

Education in Emergencies: Concept and Practice

Author: Mr. Abdikadir Issa Farah

E-mail: fiabdikadir@gmail.com

Abstract:

This paper researches principles and standards set for implementation of Education in Emergencies together with case studies and experiences related to exercises that took place at different contexts in emergencies. The paper will present how practices are fitting into the prerequisite systems developed by Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) for implementation of Education in Emergencies. The paper will focus on the coordination, information sharing, advocacy and humanitarian response to the affected people. The paper will present two different scenarios that making interpretation about the importance of education in emergencies. The first scenario is about the vital role played by Education Cluster Coordinators and how good information sharing and internet communication mechanisms are beneficial and contribute to immediate assistance to the children in humanitarian crisis affected areas. The second scenario is a lesson learned from children who received tools and adequate response to their education needs during in emergencies.

Key Words: Education in Emergencies, child rights, quality education, humanitarian assistance

Introduction:

Education is human right for all and it is essential for physical growth/wellbeing, psychological and cognitive development of children. Education contributes to poverty reduction, building peace and social cohesion. It was understood that education and schooling of children are compulsory at both normal and emergency situations and leaders of states as well other people are obliged to provide adequate and protective quality education to all children.

Contextualization Education in Emergencies and Implementation as an Important and Emerging Life-saving Factor:

From the World Education Forum Conference that took place in Dakar Senegal in 2000 and followed Framework for Action for Education for All, Education in Emergencies brought noticeable approaches and systems for protecting and saving lives of millions of children at the corners in the world. An inter-agency coordination mechanism for agencies and organizations with expertise and a mandate for humanitarian response within the education sector in situations of internal displacement was established, and is co-chaired by UNICEF and Save the Children with unlimited partnerships from governments, UN agencies, national and international NGOs and community based organizations at all countries in the globe. The Education Cluster is responsible for strengthening preparedness of technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies. During humanitarian response, it should ensure predictable leadership and accountability in the education sector (...INEE). In 2015-16, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), a United Nations global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises was established. The aim of ECW is to support and protect holistic learning outcomes for refugee, internally displaced and other crisis-affected girls and boys, so no one is left behind(...ECW).

Definition of Education in emergencies:

The history of education in emergencies existed long time, but since it has been institutionalized and established comprehensive minimum standards return to the current era of the world. Most agreed definitions on education in emergencies include.

1. "Ensuring the right to education in emergencies and building resilience in the face of crisis" (UNESCO <https://www.unesco.org/en/education/emergencies>)
2. Education in emergencies means providing schooling in humanitarian emergencies including conflicts or wars, natural disasters and health-related crises, such as the Ebola outbreak (TheirWorld <https://theirworld.org/resources/education-in-emergencies/>).
3. 'Education in emergencies' refers to the quality learning opportunities for all ages in situations of crisis, including early childhood development, primary, secondary, non-formal, technical, vocational, higher and adult education. Education in emergencies provides physical, psychosocial, and cognitive protection that can sustain and save lives. Common situations of crisis in which education in emergencies is essential include conflicts, situations of violence, forced displacement, disasters, and public health emergencies. Education in emergencies is a wider concept than 'emergency education response' which is an essential part of it (Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)).
4. In emergencies education activities offer opportunities for refugees to receive information about their rights, available services, disease prevention, safety and physical security (including mine risk awareness) and have access to psychological support services (PSS). (UNHCR: <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/53602/education-in-emergencies>)

Implementation Education in Emergencies:

Natural and man-made disasters such as floods, drought and wars cause burdens and trigger difficulties on the daily life routines of societies. Sometimes people flee from their affected homes looking for safer place to refuge in, and leave all their belongings behind. Education in Emergencies was institutionalized to respond like those situations. I want to present two case studies to discuss on the importance of education in emergencies; and how implementation exercises complement and match to the principles and standards set by Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). The first case study is about the vital role played by Education Cluster Coordinators and how good information sharing and internet communication mechanisms are beneficial and contribute to immediate assistance to the children in humanitarian crisis affected areas. The second case study is a lesson learned from children who received tools and adequate response to their education needs during in emergencies.

Scenario 1: The Case of Erin Tate

Erin Tate, a US citizen was eighteen years old girl, and was learning at Miami Country Day School in US in 2012. When she was in her government class learning the basics during the first few months of school and as she was expanding on different types of governments, she got into **anarchy**. An example of anarchy that the teacher used was Somalia. Before that, she (embarrassingly) didn't know much about the situation but something about the few pictures that the teacher showed left her curious enough to do more research on her own(..Erin). After spending hours researching and learning more about that terrible occurrence which had been happening for years, she suddenly felt obligated to devote her last year of high school to do something to help the Somali people. Erin had no idea what she was going to do yet, but she wouldn't stop until she did something and made a difference. She emailed every person she could found on the United Nations website, (over 20) and with only three respondents. She was fortunate to had gotten in contact with Jumma Khan (Somalia Education Cluster Coordinator-UNICEF) who introduced her to FENPS (local NGO in Mogadishu, Somalia) (...Erin). Again Erin wanted to do whatever she could to give the students of in Mogadishu the best possible education in order for them to survive those hard times and gain sensible knowledge to survive in the world. When she first came up with the idea, she directly contacted to her advisor of two years, who was also her history teacher the year prior. The teacher not only supported her with whatever she wanted to do, she also encouraged her to try and try and try

until she succeeded in whatever she wanted to accomplish in that project. She helped her brainstorm for new ideas when she felt helpless and told her to not give up, reminding her that no Somali students (...Erin). After that, Erin started the first phase of her program named "Miami Country Day School and Somali Schools Sister School Program" (...Erin). The goal of her program was: to expand Somali secondary school enrollment; advocate education and its importance; and give Somali students hope and an international support system that would serve as a foundation that those students could lean on, depend on, talk to and ask for and receive basic necessities. Erin Tate with her classmates organized soccer tournament to raise money for Somali students and arranged books collection ceremony at their school in Miami, US. They collected many valuable books and other education materials from individuals and libraries in US. Later, Erin shipped the books to Mogadishu, Somalia and Somali students used to benefit the precious books and laptops sent by Erin to them. The Somali students were very happy and thanked to Erin for the text books and other education materials she supported with them.

