

PREFACE

The colloquium on *Curriculum Change and Social Cohesion in Conflict-affected Societies* (Geneva, 3-4 April 2003) constitutes an important foundational component of international dialogue and exchange relative to the process of documenting curriculum policy reform in societies that are emerging from, or that have emerged from, civil strife. Seven case study contexts are represented in this formative attempt, concentrating on questions of social cohesion in their illustration and analysis of policy reform. These case studies were initiated by the International Bureau of Education (UNESCO: IBE) in August 2002 around an initial version of a framework of questions and issues developed by the project team, then composed of the following contexts: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Lebanon, Mozambique, Northern Ireland, and Rwanda. The contexts of Guatemala and Sri Lanka joined the team soon afterwards. In almost all of the contexts, the case study authors are educational experts involved in national policy reform. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the author is a non-national expert who has been closely involved in technical advice for the core curriculum team (see Annex 1 for profiles of all project team members).

Objectives of the colloquium

The colloquium brought the project team together with a total of some seventy participants representing both international organizations and NGOs, as well as academics, based mainly in Geneva (seen Annex 3 for list of participants).

The objectives of the colloquium were as follows:

- To collect critical feedback and insight for the case study teams in view of improving and finalizing the case studies (for summer 2003).
- To assess the usefulness of the analytical framework developed for this project, and consider refining it in light of its practiced strengths and weaknesses.
- To establish a strong foundation for the development of a series of comparative case study based training materials for educational planners, curriculum developers, and students of education.

Organization of the report

Section I (Introduction – pp5-13) begins by discussing the rationales that inform the thematic focus, continues through the presentation of the working assumptions, and briefly outlines some of the issues raised and areas requiring clarification.

Section II (Analytical Framework - pp14-18) presents the “final” version of the analytical framework based on feedback, received during and following the colloquium, as well as through on-going discussions with the project teams as they work toward revising and completing their case studies.

Section III (Feedback & Evaluation - pp19-33) provides a compilation of the feedback directed to the project team from colloquium participants affiliated to the Department for International Development (DFID), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Refugee Education Trust (RET), UNESCO Education Sector, UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), the University of Geneva, the World Bank regarding the finalization of the case studies, the usefulness of the analytical framework, and the identification of links with project work, training and research that the organizations and institutions represented support or conduct. Feedback is also provided from the perspective of the case study authors, essentially in terms

of the usefulness of presenting their work-in-progress both to each other, as well as to a larger audience.