

Spring 2012

International Coordination and Response to the Quality of Teaching in Refugee Camp Settings

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SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAINING

International Coordination and Response to the Quality of
Teaching in Refugee camp settings

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Spring 2012

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Acknowledgments

This paper has been an incredible opportunity to explore a topic of extreme interest to me and has forced me to re-think and consider what path I want to take when I finish my undergraduate studies. However, I cannot take sole credit for this finished product as it would have been impossible without the priceless input from many different experts and specialists in and outside of Geneva. First, I would like to thank the Academic Directors for the School of International Training, Dr. Csurgai and Dr. Lambert, along with Ms. Aline Dunant for their advice and guidance during the early stages of research. I would also like to thank my advisor Mr. Heikki Mattila who was invaluable, not just in the drafting stage, but also in helping to develop my case study in Chad and putting me in touch with local UNHCR field offices in Southern Chad. I would also like to thank these officers based in S. Chad for their input and speedy response given the immense amount of work they have on a daily basis. Next I would like to thank all the wonderful specialists in the field of education within various governmental and non-governmental organisations that took time out of their busy schedules to meet with me. Ms. Lene Leonhardsen (UNCIEF), Mr. Gabriel Khili (UNESCO), Ms. Theophania Chavatzia (UNESCO), Ms. Audrey Nirrengarten (UNHCR), Mr. Heikki Mattila (IOM) and Ms. Marina Lopez-Anselme (RET) were all invaluable for the writing of this paper and gave me complementary information on the subject. I would like to thank my colleagues and friends in the SIT program who were great during the brainstorming stage but also great motivators and commiserates throughout the whole process. Finally, I would like to thank my parents because without their constant support I never would have been able to study abroad, and this wonderfully enriching semester in Geneva would not have been possible.

Preface

The overall purpose of the ISP paper is to focus on a specific topic of interest within the field of international relations and use interactive research to explore and study the subject. The focus of this paper addresses the international response and strategy to address problems of quality within the field of refugee education with particular attention to the quality of teaching and teachers. Obviously, there is not one overarching methodology or answer for improving the quality of teaching in refugee camps, and teaching goes hand in hand with so many other factors that it is impossible to create a “one size fits all” solution. The purpose of this paper is to identify what steps are already in place to address this issue, and what work still needs to be done to improve the situation. The paper will analyse the effectiveness and cohesiveness of the international community in tackling the quality of teacher learning and it will provide a case study example of Chad to illustrate programs that are working, areas that still need improvement and the coordination of the international community in Chad.

Abstract

Refugee education has been evolving and developing since it was brought to the attention of the international community in the 1960s. Although education has become more accessible worldwide, the quality of this education has started to become a concern. Increasing the number of enrolled students in formal education systems is an achievement, but if half of these children drop out before the end of the school year what progress has really been made? Providing a quality system has long-term benefits that extend outside of the school setting, benefiting children, educators, parents and the rest of the community. In refugee camp settings, particularly protracted situations where camp mentality has become institutionalised, the need for a quality education can be groundbreaking for creating a self-sustaining population that will be able to thrive when it is time to adopt durable solutions: repatriation, integration or resettlement. Therefore, the global community has shifted its attention to improving the already established and functioning education systems.

The Education Strategy, 2012-2016, has prioritised and outlined many specific guidelines for how to improve the quality of education within its refugee camps and one of the major points of concern is improving the teaching. As described in the UNHCR Global Review on Refugee Education, “teachers are the central aspect of refugee education. Sometimes there is no building, no administration, but there is a teacher. It is these teachers that determine the effectiveness of refugee education”¹ It is apparent that if one wants to improve the quality of refugee education then one first has to address the problems affecting refugee educators. A lack of potential educators, a lack of materials and resources, a lack of motivation for teachers to stay in the camp based schools and a lack of successful interactive teaching methods have all taken a toll on the standard of learning and teaching in refugee camps.

A lack of funding is often cited as the reason why these problems have created “a vicious cycle of underdevelopment”² but increasing funding is not a feasible or realistic solution for a lot of international organisations that have other sectors to which they have to allocate funds. Also convincing donors to give more money is not the easiest or most time efficient task.

Therefore the international community has had to increase its global cooperation and coordination with implementing partners. The combined pooling of information, potential program strategies and funding is essential if there is to be improvement and the present situation is positive but still leaves a lot of room for improvement, especially in the manner of tackling problems in teacher training.

¹ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2011) 54.

² IOM, *Assessment Report: Impact of the Returnees from Libya on their Home Communities in Chad* (Geneva: IOM, 2012) 21.

