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Educational Quality Improvement Program
Classrooms • Schools • Communities

Understanding education's role in fragility

Synthesis of four situational analyses
of education and fragility: Afghanistan,
Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Liberia



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The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is an open global network of representatives from non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies, donor agencies, governments, academic institutions, schools, and affected populations, working together within a humanitarian and development framework to ensure the right to quality and safe education for all persons in emergencies and post-crisis recovery.

This report was written by Lynn Davies and revised by Denise Bentrovato. It was developed on behalf of the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility. The Working Group serves as an inter-agency mechanism to coordinate diverse initiatives and catalyse collaborative action on education and fragility. For more information on INEE and the Working Group, visit the organization's website at www.ineesite.org. The report and other key resources related to situational analyses of education and fragility can be found at: www.ineesite.org/index.php/post/situational_analyses_of_education_and_fragility1/

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About the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility

The INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility (2008–2011) consists of 20 member agencies:

- Academy for Educational Development (AED)
- Australian Agency for International Development (AusAid)
- CARE
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- Center for International Education at the University of Massachusetts
- Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution
- CfBT Education Trust
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)
- Education Development Center (EDC)
- European Commission (EC)
- Fast Track Initiative (FTI) Secretariat
- Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Reach Out to Asia (ROTA), Qatar Foundation
- Save the Children Alliance
- UK Department for International Development (DFID)
- UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP)
- UNESCO Centre at the University of Ulster
- United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
- US Agency for International Development (USAID)
- World Bank

For more information on the Working Group, contact educationfragility@ineesite.org or visit www.ineesite.org/educationfragility

Presentation of the IIEP series

UNESCO is often asked to provide an educational response in emergency and reconstruction settings. The Organization continues to develop expertise in this field in order to be able to better prompt and relevant assistance. IIEP has been working most recently with the Global Education Cluster to offer guidance, practical tools, and specific training for education policy-makers, officials, and planners.

The UN General Assembly adopted, in July 2010, a resolution on the 'Right to education in emergency situations'. It recognizes that both natural disasters and conflict present a serious challenge to the fulfilment of international education goals, and acknowledges that protecting schools and providing education in emergencies should remain a key priority for the international community and Member States. The Dakar World Education Forum in 2000 explicitly focused on the rights of children in emergencies in the fifth of the eleven objectives it adopted. Governments, particularly education ministries, have an important role to play in an area that has often been dominated by non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies.

In this regard, the field of educational planning in emergencies and reconstruction is still developing, and requires increased documentation and analysis. Accumulated institutional memories and knowledge in governments, agencies, and NGOs on education in emergencies are in danger of being lost due to high staff turnover in both national and international contexts. Most of the expertise is still in the heads of practitioners and needs to be collected while memories are fresh.

The IIEP series on Education in Emergencies and Reconstruction aims to document such information, and includes country-specific analyses on the planning and management of education in emergencies and reconstruction. These studies focus on efforts made to restore and transform education systems in countries and territories as diverse as Pakistan, Burundi, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Sudan, Kosovo, Timor-Leste, and Rwanda.

The situational analyses of education and fragility, produced in collaboration with the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), are the latest of IIEP's publications that seek to broaden the body of literature and knowledge in this field. These include a series of global, thematic, policy-related studies on topics including certification for pupils and teachers, donor engagement in financing and alternative education programmes. In addition, IIEP has published a *Guidebook for Planning Education in Emergencies and Reconstruction* for ministry of education officials and the agencies assisting them. In collaboration with UNICEF and the Global Education Cluster, IIEP is also developing specific guidance on how to develop education-sector plans in situations affected by crisis for a similar audience. Through this programme, IIEP will make a modest but significant contribution to the discipline of education in emergencies and reconstruction, in the hope of enriching the quality of educational planning processes in situations affected by crisis.

Khalil Mahshi
Director, IIEP

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List of abbreviations

ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
EC	European Commission
EFA	Education for All
EFA-FTI	Education for All, Fast Track Initiative
EU	European Union
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
GDP	gross domestic product
IDP	internally displaced person
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
MoE	ministry of education
NGO	non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD–DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee
OHR	Office of the High Representative (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PAP	priority action programme
PETS	public expenditure tracking system
PTA	parent–teacher association
RS	Republika Srpska
SMC	school management committee
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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Foreword to the situational analyses

The publications in this series are the result of a research project, 'Situational Analyses of Education and Fragility', carried out by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Working Group on Education and Fragility. The four studies in the series – Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, and Liberia – have been synthesized into an overarching review that aims to identify key elements in the complex relationships between education and fragility.

The INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility was established in 2008 as an inter-agency mechanism to coordinate initiatives and catalyse collaborative action on education and fragility. Its goals are to:

- strengthen consensus on approaches to mitigate fragility through education, while ensuring equitable access for all;
- support the development of effective quality education programmes in fragile contexts; and
- promote the development of alternative mechanisms to support education in fragile contexts in the transition from humanitarian to development assistance.

In late 2008, the Working Group decided to undertake country case studies to further develop the evidence base necessary to understanding the role of education in either exacerbating or mitigating fragility.

One of the Working Group's first tasks was to clarify the concept of 'fragility'. The term evolved from the terminology 'fragile states'. The Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD–DAC) defines fragile states as those that have a limited capacity and/or political will to provide basic services to the population (OECD–DAC, 2008). The shift from 'fragile states' to 'fragility' reflects an attempt to avoid pejorative labels that might hinder diplomatic relations or assistance to such countries, as well as a more constructive approach to articulating the conditions of fragility, their causes, and their locations. This new focus no longer considers the state as the only unit of analysis – although its role remains critical. It also allows for a deeper exploration of the various causes (human and systemic) of a failure to provide basic services (security, justice, health, and education) to affected populations.

Fragile contexts are distinguished from non-fragile contexts principally by instability – political, economic, social – often coupled with the presence (or risk) of violent conflict. Any number or combination of the dynamics of fragility may characterize such contexts, including poor governance, repression, corruption, inequality and exclusion, and low levels of social cohesion. The four states examined in the situational analyses of education and fragility (Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, and Liberia) have all experienced, and continue to experience, instability, and/or prevalence of violence.

The relationship between education and fragility is dynamic and often mutually reinforcing. The numerous ways in which fragility can impact aspects of education (including access,

quality, relevance, equity, and management) are well documented. There is also a deepening understanding of the impacts of education on fragility (in terms of exacerbation or mitigation). However, additional evidence is needed to understand the complex dynamics of education in fragile contexts, and to determine the effectiveness of educational policies and programmes in reducing fragility.

Each of the four case studies presents an analysis of a *situation* of fragility. Their ultimate aim is to assist the development of recommendations for policy, planning, and programming strategies and best practice at the country level. All four studies used an 'Analytic Framework of Education and Fragility';* developed by the Working Group. This built on existing tools, such as the USAID Education and Fragility Assessment Tool and the Fast Track Initiative's (FTI) Progressive Framework. The analytic framework laid out common research questions to facilitate a process of (1) establishing the fragility context, (2) understanding the response to the fragility context, and (3) summarizing impact. The research analysed the interactions between education and fragility across five fragility domains (security, governance, economy, social, and environment), and against various aspects of education within four categories (planning, service delivery, resource mobilization, and system monitoring). The analytic framework was also intended to provide a base to develop a cross-comparison examination of all four situational analyses.

Yet, using the analytic framework as a methodological basis for the research proved challenging. In addition to being unwieldy, it failed to clarify the relationship between education and fragility for the researchers, each of whom interpreted the task and the framework in a different way.** Complex and abstract definitions of fragility, which proved difficult to operationalize, compounded the problem. Furthermore, the issue of discriminating the interlinking and cross-cutting dynamics between the five fragility domains made it difficult to develop measurable indicators, and thus, methodologies and questionnaires. This led to differences in data collection between the countries, and complicated the cross-case analysis. It became apparent that a full understanding of fragility dynamics was necessary before beginning to tease out how education interacts and interfaces with indicators of fragility.

Due to this difficulty in establishing a shared analytic approach, the studies were less analytically consistent in terms of depth, focus, and quality than had been envisaged. The studies on Cambodia and Liberia, originally intended to be field-based, suffered more significantly from this lack of consistency, and therefore required bolstering with secondary literature.

However, despite the challenges, this synthesis of the four studies identifies emerging themes, commonalities, contrasts, and gaps in research on the relationship between education and fragility. IIEP hopes to use the knowledge garnered from the series to develop additional research and analytic tools for a wider audience.

* The analytic framework is available at: www.ineesite.org/index.php/post/field-based_situational_analyses_of_education_and_fragility/

** Independent researchers at IIEP-UNESCO and the University of Ulster developed the Afghanistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina studies respectively. The Working Group commissioned independent research teams for the fieldwork and development of the Cambodia and Liberia studies.

Executive Summary

This report synthesizes four situational analyses commissioned by the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility with the intent to provide key data needed to better understand the relationship between education and fragility in a variety of contexts. For this purpose, the four countries – Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, and Liberia – were selected to encompass a range of different types and stages of fragility, with diverse historical antecedents and locations across different geographical areas. This synthesis report aims to present the findings of the case studies and, through comparisons guided by various analytic frameworks, generate insights and recommendations for policy and programming, as well as identify possible areas for further research.

At the core of the synthesis is an analytic framework that comprises three types of comparative lens. The first examines how education might impact specific domains of fragility, both negatively and positively. The second goes beyond this ‘two faces’ approach to reveal a varied and nuanced spectrum of impact. The third outlines six apparently common areas of difficult policy and programming choices. Summary tables provide a useful overview and allow a visual cross-check of the main issues that emerged in the discussion and analysis.

Chapter 1 introduces both the overall research project on the situational analyses and the Synthesis Report. *Chapter 2* provides an overview of the drivers of fragility in each country for the five domains of governance, security, economy, the social domain and the environment. It then presents the first comparative analysis, examining the impact of education on these five domains. The analysis shows that the role education has played in each domain (through access, curriculum, textbooks, and governance and management) has been negative by reflecting, reproducing, reinforcing, and failing to challenge fragility, and positive by contributing to mitigating fragility and its impact. The impacts vary according to whether access to education is made a privilege or a right; whether curricula and textbooks are biased and divisive or objective and inclusive; and whether educational governance and management are characterized by inefficiency, incompetence, and corruption, or efficiency, high levels of capacity, and transparency.

This chapter concludes that, at present, education in the four countries under review appears to have had the greatest potential for positive, mitigating impact on fragility in the following areas:

Governance

- Education restores trust in the government’s will and capacity to serve the needs of the population through increased equal access and accountability measures.
- Education strengthens community participation and ownership, and promotes the development of an active citizenry through decentralized structures.

Security

- Access to education prevents armed conscription.
- Education promotes respect for rights and non-violence through codes of conduct for teachers, as well as through peace education programmes.

Social domain

- Education promotes nation-building, social cohesion, and positive values through integrated structures, as well as through inclusive and peace-oriented curricula and textbooks.
- Education promotes an equal society through equal educational access and outcomes.
- Education challenges and addresses patterns of gender discrimination, oppression, and violence through gender-sensitive policies, as well as through HIV and AIDS education.

Conversely, the influence of education in the four reviewed countries is arguably less positive in the following areas:

Economy

- Frequent neglect of secondary and tertiary education, as well as economically irrelevant curricula, results in a failure to boost weak economies.

Environment

- The general lack of widespread environmental programmes fails to raise awareness of and prevent environmental degradation.

Chapter 3 presents the second comparative analysis. It expands the notion of the 'two faces' of education mentioned in the previous chapter, and breaks down the relationship of education to fragility into a broader spectrum of five types of possible impacts, ranging between the two extremes of exacerbating and mitigating fragility. This analytical lens aims to demonstrate the complexity of this relationship, and provide some insights into past and present 'good' and 'bad' practices.

On the negative side of the spectrum, education:

- actively or deliberately reinforces and perpetuates fragility, e.g. through the politicization and manipulation of access, structures, curricula, and textbooks;
- reflects the status quo, e.g. by reproducing and failing to challenge existent patterns of division, inequality, violence, corruption, and inefficiency; and
- inadvertently favours fragility, e.g. through well-intentioned, but inadvertently counter-productive interventions, ranging from educational structures established by peace agreements that further entrench social divisions and tensions, to educational programmes which fail to lead to graduate employment.

On the positive side of the spectrum, education:

- enables people to live with fragility, e.g. through expanded access, taking children off the streets and creating a sense of routine, and through programmes enhancing life skills; and
- makes inroads into fragility, e.g. through increased equal access, promoting equality and strengthening governmental legitimacy, via decentralized structures strengthening civil engagement, and integrated structures and inclusive curricula and textbooks enhancing national unity and social cohesion.

