

SAFETY, RESILIENCE,
AND SOCIAL COHESION:
A GUIDE FOR CURRICULUM
DEVELOPERS

OVERVIEW

Curriculum
enhancement
to promote safety,
resilience, and
social cohesion

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PROTECT EDUCATION IN INSECURITY AND CONFLICT
حماية التعليم في ظروف النزاع والعنف والأمن

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About the booklets

This publication is one of a series of eight curriculum development booklets focused on promoting safety, resilience, and social cohesion throughout the curriculum. The booklets should be read alongside other relevant curriculum development materials (see the Key Resources section of each booklet for details). The series includes:

- Glossary of terms
- Booklet 1 – Overview: Curriculum enhancement to promote safety, resilience, and social cohesion
- Booklet 2 – Getting started: How do we organize the process?
- Booklet 3 – Key content: What are the desired learning outcomes?
- Booklet 4 – Curriculum review: Where are we now and where do we want to go?
- Booklet 5 – Curriculum approach: How will we get there?
- Booklet 6 – Textbooks and other education materials: What key messages do we want to convey and how?
- Booklet 7 – Teacher development: How will we support and train teachers?
- Booklet 8 – Assessment, and monitoring and evaluation: How will we know what students have learned?

A parallel series of booklets has been published on incorporating safety, resilience, and social cohesion in education plans and policies.

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Girls attend class in a village in Nowshera District, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan. The school was damaged by floods, but has been rehabilitated with UNICEF support.

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SAFETY, RESILIENCE, AND SOCIAL
COHESION: A GUIDE FOR
CURRICULUM DEVELOPERS

Booklet 1

OVERVIEW

Curriculum enhancement
to promote safety, resilience,
and social cohesion

Acknowledgements

This booklet is one of a series of eight, intended for curriculum developers, which – together with six booklets on planning – is the result of a collaboration between IIEP-UNESCO, Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC), and UNESCO's International Bureau of Education (IBE).

The curriculum booklets were written by Jennifer Batton (consultant), Amapola Alama (IBE), and Margaret Sinclair (PEIC), and edited by Lynne Bethke (InterWorks) and Jean Bernard (Spectacle Learning Media). The planning booklets were written by Lynne Bethke (InterWorks), Lyndsay Bird (IIEP), and Morten Sigsgaard (IIEP), with additional editing by Leonora MacEwen and Thalia Seguin (IIEP). Valuable feedback on the curriculum booklets was provided by Anton de Grauwe (IIEP) and Marla Petal (Save the Children).

Abbreviations

DRR	disaster risk reduction
LTLT	learning to live together
NGO	non-governmental organization

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Foreword

Crisis-sensitive education content and planning saves lives and is cost-effective. 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 and education materials. Over the long term, crisis-sensitive education content and planning strengthen the resilience of education systems and contribute to the safety and social cohesion of communities and education institutions.

The devastating impact of both conflict and disasters on children and education systems is well documented and has triggered a growing sense of urgency worldwide to engage in strategies that reduce risks. Annually, 175 million children are likely to be affected by disasters in the present decade (Penrose and Takaki, 2006), while the proportion of primary-aged out-of-school children in conflict-affected countries increased from 42 per cent of the global total in 2008 to 50 per cent in 2011.

The urgency of developing education content and sector plans that address these risks is undeniable. This series of booklets aims to support ministries of education to do just that. With a common focus on safety, resilience, and social cohesion, a series of six booklets on education sector planning and a further eight booklets on developing curriculum are the result of collaboration between the Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict Programme, UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning, and UNESCO's International Bureau of Education. This collaboration and the overall framework build on the efforts and momentum of a wide range of stakeholders, including UNICEF and its Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy programme.

The mission of the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO) is to strengthen the capacity of countries to plan and manage their education systems through training, research, and technical cooperation. Additionally, IIEP has developed expertise in the field of education in emergencies and disaster preparedness. Its programme on education in emergencies and reconstruction has produced a Guidebook for Planning Education in Emergencies and Reconstruction, as well as a series of country-specific and thematic analyses. It has undertaken technical cooperation and capacity development in crisis-affected countries such as Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Chad, and has developed and piloted crisis-sensitive planning tools in West and East Africa.

Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC) is a programme of the Education Above All Foundation, founded by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser of Qatar. PEIC aims to promote and protect the right to education – at all levels of education systems – in areas affected or threatened by crisis, insecurity, or armed conflict. PEIC supports the collection and collation of data on attacks on education and the strengthening of legal protection for education-related violations of international law. PEIC works through partners to help develop education programmes that are conflict-sensitive and reduce the risks of conflict or its recurrence.

The International Bureau of Education (IBE-UNESCO) supports countries in increasing the relevance and quality of curricula aimed at improving basic competencies such as literacy, numeracy, and life skills, and addressing themes that are highly relevant at local, national, and global levels such as new technologies, values, sustainable human development, peace, security, and disaster risk reduction. IBE offers such services as strategic advice, technical assistance tailored to specific country needs, short- and long-term capacity development, providing access to cutting-edge knowledge in the field of curriculum and learning.

This series of publications, which is the fruit of collaboration between IIEP-UNESCO, PEIC, and IBE-UNESCO, draws on the particular expertise of each of these agencies. With these booklets, we aim to support the staff of ministries of education, at central, provincial, and district levels, to promote education systems that are safe, resilient, and encourage social cohesion through appropriate education sector policies, plans, and curricula. This initiative responds to an identified need for support in systematically integrating crisis-sensitive measures into each step of the sector planning process and into curriculum revision and development processes. By adopting crisis-sensitive planning and content, ministries of education and education partners can be the change agents for risk prevention and thus contribute to building peaceful societies in a sustainable manner.

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Booklet 1 – Overview

Take-away points

- ▶ A quality education promotes knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to benefit students, their communities, and the nation.
 - ▶ School curricula to promote safety, resilience, and social cohesion should include content supportive of learning to live together (LTLT) and disaster risk reduction (DRR).
 - ▶ Effective implementation of curriculum enhancements requires the development of content which motivates students and is based on their life situation, and teacher-friendly methods suited to classroom conditions.
 - ▶ Inclusion of content related to safety, resilience, and social cohesion in school and national examinations is key to the successful implementation of the enhanced curriculum.
 - ▶ System-wide action is needed to promote the safety and resilience of all children and young people and for education to have a significant impact on increasing social cohesion and disaster risk reduction.
-

This introductory booklet is the first in a series of eight which show how to address safety, resilience, and social cohesion at every stage of the curriculum development and implementation process. It explains why education ministries should strengthen the focus on safety, resilience, and social cohesion in their curricula, and provides an overview of the steps needed to accomplish this. The remaining booklets in this series provide more detailed guidance on the process.

Introduction

Every year, disasters and conflicts affect millions of people, causing unnecessary death and injury and the destruction of vital infrastructure, including schools. All stakeholders, including those in the education sector, must work together to promote safety, resilience, and social cohesion in order to protect lives and secure the future development of their society.

Every context is different and implies different risks. However, few countries are exempt from natural hazards or political and social tensions, such as gang- or drug-related violence, for example. Education officials must, therefore, engage in a thorough analysis of the risks to safety, resilience, and social cohesion within their particular context. This kind of analysis helps to illustrate gaps in the curriculum or areas which need to be enhanced in order for children and young people to learn more about the risks in their environment, how to cope with them better, and how to contribute to stronger, more cohesive societies.

As the primary purpose of schooling is to prepare children and young people for life, the school curriculum cannot be focused solely upon reading, writing, mathematics, and other traditional subjects, or on preparing students to succeed in examinations. It also has to equip students with the resources they need to tackle the challenges facing their societies, as well as the problems that will arise in their own lives. A good-quality, relevant education helps children and young people develop the skills, attitudes, and values that will keep them safe, develop their resilience, and help them to grow into responsible citizens who contribute to building a more peaceful, prosperous, and cohesive society. This series, therefore, focuses on what ministries of education can do, system-wide, to address these goals, even under difficult circumstances. It looks, in particular, at how this can be achieved through incorporating safety, resilience, and social cohesion into the curriculum. The accompanying series of planning booklets explains how and why education ministries might incorporate these issues into education sector policies and plans.