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I. Introduction

The 1989 Convention of the Rights of the Child confirmed that all children, regardless of status, had the right to a free and compulsory primary education and access to secondary and higher forms of education.³ This was, at the time, a wonderful breakthrough for the international community as there was a shift in the perspective towards education. It was viewed, not just as a privilege for the few, but a right for all. Today, as more and more children have access to an education it has become apparent that education is not equal and that there is a stark difference between providing an education and providing a quality education. Sarah Peterson opened up her lecture to the UNHCR Executive Committee with the following quote, “education is a like a lamp, if you don’t provide sufficient paraffin the lamp won’t function.”⁴ This analogy is accurate because, realistically, what information can a child retain in he is sitting in the back of the class with a hundred other children, he can’t see the blackboard (if there is one) and can’t hear the teacher? How can a child learn if the teacher, himself, has only had three years of formal education, adopts a traditional lecture method of teaching and does not encourage questions or interactive learning? These questions are just a sample of the many problems that need to be addressed in education worldwide but, in particular; a lack of quality has been a crippling factor in refugee communities as they are already plagued with inadequate funding and a lack of human resources.

Unfortunately, dealing with issues of quality is easier said than done as the situation depends on so many circumstantial factors: location, language, size and education level of the refugee community, the rapport with the local population, amount of governmental and non-governmental funding for that particular camp etc. Therefore there is not a ‘one size fits all

³ Sarah Dryden- Peterson, *Refugee Education :Global Review* (Geneva: UNHCR 2011) 8.

⁴ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, Lecture on ‘The Key to the Future: Providing a Quality Education to All Refugees,’ (Geneva, October 2011).

solution' or methodology that can be implemented across the board. Also, defining quality itself is such a subjective concept that unless there is an internationally recognised definition and benchmark of what a quality education should look like then it would be impossible to measure progress. Finally, quality is a combination of many different elements and so it is impractical and inefficient to try and address one problem without considering complementary factors at the same time.⁵

In the developed world discrepancies do exist between different schools, however a 'bad quality school' is not comparable to bad quality schools in refugee camp settings. Although there are cases of protracted refugee situations, a refugee camp is supposed to be a temporary solution. Therefore, there are no permanent structures or buildings in place and a school in a refugee camp could consist of a makeshift tent or, in dire circumstances, a tarp spread between two trees to serve as some shelter from the sun. The psychological impact of having to flee one's home, perhaps leaving family and friends behind, to move into a camp with thousands of other people is also a factor that separates refugees from other situations. Consequently, even before school systems are formally set up, refugee children are at a disadvantage due to the circumstances they find themselves in. For this reason, the international community has to work even harder to address problems of quality in refugee education because the longer organisations wait, the harder it is to remedy the problem.

In this paper I will examine the ways the international community can help correct the quality of refugee education by improving the standard of teaching in refugee camps. Of course, this cannot be studied without taking into account other elements that exacerbate teaching quality such as class size, curriculum and a lack of certification, but teaching is the most important

⁵ Jackie Kirk and Rebecca Winthrop, "Promoting Quality Education in Refugee Contexts: Supporting Teacher Development in Northern Ethiopia" (International Rescue Committee 2007) 2.

aspect that needs to be addressed if we are to see improvements in refugee education. The UNHCR 2011 Global Review states, “teachers matter more than any other single factor for the quality of learning in schools,”⁶ and so it the most pertinent and important issue that needs to be addressed from the start.

The purpose is to identify and analyse the current goals and projects of various governmental and non-governmental organisations in terms of correcting a lack of quality in refugee education. I will start by identifying the globally recognized definition of a ‘quality education,’ then give a brief overview of the development in the approach to refugee education and then detail various projects and programmes that are already implemented along with examining the current situation in Chad refugee camps to give a case study example of what is being implemented at the field level.

II. Development of Refugee Education

Attention to refugee education is not a recent development within the international community but, on the contrary, has been a part of the UNHCR mandate since the 1960s. Before it became a part of the UNHCR agenda, UNESCO held the mandate for refugee education, but this shift led to the presence of education officers at the field level. In these early years, the focus within refugee education was mainly on scholarships and self-help initiatives at the primary level and post-secondary education.⁷ Therefore, UNHCR was not really allocating a lot of funding for refugee education and instead refugees were relied on to created their own informal education systems. It wasn’t until the end of the 1980s that there was a shift from scholarships to

⁶ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review* (Geneva: UNHCR 2011) 54.

⁷ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, Lecture on ‘The Key to the Future: Providing a Quality Education to All Refugees,’ (Geneva, October 2011).

implementing actual education systems in a camp context and more attention was given to primary education.⁸

This reason for this shift was fourfold. Firstly, the large number of refugee flows in the 1980s led the UNHCR to reconsider its intervention strategy and an encampment policy became the norm. Secondly, the almost unanimous ratification of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989) institutionalised a new frame-work that advocated for the universal right of all children to primary education regardless of status. Third, the institutionalisation of this framework changed the mentality of citizens and more and more people expected and wanted access to education. Finally the experience in post-soviet countries, where religious and ethnic identities and access to resources became sources of conflicts, led UNHCR to adopt a new education strategy as it became apparent that education could be used as a tool for mitigating conflict but could also exacerbate conflict unless a systematic approach was adopted.⁹

The 1990s and early 2000s saw a dramatic shift again in refugee education as responsibility was transferred from the field based level to headquarters level policy. This led to “a total lack of expertise in the field of education in the organisation.”¹⁰ Therefore, as there was no expertise on the field level, this led to inter-agency partnerships as UNHCR had to rely on partners on the ground to implement education practices. This shift is, as Sarah Peterson describes, “a shift from the field of practice to a field of policy.”¹¹ Audrey Nirrengarten, an Education Officer at the UNHCR, acknowledged that the core function of the UNHCR is protection, which results in an abundance of legal expertise at the field level that are then responsible for implementing and regulating all community services in the camp, including

⁸ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review* (Geneva: UNHCR 2011) 16.