Chapter 4 brings together many of the issues elaborated upon in preceding chapters to examine them in terms of policy and programming priorities, and to explore challenges and dilemmas that have emerged in the four countries. The chapter is organized into two main sections: 'Access and quality', which incorporates sections on 'civic and social relevance' and 'economic relevance'; and 'Governance, management, and financing', which includes 'private provision of education', 'centralization and decentralization', and 'funding modalities'. Discussion of the challenges and dilemmas relevant to each category is concluded by a third section, which attempts a tentative formulation of general lessons learned:

- **Access and quality.** The expansion of equal access to basic education often comes at the expense of quality. With an eye to enhancing the chances of effectively tackling and preventing fragility, ensure equal, generalized, and safe access to education while guaranteeing its quality and relevance.
- **Civic and social relevance.** Focusing on national identity to enhance social cohesion sometimes results in assimilationist practices. Instead, promote national unity while acknowledging and respecting differences and particularities.
- **Economic relevance.** The ability of education to provide livelihoods is greatly compromised by a generally volatile and weak marketplace. Promote education for employment by matching skills and knowledge to the labour market, and by establishing education/employers' partnerships.
- **Privatization of educational provision.** Privatization of educational provision enables expanded access, but often results in poor quality as well as class disparities. Ensure quality private education, but avoid entrenching inequalities and divisions.
- **Centralization and decentralization.** Central control is important in providing cohesive direction and regulation, but sometimes results in dangerous concentrations of power. Decentralization gives ownership to communities, but runs the risk of increasing ethnic or religious fragmentation, and inefficiency due to lack of local capacity. Promote adequate degrees of decentralization in combination with some central regulation, while strengthening capacity and monitoring efficiency at both the central and decentralized levels.
- **Funding modalities.** Faced with weak governance, donors tend to favour 'projectization' of aid to circumvent 'unreliable' state apparatus. This often results in fragmentation of initiatives and lost opportunities to build local capacity. Harmonize aid with government priorities, so as to enhance state ownership and avoid fragmentation of planning, while also strengthening government management capacity to help guarantee sustainability.

Chapter 5 concludes the synthesis, providing a summary of the preceding analysis and findings, and presenting a number of recommendations for policy and programming, and further research.

The synthesis identifies three main targets and goals of educational programming in relation to fragility mitigation: (a) target the fragility of the education system itself by building and/or strengthening its functionality; (b) target individuals and groups by building and/or strengthening their capacity to cope with fragility; and (c) target the context of fragility by building and/or strengthening peace, the state, and the nation. For each of these goals and targets, a number of entry-points are suggested. One general recommendation, however, applies to all interventions: the connections between education and fragility should be mapped. This mapping should serve as a basis for determining needs and risks, and setting targets and evaluating progress.

Targets and goals

- **Mapping the connections between education and fragility**

This should be seen as critical in thinking about education policy and programming, and should serve as a basis for determining needs and risks, and setting targets and evaluating progress.

- **Target and goal 1: building and/or strengthening a functional education system**

This goal can be achieved through initiatives aimed at promoting:

- national planning, including joint planning across sectors, joint planning across donors and government, and the establishment of a robust data system;
- legislation and regulation;
- community governance; and
- teacher capacity development.

- **Target and goal 2: building and/or strengthening people's capacity to live and cope with fragility**

This goal can be achieved through initiatives aimed at promoting:

- physical protection, including mine-risk education, HIV and AIDS education, disaster-preparedness programmes, and safe school construction.

- **Target and goal 3: building and/or strengthening peace, the state, and the nation**

This goal can be achieved through initiatives aimed at promoting:

- equal, generalized, and safe access to education;
- nation-building and good citizenship;
- preparation for livelihoods and entrepreneurship;
- gender-sensitivity; and
- environmental sensibility.

Faced with a thin evidence base for the positive impact of education on fragility, the synthesis recommends four main areas for future research:

1. Improve the qualitative and quantitative database for education decisions.
2. Assess the long-term impact of social science curricula, including civic education, peace education, and human rights education.
3. Enhance the knowledge of the workings of community-based governance.
4. Elicit the voice of youth on education programming, and make use of young people in research itself.

1 Introduction

This report synthesizes four situational analyses commissioned by the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility with the intent to provide key data needed to better understand the relationship between education and fragility in a variety of contexts.¹ For this purpose, the four countries – Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, and Liberia – were selected to encompass a range of different types and stages of fragility, with diverse historical antecedents and locations across different geographical areas. This synthesis report aims to present the findings of the case studies and, through comparisons guided by various analytic frameworks, generate insights and recommendations for policy and programming. Evidently, a different set of countries could have generated different conclusions.

Central to this report are key and sometimes uncomfortable questions on whether and how education can make an impact on the various drivers and dynamics of fragility. In particular, this report asks to what extent education can single-handedly tackle the root causes of fragility, and whether it should be content with, at least, ‘doing no harm’ and, at best, building people’s capacity to live and cope with fragility. To find answers to these questions, the synthesis report extracts evidence about the impact of education on fragility, as opposed to common-sense assumptions and ‘logical’ prescriptions, which seem to have long dominated practice in this field. Conversely, the impact of fragility on education is not examined here, as this is already graphically documented in a number of existing reports (O’Malley, 2010; UNESCO, 2010).

This report is aimed at a wide audience. It is primarily intended as a practical policy paper aimed at national and international stakeholders, concerned with interventions in education in fragile contexts. However, it also hopes to contribute to the ongoing theoretical debate in the academic community about education and fragility, which remains characterized by many un-evidenced assumptions.

The report is organized as follows. *Chapters 2, 3 and 4* present three different types of comparative analyses. Focusing on the four countries under review, these explore respectively: the main drivers and dynamics of fragility, and both negative and positive impacts of education in such contexts; a more nuanced and varied spectrum of impacts of education on fragility; and several education policy and programming challenges and dilemmas common to these fragile contexts. Finally, *Chapter 5* provides an overall summary of findings and conclusions, as well as a series of recommendations for both policy and programming, and research.

1. While the four case studies provide the core of the analysis, other sources have also been consulted relating to the four countries. Only in the latter case have sources been referenced.

At the core of this synthesis report is an analytic framework that comprises three types of comparative lens. The first, in *Chapter 2*, summarizes specific domains of fragility in each of the four countries under review, and examines how education might impact them both negatively and positively. The second, in *Chapter 3*, goes beyond the ‘two faces’ approach of education and fragility (Bush and Saltarelli, 2001; INEE, 2010) to reveal a varied and nuanced spectrum of impact. The third, in *Chapter 4*, outlines six areas of difficult policy and programming choices apparently common to the four fragile contexts under review. Here, the use of categorizations – necessarily somewhat subjective and artificial, and inevitably unable to fully capture what is a much more complex reality – will recur as a convenient way of organizing the present discussion.

2 Education and the domains of fragility

2.1 The context of fragility

The reports on Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, and Liberia clearly show that fragility, in its various forms, characterizes all four contexts. A cross-case examination of the five domains of governance, security, economy, the social domain, and the environment highlights a number of common features, summarized below:

Governance

- weak governance institutions and ineffective exercise of political power;
- political and administrative structures fragmented along identity lines;
- power interests linked to inequality and discrimination in resource allocation;
- lack of political will and/or capacity to ensure the basic well-being of the population and foster inclusion;
- widespread corruption;
- undemocratic and repressive state;
- concentration of power;
- lack of or limited legitimacy as well as trust in the government;
- limited state capacity and efficiency.

Security

- legacy of war;
- ongoing intra-state conflicts linked to identity and resources;
- presence of rebel, criminal, and terrorist and violent extremist organizations requiring ongoing military activity and high military spending;
- widespread lawlessness, crime, and human rights violations;
- inability of the state to maintain territorial control and guarantee physical security;
- ineffective security-sector reform, including unsuccessful or incomplete demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, and inefficient and corrupt military and police forces.

Economy

- widespread poverty and static or declining national growth;
- high levels of debt and of dependence on foreign aid;
- weak, undeveloped, unproductive economy, vulnerable to global shocks;
- high levels of unemployment;
- widespread inequalities in resource and income distribution.

Social domain

- history of distrust, grievance, and violent conflict;
- weak national identity, and ethnic, religious, and class-based divisions, polarizations and tensions;
- alienated, aggrieved, and disempowered youth, leading to juvenile delinquency;
- grievances among the poor and the marginalized;
- widespread gender inequality and violence;
- widespread attitudes of passivity;
- high levels of illiteracy and limited access to education;
- vulnerability to health shocks and food insecurity.

Environment

- weak environmental management and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources;
- environmental degradation, generally affecting the poor and powerless disproportionately.

The four boxes below provide an overview of the main characteristics of fragility in the countries under review. This visual cross-check on common and unique dimensions of fragility will guide the following discussion on negative and positive impacts of education on fragility.

Box 1. Main characteristics of fragility: Afghanistan

Governance

- *Weak governance institutions:*

Widespread corruption exists across most sectors. The political arena is fragmented, with 83 officially approved political parties, most ethnically based.

Security

- *Legacy of conflict and violence:*

Three decades of war have resulted in the proliferation of firearms, landmines, high crime rates, abductions, and drug trafficking.

- *Current insecurity:*

Four major anti-government groups exist (Haqqani, Hezb-e-Islami, Jamat Sunat al-Dawa Salafia, and the Taliban), alongside 1,800 other illegal armed groups, which frequently traffic in arms and narcotics. Rival criminal networks (including government officials) compete for drug revenues, control of smuggling routes, and natural resources. The Afghan army and police are unable to maintain control over the entire national territory and maintain a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Consequently, US military expenditure is 14 times higher than non-military aid expenditure.

Economy

- *Weak economy:*

The main economy is based upon opium, while 30 per cent of GDP comes from remittances sent home from the diaspora, from neither of which the government can derive income. Over two-thirds of aid bypasses the Afghan Government. Aid money funds 20 per cent to 50 per cent of the profit margins of private-sector companies.

Social domain

- *Ethnicity, gender, and class:*

The population is fractured along religious (Sunni and Shi'a), linguistic, ethnic, gender, class, and urban/rural lines.

- *Education:*

Two-thirds of the population is illiterate. Gender is a significant battleground in education.

Environment

- *Environmental degradation:*

Deforestation and desertification are significant factors.

Box 2. Main characteristics of fragility: Bosnia and Herzegovina

Governance

- *Weak governance institutions:*

Fragmented system of governance: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has two political and administrative entities: The Republika Srpska (RS) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH). RS is characterized by a centralized administration, FBiH is highly decentralized, divided into 10 cantons (five predominantly Bosniak/Muslim, three Croat, and two mixed) where responsibility is conferred onto small, ethnically based units, eventually resulting in lack of unified system of laws and failed implementation. The District of Brčko is an additional self-governing administrative unit.

Fragmented political arena: Bosnian politics is firmly divided along ethnic and linguistic lines. The Prime Minister of RS favours a referendum for RS independence, while the President of BiH favours the abolition of RS and the creation of a centralized Bosnian state.

Limited self-governance: civilian aspects of the 1995 General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFA) (Dayton Agreement) continue to be supervised by the Office of High Representative (OHR). This office can overturn the decisions of democratically elected officials and can therefore be blamed for political impasses by politicians. The presence of a civilian administration as well as an international military force is an indication of the country's inability to self-govern.

Security

- *Legacy of conflict and violence:*

The ethnic, national, cultural, and linguistic identity issues of the civil war (1992–1995) played a central role in the conflict. Despite the GFA, tensions remain high.

Social domain

- *Ethnic issues:*

High tensions exist between Bosnians and Serbs, with an increase in popularity of nationalist parties among ethnic groups.

- *Youth issues:*

High levels of youth unemployment and youth urban migration exist.

- *Education issues:*

Refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) still experience difficulty accessing education.

Box 3. Main characteristics of fragility: Cambodia

Governance

- *Weak governance institutions:*

Cambodia is a single-party, authoritarian, repressive state with lack of free speech and assembly, and restricted opposition dissent. Governance is characterized by limited separation of powers, superficial decentralization and lack of confidence in local and provincial administration, high levels of corruption and nepotism, low capacity, and weak legal structures.

Security

- *Legacy of conflict and violence:*

Genocide occurred during the Khmer Rouge regime (1975–1979), with low-level conflict continuing up to 1999.

- *Ineffective security-sector reform:*

Only limited demobilization of the over-sized army has taken place.

Economy

- *Widespread poverty:*

Cambodia is among the poorest countries in the world, despite a decreasing poverty rate and the presence of oil and gas.

- *Economic inequality:*

Large disparities exist between the rich and poor and urban and rural populations.

- *Limited access to natural resources:*

Land rights are tenuous with land-grabbing rampant. The supply of fish and timber to rural people is not guaranteed. Efforts have been made to regulate the degradation of natural resources.

Social domain

- *Youth issues:*

High levels of unemployment characterize the large youth population, with gang violence and drugs prevalent among youth. Erosion of family and community relationships reinforces youth alienation.

- *Gender issues:*

High levels of gender inequality.

- *Class issues:*

Feelings of disempowerment are significant among the marginalized poor.

Environment

- *Environmental degradation:*

Environmental management is weak with the consequent destruction of natural resources.

Box 4. Main characteristics of fragility: Liberia

Governance

- *Weak governance institutions:*

Liberia is governed by a democratically elected and popular president, demonstrating high levels of political will. However, the government is characterized by high centralization and concentration of power, high levels of corruption, and limited human and organizational capacity.

Security

- *Legacy of conflict and violence:*

Historical tensions exist between Americo-Liberians and the indigenous population. Following the 1980 coup, ethnic factionalism and civil war overtook the country until 2003.

- *Current insecurity:*

Physical security stabilized following peace, and is seen as relatively solid. However, numerous small outbreaks of violence and widespread crime continue.

- *Ineffective security-sector reform:*

Army and police reforms have taken place. Ex-combatants (majority youth) are not fully reintegrated into society and are susceptible to joining various militia groups. The police are considered ineffective and corrupt. At present, 15,000 United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) troops are still present in the country.

Economy

- *Widespread poverty:*

Liberia is among the poorest countries in the world, although rich in natural resources. It is highly indebted and dependent on foreign aid, most of which is project-based.

- *Weak economy:*

Liberia has a large and relatively undeveloped informal economy, comprising a subsistence agricultural sector with low levels of productivity, and a comparatively small formal economy highly dependent on exports of primary products and vulnerable to fluctuations in international commodity prices and global shock. Unemployment is high, with most opportunities existing in low-productivity and low-income sectors, mainly in the informal sector.

- *Economic inequality:*

Resource and income distribution is highly unequal. Proceeds from the extractive industries are channelled to a small elite.

