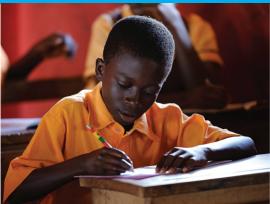
GENDER, EDUCATION AND PEACEBUILDING BRIEF

Emerging issues from 'Learning for Peace'







This brief is intended to inform policy discussions among education and peacebuilding actors on relevant gender considerations across both fields. It provides an introduction to the issues and serves as a precursor to the 'Update Brief' to be published 2016. The update will outline evidence generated under 'Learning for Peace' - the fouryear Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy programme implemented in 2011–2016, in partnership between UNICEF, the Government of the Netherlands, the national governments of 14 participating countries and other key supporters.

illions of children are affected by violent conflict and insecurity worldwide. As they face increasing and protracted crises, UNICEF is committed to helping children live in peace, free from violence and fear. This requires exploring new approaches and investing in programmes that address underlying risk and build resilience to reduce children's vulnerability to violent conflict.¹

Evidence demonstrates that effective and sustainable strategies to build resilience must address gender inequalities, and that failing to consider gender-related structural barriers and unequal power dynamics can reinforce vulnerabilities for the entire population.² To address gender inequalities and build long-term, sustainable peace, UNICEF uses social services as an entry point, with education representing a good example of this approach.

Gender equality: Fundamental to transformative and sustainable peacebuilding

Effective peacebuilding requires addressing the dynamics and underlying causes of conflict, and it cannot be accomplished if half the population is excluded from the process. Addressing gender inequalities, which are often an indicator of unresolved underlying conflict drivers, is an integral part of building long-lasting peace. Evidence indicates that improving gender equality in peacebuilding initiatives has a positive impact on both their outcome and durability.³





Equality between women and men is inextricably linked to peace and security. **

– Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, High Level Advisory Group for the Global Study on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325, 2000.

Among other benefits, it offers peacebuilding processes and society as a whole new levels of inclusiveness, human and social capital recovery, and more durable economic growth.⁴

Reflecting the rights, needs and concerns of all societal groups is fundamental to the sustainability of peace. Women, men, girls and boys experience conflict differently, with a range of gender-related impacts that must be effectively taken into account. Women and girls are uniquely and often disproportionately affected by violent conflict. For example, while conflict situations may lead to women and girls undertaking non-traditional activities that provide opportunities for economic participation, the already disproportionate burden of care they typically face can become exacerbated in the post-conflict context and negatively affect their economic empowerment. Without clear gender-transformative strategies, such dynamics can reduce the contribution of economic growth to peacebuilding.5

Global evidence further demonstrates that a country's level of gender equality is a key indicator of peacefulness (see Box 1). This is arguably linked to social or community norms of tolerance and inequality that are mirrored in behaviours throughout a population, from the individual through to the whole society, as the blueprint for interaction between humans with different characteristics is learned from femalemale relationships in every society.⁶

Although the social upheaval experienced during violent conflict may present an opportunity for peacebuilding approaches to redress gender inequalities and set new precedents during post-conflict transition, data show consistently low levels of gender equality in peacebuilding initiatives - both in terms of equal participation of women and girls, and in the limited application of strategies to promote shifts away from harmful gender norms.7 Gender-transformative peacebuilding efforts to date have had limited impact due to the lack of systematic uptake at scale, minimal dedicated financing, and limited expertise on the ground. As a result, interventions have largely failed to analyse, understand and address the norms dictating gender relations and power dynamics that can fuel violence.8

Gender-transformative peacebuilding approaches must go beyond simply including women and girls, to understanding and responding to how gender roles and relationships work across various contexts. Ensuring the equal participation of women and girls in efforts to promote peace and security and their engagement in decision making on conflict prevention and resolution are crucial for sustainable peace. This principle is embodied in the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325,9 which is considered to be central to advancing the international peace and security agenda.