Box 1.1

Understanding safety, resilience, and social cohesion

- **Safety:** Ensuring the protection and well-being of learners, school personnel, and facilities.
 - **Resilience:** The ability of education systems and learners to withstand, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in ways that promote safety and social cohesion.
 - **Social cohesion:** Promoting a sense of belonging, acceptance by others, and a desire to contribute to the common good.
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Steps to organize the incorporation of safety, resilience, and social cohesion in the curriculum

- ▶ Identify ways in which education can help children and young people to be safe and resilient and contribute to social cohesion.
 - ▶ Adopt a realistic approach in order to achieve system-wide impact.
 - ▶ Develop a plan of action for curriculum enhancement.
 - ▶ Build strong stakeholder support.
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Step One

Identify ways in which education can help children and young people to be safe and resilient and contribute to social cohesion

Before embarking on curriculum enhancement to promote safety, resilience, and social cohesion, it is necessary, first, to identify the types of risk that exist in societies and school communities. Naming specific current risks within both national and local social contexts helps to clarify how the curriculum can contribute to reducing their impact. Education ministries could consider a stronger focus on:

- **Safety** – so that children, young people, and educators are safe at school, at home, and in their communities.
- **Resilience** – so that children, young people, and educators are able to cope with different types of adversity in their lives and in their communities.
- **Social cohesion** – so that children, young people, and educators feel and show respect to all members of society, without discrimination, and become responsible citizens helping to build peaceful and well-functioning societies.

While disasters and conflict are very different types of events, both pose an immediate threat to the physical and psychological safety and well-being of children, teachers, and other education personnel, as well as threatening

longer-term disruption to their lives. Accordingly, the curriculum must address these issues in ways that protect schools and communities from immediate threats while reducing the risks of impending disasters and mitigating the impact of ongoing and recurring tensions and conflicts. For a full discussion of how disasters, conflicts, and population movements can impact on education systems, see *Booklet 1 – Overview: Incorporating safety, resilience, and social cohesion in education sector planning* of the accompanying planning series.

Educational interventions can contribute greatly to safety, resilience, and social cohesion, with major dividends for peace. For instance, in Guatemala, the 1996 peace accords included a commitment to develop intercultural bilingual education, with the aim of reducing the exclusion of indigenous people and supporting peacebuilding. However, as *Booklet 1* of the planning series highlights, research has uncovered a complex relationship between education and conflict (INEE, 2011; UNESCO, 2011). Education, it points out, can serve as both a driver of conflict and a platform for peacebuilding. It can exacerbate the risk of conflict by disseminating discriminatory messages, favouring one group to the detriment of others, or by providing and encouraging models of violent behaviour. At the same time, it can reduce the risk of conflict, by creating positive learning environments or curriculum materials which promote social cohesion, for example. Similarly, education can help reduce the impacts of disasters by teaching children how to prepare for and respond to natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, and cyclones.

The starting point for curriculum enhancement is to review the objectives of the national curriculum to determine whether and how they address safety, resilience, or social cohesion and whether additional or revised objectives are needed. Examples of such objectives include:

Education systems promote safety and protect learners

- Students can describe and demonstrate basic safety measures to use at school, at home, and in the community.
- Students can identify the potential hazards or disasters that may impact on their communities and know how to be prepared, as well as how to stay safe, when disasters strike. This type of curriculum enhancement is sometimes called 'disaster risk reduction' (DRR), and may also include safety measures.
- Students can demonstrate that they know how to prevent and address bullying and harassment due to gender, language, ethnic or cultural group, or other characteristics.

Education systems promote resilience

- Students develop the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes needed to face challenges, recover from shocks, adapt to changes in their environment, and build a positive future for themselves, their families, their schools, their communities, and their country.
- Students can identify and describe the skills that can help them prepare for and respond to the risk of disasters, insecurity, violence, or even armed conflict that can occur or recur in their natural, social, and economic context.

Education systems promote social cohesion through quality education that builds respect for all

- Students develop the skills and values for living together, as individuals and in the wider society, including respect for diversity, conflict resolution, and responsible citizenship. This is often called 'learning to live together' (LTLT), which can include key elements of resilience.¹
- Students from all cultural and linguistic groups can obtain equitable access to educational opportunities through a national language-of-instruction policy that provides learning materials in their mother tongue, particularly during the first years of schooling.

In any system, incorporating safety, resilience, and social cohesion in the curriculum is a major challenge as what is being sought goes beyond the acquisition of subject-based knowledge. Rather, the imperative is for the curriculum to provide teachers with the tools to bring about some form of behaviour change that will, in turn, strengthen and transform their societies. The curriculum outcomes, therefore, need to address knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. Examples of these include:

- **Knowledge:** conveying facts about natural hazards and their effects.
- **Skills:** developing psycho-social skills that will foster resilience and the ability of children and young people to cope with challenging circumstances.
- **Values:** promoting equality and inclusion through class discussion and by making sure that the learning needs of all children are addressed in the classroom.
- **Attitudes:** accepting others even when they are different.

