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National Commission for UNESCO

Towards the Concept of Education as a Humanitarian Response in the Context of a UNESCO chair/UNITWIN network

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

EFA	Education for All
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EHR	education as a humanitarian response
EIE	Education in Emergencies
GMRs	Global Monitoring Reports
HRE	education as a human right
IDPs	internally displaced persons
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
OVCs	orphans and vulnerable children
REBA	Regional Education and Business Alliance
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

SUMMARY

This paper aims to make the case for education as a humanitarian response to be considered as a prime function of educational activity. Educational provision, especially organised systems of schooling, is normally seen more in terms of enhancing the quality of a national workforce and contributing to economic development. By contrast, education as a humanitarian response seeks to provide knowledge and skills that are appropriate to the specific needs of different human groups at any given time. As the paper describes, responses to such needs are more obvious with respect to excluded and marginalised groups who are dislocated from mainstream provision, whether it be due to man-made disasters such as civil wars or natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis. However, the need for appropriate educational experiences can apply to all human groups in the sense that if it is not appropriate it cannot be humane.

CONTEXT

Education, and especially 'liberal education', is what makes civil society possible. That means it has an importance even greater than its contributions to economic success, which, alas, is all that politicians seem to think it is for.
(A C Grayling, 2001)

Everyone has the right to education ... Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
(Art. 26, Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

As the title implies, this paper has a great deal to do with the context of a UNESCO chair operating within the UNITWIN mode. Recent thinking and reorganisation within the education division of UNESCO includes a greater preference for the UNITWIN mode when awarding UNESCO chairs, and a stronger monitoring of their performance. Consequently, a prime purpose of such chairs in the field of education is to focus on issues of concern in the developing world and/or relating to human groups that mostly emanate from poorer societies such as refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants and travelling communities. The planning and operation of this UNESCO chair is based firmly on this requirement, but we are equally concerned not to take 'education' as a 'given' or to assume that mere access to it is sufficient.

We feel that it is necessary to question the conventional wisdom relating to the assumed efficacy of the residual patterns of educational provision, which are products of the emergence of the nation state, and whose prime functions relate to the survival and development of the state. It is well known that the majority of education systems in the world are, at best, very partial at meeting the needs of their populations and, at worst, dysfunctional or, in some cases, even collapsed. By any standards, the majority of educational systems fail a significant proportion of their students. That is to say, for a variety of reasons, they do not address their real needs on an individual level.

It is in order to address this deficiency that the chair has been created under the title 'education as a humanitarian response' (EHR), and we propose such a response as a prime function of educational provision in whatever form(s) it may be experienced at any time. Our motivation for this approach has been the global objective of Education for All (EFA), which, despite being a holistic concept, is seen in more conventional terms in the approach to date of the Global Monitoring Reports (GMRs) on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It seemed to us that the educational needs of a significant

minority of the world's population, marginalised or excluded from access to education (at various levels), were not sufficiently considered. Furthermore, it is also the case that there were many millions of others who, while having access, do not have their educational needs met in cultural terms. For us, the concept of EHR is a fundamental response to the needs and entitlements of all people for an *appropriate* educational experience in terms of both technical and diffuse skills (Hopper, 1977).

So, while in the spirit of UNESCO's UNITWIN programme, we have worked to date primarily on issues and projects relating to the most obviously disadvantaged groups. We see our EHR as supporting the well-known adage that 'if one gets it right for those with significant disadvantage and special needs, one necessarily gets it right for the majority'.

Without a functioning 'civil society', the condition of 'humanity' is difficult if not impossible to achieve. We are in agreement with A C Grayling's view that education is fundamental to civil society, that vital yet often overlooked component of the institutional capacity of human communities. We also see his promotion of 'liberal education' as analogous to 'respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms' as in the second quotation at the head of this paper. Respect for these freedoms, in turn, necessarily corresponds to the provision of an appropriate education for all of humanity. Moreover, we contend that an inappropriate education is inhumane in the specific contexts of individuals and human groups. Of course, the notions of 'appropriate' and the 'needs' to which education is supposed to respond are contentious. We must therefore unveil our objectives, and confess that we come to this task with an agenda. That is to argue for, and work towards, an attitude towards ascertaining the needs for education, and the meeting of those needs, which is essential in achieving the best possible education for all in terms of both access and content. This paper attempts to explain how we hope to make a meaningful contribution through the context of a UNESCO/UNITWIN programme. It is necessarily therefore influenced strongly by the concept of such a programme as formulated by UNESCO and outlined above.