⁹ Ibid, 17.

¹⁰ Sarah Peterson, Lecture on ‘The Key to the Future: Providing a Quality Education to All Refugees,’ (Geneva, October 2011).

¹¹ Ibid

education. Therefore these field officers are not necessarily education specialists and if there is only a team of twenty people in the field they have to rely on local NGO's and ministries to help offer the services and expertise that UNHCR is lacking.¹²

However, in recent years there has been more emphasis placed on the importance of refugee education and it has become a greater priority in terms of budget allocation. Previously education was not prioritised and it was often a battle for the three headquarter based education specialists to convince colleagues of the importance of refugee education, when there were so many other aspects of refugee welfare to be considered.¹³ However, the recent Global Review on Refugee Education and the consequent creation of a five year strategy, from 2012-2016, to improve the quality of refugee education has made it impossible for members of the international community to overlook education. Ms. Nirrengarten attributes a lot of this progress due to the formation of the Global Education Cluster which has allowed for better coordination and information sharing between various governmental agencies, alongside the creation of the Inter-Agency Network for Emergencies, which has been invaluable for providing research and evidence that UNHCR does not have the resources to conduct itself.¹⁴ It is important to note that the Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All (2000) and the Millennium Development Goals (2000) added fuel to education movement by creating optimistic goals that the international community should strive to reach by 2015.¹⁵ One of the goals in the Dakar framework was to ensure a quality education for all, which further emphasizes the development in the international response to education where organisations are moving away from simply trying to implement

¹² Audrey Nirrengarten, Interview at UNHCR Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012)

¹³ Audrey Nirrengarten, Interview at UNHCR Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012)

¹⁴ Audrey Nirrengarten, Interview at UNHCR Headquarters (Geneva, Switzerland, April 2012).

¹⁵ Global Education Cluster, *Education Cluster Coordinator Handbook*. 1st ed. (Geneva: Global Education Cluster, 2010) 73.

education programs but there is a greater focus today on ensuring the quality of the implemented education.

III. INEE and the Global Education Cluster

What is the Global Education Cluster and the Inter-Agency Network for Emergencies?

The Global Education cluster was created in 2006 as the international community became more aware of the importance of education within humanitarian response. In 2007 there was the signing of the co-leadership between UNICEF and the International Save the Children Alliance, which marked the first global level cluster to be led by a UN body and a NGO.¹⁶ This act in itself speaks to the cross-cutting nature of the cluster and how influential and important it has been to facilitate better coordination and cooperation between all education related organisations.

The Inter-Agency Network for Emergencies (INEE) was founded in Dakar in 2000 with the intention to ensure that everyone has the right to a quality education and a safe learning environment in emergencies through to recovery. The network is made up of practitioners and policymakers and the INEE Workgroup (2009-2011), which consisted of 19 different organisations that had substantial expertise in situations of conflict and disaster, helped to create the INEE Minimum Standards for Education.¹⁷ This text has been extremely influential for laying out various guidelines for international organisations administering and implementing various educational programs in conflict related settings.

What role does the INEE and the Global Education Cluster play in terms of refugee education?

¹⁶ *One Response*, Global Education Cluster. Web.
<http://onerresponse.info/GlobalClusters/Education/Pages/default.aspx>.

¹⁷ INEE: Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response and Recovery*. 2nd ed. (New York: INEE, 2010) 1.

The Global Education cluster created an Education Cluster Coordinator Handbook in 2010 to help ensure an efficient, predictable and timely response from Education Cluster Coordinators when administering programs in emergency related settings. The goals of the cluster are to ensure sufficient global capacity, predictable leadership, to work in partnership towards humanitarian objectives and to strengthen the accountability of the international community.¹⁸ The creation of these objectives and global clusters in general are important when there is a lack of clarity over leadership. However, it is tricky in terms of refugees because UNHCR holds the official mandate for everything to do with refugees but it still relies on a lot of the information sharing, structuring and research provided by the Education cluster. Therefore, UNICEF and Save the Children cannot directly decide on policy and programs for refugee situations, but can provide help and resources if invited by UNHCR, and of course, as a member of the Education Cluster, UNHCR has access to all the information and guidelines as well.

