system, donors can support NGOs with specific capacities in teacher training and follow-up as part of building the capacity of the overall system.

A sufficient number of teachers who are equally distributed and well trained to provide a quality education and be role models for new ideals and values is a prerequisite for

secondary education to have a positive impact on young people's futures and future social involvement. This point is underlined time and again in evaluations (DANIDA 2012, INEE 2011, Nicolai 2009, UNESCO 2011). Teacher training has been most successful in providing new knowledge and inspiring teachers to apply new methods when follow up and monitoring are integrated (Save the Children 2010, Davies 2006, UNESCO 2011). Teachers who are unqualified risk perpetuating social divides and old elite-defined versions of the nation and citizens, and fuelling conflict (UNESCO 2011). The new SIDA evaluation from Afghanistan (Rasmusen et al. 2013) shows that 'qualified' does not necessarily mean 'highly educated', but teachers need to be involved in teacher education and, most importantly, to receive supervision and follow-up.

Even though some teachers retain old norms and modes of disciplining, research (Petersen 2011) shows that the presence of a few role-model teachers showing students new ways is enough to encourage students to adopt new values. Nonetheless, issues of peace education, new readings of history and civic education alongside the ability to handle traumatised young people require strong teacher capacity. In many fragile situations, teachers are so few that those doing the teaching may not even have the basic formal qualifications. As the example of Nepal shows, it is not enough to provide all teachers with basic training and then expect fundamental change in teacher–student relations or in the methods applied. It requires follow-up and a cultural change at each school to encourage teachers to apply their new skills, as has successfully been attempted in Afghanistan (SIDA 2013). In fragile contexts, state institutions lack qualified personnel and teachers who are properly trained. NGOs may provide training and follow-up within specific areas and teachers who attend such training may be recruited into government positions and international NGOs after a time, leaving the schools without proper capacity. Therefore, donors should support governments to find *systems to retain teachers* while at the same time building capacity within state institutions, as has successfully been done in the Afghanistan MOE (Nicolai 2009, DANIDA 2012).

*Real teaching time matters*, and absentism is a pervasive problem in many fragile countries, not least in the more remote or conflict-torn areas. Supporting and monitoring teachers to be regular and punctual in attendance is a mundane but important priority when providing education because it provides accountability and legitimacy. Also disruptions and unforeseen closures should be minimised, as has been successfully attempted in Nepal with the Schools as Zones of Peace programme (see Box 7 above).



*Ensure relevant secondary schooling and links to future possibilities*

A fourth element that has been grossly neglected in aid to education is the creation of links to post-secondary opportunities. Evidence shows that, where some supervision and links are made with further education, young people are more likely to make use of their education.

In fragile situations, secondary education cannot be expected to cater for the most traumatised, but it should still be relevant to the context. In rural Nepal, teachers and students found it problematic that secondary schooling was not relevant in the local context. They emphasised a need for agricultural vocational subjects in the curriculum and for support to continue in relevant training after the SLC exam. Barakat and Urdal (2009) have conducted a large study of whether education mediates the relationship between youth bulges and violence, showing that two factors are especially relevant when discussing the connection between young people and education in fragile situations: first, the possibilities of progression after primary school, and secondly, interventions to meet the over-supply of educated youth. The authors argue (ibid.) that, while primary enrolment rates may reveal the level of the government's responsiveness to the immediate needs of the population, it is the lack of secondary school provision, leading to low educational progression ratios, that exacerbates the risk of conflict in youthful states. Likewise, increasing secondary education for young people must be followed by creating employment opportunities. Otherwise, disappointment and frustration increase the risk of violent conflict. A DANIDA (2012) evaluation of education aid to Afghanistan finds that growing enrolment rates must be followed by improved quality as well as graduate opportunities to make use of their learning in further study or work when they leave school. There is a need to assess the local context thoroughly and ensure that secondary schooling actually provides knowledge and skills that are useful for further study or work.

*Involvement, ownership and accountability are the keys to successful secondary schooling.*

Local communities, especially as represented in, for example, school management committees and parent-teacher associations, must be part of the process of ensuring that young people receive good and safe secondary schooling. This finding is echoed across different fragile contexts. In Afghanistan, for example, the Education Quality Improvement Programmes run by UNICEF (supported and evaluated by SIDA 2013) have been very successful in supporting and capacity-building local shuras (local consultations) to be involved in construction and providing support and protection for children's schooling. While it can be difficult to involve communities



in fragile situations where people are trying to recover after terrible experiences, evidence from Afghanistan and Nepal shows that schools function better and are more likely to support young people through to their final exams and to have a culture of inclusion and non-violence the more cooperation and mutual support there is between schools and their communities. In Nepal, allocation of scholarships for Dalits and marginalised students is a core issue with the potential to fuel conflict, but when managed in cooperation the distribution of scholarships can create trust and accountability (DANIDA 2012). In Afghanistan, although shura mobilisation has proved positive, this still does not mean that the inclusion of marginalised groups is necessarily ensured (SIDA 2013).

Secondary schooling is an important form of youth education catering primarily to young people who have managed to complete the primary level and are able to invest several years in their schooling. This is vital in creating future hopes and aspirations, introducing new ideals and values, and providing a formal acknowledgment of students' value for the labour force and as citizens, as well as in connecting young people to processes of national development and state building. Support needs to go beyond ensuring access to focusing on content and methods applied, as well as in creating links and support to young people after the end of education. Many young people are either not able or not qualified to enter secondary school, and the next two chapters analyse the two most common alternatives to providing knowledge and skills for them.

### **Additional Literature**

- DANIDA 2009. Joint evaluation of secondary education support programme in Nepal. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.
- Petersen, B.L. 2011 *Becoming citizens: youth, schooling and citizenship in post-war rural Nepal*. Un-published PhD thesis. University of Copenhagen/Danish Institute for International Studies.
- Rasmussen et.al. for SIDA 2013. *Evaluation of Swedish Support in the Education Sector in Afghanistan-2012*.
- DANIDA 2012. *Evaluation of DANIDA support to the education sector in Afghanistan*. Evaluation. 2012.02.
- Davies, L. 2011. "Learning for state-building: capacity development, education and fragility." *Comparative Education* 47(2): 157-180.

## 4. Accelerated learning

Accelerated learning – second chance, alternative education, back on track – many such names are used for programmes catering for school drop-outs or those who have never gone to school. Since the launch of the EFA campaign, it has become clear that a vast number of the world's out-of-school children are over-age primary school aspirants or students who have dropped out early due to difficult life circumstances or have been forced out by conflict (UNESCO 2011). Such older children and young people often find it embarrassing to study alongside small children and therefore often see themselves as having lost their chance of going to school (Manda/UNICEF and MOE Liberia 2011, Hoffmeyer 2011 and interviews). The ALPs are aimed specifically at such young people and are designed to provide them with a condensed form of primary education to allow them to re-enter education and continue in secondary school.

Accelerated learning has been a concern for more than thirty years (Nicholson 2006), and was first applied to disadvantaged learners in developed countries. ALPs usually cover the entire or the most important parts of the formal primary school curriculum and are taught at double the normal pace, that is, two grades per year. Besides being accelerated in content, a central characteristic of the programmes is the use of different forms of learning and teaching to optimise the effects of learning. ALPs often have additional components of life skills or vocational learning to benefit young people. Usually there is no fee or requirement to wear a uniform, and in many places a meal is (or should be) provided. There are also programmes catering for young mothers by providing baby nutrition and possibly caring (as in programmes run by the NRC, IBIS and UNICEF among others). ALPs are often run through or in coordination with the recipient country's government as the heart of the programme is to provide students with an opportunity to catch up and reach par with other ordinary students of their age, with similar formal primary school qualifications. Ideally, after finalising ALP students should be integrated into the formal system and be able to continue in secondary school. This requires ALPs to be officially approved and finalised, with official certificates and openings allowing return to the formal school system.

### Donor interest and existing programmes

Many donors (e.g. DFID, DANIDA, NORAD, SIDA, GIZ and the World Bank) now support organisations and programmes that include ALP components in

### **Box 8. Accelerated Learning Programme in Liberia**

The ALP programme in Liberia has been developed by the Liberian government and UNICEF in unison and run by various organisations since 1998 following a sustained conflict in the country. It is a three-year condensed programme encompassing a full primary cycle of six years. Because of renewed violence in the country, the programme did not become fully operational until 2005-2006. Until 2009 it was implemented in all fifteen counties, covering 59% of school districts countrywide. The wide coverage of ALPs and their incorporation into formal policies and practices in formal schooling make the programme a good example. In 2009 the government announced that ALP would be phased out and most programmes end at the latest in 2012, although there is still a great need for them. From 2006 NGOs, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education began regular coordination meetings, and in 2007-2011 there were at least twelve implementing partners, among which the most prominent are UNICEF, Save the Children Fund-UK, NRC, IRC and IBIS, all coordinated through the ministry.

