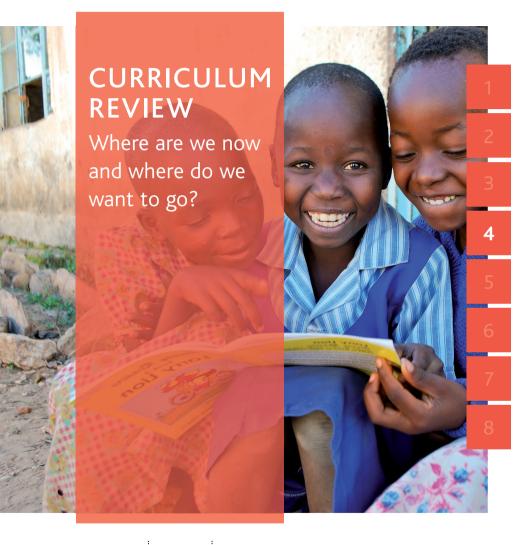
SAFETY, RESILIENCE, AND SOCIAL COHESION: A GUIDE FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPERS











A programme of education above all™

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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Tatenda, age 8, Chipo, age 9, and Trish, age 8 (left to right), share a story book during class at Matau Primary School in Zimbabwe.

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Booklet 4

CURRICULUM REVIEW Where are we now and where do we want to go?

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

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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.

Suzanne Grant Lewis
Director, IIEP

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Director, IBE

Mark Richmond

Director, PEIC

Booklet 4 – Curriculum review: Where are we now and where do we want to go?



Take-away points

- ▶ Undertake curriculum review at a point in the reform cycle when the ministry is considering introducing changes in its curriculum but has not yet decided what changes need to be made. To make informed decisions, the ministry needs to have a good picture of what exists and what is missing in the curriculum documents (that is, the curriculum framework, syllabuses, textbooks, etc.), the actual teaching practice, and the assessment processes.
- ▶ A full curriculum review indicates which elements of learning to live together (LTLT) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) are already included in the official curriculum and in teaching practice, and which elements need to be added or reinforced.
- ➤ Carry out a baseline review of practice in the schools as a critical first step. This should include a small-scale survey of actual conditions, including whether the existing LTLT and DRR elements in the written curriculum are actually taught, the attitudes of teachers and students towards these elements, and their views as to any gaps.
- ▶ A systematic curriculum review usually leads to a set of recommendations for changing and improving the current curriculum and will have implications for all aspects of the curriculum textbooks, teacher training, and examinations, as well as management and administration of the education system and at school level.

Introduction

Curriculum review is a necessary part of the curriculum enhancement process. Its purpose is twofold: to understand what messages concerning learning to live together (LTLT) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) currently feature in curriculum documents and textbooks; and to understand how these priority messages are conveyed in classrooms. In order to decide what, if any, curriculum changes are required, it is first necessary to know what is already in place. In other words, the present situation needs to be thoroughly understood, which is the task of the curriculum review.

A curriculum review will examine national curriculum policy and key curriculum documents, including the curriculum framework, syllabuses, nationally recognized textbooks, teaching methods, and assessment and examination systems. A full curriculum review will include a baseline study collecting empirical data on the current teaching of any LTLT and DRR themes in schools, as well as on related teaching practices, teacher education, student needs and perceptions, community perspectives, and the potential of various institutions and networks to bring about change (UNESCO and UNICEF, 2014: 43).

Priority content areas, as described in *Booklet 3*, can be compiled into a checklist and used in the review of the curriculum framework and subject area syllabuses. It can also assist with the design of focus group topics for the baseline study and in developing interview schedules.

Steps in a curriculum review

- Review curriculum documents and a selection of textbooks and other materials for LTLT and DRR content.
- ▶ Undertake a baseline study of teaching practices in schools, relevant school conditions, and teacher/student perspectives.
- ► Hold a participative curriculum review and baseline study workshops.

Step One

Review curriculum documents and a selection of textbooks and other materials for LTLT and DRR content

A first step is to review all curriculum policy guidance frameworks and syllabuses to ascertain what reference is made to topics relevant to safety, resilience, and social cohesion, and to discover how the topics are presented. In a similar way, portions of textbooks should be selected for detailed review, following a quick scan of their index pages. Although textbooks from certain subject areas, such as mathematics, may not seem directly relevant, they should still be reviewed for the way in which different situations and characters are portrayed, for example, in illustrations and word problems. Some science lessons, such as those that focus on disasters, health, and climate change, will be very important for various DRR topics. Social studies, history, geography, and language textbooks will have some content relevant to LTLT and, perhaps, DRR. Other subjects may be relevant, depending on the context. Religious studies and subjects such as ethics/morals and civics or citizenship education will certainly have content related to LTLT. Even art, physical education, and music syllabuses may well contain messages that promote living together in peace, teamwork, and appreciation of the beauty of the natural environment.