The programme we have envisaged to date is described and explained in the latter part of this paper, in advance of which we need first to discuss such issues as: key words and terms; the nature forms and functions of education; and developing a concept of EHR.

1. PURPOSE, PARAMETERS AND STYLE

The prime *purposes* of this paper are:

- to **float** our contention that: to experience education, in whatever form, as a humanitarian response to both fundamental and perceived needs of human beings and groups, is more likely to be successful than as a response to merely instrumental objectives;
- to **report** to our constituencies: that is to say to UNESCO itself and the UK Commission to UNESCO, not only on our theoretical and conceptual approach, but also on actions taken, progress to date and ideas for realising our aims and objectives.

Such purposes lead to *parameters*, notably that:

- such an objective requires a holistic approach to education in all its **forms**;
- there is an identification of the range of apparent **functions** of education in all its forms;
- there is a discussion of key **contemporary issues** regarding education in global and intercultural contexts, and progress in the work of the Chair to date.

These purposes and parameters necessarily inform the *style* of the paper in that:

- it is a **working paper** leading hopefully to improvements in a work in progress, namely a UNESCO chair/UNITWIN network project on 'education as a humanitarian response';
- it is deliberately more **discursive** than academic, which explains a limited level of resort to such conventions as references, though these are supplied where deemed appropriate.

2. FORMS AND FUNCTIONS OF EDUCATION

With respect to *forms* of education, we need first to distinguish between: **education the phenomenon**, which refers to the impressive capacity of human beings to acquire knowledge and skills, and apply them, whether as an administrator, teacher, learner – or any combination of the three – within an organised setting; and **education the discipline**, a composite multidisciplinary field of academic study and research residing broadly within the social sciences. ‘Education the phenomenon’ includes ‘education the profession’ and at this stage it is appropriate to discuss ‘education the profession’ and ‘education the discipline’ because they have conspired to contain the focus of the conventional view of education that has been far from helpful to the perspective on education we are attempting to propagate here. This is largely because they have focused on education within what are normally termed ‘education systems’ and especially those systems organised and provided by, or under the supervision of, political authorities.

In most countries, such authority operates at a variety of levels, and may be federal or unitary. But control by ‘government’ at national and/or provincial/local levels is a key influence and a major constraint on maximising the potential capacity of human beings to become educated in the liberal and/or appropriate sense with which we opened this discussion.

Education is an indicator of the basic quality of life in a nation ... Children of ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities, or those who are members of indigenous societies, are entitled to learn their own culture and profess and practice their own religion and language (Article 30) ... In the United States, has the movement since the 1960s to provide ... education provided cultural, ethnic and linguistic minorities with an appropriate education that satisfies this aspect of the UNCRC?

(Edmonds & Fernekes, 1996, p. 14)

The mention of ‘societies’ in the above quotation indicates the need for a holistic approach to education including the lifelong dimension. This is truly ‘education for all’. Also, education as a humanitarian response (EHR) is meeting the demands of education as a human right (HRE). Together these are essential for meeting the ideal of appropriate education:

HRE + EHR = **appropriate education**

One of UNESCO’s updates on EFA goals also indicates that governments can act as a barrier to ‘education for all’, and goes further to state that governments should take urgent action to tackle exclusion:

Governments urgently need to identify the groups of children most likely never to enrol in school, in addition to those who drop out. This is the first step in implementing policies that reach out to the excluded and improve the quality, flexibility and relevance of education.

(UNESCO, 2007, p. 2)

While agreeing with this, we would also like to point out that the notion of appropriate education as a human right also applies to the *mainstream majority* in any society who have no problem in accessing the education system, but may not be receiving an education appropriate to their particular needs in the various localities and social groups that make up the total society.