#### *Outcomes*

One of the important results is that it is more efficient and cheaper to run ALP through the MOE than through a variety of other organisations. In all countries the experience is that ALP students score the same or sometimes higher as primary school students taking the same exam. In the ALP run by NRC, the pass rate was noticeably higher than among ordinary primary-school students (a 90% pass rate), and although fewer girls (37%) sat the exam, their pass rates and grades were comparable.

Several students who had a secondary school within walking distance joined after completing ALP.

#### *Why was it successful*

The different strengths of the various organisations were important: NRC is good at construction, IBIS is renowned for capacity in teacher training and support, UNICEF is strong in overall coordination, and the Ministry of Education took upon itself the role of coordinating and formalising the NGO run programmes. Strong ownership by the MOE. NRC and IBIS show that the involvement of local communities and authorities has been instrumental in legitimising ALP and facilitating the students' involvement in community affairs.

Also the fact that ALP is 'free, fun and flexible' – by including physical education, alternative methods, good teachers, free books and stationary and runs in the afternoon – made it successful in terms of the retention of students and acquiring community support. Schools with feeding programmes had even higher rates of attendance.

#### *Impact for young people*

ALP brought a sense of normality, safety and tolerance to ex-combatants, refugees, IDPs and communities living together. The NRC evaluation also shows that ALP has been instrumental in promoting social cohesion and reducing the risk of future conflicts.

Parents noted how ALP had helped restore the social behaviour of their children, especially those who had taken part in the war directly. Teachers reported that many combatants displayed aggressive behaviour when ALP started but became more relaxed and constructive after a while.

ALP learners themselves said that they had become less violent, more helpful and socially oriented after taking part in ALP. There are also clear indications that ALP learners often demonstrated conflict resolution and decision-making skills, which, for example, have helped reduce issues of public and domestic violence.

The NRC evaluations show that community members consider that ALP has facilitated a change in youth behaviour, leading to better hygiene for themselves and their communities.

ALP also served to narrow the gender gap by providing support for young mothers so they could attend school, which they would otherwise not have done.

Many ALP learners also said that acquiring knowledge of various life skills had changed their behaviour, and numeracy and literacy also made a great difference. This was not because they found employment, but as one girl stated, 'Now I know I do not get cheated when buying things at the market'. There is general satisfaction with learning literacy, numeracy and English language skills (which conventional schools required to be 'correct' English and not Liberian English).

Students also emphasised that it was of great importance to them that they felt they could 'stand among people and express themselves' after attending ALP.

ALP accelerated the re-employment of internally and externally displaced teachers. Because of the incentives paid, this also benefitted many of the conventional schools. ALP speeded up the renewal of the education system because public schools were renovated to host ALP as well, and upgraded teachers were used outside ALP.

### *Challenges*

Because it was successful in educating many, ALP also left young people in large parts of the country with qualifications and renewed future aspirations, but no opportunities for employment or further education afterwards.

The short time-span of the activities of humanitarian NGOs like IRC and NRC makes it difficult to run ALPs long enough to ensure long-term impacts in the form of well-trained and supervised teachers, role models among students to be used in ALP, and the ability of the local MOE to take ALP over.

NRC built several ALP schools in areas with no other schools, which increased the pressure and made the community expect it to cater for all children like a normal school.

Two factors have created tension and made ALP more popular than public schools: the fact that ALP is free, unlike public schools, and the initially higher pay of ALP teachers, which made good teachers flee to ALP and the rest feel badly treated.

There is a vast lack of monitoring and documentation of drop-out rates and what happens to students after the end of their training.

*Source:* Manda/UNICEF and MOE 2011. Evaluation of the Accelerated Learning Programme in Liberia. Nkutu, A., Bang, T. and Tooman, D. 2010. Evaluation of NRC's Accelerated learning Programme in Liberia. IBIS 2011. Fokus no. 130 – Uddannelse under krise. Nicholson 2007. Assessment of the Accelerated Learning Programme in Liberia, implemented by UNICEF.

fragile situations. It is significant that the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report of 2011, 'The hidden crisis: armed conflict and education', and the 2012 report, 'Youth and skills: putting education to work', both strongly advocate the need to support accelerated learning or second chance. Also USAID's recent Youth in Development policy (2012) prioritises support to providing young people with a second chance in education. A vast majority of ALPs are carried out by UNICEF, international NGOs (INGOs) or local partner NGOs, but a few programmes such as the UNICEF-initiated ALP in the Democratic Republic of Congo are run by the official education system. The founders of the idea are UNICEF and Save the Children, who both support and run ALPs in numerous countries.

The impact findings and lessons learned in this chapter are based on an example from a large ALP programme in Liberia (see Box 8), where a recent joint evaluation by UNICEF/MOE (2011) covers all the different implementers of ALP in the country. An evaluation of the NRC-run ALP in Liberia provides considerable insights on impact, supplemented by Sue Nicholson's large comparative study for Save the Children US of four large-scale ALPs in South Sudan, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Uganda (of which only Sierra Leone and Afghanistan document some outcomes and impact for youth), evaluations from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Angola by NRC, a results and lessons learned paper from IBIS in South Sudan, and interviews with IBIS. Impacts for young people are mostly documented in the NRC evaluations and the IBIS study, whereas the others provide general learning.

One emphasis in the national ALP evaluation on Liberia is the advantages of different organisations' different competencies. The Danish NGO IBIS, which specialises in education, has developed a model for capacity-building and the training of local government officials and teachers, which is highly acclaimed for its long-term, development perspective in contexts that are often dominated by short-term emergency approaches (Lonsdale 2011). The long-term perspective is manifested in what IBIS calls spiral methodology, which entails several rounds of supervision, follow-up and re-training. This makes their capacity-building sustainable and useful beyond their specific ALP programme (see Box 9).

### **Box 9. IBIS-run ALP in South Sudan: small organisation with comparable advantage**

IBIS is a Danish NGO with expertise in education. Its ALP in South Sudan is supported by DANIDA, whose recent review called the programme 'very thorough and successful' and as having provided several war-traumatised young people with a new trust in the future.

Because of IBIS's expertise in education and because of the funding available for small-scale projects, it is possible to develop and refine best practices, from which other implementers and donors can learn. The best practices of IBIS's South Sudan ALP are a combination of system-strengthening and service delivery.

1. Capacity-building of local government officials in education management and administration through on the job training and spiral methodology
2. Practical skill development of ALP teachers, continuous formative supervision
3. Second and train government counterparts as technical education staff
4. Deliver comprehensive education advocacy and school governance through cluster-based stakeholder meetings
5. Promote gender equality in pedagogy, life-skills and the training of female officials and teachers
6. Performance-based financing to foster ownership and sustainability

Although relatively expensive, the review of DANIDA-funded education programmes in South Sudan emphasises that IBIS's ALP is an example of a long-term development plan. The reason is especially the exemplary teacher training which takes place over a long time, with continuous support, testing, supervision and re-training. This is of benefit to the entire education system. The local government has adopted IBIS's formative supervision of teachers and continuous professional development as its own. In dialogue with partners, government officials also promote IBIS's approach to the capacity-building of local government officials and teachers as the model to emulate in the country.

*Source:*

IBIS 2012. Lessons learned from our Practice: IBIS South Sudan, results, lessons learned and best practices.  
Lonsdale/Save the Children 2011. A review of DANIDA ROI funded education programmes in South Sudan: identifying good practice and replicability.  
Interview with Karina Kleivan and Bent Jahns, November 2012.

## **Impact for young people**

*ALP increases learning and caters to young people excluded from normal schooling.* In Liberia, ALP students generally performed better than in normal schools, a pattern that is also documented in Sierra Leone (by NRC), Afghanistan (by APEP) and South

Sudan (IBIS study). Save the Children (2012) documents how in South Sudan the atmosphere in ALP was less formal and more joyful than in formal schools, while in Angola ALP students were able to read at 36 words per minute compared to 10 words per minute in formal schools, possibly because of the participatory teaching methods. Learning outcomes in general were better in ALP schools than normal schools, reading skills were higher, and comprehension of what was read was better. Drop-out rates were also lower than in normal schools. Several evaluations (Smith 2007, UNICEF 2010, NRC 2009, Nicholson 2007) show how the use of alternative methods enhances young people's learning (measured as literacy abilities) and their ability to think creatively.