- *Limited access to natural resources:*

Access to land is a particular source of grievance.

Box 4. (cont.)

Social domain

- *Divided society:*

Liberia has a history of exclusion and marginalization, characterized by persistent disparities and divisions.

- *Ethnic issues:*

The sense of collective national identity is weak across ethnic lines.

- *Youth issues:*

A sense of identity crisis and social alienation exists among youth. Unemployed youth are seen as a risk factor in renewed tensions.

- *Gender issues:*

Gender inequality and gender-based violence persists, although women are recognized as a positive force for reducing conflict and building resilience.

Environment

- *Weak environmental management:*

Exploitation of natural resources is unsustainable.

2.2 The negative and positive roles of education in contexts of fragility

Using the above-mentioned five broad domains of fragility and their specific features, this report presents a crude balance sheet of cross-country negative and positive impacts of education on fragility, organized by area of intervention: educational access, curriculum, and governance and management (*Table 2.1*).

The impact of education on the five domains of fragility can be summarized as follows.

Governance

On the negative side, education was found to reflect, reproduce, and reinforce fragile governance structures in a number of ways. Through the unfair and unequal allocation of educational access and outcomes, the education system was found to reflect and reproduce historical divisions of wealth, ethnicity, and gender and failed to challenge and shift existent power structures and power bases. Perceptions of unfairness and a lack of meritocracy in education, coupled with inefficiencies deriving from corruption, lack of capacity, and fragmentation of powers, were also found to result in a lack of trust in the government's will and capacity to serve the needs of the population. Additionally, the failure of education to challenge widespread attitudes of passivity and create a sense of agency likely translates into a failure to promote the development of a vigorous citizenry, willing and able to criticize and challenge authority, and advocate for and act towards positive change.

On the positive side, education was found to help people operate within fragile and dysfunctional national governance systems and to help improve general governance. Through the abolition of school fees, the education system was found to help change structures of exclusion and create a more level playing field, as well as to help restore a degree of trust in

the government. Through accountability measures, education appears to have contributed to breaking general habits of secrecy and enhancing efficiency. Additionally, community involvement in education seems to have helped build local ownership and community self-confidence, eventually contributing to a vigorous civil society. Civic education, as well, was noted as helping people to recognize and avoid political manipulation, hence promoting the development of an active citizenry.

Security

On the negative side, schools have been shown to reflect and reproduce violence outside the classroom by regularly exposing children to corporal punishment and schoolbooks extolling violence. Incitement to violence also occurs through the politicization of education, which is manifested in a segregated system and in biased portrayals of 'the other' in curricula and textbooks. This is generally coupled with a pedagogic approach that fails to promote critical thinking skills, thus favouring young people's manipulation and mobilization. Education thus becomes a 'battleground' where broader ethno-national divisions are played out. By being violent, divisive, and prejudicial places, educational institutions have helped to reinforce justifications for ethnic or religious conflict, and hence contribute to insecurity.

On the positive side, schools can provide a place of physical security for students, and may play a role in countering militarization by preventing enrolled young people from being conscripted. Schools can also contribute to countering physical insecurity through specific programmes such as mine-risk education and HIV and AIDS education. In addition, codes of conduct for teachers on physical punishment and sexual violence have shown positive potential to reduce general violence.

Economy

On the negative side, it was found that education failed to lead to jobs and to directly impact the economy. The lack of impact may relate to donor focus on basic education, rather than secondary or tertiary education, and to the fact that programmes with the potential to provide a productive labour force, and thus boost the economy, appear to have been largely unsuccessful in this respect. For instance, vocational education – as well as Liberia's Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP)² – received criticism for failing to provide graduates with livelihoods and increasing frustration due to false expectations. This is ascribed partly to the economic irrelevance of such programmes, which failed to include job-related skills, and partly to a weak job market.

2. The ALP was reported as being highly effective in providing educational opportunities for over-age youth, thereby temporarily keeping them out of an already limited labour market and reducing their vulnerability to recruitment as combatants.

Table 2.1 Education and the domains of fragility

Domains of fragility	Negative impact: education reinforcing and reproducing fragility	Positive impact: education mitigating the drivers and the consequences of fragility
<p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak governance institutions and ineffective exercise of political power. • Political and administrative structures fragmented along identity lines. • Power interests linked to inequality and discrimination in resource allocation. • Lack of political will and/or capacity to ensure basic population well-being and to foster inclusion. • Widespread corruption. • Undemocratic and repressive state. • Concentration of power. • Lack of or limited legitimacy and trust in the government. • Limited state capacity and efficiency. 	<p>Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfair and unequal access to education (e.g. geographical inequality in education allocations) (L), reflecting and reinforcing existing inequalities and divisions, and failing to challenge existing power structures. • Perceptions of unfairness and a lack of meritocracy in education resulting in a lack of trust in the government. <p>Governance and management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corruption in education (e.g. 'ghost' schools and teachers, which exist only on paper; bribes to and by teachers; illicit fees for registration, enrolment, classroom materials, and examination papers), reflecting and reproducing outside reality, and encouraging student acceptance of corruption as a normal method of operation. • Lack of capacity in education management (A, C, L), reflecting limited state capacity and efficiency, and leading to problematic and inefficient decentralization. • Fragmented education system (B), reflecting and reinforcing general governance fragmentation and lack of coherence. 	<p>Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widening access through abolition of school fees (C), helping to change structures of exclusion by enhancing equity, as well as helping to restore trust in the government's willingness and capacity to serve the needs of the population. <p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic education (L), enhancing resistance to political manipulation and promoting a sense of responsible agency. <p>Governance and management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of corruption and enhancement of transparency in education through accountability measures (e.g. public expenditure tracking system, PETS) crucial to breaking widespread habits of secrecy and enhancing efficiency. • Promotion of education by working <i>within</i> embedded patron–client systems (C), helping to reduce the impact of such systems and make education allocations more transparent. • Community-based education and community involvement and participation in education management helping to build local ownership and community self-reliance and confidence, eventually contributing to a vigorous civil society (A, C, L).

Table 2.1 (cont.)

Domains of fragility	Negative impact: education reinforcing and reproducing fragility	Positive impact: education mitigating the drivers and the consequences of fragility
<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legacy of war. • Ongoing intra-state conflicts linked to identity and resources. • Presence of rebel, criminal, terrorist, and violent extremist organizations requiring ongoing military activity and high military spending. • Widespread lawlessness, crime, and human rights violations. • State inability to maintain territorial control and guarantee physical security. • Ineffective security-sector reform, including unsuccessful demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, and inefficient and corrupt military and police forces. 	<p>Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion and marginalization in education leading to grievance and possible violent action. <p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Militarization of curriculum (e.g. schoolbooks extolling violence) (A), reflecting and reproducing outside violence, inciting new violence and encouraging student acceptance of violence as a normal way of solving problems. • Politicization and manipulation of schooling visible in segregated education system and biased portrayals of ‘the other’ in curricula and textbooks (B), reflecting and reproducing divisions and fuelling tensions and conflict. • Lack of promotion of critical thinking skills (A, C, B), while small inroads into critical thinking skills (L) generally favour manipulation and mobilization of young people, and fail to challenge widespread attitudes of passivity and create a sense of agency crucial to the development of a vigorous citizenry, willing and able to criticize and challenge authority and advocate for and act towards positive change. • Inability of schooling to provide for livelihoods (C, L), failing to live up to young people’s expectations and causing grievances that might erupt in violent action. 	<p>Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schooling (e.g. Accelerated Learning Programmes) (L) reducing children’s and young people’s vulnerability to recruitment as combatants. • Increased female school enrolment associated with reduced violence, land conflicts, and crime (C). <p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace education and human rights education (A), and pilot peace education and human rights education (L), promoting non-violent values, attitudes, and behaviours. • Mine-risk education promoting children’s physical protection (B, A). <p>Governance and management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National codes of conduct for teachers around corporal punishment and sexual violence (L), helping to reduce overall violence.

Table 2.1 (cont.)

Domains of fragility	Negative impact: education reinforcing and reproducing fragility	Positive impact: education mitigating the drivers and the consequences of fragility
<p>Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread poverty and static or declining national growth. • High levels of debt and dependence on foreign aid. • Weak, undeveloped, unproductive economy, vulnerable to global shocks. • High levels of unemployment. • Widespread inequalities in resource and income distribution. 	<p>Governance and management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence in schools through corporal punishment (A), reflecting and reproducing outside violence and encouraging student acceptance of violence as a normal way of solving problems. <p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic irrelevance of schooling, failing to build a productive labour force to boost the economy. 	<p>Governance and management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing teachers with land and seed as a way to compensate for low salaries (A).
<p>Social domain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of distrust, grievance, and violent conflict. • Weak national identity, and ethnic, religious, and class-based divisions, polarizations and tensions. • Alienated, aggrieved, and disempowered youth, leading to juvenile delinquency. • Grievances among the poor and the marginalized; • Widespread gender inequality and violence. • Widespread attitudes of passivity. • High levels of illiteracy and limited access to education. • Vulnerability to health shocks and food insecurity. 	<p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biased and divisive curriculum enhancing mistrust, intolerance, and separate identities (A, B). • Education failing to challenge widespread attitudes of passivity and to create a sense of agency. <p>Governance and management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination in education along ethnic, religious, political, and socio-economic lines by means of corporal punishment, denial of access, and non-recognition of achievement, reflecting and reinforcing patterns of inequality (A); • Segregated education enhancing mistrust, intolerance, and separate identities (B, L). • Gender discrimination and sexual harassment in schools reinforcing unequal gender relations (A, L). 	<p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum emphasis on commonalities, future building, and strengthening national identity (A); • Secular education promoting social integration (B); • Child rights programming giving young people awareness of equity (A, L, B). <p>Governance and management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnically integrated education promoting cohesion (B).

Table 2.1 (cont.)

Domains of fragility	Negative impact: education reinforcing and reproducing fragility	Positive impact: education mitigating the drivers and the consequences of fragility
<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak environmental management and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. • Environmental degradation, generally affecting the poor and powerless disproportionately. 	<p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education failing to teach about environmental issues, such as deforestation and energy conservation. • Education failing to teach about land-grabbing, land tenure, and land rights, as well as skills to make claims following industrial or other disasters. 	<p>N/A based on data.</p>

Note: A= Afghanistan, B = Bosnia and Herzegovina, C= Cambodia, L = Liberia. When no letter is mentioned, this feature applies to all four countries.

Positive impacts related to bolstering a fragile economy appear to be mainly indirect, in terms of general preparation to enter an economy when jobs in the formal or non-formal sectors may be available. One educational initiative which proved successful in enabling people to live within a economically fragile context consisted of providing teachers with arable land, seed, fertilizer, and other non-food items to compensate for low salaries.

Social domain

Education was found to negatively impact a number of social drivers of fragility. Segregated structures and biased and divisive curricula, often coupled with lack of promotion of critical thinking, were found to enhance mistrust, intolerance, and separate identities. There was also evidence of identity-based discrimination in schools, reflecting and reinforcing general social inequalities, divisions, and tensions, as well as gender discrimination and sexual harassment, reinforcing unequal gender relations. Additionally, a lack of adequate educational opportunities for youth was seen to contribute to a failure to reduce not only unemployment and the consequent migration, but also social problems among the large youth sector.

On the positive side, schooling was found to promote positive values through human rights education and peace education; and to promote nation-building and social cohesion through integrated structures, an emphasis on national unity and national identity, and a strategy based upon 'looking to the future' rather than 'dwelling on the past'.

Environment

Environmental degradation and/or conflict over resources often form part of fragility, generally affecting the poor, women, and children disproportionately. The negative impact of education on the environment is largely one of omission, through the failure to teach and raise awareness of environmental issues such as deforestation, energy conservation, as well as land-grabbing, land tenure, and land rights. The case studies provided no evidence of long-term positive impact on the environment – achievable through widespread environmental education combined with education in political skills to enable citizens to challenge the power interests perpetuating environmental degradation.

2.3 Key findings and conclusions

At present, education in the countries reviewed has the potential to provide positive impacts on fragility in the following areas:

Strengthened governance:

- Increased equal access to education as well as accountability measures restore trust in the government's will and capacity to serve the needs of the population.
- Education strengthens community participation and ownership, and promotes the development of an active citizenry through decentralized structures.

Improved security:

- Access to education prevents armed conscription.
- Codes of conduct for teachers as well as peace education programmes promote respect for rights and non-violence.

Improved social relations:

- Integrated structures and inclusive and peace-oriented curricula and textbooks can promote nation-building, social cohesion, and positive values.
- Equal educational access and outcomes promote an equal society.
- Gender-sensitive policies and HIV and AIDS education challenge and address patterns of gender discrimination, oppression, and violence.

Conversely, education in the countries reviewed shows less positive influence in the following two areas:

Economy and environment:

- Frequent neglect of secondary and tertiary education and economically irrelevant curricula contribute to the failure to boost a weak economy.
- A general lack of widespread educational environmental programmes translates into the failure to prevent and raise awareness of environmental degradation.

3 The spectrum of impact of education on fragility

The following comparative analysis expands the ‘two faces’ notion of education used in *Chapter 2*, and employs a larger spectrum of impacts ranging between the two extremes of either exacerbating or mitigating fragility. The spectrum identifies five types of impact of education on fragility (*Table 3.1*).

