

**Background paper and analytical framework
for a conflict assessment of the
Education for All Programme in Nepal**

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Introduction

This paper aims to serve as background and analytical guidance for a conflict assessment of the Education for All programme in Nepal. In doing so it:

- Provides an outline of the latest thinking on sectoral approaches and conflict.
- Provides an overview of the relationship between conflict and education as outlined in recent literature.
- Considers the possible interactions between education and conflict in Nepal.
- Proposes an analytical framework for applying a conflict lens to the design and planning, method of implementation and systems for monitoring and evaluation of the Education for All programme.

1. Latest thinking on SWApS and Conflict

Chapter four of the Resource Pack¹ provides guidance on integrating conflict sensitivity into sectoral approaches. From an examination of donor policies and operational guidance² it appears that since its publication, no comprehensive guidance or policy positions have been developed which directly address the integration of conflict sensitivity into sectoral approaches. SIDA does include a section on the sectoral level in its guidance note 'How to Conduct a Conflict Analysis' however this draws heavily on chapter four of the Resource Pack.

There have been advances in three areas which could serve to inform the further development and application of guidance on integrating conflict sensitivity into sectoral approaches. These areas are:

- Service delivery in difficult environments/ fragile states
- Aid Instruments in fragile states
- Developing conflict-sensitive poverty reduction strategy (PRS) processes

1.1 Developing conflict-sensitive PRS processes

The World Bank is undertaking a three year programme that aims to contribute to effective poverty reduction strategies (PRSPs) in conflict affected countries. To date retrospective studies of the conflict sensitivity of PRS processes have been undertaken in 9 countries and the lessons disseminated in a World Bank report 'Toward a Conflict-Sensitive PRS'³. The work has generated lessons and developed a conceptual framework which could be adapted and applied when considering conflict sensitivity at the sector level.

The conceptual framework and approach of the study involved considering three main sets of issues bearing on the PRS processes in a country:

¹ The Resource Pack refers to APF et al (2003)

² Donors/ agencies studied are: DFID, SIDA, UNDP, World Bank as well as the OECD DAC Fragile State's Group. Donors were chosen on the basis of their previous engagement on the issue of conflict sensitivity and sector support, as well as their involvement in developing strategic conflict assessment frameworks (as opposed to programme or project specific).

³ World Bank (2005)

- Conflict sensitivity of the PRS. The extent to which conflict factors are recognised and addressed in the PRS process⁴ (participation, poverty diagnostic, institutional arrangements and donor behavior) and in recommended policy actions; and key contextual issues that either constrained or facilitated the conflict sensitivity of the process.
- Challenges created by the conflict environment. For example, the extent to which diminished capacity, entrenched power interests, lack of full territorial control, political/social taboos, lack of vertical and horizontal trust, and donor behavior constrained the PRS process.
- Lessons. How the countries addressed these challenges and integrated conflict considerations into the PRS process. How donor behavior affected the process.

Relevant suggestions/ lessons from the World Bank study are outlined in the box below (these could also be adapted for the sector level):

Box: 1 Lessons from World Bank report: ‘Towards a Conflict-Sensitive PRS’

- Base PRS process on a thorough assessment of the country context, including conflict factors.
- Design strategy and process so that countries can respond to changing circumstances.
- Identify and manage risks inherent in the PRS process. Eg. expectation raising.
- Identify ways of ensuring that all groups are engaged in participation and avoid excluding groups.
- Design participation process in a way which increases collaboration between groups which have experienced tensions, to help promote reconciliation.
- Build trust and manage expectations during participatory processes, particularly with conflict affected groups
- Ensure transparency of participation.
- Systematically integrate recognition of conflict factors into policy actions. Selection, prioritisation and design of actions should be based on context analysis that considers conflict factors.
- Assess policies and strategies for their impact on conflict.
- Ensure broad based inclusive institutional arrangements for implementing and monitoring the PRS.
- Prioritise country ownership over donor assertiveness. Donors could strengthen the country’s capacity to prepare a conflict-sensitive PRSP by providing technical assistance, commissioning studies and organising consultation workshops.

1.2 Aid instruments and aid effectiveness in fragile states

1.2.1 ‘Aid Instruments in Fragile States’

The Poverty Reduction in Difficult Environments Team (PRDE) in the UK Department for International Development (DFID) Policy Division has produced a draft working paper entitled ‘Aid Instruments in Fragile States’⁵. It examines the strengths and weaknesses of various aid instruments (including budgetary support and sector basket funding) and how they have been successfully used in the

⁴ Conflict factors refer to those features of a country’s national resource base, economy, social structures or political environment that have, or could potentially contribute to escalation or de-escalation of conflict. They may include causes of conflict as well as consequences. Recognition of conflict factors would entail that the PRSP takes them into account and integrates knowledge of them and the specific ways they link with poverty and growth in that country. A PRSP would seek to address conflict factors if it includes policy actions designed to resolve or mitigate any of the factors.

⁵ PRDE Working Paper No. 5 (2005)

context of fragile (including conflict affected) states⁶. It takes its starting point as the need to improve and increase aid delivery as opposed to conflict-sensitivity per se, but there are nevertheless some useful findings. These are outlined in the box below.

