ADEA Inter-Country Quality Node for Peace Education
Roundtable Concept Note
26 – 28 July 2011
Kinshasa - Democratic Republic of Congo
'Education, Peace and Development'

"Wars are dramatically altering the lives of children around the world. UNICEF (2006) reports that conflicts in the last decade have killed an estimated 2 million children and have left another 6 million disabled, 20 million homeless, and over 1 million separated from their parents."[1]

The 2011 EFA Global Monitoring Report points to the potential role of education in mitigating the impact of conflict and fragility on societies while contributing to reconstruction and development.

Furthermore, it underlines that "conflict-sensitive planning in education is about recognizing that any policy decision will have consequences for peace building and for the prospect of averting a return to violence." stressing that, "there are many channels through which education can influence prospects for peace."[2]

One possibility is that through the development of appropriate skills which enable the capacities amongst young people for peace keeping, peace-making and peace building, the culture of societies are transformed and a milieu in which, economic, social and political growth and development can take place, created.

The **Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Inter Country Quality Node Peace Education (ICQNPE) together with the Kenyan Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Education of the Democratic Republic of Congo** and **UNESCO BREDA** are collaborating to convene a roundtable focusing on education for young people and its role in developing peace building skills in response to situations of conflict and contexts of fragility[3].

The Roundtable which will be hosted from the 26 July – 28 July 2011 in Kinshasa will bring together technical experts from African education ministries including policy makers, and curriculum developers, as well as development agencies, donors and civil society partners from five countries in the region that are experiencing situations of conflict and

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[1] *Betancourt T S and Khan K T, (2008), The Mental Health of Children Affected by Conflict: Protective Processes and Pathways to Resistance, Harvard School of Public Health, Cambridge MA, USA*
[2] 2011 EFA Global Monitoring Report, Regional Overview: Sub-Saharan Africa, p14, www.http//:unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001913/191393e.pdf
[3] In recognition of the empirical and normative shortcomings of the term 'fragile states', development agencies are now increasingly favouring the much broader terminology of 'fragility' or 'situations of fragility'. These terms are also seen to better capture the fact that fragility is not exclusively determined by the nature and boundaries of states – there is a need to look beyond the state to the state of society in both assessing and addressing fragility. *http://www.gsdrc.org/go/fragile-states/chapter-1--understanding-fragile-states/definitions-and-typologies-of-fragile-states*

fragility. Together, they will deliberate on education policy and practices that support education as a means to the capacity to build, keep and make peace in order to contribute to social cohesion, political stability and economic development.

These interactions will lead to deepened dialogue, knowledge generation, as well as enhanced understanding and commitment to implementation of initiatives and solutions to addressing the many challenges facing young people on this continent in order to contribute to the promotion of education for peace and sustainable development.

1. Context and background

Recent years have seen many regions of Africa involved in armed conflict and other situations of violence, implicating State and non-State actors. "Since 1990, 90% of deaths related to armed conflict have been civilians and, of those, 80% are children and women. In the past decade, two million children have been killed in armed conflict.

Three times as many have been seriously injured or permanently disabled. Millions of others have been forced to witness or take part in horrifying acts of violence. Furthermore, over nine million refugees and even more significant numbers of people suffer internal displacement and are in need of shelter and support.[4]

For those who survive, come the realities of vulnerability. Children and young people who often become separated from their families, displaced or abandoned, during times of conflict and are at risk of being recruited into armed forces.[5] Furthermore, as a consequence of war, the destruction of the family and community structures, leave children and youth more vulnerable to sexual exploitation, trafficking and exploitative labor practices. [6]

These horrors are further exacerbated by limited or even non-existent educational opportunities leaving, adolescent boys and girls who may be frightened, bored and frustrated with life. Under such circumstances, life in the military may become the most attractive option, especially for those who come from impoverished and marginalized backgrounds

Power can act as a very strong motivator in situations where young people feel powerless and otherwise unable to acquire basic resources leading them to take up arms as a means to gain power, recognition and some since of security. Others children and young people may of course, for various reasons of vulnerability already discussed, end up as soldiers against their will. Additionally, adolescent girls are particularly at risk for gender-based violence and sexual exploitation during times of conflict and crisis.