The international community relies on the “Minimum Standards for Education” that are outlined by the Inter-Agency Network for Emergencies (INEE) and the guidelines created by the Education Cluster when creating, assessing and evaluating the quality of education in an emergency situation. It also speaks to its importance that it was mentioned by every expert I spoke with throughout the research process and Mr. Gabriel Khili (UNESCO) claimed that the INEE guidebook and the work of the Education Cluster served as the “two pillars,”¹⁹ in terms of setting standards and policy for creating sustainable and quality education. Ms. Chavatizia, also with UNESCO, reiterated this sentiment, adding that she didn’t understand why the INEE referred to their document as “Minimum Standards,” because in reality they lay out a very solid

¹⁸ Global Education Cluster, *Education Cluster Coordinator Handbook*. 1st ed. (Geneva: Global Education Cluster, 2010) 8.

¹⁹ Gabriel Khili, Interview at UNESCO Headquarters (Paris, France, April 2012).

and cohesive framework²⁰ that educational specialists can apply on the global and local level. The INEE has been invaluable in designing education policy and programming for all emergency situations including refugee camp situations. In terms of outlining guidelines for educators, the INEE handbook lays out extremely detailed standards for teaching and learning, breaking the topic into four subsections: curricula, training, professional development and support, instruction and learning process and assessment of learning outcomes.²¹ It also breaks teachers and other education personnel into three categories: recruitment and selection, conditions of work and support and supervision.²² Both of these topics and subcategories have extensive notes and guidelines on the topic. For instance, in the ‘recruitment and selection’ section the manual lists a list of professional and personal criteria necessary for the selection of teachers and then references the INEE Guidance Notes on Teacher Compensation another thorough text.²³ The INEE Minimum Standards for Education is also extremely practical because it lists case studies and examples throughout to illustrate good methods that work and could be copied elsewhere if the circumstances allowed for it.

IV. Quality teaching: definition and challenges

Teachers have been referred to as the ‘lynchpin of education,’ and a ‘real investment,’ in the INEE Guidance Notes on Teaching and Learning.²⁴ Therefore, in terms of improving the quality of refugee education it seems that addressing issues in teaching is the best place to start.

How does one define a quality teacher?

²⁰ Theophania Chavatzia, Interview at UNESCO Headquarters (Paris, France, April 2012).

²¹ INEE: Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response and Recovery*. 2nd ed. (New York: INEE, 2010) 75.

²² *Ibid*, 95.

²³ *Ibid*, 96.

²⁴ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2011) 57.

Quality is a subjective term in itself and the definition could change dramatically from organisation to organisation. The UNHCR Global Review defines a quality education as and education that, “satisfies basic learning needs and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experience of living.”²⁵ It is important that attention is given not just towards academic enrichment but also to the overall wellbeing of the child. Therefore, an array of both professional and personal characteristics can play a role in the quality of the educator. The INEE guidelines for ensuring quality teachers, as they are one of the principal authorities in terms of emergency education related situations, and, lays out certain key attributes. From a professional standpoint an academic background, prior teaching experience, sensitivity to the psychosocial needs of children and relevant language ability are all desirable qualities. In terms of personal elements, age and gender need to be taken into account along with the ethnic and religious background of the person when considering the social tensions and longstanding inequalities that might exist between cultures.²⁶

Françoise Caillods, in the “Global perspectives on teaching learning” adds that, “some investigations have identified a number of characteristics that make a good teacher: analytical thinking, initiative, curiosity, a passion for learning, professionalism, confidence, trustworthiness, fairness, and respect for others,” and that, “pupils and students do not necessarily learn better when they are taught by a teacher who has spent a long time in teacher training.”²⁷ This reinforces the idea that it is not necessarily just what is being taught but the manner in which it being taught that is equally as important. Ms. Caillods continues by adding, “the teacher is at the centre of the learning process; and learning therefore depends first and

²⁵Ibid, 30.

²⁶ INEE: Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response and Recovery*. 2nd ed. (New York: INEE, 2010) 96.

²⁷ John Schwille and Martial Dembélé in collaboration with Jane Schubert, *Global Perspectives on Teacher Learning: Improving Policy and Practice* (Paris, UNESCO: IIEP, 2007)16.

foremost on the quality of the teacher.”²⁸ UNHCR contributes to this list by claiming quality teachers will use a variety of teaching methods and aids in the classroom, will encourage discussion and interaction with the students, will be knowledgeable in the subject material and use non-violent forms of punishment.²⁹

These are all important, universal qualities that make for great teachers in the classroom. However, rarely in refugee camp situations are these characteristics readily available for many reasons that will be discussed in detail shortly. Therefore, humanitarian organisations have to take the training and educating of teachers into their own hands, through the designing and implementing of their own programs or those of a field based partner organisation.

Immediate problems that hinder adequate teaching in refugee camp settings

Refugee camps are, by nature, considered a temporary solution in direct response to an emergency situation and never a long-term solution. The ultimate goal of UNHCR and other refugee based organisations is for repatriation, integration into the local community or resettlement elsewhere. For this reason, it is often very difficult to get governmental and private donors and national communities to think of the long-term solutions for refugees in terms of education. Therefore, there is an extreme lack of funding for educational based programs in refugee camps and hence a lack of resources for students and teachers in many cases. In 2010, UNHCR allocated only 4% of its annual budget to address all the educational needs of the educators, students and communities under UNHCR protection.³⁰ Ms. Nirrengarten expanded on this, adding that donors were often more willing and eager to give money for certain cases rather than others, which also leads to a disparity of resources and money between camps. This was the

²⁸Ibid, 15.