*ALP gives large numbers of young people a sense of normality and direction and reduces aggression and violence.* For many young people in war-affected areas and in fragile situations where there are no educational opportunities because the system is not functioning, ALP is perceived as the lifeline that restores their trust in the future and in their own abilities. This is confirmed by lessons learned from both NRC's and IBIS's ALP work in Liberia, as well as an ALP run by the consortium of nine organisations under the Afghan Primary Education Programme in Afghanistan (Nicholson 2007). Young people themselves, as well as the local communities in which they live, note a marked reduction in aggressive behaviour and violence after enrolment in ALP. Because it is accelerated education, however, ALP proves demanding, and when students miss classes they miss twice as much than in normal schools. In order to be successful, therefore, students need to be disciplined in their attendance and homework in order not to fall behind. This is a major requirement placed on young people, many of them traumatised by war and living under immense psycho-social distress and therefore not immediately capable of catching up. This is a challenge worth considering for donors, in order to have realistic anticipations of outcome.

The case of Liberia shows that the most important impact for young people is in *raising their self-esteem*. They have the confidence to voice their opinions, bargain in the market and believe that they have future opportunities. After attending ALP, some *young people also helped resolve local conflicts*, and in Afghanistan several young women were afterwards employed as teachers in primary schools (Nicholson 2007). Both the IBIS study and the NRC evaluation also found that the young people felt that the basic numeracy and literacy skills they learned instilled confidence in them and enabled them to go to the market without fear of being cheated (see also Box 10). ALP enabled young people to navigate better in daily life and encouraged them to speak in front of others. However, many young people did not continue in secondary

### **Box 10. It is never too late: ALP provides hope after conflict in South Sudan**

Veronica and Emmanuel, both nineteen years old and from South Sudan, tell how ALP has been their only chance to return into education. The fact that it is free enabled them to return to education, although they come from poor families. Veronica is happy that she does not have to study alongside smaller children. They gain friendship and support each other.

Veronica said she has no desire to get married and have children soon: 'In fact I do not think of it at all, yes, only maybe if I get children, then they must go to school.' Veronica continued: 'We need knowledge when we have to build and develop South Sudan, and we, the young people, have to be the most active players in this – we are the new generation.'

Emmanuel aspires to become a doctor if he can find an opportunity to study further because he wants to tell all children and young people that they have to be cautious: 'we should never again experience war and all the suffering that I cannot even think of. No! Clean water, schools, agriculture and plenty of food. That is what I wish for our new country', he said. Despite aspirations, Veronica does not think she can continue in the last ALP in Grade 4 because she has to earn money, but Emmanuel hopes to continue.

(Interviewed provided by IBIS 2011)

school or on to a job after completion because there were not enough opportunities or support to help them do so. A lack of connection with further education and employment is a main challenge and potentially creates frustrations and conflict (UNESCO/IIEP 2011c)

*ALPs can support marginalised young people and especially girls*, Save the Children's evaluations (2011, 2012) of ALP in Afghanistan, Angola and South Sudan reveal better indicators of gender equality than in formal schools. Also NRC- and IBIS-run ALPs show positive impact in terms of involving and educating young mothers. This is partly because young mothers could send their children to school (Angola), or because child care was offered as part of the programme (NRC, IBIS), and partly due to the time flexibility of ALP and the proximity of classes to their homes.

### **Lessons learned and challenges**

ALPs are highly relevant to support because they cater to a large part of the young population in fragile contexts, especially in areas with former combatants, refugees



and a lack of schooling alternatives for those exceeding primary school age. Aid can be provided through MOE, UNICEF and various INGOs, and will have to consider several factors.

### *Support implementing NGOs and alignment with the education system*

*ALP must be incorporated into education policies and owned by the government* to ensure wide coverage, a long-term perspective and links to further education. Liberia is a good example of ownership and at the same time close coordination between MOE, UNICEF and implementing organisations such as NRC. Some ALPs are promoted by MOE and are fully integrated into the education system, like CREPS in Sierra Leone and ALP in Liberia and in South Sudan (Nkutu et al. 2010, Nicholson 2007). They are then developed in cooperation with experienced donors and organisations like USAID, UNICEF and Save the Children, and implemented by INGOs and local NGOs. In South Sudan, the implementation of ALP by IBIS, NRC and Save the Children has been highly praised, especially for its close alignment with the Ministry of Science and technology (Lonsdale 2011). The DANIDA-supported ALP implemented by Save the Children UK and Save the Children Denmark in Somaliland has been successful due to the *close cooperation with government, especially at regional level*, where almost full involvement and ownership was experienced (Smith 2007). The close cooperation made it more likely that the improvements occurring through ALP would benefit the entire education system. However, although the different ALPs are found to be well-functioning and of great importance, employees in the Ministry of Education do not mention it as part of the education system. The reason is that it is both run and funded by international NGOs, raising problems of sustainability when they are phased out. It is a challenge to integrate it, and it also requires donors to support capacity-building in order for it not to fail. Another challenge, as several practitioners have pointed out, is *the risk of ALP undermining the official education system by providing a parallel system*. Conversely, Save the Children points out that ALP is sometimes viewed as second best when it is not within the formal school system. Staff of IBIS, UNICEF and DFID have pointed to the tendency for ALP to create parallel structures that compete with the formal system and show that parents often prefer ALP because of its better teaching, better materials, greater prestige and the fact that it is free. It is therefore important to *align closely with the government system where possible and also ensure complete correspondence, for example, in terms of salaries and incentives*.

As the Liberian example shows, *locating the ALPs in normal school buildings* is a physical sign that they belong to the same system, and it makes the route of trans-

fer easier. Moreover, as in some places in Liberia, the *same teachers can be used for morning primary and afternoon ALP* provided incentives are offered. Because ALP teachers receive training in participatory methods and materials are provided, this benefits the normal schools as well. Also renovation of the building and the provision of furniture and latrines will benefit both ALP and normal schools if they apply jointly on the same premises (Manda 2011). In this way ALP can speed up renewal of the school system, instead of competing and undermining it by being more attractive, as has been the criticism in some places (Nicolson 2007).<sup>16</sup> This is not always possible: for example, as a humanitarian organisation NRC often implements ALPs in areas with no formal schools. Furthermore, its short-term support does not enable a general improvement of teachers and the school system to take place. Nonetheless, the process is gradual: some states are so fragile that it is only after years of implementation by NGOs that a system will emerge with which to align.

ALP must provide formal certificates and routes to enter formal education wherever possible. Besides linking ALPs to the official system, there are good examples of organisations facilitating the *transfer from ALP into secondary school or other alternatives such as vocational training*. Organisations like IBIS prioritise long-term follow-up and supervision to help young people move on after ALP, and this increases the likelihood of continued education.

### *Support a variety of organisations with specific capacities*

The findings indicate that ALP must be initiated quickly, drawing on the expertise of humanitarian organisations like NRC, but from the outset must be planned as a long-term education priority. The Liberia case underlines a point asserted by many organisations that strategies for their phasing out should be developed from the start in cooperation with the decentralised stakeholders with whom they work. It is important to find *the bridging organisations* that can help transform short-term emergency programmes into lasting ALPs, that is, NGOs with experiences in both fields. IBIS, for example, have a longer time perspective than NRC, but the two organisations coordinate and have partly similar models of work. IBIS seem to counter some of the challenges that NRC faces that the programmes only run for a few years

<sup>16</sup> Harvey Smith (2007) suggests doing away with the distinction between formal and non-formal regarding ALPs as they are based on the same curriculum, albeit taught at different rates. The interactive methods and stimulating environment of ALPs, instead of being exclusive, ought to inform and be transferred to normal schools and the competition or sense of parallel systems that are detrimental to the formal system (Smith 2007, UNICEF 2010, UNESCO 2012).

and follow-up is limited. Without a bridging organisation and attempts to have the MOE take over, the risk is that ALP is run as a parallel and competing system with better teachers and no fees, with the consequence that the primary school is undermined and ALP suffers from under-aged students, as has happened in several cases (for example, Somalia).

### *Build on needs and local involvement*

The NRC evaluations from Liberia and Sierra Leone, as well as the IBIS (2012) lessons learned study, certify that *involvement, capacity-building and ownership by local communities are the keys to success*. Such ‘sensitisation’ is the expertise of NGOs and INGOs. Nicholson (2007) argues that this can create a lack of clarity over whether ALPs are actually owned by the community or by the MOE. In the Somaliland ALP, local communities supported the school, and due to a gradual phasing out of funding starting already after the first year, communities mobilised resources to continue this schooling (Lonsdale 2011). The ALP schools were often much closer to the communities (with formal school being more than ten kilometres away), the accelerated curriculum was relevant and stimulating, and the use of alternative teaching methods and more active student involvement made it more encouraging, so that the drop-out rate was lower than in formal schools.