Box 2: Findings from the study ‘Aid Instruments in Fragile States’

- There is no single approach to aid instruments in fragile states. Development actors should avoid a one size fits all proscriptio such as ‘ budget support is inappropriate’ and rather focus on the context, policy objectives and imaginative and flexible use of the various instruments.
- Risk related to the use of instruments can be reduced but not eliminated. There will be concerns over state legitimisation and fiduciary risk, and minimum conditions for budget support may not be met. However, trust funds, pooled funding and social funds are being used in innovative ways that can manage these concerns, and also meet other objectives such as institutional development and donor harmonisation.
- Budget support instruments have been provided in countries of ‘low capacity/ high will’⁷ to some effect, specifically in two circumstances: budget support via Trust Funds in the early stages of state formation (eg. Afghanistan), and budget support, direct to government, in more established post-conflict countries with new regimes – eg. Rwanda (a high risk strategy).
- Sector budget support has advantages over other forms of programme aid (ie. debt relief, budget support, balance of payments support). (i) Sector budget support can be used even if overall policy, budgetary and institutional frameworks are considered sub-optimal, provided that sector frameworks are viable, therefore isolating and reducing risk. (ii) sector budget support may be used to cover key recurrent supply-side costs (for teachers and health workers, school textbooks, essential medicines) that may complement demand-side financing provided through social funds and other instruments (iii) sector budget support may be used as a pilot and pre-cursor to general budget support.
- Degrees of alignment of projects to national and local government systems are infinitely variable, and projects can be adjusted to accommodate different contexts and different development objectives. For example, projects can demonstrate principles of aid effectiveness such as alignment, harmonisation and predictability.

1.2.2 Joint donor statements and declarations relating to aid effectiveness and good international engagement in fragile states

In January 2005 the OECD DAC⁸ Fragile States Group produced a draft set of principles for international engagement in fragile states. These aim to maximise the positive impact of engagement and minimise unintentional harm. Many of the principles are closely related to those of conflict

⁶ Fragile states are defined in the paper as states that cannot or will not deliver core state functions for the majority of their people, including the poor.

⁷ Low institutional capacity but high commitment to a poverty reduction agenda

⁸ Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation. Development Assistance Committee

sensitivity⁹ and can inform the integration of conflict sensitive approaches and strategies at the sector level. They include commitments to:

- Take context as a starting point and the importance of sound political analysis in order to adapt international responses to the country context
- Focus on state building as the central objective
- Align with local priorities and/or systems. Behind government strategies where there is political will for development or, where there is weak governance, via partial alignment at the sectoral or regional level.
- Coordination and coherence between international actors and donor government agencies
- Do no harm. This includes avoiding bypassing national budget processes.
- Mix and sequence aid instruments to fit context. Including instruments to provide long-term support to health, education and other services.

These principles are reflected in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of March 2005 by ministers from developed and developing countries.

1.3 Service delivery in difficult environments

The Poverty Reduction in Difficult Environments Team (PRDE) in DFID Policy Division has produced a working paper entitled 'Approaches to Improving Delivery of Social Services in Difficult Environments'¹⁰. It underlines the importance of service delivery in addressing causes of conflict and provides useful guidance for supporting the development social sector strategies/ policies (eg. health and education) and service delivery approaches which address conflict issues (eg. horizontal inequalities in access to services, providing service delivery as a 'peace dividend').

The paper outlines the different challenges to supporting pro-poor service delivery in difficult environments including lack of political will on the part of the government, lack of state capacity to supply services. With these challenges in mind, approaches are outlined for the international community to strengthen pro-poor policy making functions (eg. by finding entry points to build pro-poor political will), build service provider capacity, and reduce barriers to poor people's access and participation (eg. by moving resources to community level).

Further work on the issue is being undertaken by a task team of donors under the umbrella of the OECD DAC Fragile States Group which will examine service delivery in difficult environments covering four sectors: Health, education, policing and potable water. It is not expected that outputs on these sectors will be available until winter 2006.

⁹ See APF et al (2004) Chapter 1, page 3.

¹⁰ PRDE Working Paper No. 3 (2004) - Difficult environments are defined as those areas where the state is unwilling or unable to harness domestic and international resources for poverty reduction, including the delivery of basic services. Such areas typically have all or several of the following characteristics: weak governance, fragile political and economic institutions, conflict, poor economic management, or are suffering from the effects of a chronic humanitarian crisis such as high HIV and AIDS infection or repeated famine.

2. The linkages between education and conflict

Over the past three years there has been a growth in the research published by bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors and agencies that examines the relationship between conflict and education.

The literature can be divided into two broad categories: (1) literature and guidance focused on support to education in the context of emergencies and reconstruction¹¹; and (2) literature which examines the relationship between conflict and education in order to inform a 'conflict sensitive' or peacebuilding approach to education.¹² This background paper draws on literature from the latter category, given its focus on conflict sensitivity and its relevance for gaining a sector wide understanding of the linkages regardless of category of intervention or phase of conflict.

2.1 The impact of conflict on education

Conflict seriously undermines the prospects of achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of Education for All by 2015. It is difficult to get an accurate picture of the impact of conflict on school attendance as the data from countries affected by conflict is scarce, unreliable and variable.

According to one source however, 82% of children who are not in school are living in crisis affected or post conflict countries¹³.

School enrolment levels are lower in conflict affected countries due to a variety of factors including: displacement; an increase in ill health and disability amongst children; rising poverty levels; and absences because of the inherent dangers of attending school amidst conflict. Schools can become targets of violence, recruiting grounds for child soldiers and travelling to school can risk the dangers of attack and landmines¹⁴. The impact of conflict on educational opportunities is often felt disproportionately by different groups and can therefore create or reinforce existing inequalities. For example, disruption to education during conflict is more common amongst girls¹⁵ and richer proportions of the population are better able to guarantee education for children than the socially disadvantaged¹⁶.