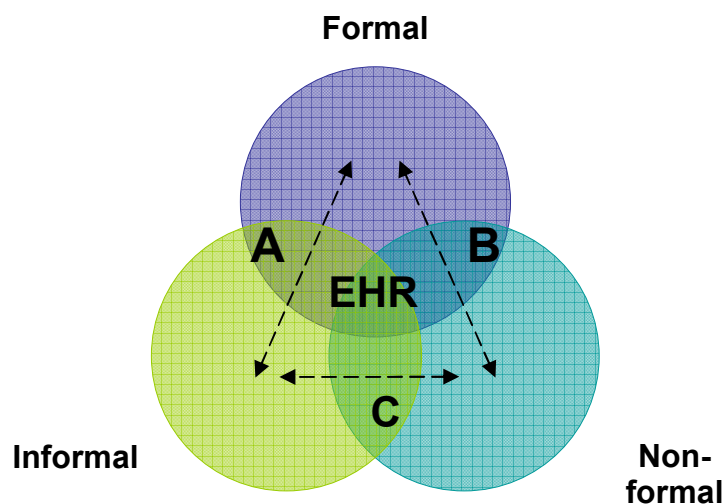
It is often disregarded that educational professionals whose role it is to *provide* and *regulate* systems of education have greatest influence on what is made accessible to the mass of the population, as well as on the credential value of whatever may be achieved. Those educational professionals who operate primarily as teachers and/or researchers, have in general less influence, since most are purveyors of the *conventional wisdom* and only a few are sufficiently unorthodox to make a difference. Teachers outside of the 'system' and/or profession are not conventionally perceived as being to do with 'education' yet they in reality deal with the majority of learning that takes place in the world. Consequently, with a liberal, appropriate or humanitarian approach to education, that effective majority of teachers in society at large need to be brought from the periphery to the core of any initiative leading towards EHR.

Another view of the *forms* of education is its conventional categorisation into:

- formal education;
- non-formal education;
- informal education.

As with most typologies, the categories are not watertight, but overlap in various ways, as indicated in *Figure 1*.

Figure 1. Forms of education: formal, informal and non-formal



As shown in the diagram above, EHR essentially comprises **all** forms of educational activity. Flow A is exemplified by good relationships between family, community and school. An example of this would be the initiatives of refugee communities in Hounslow in coordinating with schools through mentoring activities (McCorriston, 2006). Flow B is exemplified by, for example, positive initiatives linking school and businesses, such as the Regional Education and Business Alliance (REBA) in Massachusetts, as well as the announced initiative by the UK government to encourage private businesses to sponsor the educational development of individual children in care (June 2007). Flow C is exemplified by, for example, NGOs undertaking educational initiatives in communities post-disaster or post-conflict.

Viewing education in these terms introduces a very significant but again somewhat neglected dimension of educational processes, namely the **temporal**. Formal education normally includes a compulsory phase from the commencement of primary schooling – and sometimes even pre-primary (kindergarten) – to somewhere in the mid-teens; at least ten years in most countries. To achieve a meaningful correspondence between school curricula and the various needs of diverse economies and societies over long periods of time is impossible. Consequently, what happens in many countries is frequent tinkering with the formal system, both structural and curricular, which often renders the formal operation even more dysfunctional. The relatively brief timescale of the office of the typical government minister is almost always at odds with that needed to effect meaningful reform from above. Education that is actually occurring is in school and community. It is culturally based and often locale-specific, even if influenced by the global/local interface of modern informational technologies. Consequently, to understand, let alone influence, what is actually happening, we need to take a much more local, and spatially disparate, view than that provided by the provincial or national systemic focus.

As hinted above, the majority of learning experiences occur outside of the formal system. That is not an argument for ‘deschooling society’, however. While the motives and even the analysis of Ivan Illich (1971) in his famous essay on *De-schooling Society* may have been admirable, its advocacy was naïve. Schooling serves valuable functions for governments in addition to purely educational ones. Some of these functions are more respectable than others. Be that as it may, massive learning takes place in very early childhood, possibly even before birth, continues throughout the compulsory schooling phase during the hours, days and weeks outside school, and continues into old age – the so-called lifelong education. A significant part of such learning also takes place in so-called ‘non-formal’ settings within such activities as religious, military, business, workplace and other civil society institutions. At the same time, they are most likely providers of more technical and vocational skills training than is the formal sector. They may well also serve to add considerably to the acquisition of knowledge.