To ensure context-specificity and accommodate the fact that young people attending ALP are not of primary school age,<sup>17</sup> *the curriculum should not only be a condensed version of the primary school one but also address some of the urgent issues for young people* in fragile areas such as psychosocial support, life skills, HIV/AIDS, sexual learning and peace education. Where programmes are based on a thorough assessment of needs and the diversity of the group of learners, they have provided the knowledge and tools for improved living conditions and coexistence, especially in areas with displaced groups.

In terms of *catering to specific needs*, it is a challenge that both under- and over-aged students often attend ALPs, and the curriculum does not cater to this diversity. The risk is that the prime target, young people, drop out (Nkuut.al./NRC 2010). Considering the often vast need for this ‘back on the track’ form of education, the recent ALP evaluation of Liberia (Manda 2011) recommends that in places with lots of students ALP should be divided into several classes according to age, e.g. 7-10 years, 11-18 (the normal ALP age), and 19 and above. This would signal a serious intention

<sup>17</sup> Recalling the extended definition of youth used by USAID, as described in chapter 1.

to create a part of the formal system to encompass all groups that no longer qualify to attend normal primary school.

### *Teachers are the backbone of ALP*

*Good teachers are a prerequisite* for accelerating young people's learning. As IBIS's programme director in Liberia says, 'garbage in, garbage out – semi-skilled trainers for illiterate traumatised youth result in disaster' (presentation provided by IBIS). The Danish NGO IBIS, for example, is well known and acclaimed for its teacher training for ALP programmes (Manda 2011, Katrine Wold NRC interview 2012). IBIS has a good track record in teacher training, and teachers often become so qualified that they have left schools and been headhunted by INGOs or government (Karina Keivan and Bent Jahns in interview 2012). The latter is not problematic according to IBIS, because it still contributes to general capacity-building and state-building. The specific expertise in teacher training could be used to benefit teacher training at a systemic level, which is the case at a regional level, such as with IBIS's work in Liberia.

ALP clearly has the potential to impact positively on young people in fragile situations, since it caters to a more vulnerable part of youth than secondary education. Still, there are many young people who need quick and immediate help to get their lives back on track and start earning an income. The next chapter therefore focuses on educational help in the form of technical and vocational training.

### **Additional literature**

- Nicholson, S. (2006) Accelerated learning in post-conflict settings: a discussion paper. Save the Children US.
- Manda (2011) Evaluation of the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) in Liberia. Liberia, UNICEF and Ministry of Education.
- Nkutu, A., Bang, T. and Tooman, D. 2010. Evaluation of NRC's Accelerated learning Programme in Liberia.
- IBIS (2012) Lessons from our practice: IBIS South Sudan, results, lessons learned and best practice.
- Save the Children (2012) Breaking the cycle of violence: learning from Save the Children's delivery of education in conflict-affected fragile states.

## 5. Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) covers the broad range of education and training that focuses on providing young people with specific income-generating or job-related skills. UNESCO (2012) documents a vast need and desire for skills among young people around the world, and shows that South and West Asia especially, as well as sub-Saharan Africa, are witnessing a glaring lack of vocational initiatives. Fragility aggravates the situation. At the same time, several organisations state that a main wish for young people in fragile situations is to acquire manual skills. To many young people, this seems to be the most direct path to earning some sort of decent income, and it is also a more likely one for all those who have missed out, or never entered, education.

UNESCO's Centre for TVET applies the following definition: 'TVET is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work' (UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007: 2). While many TVET programmes traditionally aimed solely at upgrading people's manual job-related skills, vocational skills and other skills-oriented forms of education are now providing a much broader focus, which encompasses flexible skills, learning to learn and various life skills (King and Palmer 2006, King 2013). This has led the Conflict and Education Research Group (CERG) at the University of Oxford to promote what they call a holistic approach to TVET: 'TVET is a learning system in which both "soft" and "hard" skills are developed within a[n]...integrated...framework that seeks to improve livelihoods, promote inclusion into the world of work and that supports community and individual agency' (UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007: 2). This definition resembles how TVET is often promoted in fragile situations. TVETs are often short term (1-10 months) in design, not least when applied in situations of emergency or fragility, where programmes are aimed at displaced youth, former combatants or others suffering from the war and needing immediate assistance to gain a livelihood. The skills training offered is usually within a locally well-known field where artisans are already active and often involves sewing, bicycle repair, mechanics, basket-making, weaving, masonry or carpentry. Such programmes are often run by international or local NGOs for small groups. National training institutes rarely exist in fragile states. The main aims are to address immediate income needs and give young people a sense of having a future, to build the human capital required for reconstruction, to bridge the relief-development gap and to provide a tangible peace dividend, which, thanks to its short-term and targeted nature, provides certain advantages over formal education (UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007).

## Donors' interest in and support to vocational education

Vocational education or training has been a cornerstone of development practice for more than six decades, and for a long period 'it received more international assistance than any other form or level of education' (Middleton et al. and World Bank 1993). TVET is currently regaining its former fame due to the growing youth population, combined with an enhanced focus on youth unemployment and the fear of untamed youth agency. Aid organisations at all levels now emphasise the need to prepare young people for employment, as emphasised in, for example, the World Development Report of 2012 'Jobs' (World Bank 2012), the Global Monitoring Report of 2012 'Youth and skills: putting education to work' (UNESCO 2012) and the ETF/European Union presentation of November 2012).<sup>18</sup> A large World Bank study (Buckland 2005) of twelve conflict-affected states shows very few examples of innovative TVETs. In fragile situations, especially post-conflict, TVET is often an integrated part of the UN's Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration programmes.

In order to understand the extended bricolage of education and training falling under this heading, it is useful to introduce the notion of applied skills, as it can point to some of the learning and challenges involved in providing young people with skills in fragile situations. In UNESCO's Global Monitoring Report (GMR) of 2012 for EFA, 'Youth and skills', skills are divided into three types, each associated with different educational levels (see Box 11).

Opposed to the more technical and linear definition used by UNESCO, Save the Children, among others, is concerned with both hard skills and soft skills. Soft skills encompass various aspects of empowerment, such as knowing one's rights and duties as a citizen, being able to participate in social and political life, and contributing to democracy (SCD 2011, presentation by Bo Tovby-Jørgensen at GMR 2012 launch conference, December 2012). In general, the Scandinavian organisations place a strong emphasis on the soft skills.

The renewed interest in skills education for young people is especially relevant in fragile situations. DFID, for example, supports TVET that focuses on economic growth and so far, with the support of local NGOs, that provides a more traditional form of skills training, with help to start a business afterwards. DANIDA provides support to several organisations that have a skills training component in their work in fragile situations (e.g. those supported under the Region of Origin Initiative). UNICEF, a joint head of the

<sup>18</sup> Kenneth King (2013) has provided a review of key reports on TVET, skills development, and work and jobs that came out in 2012, indicating the fast-growing concern with the topic.

**Box 11. UNESCO: three types of skill**

Foundational skills: those skills children must acquire in primary school. Literacy, numeracy and basic learning skills that enable them to learn.

Technical skills: learning a trade or handicraft which can be used for production or a job in the labour market.

Transferable skills: abilities to solve problems, think creatively etc. – skills which young people only acquire if they reach upper secondary levels of education.

According to UNESCO, a combination of the three types of skill provides the best equipment for the job market. The ways to acquire skills are through either formal education alone or formal education in combination with vocational training and/or apprenticeship. Learning is perceived as a linear progression.

*Source:* UNESCO, 2012. Youth and Skills – putting education to work. EFA-Global Monitoring Report 2012.

education cluster, plays a lead role in promoting vocational education in fragile situations, and Save the Children also runs a programme for young people in fragile situations called Education for Youth Empowerment (EYE) (see Box 13). Representative of several donors and organisations such as NORAD, DFID, SIDA, UNICEF and Save the Children Denmark have emphasised that the most successful examples of vocational education in fragile situations is the Youth Education Pack (YEP) programme founded and run by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) (see Box 12) and a similar programme by IBIS.

