Education in Emergencies Toolkit

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC



Tool 2

Peacebuilding and conflict transformation checklist for the HDP Nexus in education

This tool has been developed in response to requests for more information and guidance about the 'peace' aspect of the Nexus.

As with the other tools that accompany the Guidance Note, it is not obligatory to use it. We hope it can support programme design and implementation, by prompting thinking and decision-making. It can be used as a discussion document with partners including other donors, to support a shared understanding of the HDP nexus.

The introductory section to this tool highlights key concepts and questions about programme design. This is followed by a short checklist that can be used as a reference point throughout programme design and implementation. It is not a tick-box exercise and does not need to be scored.

1. Framing the "Peace" Component of the HDP Nexus in Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises

What is 'Peace' in the HDP Nexus?

The peace-pillar of the HDP Nexus for education in crisis contexts involves using *at a minimum* SDC's Conflict Sensitive Project Management (CSPM) approach: avoid harm, build resilience[1] and addressing root causes of conflict. The peace pillar *can be applied transversally or be framed as a peace-specific objective*. For SDC, it is often related to results at local level. It does not mean political mediation or formal peace processes, although it may contribute to these

Evidence from conflict-affected contexts shows that education can either mitigate conflict or actively fuel it, depending on how systems, content and pedagogy are designed.

In all contexts, but particularly where political tensions are high and/or there is violent conflict, the provision of education must aim to:

- prevent harm and reduce conflict risks
- avoid reinforcing grievances
- support social cohesion, dignity and non-violence
- ensure good governance in education-related bodies, processes or decision making

An HDP Nexus approach in education requires joint analysis by humanitarian, development and peace actors, of conflict risks and drivers, and how systems function under stress. S*ystem-level features* including access, language, curriculum, teachers, certification often sit at the heart of conflict dynamics.

[1] This is aligned with the INEE Conflict Sensitive Education Pack, and specifically with Document 2, Guiding Principles

Based on the joint HDP analysis, curriculum content, and the way it is taught, needs to be inclusive and avoid fuelling political and social tensions. Who has access to schools and learning centres, how decisions are taken, how complaints are addressed – all aspects of good governance - are also critical. Where school management committees, for example, support the inclusion of all groups in a community, ensuring participation, transparency and accountability, they build trust and legitimacy in state institutions and public services.

In these ways, education can make a huge contribution to the societal and institutional conditions and capacities that enable conflict prevention and transformation, and ultimately contribute to peaceful societies.

Key questions – conflict-sensitive analysis

- What role does education currently play in this conflict context: stabilising, neutral, or dividing?
- Which education-related inequalities or exclusions matter in this context? What are the root causes?
- Who benefits and who loses from the current education response?
- Are parallel humanitarian mechanisms weakening long-term system legitimacy?
- Is this EiEPC response likely to **reduce tensions**, or could it unintentionally reinforce them?
- To address this, does the project approach align with the Do No Harm and SDC's CSPM-approach?

Simplified checklist

- ✓ Conflict drivers linked to education are identified (access, language, certification, governance)
- ✓ Horizontal inequalities (between groups/regions) are explicitly analysed
- ✓ Risks of parallel systems are identified and mitigated where feasible
- ✓ Education is treated as part of the political economy of crises, not a neutral service

2. Working on Attitudes, Values and Behaviour

Rationale

Evidence shows simple attendance at a school or learning centre is not sufficient to support progress towards peace. Education can have peacebuilding aspects, IF:

- it focuses on good governance components that are built into the project or programme deliverables (for example accountable institutions, participative processes, inclusive access)
- it addresses root causes
- it helps shape in positive ways how people think, relate and act, especially in protracted crises.

This aligns with the *"Peace always"* dimension within the core logic of the HDP Nexus, that states "conflict prevention and **peace always**, development wherever and whenever possible, and humanitarian assistance only when and as long as necessary'. It refers to the need to address root causes and future risks, even during emergency response.

Key questions – Attitudes, Values and Behaviour

- How do learners, teachers and communities understand "peace" and "violence" (in their specific context)?
- Are violent norms normalised or challenged through education?
- Do education personnel and learners acquire skills for non-violent conflict resolution?

Simplified checklist

- ✓ Education activities go beyond information provision to support critical thinking and conflict resolution
- ✓ Non-violence, empathy and dialogue are explicitly supported
- ✓ Psychosocial safety is considered alongside physical safety
- ✓ Content and pedagogy avoid reinforcing fear, hatred or victimisation

3. Transforming Relationships and Social Cohesion

Rationale

In fragile contexts, education contributes also to peace when it:

- rebuilds trust
- reduces “us versus them” narratives
- creates spaces for coexistence

Key questions - relationships

- Which groups are polarised or mistrustful?
- Does education reinforce separation, or enable interaction?
- Are safe spaces for dialogue available and legitimate?

Simplified checklist

- ✓ Education creates opportunities for interaction across divides (where possible and appropriate)
- ✓ Multiple narratives of the past are acknowledged
- ✓ Dialogue is recognised as a *process*, not a quick fix
- ✓ Reconciliation is framed as long-term and context-specific

4. Combining Formal, Non-Formal and Community-Based Approaches

Rationale

The Nexus encourages complementarity, not silos. For example, ensuring that actors in formal, non-formal and community-based approaches coordinate with each other, and adopt coherent approaches to peacebuilding. Wherever possible, non-formal and community-based approaches should provide pathways back into the national education system.

Different entry points – types of education space – for building coherence and coordination include:

- schools (formal systems)
- community education initiatives
- non-formal learning (for example youth, radio, arts clubs)

Key questions – entry points for connecting education approaches

- Which entry points (formal, non-formal, community based…) are safest and most inclusive right now?