1. This term was first used in *Learning: The Treasure Within*, Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century (UNESCO, 1996).

The topics under consideration relate to students as people. How can their studies be adapted so that students consciously develop the values of respect for others, and of caring for the safety and well-being of others and themselves? For effective teaching and learning, these elements need explicit focus in the school curriculum (see *Booklet 5* for further discussion of approaches including these topics in the curriculum, while *Booklet 3* includes a discussion of the types of curriculum content that address safety, resilience, and social cohesion).

Curriculum initiatives in this area have been given many different names, as *Box 1.2* illustrates. There is often overlapping content, though the emphasis is usually different. All of the curriculum initiatives detailed in *Box 1.2* can contribute to safety, resilience, and social cohesion, which means that ministries of education can build on existing initiatives or adopt new ones based on their particular curriculum needs. Additional information about these different initiatives and how they fit together is included in *Booklet 3*.

Box 1.2

Curriculum initiatives that contribute to safety, resilience, and social cohesion

Safety and disaster risk reduction: introduce personal safety and security measures, together with preparedness and actions to mitigate the consequences of natural and human-made disasters.

Learning to live together

- ▶ **Values education, social and emotional learning, and life skills education** are focused on core values and psycho-social skills such as emotional awareness and self-management, empathy and respect for others, and interpersonal skills, including models of conflict resolution. These are essential components that contribute to personal resilience.
- ▶ **Peace education** includes values, life skills, and conflict resolution skills, as well as an introduction to the concepts of human rights. The emphasis is on tolerance and inclusion, which contribute to **social cohesion**.
- ▶ **Human rights education and education for gender equality** include core skills and values such as empathy and respect for others, avoiding stereotyping/bias and exclusion, critical thinking, and the concepts associated with human rights and responsibilities, such as non-discrimination. Human rights education introduces international human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), among others.
- ▶ **Civic education** can include learning about local, national, and international institutions, good governance, rule of law, democratic processes, civil society, and participation. **Citizenship education** is similar, but nowadays incorporates concepts from the approaches listed above. A key goal is to teach future citizens with diverse backgrounds to cooperate peacefully to ensure that the basic human rights of all

are met without discrimination or violence in order to build stronger, more resilient, and more cohesive societies.²

- ▶ **Education in humanitarian norms** includes teaching values and action necessary to care for other human beings who are in need, without discrimination. It also includes an introduction to the principles underlying international humanitarian law (that is, the laws of war), to reduce suffering in times of armed conflict.
- ▶ **History education reform** aims to move away from a one-sided view of the past toward an approach which recognizes multiple perspectives. It should be undertaken when the time is ripe for a multi-stakeholder approach, not necessarily in the immediate aftermath of political change or violent conflict.

Source: Adapted from Sinclair, 2013: 14-16; and GTZ and IBE-UNESCO, 2008: 64-67.

There is no one term corresponding to all the aspects of curriculum discussed in these booklets. **Each country should, therefore, adopt terms that are motivational and appropriate to the national context.** For convenience, throughout these booklets, we often use the terms 'disaster risk reduction' (DRR) and 'learning to live together' (LTLT) as shorthand to cover many of the topics related to safety, resilience, and social cohesion included in *Box 1.2*. It is important to discuss and agree terminology with key stakeholders before undertaking any work in this area.

2. The local, national, and global aspects of responsible citizenship have recently been brought together under the name of 'global citizenship' as part of the UN Secretary General's Global Education First Initiative (GEFI).

Step Two

Adopt a realistic approach in order to achieve system-wide impact

These booklets provide a guide to what needs to be done in order to introduce or strengthen the safety, resilience, and social cohesion aspects of a national curriculum. They offer suggestions as to what the ministry of education can do, system-wide, even under difficult circumstances, to strengthen this dimension of curriculum planning. The aim is to create a realistic and sustainable approach. Even a small action, if it is accomplished on a wide scale, compares favourably with a complex programme that is ignored due to prevailing conditions. Thus, the ministry of education and its partners should be realistic about what can be accomplished.

