

EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES

Save the Children Policy Paper

The following paper is one in a series on Save the Children's (SC UK) policies on humanitarian terms of engagement. The series will provide practical guidelines for field staff as well as positions to support SC UK's advocacy work.

SC UK emergency policy builds on an established body of organisational policy and is underpinned by core humanitarian principles and standards. These policies, principles, and standards are articulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Geneva Conventions, the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards of Disaster Response, the Red Cross Code of Conduct, the SC UK Global Policy on Emergencies, and the SC UK Emergency Strategy.

SUMMARY

Save the Children UK believes education is a fundamental component of humanitarian assistance. This belief is founded on a child's right to education, need for protection, and desire for education opportunities. Significant numbers of children worldwide are denied education due to the impacts of an emergency. In emergencies, it is Save the Children's policy to integrate education into its emergency preparedness and response phases. This is always guided by core principles of relevance, inclusion, and durability.

SC UK runs programmes in fifty-four countries affected by conflict or natural disaster, nearly two-thirds of which have experience in emergency education. Efforts range from rapid response in acute crisis to long-term inputs in a chronic situation. Projects broadly fall into the following four categories:

- 1) Support to existing education systems
- 2) Special measures to return children to school
- 3) Organise of out-of-school alternatives
- 4) Co-ordinate non-school age programmes

Although some of this work has been short-term and other has been limited in scope, there have been a number of pioneering programmes that have had wide impact and whose learning contributes to these guidelines. On issues of quality, the diverse experiences of non-emergency education projects also have much to share.

This paper aims to provide country programmes with a *policy framework* and some *practical advice* to guide Save the Children's emergency education work. It covers the following points.

- I. Defining emergency education
- II. Rationale for emergency education
- III. Impacts of emergencies on education
- IV. Contexts for affected children
- V. Education principles
- VI. Designing a response
- VII. Project approaches
- VIII. Challenges of response
- IX. Core activities
- X. Enhancing organisational effectiveness

I. DEFINING EMERGENCY EDUCATION

Emergency education is a set of linked project activities that enable structured learning to continue in times of acute crisis or long-term instability.

– Save the Children UK definition

SC UK Working Definitions

An *emergency* is a crisis situation that overwhelms the capacity of a society to cope by using its resources alone. An emergency response can be carried out in the context of an acute or a chronic emergency, with causes varying from armed conflict to political instability to natural disaster.

Education is a process of learning that begins from birth onwards and takes place in the family and community as much as in the school. Education efforts are diverse and focused on stimulating change wherever children's learning takes place within a given community.

As part of its emergency efforts, Save the Children UK is dedicated to ensuring education is available and appropriate for children affected by armed conflicts and natural disasters. In its broadest sense, education continues regardless of whether the structures of society arrange for it to happen or not. Learning occurs as individuals are exposed to different experiences or as people exchange or pass on skills. When SC UK speaks of supporting education during periods of disruption, it uses the narrower meaning of education as an organised and collective activity. Education in this sense requires some form of structure to support it. Therefore, a primary aim of emergency education programmes is to help people in shattered communities rebuild a structure that will ensure education continues.

Emergency education project activities vary greatly according to the nature of the crisis and the cultural context of the country. As a rule, emergency education will:

- Deliver tangible results, with an aim to maintain children's educational continuity
- Be flexible in terms of timing, location, and methods used
- Build the capacity of teachers to help children cope with the mental, physical and social impacts of an emergency
- Focus efforts on groups of marginalised children: the displaced, ethnic minorities, girls, the disabled, younger children, former child soldiers
- Find ways to address community tensions and enhance integration
- Engage governments, local NGO's, or communities themselves as partners

II. RATIONALE FOR EMERGENCY EDUCATION

State parties recognise the right of the child to education and...shall make primary education compulsory and available free for all... and take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop out rates.

- *Convention of the Rights of the Child, Article 28*

Save the Children believes that education is a priority component of humanitarian assistance. Conflicts and natural disasters deny generations of children the knowledge and the opportunities that an education can potentially provide. Education for children experiencing emergencies is a necessity that can be both *life-preserving* and *life-saving*. It preserves life by offering structure and stability during a time of crisis and hope for the time beyond. It saves lives by directly protecting children and by sharing information necessary for survival. Three core factors form a foundation for SC UK's commitment to emergency education.