Conflict causes damage to educational infrastructure. School buildings are destroyed, either because they become targets of violence or because they suffer 'collateral' damage. Teacher numbers drop due to an exodus of professionals, declining teacher health (including HIV/ AIDs), or because teachers themselves become targets of the violence. In times of war the education system often attracts less financing, both public and private, as resources are diverted to the security forces and personal survival¹⁷. Governance of the education system is adversely affected. Management systems are disrupted and schools in zones of instability can become disconnected from the larger school system,

¹¹ UNESCO (2002& 2003), World Bank (2005)

¹² GTZ (2004), Smith and Vaux/ DFID (2004), Bush and Salterelli/ UNICEF (2000).

¹³ Smith and Vaux (2003)

¹⁴ GTZ (2004)

¹⁵ Smith and Vaux (2003)

¹⁶ GTZ (2004)

¹⁷ GTZ (2004)

undermining education system coherence (eg. curriculum, exams)¹⁸, overall quality and data collection.

Some commentators point to the resilience of primary education in situations conflict, as schooling often does continue via community led or rebel schools. However equity, access and quality usually all deteriorate¹⁹ and schools and education can become a weapon of war as a tool for indoctrination and through denial of access²⁰. Furthermore, even where schools are present, conflict can lead to an impairment of students' learning ability, mental health and motivation²¹.

2.2 The negative impact of education on conflict

There is a tendency amongst educationalists to think that education is inherently peace building²². However, the recent literature on education and conflict underlines the importance of understanding that education is not always a force for good and can be strongly linked to the structures, dynamics and actors of conflict.

'The formal education system can be linked to conflict factors when it (re) produces socio-economic disparities and brings about social marginalisation or compartmentalisation, or promotes the teaching of identity or citizenship concepts which deny the cultural plurality of society and lead to intolerance^{1,23}. Socio-economic disparities (eg. class, regional, religious) may be reinforced through unequal access to education and its governance systems; and social marginalisation/dominance can be deepened when curricula and learning resources promote the values, traditions, language and identity of one particular group over others or manipulate history. The state or providers of education (including teachers) may be a party to the conflict and actively use education as a weapon in the suppression of minorities and sectors of society, both economically and culturally. Education is for example a key medium with which ethnicity is mobilised for the escalation of conflicts²⁴.

Corruption may be a key factor in educational governance and there may be elite capture or partisan local decision making which fuels grievance. Education can contribute to conflict where there exists a lack of opportunity and life chances for the educated²⁵. The resulting dissatisfaction amongst youth and increases their chances in fomenting or becoming drawn into conflict.

2.3 Positive impact of education on conflict and peace-building potential of education

An understanding of how education might exacerbate conflict can also inform us of how education might have a positive impact on conflict by addressing structural causes.

Where governments are willing and data accurate and reliable, state education policies and systems have the potential to target inequalities and provide opportunities for the disadvantaged in society. They can be designed to be inclusive, manage diversity and create a climate of tolerance through

¹⁸ Sommers (2003)

¹⁹ World Bank (2005)

²⁰ GTZ (2004)

²¹ ibid

²² ibid

²³ Davies (2004) cit. GTZ (2004)

²⁴ Bush & Salterelli (2000)

²⁵ GTZ (2004)

democratic, participative and inclusive schools and governance systems. Certain types of education systems, such as differentiated systems, may be better insulated against political and ideological abuse and patronage; and certain types of curricula can help to provide skills, attitudes and values which are helpful in mitigating or preventing conflict²⁶. Recruitment, training and deployment of teachers is central to a conflict-sensitive education system²⁷. This might involve ensuring that teachers are drawn from different groups and are trained in rights based education.

Educational reform process and rehabilitation activities (including post-conflict and development orientated relief activities) provide particular opportunities to promote systems and schools that are geared to conflict prevention and can promote social cohesion. For this potential to be realised there needs to be a thorough analysis of the destructive elements of the prior system in order to avoid replicating those structures²⁸. Steps can also be taken to reinforce the crisis resistance, adaptability and sustainability of educational facilities given renewed violence²⁹ and education has a role in rehabilitating child soldiers and in raising awareness on the misuse of small arms and light weapons³⁰.

Despite the large number of publications on peace education (ie. promoting peace as an element of the curriculum or through specific educational projects), there is increasing criticism of its theoretical backwardness³¹ and a growing sense that it is inadequate as a response to conflict from the education sector. As highlighted above, peacebuilding through education is best achieved where it is embedded into the educational system and its governance, rather than a 'tag on' or discrete intervention.

2.3 Further work is needed to promote/ facilitate conflict sensitive approaches to education

There is a general consensus in the literature that there is an urgent need to develop 'conflict sensitive indicators' and conflict analysis and impact assessment frameworks specifically for the education sector³². Existing guidance on supporting education in conflict affected countries focuses on education in emergencies, for example UNESCO's 'Guidelines for education in situations of emergency and crisis'³³, and multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors have yet to develop methodologies and indicators to guide the development of a 'conflict sensitive' approach to education³⁴, including in the context of sector planning.

Analysis of the relationship between education and conflict needs to be systematic in all education interventions, not just in relation to specific phases of conflict, and it needs to be linked to a broader strategic conflict analysis of the country or region concerned³⁵. Conflict assessments should be factored into sector planning and sector reform processes including National Education For All plans.

²⁶ Smith & Vaux (2003)

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ GTZ (2004)

³⁰ Smith & Vaux (2003)

³¹ *ibid.*

³² GTZ (2004)

³³ UNESCO (2003)

³⁴ Smith & Vaux (2003), GTZ (2004)

³⁵ Smith and Vaux

3. The possible interactions between education and conflict in Nepal

This section considers the possible interactions between education and conflict in Nepal. Drawing on a limited number of reports and analyses, it provides a brief snapshot of the conflict and an overview of education provision in Nepal. It considers the possible impact of the conflict on education provision in Nepal and conversely the impact of the education on the conflict. Given the limitations of the analysis (in terms of research process, materials and time) the findings are only tentative and, in some cases, speculative, and therefore need to be verified through more in depth research.