One of the fundamental problems underlying education for LTLT and DRR is that experiential programmes, which are the gold standard for behaviour-change education, cannot usually be introduced system-wide for practical reasons. Although there have been many initiatives in this field, their success often relies on the presence of a lot of resources, especially well-trained teachers and small class sizes. These 'intensive' programmes can be extremely beneficial to the students they reach, but cannot, in most cases, be effectively scaled up to national level. Often, these programmes have only short-term funding, which also impacts on their sustainability and reach. Therefore, it is important for education ministries to plan curriculum enhancements that can be implemented throughout the system within existing local capacities.

These booklets are designed primarily to support ministries of education in considering what, realistically, can be done system-wide to implement curriculum enhancements. In addition to this, ministries of education should encourage interested organizations to support 'intensive' programmes, including in areas of special need.³ Education authorities may also choose to support the formation of a network of schools implementing special 'intensive' programmes

3. For examples of 'intensive' activities in school systems, see the good practice highlighted in *Learning to Live Together: Education for Conflict Resolution, Responsible Citizenship, Human Rights, and Humanitarian Norms* (Sinclair, 2013: 25-29).

Box 1.3**System-wide coverage versus local 'intensive' programmes**

System-wide coverage entails actions that have the potential to make changes in every school. An example is the development or revision of textbooks to promote learning for safety, resilience, and social cohesion (including LTLT and DRR), adapted realistically to current classroom conditions. Another method with wide outreach is radio programming that complements school initiatives.

In contrast, **'intensive' programmes** generally include personal interaction through experiential activities designed to deeply change hearts and minds, and are implemented on a smaller scale. They require specially trained teachers and ongoing teacher support, as well as small classes, and, usually, extra time in the study schedule. They have been successfully implemented in localized settings such as refugee camps, teacher training colleges, and non-governmental organization (NGO) education programmes.

related to safety, resilience, and social cohesion. For example, in Sri Lanka, 200 schools implemented the Education for Social Cohesion programme (Davies, 2013). Likewise, in Colombia, the University of the Andes and several NGOs helped selected schools implement the Colombian Ministry of Education's National Citizenship Competencies framework (Nieto and Luna, 2013). The Responsible Citizenship programme introduced in secondary schools in parts of Burundi to which refugees were returning constitutes another example of intensive programming (Servas, 2013) that reinforces government efforts.

For system-wide implementation in sometimes difficult circumstances, less ambitious approaches may be needed. For example, incorporating key messages about safety, resilience, and social cohesion into textbooks and using stories as a way to engage the hearts and minds of students are alternatives to consider. There are

still many challenges, such as generating local content that connects with the students and their real lives, challenges, and choices. Because content related to safety, resilience, and social cohesion is about human life and social organization, it requires more than superficial coverage in the classroom or a search on the internet. Developing good local content requires the well-organized training of educators and writers so that they acquire the LTLT and DRR competencies and associated motivation to enable them to interact with and write for young people and teachers in different regions and social groups. Such training should also equip writers and illustrators with the skills to develop stories and narratives that are motivational and engaging.

Organizing this process is especially problematic if school textbooks are produced by multiple publishers, international or national, since private publishers might not have the expertise, resources, or access to develop relevant local content. When this is the case, the ministry of education should seek to

organize a process for developing local content that can inform the creation of new textbooks and other educational materials, even those produced by outside publishers.

Another challenge involved in incorporating learning to live together and disaster risk reduction initiatives into the curriculum is that the desired values, attitudes, and skills associated with these topics are thought to be difficult to assess by written tests and national examinations. Consequently, they may not be examined at all, and, if a subject is not examined, it tends to be neglected by teachers and students (see, e.g., Njeng'ere, 2014). Therefore, a carefully developed approach is needed which is relevant to a student's personal life and developing identity – and can be used to connect with students even in large classes – and through which learning can be measured using both formative and summative assessment tools (see also *Booklet 8*).

A final challenge with regard to incorporating safety, resilience, and social cohesion into the curriculum concerns the fact that any 'curriculum cycle' is relatively long and should be understood as part of an ongoing process that is in perpetual motion. Ministries of education do not revise curriculum frameworks, syllabuses, and textbooks on an annual basis (as they do budgets). Furthermore, the high cost of textbooks generally means that school systems use a stock of textbooks over several years before updating or revising them. Therefore, a multi-pronged approach is needed which ensures that schools are provided with new materials – either through the development of revised textbooks or by issuing supplementary materials that can be reflected appropriately in examinations and can later feed into new generations of textbooks.