The impact findings of this chapter are based on evaluations from Norwegian Refugee Council programmes, the most recent being from Liberia (Moberg and Johnson-Demen 2009), and an older one from Sierra Leone (Johannesen 2005), as well as a summary of evaluation findings from IBIS alongside a study of students who have finalized an IBIS-run programme and findings from Save the Children Denmark's programme in South Sudan. Lessons learned are supplemented with insights from the Global Monitoring Report on Youth and Skills (UNESCO 2012), a discussion paper on TVET in post-conflict situations (UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007) and a report from a UNESCO-UNEVOC online conference, 'TVET in situations of post-conflict and post-disaster'. There is an absolute wealth of TVET programmes, and they all have specific aspects, depending on the context and implementing organisations. However, it is safe to say that, although impact findings are context-specific, they provide some indications of what is important to consider when supporting TVET in fragile situations.



### **Box 12. Youth Education Pack In Liberia: NRC's integrated programme for youth**

YEP in Liberia was designed in 2005 by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) based on experiences in Sierra Leone and Burundi. It is a one-year basic education and training programme for young people (14-22 years) with little or no formal education. NRC defines the main target group as former refugees and internally displaced people, but its programmes, being located in return areas, also benefit ex-combatants and local youth in general.

NRC follows a 'heads, hearts and hands' approach, which means that YEP has three main components: literacy/numeracy, life skills and practical skills. The first two are taught in the morning, the latter in the afternoon. The vocational skills are tailoring, soap-making, pastry, weaving, auto mechanics, masonry, carpentry and cosmetology, and the instructors are skilled artisans from the local area. The programme has been highly popular, and only few students have dropped out (3-6%). The local community is involved in support of the programme, and the young people are put in a group to support each other.

The project is intended to respond to the needs of young people who missed out on educational opportunities due to war and who expressed frustration and a need for employment. The project is designed to provide a predictable life-structure, daily routines and meaningful activities for young people for whom even ALP is beyond reach. YEP should provide them with opportunities to contribute to their own and their communities' development.

#### *Impact for young people*

Young people acquired a new identity through YEP, gaining self-esteem and a new and better status in their communities. Most of the young people displayed a new belief in the future. For the communities themselves, after the war young people in these parts of Liberia were generally seen as a risk, but since YEP the crime rate has gone down, and young people are perceived as important and responsible members of their society.

Many continued to practice vocational skills after ending their training, and some continued to affiliate with their groups with great solidarity. Their produce was considered as being of good quality, but business is generally small, as purchasing power in the villages is very low. Tools, however, were of low quality, and several sewing machines broke.

#### *Why was it successful*

YEP was set up in areas with no other forms of education and thus did not enter into competition with, for example, fee-paying forms of education or the formal system. It was introduced after local consultation and focussed on skills that were relevant in the given context. Although it was quite radical in insisting on 50-50 gender enrolment, which could have generated resistance, this helped empower the young women who participated, some of whom were even trained in traditional male skills such as carpentry.

Child care support helped young mothers take part, while the provision of one meal per day enhances the likelihood of young people participating all day without having to leave to earn money for food. Young people were organised into groups sharing tools and supporting each other and with a group monitor with good local standing attached to mobilise young people, families and



communities and advise on income-generating activities, as well as to mediate conflicts. The Ministry of Education participated in adapting the academic curriculum and teacher training to the Liberian context, thus ensuring a minimum standard in line with the ALP. Graduates received a Ministry-signed certificate.

#### *Problems and challenges*

Young people prioritise making a living and thus prioritised vocational over academic and life skills training because they perceive vocational skills to be the most likely way to earn an income. Hence, many were still illiterate. The evaluation also argues that a greater focus on gender and trauma may enhance young people's performance in academic training.

YEP is a typical NGO recovery project with insufficient anchoring and ownership. This is one of NRC's main priorities.

The project is very costly according to the standard of host countries, making the vital takeover difficult. Despite the presence of working group monitors, there is a lack of follow up and proper monitoring of outcomes.

*Source:* Moberg, L. and A. Johnson-Demen, 2009. 'Small-small steps' to rebuild communities with YEP. Norwegian Refugee Council, Evaluation Report.

YEP follows an integrated approach combining various types of skills education and providing additional support such as child care. NRC ensures that the local community supports the education and involves local artisans and market actors directly. YEP is a one-year programme. Recently market analysis and business training have been added, after evaluations made it clear that young people need more than just manual skills to actually practice and make a living. YEP programmes are now being run in ten countries (Burundi, DR Congo, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Somaliland, Sudan, Uganda, Georgia and East Timor, with implementation being planned in Lebanon and Afghanistan). The concept is constantly being refined (interview with Katrine Wold, NRC 2012), but a main challenge is the short traditional programme periods of its humanitarian work. The Danish NGO IBIS, which is not a humanitarian NGO, has worked closely with NRC in Liberia and through a joint agreement implemented YEP in a part of Liberia where NRC is not working. IBIS has developed the approach to include more follow up and supervision (see Box 13).<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> IBIS has now changed the name to Education for Youth Empowerment (not to be confused with Save the Children's similarly named programme) because they found the concept of YEP too restrictive. IBIS, a development NGO, wants to apply a longer term perspective on training, follow-up and supervision (interview with Benth Jahns and Karina Kleivan, November 2011).

### **Box 13. IBIS's study of YEP's impact for young people in Liberia**

IBIS has agreed with NRC to implement a YEP programme in south-east Liberia. Its elements are thus similar to those described in Box 12. A course runs for ten months. A study from autumn 2011 researched the impact for young people completing the two first phases (2009 and 2010) combined with those who were attending the third phase (2011). Impact is measured on several areas.

#### *Where young people go after ending training*

Many go back to their villages immediately, but some have returned to the town where the training took place because there was a greater likelihood of obtaining contracts. Some moved away having been contracted by a larger firm (not employing their skills), hoping this will provide an income to start up business where they can practice their skills when they return.

#### *How they manage challenges after graduation*

Many of the young women had to return to their homes, and many were or became pregnant or already had small children who had been taken care of during the training, but whom the women had to care for after graduation, which made it difficult for them to begin to work.

Those who went away from the town quickly after ending training had difficulties in finding contracts, returned to domestic work, were blamed by their families for having gone away but still not contributed to income-generation, and were in general more frustrated.

Those who returned to their villages, even when they were given an opportunity to use their skills, often did so to help relatives whom they feel they cannot charge. Therefore, they do not earn an income, but do contribute to their community.

Groups only receive tools from IBIS when they have found a workplace, which is difficult for many, especially those with mechanical, tailoring and carpentry skills. They have to find and cut building materials themselves, which has excluded several women.

#### *How it has improved livelihoods*

Those graduates who are able to earn some income, or who are determined to do so, emphasised a change in the way they are perceived: they have become people who can contribute to their families and communities, and they qualify to be regarded as adults. For example, one young woman (and mother) was called 'sister' by her family, but since training she has been earning an income and is called a woman and 'mama'. In similar ways, some young people find that earning an income from a skill that is theirs means earning 'real money'.

Many, including their employers, are proud of their skills and talk about them as their own, 'something installed in me', a social asset that cannot be taken away and which is equated with a brighter future.

The fact that women also learn 'men's skills' such as masonry helps women acquire greater respect: 'I learned something that can back me tomorrow'.

Those who have used the training to return to school also feel they have gained status and respect. The life-skills component also benefitted the young people, especially the women who learned about childbirth, child-care, HIV/AIDS and general hygiene, which has led young people to make, for example, toilet improvements for their families.

Several young people emphasise that their improved status allows them to be more involved in community decisions.

#### *Future dreams*

Clearly, the training has influenced the young people's dreams: they have more trust in the future, and they express the wish to study, to open a business, to work for big companies and to be able to send their own children to school.

#### *Challenges*

It has been difficult for young people to find and establish workplaces, to obtain access to the tools provided and to get started.

While day care is crucial to allowing young mothers to complete a YEP course, the lack of day care afterwards, combined with social norms expecting them to stay at home, makes it difficult to employ their skills.

The programme is expensive, and although many of the young people meet or work in the established groups, only about a quarter are working to establish a workplace. There is clearly a need for more support.

The programme director states that empowering women through skills can also be dangerous because men feel threatened by their new status.

Success is usually measured according to income gained from employing the skills learned, but the programme director is concerned that the other skills often make young people employable in other sectors.

*Source:* Hoffmeyer/IBIS, 2011. Study of young people finalising a Youth Education Programme. Presentation by IBIS Liberia programme director Patrick

Following a similar approach to NRC and IBIS, Save the Children (Denmark) has developed an integrated programme called EYE which aims to empower vulnerable children and young people in rural and urban areas to improve their living conditions, thus strengthening their skills to access safe and protective employment opportunities and to have an influence on decisions affecting their own lives.