Education is a right

The nearly universal ratification of the 1989 *Convention of the Rights of the Child* has established education as a basic human right to which all the world's children are entitled. However, large numbers of children are denied education due to conflict, chronic instability, and natural disasters. In 1996 Graca Machel highlighted the plight of some of these children in her *Report on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*. In 2000, governments and agencies participating in the Dakar World Education Forum identified humanitarian emergencies as a major obstacle toward achieving the goals of *Education for All*. While it is important to state that education is a right, the words are not enough. Action to ensure the right exists is essential.

Education affords protection

Education structures can serve an essential function of protection, providing a safe environment in which to support and account for individual children. The protection of a school environment affords parents the time and space to tackle their concerns during an emergency situation. Schooling is a nearly universal community structure, which by its nature tracks children and provides adult supervision outside of the family. This interaction can alert officials to recruitment of children in the armed forces or abduction for other purposes such as the sex industry. Education programmes also impart important messages, such as hygiene, HIV/AIDs, or landmine safety, which individually protect children and help them to cope with the impact of the emergency at a practical level.

Education is prioritised by communities

Communities experiencing crisis commonly place the provision of education as a top priority for assistance. Both children and parents want schools, but in an emergency there is a breakdown in the local mechanisms that support education. The structure and stability of education can give children, their families, and communities resilience and hope in the future. Postponing education provision until 'the emergency is over' can mean that many children will never attend school again. They may not learn to read, write, or count, and burdened with adult roles and left without the opportunity to play, the development of other essential life skills is hampered. Uneducated children are vulnerable to a future of poverty and violence, and lack the more complex skills needed to contribute to their society's reconstruction and development.

III. IMPACTS OF EMERGENCIES ON EDUCATION

It is estimated by that over 80 percent of the reported 113 billion school-age children not enrolled in school are living in crisis and post-crisis countries.

- Emily Vargas Baron, Ph.D., "The RISE Institute"

The effects of conflicts and natural disasters extend beyond individual children to impact service systems and societal structures as a whole. Little is left unchanged in a child's world when an emergency strikes. Educational responses to the emergency can relate to any of these levels of impact.

Personal impact

Children who have experienced the instability of an emergency are vulnerable. They are surrounded by change, have often directly witnessed violence or destruction, and may face continued threats to their security. They look toward an unknown future with the added challenge of having to make their way amidst chaos. Some children may be traumatised by their experience of conflict or disaster. They may be threatened by violence themselves, have lost a home, or experience the uncertainty of life as a displaced person. Children often face forced or voluntary conscription, sexual violence, increased risk of sexually transmitted disease, and physical mutilation from landmines and unexploded ordnance. When schooling is not available, neither is a central source of stability to a child. Even if schools remain open in such circumstances, it is likely that a child's ability to learn and participate will be adversely affected.

Impact on systems

Education systems break down or experience interruption during an emergency. School infrastructure can break down with buildings destroyed or used as shelters by homeless families. Supplies can be looted, there may be access and security issues, or landmines could be present. Staffing of schools is often equally affected with a lack of qualified teachers, no salaries, and absence of training. The classroom content may become controversial and co-opted to serve a political function, with administration or teachers themselves imposing skewed views on language, religion, or history. Essential content might be missing, psychosocial support ignored, or ways of teaching irrelevant. Even if all of the above is in place, attendance would be affected through large class sizes, marginalised children not participating, and lack of overall capacity of the school. The disruptions may occur over extended periods of time while funding is cut back, teachers flee or are killed, and schools are closed and re-opened as fighting allows. Efforts to improve systems through long-term developments such as teacher training or textbook production are often abandoned.

Societal impact

The environment in which children learn and grow is disrupted during emergencies. Social networks break down and support systems erode as communities are dispersed and displaced. Family violence often increases. Traditional role models are replaced by soldiers or criminal gangs. Children are suddenly expected to adopt adult roles and responsibilities. Schooling is one of the most significant social structures in children's lives. In the midst of so much loss and change, absence of schooling intensifies the impacts of a crisis and denies children one of their primary social environments.

IV. CONTEXTS FOR AFFECTED CHILDREN

In poorer countries where emergencies typically occur, more than 50% of the population affected are typically made up of children or adolescents. They live in a variety of contexts, with each setting impacting available supports for schooling in different ways.

