Capacity Development for Ministries of Education on Education and Resilience: 
Crisis-sensitive Educational Planning and Curriculum to Strengthen Resilience, Social 
Cohesion and Comprehensive School Safety in East Asia and Pacific 

Draft Concept Note 

A proposed partnership between: 

UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF EAPRO), UNESCO Asia and the Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok), Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Secretariat (SEAMES), UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO-IIEP), SEAMEO Regional Center for Educational Innovation and Technology (SEAMEO INNOTECH), and Protect Education from Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC). 

Introduction and Rationale 
Disasters and conflicts have devastating economic and social impacts and pose enormous setbacks to human security and development. Natural hazards such as earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical storms, flooding, landslides and volcanic eruptions affect millions of people every year, and almost 2 million people in the Asia-Pacific region were killed in disasters between 1970 and 2011. The Asia-Pacific region is the most disaster-prone area of the world, and the region that experiences disasters which have the most severe impacts. In 2010 alone, the Asia-Pacific region laid claim to 6 of the 10 most deadly global disasters. These events are becoming more frequent and severe, compounded by the effects of climate change and growing population density. In addition, the conflicts and violence that plague some of the countries in the region further aggravate the challenges brought about by the adverse effects of these natural hazards and disasters. 

At first glance Southeast Asia and South Pacific seem conflict-free and it is true that for three decades these regions have had no significant inter-state conflict and are in fact enjoying

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their "most peaceful period in modern history", according to Wainwright (2010\(^2\)). This stability has supported fast economic growth and human development, including in the education sector. However, closer study reveals that many of the countries are currently experiencing or recovering from some form of intra-state conflict or serious inter-communal violence. For example, Indonesia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand and Timor Leste all have a past and on-going of insurgencies where some regions try to assert their own identity and greater autonomy within, or independence from the nation state. On the other hand, countries such as Fiji, Indonesia, Myanmar and the South Pacific Island states of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu have experienced inter-communal violence. In addition, the region has also been plagued by other forms of political violence such as terrorist attacks by radicalized religious groups, violence associated with political coups, elections and mass demonstrations; clan feuding for political advantage, and political repression. In terms of education, schools, teachers and students have been targets of attacks at least in Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia and Myanmar (Education under Attack, 2014\(^3\)).

However, key institutions in Asia and Pacific countries, including education ministries, often lack the capacity to effectively anticipate, respond to, cope with, manage and overcome crisis. The failure of these institutions during emergencies can compound the impact of disasters. To address the many environmental challenges and hazards and potential added stress of violence and conflict with which they are confronted, there is a pressing need for in-depth awareness and understanding of how to adequately mitigate, prepare for, and respond to conflict and disasters. Education has a vital role to play in this regard, as it can contribute to building resilience to disasters and conflicts and enhancing capacities to adapt to a changing climate and context. While many natural hazards are inevitable, education can help countries in the region mitigate their effects, by ensuring that school communities and education systems are able to effectively prepare for, respond to, and properly recover in the aftermath of disasters. Education systems also have a significant role to play in reducing the potential for and impact of violence and conflicts.

To do so, it is essential for education systems to adopt policies and plans that maximize their own resilience to disasters and conflict. Access to education often deteriorates significantly in crisis-affected areas. When provided safely, however, education in emergencies can protect children from exploitation and harm, disseminate life-saving information, and mitigate the psychosocial impact of an emergency by giving a sense of normalcy, stability, structure and hope for the future, while also providing essential building blocks for social and economic recovery. Education content, through its curriculum, can also spread life-saving messages and promote social cohesion, respect for diversity and peacebuilding. The education sector therefore has a key role to play in promoting Conflict and Disaster Risk Reduction (C/DRR). As such, there is an urgent need for educational planners to integrate conflict and disaster risk reduction into sector planning processes, and for curriculum developers to ensure that these issues are sufficiently addressed in educational content.