Table 3.1 Types of impact of education on fragility

	Type of impact of education on fragility	Examples and elaboration
Mitigating fragility / Exacerbating fragility	Education actively or deliberately reinforcing and perpetuating fragility	Education deliberately used to reinforce or perpetuate fragility through the politicization of structures, curricula, and textbooks; targeted exclusion and marginalization; attacks on schools by belligerents; etc.
	Education reflecting the status quo	Education not designed or manipulated by key actors to create tension or foster power interests, but simply reflecting the fragile status quo by reproducing and failing to challenge existent patterns of division, inequality, violence, corruption, and inefficiency.
	Education inadvertently favouring fragility	Well-intentioned, but inadvertently counter-productive interventions, ranging from peace agreements that further entrench social divisions and tensions, to vocational education and accelerated learning initiatives that lead to frustration among unemployed graduates.
	Education enabling people to live with fragility	Education that enables people to live and operate in the existing fragile context by softening its impact. This includes curricula-enhancing capabilities in livelihoods, health, and conflict resolution.
	Education making inroads into fragility	Education that starts to break the cycle of fragility itself. This includes effects of education that challenge the reproduction of inequality and division, enhance national unity and national hope for the future, strengthen civil engagement, and build governmental legitimacy.

Breaking down the relationship of education to fragility into a spectrum of possibilities enables targets to be established. Paradoxically, at the very negative end, where education is deliberately manipulated for vested interests, solutions are relatively straightforward. These include revising inflammatory teaching materials and removing overt bias from school admissions. The second category – education reflecting the fragile status quo – is often the most intractable, because it concerns issues that are more entrenched and deeply rooted in societal systems and cultures. As such, it often requires solutions to be found outside the education system. The third category – education inadvertently favouring fragility – provides lessons about types of initiatives that might not only fail to effectively address fragility, but also inadvertently result in harm. Towards the positive end of the spectrum, this synthesis distinguishes between initiatives that have the modest goal of helping individuals and communities live and cope with fragility, and those that have the more ambitious goal of challenging the drivers of fragility themselves.

Examples of this more varied spectrum of impact of education on fragility are summarized for each of the four countries (Table 3.2).

3.1 Education actively or deliberately reinforcing fragility

This category encompasses intentional attempts to use education to fuel social division, tension, and instability. These include interventions to deliberately privilege one group, segregate communities, and contribute to radicalization, destabilization, and militarization of society.

In Afghanistan, education has actively promoted insecurity through the militarization of the curricula and textbooks in some schools, which has contributed to the promotion of military mindsets and the idea of solutions by force (Jones, 2009).

In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the politicization of education has actively reinforced fragility, through endeavours to maintain 'national' difference and segregation with regard to ethnicity, religion, and language. This is manifested in a divided and segregated system; curricula and textbooks deliberately promoting 'national' identity; and 'national' language, music and anthems, poetry, and history. In addition, the 'defence' curriculum, which teaches students techniques to defend themselves from military attack and ways to retaliate, has contributed to maintaining fear and the notion of threats from 'others'.

In Cambodia and Liberia, education now seems to be less overtly used to promote tension and 'othering'. Historically, however, education played an active role in contributing to fragility through the promotion of exclusion from schools. In Cambodia, mobilization was organized around this core grievance. In Liberia, educational exclusion was officially recognized as one of the root causes of the conflict, playing a major role in larger patterns of exclusion and marginalization by limiting access and offering low levels of quality for many.

3.2 Education reflecting the status quo

Reinforcement of fragility merges into the next category – reflection and reproduction of the fragile status quo. This category includes *inter alia* existing patterns of division, inequality, violence, corruption, and inefficiency. In highly divided, unequal, violent, and/or corrupt societies, schools function as microcosms, generally mirroring the patterns and dynamics of the context in which they are embedded.

In Afghanistan, schools reflect and reproduce patterns of inequality through unequal access and unequal outcomes. They also reflect outside realities where violence, corruption, and inefficient bureaucracy are considered 'normal' modes of operation. The result is frequently a lack of trust in the education system and the state.

Table 3.2 The spectrum of impact of education on fragility

	Afghanistan	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cambodia	Liberia
Education actively or deliberately reinforcing and perpetuating fragility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Textbooks promoting militarism in certain schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fragmented system, and biased curricula, textbooks, and teacher training designed to maintain ethnic and language divisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of exclusion in education provoking grievances, which were mobilized by key actors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of admissions policies deliberately favouring Americo-Liberians. Limited access to education contributing to exclusion of significant portions of society from economic opportunities and wealth.
Education reflecting the status quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools reflecting and reproducing patterns of inequality, violence, corruption, and inefficient bureaucracy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools reflecting and reproducing patterns of inequality by determining outcomes and employment chances. Schools reproducing and failing to challenge the existing system of governance by falling short of promoting critical thinking and conflict analysis through the curriculum . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools reflecting and reproducing urban/rural and rich/poor disparities, as well as corruption and patron–client relations (e.g. rent-seeking in allocation of education jobs). Schools failing to challenge irresponsible environmental practices by failing to raise awareness of environmental dangers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools reflecting and reproducing social disparities and divisions, as well as widespread corruption and violence.
Education inadvertently favouring fragility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Back-to-School campaign pitting Sunni against Shi'a Muslims through culturally insensitive curricula and textbooks. Use of schools as sites for voting and educational provision for girls, both provoking targeted attacks by belligerent groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dayton peace agreement leading to a highly inefficient, fragmented administration and a cementing of ethno-nationalist rivalries through the decentralization of the education system. Donor focus on revising biased textbooks and divisive curricula, leading to politicization of discussions on educational reform and more entrenched positions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of education causing rising expectations and naivety over employment prospects, resulting in heightened frustrations among graduates when these are not fulfilled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALP) unable to result in employment, leading to heightened frustrations among graduates. Programmes targeting former combatants, creating grievances among non-recipients. Donor 'projectization' of aid leading to inefficiencies due to fragmentation of efforts and lack of government ownership.

Table 3.2 (Cont.)

	Afghanistan	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cambodia	Liberia
Education enabling people to live with fragility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded access to education taking children off streets and creating a sense of routine in a context of general insecurity. Distance and radio education enabling schooling, despite security challenges. School feeding programmes and HIV and AIDS education programmes facilitating living in a context characterized by food insecurity and health shocks. Employment opportunities in the teaching profession and school construction and maintenance enabling living in a context of economic fragility characterized by high levels of poverty and unemployment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secular education in integrated schools in Brčko, enabling the integration of returnees. Life skills education in child-friendly schools enabling children to better cope with the fragile context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite discrepancies in access to education along rural and urban lines, evidence that NGOs and donor outreach have increased educational opportunities for minority children. Attempts to introduce the teaching of an objective historical account of the genocide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to education getting disengaged youth off the streets, and assisting the social reintegration of ex-combatants. Human rights education raising young people's awareness of violations recurrent in their environment.
Education making inroads into fragility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decentralization of education and community-based educational initiatives strengthening civil engagement and building trust between armed insurgents, local communities, and government, thereby improving governance and stability. Enhancement of transparency in education through accountability measures building trust in the government, thereby improving governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater central regulation in view of accession to the European Union, promoting quality improvement and depoliticization of education reform and cohesive policies. Regulations on language and national symbols in integrated schools in Brčko promoting social integration and cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-based educational initiatives breaking cycles of passivity and strengthening a sense of agency and civil engagement, potentially improving governance. Expanded access to education, building trust in the will and capacity of government to serve the needs of the population. Expanded female school enrolment perceived as leading to conflict reduction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum and teacher support to focus on 'one Liberia' promoting national unity and social cohesion. Informal civic education promoting responsible, non-violent citizenship. Educational policies and strategies against gender-based violence, challenging and tackling widespread practices of gender discrimination and violence. Parent-teacher associations strengthening civil engagement and accountability.

In BiH, schooling reflects and reproduces existing patterns of class and gender inequality that cut across the ethno-national divide, leading to unequal life chances and employment opportunities. Education also appears to be unsuccessful in challenging the current system of governance and the present value system by failing to include conflict analysis and critical thinking in the curriculum. It thus falls short of preparing young people to tackle conflict and question hazardous aspects of ethno-nationalism.

In Cambodia, schooling also appears to reflect and reproduce patterns of inequality between rich and poor and urban and rural areas, as well as widespread corruption and patron–clientship. In addition, it fails to raise awareness of environmental degradation and, consequently, fails to contribute to mitigating environmental as well as economic fragility.

In Liberia too, schooling continues to reflect and reproduce historical patterns of inequality, resulting in a continuing lack of trust in the system. Despite the gradual erosion of the historic advantage that the Americo-Liberians accorded themselves, bias in educational access persists along lines of wealth and geographical location, as well as gender.

3.3 Education inadvertently favouring fragility

In the middle of the continuum is a category consisting of initiatives that were intended to tackle the drivers or the results of fragility – by promoting equity or integration, for example – but were not particularly successful, or were even counter-productive.

In Afghanistan, the ‘back-to-school’ campaign (2002–2003) ended up unwittingly pitting Sunni against Shi’a. As part of this initiative, explicit incitements to violence were removed from new textbooks; however, references to mistrust of descendants of Ali (that is, prejudicial references to Shi’a Muslims) were not. Students were also introduced to a culturally insensitive curriculum that did not represent non-Pashto, non-Sunni histories and culture. While newly revised textbooks are being reprinted, old textbooks continue to circulate and be used. The use of schools as sites for voting and the offering of education to girls have also inadvertently created physical insecurity, resulting in targeted attacks by belligerent groups.

The BiH case study clearly shows the inadvertently negative impact of well-intentioned, but poorly thought-out, educational interventions, aimed at promoting peace, but which ended up causing divisions and tensions and heightening political instability. The structures and systems put into place by the Dayton Agreement are a case in point. Apart from largely neglecting education as an important area of reform – a reality manifested in the lack of a designated responsible body mandated to implement education reform (unlike policing and electoral reform) – the peace agreement led to the decentralization of powers. The result was a highly inefficient, fragmented administration, and a cementing of ethno-nationalist rivalries through schools and teacher education. With the aim of bridging such divides, donors subsequently placed a strong emphasis on revising biased textbooks and divisive curricula. Those who felt threatened by integration criticized these interventions for politicizing discussions about education reform and for entrenching attempts at political control. The consequence was damaged relations between international authorities and BiH politicians and communities. Other approaches such as integrated schools in Mostar and the ‘two schools under one roof’ initiative – offering different shifts and different curricula to different communities – were criticized for merely accentuating difference and bringing the conflict closer to home. Similarly,

attempts to enable education for returnees, such as school-bussing, ended up reinforcing divisions: parents frequently chose to bus their children across regional boundaries to schools of their 'own' ethnic group out of fear of losing their identity or being part of a minority.

In Cambodia, the expansion of educational opportunities had the positive effect of creating conditions that might ultimately lead to a reduction of past inequalities; however, this also led to rising expectations and naivety over employment prospects, eventually resulting in frustrations among graduates in the face of unfulfilled promises.

Similarly, in Liberia, concerns were raised about the viability of programmes such as TVET and ALP in a context characterized by a weak job market unable to provide matching employment opportunities. The result again was heightened frustrations among graduates. The ALP also targeted predominantly former combatants, which reportedly caused grievances among non-recipients. Additionally, the tendency among donors to opt for aid 'projectization' – with funds going directly to implementing agencies and not being included in the government's budget – resulted in inefficiencies due to the fragmentation of efforts and lack of government ownership.

This category of problematic policy and programmatic attempts is further explored in *Chapter 4*, which is dedicated to highlighting the balances and compromises often required when promoting education reform in fragile contexts.

3.4 Education enabling people to live with fragility

This synthesis report distinguishes between education that enables people to live with fragility by softening its impact and education that tackles the root causes of fragility itself. While this distinction is sometimes difficult to draw clearly due to overlap between these categories, its usefulness in policy and evaluation terms is presented here to better determine realistic targets of 'success'.

In Afghanistan, expanded access to education – in some cases facilitated by community involvement in school management resulting in reduced likelihood of attack – has taken more children off the streets, and provided them with a sense of routine hitherto disrupted by the conflict and the violence. Where educational provision was hampered by security threats, distance education, radio education, and the distribution of DVDs have been used to surmount those challenges, while also promoting aspects such as girls' education. School feeding programmes and HIV and AIDS programmes have also helped people live in fragile contexts characterized by food insecurity and health shocks. In addition, employment opportunities in the teaching profession and school construction and maintenance have offered ways to live within a context of economic fragility characterized by high levels of poverty and unemployment.

In BiH, integrated schools in the autonomous District of Brčko offered returnees and internally displaced persons a secular programme on the 'culture of religions', as opposed to religious instruction. This provided an alternative to exclusionary religious denomination schools, and eventually enabled social reintegration. Child-friendly schools are another example of a remarkable educational initiative. These have had the positive effect of enabling pupils to better cope with the fragile context in which they live by promoting their life skills and self-esteem.

In Cambodia, there is evidence that NGO and donor initiatives have improved access to education for minority communities, by attempting to address disparities along rural and urban lines. In addition, there have been attempts to introduce objective accounts of history, including the genocide, through mainstreaming textbooks and programmes sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS).

In Liberia, increased access to education has taken disengaged youth off the streets, and enabled the social reintegration of former combatants. In addition, human rights education has raised young people's awareness of recurrent violations in their politically and socially fragile context.

3.5 Education making inroads into fragility

Various education initiatives, programmes, and policies have proven promising in enabling people to cope with fragility; the question remains as to whether they can also directly address the drivers of fragility. Currently, there is insufficient evidence to formulate an answer to this question. At present, solutions to fragility often come from outside the education sector. Education appears unlikely in itself to guarantee peace and security, good governance, economic growth and prosperity, equality and social cohesion, and environmental sustainability. The four case studies, however, point to a number of initiatives making small inroads into overall fragility.

