

**AFRICA CENTER FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION IN EMERGENCY**

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**RESEARCH PAPER SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF AWARD OF CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION IN EMERGENCY.**

**ABSTRACT**

Education is a fundamental right for all children. In conflict zones it can be lifesaving, protecting them from threats in the community, restoring a sense of normality and supporting their cognitive, social and emotional development.

The right to an education for all is meant to help ensure a life of dignity and is enshrined in numerous international documents and conventions such as the UDHR, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Covenant of Economic, Cultural, and Social Rights. Yet while this fundamental right applies to all, regardless of circumstance, it has often been considered of secondary importance in both natural and human-caused emergencies. However, in recent years this trend has begun to shift. In 2004 the INEE released the Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies; in 2006 the Global Education Cluster was formed to strengthen preparedness, coordination and technical capacity in educational emergency response; and in 2008 the Sphere Project announced a companionship agreement with the INEE. (Save the Children, 2009) Through these efforts, among others, integrating education into all stages of emergency response has become a higher priority for both aid agencies and donors. This brief highlights the importance of education in emergency and its tangible benefits of incorporating education into emergency response. . Literature review was used to collect information about the significance of Education In Emergency. Findings show a great significance of Education in Emergency ,like creation of sense of mormalcy, provision of temporary child- Friendly learning spaces, inculcates development of skills, enhances development and stability and among others. It is therefore, prudent to embed Education in Emergency in all stages of emergency response

**INTRODUCTION:**

**Background**

Education has been defined by various scholars; according to Sinclair; Education is defined as a learning process for the individual to attain knowledge and understanding of the higher specific objects which formally results into individual pattern of thought and behavior in accordance with the education they have gained.

On the other hand, Education in Emergency is a critical life – saving response that works to protect children in conflict and natural disasters and preserve their rights to education.

According to Margaret Sinclair, Education in emergencies’ refers to education for populations affected by unforeseen situations such as armed conflict or natural disasters like floods, earthquake, landslide, hurricanes, and tysnumies and among others

Defining “education” in the phrase “education in crisis” is almost equally fraught with difficulties. The central conceptual question is whether there are distinguishing characteristics between education in crises and education in peaceful developing countries. The Save the Children Alliance says “Education for children affected by emergencies” is “education that protects the well-being, fosters learning opportunities, and nurtures the overall developments (social, economic, cognitive, and physical), of children affected by conflicts and disasters” (cited in Sinclair, 2002, p. 23). Education services

As humanitarian action evolved and expanded in the mid late 1990’s international aid workers took the opportunity to promote education as a key element of humanitarian responses. They called these education initiatives “Education in emergencies” programs. The term was compatible with language used to promote aid in countries affected by conflict, with an emphasis on urgent support for education as a humanitarian need and human right. In fact, it was implicitly chosen to solidify this link to humanitarian action and ensure the incorporation of supports to education among other form of relief aid. The term was also compatible with interest in outcomes related to improving lives of beneficiaries, a central goal of aid work

During the 1990s, many organizations provided support to education of emergency-affected populations, and the concept of ‘education as a humanitarian response’ gained ground (Retamal and Aedo-Richmond, 1998). The near universal ratification of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child meant that governments and agencies could not argue that education of refugees or internally displaced children should wait until they returned home, since there is no way to be sure whether the wait will be for weeks, months, years or decades. The Convention obliges governments to promote or facilitate access to education for children within their territory, regardless of their status. Even children who are asylum-seekers must have access to education.

At the World Education Forum held in Dakar in 2000, the world’s education ministers endorsed these principles, and pledged themselves to ‘meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict’.

A follow-up technical consultation in November 2000 led to the creation of the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), catering to institutions and individuals with an interest in emergency education. The governing body comprises UNHCR, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the World Bank and leading NGOs. This network organised regional and global consultations, leading to the widely endorsed Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction (INEE, 2004). These standards are currently being disseminated through regional training of trainers and subsequent national and local training.

