

# **INEE Minimum Standards for Education: @PKO Now!**

## **No.33**

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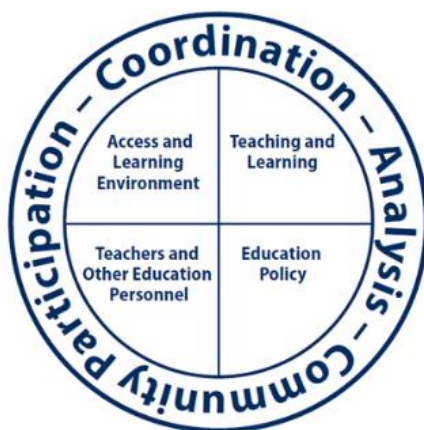
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Following the issue of "Education for Conflict Prevention" in No.26, this is to introduce the "Minimum Standards for Education" published by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), which includes both armed conflicts and natural disasters.

### **Minimum Standards for Education**

In many emergency situations, such as natural disasters and armed conflicts, education systems are damaged and people cannot receive quality education. However, education is a basic human right for all, and it remains an essential element during the post-emergency reconstruction phase; it helps people to recover, normalizes their lives, and empowers them to reconstruct society economically, socially, and politically. Therefore, it is important to start recovery and reconstruction efforts in the area of education immediately after armed conflict or natural disaster. The INEE<sup>1</sup> has published a handbook called "Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery"<sup>2</sup> by sharing knowledge with UN officers, college professors, teachers, NGO staff, and other key persons, and has set up four large domains, and 19 standards and guiding principles<sup>3</sup> for each domain for education during emergencies. This handbook allows us to improve the process of preparedness, response, and recovery, to increase access to safe and appropriate education opportunities, and to clarify accountability whenever one gives educational services. Unlike the title of this book, the standard introduced in this handbook is set quite high, with consideration of internationally agreed-upon human rights and best practices in various countries. By

defining the needs of high quality education and the dignity of people, this standard can be a guideline to support education in post-emergency countries for various stakeholders such as the UN and other international organizations, and international/local NGOs. This minimum standard consists of four domains: (I) Access and Learning Environment, (II) Teaching and Learning, (III) Teachers and Other Education Personnel, and (IV) Education Policy. Each is explained below.



## **I. Access and Learning Environment**

For education in emergency, it is important to secure (1) equal access and (2) mentally and socially protected educational environments. During the time of peacekeeping and peace building, both learners and educators are easily exposed to physically and mentally dangerous situations, and it is important to plan and provide (3) educational facilities and services that can prevent any expected dangers. At the time, careful consideration must be taken to prevent barriers to any educational opportunities caused by one's sex, language, and/or geographical location.

## **II. Teaching and Learning**

Providing teaching and learning opportunities of high quality is also important during emergencies. Especially during the time of emergency, the contents of education should be suitable for learners, and it is necessary to refine: (1) Curricula, (2) Training and Professional Development and Support, (3) Instruction and Learning Process, and (4)

Assessment of Learning Outcomes, for education to protect learners. Especially, right after a conflict or natural disaster, education to alleviate current or future menace, or education on human rights, peace, and democratic citizenship should be emphasized, and it is important to create safe environments to offer education.

### **III. Teachers and Other Education Personnel**

During the transition time of the peace process, teachers and any education personnel must respond to the educational needs of all learners, including both children and adults, and it is essential to: (1) recruit and select appropriate human resources, (2) provide appropriate employment conditions and compensation, and (3) support and supervise them impartially with a highly transparent process. The roles of teacher and education personnel are different in both formal and non-formal education<sup>4</sup> settings, and the definition of "teachers and other education personnel" in this handbook is: teachers and teacher's assistants in class, children's nurses in nursery and kindergarten, educators for disability persons, trainers and professionals of various fields, local volunteers, religious leaders, instructors of life skills, principals, and any other personnel working for education-related services.

### **IV. Education Policy**

In many international documents and declarations, the "right to education to all" is clearly stated,<sup>5</sup> and it functions as a foundation to promote human rights in general.<sup>6</sup> "Freedom of expression," "achievement of equal rights," and "rights to give opinions to decision making on society and education policy" are essential elements for all kinds of education. To protect these rights, cabinet-level ministry and agency of education and related personnel should: (1) create education policy and education standards, support rights to receive education, prepare and respond to the educational needs of afflicted people, and clearly indicate a long-term plan for further development. Furthermore, it is essential for each stakeholder and local community to (2) join the planning and implementing process of educational program policy.

## **V. Foundational Standards**

For all the domains above: "community participation," holistic "coordination" of all education personnel and other stakeholders, and "analysis" - including the holistic assessment of needs and resources? Countermeasures against any obstacle to educational development, and monitoring to respond to the change of educational needs, and impartial assessment are essential. These standards are applicable not only to primary education but also to early childhood education, secondary education, higher education, vocational and technical education, and adult education, targeting people of various age ranges in both formal and non-formal education settings.

## **Conclusion**

Currently, "Minimum Standards for Education" is widely utilized in various nations whose infrastructure and educational organization are destroyed or fragile due to conflict and/or natural disaster. Especially during and after emergency, it is essential to normalize education and maintain the quality of education to develop the afflicted nations.

## End Notes

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<sup>1</sup> INEE is an inter-agency network for education in emergencies, and aims to create a foundation of humanity and development to give high-quality education to all people and to secure safe environments to maintain education after emergencies such as natural disasters and armed conflicts. More than 7,000 organizations and agencies such as students, teachers, UN officers, NGO workers, donors, government agencies, and universities, are currently involved in INEE.

<sup>2</sup> INEE (Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergency). (2010). "Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery." INEE Coordinator for Minimum Standards and Network Tools. New York, USA.

<sup>3</sup> The international legal instruments below underpin the INEE Minimum Standards introduced in this article.

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) (Article 2)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) (Articles 2, 13, 14)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) (Article 10)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (Articles 2, 22, 28, 29, 30, 38, 39)
- Jomtien Declaration (1990)
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998) (Article 8(2)(b)(ix) and 8(2)(e)(iv))
- Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (non-binding) (1998) (Paragraph 23)
- World Education Forum Framework for Action promoting Education for All (2000)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) (Article 24)
- Millennium Development Goals (2000)
- United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the Right to Education in Emergency Situations (2010)
- The Sphere Project: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response. (2011)

<sup>4</sup> "Formal education" refers to educational activities within the scheme of public education systems, and "non-formal education" refers to systematic educational activities operated outside of formal school education for certain purposes.

<sup>5</sup> e.g. Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (Articles 28).

<sup>6</sup> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) (Articles 13, 14)

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Millennium Development Goals (2000)

United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the Right to Education in Emergency Situations (2010)

The Sphere Project: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response. (2011)