Step Three

Develop a plan of action for curriculum enhancement

Most school curricula, of whatever form, already have elements of safety, resilience, and social cohesion embedded in their teaching and learning processes and in the textbooks and other materials they use. In these booklets we propose a deliberate and vigorous effort to enhance this component of the curriculum in a realistic manner that takes into account the challenges facing schools in which this learning is needed. The processes followed to strengthen and enhance the curriculum, and the particular sequence of activities needed to implement the enhancements, will depend on the country context. It will also depend on how far the country has progressed in terms of curriculum and textbook development or revision, and upgrading teacher training and/or examination systems. For example:

- If the ministry of education is planning or implementing major curriculum reform in order to move from a traditional subject-based curriculum toward an integrated, competency-based approach, the curriculum development team can identify key competencies related to safety, resilience, and social cohesion and define relevant outcomes.
- If there is a current plan to revise some or all relevant textbooks, then a safety, resilience, and social cohesion initiative can be integrated into this schedule.
- If there is a current plan to develop or strengthen early-grade reading programmes, then the actions described in these booklets can support that process.
- If curriculum and textbooks have recently been revised, then this initiative can support a review of the implementation and use of relevant content in the classrooms of representative schools, strengthen teacher support and training, and support the development and trial of additional materials which may be reflected in examinations and influence future textbooks.

Other factors, such as whether textbooks are developed by the ministry of education or by private publishers, and whether the country is already piloting or implementing any initiatives related to safety, resilience, and social

cohesion, will also affect the process. If any substantial change is envisaged, there will need to be strong policy and stakeholder buy-in and an effective core team to lead the initiative (see *Booklet 2*). Most important will be a focus on identifying changes that are feasible in the majority of schools and that are financially sustainable.

An action plan for incorporating safety, resilience, and social cohesion into the national curriculum should include the following sequence:

- Develop and adopt a strong national policy on enhancing education for safety, resilience, and social cohesion through the curriculum (see *Booklet 2*).
- Develop a set of priority competencies and desired learning outcomes to support safety, resilience, and social cohesion, including especially LTLT and DRR (see *Booklet 3*).
- Review existing curriculum and textbooks for the inclusion of LTLT and DRR and conduct a baseline study of the actual situation in schools and the perceptions of students, teachers, and other stakeholders (see *Booklet 4*).
- Decide how to incorporate units of LTLT and DRR explicitly into syllabuses, teaching materials and school timetables, as well as integrating more generally throughout all programmes (see *Booklet 5*).
- Develop, pilot, and introduce new or revised textbook content and other education materials that incorporate LTLT and DRR (see *Booklet 6*).
- Find effective ways to support and train teachers for LTLT and DRR, and related school practice (see *Booklet 7*).
- Design appropriate tools to assess student achievement. Monitor and evaluate programme implementation and impact. Support effective and sustainable implementation of LTLT and DRR in the curriculum through inclusion in school and national examinations (see *Booklet 8*).

Each of these actions is discussed in more detail in the other booklets in the series.

Step Four

Build strong stakeholder support

Education is often a 'political football'. Curriculum is an issue about which many people have strong opinions. Changes are more likely to be implemented successfully when they are developed through a collaborative process which includes individuals, organizations, and groups with a stake in curriculum decisions at local, regional, and national levels.

Strengthening curriculum elements related to safety, resilience, and social cohesion, or LTLT and DRR, will require extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders – in all parts of the country. The changes must have the buy-in of a wide spectrum of the population, or they may be openly or quietly rejected. Unless members of different ethnic, religious, and political groups agree on the approach to be adopted, the changes will not take root. There should be opportunities from the start for the inclusion of representatives of these groups in the design and development process. Updates should be provided to the public through media and other relevant channels to help maintain public support as progress is made.

Education specialists from all political parties and relevant departments and agencies should be included, as far as is possible. Without this level of collaboration and inclusion a change of government, or a change of education minister or senior official, may seriously impede or even destroy the initiative.

Moreover, key actors from within the education system, such as teachers, head teachers, school managers, guidance counsellors, and parents need to understand and accept the approach as beneficial and practical. Ensuring that these stakeholders are part of the initial design process is critical. Past difficulties in implementing similar initiatives (e.g. on gender awareness, life skills, and peace education) must be discussed with teachers and addressed. Examination bodies must also be involved so that examinations can reflect the new content in an appropriate way.