In this series of booklets the focus is mainly on nationally examined subjects. However, useful lessons also can be learned from the experience of trying to introduce theoretically compulsory but non-examined subjects that may not, in reality, be regularly taught in all schools. These may include life skills, health education, peace education, or other similar curriculum initiatives. Lessons can also be learned from the implementation of innovations that have not impacted on all schools, such as efforts to improve pedagogy, or the move towards 'child-friendly schools' (CFS). Reviewing curriculum implementation in a sample of typical schools, as well as innovative or good-practice schools, will help indicate what might or might not be practicable on a national scale.

Develop standardized review tools

A review of curriculum, textbooks, and other documents for elements related to safety, resilience, and social cohesion examines current education materials in order to answer questions such as:

- Which elements of the curriculum framework for LTLT and DRR (as discussed in *Booklet 3*) are already covered in textbooks, teacher training, and examinations?
- Is there bias or are there discriminatory statements in the materials in relation to ethnicity, gender, religion, ability, or particular social groups?
- How are LTLT and DRR elements included in the existing curriculum (as a separate subject, in other subjects with or without clear identification, cocurricular, etc.)?

A review tool specific to each context is needed to document the representation of LTLT and DRR in curricula, textbooks, and other education materials. *Table 1* is an example from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) that illustrates a possible approach (UNRWA, 2013: 5).

Table 1
Materials review tool: Sample from UNRWA framework¹

Competency	Rating	Teacher training	Textbooks	Supplemental programming	Comments		
	Not included? Partially included? Yes, included?	What resource? What page? Skill or content knowledge?	What resource? What page? Skill or content knowledge?	What programme materials? Skill or content knowledge?			
Citizenship							
Learners recognize their social responsibilities.							
• Learners act responsibly towards the environment.							

^{1.} See also GTZ and IBE-UNESCO (2008: 58-69) for approaches and descriptions of textbook review for LTLT.

- Learners respect the value of their own and other cultures and heliefs
- Learners respect UN values and human rights.

Review checklists should incorporate the priority LTLT and DRR content areas and learning outcomes/competencies so that reviewers can see which of these topics are represented, and what content is included for the various age groups. *Annex 1* provides a sample format for use in the review of textbooks.

Review for bias

Bias can relate to all aspects of identity, including gender, language, ethnicity, socio-economic status, language, ability (mental and physical), and political and religious affiliation. Textbooks should be reviewed for text and pictures that reflect bias. When reviewing for gender, ethnic, political, religious, or other bias in the curriculum or in textbooks, be sure to:

- review content:
- review illustrations;
- ensure diversity is valued throughout in a meaningful and purposeful way.

Box 4.1.

Key resources for reviewing curricula for gender bias

- ► The Textbook Writer's Manual (Gachukia and Chung, 2005: 51-55).
- Guidelines for Textbook Review and Analysis from a Gender Perspective (IBE-UNESCO, 2010).
- ► GENIA (Gender in Education Network in Asia-Pacific) toolkit: Promoting Gender Equality in Education, 4th edition (UNESCO Bangkok, 2009: 60-62).
- Promoting Gender Equality through Textbooks (UNESCO, 2009: 48-62).

Step Two

Undertake a baseline study of teaching practices in schools, relevant school conditions, and teacher/student perspectives

There may be a big difference between stated policy and the officially required subjects and pedagogy, and what is actually taught in schools and how. Some of the requirements may simply be impracticable in under-resourced schools, while others may not be met because of pressures on students and teachers to focus on national examinations and to avoid sensitive topics. Students' reading abilities, and issues concerning the language of instruction, may also prevent effective implementation.