Gender-responsive approaches to peacebuilding have traditionally been based on the assumption that women face greater levels of vulnerability and marginalization. While Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security¹⁰ have made efforts to refocus attention towards women's participation and protection, this has tended to result in 'just add women and stir'¹¹ approaches in which women and men are treated as homogeneous groups. In practice, little attention is paid to the multiple conflict roles and experiences of men and women as both survivors and perpetrators of violence, or as change agents, and how their gender intersects with other sociocultural identities (see Box 2).¹²

Box 1

Gender and peacebuilding

Among the evidence reviewed for this brief, it has been found that the greater the level of gender inequality in a country, the more likely a country is to be involved in intra- and inter-state conflict.⁽¹⁾

The best predictor of a state's peacefulness, on the other hand, is how well women are treated, rather than the status of wealth, democracy, ethnicity or religious identity. Based on the Gender Equality Index, and for countries with available data, 69 per cent of armed conflicts occur in areas with severe gender inequalities.

Source: (1) Hudson, Valerie M., et al., Sex & World Peace, Columbia University Press New York, 2012. (2) Caprioli, Mary, 'Gender Equality and Civil Wars', CPR Working Paper no. 8, World Bank, Washington, D.C., September 2003; Caprioli, M., 'Primed for Violence: The role of gender inequality in predicting internal conflict', International Studies Quarterly, vol. 49, 2005, pp. 161–178; and Melander, Erik, 'Gender Equality and Intrastate Armed Conflict', International Studies Quarterly, vol. 49, no. 4, December 2005, pp. 695–714. (3) Francesch, Maria Cañadas, et al., 'The Gender Dimension in Peacebuilding', Chapter 6, Alert 2010! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding, Escola de Cultura de Pau, Barcelona, 31 December 2009, pp. 139–148.

A nuanced approach

Gender, alongside other intersections of power – race, class, ethnicity, education, disability – shape a person's opportunities, vulnerabilities, limitations and assets. In urban Burundi, for example, a married, female middle-aged civil servant will face different challenges and opportunities before, during and after violent conflict compared to an unmarried, unemployed female ex-combatant in rural Burundi.

In order to be effective, such nuances must be reflected in peacebuilding approaches rather than a simplistic approach that limits gender-transformative peacebuilding to gender-based violence and general issues facing women and girls.

Source: Myrttinen, Henri, Jana Naujoks and Judy El-Bushra, 'Re-Thinking Gender in Peacebuilding', International Alert, London, March 2014, p. 10.

To promote gender equality effectively and ensure the durability of peacebuilding efforts, social service providers must understand how women and men jointly reproduce gender norms that dictate rigid gender roles and related power dynamics, and how these can either fuel conflict or promote peace. Gender must be understood in terms of its links to a range of identities, power dynamics and norms across various social groups, which in turn lie at the heart of peacebuilding (see Box 3). Adopting a broader and deeper understanding of power relations is an important factor in facilitating women's equal participation in social transformation that promotes benefit sharing and solidarity, and can produce peaceful outcomes.¹³ For example, men's willingness to share power and promote women's presence at the peace table or in negotiations/discussions in the public sphere is also a prerequisite for women's equal participation.

Harnessing the potential of education

Alongside promoting gender equality, leveraging the opportunities presented by education in the post-conflict period to promote gender-transformative interventions is a crucial prerequisite for building sustainable peace. Education can be transformative when it is equitably available, of good quality, relevant and conflict-sensitive, and can touch the lives of every citizen. UNICEF's Gender Action Plan 2014–2017 highlights the differential impact of conflict on girls and boys and underscores the need for tailored programmatic responses as part of strategies to mainstream gender equality in education and the importance of peacebuilding interventions to this end.¹⁴