### **Box 14. Education for Youth Empowerment in South Sudan**

Save the Children has developed its Education for Youth Empowerment programme after long experience in Somaliland and Bangladesh. It is being implemented in South Sudan by Save the Children Denmark supported by DANIDA's Regions of Origin Initiative.

It is a nine-month training programme combining practical and theoretical training (80:20) and school-based training and apprenticeship. The skills offered are selected after market analysis and a tracer study of the first batch. The approach and curriculum were decided together with a technical advisory committee (including local leaders), government officials and company owners. Students produce items of value to the community and the training centre. Food security is a main issue, and thus a focus on agricultural skills is an important component.

#### *Impact*

The first tracer study revealed that 49% of participants had found employment, become local policy-makers and teachers, or established their own business. More than half of the women had started their own businesses, compared to only slightly more than a quarter of the men.

The integration of returnees back into their own communities and changes away from violent behaviour had been successful.

#### *Reason for success*

The programme builds on a holistic approach, which includes campaigns to change the negative perception of manual labour, thus making it more attractive for young people to attend.

It combines life-skills, entrepreneurship and business training with numeracy and literacy, which young people find provide self-esteem and give them courage to start on their own after training. Child-care options and accommodation makes it possible for girls and young mothers to pursue training.

Constantly adapting the programme to changing market and community needs increases the likelihood of young people earning an income.

Integrating training on saving schemes has helped young people use the income they have earned from orders they obtained during the course to save up for buying tools etc. to set up their own businesses.

Youth clubs provide the foundation for saving schemes, management and business training, team building, peer education, community involvement and health and life-skills which provide tolerance and support across social and cultural divides after conflict.

The outreach approach ensures that trained young people apply their knowledge and skills in, for example, agriculture or in their local societies, and that they teach others, thus making the programme less costly than other TVET programmes.

#### *Challenges*

The tracer study and the market analysis it also indicated a vast but hitherto unexplored potential in relation to farming skills and agro-related business development.

Young mothers do not have child care after ending training.

It is expensive and difficult to hand over the Save the Children's programme.

*Source:* Save the children 2013. A sense of business. Introduction to Education for Youth Empowerment in South Sudan.

Interview with Bo Tovby-Jørgensen, programme coordinator for EYE, Save the Children Denmark.

## Impact for young people

While the outcomes of vocational and skills training programmes are mixed, those described in the boxes above, which combine basic life-skills with technical training and possibly internships or apprenticeships and further support in entering the job market or getting started with their own businesses, have *significantly improved employment opportunities* (also UNESCO 2010, 2011). Some young people have paid work, some start businesses employing their skills and other find work due to the other learning acquired in the training. Also, Save the Children's skills training for the employment opportunities project in Somalia has been successful in getting youth into jobs. A two-year project funded by the European Commission aimed to provide 5,100 disadvantaged young people with vocational training linked to job opportunities. Almost all young people indicated that they had become employed or started their own businesses. A tracer study confirmed that, of the young people taking part in the education, 67% in Somaliland and 68% in Puntland are in sustainable employment (Save the Children DK 2012a). According to GIZ, 50% should be a criterion of success for EYE.

*Young people's self-esteem is positively influenced* by the training. There are several reasons for this, one being the basics of learning to read and count, which gives them the confidence to become involved in business, while another is the fact that, by acquiring some knowledge and skills, they 'become someone' in the eyes of the community. Finally, several young people find that their knowledge of hygiene and child care has significantly improved their well-being and lives.

*Young people have become less aggressive, and violence in the local society has markedly reduced.* In all three programmes this is emphasised by both young people themselves and their communities. These programmes are often run in areas where there is a mixture of former combatants, returnees, refugees and other vulnerable groups, and therefore the increase in peaceful coexistence, especially where formerly conflicting groups live together, is an important impact. Also the Danish Refugee Council has experienced reductions in violence through their programme in Somalia, where eighty business groups have been established consisting of potential recruits for extremist groups (UNESCO-UNEVOC 2012).

Young people start to *contribute to their local society* after being enrolled on the holistic programmes, not only by finding employment and earning money, but also by using the other skills acquired to improve conditions in their locality, as well as through various forms of voluntary support and social involvement. This

is attributed to the soft skills and the attempts to form groups and encourage co-operation during the training.

As with the ALP, *TVET can alter gender relations* and ensure the integration of young women into income generation. Both IBIS and NRC ensured a 50-50 involvement of young men and women and encouraged young women to learn traditional male skills such as carpentry, which several of the latter were able to employ afterwards. As with the ALP, the programmes that integrate child care and support of young mothers have great impact on young women themselves, as well as their status in the community.

### **Lessons learned and challenges**

*Skills training is desired and highly relevant for young people in fragile situations.* Skills training is important as a way to reach those who are difficult to reach by other means, including young people who are so traumatised that they cannot concentrate on actual schooling but need to be practically involved. It is also *immensely costly*, and even for the best functioning programmes, *coverage is small*. Programmes for skills education are expensive in terms of time, commitment, methodology, curriculum and support structures and thus difficult to replicate on a broader scale. Although most programmes are endorsed by the education system, there are no examples of coherent and coordinated approaches to skills training in fragile situations. Still, implementation is taken care of mostly by international and sometimes local NGOs, and their approaches and costs vary greatly. In terms of coverage, these are still only drops in a vast ocean (UNESCO 2012). Hence, if the increased focus of many donors on employment is to have a serious impact, it requires considerable increase in funding.

#### *Support a patchwork of organisations, as well as policy formulation*

Support to both humanitarian organisations like NRC and bridging organisations like IBIS and Save the Children that work in both fields can ensure a longer time perspective and thus the time to mobilise resources locally (through support from local businesses and the community) and to hand the programme over to the government. Also, organisations emphasised in interviews (with NRC and IBIS) that a take-over by government is not important since the high costs, exit strategy and onward use of training centres, trainers and equipment must be part of the initial planning. Save the Children's recent attempt to lower costs by using an outreach approach in which the young people share their knowledge and skills within their communities may be a way forward. Several of these organisations urge donors to support the creation of national skills training policies (conference on youth and skills training in Sub-Saharan Africa,

Copenhagen, February 2013). Here, the government of South Sudan has shown great commitment and has been supported by UNICEF and Save the Children among others. As one government representative (in Save the Children 2013) asserted, it is fine for the government to take over in terms of policies, but in such fragile and poor contexts, support to individual training organisations is inevitable.

*TVET programmes must be relevant, context-specific and demand-based*

Vocational education activities in fragile situations need to be based on *context-specific local needs and wants*. A DANIDA evaluation of vocational programmes (2007) in non-fragile situations and a Recom study of employment (Fields 2013) both find that vocational programmes must be directed at the informal market and must integrate past and future, that is, take into account trauma and peace-making as well as market understanding. Vocational education should teach young people that it is possible to acquire the skills and knowledge to make changes in their lives. The World Bank (2011) argues for giving priority of access to employment, but also notes that skills acquisition may not be sufficient to prevent grievances from escalating into violence. It is vital to address the root causes of social exclusion, as argued also in the chapter on secondary education. Job creation should be combined with training in conflict resolution, for example.

*Market analysis must foreground intervention and be used together with tracer studies to adapt programmes to changing needs.* Several donors and organisations (for example, EFT of the European Union, UNICEF, ILO and NRC) have realised that it is crucial to undertake a local market analysis before deciding what skills to offer in a programme, locating who can act as trainers and ensuring that training meets needs that have hitherto not been covered by local craftspersons or businesses.<sup>20</sup> NRC found that, despite following local skills and needs, the local market was quickly saturated with the skills provided by YEP in Sierra Leone and Liberia. It has been a challenge for several programmes to match education to the labour market, for example, in vocational programmes in Liberia, Cambodia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (INEE/IIEP 2011). It is generally acknowledged now that the *demand side*, not the supply side, must guide the design of programmes (conference on Skills Training for African Youth in Copenhagen, February 2013). It is crucial to *involve the local business environment* when selecting relevant skills and to secure their *commitment to ensuring apprenticeship and employment* after the end of training. *Base training on local artisans and using local people as supervisors* is cost-efficient, but it also builds

<sup>20</sup> The NRC has developed a tool kit for market analysis.



networks and relations locally by acknowledging people's skills. The World Bank supported the Liberian government in the repair and maintenance of infrastructure and combined it with the goal of creating employment. While this provided instant employment to a lot of TVET-trained young people, it was short term and created a lot of frustration because the skills learned were not useful afterwards (UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007).