Where there is no authority

Children in communities experiencing chronic emergencies may live in a context where there is effectively no government. Insecurity, violence, and on-going civil war limit the formation of state structures and their ability to operate. In these cases, local communities must take up responsibility to provide schooling on their own. They must build and maintain schools, pay teacher salaries, train teachers, supply schools, and design curricula, all of which are activities typically covered by governments.

Refugee children

More than half of the world's 22.4 million refugees are children and adolescents under the age of 18. Each day, another 5,000 children become refugees; one in every 230 persons in the world is a child or adolescent who has been forced to flee his or her home.

- *UNHCR Global Appeal, 1999*

Refugee children may live either in camps or with host families. They face issues of separation from their communities, friends, and sometimes families. Refugee camps are designed to be temporary, although people may spend years living in them. Schooling is often set up in the camp itself, which requires the establishment of a new system, identification and training of teachers, and decisions on curriculum use. Refugee children living with host families will more typically attend schools in the country of asylum. Both of these contexts necessitate difficult decisions on issues such as language of instruction, relevance of curriculum, and certification. As the initial aim of most refugees is to return home, schooling compatible with the home country education system is a priority. However, in a long-term refugee situation it may be better for children to begin to learn the language and curriculum of their host country so that they have a greater chance of continuing school and progressing to the next level of education.

Displaced children

The numbers of internally displaced peoples (IDP's) have grown significantly from an estimated few million 15 years ago in less than ten countries, to today's figures of 20 to 25 million IDP's in around 40 countries. Some groups estimate the number of IDP's as high as 30 million, representing 1 out of every 200 people on earth, 80% of them are women and children.

- *Jubilee Action Briefing Paper, 2000*

Internally displaced people (IDP's) are those who did not or could not flee their country as a result of a crisis. People are only officially considered "refugees" after they have crossed a border into another country. Issues surrounding displaced children need as much attention as those of refugees, as the situation of IDP's can often be worse than that of refugees. IDP's are under a much greater threat of renewed attack from the warring parties, their legal rights are more ambiguous, access by aid agencies is likely to be difficult, and media attention is scarce. Relief aid is usually relegated to people taking refuge in official "safe areas", and cannot be

spent on children living elsewhere in war zones. Consequently, displaced children's right to education is often violated as services and assistance are difficult to arrange.

Children returning home

Children who were displaced or have been refugees will return home to vastly different contexts. Levels of destruction and violence, as well as length of time away from home, will greatly affect the educational needs of returning students. In some instances, it is necessary to completely rebuild the school system. In others, the priority is to help children return and integrate into the existing system. As a preparation for return, great care should be taken to ensure that displaced children are being taught with material to match what they must learn when they return home. If children are to have a realistic chance of reintegrating into their own country's education system, then ideally they should follow a similar curriculum and be taught in the same language of that system. Once they do return, special care should be given to supporting and tracking their progress.

Children remaining at home

Finally, large numbers of children affected by conflict and natural disasters do not move during a crisis. Although they have not had to cope with the impact of being displaced, the instability of their surrounding environment can have a profound effect. Groups of children remaining in their homes may experience increased threats of violence and destruction of schools and their contents. Population shifts can place a burden on resources. Schools might close or be limited in their hours. Class sizes will have grown and school personnel might have dwindled in numbers. Children who remain at home and face conflict or disaster can experience loss of education opportunities equally significant to those who have needed to move.

V. EDUCATION PRINCIPLES

In the CRC, article 29 address the “aims of education”. It recognises a necessary qualitative dimension to education and insists upon the need for child-centred, child-friendly, and empowering schooling. The education to which every child has a right is one designed to provide the child with life skills and to strengthen the child's capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights.

- *Convention of the Rights of the Child Appendix: Comment on Article 29*

Education can change the lives of children and their families, but it does not do so inherently. All of SC UK’s education programmes emphasise *quality*. The following principles contribute to this aim, and are shared by all programmes regardless of context. In emergency settings, alternative ways of working toward these principles must be explored.

Education is relevant

When faced with a crisis, individual or family survival needs such as food, shelter, and livelihood often take precedence, leaving communities without the ability to organise education efforts. At times the capacity to continue schooling does not exist. At others, the content or teaching methods are no longer appropriate to the changing needs of the society, and so families choose not to send their children to school. In an unstable emergency setting it is imperative that schooling provides *psychological and social supports*, conveys *knowledge vital for saving lives*, and offers real hope for a future- helping children to *explore peaceful options* for building their own lives. Education should also encourage *active participation*, not just deliver something to children. A school environment will take on increased relevance if children can take part in creating it.

