

Education Cluster Nepal

Terms of Reference

1. Global Context

In December 2006, Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals' meeting endorsed the recommendation for cluster approach to be applied to education sector. At the global level, the aim of cluster approach is to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies by designating global Cluster Leads and ensuring that there is predictable leadership and accountability in all sectors or areas of activity. This led to development of a co-leadership arrangement between UNICEF and Save the Children. This arrangement is based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreed in 2007.

The Education Cluster is responsible for all forms of education (recreational, non-formal, and formal) at all levels/age groups. Protection of children, adolescents, adults during emergencies must be paramount and education can play a vital role in the physical and psychological protection of affected population. A core component and initial education response during emergencies are formation of children, adolescents, and adults friendly spaces where they can enjoy increased physical protection and psycho-social support. These spaces provide an opportunity to be taught life-saving knowledge and skills, from simple hand-washing techniques to prevent the spreading of disease to learning about landmines or unexploded ordnance – knowledge that gets disseminated to children's families and wider community. Furthermore, they act as a central point where separated children can be reunited with their families or a place where affected parents are able to safely leave their children to attend distribution points, find relatives, and begin to rebuild their lives.

2. General Principle and Approach to Education in Emergencies

2.1. Education Cluster will convene based on any or combination of following trigger mechanisms: 1) the Government of Nepal declares a state of national emergency; 2) initial media or partner feedback on extent and impact of emergency; 3) the UN humanitarian coordinator assembles all clusters to be prepared to respond.

2.2. Nepal Red Cross Society will conduct Initial Rapid Assessment (IRA) to assess damage and Multi-sectoral Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) team will be mobilized for further information. If a more detailed education assessment is required, a team of education specialists will conduct the assessment later.

2.3. Education's life-sustaining and life-saving role has been recognised and inclusion of education within humanitarian responses is considered critical now. Education in emergency comprises learning as well as provides new skills opportunities for all ages. It encompasses early childhood development, primary, secondary, non-formal, technical, vocational, higher and adult education. In emergency situations through to recovery, quality education provides physical, psychological and cognitive protection that can sustain and save lives. In addition,

essential activities in emergency like water, sanitation, nutrition, health etc. should be integrated and coordinated with education. Psychosocial support and increased protection from various impacts of emergency will be carried out in collaboration with child protection cluster of different partners involved in emergencies. Child-centred/friendly teaching and learning materials and school supplies should be provided. Similarly, extra-curricular materials will be supplied to adolescent boys and girls. Engagement of this age group in some activity is vital.

2.4. Community priorities education in times of emergencies. Participation of people of affected and host communities should be ensured. Displaced and affected teachers, older children or adolescents with leadership qualities and basic teaching capabilities should lead response activity. Priority will be given to most vulnerable and affected people, areas and schools in terms of distribution of educational resources. School and children from host community should be supported to ensure there is no tension between host and displaced populations. This support will include teaching and learning materials, additional teachers, and school furniture.

2.5. Coordination is always a vital and challenging aspect of emergencies. Therefore, NGOs, CBOs, federations, community members and organizations of the affected population will be mobilized. Similarly, support from other clusters –health, sanitation, nutrition, and physical etc. should be mobilized. Emergencies can also offer an opportunity to work together with different international communities of stakeholders from humanitarian response sectors. Education cluster should take stock of all institutions and opportunities.

3. Cluster Approach and Education Cluster in Nepal

In Nepal, the Cluster Approach was formalized by Nepal's IASC, following the major Koshi floods in September 2008. At the country level, the aim of cluster approach is to ensure a more coherent and effective response by mobilizing groups of agencies, organizations and NGOs to respond in a strategic manner across all key sectors or areas of activity, each sector having a clearly designated lead, as agreed by the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Humanitarian Country Team.

While the humanitarian operation in Nepal is phasing down following the end of the conflict and the ongoing peace process, humanitarian needs remain. A prolonged food crisis, winter drought and a poor harvest, particularly in the hilly and mountainous regions could increase malnutrition and cause additional, long-term vulnerabilities. In addition to these underlying vulnerabilities, Nepal faces risks from annual devastating floods and landslides and is at high risk of a high magnitude earthquake. Nepal will also be influenced by regional and global crisis drivers, particularly climate change, food and energy price instability. All of these factors support the need to reinforce the humanitarian coordination architecture and to strengthen preparedness and emergency response capacity.