3.1 The conflict in Nepal

In 1990 Nepal underwent a transition from royal rule to a multi-party system with the development of a new constitution and elections. Following six years of fragmented attempts to establish the new system of democratic government the conflict started in 1996. The Communist Party of Nepal – Maoists (CPN-M), involving elements of the dissatisfied intelligentsia and marginalized rural masses, declared a People’s War against the state (including the palace) and elite classes, with the objectives of overthrowing the bureaucratic capitalist class and state system, abolishing semi-feudalism and establishing a democratic republic. Initially the insurgency was concentrated around a limited number of districts in mid and far-west Nepal, however the Maoists have achieved a presence in large parts of rural Nepal, and, by 2004, 75 districts of Nepal were affected with government control of the country estimated at between 10 and 20 percent³⁶. In areas under their control the Maoists have sought to promote social and political change, establishing state like functions and structures. In 2000 the first Maoist district government was declared in Rukum.

In response to escalating conflict and following the breakdown of peace-negotiations, the government declared a state of emergency in 2001. The king dismissed the prime-minister and suspended parliament in 2002. Since then the palace has made increasingly authoritarian moves with the royal appointment of successive prime-ministers and repeated postponements of fresh elections, culminating in a royal coup in February 2005 directed primarily against the power of the political parties.

The following table provides an overview of some of the key structural dimensions/ key sources of tension of the conflict in Nepal³⁷.

Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Economic stagnation, poverty and income inequality – Uneven development with wide regional imbalances, horizontal inequalities and rural/ urban divide – access to land/ failed land reform of early 90's – Failure of governments to deliver on economic reforms and poor trickle down of donor supported programmes – Environmental decline – Economic activities linked to conflict eg. 'taxation' of development
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³⁶ Aarmon et al (2004)

³⁷ This table draws in part on Goodhand (2000)

	activities by CPN-M, targeting of rural banks
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Social systems and factors which impede economic mobility and political participation including: feudal caste system, class, gender inequality – Use of language (Nepali vs. local dialects) – Dissatisfied youth – Evidence of mobilisation of ethnicity
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Failed political transition – Capture and erosion of democratic institutions by elite interests/ palace. Feudal elites entrenched within political system – Patronage politics and corruption – Failure of successive governments to deliver on political reforms and address grievances (anti-corruption, bureaucratic reform) – Weak (and increasingly elite captured) local governance – Competing sovereignties (CPN-M) – Regional interests – India
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Widespread human rights abuses by security forces, absent democratic oversight/ control – Increasingly militarisation of society – emergence of militias – Increasing politicisation of military – Violence used to gain economic benefits (CPN-M) – Political violence

The royal coup of February 2005 has had an impact on the dynamics of the conflict. The inability of the palace to deliver on its promise of increased political stability, including curbing the insurgency, has weakened its support. It has also radicalised the parties against the monarchy and has given an impetus for a dialogue between the parties and the Maoists, boosted by the latter's recent ceasefire announcement³⁸. At the same time there are signs of a deteriorating economic and humanitarian situation, increasing politicisation of the military and an ongoing human rights crisis. This situation risks both a potential for further escalation of the conflict if the Maoist ceasefire does not hold, and a brutal crackdown by the palace on the mainstream opposition. Should the royal government collapse there is the risk of a power vacuum.³⁹

The conflict's root causes can only be addressed by structural change in the state and its governance system⁴⁰. The potential for such change is currently distant, however the royal coup has 'marked the

³⁸ ICG (2005b)

³⁹ ICG (2005b)

⁴⁰ Aarmon et al (2004), ICG (2005a)

definitive end of the old status quo', and the political landscape is throwing up its own peace opportunities which need to be nurtured⁴¹.

3.2 Overview of education provision in Nepal

In line with commitments in the PRSP (which is based on Nepal's 10th Development Plan) the Government of Nepal (GoN) is taking steps to improve school sector education and has embarked on a number of reform initiatives, including a sector programme for primary education – Education for All (EFA) – 2004-2009. Based on a pro-poor approach and with a primary implementation strategy of decentralisation, it has three main objectives: i) Ensuring access and equity in primary education, ii) Enhancing quality and relevance of primary education, and iii) Improving efficiency and institutional capacity. The programme is described in more detail in Annex 1.

EFA seeks to respond to some key issues in the current status of state educational provision in Nepal. These include: regional, gender and caste disparity in enrolment and high school drop out levels; poor quality education with only 15% of teachers having received any training; poor school infrastructure and distribution of learning resources; and weak democratic governance with management continuing to be highly centralised despite efforts towards decentralisation. In response to the weakness of the state education system private education provision has expanded, particularly in urban areas, leading to two different education systems.

3.3 Impact of conflict on education provision

The conflict has had a profound negative impact on education in Nepal. According to one commentator "children's education has been one of the worst hit sectors in the country"⁴². Insecurity and conflict, as well as the calling of strikes, has caused disruption to the operation of schools resulting school closure and a loss of school days⁴³.

Government access and service delivery

The insurgency and subsequent loss of government control of many rural areas of Nepal has reduced government and non-governmental access and capacity for service delivery, including education, further marginalizing the already poverty stricken population. The conflict and its political consequences has weakened local democracy and governance structures⁴⁴, led to poor lines of internal communication and reduced the government's ability to effectively monitor or gather statistics in the education sector. Village Development Committees (VDCs) have ceased to function, officials have fled to cities and elected bodies at the district and regional level have been allowed to lapse⁴⁵.