Education is more than a social service, it can serve to develop identities and influence deeply seated cultural norms, and plays a vital role in shaping the understanding of gender roles and responsibilities, and internalizing positive gender norms during childhood and adolescence. Conversely, education that legitimizes potentially harmful gender stereotypes at an early age can pose a challenge to education access and quality – and can undermine boys' and girls' ability to contribute

Box 3

Power dynamics in Karamoja, Uganda

In Uganda's Karamoja region, conflict dynamics related to cattle raiding have had a significant impact on gender relations. After being disarmed, young men may lose their ability to secure cattle and are unable to fulfil traditional expectations of protecting and providing for their families. In some cases, both men and women reported that men "have become like women now" because they could no longer control livestock and protect their families.⁽¹⁾

Some men in this situation have resorted to livelihood strategies involving crime and violence as both a means for survival and reassertion of masculinity, power and control. (2)

Source: (1) Stites, Elizabeth, and Darlington Akabwai, 'Changing Roles, Shifting Risks: Livelihood impacts of disarmament in Karamoja, Uganda', Feinstein International Center, July 2009, p. 33. (2) Stites, Elizabeth, et al., 'Engaging Male Youth in Karamoja, Uganda', LOGiCA Study Series, no. 3, World Bank, Washington, D.C., June 2014, p. 4.

to peacebuilding, possibly even fuelling violence.¹⁵ The education system and teachers thus play a critical role in the process of promoting gender equality and providing opportunities for boys and girls to contribute equally and positively to peacebuilding processes for future generations.

UNICEF's strategic focus on girls' education goes beyond parity to aim at achieving gender equality. Girls in conflict-affected areas face higher barriers to accessing education due to such issues as child marriage, lack of security and threats of violence related to attending school, gender-based violence within schools, and lack of essential 'girl-friendly' infrastructure (see Box 4). Resulting gender disparities in access to education and completion of schooling deny children

Key facts on barriers to education

- 246 million boys and girls suffer from schoolrelated violence every year.⁽¹⁾
- Qualitative studies have shown that genderbased violence contributes to girls' poor performance at school and dropout. Rape or coerced sex can result in early and unintended pregnancies and increase the risk of girls not being able to finish their education.⁽²⁾
- An estimated 500 million women and girls lack adequate facilities to manage menstrual hygiene needs with dignity, privacy and safety. (3) Lack of adequate facilities at school can be a major barrier to girls' attendance.

Source: (1) Greene, Margaret Eleanor, et al., 'A Girl's Right to Learn without Fear: Working to end gender-based violence at school', Plan International, Woking, United Kingdom, 2013, p. 7. (2) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, Gender and EFA 2000-2015: Achievements and challenges – EFA Global Monitoring Report gender summary, UNESCO, Paris, 2015, p. 29. Available at: http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/2015/education-all-2000-2015-achievements-and-challenges#sthash.20010lLD.dpbs. (3) World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund, 25 Years of Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water: 2015 update and MDG assessment, WHO and UNICEF, Geneva and New York, June 2015, p. 45.

– particularly girls – the opportunity to gain skills and competencies needed for civic and political engagement and to make an active contribution to peacebuilding.

The targets for education parity remain unachieved in countries affected by conflict, where primary enrolment rates were 83 per cent for boys and 76 per cent for girls in 2015. 16 While continued efforts to address parity in areas affected by violent conflict are needed, a greater focus is also needed on equality of education outcomes to enable all – and particularly young women and girls – to acquire the full benefits of education. 17

Given the crucial role of women's socio-economic empowerment in the success of peace processes and the well-documented barriers girls face to accessing quality education in both conflict and post-conflict environments, strategies for girls' education are an essential aspect of effective peacebuilding. Evidence demonstrates that girls' education can be transformative for entire societies, influencing not only girls' lives but almost every development outcome – from reducing child and maternal mortality to equitable growth and changing social norms. 19