Even formal and non-formal educations are culturally embedded phenomena, but subject to the many factors that combine to enable them to operate, dominant among which is the political. *Figure 2* is a partial portrayal of the interface between different key components of ‘culture’ (ethnicity, religion and language) and ‘provision’ (politics, economics and society).

Figure 2. Cultural bases, societal forces and educational features

	Economy	Politics	Society
Ethnicity	Occupation Culture Education	Power Culture Education	Structure Culture Education
Religion	Church/Wealth Culture Education	Church/State Culture Education	Custom Culture Education
Language	Efficiency Culture Education	Polemic Culture Education	Disparity Culture Education

In addition to technical and vocational education in schools and colleges – as hinted above – education and training also occur informally at the workplace. This form of education is habitually neglected by the vast majority of educationists whose researches and publications dominate the literature of the field. Much of this type of education and training takes place in occupational settings, ranging from large multinational corporations to the small family shop. This failure to understand where the majority of learning is actually happening leads to a very false understanding of educational reality. We concur with the subtitle of Easterly's latest volume: *Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (2007).

Such a situation is due, in developed and developing countries alike, to the *prime functions* of education systems as seen by their providers (politicians and governments), as implied in the quotation from Grayling (2001) with which we opened this discussion. These prime functions of formal education are:

- **control function:** as *political and social control mechanisms* serving both ideological and reproductive forces that tend to have considerable inertia;
- **economic function:** as vehicles for the *acquisition of knowledge and skills* ranging from basic human rights, such as literacy and numeracy, to curricular and structural emphases that governments imagine to be contributing directly to economic growth;
- **custodial function:** as providing *physical facilities for the custody* of millions of urban schoolchildren in both developed and developing countries during the day.

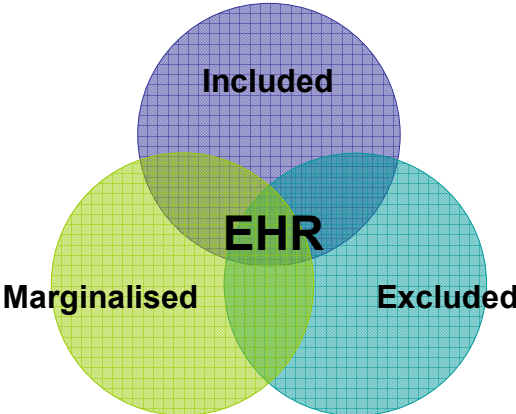
With urbanisation of different kinds occurring incrementally in most countries of the world, if schooling is not provided, children and young people in towns and cities do not have an obvious alternative with which to occupy their time. By contrast, their rural counterparts can play an active part in what is still the prime economic sector supporting their communities, which is subsistence agriculture.

Serving all the above functions, the phenomenon that is 'education' has been fashioned by educated urban elites, and serves them well, both structurally and in terms of the curriculum. Furthermore, the language used in textbooks and by most teachers is relatively sophisticated. Even when it is the same tongue as that of the learner, for many it might often just as well be a foreign language. In higher education, especially in the arts, humanities and social sciences, many of the practitioners seem to take a perverse preference for totally unnecessary jargon and other convoluted forms of expression. This is part of the mystique of so-called social science professionals, including educationists.

We are arguing for another, a fourth, **prime function**, for education as a **humanitarian response** to the real learning needs of all children and adults. This kind of education would be very individual and locale-specific, necessarily relating to respective cultures and specific needs. This has long been known to be best practice in the classroom, albeit rarely followed partly due to the range of pressures to which teachers are subjected each and every day. Here we argue that this approach needs to become best practice in the ways in which education, including schooling, is organised, operated and even funded. This is especially the case where schooling is not even available or where communities are otherwise marginalised or even excluded.

Indeed it is with the marginalised and excluded that the notion of EHR is most obviously applicable. This has led to our project being seen as primarily to do with the nascent field of education in emergencies, which it is not. In fact, it is more fundamentally related to the broader concept of EFA, which relates to both emergency and to stable situations, and in all societies. Figure 3 illustrates our conceptual framework for EHR.

