

EDITORIAL NOTE

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Every theme that appears in the *Journal on Education in Emergencies* is by definition timely and important. In this special issue of *JEiE*, we focus on education and peacebuilding. Although humanitarians for many years credited education with creating or fostering peace, the understanding of this relationship grew more nuanced at the start of the 2000s, with the publication of *The Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict* (Bush and Saltarelli 2000). This publication ushered in a period of reflection on the role of education, not just in promoting peace but in promoting conditions for conflict through uneven access, biased classroom practices, or negative ideological content (Brock 2011; Burde 2014; Burde, Kapit, Wahl, Guven, and Skarpeteig 2017; Gross and Davies 2015; King 2014; Ostby and Urdal 2010; Shields and Paulson 2015; Smith 2007). Although educators were as committed as always to the transformative potential and power of education, they were no longer as sanguine about its delivery or content in humanitarian crises.

At the same time, however, educators continued to pursue a deeper understanding of how, and under what conditions, education could promote peace or contribute to peacebuilding. Increased reflection among practitioners helped refocus this line of research on a more granular and systematic understanding of the mechanisms that could increase underlying conditions for peace. How might gender norms, for example, contribute to or undermine efforts to promote conditions considered important for peace? What are the implications of redistributive school financing for social cohesion? With this new issue of *JEiE*—which consists of three research articles, one field note, and four book reviews—we return to the positive face of education as we examine its contributions to peacebuilding. The articles in this issue bring a range of analyses to this question, including a focus on social justice, reconciliation, inclusion, gender norms, and the importance of social cohesion. We present a short description of each piece below.

In “The 4Rs Framework: Analyzing Education’s Contribution to Sustainable Peacebuilding with Social Justice in Conflict-Affected Contexts,” authors Mario Novelli, Mieke T. A. Lopes Cardozo, and Alan Smith present an analytical framework for investigating and understanding peacebuilding through education. The 4Rs framework emerged during the early stages of the UNICEF’s Peacebuilding,

Education, and Advocacy program (PBEA—also known as Learning for Peace), a four-year initiative established in 2012 and funded by the Government of the Netherlands. The framework played an important role in shaping thinking on the relationship between education and peacebuilding within UNICEF and in PBEA's evolution. In the article, the authors identify “how the 4Rs framework combines dimensions of recognition, redistribution, representation, and reconciliation . . . to demonstrate what sustainable peacebuilding might look like in postconflict environments” (18). They argue that the roots of conflict must be addressed in order for a society to transition to sustainable peace, and that education can play an important role in this process, particularly through social justice and reconciliation. They then apply the 4Rs to a case study in Myanmar, illustrating how the framework provides a useful heuristic device for analyzing peacebuilding and education, which may be applied to academic research, policy-making, and program design and evaluation.

In “Can Teacher-Training Programs Influence Gender Norms? Mixed-Methods Experimental Evidence from Northern Uganda,” Marjorie Chinen, Andrea Coombes, Thomas De Hoop, Rosa Castro-Zarzur, and Mohammed Elmeski detail a mixed-methods study of a teacher-training program on gender socialization in Karamoja, Uganda. The authors emphasize the role education plays in promoting gender equality in conflict-affected environments, and the implications for peacebuilding. Quantitative evidence demonstrates that the program had positive effects on teachers' knowledge and attitudes but did not affect their practices in the short term. There was no quantitative evidence for the effectiveness of a complementary text-message intervention. Qualitative data suggests “that teachers still identified with traditional gender norms and beliefs about gender” (71) and that, although teachers engaged in basic program practices taught during the training, they did not engage in more complex practices. Their findings indicate that, “while teacher training can influence knowledge and attitudes toward gender equality, traditional gender norms can be a barrier to changing behavior in the short term” (46).

“The Limits of Redistributive School Finance Policy in South Africa,” by Rachel Hatch, Elizabeth Buckner, and Carina Omoeva, focuses on the effectiveness and perceived effectiveness of South Africa's no-fee school policy. This mixed-methods study draws on household and school survey data and qualitative interviews to examine if and how the no-fee school policy has contributed to equity. Their findings show that the policy “has reduced the financial burden on many black households, which are often in poorer communities” (80), but that “gains have not been equalizing, and gaps in resources remain” (100). Thus they argue “that

South Africa's current school finance policies may be better characterized as pro-poor than redistributive, and point to implications for social cohesion" (79).

In our one field note for this issue, "The Potential of Conflict-Sensitive Education Approaches in Fragile Countries: The Case of Curriculum Framework and Youth Civic Participation in Somalia," Marleen Renders and Neven Knezevic describe an innovative education intervention aimed at addressing the drivers of conflict in Somalia. The program directly engaged local youth in a participatory process to contribute to a review of the primary school curriculum framework. This approach—involving youth in the facilitation of local communities' discussions of curriculum changes—"has the potential to address historic legacies of authoritarian national governments and top-down governance systems" and to offer "many traditionally excluded groups an opportunity to contribute to a national development process" (125). The authors contend that education interventions that directly engage with the factors driving conflict and that directly involve the voices of a wide range of stakeholders, particularly local communities, have important implications for peacebuilding.