Understanding the impact of conflict and crisis on young people and children and their ability to access to education requires recognition of the role that a functioning education system that offers quality education plays in society. It is well recognized that through daily schooling

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[4] http://www.globalissues.org/issue/83/conflicts-in-africa
[5] Today, the vast majority of armed conflicts involve the use of child combatants under the age of 15.
[6] www.unicef.org/protection/files/Armed_Conflict.pdf

children and young people are engaged constructively in safe environments that provide the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge, enable them to achieve self-fulfillment and to contribute meaningfully to democracy, economic development and social cohesion across their communities.

In a country that is at war or in crisis, resources and capacity are seldom directed towards ensuring that education continues to function at an optimal level (if at all). Thus the system fails – taking away all that education has to offer in the short and more significantly the long term for children and youth.

Schools may also be specifically targeted for intimidation, recruitment and indoctrination, and school premises damaged, destroyed or occupied by fighters. In conflict areas, government spending on education can sometimes be diverted to security, further lowering the quality of provision. Teachers may become subject to manipulation where repressive regimes view education either as a threat or as potential for indoctrination. In fact, there is evidence that, if misused, education may actually exacerbate situations of conflict."[7]

Since, the imagination, ideals and energies of youth are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. It is essential that during or after times of war and fragility, special attention is given to mitigate the impact on children and youth. This may be particularly important for those who have had severely distressing experiences, and so might view their lives very pessimistically, suffer from serious depression or even become a challenge to society.

Although children and young people have special needs and may be vulnerable, they also have special strengths; they should be regarded as survivors and active participants in the creation of solutions, not as mere victims or problems. How do we effectively address their development needs while recognizing their voices and right to dignity and autonomy? What is the role of education in providing a means to skills development and a route to embedding the values of human rights, respect, equality and dignity in society through children and young people?

There is increasing consensus that a functioning education system offering quality education for all as well as the specific implementation of education programs for young people promoting peace and development has the potential to contribute to social, economic and political development and stability. An investment in education constitutes an investment in a future of good citizenship and good governance.

That said, it is also important to be mindful that this is no quick fix. "[P]eace building cannot be seen in a vacuum, as a single educational input, but as a 'process rather than a product', relying on local rather than external inputs which seek to create opportunities rather than impose solutions.[Bush & Saltarelli] suggest that peace building education has to go further

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[7] Where Peace Beings (2008), Education's Role in Conflict Prevention and Peace Building, Save the Children: Rewrite the Future, International Save the Children Alliance, Cambridge House

than 'add good education and stir' and offer more systematic community-based mechanisms which encourage peace building as a process rather than a product of education." (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, in Bird, 2003b, p. 22)

It is in response to these many challenges facing young people and educators in Africa that that ADEA has come together with its partners to host this roundtable.

2. What is the Inter Country Quality Node on Peace Education and what is its Role?

ADEA established a number of Inter Country Quality Nodes with the aim of bringing together countries facing similar challenges with strategic partners who have expertise in a specific field to promote dialogue, collective learning and space for collaborative action. In this way, the ICQNs support the broader vision of ADEA[8] and, play a role in bringing together representatives from Ministries of education with other partners to address challenges which could be designated as a national (or even a regional) priority.

Given the number of African countries that have been or are currently affected by conflict and war, and the impact of these realities on education, the ICQN on Peace Education was established. It is envisaged that this embryonic ICQN will provide support dialogue and cross country learning in order to contribute to the formulation of appropriate country frameworks and policies for the implementation of Peace Education strategies within the education sector across Africa.

The ICQN Peace Education recognizes that quality education can be a means to counteract conflict and violence as well as serve as a preventive measure. ADEA recognizes the potential for education to build, keep and make peace. It will thus through this roundtable process, with its partners, seek to play a pivotal role in the promotion of policy dialogue, policy development and effective practices that promote peace through and within education systems.

