



Minutes of meeting: Launch of the 2011 EFA Global Monitoring Report, “The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and Education”

Organized by:	International Bureau of Education, Swiss Network for Education and International Cooperation (RECI) and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
City/Country:	Bern, Switzerland
Date:	20 th May 2011

Objectives:

- To launch the 2011 Education for All Global Monitoring Report, “The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and Education”, in collaboration with the IBE’s partners, the Swiss Network for Education and International Cooperation (RECI) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).
- To share views and perspectives, as well as the various roles the different institutions, present at this event, play in the field of education and conflict (RECI, SDC, UNESCO, INEE, IIEP-UNESCO, IBE-UNESCO, and the Education Cluster).
- For the IBE Director to present a response to the presentation on the GMR, by policy analyst, Ms. Karen Moore and participate in the discussions.

(See Annex 1 and 2: Agenda and list of participants)

Description:

- Introduction by Mr. Jüng Benz, Deputy Head, Regional Cooperation, SDC.
- Presentation by Ms. Karen Moore, GMR Policy Analyst, on the GMR.
- Response to presentation by IBE (Clementina Acedo), RECI (Fabienne Lagier) and SDC (Valerie Liechti).
- General discussion with all participants.
- A panel discussion made up of various experts in the fields of education, humanitarian and development aid:
 - Karen Moore, Policy Analyst, Education for All Global Monitoring Report
 - Khalil Mahshi, Director, International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP)

- Kerstin Tebbe, Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)
- Wendy Wheaton, Education Cluster, Geneva
- Beat von Däniken, Directorate Humanitarian Aid and SHA, SDC
- Markus Heiniger, Focal Point, Conflicts and Human Rights, SDC
- General discussion with all participants.

Introduction, Presentations and Discussions

Mr. Jüng Benz, Deputy Head, Regional Cooperation, SDC gave a short introduction on education and conflict, the GMR and SDC's role. He emphasized the fact that it is not only access to education which is the goal, but also to provide quality education to all, in order to avoid exacerbating social division and the rich-poor gap. He also pointed out that of the 35 countries mentioned in the GMR, the SDC is currently working in 14 of them, but highlighted that often the education assistance is short term. Mr. Benz finished and left the participants with the question of how humanitarian aid and development aid can improve its support in both quantitative and qualitative terms in education.

Ms. Karen Moore then presented the GMR (see annex 3 for PowerPoint presentation). She began by discussing the six EFA goals, with examples of countries that are reaching them and others that are still lagging behind. She emphasized the fact that education needs to fit into the humanitarian aid agenda, and in the longer-term development aid agenda. Following Ms. Karen Moore's comprehensive presentation, the **IBE Director, Ms Clementina Acedo**, presented her response, in which she emphasized the link between education in an emergency and its transition to the post-conflict situation and reconstruction. She re-iterated the fact that conflict can arise from education and more specifically, curriculum, and that therefore, peace and reconstruction can also arise from a solid and well constructed curriculum, evoking UNESCO's constitution: 'That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.' She continued by using as examples, some of the work which has been carried out at the IBE in conflict-affected countries (Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Afghanistan and Iraq) and described the process of creating a curricular framework in order to bring together a nation (eg. the Kurdistan and Baghdad regions of Iraq).

Subsequently, **Ms. Fabienne Lagier, RECI**, gave her response. She began by expressing her appreciation of the GMR report, as providing a broad understanding and comprehensive view on this 'hidden crisis'. She thanked the participants for this opportunity to learn more about education in conflict-affected countries, given the fact that RECI is not directly involved in such countries. Finally, she expressed her hope that in the future, the GMR could focus more on analysing quality in education and a focus on such quality in terms of how education plays a role in trauma-healing. Finally, **Ms. Valeri Liechti, SDC**, presented and like Ms. Lagier, commended the GMR report, its systematic analysis and reporting, and its yearly update on the six EFA goals for donors to be aware of the situation. She emphasized the fact that for donors, education is not a post-conflict reconstruction priority and that it is not part of the peacebuilding agenda, but that education is nonetheless central as a protection tool and as part of peace settlements, among other things and that therefore this must be effectively communicated to donors.

A short discussion ensued, in which the main issue discussed was the reliability and robustness of the quantitative data in the GMR and the issue of quantitative versus qualitative data. Ms. Karen Moore pointed out that it already constitutes a great challenge to collect reliable and robust data from developing countries, and that obtaining such data from conflict-affected countries is an even greater challenge; hence justifying any data gaps in the report. Furthermore, she explained that conflict-affected countries are more often than not left out of global data collection, due to the precarious conditions in such countries.

Panel discussions:

Ms. Rosemarie Lausset, consultant, SDC and moderator of the panel, invited each panel member to introduce themselves and give a short introduction of the work their respective organisations are doing in the field of education and conflict. These introductions and professional experiences emphasized the diversity of actors in the field, and brought an interesting perspective to the table. Among the panel members there were education specialists, humanitarian aid specialists and development aid specialists.

Some of the issues and questions raised were the following:

- Where does humanitarian aid begin? Is humanitarian aid acting because development failed? Should humanitarian actors and development actors have better coordination mechanisms? Does a significant overlap already exist?
- Whether a development perspective should be adopted for reconstruction, rather than a humanitarian perspective.
- Whether the concept of phases in conflict and post-conflict countries are useful? Or whether it is a question of context-specific assessment, which takes more time, but is more effective in the long-run.
- Whether short-term interventions, however valuable, can in fact do more harm than good. Reconstruction requires a longer-term commitment.

Subsequently, Ms. Lausset asked each panel member to define what they would recommend to the different actors at the various levels. Responses included:

- Gathering a solid evidence base of research, with thought put in as to its purpose, expectations and who should be collecting the information.
- Developing context-specific analysis of the conflict, including risk, as a lack of such understanding severely hinders aid.
- Developing capacities in conflict-affected countries in a continuous manner in order to create country leadership.
- Ensuring governments do not lose track of education as a priority; hold governments accountable.
- Ensuring we do not forget what education is about; reference to the UNESCO Delors Report, 1996 – the four pillars: Learning to do, Learning to know, Learning to be and Learning to live together).
- Communicating and advocating for education as a good in itself.
- Learning from past professional experiences

In the discussion which developed with panel members and other participants, many points were raised; however there was general consensus on the need to work together, to fully understand the context and roots of conflict, the need for long-term strategies and funding, the need for prevention and preparation, and the need to monitor quality, as well as quantity. In conclusion, Ms. Anne Zwahlen, West African Division, SDC tied the discussions of the event together by reminding the participants that humanitarian and development work is risky and political, and therefore we must fully understand all aspects of the context and the different views and positions held by different actors in the field. Furthermore, she added that as international players, we must build the confidence of local partners and act together with them and each other.

Outcomes:

- Understanding of the conclusions and recommendations of the 2011 GMR, and having discussions on the various issues raised.
- Involvement in dialogue in the field of education and conflict from various different professional perspectives, with the IBE being recognised as one of the players in the field.
- Sharing of the IBE's technical assistance and capacity development work in the field, as well as learning about the work of other institutions.
- Strengthening of the partnership between RECI and SDC, by co-organising and participating in the launch.

Follow-up:

- To continue to collaborate with existing partners (SDC, RECI) and create new partnerships, in light of this event, in order to be more effective in responding to requests from Member States of conflict-affected countries.

Annexes:

1. Agenda
2. List of Participants
3. GMR 2011 PowerPoint presentation

Date: 27 May 2011

Signature:

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