²⁹ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2011) 55.

³⁰ Audrey Nirrengarten, Interview at UNHCR Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012).

case with Iraqi refugees residing in Syria and Jordan who received a lot of attention from donors and so UNHCR was able to build additional classrooms in pre-existing schools for these refugee children.³¹ The dependency on donors can also lead to unpredictability for international humanitarian organisations as it makes it difficult to try to plan long-term strategies and programs for a certain area if they are unsure whether they will have adequate and consistent funding to sustain them.³² A lack of funding has a direct impact on the quality of teaching because if donor interest is based solely on short term solutions it leads to a lot of short, minimal and unsubstantial training sessions that may help to address the immediate need of teachers in the camp but does very little to ensure and promote quality and sustainable learning for refugees. This is particularly problematic in protracted refugee situations such as the Somali refugee camps in Kenya, which have existed for over twenty years, and yet the percentage of trained teachers remains at a shockingly low 12%.³³

Another major problem is the lack of readily available teachers, and it is acknowledged that in developing countries, “large numbers of practising teachers will have to be trained, upgraded or replaced.”³⁴ A shortage of educators is especially apparent amongst refugee populations that come from a more agricultural based background. This was one of the major problems in Eastern Chad refugee camps, leading the Refugee Education Trust, although created to address the gap between post-primary and secondary education, had to start from scratch implementing literacy and numeracy programs to increase to create a pool of capable teachers.³⁵ In tandem with a lack of teachers, once the international community tries to correct this

³¹ Ibid

³² Ibid

³³ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2011) 31.

³⁴ John Schwille and Martial Dembélé in collaboration with Jane Schubert, *Global Perspectives on Teacher Learning: Improving Policy and Practice* (Paris, UNESCO: IIEP, 2007) 15.

³⁵ Marina L. Anselme, Interview at RET Headquarters (Geneva, , April 2012).

deficiency through the implementation of training schemes, the most capable teachers often leave to pursue more highly paid jobs in the local community, or are the first to relocate back in their country of origin.³⁶ This was problematic in Cambodia where UNHCR spent resources and energy into training capable, qualified professors for increasing the opportunities for students to pursue a higher education. However, after the training a lot of these professors left and became civil servants, doing little to help improve the quality of education within the refugee population.³⁷ This leads to the constant re-training within the refugee population, and unless incentives can be given to get teachers to stay and pass their skills on to the next generation there is a constant cycle of short-term teachers that do little to make the refugee community self-sustaining.

Ineffective training programs cannot be overlooked as a cause of hindering the quality of teaching in camp settings. It is generally acknowledged that there is a ‘continuum of teacher learning’ that encompasses all phases of teacher preparation from their own schooling, pre-service training and induction to finally becoming practicing teachers and the on-going assessment throughout their careers.³⁸ This conceptual model seems logical, as one would expect that a teacher would continue learning and improving throughout their career, but many programs in developing countries have been inefficient as they fail to address the entire spectrum of teaching. They spend a lot of resources on the upfront phases, such as early schooling for teachers and pre-service training courses but fall short in providing services to oversee the latter phases.³⁹ Although there are instances of these short-term training programs being effective in terms of creating a teacher pedagogy that had a child-centred approach, such as the three month

³⁶ Audrey Nirrengarten, Interview at UNHCR Headquarters, (Geneva, April 2012).

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ John Schulle and Martial Dembélé in collaboration with Jane Schubert, *Global Perspectives on Teacher Learning: Improving Policy and Practice* (Paris, UNESCO: IIEP, 2007) 29.

³⁹ Ibid, 16

intensive training programs implemented by Save the Children, it did little to change learning outcomes.⁴⁰ Also, up until the recent Refugee Education Strategy (2012-2016) released earlier this year by UNHCR, a ‘trained’ teacher could be an educator that had had a minimum of ten days of training.⁴¹ Even if this training is extremely thorough in some camps, it could be completely ineffective in others and the problem arises that there is no benchmark for when a teacher can truly be called ‘trained.’⁴²

Finally, the belief and practice that improving teacher-learning could be achieved by adopting ‘partial measures,’⁴³ does not take into account cross-cutting issues that are also invaluable in creating quality teaching such as the gender element and psychosocial component. Having female teachers in schools is an effective way to encourage more girls to stay in school as they serve as positive role models and it also makes parents more likely to send their children to school, as they believe they will be safer with a female teacher.⁴⁴ Ms. Chavatzia, UNESCO, argued that when implementing any sort of program it is important to keep the gender perspective in mind and realise there are differences between the two.⁴⁵ Although most UN agencies and NGO’s do keep gender disparity in mind when dealing with all areas of humanitarian response, it takes a long time to see the effects and statistically there are still huge disparities between female and male education levels in refugee communities.⁴⁶ The psychosocial element is another cross-cutting element that needs to be considered in teacher training to promote well-rounded quality educators. As outlined in the International-Agency Standing Committee’s (IASC) Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in

⁴⁰ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2011) 56.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 54

⁴² Marina L. Anselme, Interview at RET Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012).

