Group Work Session A Handout
Recommendations for Education Policy and Programmes for Social Cohesion
and Conflict Risk Reduction
Summary of Recommendations from Desk Review of Education, Peacebuilding and
Social Cohesion (UNICEF EAPRO)

Access to education
- *Expanding access to education* in post conflict contexts through the development of inclusive education systems is an essential part of the peace divided. Including education in peace agreements with a commitment to universal access to education sends a signal to the population that the state is committed to addressing the roots of armed conflict through broadening education opportunity. Expanding access to secondary education is especially important.
- *Conflict analysis* and geographic mapping can reveal patterns of access to education and assist in reducing the gaps.

Safety and protection
- *Schools as zones of peace*. The approach taken by the schools as zones of peace (SZOP) programs has had some success in making school environments safer. Consider adapting the approach to other conflict affected countries, not only to protect education but also to contribute to peacebuilding processes in local communities.
- Use *community support* structures including child clubs, PTAs and child protection committees

Reducing violence within schools
- *School violence*. Interventions aimed at reducing violence in schools should encompass violence perpetrated by students as well as adults.
- *Corporal punishment*. Enact policies that prohibit corporal punishment along with training on child rights was not sufficient to change the practice of corporal punishment.
- *Codes of conduct.* Participatory development of school codes of conduct, including anti-violence clauses agreed on by the whole school community.

Language of instruction
- *National commission*. A commission of education reform can be created to promote dialogue, address grievances and establish policies for multilingual and intercultural education
- *Multilingual education.* Develop policies and instruction in multi-lingual in programmes in which children first learn to read and write in their own language and the second language is introduced gradually. Ensure access to heritage languages and cultures and to languages of power/opportunity.

Curriculum and textbook reform
- *Teaching of history.* Governments in post conflict contexts should take advantage of opportunities and address the teaching of history with a concrete plan of action and timeframe, since avoidance of curriculum reform may refuel tensions and result in further polarization.
- *Participatory approaches* to text book development have been suggested involving religious minorities and other excluded groups.

- *Teacher training* may be as important as curriculum reform to assist teachers in using pedagogy that addresses the controversies and sensitivities of the narratives of conflict and children's intellectual and emotional development (Cole and Barsalou, 2006).
- *Risk assessment.* All post-conflict policy reform needs to include risk assessments to weigh the impact on affected groups.

Life skills, peace, human rights and civic education
- Many countries have chosen to develop new courses in the areas of civics, peace education, human rights, conflict resolution, life skills and democracy with the focus on helping students develop new skills as active citizens
- Incorporating knowledge, skills and values that promote reconciliation in the national curriculum can contribute to new behavior patterns and attitudes between different groups and a shared willingness to look to the future more than the past.
- Advocates of critical peace education argue for the development in learners of a sense of **transformative agency** to enable them to take an active role in their own efficacy and address the underlying causes of conflict. "A complex matrix of education initiatives that address key themes and values could have a preventative effect in the long term. It is unrealistic to expect that such programmes will have immediate impacts within short periods of time." (Zakaria)
- There is some evidence in that **social/emotional learning** (SEL), which falls generally under the rubric of life skills, can have a positive impact on children who have experienced trauma.

Teachers and teacher training
- *Teacher training in pedagogy* that supports curriculum reform efforts is essential in post conflict contexts. Teachers may need training in teaching methods that emphasize critical thinking, dialogue and participatory, active learning approaches rather than rote learning. Approaches that emphasize students' critical thinking skills and expose them to multiple historical narratives can reinforce democratic and peaceful tendencies in transitional societies emerging from violent conflict.
- *Policies related to recruitment, training, remuneration*, and incentives to work in remote areas should be developed. Governments need to ensure that teacher training and accreditation systems are established quickly in post-conflict contexts.

Education governance and sector reform
Sector-wide approach (SWAp) could provide donors and government with an opportunity to initiate a conflict sensitive planning process to address areas such as policy reforms, new legislation, information systems to monitor equity, educational budgeting and financing
- *Reform of education governance*, including greater transparency in funding, employment, and the balance between centralized and local authority, is of critical importance during the post-conflict period.
- *Devolution* can result in positive outcomes for education quality. Successful interventions can empower the school community to take ownership and control of the school improvement process.
- *Raising the level of participation* of children, teachers and the community in school improvement is critical to enhancing other aspects of quality including teaching, learning, safety and inclusion. Building up trust and cooperation (*social capital*) through school-based organizations can rectify grievances over lack of participation and improve relationships

between individuals and groups. Participatory education systems can raise the social costs of and constraints against engaging in armed conflict.

Funding
- ***Increasing government investment*** in formal education systems is critical for building peace
- ***Local level***. At the local level in funding issues, school management committees should ensure transparency and avoid discrimination or favoritism regarding access, scholarships, fee waivers and employment.
- ***National level.*** At the national level, planning should involve using quantitative criteria to allocate resources fairly to different groups. Disaggregated statistics are needed that show current and planned resource allocations and enrolment ratios, as well as education achievements and transition rates to higher education levels, according to geographic locations (districts, sub-districts) or for different ethnic, religious or other groups.

A working model of 'peace-promoting education' for Southeast Asia and the South Pacific
From Peace-promoting Education Reform in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific

UNIVERSALIZATION
Basic education system is being expanded and universalized, with a minimum level of quality that leads to measurable basic skills outcomes
+ PEACE PROMOTION:
Analysis of the economic, social, environmental and governance/geopolitical factors that might drive conflict or promote peace, and ***Attention*** to education's role in peace-promoting processes:
↓   ↓   ↓

Inclusion	**Cohesion**	**Resilience**
• Mainstreaming educational equity and gender equity • Measures to serve poor and vulnerable groups • Measures to ensure equity of access, duration and opportunity across ethnic, religious and other identity groups • Strategies to reach out of school children	• Critical thinking, accurate information, diverse perspectives and narratives • Access to heritage languages and cultures and to languages of power/ opportunity • Respectful inter-group relationships, shared values of common citizenship • Promotion and practice of non-violence	• Sector and school level DRR, emergency preparedness and response systems • Child protection and appropriate social/ emotional support • Relevant environmental and livelihoods education and skills

↑   ↑   ↑
Underpinned by* GOOD GOVERNANCE:
• Education services delivered efficiently, transparently and fairly • Effective mechanisms for broad participation in education • Education sector linked with wider poverty reduction, social development and rights frameworks • Education part of national frameworks for disaster risk reduction and management and climate change