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\(^2\) Wainwright, E., Conflict Prevention in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, New York University, April 2010

\(^3\) Education under Attack 2014, Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack.
In response to this need, this proposed capacity development initiative for Ministries of Education on crisis-sensitive planning builds on existing work that has been undertaken by UNICEF EAPRO, UNESCO Bangkok, SEAMES, UNESCO-IIIEP, SEAMEO INNOTECH, and PEIC. The recently developed *Regional guidance on education and resilience programmes and policies that promote social cohesion and comprehensive school safety in East Asia and the Pacific*, and the corresponding brochure ‘*Education and Resilience – Nine priority paths for making schools safer and societies more cohesive*’ published in April 2015 puts forward 9 recommendations to support governments, Ministries of Education (MoEs), education agencies and communities in the East Asia and the Pacific Region in developing and implementing policies/programmes to strengthen the resilience of the education system in promoting social cohesion and comprehensive school safety. Specifically, recommendations 1 - Risk/Hazard Assessment; Conflict/situation analysis, 2 - Integration of Conflict and Disaster Risk Reduction into Education sector Plan and Budget, and 4 – Carry out comprehensive reform of curriculum that is geared towards social cohesion and school safety. These recommendations are of particular relevance to the proposed partnership between UNICEF EAPRO, UNESCO Bangkok, SEAMES, UNESCO-IIIEP, SEAMEO INNOTECH, and PEIC.

**Expertise of UNESCO-IIIEP**

The key technical expert in this initiative is the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO-IIIEP). UNESCO-IIIEP’s mission is to strengthen the capacity of countries to plan and manage their education systems through training, research and technical cooperation. IIIEP has developed global expertise in the field of education in emergencies and disaster preparedness, and specifically in crisis-sensitive planning. It is increasingly recognized that crisis-sensitive planning saves lives and money. Education protects learners and their communities by providing life-saving advice in cases of emergency. Good planning can save the cost of rebuilding or repairing expensive infrastructure. Over the long term crisis-sensitive planning strengthens resilience of education systems and communities to overcome the challenges and risks facing learners and education institutions. The long term and systemic nature of planning (that includes curriculum reform) means there is sufficient time for prevention and preparedness measures to be embedded in planning processes. The increasing complexity of protracted crises, together with the rising occurrence of both conflict and disaster means that short term humanitarian quick fixes are no longer sufficient. By adopting crisis-sensitive planning, ministries of education, planning and curriculum departments can be the change agents for prevention.

After developing “*Guidance notes for educational planners on integrating conflict and disaster risk reduction in education sector plans*”, together with UNICEF WCARO in 2012, IIIEP has been working with Protect Education from Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC) and a range of partners on the “*Crisis-sensitive Education Sector Policymaking, Planning and Curricula: a Capacity Development programme*” since 2013. This programme supports education ministries to develop and implement systemic policies, plans and curricula that strengthen safety, resilience and social cohesion. This programme takes ministries of education through the typical planning cycle. In addition it encourages them to consider and act upon the
vulnerabilities as well as resilience of the education system in order to mitigate the impact of possible disasters, insecurity and conflicts.

The collaboration between partners has been central to this first phase of the programme. Many countries as well as UN agencies and non-governmental organizations have demonstrated interest in developing country-level capacities to integrate conflict and disaster risk reduction in education sector plans and policies. Using the partnerships developed during collaboration with PEIC, IIEP draws on agency support for technical expertise, additional funding, and advocacy to widen the reach of this programme in order to effectively meet the increasing demands of ministries of education as they integrate the risk of conflict and disaster in their planning and curriculum development processes. The IIEP technical team, funded through the PEIC project and other sources, works closely with these partners and ministries of education to develop country-specific strategies for developing capacities of planners and curriculum developers to reduce the risks of conflict and disaster. The collaboration proposed herein is part of the IIEP-PEIC global programme.

The underlying theory of change of the IIEP-PEIC programme is that capacity building and accompaniment of MOE planning and curriculum departments over a multi-year period will help overcome barriers to inclusion of crisis-sensitive elements in education plans and education materials, and will build sustainable institutional policies and capacity in this area.

The IIEP-PEIC programme works through: (1) offering training courses and materials; (2) providing technical cooperation at the national level in two or three countries; (3) providing further ongoing accompaniment and mentoring from a distance and face-to-face. It is envisaged that the continued technical and financial partnership with PEIC will provide a strong foundation for work with other partners, as part of a coordinated plan of action. For UNESCO-IIEP, the work contributes to IIEP’s Strategic plan’s 2014 – 2017 Thematic priority 4: Resilience of education systems through crisis-sensitive planning.