Education is a human right, important in it and also ‘enabling’ access to other rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires governments to promote free and compulsory schooling at primary level, access to secondary education, and access to tertiary education on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means. In emergency situations, it may be more difficult to meet these goals but they cannot be ignored. In fact, people displaced by war or calamity accord high priority to restoring education – they see education as important for the future of their children and of their society. Education in emergencies can help to:

Education in emergencies saves lives. Conflict and disaster destroy normalcy and upend the lives of those affected – this is especially true in the case of children. Young people caught in emergency situations are thrown into unfamiliar and hostile realities – often without the safety nets they once enjoyed such as school and family. Quality educational initiatives employed at the outset of an emergency can mitigate these circumstances and provide much needed survival skills to understand the dangers of a new environment. These include initiatives to teach landmine awareness, living and surviving in refugee camps, basic health and hygiene information, how to protect oneself from sexual abuse, and the provision of psychological support. (Nicolai, 2006) Education also protects the lives of children through the creation of a safe space. As noted in their 2004 Minimum Standards Handbook, the INEE states that “quality education saves lives by providing physical protection from the dangers and exploitation of a crisis environment. When a learner is in a safe learning environment he or she is less likely to be sexually or economically exploited or exposed to other risks such as recruitment into armed forces or organized crime.” (INEE, 2004)

Education in emergencies promotes developmental skills. Susan Nicolai (emergency education officer, Save the Children Alliance) asserts that although basic survival skills are an essential component of emergency education, “individual and social development skills are equally important [and] having at least one constant in a daily life full of change can help 4 children continue growing both individually and socially.” (Nicolai, 2006) As Nicolai simply states, education in emergency helps children “learn to be.” The importance of this skill set cannot and should not be underestimated in situations where youth are exposed to prolonged periods of psychological distress and/or violence.

Education in emergencies can enhance development and stability. In their 2009 Re-Write the Future policy brief, Save the Children states that in the longer term education can be a critical ingredient in the reconstruction of post-conflict post-disaster societies, promote conflict resolution, tolerance and respect for human rights, increase children’s earning potential, and play a central role in reducing the impacts of future disasters by incorporating DDR strategies into national curricula. (Save the Children, 2009) This sentiment is echoed and supported by the INEE findings that a “quality education contributes directly to the social, economic, and political stability of societies…and education reform, which can start soon after an emergency, is necessary to help ensure the protection of education systems and set conflict-affected societies on paths to sustainable peace and development.” (INEE, 2004) Peter Buckland, a senior education specialist, further underscores education’s role in stabilizing conflict when he states that “[w]hile education does not cause wars, nor end them, every education system has the potential either to exacerbate or mitigate the conditions that contribute to violent conflict.” (Buckland, 2006).

Education in emergencies can provide core academic skills. While situational demands will most likely push these programs further along the emergency response continuum, they simply cannot be ignored. A brief look at the numbers of children affected by disaster confirms this point. According to the Save the Children Alliance, more than half of the estimated 72 million children out of school live in conflict affected states, millions more in areas hit by natural 5 disaster, and on average these children spend eight years in displacement. (Sphere Project and INEE, 2009) These statistics not only portray the magnitude of the problem, both in number of youth affected and the duration of these negative ramifications, but also highlight the futility of pursuing the MDG of universal primary education without seriously addressing the need for education in emergency situations. Allowing generations to go uneducated until a crisis is resolved is not a viable option if the international community is to meet its collective EFA commitments. Furthermore, this lack of education can lead to continued unrest and an exacerbation or reoccurrence of hostilities in conflict zones.

People negatively affected by natural disasters and conflict ask for emergency education. Sphere Project, INEE, and Save the Children reports all confirm that during times of crisis education is a high priority. (Sphere, 2004; INEE 2004; Save the Children, 2009) Schools are often at the heart of a community and education is viewed as the key to providing a better life through increasing each person’s ability to participate fully in the life of their society – economically, socially and politically. (INEE, 2004) Without this societal element people can quickly lose hope in a brighter future. The IRC report Educating Children in Emergency Settings speaks to this. “Despite the folklore of our work, these crises are more often not life-ordeath situations. Rather the predominant experience is a hopeless and purposeless existence.” (Sphere Project and INEE, 2009) This sentiment can be witnessed in refugee camps and conflict zones around the world.