In Afghanistan, decentralization of education as well as community-based educational initiatives have shown potential for strengthening civil engagement and building trust between communities, armed insurgents, and government, thereby improving governance and increasing stability. Similarly, the use of accountability measures to enhance transparency in education has also demonstrated potential for improved governance, by building trust in the government.

In BiH, greater central regulation, rather than decentralization, appears to have the potential to make inroads into fragility. With one eye on its possible accession to the European Union (EU), BiH has promoted educational reform focused on achieving conformity and lifting technical standards to EU levels, thereby favouring a depoliticization of education reform and a lesser emphasis on nationalism and 'national' identity. Regulation also forms the basis of the 'success story' of Brčko and its integrated schools. Strict rules established the language of instruction, mandating pupils' freedom of expression in their maternal language; teachers' obligation to teach in all three languages (Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian); the parents' right to request school documents in the relevant language and script; and the schools' obligation to guarantee that the ethnic composition of teachers reflects that of students, and that textbooks in use are harmonized with the curriculum. Respect of these regulations has been encouraged through a Code of Conduct and increased salary for teachers. The overall positive result has been children from different ethnic backgrounds educated together, while retaining their own cultural identities. For the purpose of enhanced social integration and cohesion, rules related to language have been accompanied by proposed regulations prohibiting schools from naming themselves after a political event, military unit, or military figure, and from organizing gatherings commemorating such instances.

In Cambodia, as in Afghanistan, community-based education initiatives have shown potential for breaking cycles of passivity and strengthening a sense of agency and civil

engagement. Eventually, citizens' enhanced ability to peacefully mount a challenge to autocratic, self-serving governance is likely to directly impact fragility by contributing to a move towards a more open and responsive system. Also, while general expanded access to education appears to have helped to promote the restoration of trust in the government's will and capacity to serve the needs of the population, thereby enhancing its legitimacy, evidence suggests a direct correlation between elevated levels of female school enrolment and reductions in conflict, including domestic violence, land conflicts, and serious crime.

In Liberia, education appears to be aiming to enhance national unity and civic consciousness by emphasizing the concept of 'one Liberia' through the curriculum, thereby potentially reducing tensions and the risk of conflict. Informal civic education in the form of radio voter education promotes social cohesion and security, and appears to have facilitated a peaceful electoral period by counteracting the potential for unfounded rumours that fuel conflict. Also, Liberia's successful educational strategies against gender-based violence seem to have directly impacted fragility by challenging and tackling widespread practices of gender discrimination and violence. As far as the domain of governance is concerned, the promotion of school-community governance arrangements by Education Law 2001, which required schools to establish a board of governors, a parent-teacher association (PTA), and a school management committee (SMC), has shown potential for strengthening civil engagement and improving accountability.

3.6 Key findings and conclusions

The use of a spectrum of impact of education on fragility provides some insights into past and present good and bad practices, and potentially some lessons learned for future interventions. In particular, this framework for comparative analysis seems to point to the following findings and conclusions. Firstly, in cases in which reinforcement of fragility is overt and deliberate, those responsible could be identified and possibly negotiated with, so as to better guarantee successful design and implementation of education reform (e.g. revision of policies, structures, curricula, and textbooks). Secondly, where education simply reflects and reproduces the less than ideal status quo, interventions could be geared towards both questioning and challenging existing patterns of, for instance, violence, corruption, and inequality, and compensating for their effects. Thirdly, where well-intentioned education initiatives start demonstrating inadvertent consequences for fragility, these should be acknowledged and learned from so as to stop 'doing harm', and redirect efforts towards enhanced effectiveness in operating within fragile contexts, as well as in tackling fragility itself. For the purpose of improving the effectiveness of interventions in dealing with fragility, the fourth and fifth categories have highlighted a number of good practice examples. These cover both enabling people to live in and cope with existent fragility – through, for example, HIV and AIDS programmes and generic livelihoods preparation – and tackling drivers of fragility through more structural and long-term interventions.

This synthesis report points out directions for future interventions on the basis of the evidence presented in the four situational analyses. More cumulative comparisons will hopefully indicate whether and which aspects of such interventions could be generalized and used as a model. However, no simple policy or programming prescriptions can be derived based on the available evidence and analysis. This leaves actors who work in education in fragile contexts with fundamental dilemmas, which often require making difficult choices and compromises. *Chapter 4* examines and sheds light on such dilemmas and choices.

4 Policy and programming challenges, dilemmas, and lessons learned

Education policy and programming in any context will be about prioritizing and compromising. As the four case studies make plain, education policy and programming in fragile contexts present particular challenges and dilemmas, often requiring difficult choices and compromises. This chapter examines many of the issues elaborated on earlier in terms of policy and programming priorities, and explores some of the balances struck and how they play out in the four countries. The following categories are discussed: access and quality, which includes civic and social relevance, and economic relevance; and governance, management, and financing, which includes private provision of education, centralization and decentralization, and funding modalities. Each category presents telling examples of challenges and dilemmas from each of the four case studies. Solutions and answers to such challenges are inevitably highly context-specific and common prescriptions are therefore impossible. However, the chapter does formulate a series of general lessons learned, and presents a useful overview of the main issues, discussion, and analysis (*Table 4.1*).

4.1 Access and quality

A common dilemma in resource-poor countries concerns whether to prioritize expansionist attempts at Education for All (EFA), increasing quantity most likely at the expense of quality, or whether expansion of education should be limited to guaranteeing the quality of existing provision. In a context of limited resources, the frequent precedence of quantity often seems to imply compromising on aspects related to the quality of education, such as curricula, textbooks, and teacher quality. As far as the curriculum is concerned, a push for quantity often prioritizes a focus on a narrow range of teaching areas, in particular, basic literacy and numeracy. The general consequence is neglect of curriculum and textbook reform, including the introduction of newer areas such as civic education, 'learning to live together', human rights education, and peace education, all of which might be useful in contexts characterized by conflict. A push for quantity also generally prioritizes a focus on basic education, inevitably sacrificing funding for expanding or improving other educational levels and sectors which would provide useful knowledge and skills to develop the country.

Table 4.1 Policy and programming challenges, dilemmas, and lessons learned

Policy and programming areas	Afghanistan	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cambodia	Liberia
Access and quality				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efforts to ensure generalized and safe access to education often require negotiation and compromise with the Taliban, as well as alternative structures (e.g. radio education). Prioritization of access and basic literacy comes at the expense of peace education programmes, seen as a luxury in a context of low enrolments.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite universal access to education, learning remains ethnically divided, passive, uncritical, selective, and politicized (e.g. history of the conflict). Reform efforts, including textbook revision, are criticized for further politicizing education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of education and school-building comes at the expense of quality: schooling is characterized by passive and uncritical learning, limited economic relevance, and limited civic relevance (teaching on the history of the genocide is starting, but there is a lack of topics related to contemporary key social issues, such as drug and environmental education). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efforts to get basic education up and running are starving other sectors as well as diverting focus from quality and relevance of education. Free primary education policy is leading to increased overcrowding in government schools, affecting quality. Education for ex-combatants is helping their reintegration, but adding to the grievance of non-combatants.
Lesson learned: Ensure equal, generalized, and safe access to education while guaranteeing its quality and relevance.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic and social relevance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government is trying to build a unified Afghan identity based on Islam, but no agreement has been reached on whose definition of a 'true' Islamic identity should prevail. The use of local languages is encouraging school enrolment, but impacting adversely on cohesion (as well as progression). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rights-based arguments used to demand segregated and differentiated learning along 'national' lines (e.g. characterized by selective and politicized history teaching and religious instruction) impacting adversely on social cohesion. Common learning initiatives (e.g. common core curriculum) are not being systematically and uniformly implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A based on data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When promoting national identity ('one Liberia'), uncertainty as to whether nation-building should be based on addressing the past or focusing on the future.
Lesson learned: Promote national unity while acknowledging and respecting differences.				

Table 4.1 (cont.)

Policy and programming areas	Afghanistan	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cambodia	Liberia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic relevance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prospects for livelihood diversification through education face challenges from widespread illiteracy (two-thirds of population) and the large (illegal) opium industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite various academic and vocational education options, challenges remain in matching education to the labour market and enhancing education's professional orientation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite various academic and vocational education options, challenges remain in matching education to the labour market: education has increased aspirations, but also unrealistic expectations of employment opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite various academic and vocational education options, challenges remain in matching education to the labour market .
Governance, management, and financing				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private education provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Private' schools run by tribal elders are not attacked by the Taliban, thus ensuring continued provision, but state control of education remains important to ensure the quality of teaching and to prevent indoctrination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A based on data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private sector is faced with issues of poor quality, with wealthy Cambodians turning towards higher-quality private institutions, contributing to the exacerbation of social disparities and divisions. Private tutoring for children in state schools constitutes an important source of income for teachers and enhances student learning, but compromises public commitment of teachers, thereby posing a threat to the integrity of the education system. Private education sector has a limited voice in centralized decisions and planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large private sector enables many providers to share in educating the country's children, but suffers from issues of poor quality and runs the risk of exacerbating disparities in access to quality education, with the best private schools being reserved for wealthy elites, able to retain their privileged position. Large private sector reduces elites' commitment to improve government schooling.
<p>Lessons learned: Ensure quality private education while avoiding entrenching disparities and divisions; build creative public–private partnerships, bringing the private sector into national planning; and promote some form of regulation and accreditation for private schools.</p>				

Table 4.1 (cont.)

Policy and programming areas	Afghanistan	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cambodia	Liberia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralization and decentralization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central planning is hindered by poor security, but decentralization first requires central capacity and central ownership of education planning. • While decentralization in a highly divided country might work against social cohesion and uniformity, community and home-based initiatives appear successful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High decentralization is creating fragmentation, costly duplication, and resulting inefficiency, as well as ethnic divisions. • School management through school boards is democratic, but politicized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moves towards decentralization and enhanced local ownership have started, but actual decision-making remains centralized. • Schools are being granted more autonomy and authority on spending decisions through priority action programmes (PAPs), but there remains lack of predictability in the disbursement of funds and limited accounting capacity on the part of school leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly centralized system limits the opportunity for local-level capacity development, with resulting bottlenecks and fewer checks on excess and patronage. • Parent–teacher associations (PTAs) and school management committees (SMCs) provide local-level oversight of education provision, but are not fully functional due to lack of devolution of decision-making and low capacity, with needs for resources and training.
<p>Lesson learned: Promote adequate degrees of decentralization in combination with some form of central regulation, while strengthening capacity and monitoring efficiency at both central and decentralized levels</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding modalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of aid dependency are hindering sustainability. • Dilemma exists over whether to channel aid funds through the weak government. • Dilemma exists over whether and which extra-state actors to authorize for education delivery (e.g. the Taliban). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of aid dependency are hindering sustainability • Dilemma exists as to whether aid should be tied to eradication of political obstacles or be focused on more practicable and technical reforms. • The political involvement of the international community is not always supported by local actors • ‘Kin state’ support from neighbouring countries is encouraging the setting up of mono-ethnic schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid is closing the financing gap, but direct-to-ministry and recipient project agreements are hindering alignment of aid with government priorities and leading to fragmentation. • Despite promising moves towards alignment and harmonization, prevalent concerns remain about the quality and integrity of national systems, leading to partners’ cautious use of such systems and an increase in programme-based aid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of aid dependency are hindering sustainability. • Most external aid is off-budget and ‘projectized’, channelled directly to implementing agencies, resulting in a lack of government overview of funds, hindering planning, and opportunities to build long-term government capacity.
<p>Lesson learned: Ensure aid harmonization and aid alignment with government priorities, while also strengthening government management capacity with the aim of guaranteeing sustainability.</p>				

In Afghanistan – a country characterized by low enrolment rates – the quantitative push for increased access to schooling has been an obvious target for donors. Between 2001 and 2008, primary school enrolment rose from 0.9 million to over 6 million (a 570 per cent increase). This increase has been particularly dramatic for girls' education, from virtually zero to 35 per cent. While successful in their expansionist intent, the downside of these efforts has been Taliban attacks on schools constructed by international armed forces, in particular, girls' schools. The level of priority assigned to getting and keeping schools open in Afghanistan is a politically sensitive issue in the context of high levels of insecurity.

In the drive for expanded education, several actors have chosen to negotiate with the Taliban to ensure safe educational provision. Such negotiations take place in the face of continued terrorist attacks on state education, meant to display Taliban might and ensure that the population either remains uneducated or is educated according to their rules. Negotiation and compromise may not always be feasible or desirable, especially with extremist groups strictly forbidding teachers from working under the current 'puppet' regime, and recognizing only mosques and madrasas teaching radical Islamic education based on textbooks from the *jihad* period and the Taliban regime. In several cases, however, education authorities and communities have been able to negotiate with the Taliban and accommodate some of their religious reservations, for example, by naming schools as madrasas and teachers as mullahs, as well as instigating dress codes for girls.

The primacy of quantity of education is also apparent from local reactions to so-called child-friendly schools run by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and several NGOs. These have attempted to increase access while promoting non-violence. According to some sources, while perceived with suspicion by the government as being insufficiently religious (Spink, 2009), the UNICEF social sciences curriculum, including peace education, has been viewed with indifference and as a luxury by many local people, whose main priority was reported to be basic literacy (Jones, 2009). Giustozzi (2010) also highlights the push by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and aid agencies for primary and secondary education at the expense of higher education. He argues that insufficient focus on higher education can lead to a lack of educated and qualified bureaucrats, without which the state apparatus cannot maintain its functions. Ghani and Lockhart (2008) also argue for higher education and advanced skills as central to reducing fragility.