Schools, teachers and students have become targets of violence and military activity

The Maoist insurgency has specifically targeted educational establishments, either as a representation of an illegitimate state or, in the case of private schools, an unjust social order. Teachers have been

⁴¹ ICG (2005b)

⁴² IRIN Report, 23 Feb 2005

⁴³ According to the UN CAP (2005) since the beginning of the 2005 academic year, schools in severely affected districts have been closed for more than 120 of the 220 day academic year.

⁴⁴ Local government was suspended in 2002 following the declaration of a state of emergency and the shift of executive powers to the king.

⁴⁵ Aarmon et al.

killed, kidnapped and raped, causing a mass exodus which, along with infrastructure damage, has weakened the educational system and quality further. Maoists have abducted and indoctrinated students⁴⁶ and used schools as a recruiting ground, either forced or voluntary, and for political and military programmes⁴⁷. In areas under their control CPN-M is imposing a curriculum of “people’s education” and taxing teachers 5-10% of their income⁴⁸. Government security forces, including the RNA, are using schools as temporary bases⁴⁹ and requisitioning vehicles for their own use⁵⁰.

School attendance

Insecurity and deepening poverty in rural areas has caused families to keep their children away from school and internal displacement has reduced some children’s access to education⁵¹. However, the forced closure of many private schools by CPN-M, and the influx of population displaced by conflict to urban centres has led to overcrowding in urban schools putting an increased strain on the already weak state education infrastructure⁵².

3.4 Impact of education on conflict

The provision of education in Nepal is linked to the structural causes of conflict and its dynamics. Many of the negative impacts of conflict on education serve to further strengthen these linkages.

Economic and social impacts of education

Poor quality and inequitable state education provision (geographically and socially) both in terms of inputs (numbers of schools, teachers, resources) and outputs (educational attainment and qualifications) has reinforced existing inequalities. It has contributed to uneven development, regional imbalances, poverty and social exclusion and has fuelled grievances. The Nepali-language based education curriculum, inadequate teacher training and a narrow social selection of teachers (predominantly Terai Brahmins) may also have contributed to social divisions and marginalisation, since the education system is less able to meet the needs of different groups. The focus on primary education and the provision of literacy programmes in a context of lack of economic opportunity may have increased youth dissatisfaction and increased their recruitment into the CPN-M. The expansion of private education has undoubtedly been a mobilising factor in the conflict

Education governance and the political dimensions of conflict

Governance and management of the education system at the village and district level⁵³ is likely characterised by patronage, corruption and capture and erosion of decision making structures and resources by elite interests⁵⁴. This undermines the equity, responsiveness and accountability of the

⁴⁶ Amnesty International

⁴⁷ UN CAP (2005). Amnesty International (2005)

⁴⁸ Amnesty International (2005)

⁴⁹ UN CAP (2005). Amnesty International (2005)

⁵⁰ EFA Annual Review Meeting, Aide Memoire (2005)

⁵¹ UN CAP (2005)

⁵² UN CAP (2005) and EFA Annual Review Meeting, Aide Memoire (2005)

⁵³ Including School Management Committees, Village and District Development Committees (where they exist) and local educational bureaucracy

⁵⁴ A Recent report by ICG suggest that the palace has been placing its own appointees into district level government positions – ICG (2005b)

system, fuelling grievances. It also makes it hard to implement educational reforms and programmes (such as EFA) which target access and equity and other structural causes of the conflict.

Education and conflict dynamics

Where schools have become a recruiting ground for the CPN-M or used to transmit ideological messages, they feed into the dynamics of the conflict and can increase tensions. The same applies to the use of schools for military purposes by the RNA and the instrumentalisation of the education system to transmit nationalist messages⁵⁵.

3.5 The positive impact of education?

The objectives and design of the EFA programme are well targeted to address the root causes of conflict in Nepal. However, given the current political and security environment it faces enormous challenges to its effective implementation. Its primary implementation strategy is decentralisation, however local democracy and government structures are weaker than ever. It aims to promote access and equity in education, yet statistics on the nature and scope of the problem are unreliable and service delivery to marginalized populations difficult. It involves transferring funds directly to schools, but corruption combined with weak monitoring make risk of resource capture a possibility. Finally, it risks raising expectations that may not be met. Against this background the following section proposes an analytical framework to assess the programme for its impact both positive and negative on the conflict, to assess whether the current approach by donors is appropriate given the current context and to consider ways in which the programme and support to it via external assistance can be strengthened.

⁵⁵ See ICG (2005b). There has been a request for the inclusion of royal photos in text books

4. Analytical framework for applying a conflict lens to the Education for All programme

4.1. The EFA programme as a sectoral approach

Donor support to the EFA programme has the following characteristics of a sectoral approach:

- *Donor assistance is provided in line with the government's own sector strategy/ programme, expenditure framework and priorities outlined in: the EFA Core Document , Annual Strategic Implementation Plans (ASIP) and Annual Work Plan*
- *Donor coordination and alignment* is achieved through common funding arrangements and donor review/ consultative meetings. The five donors (IDA, DFID, Norway, Denmark and Finland) have signed a Joint Financing Arrangement with the Ministry of Finance of Nepal to provide sub-sector budget support.
- *Broad stakeholder participation.* The process of preparing the EFA core document and Annual Strategic Implementation Plans involved a consultative process with civil society and stakeholders at central, regional, district and resource centre levels.
- *Variable modes of assistance using various financial assistance.* External assistance to the EFA is provided by sub-sector budget support and technical assistance as well as INGO and NGO projects aligned with EFA objectives.
- *Results based aid management approach.* Emphasis is given to joint monitoring and evaluation involving joint donor/ government review missions as well as independent external donor reviews.