⁴³ John Schuille and Martial Dembélé in collaboration with Jane Schubert, *Global Perspectives on Teacher Learning: Improving Policy and Practice* (Paris, UNESCO: IIEP, 2007) 15.

⁴⁴ Audrey Nirrengarten, Interview at UNHCR Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012).

⁴⁵ Theophania Chavatzia, Interview at UNESCO Headquarters (Paris, April 2012).

⁴⁶ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2011) 33.

Emergency Settings, “educators can provide psychosocial support to learners both by adapting the way they interact with learners, creating a safe and supportive environment in which learners may express their emotions and experiences, and by including specific structural psychosocial activities in the teaching/learning process.”⁴⁷ However, in order for this element to be addressed, teacher training programs need to cover not just curriculum and effective teaching methods but also the psychological well-being of teachers and train them in sufficient ways to deal with their own emotional needs and how they can identify and promote these same practices in their classrooms.

There are a lot of challenges the international community has to tackle in order to foster and increase the quality of teacher learning within the refugee camp context. However, the present situation is not entirely negative and there has been a lot of progress in recent years amongst UN agencies and NGO partners in terms of addressing some of the most pertinent issues listed above.

V. Methods adopted to improve the Quality of Teaching Learning

Long-term, holistic training programs

The type of program depends on the area and the resources readily available to the field officers and NGO partners at the ground level. Therefore there is not one clear method of ensuring quality teaching as it could depend on an array of factors. As articulated by Mark Bray, a Director at IIEP, “while everybody agrees that teacher education and teacher training are very important, the question of how much formal teacher preparation is needed and how it should be delivered is the object of much debate and experimentation in developing as well as developed

⁴⁷IASC, *IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings*, (Geneva: IASC, 2007) 152-153.

countries.”⁴⁸ However, despite the general flexibility in terms of which program is best to implement, research suggests that more long-term, holistic approaches to teaching educators is the most efficient and effective way to improve quality teaching.

A. Healing Classroom Initiative

One pilot project that was introduced in northern Ethiopia to encourage teacher development was the “Healing Classroom Initiative” founded by the International Rescue Committee in 2004. This program was extremely successful because it was able to address many problems identified in the level of teaching competency and teaching practice through an interactive teacher training program. As the director of the program outlines, “the focus of programming attention tends to be on the very practical issues relating to teacher recruitment and basic training. The Healing Classrooms Initiative is therefore piloting alternative approaches which recognize and build on the different experiences of the teachers. These approaches are more holistic, working with the principles of psychosocial well-being and the “healing” of children and teachers and integrating these with culturally appropriate notions of “good teaching.”⁴⁹ This untraditional approach did not assume that the current pedagogy of the teaching staff was poor as is typical of most traditional training programs, but instead was eager for teacher input when adapting the curriculum. The approach used qualitative methods to learn more about teacher’s lives and experiences and incorporate their local knowledge and culture into the curriculum.⁵⁰ The initiative had a twofold effect, as not only did it improve and facilitate more interactive, engaging teaching methods in the classroom, but it helped empower what the IRC refers to as ‘tentative teachers.’ This term is used to refer to teachers who did not really ever

⁴⁸ John Schwille and Martial Dembélé in collaboration with Jane Schubert, *Global Perspectives on Teacher Learning: Improving Policy and Practice* (Paris, UNESCO: IIEP, 2007)11.

⁴⁹ Jackie Kirk and Rebecca Winthrop, “Promoting Quality Education in Refugee Contexts: Supporting Teacher Development in Northern Ethiopia” (International Rescue Committee, 2007) 2.

⁵⁰Ibid, 5

envision themselves as teachers and did not feel comfortable or qualified enough when they took on the role.⁵¹ Allowing these teachers to contribute to the curriculum and identify their ‘promising practices’ served to engage teachers in active learning and to feel happier and more respected.⁵² The HCI also encouraged learning through play, song, stories and drama, and was intent on creating ‘homeroom teachers’ to promote better student-teacher relations.⁵³ Fostering trust and respect in students towards their educator is a sign of a qualified teacher because as Rebecca Winthrop articulates, “child-centered teaching allows teachers to know their students and address their individual needs.”⁵⁴ Therefore, the HCI is extremely effective because it simultaneously addresses many of the problems identified earlier. It not only improves the quality of educators in terms of expanding their knowledge on the curriculum, promoting better teaching practices in the classroom and fostering close relationships between teacher and student, but it also addresses cross-cutting elements such as the psychosocial element that needs to always be considered when creating education in emergency and post-emergency situations. Although piloted in Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Guinea and Sierra Leone the program has now expanded and adapted for twenty other conflict and post-conflict settings.⁵⁵