**Contribution to UNICEF Priorities**

For UNICEF EAPRO, the initiative falls under the ‘Learning for Peace’, Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy (PBEA) Programme which aims to strengthen resilience, social cohesion and human security in countries and provide a more systematic approach to addressing all risks that children face. In addition, the initiative is aligned with key global and regional plans and priorities of UNICEF.

**Objectives**

This initiative on crisis-sensitive education planning and associated work on education content and materials aims to enhance the capacity of education ministries to analyse and respond to the risks of conflict and disasters in the education sector. It also aims to enhance the knowledge-base for designing crisis-sensitive education plans.

**Expected outputs**

By joining forces and implementing a capacity development initiative on crisis-sensitive educational planning and associated content and materials with a select group of countries in
the Asia-Pacific region, UNICEF EAPRO, UNESCO Bangkok, SEAMES, UNESCO-IIEP, SEAMEO INNOTECH and PEIC will:

1) Enhance the participating countries’ capacity on integrating C/DRR in education planning, including costing and budgeting;
2) Enhance the participating countries’ capacity on curriculum issues related to DRR/school safety, resilience and social cohesion;
3) Foster knowledge sharing and learning across countries;
4) Provide an opportunity for action planning which will enable representatives to apply their learning directly in their country context; and
5) Provide practical and concrete tools and guidelines for integrating C/DRR in education planning and curriculum development.

Proposed content
In the framework of the proposed partnership between UNICEF EAPRO, UNESCO Bangkok, SEAMES, UNESCO-IIEP, SEAMEO INNOTECH and PEIC, we propose the following capacity development activities:

1. A regional workshop on Integrating Conflict and Disaster Risk Reduction (C/DRR) into Education Sector Plans, Curricula and Budgets (Bangkok, Thailand)

This workshop will be jointly organized by all partners, and will aim to bring together teams of 5 individuals from the Ministries of Education and potentially two UN agencies or INGOs representatives per country (who will fund their own travel), from a total of 7 countries, in order to build their capacity on C/DRR. These will be countries that have started to integrate conflict and disaster risk reduction in their education sector planning processes, and that are working on addressing these issues in their curriculum.

After an initial 2-day seminar on the rationale and methodology for integrating safety, resilience and social cohesion into sector plans, policies and curricula, workshop participants will be divided into two parallel streams before returning to consolidate their findings. The workshop will last a total of 5 days and cover the following:

1. Joint workshop (two days): General overview of the concepts and methodology of integrating school safety, resilience and social cohesion into sector plans, policies and curricula
2. Stream 1 Planning (three days): Integrating school safety, resilience and social cohesion into education sector analysis including at state level. This will also include analysis of EMIS data and utilisation of projection modelling to prioritise indicators related to school safety, resilience and social cohesion
3. Stream 2 Curriculum (three days): Analysis and capacity development on curriculum issues relating to school safety, resilience and social cohesion
The materials development and workshop facilitation will be led by IIEP, PEIC and UNESCO Bangkok with support and inputs from UNICEF EAPRO, SEAMES and SEAMEO INNOTECH. Materials for the curriculum stream will be provided by PEIC, with support and inputs from UNICEF EAPRO and UNESCO Bangkok.

The dates of the workshop have been agreed for 19 – 23 October 2015. The workshop will take place in Bangkok. The seven countries that will be invited are:

a) Cambodia – The government developed the Strategic National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (2008-2013) which has a disaster risk reduction component “Use knowledge innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience”. UNICEF has recently supported Cambodia to develop the Education Sector Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan and to strengthen Multilingual Education (MLE).

b) Indonesia - UNESCO will soon pilot the VISUS tool (Multihazard school safety assessment methodology). UNICEF supports emergency preparedness, safe schools and child-centred DRR in education in Indonesia.

c) Lao PDR – UNESCO is piloting the VISUS tool (Multihazard school safety assessment methodology).