Figure 3. Education as a humanitarian response



In the figure above, it is implied that the concept of EHR applies to children and adults alike, and communities of all types.

3. KEY ISSUES RELATING TO THE NOTION OF AN APPROPRIATE EDUCATION

The first issue to note in relation to the notion of an 'appropriate' education is that the realities of life demand that any approach that does not simultaneously embrace all forms of education – informal, non-formal and formal – will not 'take', or be sustainable. It will be like an ill-prepared tissue or organ graft and be rejected, which is why most education systems also fail the majority as well as the marginalised and excluded. Consequently, to view the objectives and evaluation of EFA mainly in terms of enrolment, completion and attainment indices in schools is far from ideal.

A new vision of quality education is essential and current events around the world have demonstrated that quality is not only about literacy and numeracy. There is a growing consensus that quality education cannot be limited to increasing the material inputs into the school systems or enhancing school effectiveness, important as they are. Quality education has both to be based on a human rights approach, and to address new areas including, but not limited to, cultural diversity, multilingualism in education, peace and non-violence, sustainable development and life skills.

(UNESCO, 2007)

To be fair, successive GMRs on progress towards those MDGs that apply to education have focused on key overarching issues such as gender (parity), quality (of education) and literacy. Nonetheless, they are primarily concerned with formal provision and performance and, in our view, do not take a sufficiently holistic view of education, which, in reality, is deeply culturally embedded. We prefer the approach of the NGO Save the Children UK (2007) to the notion of 'Quality Education', as summarised here by Inglis (2007):

First the education a child receives must be **relevant** to their lifestyle, culture, location and future needs. It must also be **appropriate** to the child's developmental progress, culture and language. In addition children must be fully active and **participatory** in their learning with families, and the wider community fully engaged in the process of learning of its children. Education must be **flexible** to differences between individual children, but at the same time respond effectively to the formal curriculum. Quality education is inherently linked to **inclusive** education, which sees diversity of ability, gender and culture as a resource to support learning. Finally, education must be **protective** and safe from violence, abuse, conflict and exploitation (p43).

Cultures tend to be very localised, whether in terms of linguistic variation, societal dimensions, idiosyncratic experiences, attitudes to education, historical legacies or other traits. This is particularly so in many traditional rural societies such as, for example, the Amerindian communities of Oaxaca where there is a different language and culture in every valley, or in the multi-island state of Vanuatu where there are more than 100 languages in a nation of a mere 208,000 souls. But such extreme localisation can also exist in urban areas with traditional indigenous micro-variations, as described in Robson's (1969) classic study of street-by-street variations in attitudes to education in the poorer sectors of the City of Sunderland in England. Another variant of this kaleidoscopic feature of urban communities can be seen in multicultural 'urban-social segregation' in third world cities as illustrated by Clarke (1973) in his analysis of race, status and ecology in Port San Fernando, Trinidad.

The phenomenon of immigration to Britain in the second half of the 20th century has created a vast number of multicultural communities, and these communities themselves encompass a wide array of individuals from diverse backgrounds, including refugees, asylum seekers and traveller communities. Such a situation requires a humanitarian response for education to be both effective and appropriate.

For a decade or so multicultural education has been promoted as the appropriate form of education for Britain. For example, the Home Office ... claimed: that 'For the curriculum to have meaning and relevance for all pupils now in our schools, its content, emphasis and values and assumptions contained must reflect the wide range of cultures, histories and lifestyles in our multiracial society.

(Shaw, 1988)

All this relates fundamentally to issues of scale in relation to the provision of schooling, an aspect of the geography of education (Brock, 1992) still virtually untouched by the literature of both educational studies and geography. The fundamental issue of scale was, however, addressed by the seminal paper of Bray and Murray Thomas (1995): 'Levels of comparison in educational studies: different insights from different literatures and the value of a multi-level analysis'. Their approach is very helpful, but a crucial level of scale – that of local community – is missing. This is because the authors have identified their levels purely in terms of political parameters, which do not necessarily converge with the cultural. Indeed, they rarely do. As we have indicated above, education is a culturally embedded phenomenon, but its potential value to the community, and to the individual, is constrained by the political parameters within which its' formal and non-formal dimensions are delivered, both in terms of its content and administration.