In BiH, a country where universal schooling has been more fully achieved, quality issues become more apparent and predominant in the arena of policy and programming choices. Here, a major quality issue relates to pedagogy, and in particular to the failure – partly due to a lack of political will – to promote a curriculum to enhance critical thinking and replace the old paradigm that relies on memorization and recall of facts rather than the development of skills, values, and attitudes. The issue of critical pedagogy is closely linked to questions of whether and how to teach the history of the conflict. Young people are reported as lacking an understanding of recent history and wanting to know more about these events. However, resistance to reforming the content of the curriculum and textbooks to include a critical discussion of sensitive and controversial matters has been strong. This has led to debate among external actors as to whether it might be preferable to focus on overall quality to avoid further politicizing discussions on educational reform. Another quality issue relates to teacher education and professional development. Concerns have been expressed about the

ethnic divisions characterizing teacher education and the systematic exclusion of teachers from curriculum design due to an absence of communication channels between universities, pedagogical institutes, and curriculum bodies. Many argue that teachers have the potential to play an important role in developing values of mutual respect and tolerance crucial in a post-war context characterized by persisting division and mistrust.

In Cambodia, the notable expansion of schooling as a result of government efforts and community initiatives, where government assistance was lacking, has been accompanied by criticism that the focus on school-building has come at the expense of educational quality. Firstly, the economic relevance of the curriculum remains a problem in Cambodian schools, with the consequent failure to contribute to providing graduates with livelihoods. Secondly, while 2010 saw the introduction of a history programme on the Cambodia genocide into schools, topics related to contemporary key social issues, such as drug and environmental education, remain absent from the curriculum. Additionally, weak English skills due to poor teaching have not only limited the chances of Cambodian students on the competitive international job market, but have also inhibited their access to critical international press and uncensored internet, thereby inadvertently maintaining the government's grip on information. The limited and irrelevant content of the curriculum is also coupled with a traditional pedagogy based on rote learning, which is likely to result in an inability among young people to analyse and question issues they are confronted with.

In Liberia, the choice between focusing on the education of ex-combatants, who present a special risk factor to stability, and ensuring general provision poses a programmatic dilemma. Grievances among non-recipients of programmes for ex-combatants have been alleviated, at least partially, through the introduction of free and compulsory education in 2001 and the 2003 back-to-school campaign. Reports have been positive on both initiatives in the push to get general provision of basic education up and running (EuroTrends, 2010b). The government's free primary education policy, however, appears to have led to increasingly over-crowded government schools, affecting the quality of public education provision. It has also been reported that the Fast Track Initiative (FTI)-supported expansionist push and its core focus on basic education is starving other sub-sectors, such as higher education, of funds, as well as diminishing the focus on quality and relevance of education.

These comparisons confirm the importance of Education for All (EFA) as a general priority in its capacity to provide basic skills to the population as a whole, and consequently restore trust in the government as being willing and capable to provide such skills and fairness. As noted in Afghanistan and BiH, there has been resistance to the perceived 'luxuries' of peace education or textbook cleansing. This is not to say that such initiatives are unimportant, but that priorities might currently lie elsewhere, for example, attempting to equalize opportunities through enhanced provision. Generally, quality issues seem to become a priority at a later stage. Ideally, however, the ultimate aim should be to *ensure equal, generalized, and safe access to education while guaranteeing its quality and relevance.*

The issue of relevance in education, in conjunction with quality, deserves particular attention here due to its commonly close relationship to fragility.

Civic and social relevance

A key question in fragile contexts concerns whether the government should emphasize national identity in an attempt to promote social cohesion, or avoid the promotion of nationalism as a dangerous avenue that might infringe cultural sensitivities and create potential hostilities between one's own nation and 'others'. Of the four contexts researched, Cambodia proved unique in the sense that ethnic tensions have not been a significant driver of fragility. Instead, a widely felt desire exists among the population to maintain stability at any cost. As such, educational curricula relating to the promotion of national identity with respect to ethnic differences do not face the same dilemmas as in Afghanistan, BiH, and Liberia.

In Afghanistan, the government has attempted to construct a unified Afghan identity based on Islam, with the intention of breaking down divisions between Sunni and Shi'a populations and promoting a moderate version of Islam as an alternative to Taliban excesses. The strategy rests on the assumption that a credible national identity can integrate or override other competing identities. No agreement, however, has yet been forged on what characterizes, and who should define, a 'true' Islamic identity. Aside from religion, another factor that has the potential to promote a national identity, cutting across many social divisions, is the country's proud history: no foreign power has ever really defeated or colonized the Afghans. One dilemma in this context revolves around the question of language. The use of local languages would encourage school enrolment, but might impact adversely on cohesion, as well as progress.

BiH presents particular problems in the way that the term 'nation' has been defined and manipulated. Each group claims a unique 'national identity' based on language, culture, history, and religion. Parents and others have argued for the right to defend their culture, and have consequently lobbied for separatist schooling and a differentiated curriculum, citing the European Convention, which guarantees the right of children to be educated 'in their own language'. While such claims might be legitimate, there is a need to implement common learning in order to foster a collective identity and a sense of a shared future and citizenship. While a new common core curriculum was developed to promote 'positive relations and a feeling of commitment to the state of BiH', this is yet to be systematically implemented, leading various UN bodies to make further proposals for unified, intercultural curricula. Within the curriculum, the teaching of history is a particularly controversial and politicized subject, with some textbooks still suggesting that BiH's multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-confessional make-up constitutes a major 'problem' rather than an asset. Religious instruction is also segregated and politicized, with any teaching of the history and culture of religions – as the case of a new Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) course – introduced inconsistently and unevenly throughout BiH. Additionally, there are 17 legally recognized national minorities in BiH, of which the Roma are the largest, that remain unrecognized by the education system.

In Liberia, the government is also attempting to construct a collective national identity by promoting a sense of 'one Liberia' as opposed to local or ethnic identities. In a fragile context characterized by a history of internecine violent conflict, the question of whether (and how) to address this sensitive past – as was done by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission – or whether to emphasize a shared future is crucial. One approach undertaken by the government was the development of a social studies curriculum, which aims to enable discussion among students of the civil war, and the development of 'positive feelings' regarding its resolution.

On balance, this chapter concludes that the promotion of a common national identity should be generally preferred as opposed to acceding to ethnic claims and policies of 'recognition'. Claims regarding language and religion should be taken into account, but should be managed within the broader goals of nation-building and the need for peaceful coexistence. The overarching general goal should be to *promote national unity while acknowledging and respecting differences and particularities*.

Economic relevance

Another aspect of quality that raises considerable challenges and dilemmas is the economic relevance of educational programmes. In contexts characterized by economic fragility, a critical area of concern is the kind of education that should be promoted in a volatile and weak marketplace, which might not cater to graduate needs and could frustrate their expectations.

In all four countries, education has failed to match the labour market and the existing economy. In BiH, where youth unemployment is four times higher than the EU average, the curriculum is perceived as lacking professional orientation and, thus, failing to contribute to stemming the flow of youth emigration to countries where opportunities are available. In Cambodia, employment prospects for a burgeoning youth demographic are dismal, also because of the largely irrelevant curriculum; however, young people continue to enrol in formal education in record numbers with unrealistic expectations of obtaining high-level employment. In Liberia too, education, including the (tiny) TVET sector, has been unable to lead to jobs due to archaic training methods, and lack of diversification and connection with the labour market. Afghanistan also faces significant structural labour market issues, particularly as one of the country's major economic drivers is the illegal opium trade. In addition, the high level of illiteracy, with over two-thirds of the population non-literate, limits possibilities for livelihood diversification through education.

Overall, the four case studies seem to confirm the importance of a focus on literacy for livelihoods, combined with social and political skills as well as foreign language skills, as opposed to a focus on specific artisan skills. This agrees with Ghani and Lockhart's (2008) argument for entrepreneurship as a route out of fragility, according to which ways of learning, flexible mental models, problem-solving, and familiarity with technology are to be emphasized over a specific body of knowledge. The overarching general goal is to *promote education for employment by matching skills and knowledge to the labour market and establishing education/ employer partnerships*.

4.2 Governance, management, and financing

Matters related to governance, management, and financing also appeared to present several challenges and dilemmas in the four countries under review. This was found to be particularly the case in relation to private provision of education, centralization and decentralization, and funding modalities.

Private provision of education

One governance of education issue relates to educational providers and, in particular, the private sector. Privatization of educational provision seems to have enabled expanded access by compensating for the state's inability to afford full education provision. However, it has often resulted in general poor quality and perpetuation of class disparities and inequalities. Evidence from three of the four situational analyses highlights the positive benefits of private education, as well as some of the dilemmas in educational policy and programming.

In Afghanistan, private schools run by tribal elders have been crucial in ensuring educational provision as they tend not to be the objects of terrorist attacks by the Taliban. This is most likely due to a desire on the part of the belligerents to maintain community support. State control of education, however, appears to play a significant role in ensuring the quality of teaching, as demonstrated by the MoE's Islamic education programme, which attempts to govern the field of religious education and prevent the indoctrination that occurs in some madrasas. This, as mentioned above, might often require some degree of negotiation and accommodation of religious values.

In Cambodia, private provision, and especially the growing private higher education sector, has been faced with issues of poor quality. The private sector seems to contribute to the exacerbation of existing social disparities and social distance: middle- and upper-class Cambodians largely turn towards higher-quality private domestic (as well as foreign) institutions, which often offer education in English. Another issue is private tutoring for children in state schools: while this constitutes an important source of income for teachers – tutoring earnings can represent approximately two-thirds of a monthly average salary – and may also enhance student learning, they can compromise teachers' public commitment, thereby posing a threat to the integrity of the education system.

Like Cambodia, Liberia is faced with issues of dubious and low-quality education in much of its huge private sector.³ Private schools are free to set their own fees, and better-resourced private schools are reserved for the wealthy elites, who are thus enabled to retain their privileged position. One key issue for national planning concerns management of this vast private sector, which enables many providers to share in educating the country's children, while running the risk of exacerbating disparities in access to quality education. Moreover, a large private sector risks reducing commitment on the part of the elite to improve government schooling, which is becoming increasingly over-crowded, since the introduction of a free primary education policy, due to a drift away from private and mission schools. The efforts of Liberia's MoE to review public-private partnership strategies to address such issues, and enable an efficient use of education resources (EuroTrends, 2010b), appear promising here.

Overall, the goal should be to *ensure quality private education while avoiding entrenching disparities and divisions*. Part of the solution might lie in *building creative public-private partnerships, bringing the private sector into national planning, as well as promoting some form of regulation and accreditation for private schools*.

3. Only 57 per cent of enrolment at primary level is in government schools, and 29 per cent at secondary level.

Centralization and decentralization

The desirability of centralization versus decentralization of education regulation is another key area of debate. Central control might provide cohesive direction and regulation, but may also result in dangerous concentration of power. Decentralization might increase community ownership, but also enhance ethnic or religious fragmentation, and result in high inefficiency due to lack of local capacity.

Afghanistan has a history of central planning dating back before the Soviet era. At present, however, central planning is hindered by the poor security situation, which obstructs data collection in the provinces. However, the alternative of decentralizing regulation would require building up central capacity first, and also ensuring MoE ownership of education planning. Furthermore, decentralization in a context such as Afghanistan, with its different tribal and warlord-controlled regions, does not seem to be an instant recipe for social cohesion and uniformity, despite the paradoxical growing success of community-based initiatives. Giustozzi (2010) states that Afghanistan needs to choose decisively between two paths when it comes to using education as a tool for nation-building: (1) the decentralized path, with community-based education and content left largely to a plurality of 'societies', each with their own war heroes; or (2) the top-down, centralized path, which is bound to trample on the aspirations and interests of communities, which have to be forged into a new nation. He argues that the second is the most sustainable option, but that it will require heavy investment and increased capacity.

In BiH, lack of central ownership and planning has been one of the greatest stumbling blocks to cohesion in and through education. There are 13 ministries of education, 2 at the entity level, 10 at the cantonal level, and 1 at the district level. Decentralization in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) confers responsibility onto small and ethnically exclusive units, resulting in fragmentation and inefficiencies. The Republika Srpska (RS), on the other hand, is highly centralized, which militates against combining the two systems (FBiH and RS). This politically forced separation of education translates into inefficient spending and significant duplication of provision. Additionally, the lack of an official statistics database at the national level hinders monitoring of access, teacher-student ratios, gender equality, and so on. The lack of standardized public information on education also results in public discourse on education focusing almost exclusively on politics, rather than quality of teaching and learning. In such a highly fragmented context, characterized by the absence of a national education plan and central control, numerous external agencies have taken the lead in promoting various forms of regulation with the aim of bringing about some degree of cohesion and consistency. For example, UNICEF has established standards and regulatory frameworks for basic education and early childhood development, resulting in the government's recent adoption of a Framework Law on Pre-Primary Education. The European Commission (EC) has supported a legislative framework through the Bologna Process, the Lisbon Convention on Higher Education, and the Copenhagen Process on vocational education and training (VET). The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is promoting a state-level education agency to set standards and ensure quality and mobility. The Council of Europe (CoE), too, has drafted legal frameworks on higher education, in addition to promoting civics and human rights education. As far as decentralization is concerned, school management in BiH is delegated to school boards. While these are democratic in the sense of allowing parents, teachers, the local community, and the

school founder a say in how the school is run, their ethnic make-up, as well as the level of influence of nationalist politics, also have a potential negative impact on stability.