Making education relevant in emergencies means:

- Ensuring basic literacy and numeracy education is available to all children in affected populations
- Responding to the psychological and social impacts of children’s experience in culturally appropriate ways: learning to live where you live, learning to be, learning to learn (see SC UK’s ‘Minimum Requirements for Basic Education for Children in Conflict Areas- MIRBEC’)
- Introducing learning content to tackle issues created by the crisis
 - ✓ Life-saving measures such as landmines safety, HIV/AIDS awareness, or health and hygiene practices
 - ✓ Peace education to challenge ways of thinking that prolong the conflict or deny human rights
 - ✓ Environmental education to introduce alternatives to practice which leads to degradation and natural disasters
- Offering structured recreation activities such as sport, drama, music, art, or dance to establish space for cultural learning and play
- Emphasising active learning methods because they help children learn more effectively

Education is inclusive

SC UK counts inclusion a top priority in all of its programme work. Particular efforts include support to children with *disabilities* and those excluded due to *gender*, often girls. An emphasis is placed on working with children during their *early years*, as this is a means to later increasing enrolment of disadvantaged children. During emergencies, particular groups of children may not have access to schooling

because of their status as *refugees* or *internally displaced* persons; because of their *ethnicity* or *mother tongue*; because they have participated in a conflict; or because of their economic situation. As emergencies can cause large-scale displacement over long periods of time, it is equally important to address integration and equity issues with *host communities*.

Making education inclusive in emergencies means:

- Advocating for displaced or refugee children's attendance at local schools by working with teachers and developing policy with education authorities
- Increasing capacity of schools for increased enrolment through teacher training on managing large classes and support for repair work or new furniture
- Providing school supplies or tuition waivers directly to the most marginalised children in the community
- Supporting teacher training for volunteers or youth in contexts where qualified teachers are not available
- Basing education curriculum and language on the area of origin to encourage displaced children's return, remembering that in long-term displacement, host language learning may assist participation in local education systems.
- Developing flexible education alternatives for children who are not reached by the government school system, whether due to security concerns, family obligations, or amount of school missed
- Channelling educational resources into both local and camp schools to avoid resentment and establish a climate where integration is possible.

Education as part of a durable response

Education, by its very nature, is a life-long process. In order to set the stage for long-term solutions, education programmes provided in emergencies, regardless of their duration, should wherever possible be connected to education systems that existed prior to the emergency. (An exception may be where the previous education system was instrumental in political divisions associated with the emergency.)