We also include four book reviews in this issue. In the first, Jesper Bjarnesen discusses *Childhood Deployed: Remaking Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone* by Susan Shepler, published by New York University Press. Shepler examines the challenge of reintegrating child soldiers and youth combatants into society, based on her extensive ethnographic research in Sierra Leone. Bjarnesen notes that the book is particularly relevant for "anyone interested in understanding the nuance and complexity of the interface between international conventions on the rights of the child and local notions of childhood and youth in a place like Sierra Leone" (130). In the second review, S. Garnett Russell examines Molly Sundberg's *Training for Model Citizenship: Ethnography of Civic Education and State-Making in Rwanda*, published by Palgrave Macmillan. Drawing on Sundberg's ethnographic research, combined with her experience as a development practitioner, the book investigates the role of Rwanda's state-sponsored civic education program. Russell notes that the book "offers an in-depth portrait of an important topic in postgenocide Rwanda" and sheds light on "the subtle contradictions and tensions of active citizenship in a postconflict authoritarian state" (134). The third book, reviewed by Laura Quaynor, is *Partnership Paradox: The Post-Conflict Reconstruction of Liberia's Education System*, edited by Christopher Talbot and Aleesha Taylor, published by Open Society Foundations. This open-source publication provides a critical look at postconflict aid partnerships in Liberia between 2007 and 2012. Quaynor writes that "many of the contributing authors offer public critique of themselves, their organizations, and others; their willingness to share insider information on

the formation and navigation of such partnerships can best be described as brave” (136). She considers this volume a “must-read” for practitioners, academics, and students of EiE. Our last reviewer, Lynn Davies, discusses *Critical Peace Education and Global Citizenship* by Rita Verma, published by Routledge. The book discusses ways educators incorporate peace education into classrooms through unofficial curricula, and the importance of stimulating peace activism. Davies notes that this book “graphically shows us that the key task for our time is not learning about peace but learning not to hate” (142).

The idea for this issue of *JEiE* originated with UNICEF’s PBEA program, and a number of the articles that appear emerged from projects that were funded by this initiative. In recognition of UNICEF’s role in this work, we offer a short description of the PBEA program below.

UNICEF PBEA¹

Conflict affects children and families directly (by causing disability, displacement, and death), and indirectly (by creating instability, loss of livelihood, and destruction of assets). Both direct and structural violence pose a risk to the development potential of young children (Punamäki 2014; see also Dawes and van der Merwe 2014). According to the World Bank, a child in a fragile or conflict-affected state is nearly three times as likely to be out of primary school, twice as likely to be undernourished, and nearly twice as likely to die before their fifth birthday as a child in another developing country (World Bank 2011). In 2014 alone, the lives of 15 million children were disrupted by conflict in the Central African Republic, Iraq, South Sudan, the State of Palestine, Syria, and Ukraine (Gladstone 2014).

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) mandate includes protecting the rights of children in both emergencies and humanitarian contexts, both natural and human-made. Faced with increasingly complex humanitarian crises that place children and women at significant risk, UNICEF responds to more than two hundred emergencies every year (UNICEF 2013).

UNICEF predicts that the caseload for humanitarian action will continue to grow in the upcoming decades. Close to two-thirds of the world’s poor will be living in fragile states by 2030, when the UN Sustainable Development Goals come to an end; the majority of them will be young people (Office of Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] 2015). The combination of climate change, natural

1 Thanks to Friedrich Affolter for contributing this description of UNICEF’s PBEA work.

disasters, conflicts, chronic poverty, and weak institutions are creating new risks and exacerbating existing ones, and over time they may erode peace, reverse development gains, and create new humanitarian needs (World Economic Forum 2016). International aid agencies need to deliver context-specific programs in complex environments that are fit-for-purpose and focus on prevention, including conflict prevention (OECD 2011).

In 2011, UNICEF's Evaluation Office commissioned a study to examine the role of education in peacebuilding in postconflict settings. Given concern about frequent relapses into conflict, the study inquired whether and how education interventions and programming could play a stronger role in the peacebuilding architecture of the UN system (Novelli and Smith 2011, 3). One conclusion of the study was that UNICEF should move away from generic programming and toward education interventions that are informed by high-quality conflict analysis and sensitive to local contexts, while also leveraging the education sector's transformative potential in postconflict societies (Novelli and Smith 2011, 37).

From 2012 to 2016, with generous funding from the Government of the Netherlands, UNICEF implemented PBEA in order to experiment with and demonstrate whether and how education, as a social service, can help to strengthen resilience, social cohesion, and human security in conflict-affected contexts, including countries at risk of, experiencing, and recovering from conflict. The countries participating were Burundi, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, the State of Palestine, Uganda, and Yemen (Shah 2016). An independent program evaluation carried out in fall 2015 concluded that PBEA's choice of using a social service such as education to deliver peacebuilding results was the right one, and that its emphasis on programming based on conflict analysis led to responsive, context-specific programs that contribute to peacebuilding (UNICEF 2015, 14).

One distinctive feature of PBEA was its mandate to collect evidence that would illustrate how social service providers—and education in particular—can mitigate drivers of conflict.² This special issue of the *Journal of Education in Emergencies* presents research conducted as part of the PBEA mandate. These articles underscore the importance of agencies' efforts to deliver services in a manner that is sensitive to conflict and, where possible, in ways that not only effectively address human and socioeconomic development needs but simultaneously transform interpersonal and intergroup relationships (McCandless 2012).

2 PBEA research products can be accessed online at <https://eccnetwork.net/resources/learning-for-peace/>.

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