Scenario 2: The Case of Sagal Mahamed Aden

Multi-Faceted humanitarian need that arose as a result of climate change (droughts, floods, etc.) compounded by a perilous security situation and surging COVID-19 pandemic crisis increased worries in Somalia. To response those extreme needs of Somali children, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), a United Nations global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises granted Somalia a multi-year resilience program (MYRP). Formal Education Network for Private Schools (FENPS) is one of implementing partners for ECW-MYRP Somalia. ECWMYRP emphasized on increased gender equity and equality in education. There were multiple outputs to achieve that outcome. Output 3 was to provide solar lamps to girls in education in Emergencies (EiE) schools to improve their accessibility to education. There were many but varied reasons that made it necessary for provision of solar lamps to vulnerable girls. Providers of electricity in Somalia are private companies that make high charges for electricity (i.e. some charge \$1per KW+\$7 fixed even if you do not use or consume less than 1KW). Low income people/families particularly those who live in IDP camps and remote/rural areas have no access to electricity. Students and vulnerable children extremely need clear electricity and/or solar lamps to learn at night. Solar lamps can be used as an alternative source of light that is affordable and responsive to girls immediate needs for clear light so that to improve their learning.

Sagal Mahamed Aden was 12 years old Somali girl. Sagal and her family fled from a small village in the vicinity of Mustahil town near the border of Ethiopia to Beletweyne town of Hiran Due to drought effects in 2017. Sagal lived with her family in a narrow makeshift hut at Rabbi Suge IDP camp in Beletweyne, Somalia. Sagal's family consisted of 5 children, mother and father. The father had no job so Sagal and her mother used to do house cleaning and washing of clothes for neighboring residents in the town to earn a living for their family. One day in November 2020, a roving community education committee (CEC) member from Safa primary school supported by ECW program met with Sagal's mother. The CEC member noted from the mother that Sagal and other children had not been sent to school because the family could not afford to pay school fees. Then, the CEC member informed the Sagal's mother that there was Safa Primary School that provided free education for children in their village, and encouraged her to stop children laboring, and requested from the mother to send them that school. Sagal's mother thanked to and accepted CEC member's suggestion. Thereafter, Sagal was enrolled at Safa Primary School. Sagal and her younger brother were learning ABE level one (combined Grade 1 & Grade 2 primary education). Sagal was one of 300 girls benefiting from solar lamp package for girls in the ECW Grant. She told that solar lamp was badly needed by her. She said that she was grateful to all the generous people for providing her that wonderful solar lamp. Before she got that solar lamp she and her family used to beg their neighbors for light in order to be able to read her lessons and/or to charge up her mother's mobile phone, but that time she and her family had received clear light and really excited about that(...Sagal).

Sagal said that not only solar panels, but she was also given pens, books and other education materials and Solar panels together with teaching and learning materials provided to children including Ms. Sagal and schools improved participation and attendance of girls in education.

My Conclusion:

Education in Emergencies provides opportunities and access to quality education for all ages in situations of crisis. Education Cluster is the best advocacy and mechanism that link affected children to other people to share with their resources and help them survive.

References

- Annet Kragt (2019-2021). Critical perspectives on Education in Emergencies, University of Amsterdam Graduate School of Social Sciences
- Bozkurt, A. & Sharma, R. C. (2020). Emergency remote teaching in a time of global crisis due to Corona Virus pandemic, *Asian Journal of Distance Education: 2020*, Volume 15, Issue 1, i-vi
- Burde, D., Lahmann, H. and Thompson, N. (2019) Education in emergencies: ‘What works’ revisited, *Education and Conflict Review*, 2, 81-88.
- Cambridge University Press & Cambridge Assessment. (2020). the Learning Passport: Research and Recommendations Report. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press & Cambridge Assessment
- Chung, Kate (2019). Identifying the Gaps in Resources for Education in Emergencies. Capstone Collection 3200. <https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/capstones/3200>
- Elisabeth King, Emily Dunlop, Jo Kelcey and Caroline Ndirangu (February 2019). Secondary Education for Youth Affected by Humanitarian Emergencies and Protracted Crises, New York and Nairobi Universities
- Josephine Tumwesige(MAY 2020). COVID-19 Educational Disruption and Response: Rethinking e-Learning in Uganda
- Monaghan, Christine (2019). Asking ‘Why’ and ‘How’: A Historical Turn in Refugee Education
- Nicolai, S., et. al. (2016). A common platform for education in emergencies and protracted crises: Evidence paper. London, ODI
- Ozsel Beleli, Victoria Chang, Michael J. Feigelson, Jules A. Kopel-Bailey, Sheila A. Maak, Jacob P. Mnookin, Thu H. Nguyen, Mariana Salazar, Joy E. Sinderbrand & Simon N. Tafoya (March 2007). Education in Emergencies and Early Reconstruction-UNICEF Interventions in Colombia, Liberia, and Southern Sudan, Prepared for UNICEF by: WWS 591D Education in Emergencies Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University
- Pedro Bastidas & Marla Petal, Independent Consultants (2012). Assessing School Safety from Disasters – A Global Baseline Report, UNISDR