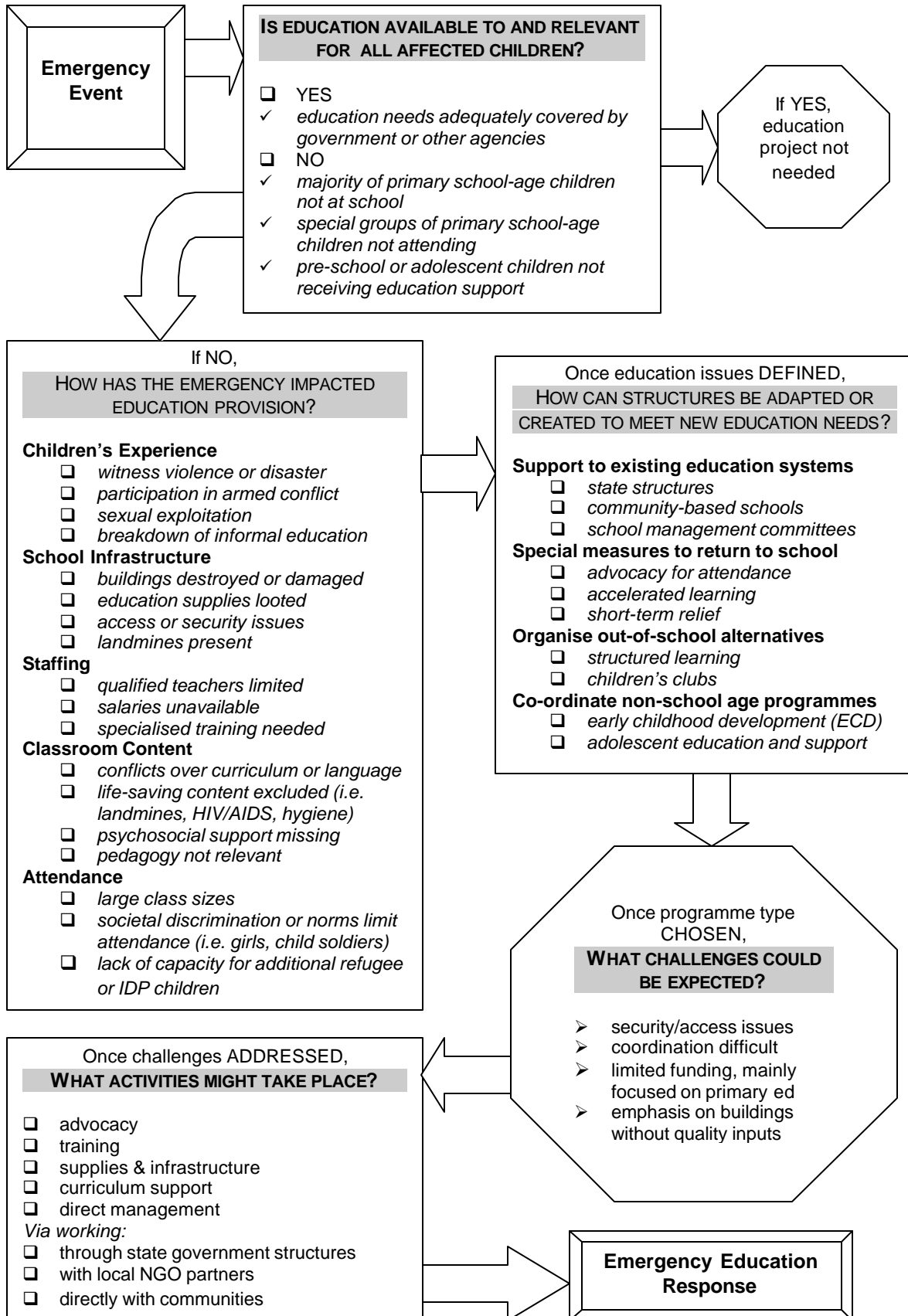
An emergency situation may provide a unique opportunity to tackle the ongoing problems of a particular education system. In many cases, a system will need significant support, and in some cases will need to be entirely rebuilt. In some instances there may also be a strong case for short-term financial inputs that will not be sustainable, if they will significantly increase the number of children receiving education during a crisis period. In the end, an education response is durable when it provides valuable knowledge and skills for individuals to take with them, regardless of where they find themselves.

Making an education response durable in emergencies means:

- Working through existing education systems wherever possible, to avoid setting up separate structures
- Emphasising community contribution in all education reconstruction efforts
- Linking provision of supplies to activities which address quality such as training, advocacy, or parent management committees
- Providing transportable education kits or activity boxes which can move with teachers in the context of frequent displacement
- As populations move, securing a physical space for education and recreation in refugee camps or host communities
- Striving for continuity in curriculum, teacher salaries, and certification
- Supporting and training government authorities responsible for state education
- Ensuring that projects facilitate a transfer of responsibilities to the community, i.e. via the establishment and training of school management committees

VI. DESIGNING A RESPONSE

The following chart outlines the process of designing of an emergency education response.



VII. PROJECT APPROACHES

The types of emergency education programmes SC UK implements can be broadly defined through four separate approaches. Naturally, these categories overlap to some extent, but their divisions can serve as a general guide in identification of project focus and exploration of shared characteristics. In short, SC UK may contribute to:

- 1) Support to existing education systems
- 2) Special measures to return children to school
- 3) Organise out-of-school alternatives
- 4) Co-ordinate non-school age programmes

1) Support to existing education systems

The responsibility for provision of education to children rests primarily with the government of the state where they live. However, in many contexts the government has limited capacity to deliver a fully functional educational structure. In a few cases the state itself does not exist or effectively denies education provision to certain groups of children. SC UK attempts to implement emergency education programmes through support of efforts to maintain or rebuild school systems, whether led by governments or communities themselves. This can also mean building community ownership of education through creation of school management committees.