The Learning for Peace programme

UNICEF's innovative, cross-sectoral Learning for Peace programme, supported by the Government of the Netherlands, has been a catalyst for exploring how social services, particularly education, can break the cycle of conflict by addressing the root causes and contribute to long-term, sustainable peace. Learning for Peace aims to embed gender considerations into education for peacebuilding interventions by utilizing education to address gender inequalities that are exacerbated by conflict, and as a tool for advancing gender equality and promoting sustainable peace.²⁰

Despite mounting evidence at the macro level, causal connections between gender-responsive approaches to programming and advancing the goals of peacebuilding remain weak.²¹ Emerging evidence generated under Learning for Peace, however, is demonstrating a link between attitudes related to gender equality in education and strengthening social cohesion at the country level.²² Experience gained through the programme is generating important lessons for gender-transformative peacebuilding and highlighting the transformative role of the education, as outlined under the following points:

'Build Back Better' – Promoting positive gender relations and social norms

Despite the potential benefits of education, school practices commonly undermine gender equality, teaching materials can reinforce gender stereotypes, and systems often perpetuate or are unable to prevent school-related gender-based violence.²³ The recovery period following violent conflict presents the opportunity to 'build back better' – transforming institutions, structures and relationships in societies affected by violent conflict.

Given that violent conflict often leads to significant shifts in gender roles and responsibilities, the transitional period presents an opportunity to influence education systems to adopt strategies aimed at reformulating negative gender and social norms. In addition to improvements such as girl-friendly infrastructure, the supply of qualified female teachers, and specific measures to prevent and address gender-based violence, approaches to promote positive gender socialization in schools are emerging as an important element of peacebuilding.

To this end, building teachers' capacities to adopt conflict-sensitive, gender-transformative pedagogic approaches and developing complementary teaching and learning materials are being tested by Learning for Peace. While such approaches have traditionally focused on addressing inequalities faced by women and girls, the scope of interventions is increasingly expanding to reflect the importance of understanding the limitations placed on men and boys by narrow or rigid constructions of masculinity. These interventions

Promoting gender equitable school environments in Uganda's Karamoja region

In Uganda's conflict-affected Karamoja region, Learning for Peace is piloting a training model that aims to build primary school teachers' capacities to incorporate gender-equality principles in their teaching and to promote more gender-equitable norms and positive models of masculinity and femininity. A complementary component includes the use of mobile phone technology to reinforce learning through ongoing interaction with teachers via Short Message Service, as well as to obtain feedback to inform the development of additional teaching aids and refresher courses.

An impact evaluation of the intervention will ascertain the extent to which it has encouraged teachers' acceptance and promotion of positive gender norms, and identify initial indications of how this may contribute to social cohesion. The findings are expected in 2016 and will inform an up-scaling strategy to be led by Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports.

Source: UNICEF Uganda

also take account of the ways that society and social norms are gendered and interlinked with a range of identities such as ethnicity, religion and age.

 Empowering women and young people to promote and participate in building sustainable peace

Analysis points to changes in the roles, responsibilities and aspirations of women resulting from their experience of armed conflict. These shifts present the potential for women's empowerment, and linked to this, recovery at the household and community levels.²⁴ Education presents the opportunity to harness such transformative dynamics through adopting an empowerment approach to engaging women and girls. Approaches ensuring that girls receive education of a quality comparable to boys and supporting women to engage closely with education delivery can reinforce fundamental facets of building sustainable peace, given that:

- ♦ Educated women and girls are more likely to engage in and own peacebuilding processes, which leads to more sustainable results. Girls' lack of formal education is a structural barrier to women's productive community participation and leads to challenges such as lack of opportunities for employment. Data have shown this to be particularly evident in public administration, where women's limited presence can affect how well the issues that affect women and girls are represented in governance.²⁵
- By reflecting gender-related conflict experiences and priorities in peacebuilding approaches, strategies become more relevant to an entire population. Peacebuilding initiatives can, for example, benefit from women's particular skills – and leverage the skills that they often developed during conflict, such as agency and activism.²⁶ The meaningful participation of the entire

population will contribute to overall increased productivity, greater investments in children's education, and more diverse representation in governance.²⁷