In South Sudan in particular, more than half a million of children have fled their homes. Since conflict first broke out in December 2013. Most have stop going to schools and aids groups have warned of long term consequences of a continued disruption to education

In Mingkaman, Awerial County in Lake state for example, many displaced children are out of school. There are about 92,000 people who have settled in Mingkaman – the largest concentration of IDP in south Sudan. Most fled here following fighting in neighboring Jonglei state.

Humanitarian organizations are running education in emergency programs comprising life, psychosocial, literacy and numeracy skills. For instance in Awerial county Plan International has set up seven temporary learning spaces in four primary schools. While each learning space is designed to support 50 children in each session, they are crowded with over 200 children per session, said Gyan Adhikari, Plan International Country Director

So far, about 110,000 children have been reached with emergency education. Aid groups are looking to tackle the teacher shortage, including by providing incentives to volunteer teachers. But these efforts are hampered by a lack of funding.

Education is the second poorest funded cluster in south Sudan’s 2014 crisis Response plan. As of 31 May, cluster was 33 percent funded

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter covered a review of literature related to the importance/significance of Education In Emergency in Humanitarian aid. It specifically reviewed literature focusing on relevance of EIE like, provide a sense of normality; restore hope through access to the ‘ladder’ of education; support psychological healing from traumatic experiences through structured social activities in a ‘safe space’; convey life skills and values for health and prevention of HIV/AIDS, gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence, conflict resolution, peace-building, responsible citizenship and environmental awareness; protect the investment that children, families and nation have made in children’s education; provide protection for marginalized groups – minorities, girls, children with disability, out-of-school adolescents – often at risk of exploitative or unsafe work such as prostitution or recruitment by militias. as far as the importance of Education In Emergency is concerned.

**Saving lives**

Education in emergencies saves lives. Conflict and disaster destroy normalcy and upend the lives of those affected – this is especially true in the case of children. Young people caught in emergency situations are thrown into unfamiliar and hostile realities – often without the safety nets they once enjoyed such as school and family. Quality educational initiatives employed at the outset of an emergency can mitigate these circumstances and provide much needed survival skills to understand the dangers of a new environment. These include initiatives to teach landmine awareness, living and surviving in refugee camps, basic health and hygiene information, how to protect oneself from sexual abuse, and the provision of psychological support.

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The April 2005 USAID Education Strategy, Improving Lives Through Learning now leads the Agency in its support of education in crisis settings. Following this effort, the draft USAID Fragile States Education Strategy for Africa specifically states, “The importance of education in fragile states cannot be overestimated: education changes behavior” (USAID Education Strategy, April 2005, p. 3). Since 2000, the Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) activity has carried out basic education, educational policy, and planning activities to provide technical assistance to USAID. BEPS has initiated education activities in countries experiencing crises, including: Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nepal, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Zambia. It has contributed to large-scale education interventions and assisted countries with transitions toward stability and reconstruction.3

**Foster development and stability**

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To paraphrase Nelson Mandela, “it will be the youth who make the future. It will be them, not us who will fix our wrongs and carry forward all that is right with this world.” (Mandela, 2000) However, for this to be possible, a large degree of responsibility rests on the collective obligation of those working to alleviate suffering and provide aid to ensure those affected by crisis are provided with the opportunities they require to rebuild what was lost.

Education is believed to be a key to state building. “Sustainable civil peace relies on the successful reconstruction of legitimate state authority” (Doyle & Sambanis, 2000, p. 2). Rebuilding an education system is one of the essential tools that governments use to cultivate and maintain legitimate authority

**Provision of skills**

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**SUMMARY**

As the literature indicated, there were many studies conducted by different researchers. The study assessed the importance of education in emergency in humanitarian crisis in different parts of the world. Related studies in South Sudan and others countries globally have been analyzed and reveal that Education in Emergency is very crucial in every humanitarian response. many National and international organization in south Sudan which are engaged in providing education in emergency like Plan International, Oxfam, War Child, LWF, and others in south Sudan since the outbreak of the war in 2013 have tried their level best creating sense of normalcy among the girls and boys, trauma and psychosocial healings, development of skills and among others. In conclusion, from the literature review done and a review of empirical studies that have been done, the empirical studies are indicative that there is need for provision of education in emergency in every humanitarian responses during crisis due to positives implication toward building resilience, development and creation of stability. However, little has been done by many government( South Sudan Government) and Donor Agencies and organizations (both local and international) in supporting or engaging in Education in emergency whenever there is crisis like in south Sudan for instance in2014 on 33 percent fund was allocated to Education cluster and education cluster remaining the second poorest cluster in term of funds, out of thousands of both national and international organization few are engaged in education sector. This accounts for high level of illiteracy, poverty and unemployment, frequent clashes/ cattle rustling which escalate tensions hence continued instability and hostility. South Sudan where many organizations have been in operation for many years and millions of dollars and pounds are squandered in many sectors like health, livelihood, nutrition, water and sanitation and among others compared to education which is less supported by government and most organizations both local and international.