- Which entry points currently have the most legitimacy and reach?
- Are existing local education initiatives being strengthened or ignored?

Simplified checklist

- ✓ Entry points are chosen strategically according to context, not universally
- ✓ Formal education is complemented by community-based education initiatives
- ✓ Existing local peace capacities are mapped and imposed
- ✓ Coordination is prioritised over multiplication of activities

5. Teachers and Educators as Nexus Actors

Rationale

Teachers are frontline Nexus actors, playing a critical role in activities that support all three pillars:

- child protection, safety (a priority in humanitarian, but also development and peace)
- education quality, system continuity (development and humanitarian, supporting peace)
- supporting good governance, dialogue and inclusion (a priority for peace, but also development and humanitarian)

Teachers are often under pressure, teaching with very limited resources and dealing with the impact of the same crises as the learners in their classrooms. They can be subject to political pressure, and frequently have limited professional support.

Key questions – Teachers as Nexus actors

- Are teachers equipped to manage sensitive issues safely, including through appropriate professional development?
- Do incentives, salaries or deployment practices create tensions?
- Are teachers protected, supported and recognised?

Simplified checklist

1. Teachers' roles as social and peace actors are recognised
2. Teacher professional development includes conflict sensitivity and dialogue skills
3. Teachers' wellbeing and safety are prioritised
4. Resources are adequate to reach the objectives, taking account of the crisis context

6. Pedagogy: How Learning Happens Matters

Rationale

The HDP Nexus emphasises *how* change happens, not only *what* is delivered.
Research shows that **dialogic, experiential and culturally grounded pedagogies** – ways of teaching - are particularly effective in conflict settings.

Key questions – facilitating learning

- Are teaching approaches consistent with peace values (participation, respect)?
- Do teaching approaches allow difficult topics to be addressed safely?
- Are local cultural practices seen as resources or risks?

Simplified checklist

- ✓ Ways of teaching – pedagogies – are learner-centred and participatory
- ✓ Arts, storytelling or culturally relevant methods are used when appropriate
- ✓ Intergenerational dialogue is encouraged where it is safe
- ✓ Process is valued alongside measurable outputs

7. Monitoring, Learning and Adaptation

Rationale

Peace impacts are rarely linear or immediately measurable, but it is important to include the peace aspect of an initiative when planning and implementing monitoring and evaluation. MEAL should encompass all pillars of the HDP Nexus.

Key questions – monitoring, learning and adaptation

- What early signals indicate positive or harmful effects of education activities?
- Are unintended consequences being tracked?
- Is there space to adapt based on learning?

Simplified checklist

- ✓ Reflection is built into implementation, not postponed to evaluation
- ✓ Indicators are both qualitative (perceptions, relationships, safety) and quantitative (captured in numbers)
- ✓ Feedback loops – exchange of information about the intervention – include teachers, learners and communities
- ✓ Adaptation is encouraged, not penalised

8. How to use this tool

This checklist compiles the 'Simplified checklists' in the preceding sections. It is deliberately modular and flexible. It is aligned with the INEE Conflict Sensitive Education Pack, and specifically with Document 2, Guiding Principles. It is not a compliance tool, but a decision-support tool to help education actors navigate conflict, fragility and peace outcomes in EiE programming. It does not need to be scored, but a scale is suggested in case this is useful to support programme management.

It can be used:

1. at different moments of the programme cycle
2. by different actors (donor, implementer, partner, evaluators)

9. Nexus in Education Checklist

Peace Education Checklist	Yes / No or scale*
1. Conflict-sensitive analysis	
a. Conflict drivers linked to education are identified (access, language, certification, governance)	
b. Horizontal inequalities (between groups/regions) are explicitly analysed	
c. Risks of parallel systems are identified and mitigated where feasible	
d. Education is treated as part of the political economy of crises, not a neutral service	
2. Attitudes, Values and Behaviour	
a. Education activities go beyond information provision to support critical thinking and conflict resolution	
b. Non-violence, empathy and dialogue are explicitly supported	
c. Psychosocial safety is considered alongside physical safety	
d. Content and pedagogy avoid reinforcing fear, hatred or victimisation	
3. Relationships	
a. Education creates opportunities for interaction across divides (where possible and appropriate)	
b. Multiple narratives of the past are acknowledged	
c. Dialogue is recognised as a process, not a quick fix	
d. Reconciliation is framed as long-term and context-specific	
4. Entry points for connecting education approaches	
a. Entry points are chosen strategically according to context, not universally	
b. Formal education is complemented by community-based education initiatives	
c. Existing local peace capacities are mapped and engaged	
d. Coordination is prioritised over multiplication of activities	
5. Teachers as Nexus actors	
a. Teachers' roles as social and peace actors are recognised	
b. Teacher professional development includes conflict sensitivity and dialogue skills	
c. Teachers' wellbeing and safety are prioritised	
d. Resources are adequate to reach the objectives, taking account of the crisis context	
6. Facilitating learning	
a. Ways of teaching – pedagogies – are learner-centred and participatory	
b. Arts, storytelling or culturally relevant methods are used when appropriate	
c. Intergenerational dialogue is encouraged where safe	

d. Process is valued alongside measurable outputs	
7. Monitoring, Learning and Adaptation	
a. Reflection is built into implementation, not postponed to evaluation	
b. Indicators are both qualitative (perceptions, relationships, safety) and quantitative (captured in numbers)	
c. Feedback loops – exchange of information about the intervention – include teachers, learners and communities	
d. Adaptation is encouraged, not penalised	

*1 = Not addressed
2 = Minimally addressed
3 = Partially addressed
4 = Adequately addressed
5 = Strongly integrated

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