Box 6

Côte d'Ivoire: Women's empowerment and social cohesion via early childhood development services

In Côte d'Ivoire, Learning for Peace is empowering women as peacebuilders through their engagement in the delivery of early childhood development services. 'Mother and Early Childhood Clubs' have been established by uniting women from various national, ethnic and social backgrounds around the common goal of their children's well-being. As part of the initiative, women are receiving training on basic literacy, numeracy, and income generation and management, as well as conflict resolution.

Ongoing programme monitoring is showing that activities have fostered increased levels of trust between women across different groups and are also promoting women's empowerment through building capacity on managing income-generating activities. Women in targeted areas are showing increased engagement in reconciliation activities, which is being observed to contribute to mending the social fabric of communities divided by conflict.

Source: UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire

Invoking positive models of masculinity and supporting at-risk male youth

Although men and boys are often constrained by gender norms that perpetuate discrimination and violence, issues of masculinity and male vulnerabilities are seldom addressed in the peacebuilding context. Other groups' perceptions of the threats posed by young men often link gender, social class and age, for example, stereotyping young male ex-combatants as 'irresponsible and violence prone'. It has also been shown that men with less education are more likely to express discriminatory views on gender, more likely to be violent in the home – and less likely to be involved in caring for their children.²⁸

Challenges for boys in relation to the low quality and relevance of education have increased their vulnerability to negative socio-economic coping strategies, such as crime and violence, as well as their vulnerability to re-recruitment.²⁹ These strategies are perceived as alternative avenues to achieving increasingly unattainable traditional expectations of manhood such as serving as head of household and sole provider.³⁰ Promoting positive masculine ideals and initiatives – through both formal and informal education – that explicitly aim to reach young men at risk of engaging in violence are thus vital to ensuring a durable peace.

Addressing gender-based violence

As reflected in prominent provisions in the United Nations Security Council resolutions, addressing gender-based violence is widely accepted as an

Box 7

The 'Living Peace' model

In Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Living Peace model uses best practices in social group therapy and gender-transformative education to engage men in post-conflict settings to promote social restoration. Evidence from the test sites shows that activities have resulted in significant positive changes – including improved and more peaceful partner relationships, improvements in the control of men's anger and frustration, and greater income sharing by men with their wives, as well as happier children and improved health outcomes.

Source: Learning on Gender and Conflict in Africa and Promundo, 'Living Peace Groups: Implementation manual and final project report – GBV prevention and social restoration in the DRC and Burundi', World Bank, Washington, D.C., September 2014. Also see the Living Peace Group links for 'IMAGES', 'Program H', 'Program M' and 'Journeys of Transformation' at http://promundoglobal.org/programs/living-peace.

essential element of peacebuilding. The global epidemic of violence is often integral to and exacerbated by conflict, and the normalization of such violence extends into post-conflict recovery. Gender-based violence also commonly serves as one of the drivers of conflict. This 'continuum of violence' undermines the violence reduction efforts that are central to peacebuilding interventions.³¹

As a manifestation of unequal power relations, addressing gender-based violence means tackling the causes of gender inequality, which are linked to social norms and values reflected in structural discrimination. Evidence suggests, for example, that increasing women's access to productive resources and to socio-economic rights reduces their susceptibility to violence in certain circumstances, but in others can increase susceptibility to violence, at least in the short term.³²

Access to relevant, quality education can contribute to the prevention of gender-based violence and serve as an important long-term strategy to address the structural inequalities that impede women's empowerment. Unless the economic, social and psychological effects of gender-based violence on survivors, witnesses and perpetrators are considered, social cohesion can be undermined, given the effects on individual functionality that carry great socioeconomic costs for society as a whole.³³