B. ICT to promote teacher learning

As the world becomes more globalized and technically savvy, the role of ICT in refugee camp settings has also become a subject of discussion and the presence of computers, radios and projectors in the field becoming a more common occurrence. Of course, this is not the reality in all camp settings, as implementing ICT products may not always be feasible due to resource

⁵¹ Ibid, 2

⁵² Ibid, 6

⁵³ Ibid, 3

⁵⁴ International Rescue Committee. *HEALING CLASSROOMS INITIATIVE: Promoting Student Well-being through Teacher Development*. (International Rescue Committee, 2006) 2.
http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/migrated/resources/irc_healingclassrooms_brochure.pdf

⁵⁵ Ibid, 2.

constraints, access to electricity and the willingness of the educators to learn how to use the technical equipment. However, as illustrated by the Global Education Cluster Group, “while this is no doubt more time-consuming in the short-term, it is more cost-effective and sustainable in the long-term.”⁵⁶ In terms of how ICT can be used to improve the quality of teaching in refugee settings, there have been usages of ICT programs to train teachers through an Open Distance and e-learning methodology.⁵⁷ UNESCO PEER implemented a teacher education program in Somalia using ICT support to train the teachers. A lack of qualified teachers or teachers with out-of-date training made up a huge percentage of the teaching force in Somalia, and there were no proper guidelines in place to ensure teachers were properly trained. Therefore, the international community had to intervene to provide some structure, but it has been proven that traditional face to face teacher training programs do not always increase the quality or numbers of teachers and are more costly.⁵⁸ The ICT pilot project was fairly successful and demonstrated that distance based training courses through ICT could be useful to train a lot of teachers at a lower cost. ICT also opens the door for increased information sharing between teachers from different countries to share teaching plans and activities and the can be an effective interactive tool in the classroom.⁵⁹

Methods to reduce teacher absenteeism in refugee camps

It is commonly agreed that continuing to train and retrain members of the refugee community every time a batch of newly certified teachers leaves to pursue other careers, is not cost-effective or an efficient solution for establishing sustainable quality education. If a child has

⁵⁶ Barbara Barry and Landon Newby. "Use of Technology in Emergency and Post-Crisis Situations." (Global Education Cluster. 2012) 6.

⁵⁷ UNESCO. *ICT Support for Teacher Education Project in Somalia (ICT-TE)*. (Paris, UNESCO PEER Project) 20.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 20

⁵⁹ Lene Leonhardsen, Interview at UNICEF Headquarters (Geneva, March 2012).

three or four different teachers throughout the academic year all of which have their own unique way of teaching and haven't coordinated their curriculum to that of their predecessor how is the child supposed to retain anything? Maintaining a level of continuity, especially in refugee settings where children have already been uprooted and missed portions of their education, is essential to quality learning.

Therefore, more efforts have been made by international organisations to provide incentives for teachers to stay and reside in the camp. UNHCR cannot provide salaries for teachers, but can offer some financial incentives and social incentives in return for their loyalty. From a financial standpoint, UNHCR and other implementing partners can provide teacher accommodation that is of a higher standard than if they had to pay for housing themselves, they can offer long-term teacher training plans to improve their skills in addition to the teacher salary, and international organisations could also increase the financial compensation they give in return for the services of teachers so that it was more competitive for a teacher to stay and work in the camp than to try and find a job in the national community.⁶⁰ From a non-economic viewpoint, the international community could incentivize teachers through the promise of travel opportunities to other countries, the offer of a variety of different workshops, giving teachers an opportunity to work with ICT or even giving them access to a community garden.⁶¹

In Uganda primary education is free for all students and the Sudanese refugees were also classed under this same umbrella when they were residing in Ugandan refugee camps. Therefore refugee teachers also profited from this system as they were paid the same wages and received

⁶⁰ Audrey Nirrengarten, Interview at UNHCR Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012).

⁶¹ Ibid

the same benefits as national Ugandan teachers so there was no incentive for them to leave the camp setting and it allowed for certified, qualified teaching in the refugee camps.⁶²

Certification can also serve as an enticement to ensure the loyalty of refugee educators as it guarantees that the training and qualification they receive in various teaching programs in the refugee setting will be recognised elsewhere either in their country of origin if they repatriate, by the national government if they integrate into the local community or by a third country if they resettle elsewhere.⁶³ Increasing the funding of accrediting teacher qualifications is something that needs to be presented and re-presented to donors as it does provide as a big incentive to keep teachers willing to work in refugee camps. Both UNESCO PEER Project and the Refugee Education Trust have adopted methods of certification for educators and learners in order to ensure that their qualifications will count outside of a refugee camp context. In 2005, UNESCO-PEER worked in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to train a small group of staff in the management, assessment, and certification of public examinations so that this knowledge could then be passed on to other teachers.⁶⁴ Certification also serves as a powerful tool for the sustainability and independence of the refugee community because once students have their education certified they can go on to get jobs as teachers, therefore giving back to the community in a positive way.⁶⁵

Addressing a lack of qualified teachers

In situations where there are little to no readily available educators the international community has to put in place basic literacy programs in order to educate the refugee population

⁶² Ibid

⁶³ Marina L. Anselme, Interview at RET Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012).