- *State structures*

In cases where the government is operational but experiencing crisis, SC UK attempts to work with and through state structures to build capacity, ensure appropriate curriculum content, and provide material inputs. Typically, programmes will involve working with governments that are extremely short of resources and struggling to cope in the aftermath of war or disaster. It is important to build the capacity of the responsible authorities as in the long-term they will guide the education system.

- *Community-based schools*

School systems may break down or collapse completely during protracted periods of violence or war. Communities affected by emergencies often attempt to re-start the education process themselves, even in the most difficult circumstances. SC UK attempts to strengthen and support community initiatives, certainly through provision of educational supplies, training for those acting as teachers, or support for development of curriculum. Breakthroughs in education systems can emerge from the most difficult situations, where contact with state education systems is extremely limited.

- *School management committees*

School management committees, sometimes called parent-teacher associations or community education committees, are an important way to impact a community's ownership and influence the education process for their children. SC UK can assist by getting them started, providing training for leadership, and offering limited supplies. An explicit aim of these groups should be to support children's school attendance, involving adults in promoting the importance of education.

2) Special measures to return children to school

Emergencies often cause large population shifts, economic hardship in families, and destruction to schools. These challenges mean that a number of children are unable to attend classes for extended periods of time. After months - or even years - of non-attendance, it is extremely difficult for children to return to school. SC UK takes

special measures to assist children to return to school in both the immediate aftermath of a crisis and in the long-term.

- *Advocacy for attendance*

Basic advocacy efforts can go a long way toward returning children to the classroom. Parents of internally displaced children might not know their rights, while local schools already at their full capacity may not be willing to honour those rights. Advocacy, coupled with support for schools through supply provision or assistance with needed repairs, can increase admission rates.

- *Accelerated learning programmes*

An effective way to assist children to return to school is through accelerated learning programmes. Planned in partnership with education authorities and covering the essential elements of the official curriculum, an intensive programme can be organised to cover education content missed during years without schooling. At the end of a catch-up period, students are integrated into a regular classroom. In particular, child soldiers will benefit from this kind of programme as reintegration into formal schooling can be a cementing factor in demobilisation.

- *Short-term relief*

Short-term relief efforts such as school reconstruction or distribution of supplies serve as a mechanism for getting children back to school as quickly as possible. Provision of material support is one of the more common emergency responses in education, as it produces immediately visible results. At a time when communities are in crisis, physical contributions to their welfare can have dramatic effects. It is important to remember, however, that impacts may be limited, as supplies are used up and buildings deteriorate - or are destroyed once again. Short-term relief should be accompanied by initiatives that will also impact the quality of education available.

3) Out-of-school alternatives

Qualified teachers, a classroom setting, and a curriculum that conforms to national standards may not be possible or appropriate in all circumstances. Alternatives to the national school system can be organised for school-goers and non-attenders alike. Through out-of-school programmes, SC UK can support innovative projects that meet the education needs of specific groups of children. Links should always be made to allow connection with the formal system, reinforcing learning and facilitating return to the classroom.

- *Structured learning activities*

In some situations structured learning activities are already run by communities themselves but may benefit from a degree of external support; in others, there may be a need to set them up. These can range from literacy and numeracy classes to sport, art, music, or drama activities. If children are not able to attend school there should be an opportunity available to them to learn to read and write. Literacy classes could be conducted for a few hours several evenings a week and be taught by young, literate adults. Organised recreation is especially appropriate for children experiencing immediate impacts of an emergency. These activities can have a particularly healing effect, giving recognition to a child's need for play and reinforcing the value of their traditions. Participation in such 'play' time reinforces children's self-esteem and assists them in finding ways to contribute to their community.

- *Children's groups*

Community-based children's groups can address a wide range of education-focused goals through their activities. Children's clubs might initiate recreation activities,

community projects such as creating a library or cleaning-up around a school, or training sessions on children's rights, conflict resolution, or other pertinent topics. Peer education groups could choose a topic like HIV/AIDS and work with other children on the issue. These groups are self-governing, with children taking on leadership roles and a young adult or community member serving as an adviser. While requiring strong start-up inputs, over time children's clubs can become sustainable, as they require limited financial support and can develop effective ownership of their agenda.

4) Non-school age programmes

In stable environments, communities devise their own structures for educating and supporting pre-school children and adolescents. In emergencies, these structures break down, and non-school age children are often overlooked. Early years education or that for children beyond primary school age is not commonly seen by governments, UN agencies, and many donors to have equal priority with the provision of primary schooling, so they are often not willing to invest resources in education for these groups.