Efforts to address gender-based violence through formal and non-formal education approaches are crucial contributions to building sustainable peace. In order to shift social norms that condone gender-based violence, parallel efforts beyond the school and classroom are required. Reducing societal violence necessitates engaging multiple stakeholders, including working with men and women to understand and address socialized behaviour held in place by the values and norms that lead to violence. Both formal and non-formal educational interventions can be used to catalyse behaviour change by creating or reinforcing positive social norms, and establishing or reinforcing legal norms.³⁴

The way forward for gender equality, education and peacebuilding

During the past two decades, we have witnessed substantial advancements in the normative framework on gender equality and peacebuilding. But significant gaps remain in knowledge on good practices as a result of limited direct investment in strategic programmes operating at scale, and a lack of rigorous evaluation and documentation.³⁵ Important ongoing processes – from the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (see Box 9) to the 15th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 – offer the momentum to drive new approaches and strategies to close these gaps.

Working with communities in Somalia and South Sudan

UNICEF is piloting a community-based model in Somalia and South Sudan to transform social norms on gender, power and violence towards building sustainable peace within families and communities. By harnessing community dynamics following the intense social upheaval of conflict, the Communities Care initiative aims to alter engrained attitudes and beliefs that lead to sexual violence. The initiative seeks to promote positive shifts in the way people interact, and to contribute to the evidence base on the role of formal and non-formal education in preventing sexual violence in conflict-affected areas.

Preliminary findings show a reduction in intimate partner violence, in the social norm of protecting family honour through violence when a women or girl has experienced sexual violence, and in acceptability of a husband's right to use violence against his wife. Additionally, emerging evidence indicates that 'community discussion dialogues' are promoting local engagement and action to build safer, more peaceful communities. Trained community discussion leaders are demonstrating increased awareness and understanding of sexual violence and the negative impact it can have on community cohesion, and they are supporting communities to undertake collective action against sexual violence. Service providers are also demonstrating improved awareness and understanding of the specific needs of survivors of sexual violence and the positive changes they can make as organizations and role models in their communities.

Source: UNICEF Somalia and South Sudan

Learning for Peace is poised to contribute to building evidence on the role of education as an entry point for addressing gender inequalities in peacebuilding. To this end, emergent learning indicates that concerted efforts are required to:

- Ensure that all learners particularly girls are provided with the opportunity to gain skills and competencies needed for civic and political engagement and to make an active contribution to peacebuilding. In areas affected by violent conflict, this requires the dual approach of specific strategies to improve gender equality in education that allow all learners to reap the full benefits of education, and efforts to address barriers impeding access to education where parity remains largely unachieved.
- Leverage the opportunities presented by education in the post-conflict period to promote gendertransformative interventions as a prerequisite for building sustainable peace alongside promoting gender equality. Interventions must build upon the United Nations 'Women, Peace and Security' agenda to reflect a broader and deeper understanding of gender and conflict issues. This must incorporate an understanding of harmful concepts related to masculinity, as well as how society and social norms are gendered and interlinked with a range of different identities such as ethnicity, religion and age.
- Ensure systems-level school and classroom-based strategies to promote gender-equitable environments that are designed to be cognizant of and complement wider community-based initiatives and informal education approaches aiming to shift social and gender norms. This should include such initiatives as prevention of gender-based violence in conflictaffected areas.

Box 9

The related Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Source: United Nations General Assembly, 'Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', A/RES/70/1, United Nations, New York, 25 September 2015.

By mid-2016, good practices generated from Learning for Peace are expected to be available to inform the design of at-scale, evidence-based programming on gender equality in education for peacebuilding. To this end, the majority of international donor support for gender equality in fragile states is allocated to social sectors, including education.³⁶ This presents a significant opportunity to leverage existing resources to build on knowledge generated from Learning for Peace and invest in gender-transformative services that address the root causes of conflict and promote peace.

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