The purpose of the baseline study is to obtain information about what is actually occurring in schools. The study, therefore, requires visits to schools selected to represent different regions and categories, including schools in rural and poor areas, and schools that serve marginalized groups (i.e. not just elite schools or schools near the capital city). The visits will include the following:

- A review of school timetables and teaching responsibilities for relevant subjects.
- An assessment of how many textbooks and teaching and learning materials
 are available and used by teachers and students, as well as the presence or
 absence of teacher guides and manuals for relevant subjects.
- A review of class sizes, the degree of overcrowding, and hours of schooling. Is there a shift system?
- A review of teacher records and student workbooks for relevant subjects to see what lessons have actually been taught and how.
- A review of sample assessment tools, such as ongoing assessment techniques, school-based tests, and formal examinations to ascertain how relevant elements of the curriculum are assessed.
- Interviews and focus-group discussions with teachers and with students, to ascertain their views on what subjects and lessons are actually taught, and the teaching methods used, with special attention to the teaching and learning of competencies relevant to LTLT and DRR,² as well as to broader issues such as school climate, student participation, etc. Where possible, interviews and focus groups should include representation from different ethnic and

^{2.} Using the terms or programme titles under which these elements are identified in the existing curriculum.

religious groups, and feature separate discussions with females and males. Interviews should be supplemented by visits to classrooms to observe teaching practice.

Where applicable, one or more schools categorized as 'child friendly' should be included. In addition, some good-practice schools, where head teachers have actively promoted education for peace, life skills, citizenship, DRR, and related themes, should also be included in the study. The visits will help answer questions such as:

 What are the main challenges in implementing the existing LTLT and DRR curriculum content in: (a) core subjects that are examined; and (b) other subjects, e.g. life skills or values education?

Box 4.2.

Key resources for conducting baseline studies

- ► Towards a Learning Culture of Safety and Resilience: Technical Guidance for Integrating DRR in the School Curriculum (UNESCO and UNICEF, 2014: 148-149): this resource includes examples of baseline studies relating to DRR.
- ▶ Learning to Live Together: Design, Monitoring and Evaluation of Education for Life Skills, Citizenship, Peace and Human Rights (GTZ and IBE-UNESCO, 2008: 90-109): this resource includes interview and focus-group questions that can be used for baseline studies.
- What are students' and teachers' attitudes to these areas of the curriculum, and how do they think they could or should be introduced or upgraded?
- Are there any relevant pilot programmes or small-scale programmes already in progress? What lessons can be learned? What are the costs and are they financially sustainable? Do these initiatives have broad support or are they dependent on one or a small number of personal champions?
- How can teachers and students with the skills necessary for preparing motivational and informative inputs into new education materials be identified?

Pay special attention to language-of-instruction policies and reading skills

When preparing materials intended to engage students at a personal level and to stimulate discussion, it is important that the students are not held back by difficulties with comprehension, self-expression, or reading. The baseline study should, therefore, include an exploration of the real teaching and learning situation, based on discussions with students and teachers, as well as informal observation of children's language skills during school visits. The following questions should be considered when designing and implementing the baseline study:

• In which grades do teachers and students use their mother tongue as the language of instruction (or as a permitted supplement to instruction in another language)?

- In which grades is their capacity to engage personally with LTLT and DRR likely to be compromised by transition to another national or international language of instruction (where applicable)?
- What is the effective reading level of students in different regions, ethnic groups, and socio-economic levels? What are the real language skills (e.g. comprehension, oral and written expression) of students in under-resourced regions or where students are not studying in their mother tongue? What are the implications for the design of materials?
- Can the core messages be written at a reading level that is below the norm used for the grade or year of schooling so as to encourage a focus on the social and emotional challenges and the core factual messages and skills?

Review the institutional framework and capacity

As part of the baseline review, it will also be important to find out which individuals and institutions have expertise and interest in LTLT and DRR, and in strengthening their role in the curriculum. This means consulting with, among others:

- ministry of education departments and institutes (especially those responsible for curriculum, textbooks, teacher training, and examinations);
- teacher-education faculties and institutions;
- United Nations, bilateral aid agencies, and academic specialists;
- non-governmental organizations with a specialist interest in education, peacebuilding, civil society, DRR, and so on, as well as organizations representing minority cultures, women, young people, and marginalized groups;
- education publishers, writers, and illustrators.

The baseline study should also report on the production, distribution, and assessment of recent textbooks and other education materials relevant to LTLT and DRR, considering, among other issues, barriers to getting good materials into the hands of teachers and all students on a timely basis. The review should determine whether students have access to textbooks through school stocks, private purchase, or rental systems, or, indeed, whether most students have any access to textbooks.