4. AT THE SHARP END OF EDUCATION AS A HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE: THE UNITWIN PROJECT

While taking all the above into consideration, it is clear that the urgency of applying a humanitarian response ranges across a spectrum from situations of dire emergency to those of benign misconception. We intend to address the whole spectrum in due course, but as this is an approach conceived in the context of a UNESCO/UNITWIN project, the parameters of which require the prime focus to be on populations in and from the poorer countries, we have begun at or towards that end of the spectrum: the '**sharp end**'. However, it is important to make clear that EHR is not a euphemism for EIE (Education in Emergencies) even though we are making the case for an EHR approach to be as directly relevant to EIE, as for any other forms or modes of provision. It is well established from the literature and practical experience of EIE (Sinclair, 2002) that medium- and even long-term perspectives of the educational needs of each community have to be included from the outset. This alone illustrates the need for an EHR approach from the outset.

So, given our UNITWIN parameters, we have attempted to develop a conceptual framework for EHR, which is expressed as *Figure 4* below. This is a matrix where the categories shown vertically on the left comprise the three main conditions already discussed in the paper (included, marginalised and excluded) and where the categories shown horizontally comprise four major situations that represent conditions at the 'sharp end' to which education needs to operate as a humanitarian response. In reality, these human groups overlap and the four conditions also overlap. For example, the case of Darfur as exemplified in the June 2007 report of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) shows how desertification caused by climate change can lead to conflict over land, which, in turn, leads not only to human displacement but further desertification.

UNESCO's UNITWIN scheme requires that the Chair initiatives include the development of networks of universities that can collaborate in development work, as well as other UN agencies and NGOs that may be working with some university links on initiatives that fall within the focus of the chair's designated area. There is further mention of such links as we are in the process of developing, or aim to develop in the future, in the penultimate section of this paper below. But in terms of *Figure 4*, we hope to develop UNITWIN links with, for example: a Palestinian West Bank university (e.g. Bethlehem and/or Birzeit); Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok (Asian Migration Studies Centre); Universidad de Los Andes (Bogota); Fort Hare University, South Africa, and the University of Kent, UK.

We would like to emphasise that in addition to all those human groups mentioned in *Figure 4*, this typology also includes all children and adults who have access to some form of education but whose specific educational needs are not being met. Across the whole spectrum, our adherence to the notion of appropriate education touches every individual. Indeed, the actual curricular outcome for every child and adult as a result of the overlapping effects of informal, non-formal and formal educational experiences is unique, but it is not necessarily appropriate to their needs as they move through life.

Back at the 'sharp end' of EHR, the UNHCR determined that at the end of 2005 there were an estimated 20.8 million 'people of concern' to the organisation, including refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs and stateless people (www.unhcr.org/statistics). These figures do not account for the vast majority of individuals who are without a state and any kind of social protection. We can safely assume that the actual statistic is much higher in the light of those who actually lack governmental protection or adequate social care, including the provision of education. These numbers lead the authors of this paper to conclude that there is therefore a significant need for further research into the field of EHR, that goes far beyond 'education for emergencies'; 'education for conflict and post-conflict areas';

'education in fragile states' and other emergent fields, important as these approaches undoubtedly are in themselves.

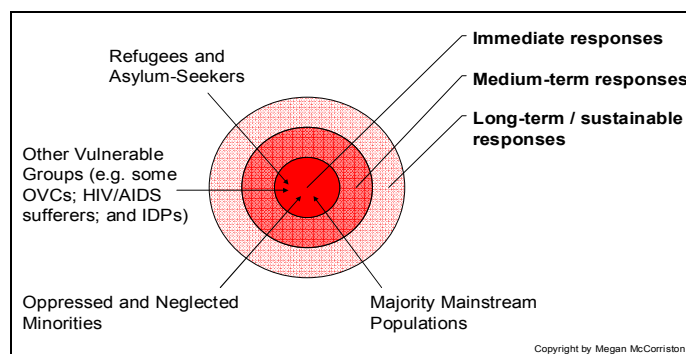
Figure 4. Education as a humanitarian response: the 'sharp end'