Finally, Save the Children's experience from South Sudan reveals that it can be well worth *supporting a campaign to change the often low public status of manual labour*. Here, close cooperation with government is significant to help circulate the message as a general public view of TVET. In the case of secondary schooling in Nepal, the qualitative research revealed an overwhelming desire to have relevant vocational subjects integrated into the secondary curriculum. This could have the side effect of enhancing the general status of TVET.

#### *The need for hard and soft skills and holistic approaches*

*An integrated or holistic approach is beneficial* in ensuring the relevance and recovery for conflict-affected youth. TVET programmes have more impact if they are taught through approaches such as those used by NRCs and IBIS's YEP programmes or Save the Children's EYE programme, where vocational skills are accompanied by literacy, numeracy and life skills education, including psychosocial education. Also, the business training (e.g. NRC) and creation of saving schemes and groups (Save the Children) and the intense post-training supervision and follow-up (IBIS) are highly rated by young people themselves and seem to make a difference. Besides integrating various subjects in the *content* of learning, a *form* integrating various needs is similarly beneficial, for example, by adding child care or meals to enable young people to participate. Programmes building on less holistic approaches, as for example the USAID-supported Training for Employment in Liberia, also seem to have less impact (e.g. USAID 2011). Also, TVET programmes in Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration programmes tend to focus exclusively on ex-combatants and thus risk fuelling local conflict (UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007).

Programmes must also be holistic in terms of reaching out beyond the training centre. The successful examples are all based on the *strong involvement of the local community* to ensure that families and leaders fully embrace the programme and support the young people in attending. It is important that the focus is not merely on income, but on making a living (as when agricultural skills help improve the yield for one's own consumption). The integrated programmes are intensive, often running both



mornings and afternoons, and thus leave little time for work during education periods. In order to succeed families must support this, which is a major challenge in poor fragile environments. Support is especially crucial for girls, who have more tasks at home, especially young mothers, who have usually been banned from education. Uganda is a rare example of returning combatants receiving unconditional family and community support, where TVET is fairly common and where community-based TVET projects are therefore very successful (UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007). This highlights the immense importance of considering the specificity of the context in terms of local involvement.

#### *Ensure linkages and documentation after training*

*Follow up, supervision and monitoring* after the end of training have markedly reduced violence and unemployment locally. This does not mean that all young people find work – this is far from being the case – but they are more disciplined and focussed in their income-generating approach, using, for example, income from agricultural work to buy tools and then make products to sell. The experiences of NRC and IBIS indicate that it is useful to create groups that can support each other by working together and sharing tools. Save the Children (2013) also shows how establishing youth clubs for cooperation and saving schemes make rapid entry into the world of work more likely for young people. NRC, due to its mandate as a humanitarian organisation, has a weakness in its follow up. IBIS, which originally copied NRC's YEP programme, has now changed to providing a full year of post-training supervision and follow-up. Their experience is that this ensures that more young people overcome the initial challenges and find sustainable employment (interview with Bent Jahns and Karina Kleivan, IBIS, 2012).

#### *Ensure that TVET receives long-term support*

TVETs, especially in fragile situations, tend to be perceived as short-term projects run by NGOs, which, although, they attempt to ensure sustainability by turning over constructed centres and other resources, still suffer from sustainability problems (UNESCO-UNEVOC 2007). A major challenge for NRC, for example, is the realisation that, in order to be successful and counter some of its initial problems, YEP needs to have a *long-term perspective* of the sort that was not originally part of NRC's way of working as a humanitarian organisation specialising in emergencies. The high costs of such programmes make INGO presence inevitable. However, *cooperation and close ties to the government can ensure that such programmes gain acceptance and encourage take-over and possible replication* by the government while still being externally funded. UNESCO-UNEVOC (2007) suggest supporting the

building of a national training institute and facilitating the formulation of national policies regarding skills.

What is most important regarding vocational training is the fact that, because it is practical and short term, it is the most likely way of supporting those young people who have been most severely affected by fragility and conflict. However, it is also by far the most expensive form of youth education, as well as being the one where coordination and integration into the education system is most weak.

### **Additional literature**

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## 6. Concluding discussion

Donors and governments are increasingly concerned with the importance of educating young people in fragile situations. They fear destructive and violent reactions from a growing youth population that lacks the opportunities to secure individual livelihoods, reintegrate into social life after conflict and contribute to their societies. This report has analysed experiences with youth education in fragile situations and specifically focussed on the impact of secondary schooling, accelerated learning and technical and vocational training. Impact evaluation is scarce, and therefore the examples selected according to their relevance and good documentation provide the main insights. These are supplemented by general reports, studies and interviews. Although experiences are highly contextual, there are some general lessons to be learned.

### **Support to education for young people is important in fragile situations**

There is increasing evidence of the severe effects of conflict and fragility on young people and education, as well as a concern among donors that education is central to support for peace, development and employment. At a general level, there are several important roles for donors to play.

First, there is a need for plentiful and long-term funding. Aid to youth education has been seriously under-prioritised in fragile situations. The Education for All agenda has directed funding towards primary education, but the evidence shows that donors need specifically to prioritise education that is aimed directly at youth. Secondly, it is a challenge for donors to help bridge the humanitarian–development gap. Fragile situations have been characterised by humanitarian interventions and short-term programmes, and education has been seen as a development activity. Although education is now part of humanitarian responses, there are gaps between interventions of short duration and the need for education to be a long-term endeavour. Donors can help bridge the gap inside their own departments by promoting the INEE minimum standards as fundamental principles for both immediate and long-term interventions and allowing greater flexibility in programme design (for example, longer terms for humanitarian organisations) and by supporting bridging organisations that work with successful humanitarian education programmes but convert them into long-term programmes. Thirdly, donors should ensure and strengthen coordination and cooperation, as well as pooled funding, which have produced better alignment and more sustainable

interventions. This can be done by using the New Deal as a basis, directing funding through the Global Partnership for Education and supporting the Education Cluster to ensure that the different implementing organisations coordinate with each other and align themselves with government. Finally, donors can support the International Network for Education in Emergencies, as well as the formulation of national, context-specific versions of the INEE Minimum Standards, to help establish global best practice.

Experience shows that, for interventions to have an impact, there is a need for thorough assessment and for building on local priorities and capacities. Without these, there is a risk of perpetuating fragility, violence and instability. There is also a need for visible results and pragmatism; hence donors should balance the tension between ensuring direct service delivery (through support to various organisations) and building the capacity of the state to do so. Here, donors can support the adaptation of successful NGO practices into the education system. There is a need for donors to prioritise long-term involvement as well as thorough monitoring and follow-up because education is long term, and the evidence shows that monitoring and follow-up are essential for ensuring that practices are improved and young people are helped to use their education to improve their lives afterwards..

Cautiousness is required as these conclusions are based on rather limited impact documentation. Yet, the evaluations, reports and practitioners consulted all emphasise a great need for longitudinal, qualitative impact documentation. Donors may consider prioritising support to making such documentation, considering the need to base support on more than just anticipations.

The report shows that, for educational youth initiatives to have a positive impact in ensuring peace, democratisation and development, they need to prepare young people for livelihood opportunities and income generation, but also challenge the inequalities and discriminations that have underpinned and fuelled fragility. Educational initiatives that have aided change have provided alternative ideals and formed social relationships, which provided real alternatives to the past. State building is a major challenge and concern in fragile situations, and where education includes a specific focus on civic education, involving young people in organisations through youth clubs and in other ways prepares young people to be able to contribute socially, economically and politically. Many have done so, or show aspirations to do so in the future.

### *Secondary education: forming future citizens*

Secondary schooling is official schooling for young people who have already completed primary school and can function well enough to spend several years in full-time education. Thus, it is primarily an option for young people whose lives have not lost all sense of normality. Evidence shows that young people can regain a trust in the future and adopt new ideals of equality and peace. Secondary schooling provides them with an identity and a status as 'schooled,' which legitimises them as citizens. Secondary schooling is also part of the official school system, meaning that support can be provided through various pooled arrangements, direct bilateral support and organisations strengthening specific parts of the system.

Lessons learned reveal that both sector support and support to organisations like UNICEF and Save the Children can play important roles in ensuring access and safety and in prioritising a secure learning environment also inside the classroom. The cases explored and the overall evaluations consulted reveal some general elements that underpin the potential for secondary schooling to foster new ideals, as well as young people's desires and ability to contribute to their local communities. These ensure that content and methods are changed to promote equality, peace and development. Introduction of alternate ideals and new social relations is appreciated by young people and has impact on their perceptions and actions. Here, it is worth noting that bold symbolic changes provide assurance that changes are happening and encourage student support for them. Teachers are central if the changes in content and methods are to occur. Therefore, programmes must prioritise the training, recruitment, distribution and support of teachers, so that the latter can appear as potential role models for new values, practices and knowledge. Finally, secondary schooling needs to be relevant, for example, by including locally appropriate vocational subjects and conflict resolution, and it must be linked to future possibilities, whether further education or agricultural work and local involvement. Lessons learned reveal that involvement, ownership and accountability are fundamental to ensuring that these changes are supported and have a lasting impact.