Cambodia has taken steps towards implementing decentralization. This is manifested particularly in initiatives aimed at granting more autonomy to schools. In support of such efforts, the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF) introduced a new financing mechanism in 2000 called priority action programmes (PAPs), which facilitate the channelling of operational funds to schools and other organizations through the government's financial planning and management systems. Besides enhancing the autonomy of schools by providing them with block grants and significant delegated spending authority, the PAP mechanism also pushes education and finance ministries to work more closely on defining and resourcing education reform, and provides a rationale for sector budget support by donors. A number of challenges related to these decentralization efforts remain, however, including lack of predictability in disbursement of funds and limited accounting capacity of school leadership. More generally, actual decision-making has remained centralized, while formal national professional associations of provincial/district education officers, head teachers, school-parent committees, and specialist teaching groups are not yet in place.

Liberia has a strong legacy of community involvement in education, community-driven initiatives having played a crucial role in ensuring provision of education during the period of instability (1989–2003). However, the country also has a highly centralized system. This leaves district education officers with limited discretion or budgets within their control, consequently limiting the opportunity for capacity development at the local level. Such centralization is seen to heighten vulnerability, with concentration of power both creating bottlenecks and resulting in fewer checks on excess and the development of patronage. Yet, as in Afghanistan, community and school-based initiatives have been rather successful: parent-teacher associations and school management committees are mediating and monitoring education provision at the local level, although there remains a need for resources, training, and increased devolution of decision-making.

The four case studies present some interesting contrasts, making any attempt at generalization particularly difficult. BiH appears to need greater centralization in the sense of unified monitoring, laws, and curriculum, as well as cross-ethnic ownership. Afghanistan also appears to need strengthened central control in order to produce and implement national plans, although there is a national push for decentralization and community ownership. Conversely, Cambodia and Liberia would both seemingly benefit from some decentralization, although this raises capacity issues, as well as political questions related to how power interests should be represented at the local level. While realities vary greatly, in general it can be concluded that viable balances are possible. For example, while curricula and admissions may have to be centralized in order to foster national cohesion, schools could simultaneously be granted autonomy in their day-to-day management and budgeting in order to promote local ownership. This process should then be subject to monitoring at both local and central levels to ensure transparency. The overarching goal could generally be to *promote adequate degrees of decentralization in combination with some form of central regulation, while strengthening capacity and monitoring efficiency at both central and decentralized levels.*

Funding modalities

Finally, there is the central question of who controls the allocation of education spending in countries heavily dependent on aid. In sustainability terms, the central issue for donors involved in situations characterized by weak governance concerns the extent to which they should align with the government, or channel funds directly to extra-state agencies. The issue of aid dependency is problematic for the escape from fragility, and presents constant dilemmas for donors. While acknowledging the genuine desire to build the state and strengthen national pride and ownership, donors frequently have to recognize that government ownership may mean a highly inefficient or even corrupt use of resources. Additionally, as the UK Department for International Development (DFID) recognizes, tension also exists between immediate service delivery versus long-term state-building (DFID, 2009).

In Afghanistan, foreign aid constitutes approximately half of the lawful economy and 90 per cent of public expenditure, with approximately 40 per cent returning to donor countries in corporate profits and consultant salaries. As far as education is concerned, the vast bulk of the MoE's budget continues to be funded by foreign aid due to the weak tax base, which should otherwise fund the sector. This large influx of aid is analysed here as an economic driver of fragility, in that any inefficient spending of aid potentially feeds corruption and fails to address poverty. Afghanistan presents particular dilemmas that concern whether to channel aid funds through the government, and which extra-state actors should be engaged. As discussed previously, Afghanistan's fragile political and security context might often require negotiation with the Taliban and other political actors.

BiH is another country highly dependent on foreign aid. While the amount of resources allocated to education from the state-level budget is almost non-existent due to the high level of decentralization, foreign aid to education has been considerable. Donors have focused mainly on building the capacity of local institutions, financing the legal framework for the education sector, and providing other forms of technical support, as well as supporting civil society organizations active in this field. While valuable in their attempt to reform and improve the education system, the effectiveness of donor efforts appears limited due to the system's highly politicized nature. In this context, the Donor Mapping Report of 2008 acknowledged the need for long-term, sustained involvement, as opposed to approaches based on the belief in quick-fix solutions. It also recommended that donors continue to advocate the eradication of political obstacles without necessarily tying their involvement in the sector to the eradication of these barriers. As pointed out earlier, donor-sponsored reform efforts in education have been criticized by many for focusing too heavily on political issues to the detriment of more practicable and necessary technical reform. The politicized nature of education in BiH has also been entrenched through 'kin state' support, whereby neighbouring countries encourage and support the creation of mono-ethnic schools in certain parts of the country. While some argue that linking the reform of education to EU accession will eventually bear fruit, others maintain that incentives are not enough, and that continued external support is necessary, particularly for the professionalization of teachers and monitoring.

Cambodia also receives substantial international aid. Direct-to-ministry and recipient project agreements are still practised, diluting efforts to align aid with government priorities. This approach has led to significant fragmentation, with only 35 per cent of technical aid

coordinated, and as many as 121 Project Implementation Units in 2007. The transition of the MoEYS from a passive to an active partner with donors to annual operational planning has been a major improvement, signalling important progress towards implementation of the principles outlined in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness⁴ (Purcell *et al.*, 2009). However, despite promising moves towards alignment and harmonization, there remain prevalent concerns about the quality and integrity of national systems. Partners have shown caution in selecting and using systems that comply with global standards (including Cambodian public financial management and procurements systems), and increasing the amount of aid provided through programme-based approaches.

As is the case for the other three countries, Liberia is highly dependent on foreign aid. More than half of the resources available to the Liberian Government are estimated to come from international development assistance, partly due to the small tax base and poor tax collection. Donors have allocated US\$45 million to education for 2009/2010 compared with government allocations of US\$25 million, with obvious implications for sustainability. Eighty-six per cent of all external education aid goes to support basic education, primarily teacher training, accelerated learning programmes, school construction, and textbook procurement. This choice in funding allocation raises questions about under-investment in other levels of education, mentioned in *Section 4.1*. As far as funding modalities are concerned, most external aid is off-budget and projectized, channelled directly to implementing agencies rather than through government financial systems. Hence, as in Afghanistan, it remains difficult to know how much funding external agencies are providing. To resolve this problem, the Ministry of Planning is establishing systems for external agencies to report their support. The main reason for the currently dominant approach among donors is perceived low government capacity to effectively manage funding; hence, the Liberian Education Pooled Fund has been designed to address the dilemma of funding nascent government systems. This has allowed for government ownership, discretion, and responsibility while maintaining mutual accountability. Acting as a transitional mechanism, one of its aims has been to build government capacity to handle larger resources flows, as well as confidence among donors. In the meantime, the government will receive assistance through EFA-FTI Catalytic Funding and budget support, following a decision taken in May 2010, which will result in programmes shifting from a humanitarian response to longer-term development.

This chapter confirms the principles of the Paris Declaration and the dangers of fragmented projectization, which bypass governments or undermine their efforts. In general, the main goal should be to *ensure aid harmonization and aid alignment with government priorities, while also strengthening government management capacity with the aim of guaranteeing sustainability*.

4.3 Key findings and conclusions

It is clear that many dilemmas and policy choices are both country-specific and time-specific. Some tentative generalizations, however, are attempted here.

4. The Paris Declaration outlines the needs for country ownership, donor alignment with government, harmonization among donors, and a results-based focus and mutual accountability.

Access and quality

Expanding access to basic education in the push for EFA may come at the expense of teacher training, learning areas linked to mitigation of fragility such as civic, peace, or human rights education, and secondary and higher education, which can provide the higher-level capacity development needed to tackle fragility. A focus on quantity, in terms of ensuring equitable access to education, as opposed to a focus on quality seems to have been the preferred way forward in building trust in the government in fragile contexts, especially over the short term. Nevertheless, the long-term goal should remain to ensure equal, generalized, and safe access to education while guaranteeing its quality and relevance.

Civic and social relevance

Curricula and textbooks that focus on national identity in the push for enhanced cohesion may result in the imposition of the culture and values of dominant groups, and assimilationist practices, as well as nationalist sentiments antithetical to and intolerant of other countries and societies. The promotion of a national, unified identity appears to remain an essential and viable goal in the face of ethnic claims, especially in highly divided contexts. In general, however, the goal should be to promote national unity while acknowledging and respecting differences and particularities.

Economic relevance

The generally volatile and weak marketplace that tends to characterize fragile contexts has been shown to compromise the ability of education to provide livelihoods. The goal should therefore be to promote education for employment by matching skills and knowledge to the labour market, and establishing education/employer partnerships.

Privatization of educational provision

Privatization of educational provision seems a common practice which has enabled expanded access by compensating for the state's inability to afford full education provision; however, it has often resulted in general poor quality and perpetuation of class disparities and inequalities. The goal should therefore be to ensure quality private education while avoiding the entrenchment of disparities and divisions. Part of the solution might lie in building innovative and pragmatic public-private partnerships, which bring the private sector into national planning, and promote some form of regulation and accreditation for private schools.

Centralization and decentralization

Central control plays an important role in providing cohesive direction and regulation, but may result in dangerous concentration of power. Conversely, decentralization gives ownership to communities and their schools, but may increase ethnic or religious fragmentation, and result in inefficiency due to lack of local capacity. The goal could be to promote adequate degrees of decentralization in combination with some form of central regulation, while strengthening capacity and monitoring efficiency at both central and decentralized levels.

Funding modalities

In fragile contexts, aid dependency is commonly high. Faced with weak governance, donors have tended to favour the projectization of aid in order to circumvent 'unreliable' state apparatus. However, this may result in the fragmentation of initiatives and lost opportunities to build local capacity. The goal should be to ensure aid harmonization and alignment with government priorities, with the aim of enhancing state ownership, avoiding fragmentation of planning, and strengthening government management capacity in order to guarantee sustainability.

5 Summary and recommendations

5.1 Summary

This synthesis report aims to explore the relationship between education and fragility using comparative frameworks. The three different lenses proposed in this report, which attempted to impose a joint structure on the analysis of the four countries reviewed, have demonstrated the complexity of such relationships.

Education's impact on the five domains of fragility

Education appears to have both negative and positive impacts on fragility. The impacts of education on the five domains of fragility – governance, security, the economy, the social domain, and the environment – can be summarized as follows.

GOVERNANCE

On the negative side, education was found to reflect, reproduce, and reinforce fragile governance structures through:

- the unfair and unequal allocation of educational access and outcomes in ways that reflect and reproduce historical divisions of wealth, ethnicity, and gender, and thus fail to challenge and shift existent power structures and power bases;
- unfairness, coupled with inefficiencies deriving from corruption, lack of capacity, and fragmentation of powers, which has resulted in a lack of trust in the government's will and capacity to serve the needs of the population; and
- a failure to challenge widespread attitudes of passivity and create a sense of agency, which is likely to result in failure to promote the development of a vigorous citizenry, willing and able to criticize and challenge authority and advocate for and act towards positive change.

On the positive side, education was found both to help people operate within fragile and dysfunctional national governance systems and to help improve general governance through:

- the abolition of school fees, which has helped to change structures of exclusion and create a more level playing field, as well as restore a degree of trust in the government;
- accountability measures, which have contributed to breaking general habits of corruption and enhancing efficiency;
- community involvement in education, which has helped build local ownership and community self-confidence, eventually contributing to a vigorous civil society; and
- civic education, which has helped people recognize and avoid political manipulation, hence promoting the development of an active citizenry.

SECURITY

On the negative side, schools were found to reflect and reproduce violence outside the classroom, as well as to help contribute to insecurity, through:

- corporal punishment;
- schoolbooks extolling violence and promoting militarism; and
- a divided and segregated system, biased curriculum and textbooks, and rote learning, favouring the manipulation and mobilization of young people.

On the positive side, education was found to reduce violence and physical insecurity through:

- school enrolment, which has helped to ensure physical security and counter militarization by preventing armed conscription;
- specific programmes such as mine-risk education and HIV and AIDS education; and
- codes of conduct for teachers on physical punishment and sexual violence.

ECONOMY

On the negative side, education was found to fail to tackle economic insecurity, including poverty and unemployment, due to:

- donor focus on basic education, and a relative neglect of secondary and tertiary education; and
- economically irrelevant educational programmes, which have failed to provide graduates with livelihoods and to train a productive labour force with the capacity to boost the economy.

On the positive side, education was found to be successful in enabling people to live within a context of economic fragility, through:

- employment opportunities in the teaching profession, as well as in school construction and maintenance; and
- the provision of arable land, seed, fertilizer, and other non-food items to compensate for low teacher salaries.

SOCIAL DOMAIN

Education was found to negatively impact social drivers of fragility through:

- segregated structures, and biased and divisive curricula and textbooks, often coupled with a lack of promotion of critical thinking, all of which have increased mistrust, intolerance, and separate identities;
- identity-based discrimination, exclusion, and marginalization, which have reflected and reinforced general social inequalities, divisions, and tensions, as well as gender discrimination and sexual harassment, which have reinforced unequal gender relations; and
- a lack of adequate educational opportunities for youth, which has failed to contribute to reducing unemployment and migration, as well as social problems within the large youth population.

On the positive side, schooling was found to positively impact on social fragility through:

- integrated structures, and curriculum emphasis on national unity and national identity, as well as a shared future, which have promoted nation-building and social cohesion;
- human rights education and peace education, which have promoted positive values; and
- HIV and AIDS education, which has helped address widespread harmful practices such as gender oppression and violence, and contributed to raising gender awareness.

ENVIRONMENT

Education has demonstrated its negative impact on the environment mostly in omission through:

- a lack of widespread environmental education, which has resulted in a failure to teach and raise awareness of environmental issues such as deforestation or energy conservation, as well as land-grabbing, land tenure, and land rights.