**Conclusion**

With regard to learning, education content likely contributes to or mitigates conflict, although the mechanism through which it does so remain underspecified, and peace education programs show promise in changing attitudes and behaviours toward members of those perceived as the “other”, at least in the short term

Finally, providing children living in Emergency and post emergency situations with structured, meaningful, and creative activities in school settings or informal learning spaces improves their emotional and behavioral well-being, creates sense of normalcy, acquisition of life- skills as well as development and stability of the countries.

**Recommendations**

* Prioritize collaboration with national governments/ Ministries of Education and encourage them to establish a transparent coordination mechanism for all education activities, including effective information sharing among stakeholders
* Ensure that school buildings are up to scale to withstand natural disasters, and that school administrators are trained in emergency preparedness.
* Include peace education and civics principles throughout teaching materials.
* Stakeholders, Education clusters, EiE WG to provide a joint tool for protection analysis and work collaboratively with working group members to create and publicise advocacy messages to ensure children’s safety when accessing education
* Expand the Better Learning Programme the Better Learning Programme is an essential element of the Recovery Box, and is covered in the latter’s full training package. It provides psychosocial support for children affected by conflict and displacement.
* Partnering EiE schools with community centres to run classes For children who have far to travel or who go to overcrowded schools, linking EiE schools to a “sister” community space could help to create more education opportunities closer to home and with more space to learn.

**APPENDICES: Appendix 1: Questionnaire about importance of Education In Emergency**

**Introduction**: This questionnaire is meant to collect information on “significance of Education In Emergency among the NGOs providing EIE in South Sudan.

**SECTIONA: General Information (TICK IN THE BOX)**

1. Gender: 1. **Male** ( ) 2.**Female**( )

1. Age: 1. **below 20 years** ( ) 2. **20 – 30 years** ( ) 3. **30 – 40 years** ( ) 4. **40 – 50 years** ( ) 5. **Above 50 years** ( )
2. Give your Level of Education 1. **Secondary** ( ) 2.**Certificate** ( ) 3.**Diploma** ( ) 4.**Degree** ( ) 5. **Masters and above** ( )
3. d) What is your current position in the organization?
4. **Education Officer** ( ) 2. **Education manager** ( ) 3.**Tutor** ( ) 4.**Education Assistant**( )

Other Specify…………………………………

**SECTION B Importance of Education In Emergency**

The following are statements on importance of EIE indicate your feeling in each by

**SA**: **strongly agree**, **A**: **agree**, **SD: strongly disagree** **D: Disagree**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Statement** | **SA** | **A** | **SD** | **D** |
| **1** | Education In Emergency is very crucial and must be made compulsory in every humanitarian Reponses |  |  |  |  |
| **2** | Education In Emergency creates a sense of normalcy and restore hopes among young girls and boys for brighter future through access to the ‘ladder’ of education? |  |  |  |  |
| **3** | Education can be a critical ingredient in the reconstruction of post-conflict post-disaster societies, promote conflict resolution, tolerance and respect for human rights, increase children’s earning potential, and play a central role in reducing the impacts of future disasters |  |  |  |  |
| **4** | Education in emergencies promotes developmental skills, like survival skills, health, and values for health and prevention of HIV/ |  |  |  |  |
| **5** | Education In Emergency support psychological healing from traumatic experiences through structured social activities in a ‘safe space |  |  |  |  |
| **6** | Education In Emergency provide protection for marginalized groups – minorities, girls, children with disability, and out-of-school adolescents |  |  |  |  |

d) What recommendations would you give to help improve the Education In Emergency in south Sudan? ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

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