Secondary schooling is a central state institution in local areas, and it reconfirms the young people's belonging and obligations towards their society. It provides young people with a status as citizens and thereby confirms the centrality of the state in their lives and in their futures as adults. Prioritising schooling enhances the state's legitimacy, and here it does not matter who the actual provider on the ground is: the most important thing is the delivery of acceptable quality education. Many fragile countries now link support to education to state-building processes

in public debates and campaigns (e.g. Afghanistan), as well as in curricula and text books (e.g. Nepal).

The biggest challenge is for donors to allocate enough funding to secondary education on a long-term basis and ensure they work closely with the system to give secondary education the desired impact. Alongside joint and coordinated funding, support to specific programmes run by UNICEF and Save the Children places extra emphasis on specific aspects such as maintaining schools as zones of peace.

### *Accelerated learning provides a much needed second chance*

ALP is the main route back to the educational track in fragile situations and is shown to provide young people with self-esteem and trust in the future. Learning outcomes are generally much better than for the same level in normal schools. Evaluations document reductions in violence and aggressive behaviour in communities with ALP. Several major reports urge donors and governments to prioritise ALP, and there are indications that this has an important impact on reducing violence and improving the young people's handling of their lives, as well as their social status. If there is access, a large number of students continue in secondary schooling. ALP has been successful in supporting marginalised groups, especially girls.

Donors can support ALP through the education system, as well as through organisations implementing programmes in various areas. Evidence shows that it is important to ensure that ALP is integrated into the education system and formally owned by the MOE, even if it is actually being implemented by other organisations. Besides official policies, several organisations have good experiences with close cooperation with the government at the regional level. Alignment with the official system can be ensured by offering salaries and incentives that correspond to the school system, locating ALPs in the existing school buildings, and upgrading and using existing primary school teachers wherever possible. ALP graduates should be given official certificates, and smooth transfer to secondary school or vocational training is important. Otherwise ALP risks creating great frustration by encouraging hopes that cannot be fulfilled. Evidence shows that it is worth supporting a variety of organisations with specific capacities. Humanitarian organisations have expertise in quick set ups, and bridging organisations can continue this work with a longer term commitment, with, for example, more thorough teacher training and follow-up. In supporting policy formulation and implementation it is important to note that local involvement, capacity-building and ownership are the keys to success. Similarly, curriculum and teaching should not only include condensed primary content, but address some of the urgent issues

for youth. The subjects of life skills, HIV/AIDS and peace education, for example, are highlighted as important, as are support such as child care and children's meals in aid of young mothers. Finally, teachers are central in accelerating youth learning. Supporting organisations that have a good track record in teacher training and that are able to coordinate their activities closely with the education system seem to be the most efficient and sustainable.

ALP risks being seen as a parallel system to ordinary schooling, with better and quicker teaching, free access and better teachers. To prevent this impression, donors can support the Education Cluster to ensure that ALP is owned by the government in close coordination with organisations. The closer the coordination, the more likely it is that support to ALP will also contribute to state-building.

*Technical and Vocational training and education: short, useful but very expensive*

This is the shortest form of education for young people in fragile situations, and it is also the most expensive, as well as being highly desired by young people in fragile areas. Holistic and well-designed TVET programmes have significantly improved livelihood and employment opportunities for young people. The training programmes have positively influenced young people's self-esteem, as well as their standing in their communities. TVET has reduced aggressive behaviour and local violence, and many young people contribute to their local community after being enrolled. TVET has also facilitated a change in gender relations by providing special support and by giving them the skills to move from reproductive to productive work. TVET programmes are expensive and thus rarely run as part of the education system. Donors can thus support recognition of the importance of TVET by government through policy formulation. As TVET is implemented by many different international and national organisations, in fragile situations donors should preferably support those applying a holistic approach that cater to young people in respect of their whole lives.

Evidence shows that those programmes that have a positive impact upon young people's livelihoods and income-earning opportunities are designed after thorough market analysis and close examination of local needs and trainer capabilities, as well as in coordination with local authorities and involving local community. TVETs are very expensive and therefore depend almost entirely on donor support to be run. To minimise this, some NGOs have sought to obtain the involvement of local businesses to fund skills training according to their needs and to provide apprenticeship places and employment after training ends. Campaigning to enhance the prestige of manual work may also increase financial support. Holistic approaches increase



the likelihood of skills training having an impact. Concrete manual skills are taught alongside other subjects that are equally important for young people to run a proper life. Trauma counselling, health and life skills, and citizen education, in combination with vocational training, have been shown to give young people the necessary support to transform themselves from being, for example, former combatants to becoming productive and constructive future citizens. For young women, child-care facilities or child food support are important to make any form of skills training feasible. Such programmes also create groups in which young people can support each other and work together. Most importantly, there are clear indications that it is worth prioritising long-term supervision and follow-up to ensure that young people obtain permanent employment. Local community involvement is a prerequisite to ensure that TVET has the intended impact on employment, youth behaviour and gender relations.

There is a need for considerable financial support if TVET is to have a lasting impact. Donors have to be careful in selecting the right partners because programmes are so expensive. Nonetheless, it may well be worth the cost when TVET succeeds in making it possible for young people to sustain a livelihood or find employment while at the same time providing 'soft skills' that enable them to be active contributors to their families and societies.

#### *A final note*

As a final note, it is worth mentioning that a general finding concerning all three forms of education, as well as across contexts, is the importance of considering what is taught and how it is taught. Findings reveal that impact may not always agree with the primary objective. It often seems to be the 'softer' components like life-skills, teaching young people to discuss issues and offer their opinions, facilitating new relationships in class and youth clubs, role-modelling new forms of interrelating between teachers and students, and providing young women with training in traditional male skills, etc. that are key in deciding whether young people can use their education for livelihood improvements, further education and social and political involvement afterwards. However, documentation of these aspects is lacking, and there is clearly a need for more research in this area.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations constitute the overall results of the present analysis. It is important to note that the specific context will determine to what extent these recommendations can be followed. In situations where the entire education system



has been destroyed by war or is virtually non-existent, recommendations related to integration and alignment with the formal system may not be immediately feasible. Still, such alignment should constitute an important aim for the future while immediate implementation is being supported.

The report identifies the following areas to be considered by donors:

### *General recommendations*

- Prioritize a strengthened focus on, and increased funding to, young people and their education in fragile situations
- Ensure that funding and support is joined, coordinated and closely aligned with the recipient government where possible
- Provide sufficient and long-term support: education must be for the long term if the aim is to support both young people and state-building
- Consider ways to bridge the humanitarian–development gap by, for example, supporting a variety of actors and bridging organisations
- Balance support to delivering education through various organisations with a strengthening of the system to do so, and even when programmes are almost entirely being implemented by organisations, make sure the government at the minimum embraces the intervention in policy
- Support qualitative and longitudinal documentation through the INEE, selected research and studies, and as integrated aspects of specific interventions

### *Secondary Education*

To play an important role in supporting secondary education, donors should:

- Prioritise support specifically to secondary education and ensure more balancing support between primary, secondary and tertiary education
- Make the revision of content and methods a strong priority, as these are fundamental to creating new values and ideals after conflict
- Encourage links between local needs, national needs and subjects to ensure that secondary schooling is useful for young people's lives

### *Accelerated learning*

ALP is an important intervention in fragile situations, and donors should:

- Ensure that ALP is made part of the education system when possible and not supported as an informal intervention or a parallel system

- Support close coordination between implementing NGOs and the education system, especially at the regional level, to ensure that best practices by NGOs can be adopted and replicated by the education system
- Ensure that links with and support to further education or work are integrated into ALP programmes

### *Technical and Vocational Education and Training*

TVET programmes are expensive, often scattered, yet important for young people in fragile contexts. Donors should:

- Support official recognition and the policy incorporation of TVET in fragile situations, which may include support to public campaigning
- Fund organisations that run holistic TVET programmes that, besides training in ‘hard’ skills, provide ‘soft’ skills that cater to the various needs of young people and their society
- Ensure that TVET reflects demand through market analysis, the involvement of local stakeholders and links to apprenticeships, employment and local basic needs for food production, for example

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