Education has played a positive role mainly by enabling people to live with environmental fragility through:

- the construction of safe schools, which are able to withstand environmental hazards; and
- disaster-preparedness programmes.

In conclusion, education in the countries under review appears currently to have the most considerable potential for positive impact on fragility in the areas of:

- strengthening governance by restoring trust in the government's will and capacity to serve the needs of the population, and by strengthening community participation and ownership and promoting the development of an active citizenry;
- improving security by preventing armed conscription and promoting respect for rights and non-violence; and
- improving social relations by promoting nation-building, social cohesion, and positive values, and by challenging and addressing patterns of gender discrimination, oppression, and violence.

On the other hand, education appears to have a less positive influence at present in the areas of:

- boosting a weak economy; and
- preventing and raising awareness of environmental degradation.

A broader spectrum of impacts

Breaking down the relationship of education to fragility into a broader spectrum of impacts, ranging between the two extremes of either exacerbating or mitigating fragility, confirms the complexity of this relationship. Education continues to contribute negatively to fragility, both actively and deliberately, by politicizing and manipulating access, structures, curricula, and textbooks, and incidentally, by reproducing and failing to challenge existing patterns of division, inequality, violence, corruption, and inefficiency. Conversely, education strategies have

proven to have a (potentially) positive impact on fragility by acting to enable people to live and operate in the existent fragile context by softening its impact, and by also working to change the drivers of fragility through challenging and replacing existing patterns, structures, and attitudes. In practical terms, this latter distinction is particularly important with regard to setting and evaluating the achievement of realistic targets. From the four case studies, it appeared that education can make a difference, but that this lies primarily in making individuals and groups more able to cope with fragility. Education was also found to make the greatest inroads into fragility when perceived as equitable in terms of access and outcomes, thereby enhancing the legitimacy of the state.

Policy choices

The starting point for policy and programming is acknowledgement of the reality and nature of fragile contexts. In situations of fragility, it must be conceded that difficult choices have to be made, and that there will be trade-offs and compromises. While many dilemmas and policy choices are both country-specific and time-specific, some tentative goals for education policy and programming may be suggested:

- **Access and quality.** The long-term goal should remain to ensure equal, generalized, and safe access to education while guaranteeing its quality and relevance.
- **Civic and social relevance.** The goal should be to promote national unity while acknowledging and respecting differences and particularities.
- **Economic relevance.** The goal should be to promote education for employment by matching skills and knowledge to the labour market, and establishing education/employer partnerships.
- **Privatization of educational provision.** The goal should be to ensure quality private education while avoiding the entrenchment of disparities and divisions. Part of the solution might lie in building innovative and pragmatic public–private partnerships, which bring the private sector into national planning, and promote some form of regulation and accreditation for private schools.
- **Centralization and decentralization.** The goal could be to promote adequate degrees of decentralization in combination with some form of central regulation, while strengthening capacity and monitoring efficiency at both central and decentralized levels.
- **Funding modalities.** The goal should be to ensure aid harmonization and alignment with government priorities, with the aim of enhancing state ownership, avoiding fragmentation of planning, and strengthening government management capacity with the aim of guaranteeing sustainability.

5.2 Recommendations

A number of recommendations for policy and programming, as well as for further research, can be elicited from the analysis.

Recommendations for policy and programming

This synthesis report identifies three main targets and goals of educational programming in relation to fragility mitigation: (a) target the fragility of the education system itself by building

and/or strengthening its functionality; (b) target individuals and groups by building and/or strengthening their capacity to cope with fragility; and (c) target the context of fragility by building and/or strengthening peace, the state, and the nation. For each of these goals and targets, a number of entry-points are suggested. However, before any intervention is designed and implemented – regardless of whether or not it is intended to achieve any such goals – one general recommendation should be taken into consideration.

MAPPING THE CONNECTIONS

Education policy, planning, and programming in a fragile context cannot afford to ignore possible negative and positive impacts on different domains and drivers of fragility. Mapping the connections between education and fragility should therefore be seen as critical in thinking about education policy and programming, and should serve as a basis for determining needs and risks, and setting targets and evaluating progress. It is advisable to build on the various conflict/fragility assessments or analyses currently available to develop relevant indicators, which could be useful for planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Three simple-sounding queries, in particular, should form the core of such exercises:

- Can this policy/project/intervention have a negative impact on conditions of fragility?
- What evidence exists that it will have a positive impact on fragility?
- What factors and dynamics might influence the course and impacts of the intervention?

In order to answer the last contextual question, in particular, it is necessary to consider a political economy analysis as well as constant acknowledgement and assessment of the politico-cultural aspects surrounding the workings of organizations. This is central to effective and conscientious policy and programming, if aid is not to be sidelined.

TARGET AND GOAL 1: BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING A FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

A strong and functional education system appears to be a prerequisite for education to impact positively on the drivers and dynamics of fragility. Four key areas are particularly important for the purposes of mitigating the fragility of the education system and building and strengthening its functionality. These are: national planning, legal and regulatory frameworks, community involvement and local ownership, and teacher capacity development.

- **National planning.** A national plan for education is a prerequisite for a functional and coherent education system. Additionally, the fact that the MoE is responsible for coordination – although not necessarily implementation – of education efforts can be crucial in creating ownership, building capacity, and strengthening its position vis-à-vis donors, as well as in building trust in the government.
 - *Joint planning across sectors.* Education systems do not exist in a vacuum; their operation is conditioned by various factors and actors. While one cannot always predict events, it is possible to take into account the existence of other sectors and predict how they will operate. Education systems and goals should be aligned with other sectors and joint planning should be attempted. Such cross-sectoral collaboration and coordination is crucial, for example, to ensure that educational opportunities for youth are effectively linked to the job market.
 - *Joint planning across donors and government.* In order to conform to the Paris Declaration and Principles for Good Engagement, the frequent projectization and

fragmentation of donor and government activity should be replaced by inclusion of all education programming and financing within the national planning process. The harmonization and alignment of aid with government priorities should be prioritized, with the aim of enhancing state ownership, avoiding fragmentation of planning, developing and strengthening MoE capacity, tackling inefficiency and corruption, and building a reporting culture.

- *Robust data systems.* Robust data systems should be established in support of effective, evidence-based planning. Databases should be improved through base lines, both quantitative and qualitative, enabling longitudinal assessments, time-line comparisons, and correlations across different dynamics.
- **Legal and regulatory frameworks.** Regulation does not change attitudes and behaviours overnight; however, its promotion is likely to lead people to behave in certain ways, which over time might become part of normality. External actors have an important role to play in the promotion of regulation, as was the case in BiH. Regulation around corruption (e.g. in the form of policies and mechanisms promoting accountability and transparency) and around violence (e.g. in the form of codes of conduct for teachers), for example, are critical to countering fragility, provided that sustained compliance measures and sanctions are in place. In particular, INEE's Minimum Standards, which are increasingly recognized as international standards in countries affected by conflict or fragility, should be further promoted.
- **Community involvement and local ownership.** Community and local ownership generally appears to play an important role in underpinning functional and strong education systems. A focus on local involvement and strengthening community capacity is therefore advisable. Communities should not only be supported in the implementation of their educational initiatives, but also systematically involved in decision-taking and decision-making in order to ensure alignment with local priorities. Ways should be found to reconcile national planning with community ownership. Possible avenues include high levels of consultation to mobilize public understanding and buy-in, participatory involvement in deciding needs and priorities, monitoring of community-based initiatives, and training at local levels. Additionally, donors and ministries should be accommodating and pragmatic in terms of accepting to work with a range of power interests, partners, and gatekeepers. Children and young people should also be given more opportunities to participate in shaping decision-making in educational planning as integral members of the community.
- **Teacher capacity development.** Capacity development is commonly cited as a key aspect of the role education plays in mitigating fragility (Davies, 2009). Within such development, the need for teacher training would seem incontrovertible.

TARGET AND GOAL 2: BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING PEOPLE'S CAPACITY TO LIVE AND COPE WITH FRAGILITY

A second target and goal of educational action in mitigating fragility relates to building and enhancing people's ability to live and cope with political, economic, social, and environmental fragility. One entry-point here could be programmes aimed at physical protection. These include such existing programmes as mine-risk education, HIV and AIDS education, and the introduction of disaster-preparedness programmes, as well as the construction of safe schools.

TARGET AND GOAL 3: BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING PEACE, THE STATE, AND THE NATION

A third, broader, and much more ambitious target and goal relates to tackling the drivers and dynamics of fragility themselves, and promoting peace-building, state-building, and nation-building. This could be attempted by promoting the following:

- **Equal, generalized, and safe access to education.** Policies and regulations aimed at ensuring equal rights to education and tackling inequality and unfairness should be prioritized, given their potential to help build or restore legitimacy and public trust in the state, and to challenge exclusion and marginalization.
- **Nation-building and good citizenship.** Programmes that contribute to nation-building and to active and responsible citizenship should be allocated high importance. These include civic education that focuses on shared national identity and commonalities, but which is respectful of differences and particularities; human rights and peace education; and environmental education. History education needs to be addressed in a sensitive and future-oriented manner where histories of conflict are concerned, ensuring that hostilities are not reinforced. The sanitizing of curricula and textbooks considered to be outdated, biased, or harmful can be a valuable immediate target. However, a high degree of caution is needed to avoid entrenching positions.
- **Preparation for livelihoods and entrepreneurship.** Priority should be given to programmes able to offer an effective preparation for livelihoods, and to developing entrepreneurship including skills such as communication skills, financial and legal knowledge, and information technology. Education and training should be geared towards employment, by matching skills and knowledge to the labour market, and establishing education/employer/government partnerships.
- **Gender-sensitivity.** Programmes that target gender equity and gender relations should continue to receive high priority. This includes initiatives on gender-based violence and HIV and AIDS education.
- **Environmental sensibility.** More attention should be given to environmental education that teaches and raises awareness of environmental issues.
- **Child-friendly schools and informal initiatives.** Initiatives such as child-friendly schools should be scaled-up because of their potential to enhance individual security, gender equity, non-violence, and teacher development. Informal-sector education initiatives, such as radio voter education and forums for youth voices, should also be scaled-up.

Recommendations for future research

This synthesis uncovered several research gaps. Four main areas for future research have been identified that could fill some of these gaps and consequently strengthen the evidence base needed to make connections between education and fragility:

1. **Improve the qualitative and quantitative database for education decisions.** The database should be improved through base lines, both quantitative and qualitative, which would enable longitudinal assessments, time-line comparisons, and correlations across different dynamics. This would also involve the generation of indicators of fragility.
2. **Assess the impact of social science curriculum initiatives.** While peace education, child rights, life skills, and civic education have been included in the curriculum of various countries with

the assumption that these programmes would promote peace, time and further research are needed to investigate their actual impact on fragility. Even if notoriously difficult, continuing efforts need to be made to trial evaluation models on the impact of 'quality' education to promote non-violence and rights, as well as specific curricular programmes.

3. **Enhance knowledge of the workings of community governance.** While community governance, manifested for instance in community-based schools, is generally believed to promote local democracy and stronger civil society, details on local governance, such as how decisions are made and by whom, are still largely lacking. Such research would be beneficial in situations of attempted democratization to assess, for example, whether local autonomy strengthens or weakens national identity and cohesion.
4. **Elicit the voice of youth.** The absence of the youth voice was noted in more than one of the countries, and emphasis placed on youth participation in design and programming, as well as research and evaluation. The youth and development literature stresses the importance of decision-making mechanisms that empower young people by giving them a voice through legitimate outlets, and allowing them to exercise agency. Research on how young people see or use various means of expressing their voice will provide insights into which areas to support.

The three lenses used in this report may provide ways to start filling present research and evaluation gaps, and, ultimately, contribute to the improvement of educational practice in relation to fragility. Firstly, identifying a particular driver or domain of fragility for scrutiny can enable more targeted and long-term indicators of the success of an educational programme or policy to be established. Secondly, acknowledging the spectrum of possible impact means greater realism about possibilities, and honesty about past mistakes or unforeseen consequences. Thirdly, seeing most policy and programming as comprising inevitable trade-offs and dilemmas may lead to greater discussion and argument among stakeholders, but also to the acceptance of opportunity costs and compromises.

Above all, the use of analytic matrices across domains of fragility enables the intersections to be monitored. Just as, in motivational terms, the removal of 'dissatisfiers' does not mean the achievement of satisfiers, in issues of fragility, the removal of a negative does not automatically mean the achievement of a positive. Removing the dissatisfier of low pay for teachers does not guarantee the satisfier of their enjoying teaching: this comes from something else. Similarly, removing the negative of, say, a militarized curriculum does not automatically mean the achievement of positive peace. This is not to say, of course, that measures should not be taken to pay teachers better or to improve textbooks. But efforts to mitigate drivers of fragility, to be most effective, should be accompanied by an exploration of where the sources of stability lie and where education can enhance these.

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About the Synthesis Report

This report is a synthesis of the four Situational Analyses of Education and Fragility commissioned by the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility with the aim of providing key data to shed light on the relationship between education and fragility in a variety of contexts. Four countries – Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, and Liberia – were selected to encompass a range of different types and stages of fragility, with diverse historical antecedents to such fragility and within different geographical areas. At the core of the synthesis is an analytic framework that uses three types of comparative lens. The first lens takes specific domains of fragility (governance, security, economy, social domain, and environment) as its starting point and examines how education might impact on these, negatively and positively; the second goes beyond the negative and positive impacts of education on fragility to reveal a varied and nuanced spectrum of impact; and the third outlines six areas of difficult policy and programming choices which appear to be common. This synthesis report aims to bring together the findings of the case studies and, through comparisons guided by various analytic frameworks, generate insights and recommendations for policy and programming, as well as identify possible areas for further research.