The use of a sectoral approach in development assistance raises particular issues which need to be considered within a conflict assessment:

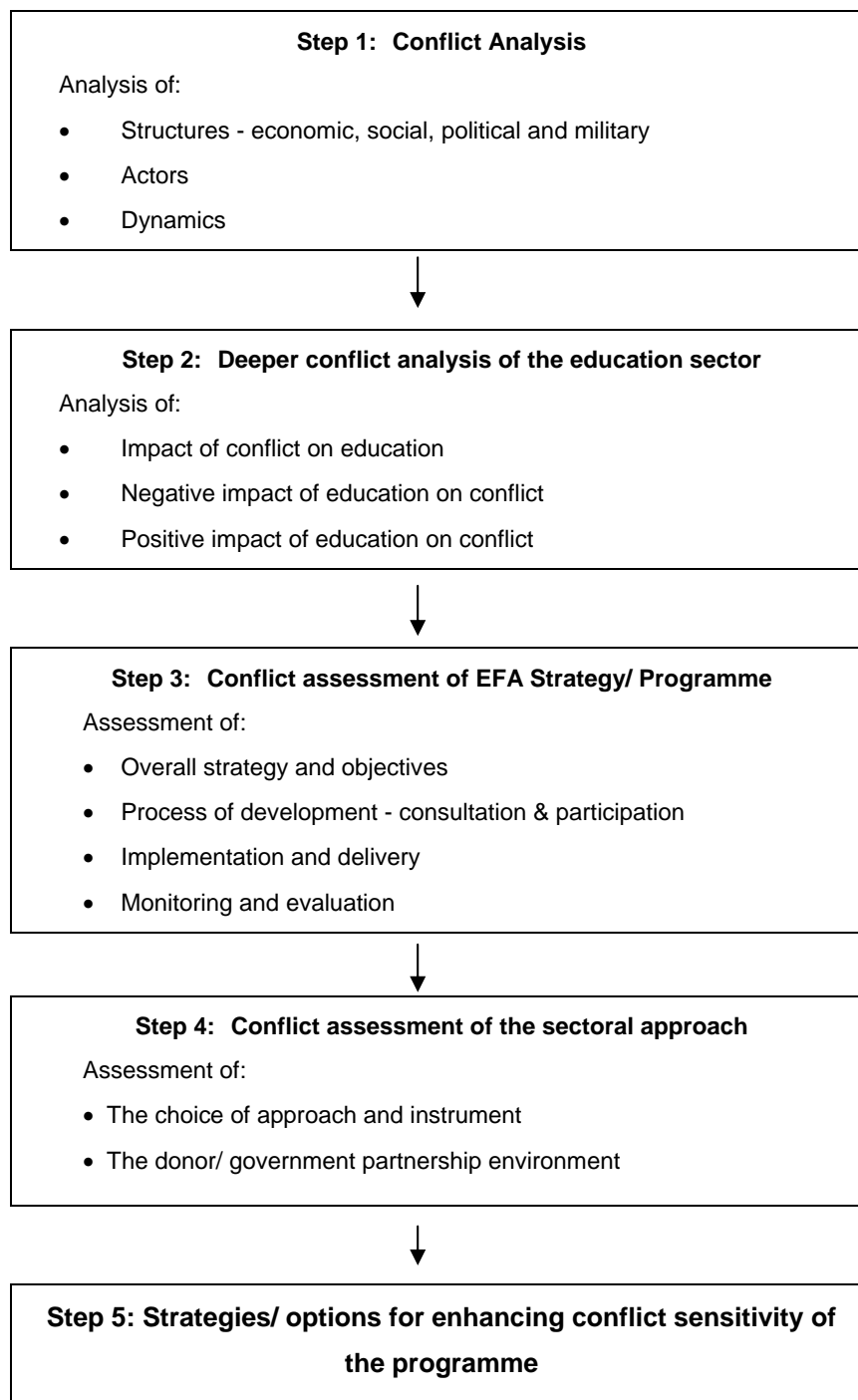
- The choice of the approach and of instrument – how do they relate to the conflict environment, what are the risks/ benefits in terms of conflict impact and scenarios?
- The donor/ government relationship - does it facilitate a conflict sensitive approach?
- Donor partnership and coordination - does it facilitate a conflict sensitive approach?
- Stakeholder consultation within the programme/ sector – what is its impact on the conflict environment and vice versa?

The following analytical framework therefore seeks to not only assess the conflict sensitivity of the EFA programme itself, but also the conflict sensitivity of the sectoral approach donors have taken to supporting it.

2. Overview of the Analytical framework

Key objectives of the conflict assessment:

- Understand the context/ conflict
- Understand the interaction between the conflict/ context and the EFA programme and the sectoral approach
- Generate strategies and options to avoid/ minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts of the programme and the sectoral approach



3. Analytical Framework

Step 1: Strategic Conflict Analysis

The aim of conflict analysis is to better understand the historical and structural antecedents of violent conflict and to better understand what converts latent conflict into open conflict or intensifies existing open conflict⁵⁶. A conflict analysis forms the bedrock of a conflict assessment and, in this case, a strategic conflict analysis is needed to inform a deeper conflict analysis of the education sector, the conflict assessment of the EFA programme itself, and also the conflict assessment of the sectoral approach. There are a number of existing conflict analysis frameworks, mostly developed by donor agencies and INGOs⁵⁷. For the purpose of this assessment, it is suggested that the consultants use the conflict analysis methodology used in DFID strategic conflict assessment framework⁵⁸ which is outlined in the following table:

DFID conflict analysis methodology

Structures	Actors	Dynamics
Analysis of long term factors underlying conflict: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Political • Economic • Social 	Analysis of conflict actors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interests • Relations • Capacities • Peace agendas • Incentives 	Analysis of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term conflict trends • Triggers for increase in violence • Capacities for managing conflict • Likely future conflict scenarios

There are a number of existing conflict analyses and reports on the conflict in Nepal which can be drawn upon and updated through desk base research and during the in-country work⁵⁹.