Ministry of Education (MoE) will maintain overall responsibility for responding to all educational needs during emergencies and will be supported by Education Cluster leads (UNICEF and Save the Children) in Nepal, together provide overall leadership of cluster

response, coordinating a group of government, UN, INGO and NGO education stakeholders to collectively respond to the education needs during emergencies.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

The Department of Education (DoE)¹, together with UNICEF and Save the Children Alliance (SCA), will co-ordinate and provide overall leadership and strategic direction of the emergency preparedness and response at the national level. They will ensure that education is prioritized in emergencies and advocate to the Ministry of Education: (1) to establish an Education Endowment Fund for emergencies; (2) strengthen the Emergency Unit within the Department of Education; and (3) assign focal points at the national, regional and district levels to support emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

At the district level, the Ministry of Education (MoE) will be represented by the District Education Office (DEO). The cluster leads will ensure full participation of other cluster members. The cluster should advocate to the other clusters and ensure inter-sectoral linkages are made between Education and other clusters. The cluster leads bear the responsibility for the overall cluster. Under normal circumstances when there is no emergency, the cluster leads should meet monthly while all of the cluster members should meet bi-monthly to update each other on any education issues which have arisen or are outstanding. The specific role and responsibilities of the cluster members and leads are given as follow:

4.1. Ministry of Education (MoE) / Department of Education (DoE):

- Provide overall leadership and strategic direction of emergency preparedness and response in coordination with other sector ministries.
- Ensure the humanitarian actors working in education sector remain actively engaged in addressing cross cutting concerns such as age, diversity, environment, gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS and human rights.
- Coordinate activities at the central level and ensure coordination with Regional Education Directorates (REDs) and District Education Offices (DEOs).
- Be accountable for assessment and monitoring, information management, printing of formal, non-formal and informal learning materials for affected children, adolescents, and adults; recruit and train teachers and para-teachers.
- Share responsibility for cluster activities including assessing needs, developing plans, joint monitoring and developing policies and Nepal contingency plan.
- Cross sectoral coordination/MOHA.

4.2. Cluster Members' Role and Responsibilities:

- Support the Education Cluster initiatives and provide proactive actions in exchanging information and reporting, highlight needs, gaps and duplication, mobilize resources, engage with affected communities, and build capacity.
- Share responsibility for cluster activities including assessing needs, developing plans, joint monitoring and developing policies and Nepal contingency plan.

¹ The Department of Education (DoE) is one department within the Ministry of Education (MOE). It is responsible for finalizing the annual education budget and ensuring the implementation of education activities and services. The DoE oversees the District Education Offices (DEOs) throughout Nepal.

- Play a role of supporting the Cluster Leads and provide proactive actions in exchanging information and reporting, highlight needs, gaps and duplication, mobilize resources, engage with affected communities, and build capacity.
- Support in developing and updating contingency plan and annual work plan at accordingly.
- Coordinate with cluster members to implement contingency plan before and during emergency and work together with different national and international communities of stakeholders from humanitarian response sectors (health, sanitation, nutrition and protection).
- Support national efforts on emergencies by raising funds.
- Implement and monitor emergencies response in collaboration with host and affect communities of emergencies.

4.3. Save the Children

- Collaborate with humanitarian and development partners including operational and technical support, surge capacity and develop human resources for emergency staff/ frontline respondents that can be mobilized to serve the cluster.
- Work to identify educational needs at the time of emergencies through education rapid needs assessment, and maintain and increase stockpile - new-born child kit, tent, cooking utensils/materials, construction of temporary/safe learning space, repair and maintenance of damaged schools by emergencies, child support materials, including ECD tool kits, educational materials and student support kits.
- Share responsibility for cluster activates including assessing needs, developing plans, joint monitoring and developing policies and Nepal contingency plan.

4.4. UNICEF

- Coordinate within the cluster mechanism between HC/RC, other clusters and information-sharing and supporting cluster partners and report to the inter-cluster and other relevant agencies on the implementation of education in emergencies.
- Ensure the cross-cutting issues (related to education are adequately addressed by other clusters and support the integration of life-saving information on nutrition, sanitation, health and protection into education cluster.
- Develop and disseminate relevant advocacy and reporting materials to encourage increased support for education in emergencies.
- Take joint responsibility for the education cluster with Save the Children to support MoE/DoE.
- Share responsibility for cluster activates including assessing needs, developing plans, joint monitoring and developing policies and Nepal contingency plan.

(Endorsed by Education Cluster meeting on 16th of March 2011)