Specifically, the ICQN Peace Education, will, through its endeavors at policy, systemic and implementation level enable ADEA and its partners to contribute to peace building and sustainable development in and through education.

As part of its endeavors in this regard within the broader ADEA mandate to lead policy dialogue on the African continent, the ICQN Peace Education has a number of research endeavors underway in preparation for the 2011 Triennale.

It is envisaged that this process will provide an opportunity to collective deliberation and collaborative learning in preparation for the Triennale of 2011 and in order to take forward

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[8] ADEA's mission is to:
- Promote dialogue and partnerships
- Develop consensus on policy issues facing education in Africa
- Reinforce African Ministries' capacities to develop, manage, and implement education policies
- Promote the sharing of experiences and successful strategies
- Promote nationally-driven education policies, projects, and programs

broader initiatives of the ICQN as it seeks to strengthen networks for peace education on the continent.

3. ADEA Triennale

Since the 2011 Triennale focuses specifically on educational transformation by focusing on the core challenge of how to promote critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for sustainable development in Africa.

Given;
- The number of young people affected by and living in conflict affected and fragile countries in Africa,

And,
- The need for change and healing in this region, and the contribution that peace education can make to enable education systems and strategies to contribute to harmonization, restoration, transformation and stability.

An Education Triennale on this continent that is focused on youth and skills development must therefore, give space to the importance of education during and after times of conflict to build, keep and maintain peace.

This core idea of the Triennale is fundamental also to the roundtable focus in which attention will be directed toward the operation of education systems, the opportunities they provide for whom and for what, the actual learning processes and their enabling environments, the nature and quality of the learning outcomes and their relevance and impact on young peoples' lives with a context of conflict and situations of fragility.

4. Objectives

Through a facilitated, interactive roundtable, participants from the five selected countries will engage in dialogue at conceptual and practical level in order to deepen their knowledge of the role of education in peace building, consider implications for policy and practice and share ideas on good practice and implementation strategies.

A central goal of the roundtable is to further enhance on-going cooperation between agencies involved in education in Africa together with a broad range of education actors so as to increase the development of instruction, research and service devoted to a Culture of Peace.

It is anticipated that the deliberations will stimulate an open dialogue that will extend far beyond this debate and will increase networking, and linkages that will contribute fostering a culture of non-violence, a Culture of Peace.

Specifically the objectives of the ICQN Peace Education roundtable are to contribute to:

- The sharing of relevant knowledge and good practice,

- A deepened understanding of the challenges related to conflict and fragility facing the region,
- The promotion of core values, ideas and skills associated with education for peace,
- Legislation and policy making that enable and support the implementation of peace education at a systemic and practical level (i.e. teacher training, curriculum development and materials design), and
- Provide the ICQN Peace Education with a platform from which to strengthen its network of education ministries and professional educators who support peace education on the continent.

5. Expected results

The roundtable through its facilitation of cross country conversations, strengthen country collaboration, enhance the network of peace in education supporters and practitioners and provide practical input to the policy practice debates.

The expected results of these deliberations are to:

- Verify the country case studies being undertaken by the ICQN Peace Education on each of the countries represented in preparation for the Triennale,
- A set of recommendations which will contribute to the ICQN Peace Education plan of action for 2011/2012 and more specifically that will feed into the ministerial roundtable at the 2011 Triennale,
- The dissemination of the ADEA newsletter focusing on peace education and the sharing of other materials and resources, and
- Strengthen and build capacity within the ICQN Peace Education network.

6. Participation

The roundtable will engage with five countries; Liberia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo and Cote d'Ivoire. It is envisaged that there will be approximately six participants from each country together with the participation of approximately 8 - 10 regional and international expert academics and practitioners.

The Roundtable will specifically seek to bring together;

- ministry of education officials including policy makers,
- curriculum specialists and textbook writers,
- teacher trainers and technical experts on peace building in and through education.

7. Date and Venue

The roundtable policy exchange will be hosted in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kinshasa from the 26 – 28 July 2011. (Venue to be confirmed)