Stakeholders to be consulted may thus include:

- representatives of political leadership (government and opposition parties) assigned responsibility for education;
- curriculum specialists, textbook writers, and publishers;
- college and university teacher training departments;
- examination boards and other experts in assessment;
- representatives from business, who can advise on skills needed for a workplace;
- representatives of other ministries working with young people, and families, or in education (such as a ministry of youth and culture) at national and local levels;
- relevant national and international NGOs active in education, disaster risk reduction, citizenship, peacebuilding, and similar themes;
- organizations representing students, parents, youth, women from different ethnic or religious groups, different regions, and marginalized social groups;⁴
- teachers and teacher unions;
- community organizations.⁵

The involvement of these different actors can take place through consultation at various moments of the curriculum review and revision process.

Key actions

- ▶ Consider the need to incorporate safety, resilience, and social cohesion, or learning to live together (LTLT) and disaster risk reduction (DRR), into the curriculum.
- ▶ Identify areas in which safety, resilience, and social cohesion, or LTLT and DRR, are already addressed. Seek to enhance these areas and to address gaps.
- ▶ Determine a realistic approach to enhancing the curriculum, based on the constraints of the system (e.g. teacher qualifications, class sizes, availability of materials, examination pressures).
- ▶ Begin the process of dialogue with relevant stakeholders to generate policy and stakeholder support.

4. Consider forming a consultative group representing marginalized groups in the community in order to provide 'insider' cultural information, relevant stories, and material for the curriculum (as per the revision of social studies textbooks described in Smith, 2015).

5. UNICEF (2013: 17) includes examples of stakeholder involvement in education and conflict analyses.

Key Resources

Davies, L. 2013. 'Sri Lanka's national policy on education for social cohesion and peace.' In: M. Sinclair (Ed.), *Learning to live together: Education for conflict resolution, responsible citizenship, human rights, and humanitarian norms* (pp. 224-233). Doha: PEIC.

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About the programme

This series of booklets arose from a collaboration between the Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC) programme, and two of UNESCO's education agencies, the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) and the International Bureau of Education (IBE). This collaboration, and the overall framework which developed from it, build on the efforts and momentum of a wide range of stakeholders.

These booklets outline a process for curriculum enhancement that serves to strengthen education systems so that they are better equipped to withstand shocks such as natural hazards and human-made disasters, insecurity, and conflict, and, where possible, to help prevent such problems. They are the outcome of a programme which aims to support ministries of education, at central, provincial, and district levels, to promote education systems that are safe and resilient, and to encourage social cohesion within education policies, plans, and curricula.

More specifically, the programme's objectives are:

- For a core team to catalyse collaboration between partners in order to consolidate approaches, materials, and terminology on the topics of planning and curriculum to promote safety, resilience, and social cohesion;
- To strengthen cadres, first, of planning, research, and training specialists (from ministries of education as well as international experts) in preparing for conflict and disaster risk reduction through education, and, second, of curriculum developers (again, from ministries of education as well as international experts) experienced in integrating cross-cutting issues into school programmes;
- To strengthen national training capacities through institutional capacity development with selected training institutes and universities.

The programme offers the following materials and booklets for ministries to consult:

- ***An online resource database/website*** containing resources on a range of related topics;
- ***Booklets and training materials on planning and curriculum to promote safety, resilience, and social cohesion;***
- ***Policy briefings*** for senior decision-makers;
- ***Case studies and practitioner examples***, which form part of the online database;
- ***A self-monitoring questionnaire*** to enable ministries of education to determine the degree to which conflict and disaster risk reduction are integrated into their current planning processes.

SAFETY, RESILIENCE,
AND SOCIAL COHESION:
A GUIDE FOR CURRICULUM
DEVELOPERS

**Education for safety, resilience,
and social cohesion**

With nearly 50 per cent of the world's out-of-school children living in conflict-affected countries, and an estimated 175 million children every year in this decade likely to be affected by disasters, there is a growing sense of urgency to support strategies that reduce the risks of conflict and disasters. Education content and teaching methods can help children and young people to develop attitudes and values that will keep them safe, foster resilience, and lead to more peaceful, cohesive societies.

These booklets provide step-by-step advice on how safety, resilience, and social cohesion can be incorporated into curriculum development and revision processes. Organized into eight booklets and a glossary, this series explains why education ministries should adopt curricula with a stronger focus on safety, resilience, and social cohesion, and offers detailed guidance on how this can be achieved.

OVERVIEW

Curriculum enhancement
to promote safety,
resilience, and
social cohesion

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