Human groups and examples of situations	Conflict and post-conflict	Natural (e.g. tsunami) and 'man-made' (e.g. desertification) disasters	Medical and other health-related problems	Endemic poverty
Included	Some refugees and asylum seekers (e.g. Palestinians in Syria)	Some internally displaced people (e.g. tsunami victims in Aceh, Indonesia)	Malaria, cholera, tuberculosis; other major illnesses; some HIV/AIDS sufferers (e.g. in SSA)	Rural and urban poor, some vulnerable children (e.g. in SSA)
Marginalised	Some refugees and asylum seekers (e.g. Palestinians in Egypt), some internally displaced people (e.g. in Colombia; and Karen in Myanmar)	Some internally displaced people (e.g. various rural communities in the Sahel zone of Africa)	Some HIV/AIDS sufferers; some primary caregivers, including children; the aged (e.g. in many cities in the developed world and in less developed countries generally)	Travelling communities, economic migrants and some OVCs (e.g. within the EU, as well as India)
Excluded	Some refugees (e.g. Karen in Thailand and Palestinians in Lebanon)	Does not normally apply unless in parallel with conflict (e.g. in Darfur)	Some HIV/AIDS sufferers, lepers and the aged (as per the box above)	Some OVCs (e.g. street children in Latin America)

The notion of an educational response implies a temporal dimension. Clearly, emergency situations require a rapid response, but there are more ongoing or even endemic situations that need medium- or long-term responses. This temporal range applies to all the categories of human groups illustrated in *Figure 4* above, but differentially according to individual contexts. This is a matter of planning appropriate responses, but a fundamental principle applies, namely that it is necessary for the seeds of sustainability to be present even in emergency responses, and that conditions for continued appropriate support find their place in any medium- and long-term plan for educational provision. Such an approach fits the concept of EHR for all populations as indicated in *Figure 5* below.

The 'bull's eye' in the centre of the diagram also illustrates graphically the potential juxtaposition of all types of human group to which responses are needed in respect of education. Such groups are not necessarily geographically discrete. For example, situations can range from refugees being integrated with mainstream society in London to indigenous minorities in Amazonian Peru living in a very different environment from that in Lima for which the mainstream education of their country is intended and to which they are themselves subjected.

Figure 5. Temporal scales in education as a humanitarian response



In the developed world the case is somewhat different because of the gloss placed by politicians on discussions about education policy and its efficacy, and the willingness of the majority of educational professionals to conform. In England, for example, the *Every Child Matters* (2003) Green Paper emphasised the country's commitment to 'education for all' by ensuring equal quality, access and achievement in the formal education system: in practice, an impossible objective to realise. Furthermore, it asserted that more attention would be given to the educational needs of underachieving ethnic minority pupils and especially Afro-Caribbean pupils. There was little policy discourse, however, addressing the specific educational needs of non-ethnic minority pupils, such as underachieving white British pupils, especially boys, who arguably comprise the ethnic 'majority' in the majority of schools. Indeed, a report has been published by the Rowntree Trust (2007) illustrating the reality of this situation, which has been evident for decades. In addition to the effect of progressively higher achievements by adolescent girls, most of the ethnic minority pupils of both genders now achieve more in secondary school than the majority white males (*The Independent*, 22 June 2007). Clearly the education they are being offered is neither effective nor appropriate. Even less has been done in serious policy initiatives to address the needs of the most vulnerable students in British schools, including refugees, asylum seekers and travellers, though NGOs and researchers continue to unearth staggering facts about degrees of disadvantage even within inclusion (Refugee Council, 2005).

The causal relationships between these human groups and situations should be emphasised, as they are not mutually exclusive. The categories themselves overlap each other and there are significant movements between human groups. For example, refugees and asylum seekers can be 'included' in formal education. Local Authorities in England are legally bound to allow access to formal education for these individuals (Save the Children, 2005). There are many instances, however, in which asylum seekers who attend school are awaiting a decision as to their legal status and are forced to leave school mid-year, causing serious disruption to their education and personal development, and perhaps even their safety. These individuals therefore go from being 'included' to effectively 'excluded' from education. Likewise, refugees who are forced to flee their country can often gain access to education in a host country. They therefore migrate from the category of 'excluded' individuals to that of 'included' individuals in education. 'Marginalised' individuals in education are those who may receive education but whose actual educational needs are not met: for instance, students who speak English as a Foreign Language (EFL) cannot immediately access the national curriculum as compared to their local counterparts, and traveller communities who may access the system irregularly. This puts these individuals at an immediate disadvantage both academically and socially.