- *Early childhood development*

Early childhood development (ECD) is prioritised as a core area of SC UK's education work. The early years of a child's life are some of the most formative. When conflict or disaster interrupts those years, young children are especially vulnerable. ECD programmes in an emergency setting should provide groups of young children with a safe place where play and education can occur on a regular basis. A pre-school structure, with set hours and a set curriculum might take place in a school or community building. Alternatively, ECD may educate parents on care and development of young children. Topics often considered to stand outside of education, such as nutrition and health, can form a major part of ECD projects.

- *Adolescent education and support*

Adolescents who have completed their basic education or are no longer of appropriate age to attend government primary school receive little support in emergencies. No longer children, but not yet able to take on adult roles, these young people easily become lost both literally and figuratively. As a result, they may join rebel fighting forces, take to the streets looking for work, or become dissatisfied with their situation and instigate unrest. Strategies to work with such young people could include engaging them as leaders in out-of-school programmes, supporting youth activity clubs, or sponsoring vocational training.

VIII. CHALLENGES IN RESPONSE

While the substantial benefits of immediately integrating education into emergency relief efforts are becoming more widely recognised, the challenges of response can be overwhelming and too often result in inaction. The need to provide a relevant, inclusive education for children experiencing emergencies is imperative, both as a frontline response activity and as a longer-term initiative in chronic situations. Awareness of the likely challenges can better prepare SC UK to overcome them.

Education is difficult to deliver

Reaching the children most in need is difficult. An emergency is inherently unstable, and rapid changes are expected by all involved. When providing education to children in these contexts, agencies can face substantial insecurity or lack of access to the most affected areas. Large or frequent population movements can interrupt efforts at sustained programming. Differences in language or ethnicity might present difficulties in use of curricula or the politics of its contents. Identification of a physical space for education activities is often difficult as public buildings that have not been destroyed are occupied by the displaced. Items such as notebooks, blackboards, and other learning supplies may be unavailable.

There is little donor funding

When a government is no longer willing or able to provide education for its population, outside actors must step in. As major bilateral donors do not prioritise education as a frontline response in reaction to emergencies, it is often difficult to acquire the funding needed to take action. UN agencies that have had the scope to respond are contracting rather than expanding, both in terms of mandate and staffing. Even when funding is found, it is often only enough to provide for a limited number of children in a limited area. If the crisis is chronic, needs will remain or grow, but the available money tends to taper off.

Quality is neglected

When an emergency education project does receive funding, projects often focus on rebuilding schools and neglect the quality of education delivered. Particularly when there is pressure to spend emergency funding, reconstruction of schools is a quick way to have tangible impact. While infrastructure needs certainly should not be ignored, it does little good to create a new home for learning if education issues connected to the crisis are not addressed. In the wake of an emergency, it is all too common to return to conventional teaching methodologies. A lack of adequately trained teachers can add challenge to any quality initiatives. In addition, an absence of official recognition of learning (i.e. through certificates or diplomas) may limit interest in education alternatives offered outside the formal system, no matter their quality.

IX. CORE ACTIVITIES

SC UK always works in partnership with indigenous structures interested in education, whether that be at a state, civil society, or community level. While project models outline certain types of education response, it would be ineffective for an international organisation to undertake the full range of activities needed for implementation. Programmes commonly engage with local partners to lead portions of a project. Core activities which SC UK might lead in an emergency education programme are outlined below.

Advocacy

SC UK attempts to provide a voice for conflict-affected children. As a global organisation, SC UK carries the status of experience and size. It has the necessary relationships with key actors to complement its work with opportunities to influence education at a policy level – both locally and internationally.

Training

Capacity building may focus on teachers, community members, or students themselves. Topics could include anything from proper hygiene practices to active learning methods to education management information systems.

Supplies & Infrastructure

Provision of education supplies, classroom activity boxes, and reconstruction of school buildings are common emergency education responses. SC UK often has an opportunity to work with other agencies, such as UNICEF, to deliver standard education kits. SC UK links these efforts to quality-focused initiatives that develop teaching skills and support community ownership.

Curriculum Support

Materials used in teaching often need to be developed or adapted to address needs particular to an emergency. Special effort is made to ensure new materials complement any existing curriculum.