In addition, the study should indicate where the country in question stands in the curriculum cycle; for example, whether textbook revisions are planned soon. If they are not, there might be an opportunity to make changes when textbooks are reprinted, if new textbooks and other education materials can be supplied to the schools. The study should also examine experience related to the use of supplementary materials, such as readers, and the use of school or classroom libraries. School leaders, teachers, and community members should be questioned to determine whether supplementary materials were distributed to the schools and how they are used in the classrooms.

Step ThreeHold a participative curriculum review and baseline study workshops

Workshops may be convened before, during, and after the curriculum review and baseline study exercises mentioned above. The preliminary workshops will help design the process and build stakeholder support. The tasks associated with the curriculum review, including the baseline study, will then be assigned to particular specialists. Following the curriculum review, the findings can be presented to key stakeholders in order to obtain policy decisions on the path forward. From the findings, it may be decided, for example, that:

- The curriculum needs to include additional or more robust aspects of LTLT, DRR, and related themes, to help support desired learning outcomes for safety, resilience, and social cohesion.
- A current 'official' programme relating to behaviour change (e.g. a peace education or life skills programme) is not realistic for many schools and should be replaced at national level with a simpler approach (while also leaving individual schools with the option of continuing with the full programme, if they have the capacity).
- Other changes are needed (e.g. regarding languages of instruction to be used for this area of curriculum, the level of difficulty of written materials).

Key actions

- ▶ Identify syllabuses, selected textbooks, and other teaching and learning materials for review in the agreed key content areas of learning to live together (LTLT) and disaster risk reduction (DRR).
- ▶ Design and use a specially prepared methodology and tool for this review, using a combination of workshops and individual review.
- ▶ Conduct a baseline study in schools in different regions to assess: teaching and learning conditions; if and how LTLT and DRR content is actually being taught; difficulties related to language of instruction and reading skills; and the perceptions and attitudes of students and teachers.
- ▶ Report back on the need for change, with recommendations as to whether and how to create better and/or more LTLT and DRR content, or whether to simplify an overly ambitious earlier initiative to enable wider implementation.

Annex 1

Sample textbook review

Below is a sample checklist for textbook review related to LTLT and DRR. This should be adapted in the light of national priorities, as noted in *Booklet 3*.

For each item, give a rating indicative of its presence in the textbook: Excellent/Good/Fair/Poor/None/ Negative bias, and note the details.

Content for review (Topics to be inserted based on priority local/ national/global issues)	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	None	Negative bias
Safety, disaster risk reduction						
Key safety/DRR topic 1						
• Key safety/DRR topic 2						
• Key safety/DRR topic 3						
Key safety/DRR topic 4						-
Learning to live together						
Social and emotional learning, life skills, psycho-social needs, resilience						
Respect for diversity/inclusion						
Gender, assertiveness training						
Education for conflict resolution, peer mediation, reconciliation						
Human rights and responsibilities						
Basic principles/underlying values						-
Human rights instruments and processes						
Human norms						
Humanitarian action (to help people in crisis)						
Principles of international humanitarian law (Geneva Conventions, etc.)						

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	None	Negative bias
_					
	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent Good Good	Excellent Good Good Fair Poor	Excellent Good Good Fair None None

Key Resources

Gachukia, E.; Chung, F. 2005. *The textbook writer's manual*. Addis Ababa: UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA).

www.ineesite.org/uploads/files/resources/the_textbook_writers_manual1. pdf

GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit); **IBE-UNESCO**. 2008. Learning to live together: Design, monitoring and evaluation of education for life skills, citizenship, peace and human rights. Geneva: GTZ.

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UNESCO. 2009. *Promoting gender equality through textbooks: A methodological guide*. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved from:

▶ http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001588/158897e.pdf

UNESCO Bangkok. 2009. GENIA (*Gender in Education Network in Asia-Pacific*) toolkit: *Promoting gender equality in education*, 4th edition. Bangkok: UNESCO.

▶ http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001864/186495E.pdf

UNESCO; UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund). 2014. *Towards a learning culture of safety and resilience: Technical guidance for integrating disaster risk reduction in the school curriculum*. Paris: UNESCO; New York: UNICEF.

▶ http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002194/219412e.pdf

UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East). 2013. *UNRWA framework for the analysis and quality implementation of the curriculum field level analysis tool*. Amman: UNRWA.

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.

CURRICULUM REVIEW

Where are we now and where do we want to go?

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