Step 2: Deeper conflict analysis of the education sector

A deeper conflict analysis of the education sector requires an analysis of the linkages between the education sector in Nepal and the structures, dynamics and actors of the conflict. It should consider both the impact of the conflict on education and the negative/ positive impact of education on the conflict. Section 3 above provides a limited analysis of education and conflict in Nepal. This needs to be deepened and verified through further research at the national, district and local level and in a variety of locations. The following table provides a list of key questions which should be considered in the analysis.

Impacts of conflict on education	Impacts of education on conflict
	Negative impacts:

⁵⁶ DFID (2002)

⁵⁷ See Resource Pack chapt. 2

⁵⁸ *ibid*

⁵⁹ See key references at annex 3

<p>How has the conflict affected school attendance/ enrolment?</p> <p>What have been the factors that have contributed to increased/ decreased attendance?</p> <p>Eg. lack of service delivery in education, access, insecurity and poverty, displacement, ill health, targeting of schools.</p> <p>How has the conflict affected the education system and infrastructure?</p> <p>In terms of: quality, teacher numbers/quality, quantity and distribution of educational provision, governance and management systems, buildings and resources.</p> <p>How has the education system and schools become instrumentalised by the conflict. Eg. as a tool for indoctrination, recruitment of child soldiers.</p> <p>How has the conflict impacted on children's learning ability?</p> <p>Have the impacts been felt disproportionately by different sectors of the population? Both socially and geographically. Have they reinforced existing divisions?</p> <p>How might different conflict scenarios impact on education?</p>	<p>Does educational provision reinforce social and economic disparities/ inequality – including regional inequality? Eg. through unequal access, curriculum.</p> <p>Has education contributed to dissatisfied youth?</p> <p>Is the governance of the education system affected by corruption, elite capture and patronage?</p> <p>How is education contributing to the militarisation of society?</p> <p>What is the position of the actors of the conflict towards education? Has education become instrumentalised within the conflict?</p> <p>Does the education system contain vested interests in the continuation of conflict/ political status quo?</p> <p>What might be the negative impacts on education of different conflict scenarios?</p> <p>Positive impacts</p> <p>Does educational provision or its process of reform processes seek to address social and economic disparities? Eg. does it target specific groups? Is it successful in doing so?</p> <p>Does it contribute to building a climate of tolerance? (eg. via the curriculum) Are teachers drawn from different groups?</p> <p>Are teachers able to respond to the phyco-social needs of conflict-affected children?</p> <p>Do educational governance structures provide opportunities for inclusivity, equity and participation? Eg. via language</p> <p>Is the education system insulated against political and ideological abuse and corruption?</p> <p>Is the education system sustainable and resilient in situations of crisis?</p> <p>Is peace-education and awareness raising around specific issues such as SALW mainstreamed within the curriculum?</p>
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As outlined in section 3 above, there are no existing conflict analysis frameworks specifically for the education sector. The approach suggested here is therefore new and untested. It will require further expert review and adjustments throughout the research process and following the completion strategic conflict analysis.

Step 3: Conflict assessment of EFA Strategy/ Programme

This involves applying the strategic and sector specific conflict analysis to an assessment of:

- Overall programme objectives and components
- Process of programme development - consultation & participation
- Implementation and delivery

- Monitoring and evaluation

Assessment of the overall programme objectives, components and strategies

The programme has three objectives: i) Ensuring access and equity in primary education, ii) Enhancing quality and relevance of primary education, and iii) Improving efficiency and institutional capacity.

Key questions:

- How do programme objectives, components and strategies impact on the structures of the conflict? Are they specifically targeted at the structures?
- How they relate to the different actors in the conflict and their goals and interests?
- How they consider the conflict dynamics, to what extent can they be adapted to different conflict scenarios?
- What adjustments need to be made to the programme design to address its possible negative impact on conflict and maximise its potential to work 'on conflict'? Are actions required in other sectors? eg. actions to address corruption.
- What adjustments need to be made to ensure that the programme seeks to mitigate the negative impact of conflict on the education sector and vice versa?

The table at Annex 2 provides some generic questions which can inform the assessment of a sector programme/ strategy from a conflict perspective. These are examples only but can provide some guidance for the generation of specific questions relevant to the EFA programme/ strategy.

Process of programme development - consultation & participation

Stakeholder consultation is a core principle of sectoral approaches and also a core principle for a conflict-sensitive approach. According to the EFA Core Document⁶⁰, consultations with civil society and stakeholders were held at the central, regional, district and resource centre levels in the preparation of the programme. The preparation of the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan 2005-2006 also involved a consultative process⁶¹.

Key questions:

- How far has the consultative process sought to address conflict structures/ conflict related issues? Eg. Has it targeted marginalized groups, both socially and geographically? Has it helped to institutionalise inclusive educational governance and build trust?
- How far has the consultative process had a negative impact on the conflict structures/ conflict related issues? Eg. Has it reinforced the voice of entrenched elite interests? Has it raised unrealistic expectations which may not be met?

⁶⁰ EFA Core Document (2003)

⁶¹ ASIP (2005/6) p.2

- How far has the conflict environment constrained the conflict sensitivity of the process? Eg. difficulty in accessing marginalized groups. Lack of buy in from entrenched interests resistant to reform.
- What actions can be taken to enhance the conflict sensitivity of the consultation process? Examples of possible actions are provided at Annex 2.