Direct Management

In order to ensure that education is available, SC UK will directly manage school or out-of-school programmes in circumstances where there is no alternative. These projects span a defined time period, and should have clear exit strategies. While it is general practice not to pay teacher salaries, in these contexts incentives or partial payments are appropriate.

X. ENHANCING ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Integrate education into emergency preparedness and assessment

All Save the Children country programmes are required to develop and maintain an emergency preparedness plan. In terms of planning, the following must be considered in order to offer a strong intervention in the sector.

- Scenarios of possible emergencies and impacts on education opportunities
- The group of children likely to be targeted for assistance
- The ability to reach children during an emergency
- Staff skills and capacities, with thought toward necessary training that will prepare them to plan and lead an emergency education programme
- Education supplies appropriate to the context and means of procurement
- Identification of local partners with whom SC UK can work
- Links to existing education projects
- Resource issues (i.e. funding opportunities, donor approaches to education)

Once an emergency happens, education should *always* be explored as one of the possible emergency responses. During the assessment phase, coordination with other actors in education is of key importance. An understanding of the country curriculum and its learning objectives should be obtained, as official materials are often used or augmented during emergencies. Emergency assessments should be conducted with a particular focus on marginalised children. At a minimum, this means assessments should be broken down by age, gender, and particularly vulnerable groups according to the context.

Provide appropriate staffing and support

Most emergency education programmes will require input from an experienced educationalist trained in active-learning methodologies. Even for short-term interventions it is essential to have an awareness of education which is helpful to children versus that which may be damaging. Recruiting at short notice for staff positions is often a main obstacle in implementing emergency education projects, and can lead to delays. Ideally, staff who can lead the work should be identified in advance. If there is already an education specialist working in the programme, they should be given emergency training.

Local staff who can work directly with communities also need to be identified. While preferable, these staff do not always have to be education specialists. Whatever their background, people with a rigid idea of how a school operates are unlikely to be useful. Desired qualities include a good rapport with people, flexibility, and an ability to be practical in providing educational experiences for children. People with an appropriate orientation may be able to get up to speed on basic educational approaches, but this will require specific short-term training.

Lobby donors for increased priority on emergency education funding

SC UK should be working with donor organisations, both internationally and in-country, to establish the urgency of education in emergencies. This is particularly true in small-scale emergencies where funding is limited and difficult choices must be made. When faced with a shortage of funds for education projects imbedding education in more comprehensive proposals or turning to smaller foundations are two options which may lead to funding for specific education projects.

In a very few large emergencies the opposite and enviable position of having too much money may be the case. The pressure in such situations is to spend donor funds within a limited timeframe, which is usually done by paying salaries and reconstructing school infrastructure. The need to couple low-cost, quality initiatives with reconstruction should be emphasised to donors in these instances. Options might include teacher workshops, sports and cultural activities, or project extensions.

Document and share experience

There is limited systematic documentation of emergency education projects. Much of what does exist is scattered in country offices and file drawers at various agencies' headquarters. SC UK is making an effort to gather its own experience, but overall, increased emphasis should be placed on monitoring and evaluation which will contribute to a consolidated learning process. The organisation has strong publications focused on quality and inclusion in education settings. There are several inter-agency initiatives at this time that are meant to increase sharing in emergency education. Most notable is the Interagency Network on Education in Emergencies comprised of UN agencies such as UNHCR, UNESCO, and UNICEF, as well as lead international NGO's. This kind of effort should lead to a more coherent strategy for coordination and project sharing.

Be familiar with emergency education resources

Current principles and strategies that guide our emergency education work include:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Minimum Requirements for Basic Education for Children in Conflict Areas- MIRBEC (see appendix)
- Implementing the Save the Children Education Strategy
- Education Advocacy Strategy

SC UK education-specific texts also provide direction and background information:

- *Starting Young*
- *A Chance in Life*
- *Towards Responsive Schools*
- *Working for Change in Education*
- Balkans Preparedness Guidelines for ECD work
- Forthcoming booklets on community participation, active learning, and measuring change
- Forthcoming emergency education resource pack

Principles for education response in emergencies and protracted crisis situations developed by agencies such as UNHCR and UNICEF are also relevant.

- *Rapid Educational Response in Complex Emergencies*, UNICEF, UNESCO & UNHCR
- *Revised Guidelines of Educational Assistance to Refugees*, UNHCR
- Global Information Networks in Education, www.ginie.org