d) Myanmar – UNESCO Bangkok is already supporting Myanmar on integrating the disaster risk reduction (DRR) in education planning through a preparation of a costing module. In addition, UNICEF Myanmar is supporting conflict sensitive education in Myanmar through its Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy (PBEA) Programme. Myanmar is going through an extensive education sector reform which includes various areas such as curriculum, policies and legislation so the moment is very suitable for this type of capacity building.

e) Papua New Guinea - PNG is one of the most disaster prone countries in the Pacific region, accounting for 25% of all the natural disasters occurred in the Pacific between 1950 and 2008. The country is also a recipient of UN’s Peacebuilding Fund and some technical support from UNICEF EAPRO’s PBEA Programme on issues related to peace building, peace building, gender and school related gender-based violence (SRGBV), and peacebuilding and ECD. PNG is looking into integrating both DRR/ climate change and peacebuilding into the education curriculum.

f) Philippines – The MoE has taken on quite an active role in systematically addressing risks of both disaster and conflict in their education sector planning processes. In Mindanao, UNICEF Philippines recently supported a local child-centred conflict analysis to support better planning and programming. A part of the process, analysis focusing on adolescents, was also supported by UNICEF EAPRO’s PBEA Programme.

g) Solomon Islands - The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) in the Solomon Islands developed the “Policy Statement and Guidelines for Disaster Preparedness and Education in Emergency Situations in the Solomon Islands”
in 2011, and has a wealth of experience in this field and has had to continuously focus on emergencies, DRR, preparedness and response. UNICEF assists Solomon Islands in education sector emergency preparedness, response, and safe schools/DRR efforts. UNICEF EAPRO’s PBEA Programme supported and included a case study on Solomon Islands in its publications on Education and Social Cohesion.  

2. **IIEP’s Distance course** on “Educational planning for conflict and disaster risk reduction”

IIEP’s distance course on *Educational planning for conflict and disaster risk reduction* was successfully implemented in 2012 and 2014, in English and French respectively. Participating countries were from the East and Southern African region in both 2012 and 2014. Several Francophone countries from West and Central Africa also participated in the course in 2014. The distance course will be offered again to English-speaking countries from 19 October – 18 December 2015 and is an integral component of IIEP’s capacity development approach for countries in East Asia and the Pacific, but also for other English-speaking countries throughout the world.

The course takes senior staff of Ministries of Education and their counterparts from development partner organizations through a systematic examination of the ways in which education authorities can integrate conflict and disaster risk reduction into sector planning processes.

Participants will examine core educational planning steps such as:

- analysing the risks affecting the education sector;
- integrating C/DRR measures into regular education policy, planning, programming, and budgeting interventions;
- developing a relevant C/DRR strategy to respond to identified risks;
- mobilizing human and financial resources to implement C/DRR measures; and
- monitoring and evaluating progress on implementation of risk reduction strategies.

3. **Module on Integrating Conflict and Disaster Risk Reduction for the Education Microplanning Toolkit**

In light of the support that UNESCO Bangkok provides to different countries in the Asia-Pacific region, it is interested in developing a module on disaster and conflict risk reduction for the Education Microplanning Toolkit⁵, a practical tool to build capacities in education planning at the local level. Conducted by communities and schools in local districts, education microplanning is the local implementation of national policies, adapted to local

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⁴ UNICEF EAPRO, 2014: Solomon Islands Case Study in Education, Conflict and Social Cohesion. UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office.
needs, aspirations and capacities. As countries in the region move to decentralize their education systems, there is an increasing need for local actors to be equipped with the capacity to assess local needs and plan activities for local educational development. Community involvement in planning is believed to result in more effective plans and increased ownership.

The contents of the module on disaster and conflict risk reduction will build on the existing work of UNESCO Bangkok, UNESCO-IIEP and UNICEF EAPRO. The existing materials will be adapted to ensure that local education planning addresses the needs of communities related to conflict and disaster risk reduction and resilience in education. An existing microplanning module “Enhancing curriculum and teaching processes to improve student learning”, which outlines curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation steps at a local level, will be reviewed for elements to be included in the module. The first draft of the module will be presented during the Regional Workshop and the feedback from the participants will be incorporated in the revision of the module.