Implementation and delivery

Decentralisation is the main implementation strategy for the EFA programme. It denotes a shift from centralised and bureaucracy controlled management to community controlled and school based planning and management, in collaboration with different partners including local bodies, NGOs, INGOs, CBOs and other private organisations.

Key questions:

- What have been, or are likely to be, the positive impacts of the implementation process/ strategy on the conflict? Eg. strengthening local democracy, enhancing access of different groups to decision making?
- What have been, or are likely to be, the negative impacts of the implementation process/ strategy on the conflict (its structures, actors and dynamics)?
- How has the conflict environment constrained the conflict sensitivity of implementation? Eg. elite capture of resources and benefits of the programme, uneven/ lack of access and service delivery reinforcing inequalities, lack of statistics to inform the equitable targeting of services.
- How far is the implementation strategy able to adapt to different conflict scenarios?
- Are implementing partners able to implement a conflict sensitive approach at the decentralised level? Eg. are they aware of conflict sensitivity? are they able to monitor and feed back information on conflict impacts of the programme?
- What further actions are required to enhance the conflict sensitivity of implementation? Eg. training of partners, strategies for different conflict scenarios.
- What steps can be taken to insulate implementation from the negative impacts of the conflict? What additional actions or adjustments might be necessary. Eg. differentiated approaches to service delivery according to region, ensuring coherence and coordination with humanitarian actors etc.

Monitoring and evaluation

Indicators to guide monitoring and evaluation of the EFA programme are found in the logical framework matrix within the core document. The ASIP further outlines the monitoring process.

Key questions:

- How has the conflict impacted on the monitoring process? Eg. difficulty in gaining access, generating statistics, accuracy of statistics and reports.

- What actions need to be taken to mitigate against any negative impacts?
- Are there indicators which can track the interaction between the EFA programme and the conflict. I.e. the impact of the conflict on the EFA programme and visa versa? What indicators need to be added?

Chapter 3 module 3 of the Resource Pack provides more information on designing conflict sensitive monitoring and evaluation processes.

Step 4: Conflict assessment of the sectoral approach

This involves applying the understanding gained through the conflict analysis to an assessment of:

- The choice of approach and instrument by donors
- The donor/ government relationship

The choice of approach and instrument by donors

The sectoral approach taken to supporting the EFA programme has benefits which are captured in the OECD DAC principles for international engagement in fragile states. It, for example, focuses on state building, it aligns with local priorities and systems, and it promotes coordination and coherence between international actors and donor government. This analytical framework aims to ensure that it fulfils three other principles:

- Taking context as the starting point and the importance of sound political (including conflict) analysis in order to adapt international responses to the country context;
- Doing no harm
- Choosing the right mix and sequence of instruments to fit the context

This involves using the conflict analysis to assess the risks and benefits of the approach and instrument used in relation to conflict impacts. It also requires assessing how those risks and benefits might change given different conflict scenarios and generating strategies and options for maximising the benefits and minimising the risks/ negative impacts of the approach. The following tables could be used to guide the analysis. Annex 2 provides a table with completed examples of possible risks/ benefits and a table which considers possible impacts of budgetary support.

Opportunities and risks associated with the sectoral approach		
Element of approach (these can be expanded)	Benefit in terms of conflict sensitivity	Risk in terms of conflict sensitivity
Relationship/ dialogue with government		
Government ownership		
Increased participation in government decision making/ implementationthe sectoral		

approach		
Instrument used (ie. sub-sector budgetary support)		
Building government systems/ institutional capacity		
Support to decentralisation and reform		
Building coherence between donors/ and donors and government		

Scenario building. Opportunities and risks associated with the sectoral approach		
Element of approach	Scenario 1: Benefit/ risks	Scenario 2: Benefits/ risks

Developing strategies and options for minimising risks and maximising benefits might involve considering changes to the mix and sequence of instruments, considering additional or alternative approaches to supporting service delivery (see section 1), or providing additional capacity building support to civil society partners or to government.

The donor/ government relationship

Support to the EFA involves a close working relationship with the Government of Nepal and policy dialogue regarding EFA objectives, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Dialogue takes place via consultative meetings. Implementing the strategies and options for enhancing conflict sensitivity of the sectoral programme requires a partnership environment that can foster a joint understanding of the key conflict related issues and one where the issues can be discussed. The conflict assessment therefore needs to examine the quality of the partnership from the perspective of promoting conflict sensitive approach, and needs to consider options and strategy for strengthening the relationship.

Options might include; involving the government in a joint conflict analysis; regularly scheduling time in meeting agendas to discuss conflict related issues; and providing capacity building support to the government on conflict sensitivity. In reality however this may be difficult. Table 2 of chapter 4 of the Resource Pack outlines possible challenges of government/ donor relations in a conflict affected country and suggests approaches to overcoming these.

Donor coordination and conflict sensitivity

Implementing the strategies and options for enhancing the conflict sensitivity of the programme also involves a joint understanding of, and commitment to addressing conflict issues on the part of donors.

The conflict assessment needs to evaluate this joint commitment and understanding and what actions could be undertaken to enhance or promote it. Approaches might include donors undertaking a joint strategic and sectoral conflict analysis and ensuring that the findings are discussed in donor review meetings on the EFA programme.

Step 5: Strategies and options for enhancing the conflict sensitivity of the programme

This requires:

- Considering adjustments to the programme and sectoral approach to make it more conflict sensitive
- Considering new approaches, additional projects or initiatives which might be required
- Considering how the donor/ government and donor/ donor partnership environment can be enhanced from the perspective of conflict sensitivity in order to maximise impact.