We can now turn our discussion away from the human groups of concern to EHR to the types of situations in which education is a necessary humanitarian response. We have divided the situational

categories into four main areas: conflict; natural disasters; health epidemics and economic fallout or endemic poverty. These categories can also be mutually dependent upon each other, for example the incidence of violent conflict can also generate severe health epidemics. These situations can severely marginalise or even totally exclude individuals from receiving any form of organised educational activity. In situations of conflict, for example, schools, students and teachers themselves can often be direct targets. The Rwandan genocide of 1994, the Breslan incident in 2004 and recent murders of teachers in southern Thailand and elsewhere (O'Malley, 2007) are relatively recent examples of conflict situations which leave many individuals, and indeed many communities, with their educational opportunities severely disrupted in the most brutal manner.

5. THE UNESCO CHAIR/UNITWIN PROJECT: PLANS AND DELIVERABLES

In terms of plans and deliverables, our work comprises the following: a) Seminars (at least one per academic/calendar year); b) Research projects; c) Publications.

5.1. Seminars

We held our first Seminar in April 2006 at Harris Manchester College, Oxford. This was an invited seminar of 20 people involving participants from four potential field projects: refugees in Northwest Thailand; orphans and vulnerable children in Ukraine; disadvantaged children in India, especially Delhi; and displaced communities in Sierra Leone with special reference to children and young people. A second seminar is planned for 2008 relating to issues of disadvantaged children and young people in the UK; this focus is important because of the interest of the UK Commission to UNESCO in this chair including a UK/European dimension. A third seminar is in mind for 2009 with respect to integrating and operationalising this UNITWIN network itself.

5.2. Research Projects

Two projects have been concluded to date: a) an assessment of in-service teacher training in the Burmese/Karen refugee camps in Northwest Thailand (five field visits were undertaken) ; and b) a documentary study of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) in Ukraine (three visits to Ukraine were undertaken), while colleagues in that country conducted their own field studies as well.

5.3. Publications

In addition to this paper: a) Report of Inaugural Seminar (McCorriston & Paulson, 2007); b) A Preliminary Study of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Ukraine (Danilko & Ivanenko, 2008); c) Research Report on the In-Service Education of ZOA (Thailand) in the Karen Refugee Camps in NW Thailand (Steadman, Brock, McCorriston and Oh, 2007). At the time of writing there is a publication in printing: The Concept of Education as a Humanitarian Response with Reference to the Arab World: the Palestinian Case (Brock and Demirdjian), which is based on a presentation made to the University of Georgetown Centre for Arab Studies and their Centre in Qatar.

5.4. UNITWIN Network

Such networks consist of universities and other higher education institutions in the various countries with which a UNESCO Chair project is involved. Institutions involved in this project to date, and others that we hope will join the network, are Kirovograd State Pedagogical University, Ukraine, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, and the University of Sierra Leone. Institutions hopefully involved at the next phase of development are: Jamalia-Ismalia University, Delhi (OVCs); Fort Hare University, South Africa, and the University of West Indies (HIV/AIDS and education); Universidad de los Andes, Bogota, Colombia (IDPs); University of Nicaragua (minority ethnic groups in the Caribbean coastal zone) and a university in the West Bank, Palestine (possibly Birzeit University or Bethlehem University).

5.5. Conclusion

Clearly this UNESCO chair/UNITWIN network is a work in progress, and in its early stages at that. The purpose of this paper is to introduce our philosophy behind the programme, that is to say, 'education as a humanitarian response', and our commitment to maintaining such a holistic approach to contributing towards meeting the educational needs of not only marginalised and excluded communities, but also the majority of people who do not experience an appropriate education despite having access to formal and non-formal institutions.

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