⁶⁴ UNESCO, *Assessment and Certification*. UNESCO PEER Project.

⁶⁵ Nicolas Servas, *Secondary Education Through Distance Learning-Chad* (Geneva: RET), 1.

so as to identify strong students that could take on the role as teachers or mentors for other students. This was the case in Eastern Chad where the Refugee Education Trust (RET) implemented a “Literacy, Numeracy and Life skills Program” with its local partner the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) to educate refugee youth for three years before being able to sit the primary education examination. The strong students that passed could then serve as Peer Educators that helped other students who required a more formal environment to learn. This trickle down or ‘snowball’ effect is the approach most UN bodies and NGOs adopt in terms of refugee education. There are not enough financial or human resources for the humanitarian aid to constantly be leading and running education development programs and so the refugees, themselves, are given a lot of autonomy to pass on information and train the next generation of potential educators.

VI. The International Community: Coordination and Cooperation

The global action in terms of addressing issues in refugee education can be described as one of increasing coordination and cooperation between governmental and non-governmental agencies. The UNHCR holds the mandate for refugees and in the 1967 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) UNESCO handed over the primary responsibility of refugee education to UNHCR.⁶⁶ However, this is not to say that the UNHCR works alone in terms of implementing, assessing and coordinating refugee education. The two UN bodies signed another MoU in 1984 where the two organisations agreed, “UNESCO and UNHCR shall exchange information and consult on matters concerning the education of refugees, through appropriate designated staff

⁶⁶ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee education: A Global Review* (Geneva:UNHCR, 2011) 14.

members both at Headquarters and in the field.”⁶⁷ Specifically in terms of teacher training it was decided that, “UNHCR shall approach governments of countries with advanced teacher training colleges, assisted by UNESCO and UNDP, in order to secure admission for suitable refugee candidates. In such cases, and in full agreement with the national authorities concerned, the UNESCO experts teaching in these colleges will, within their fields of competence, undertake the remedial work which may be necessary to help refugee students fit into the life and work of the institutions concerned.”⁶⁸ Therefore, there has been a long legal history of cooperation and consultation between these two governmental bodies.

The RET and UNHCR also have a special agreement, as the RET was founded in 2000 by Mrs. Sadako Ogata, the then High Commissioner of UNHCR, as a branch off organisation to “bridge the gap” between post-primary and secondary education.⁶⁹ After two years RET became its own independent agency but this has not stopped the collaboration between the two organisations. A MoU was signed between the two bodies to strengthen post-primary education worldwide⁷⁰ and RET provides their own funding to assist UNHCR in various camp based situations.⁷¹ An advantage of the small and independent nature of RET, is its rapid reaction because it is able to respond quickly to situations without having to wait for consensus within a big international agency.⁷²

UNICEF, being one of the co-chairs of the Global Education Cluster, plays a key role in offering invaluable information, research and advice in collaboration with other global partners.

⁶⁷ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, *Memorandum of Understanding Between UNESCO and UNHCR on Education for Refugees*, 30 August 1984, available at:

<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b31960.html> [accessed 17 April 2012]

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ RET. *Protecting Through Education: RET* (Geneva: RET).

⁷⁰ UNHCR. *Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Africa*. Rep. no. 114 (Geneva: UN General Assembly, 2003.) 15.

⁷¹ Marina L. Anselme, Interview at RET Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012).

⁷² Ibid.

In regards to refugee children there was a “strategic dialogue” that took place between the two UN agencies in, specifically, the “different phases of refugee and returnee operations, including emergency and protracted situations.”⁷³ This partnership in West Africa was further strengthened in March 2003 by a MoU.⁷⁴ However, in terms of refugee education, there is still no legal document signed between UNICEF and UNHCR about the role UNICEF can provide to bring aid or resources to a refugee education situation in a camp setting. This has become a fairly politically contentious subject as a lack of legal framework or guidelines, leads UNICEF to have to wait to be ‘invited’ by UNHCR to help in the camp setting, which could be dependent on the amount of human resources available to UNHCR at the ground level, the number of refugee and the immediacy of the situation.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, a recent Letter of Intent signed by the CEO of UNICEF and UNHCR on increasing the level of cooperation in refugee camps may give rise to more consistent coordination in the future.⁷⁶ This would only strengthen the effort to target problems in refugee education, because UNICEF makes sure to have a strong relationship with each Ministry of Education where it is working, and therefore would make UNICEF a powerful ally for UNHCR in certain countries where the relations between refugees and the national government are contentious.⁷⁷

Finally, national NGOs and Ministries of Education cannot be overlooked in collaborating with UNHCR in the sphere of refugee education. Almost all UN agencies try to establish solid relationships with the local Ministry of Education in order to coordinate the education within the refugee camps to the system provided by the national population. Local

⁷³ UNHCR. *Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Africa*. Rep. no. 114. (Geneva: UN General Assembly, 2003)14.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 14.

⁷⁵ Lene Leonhardsen, Interview at UNICEF Headquarters (Geneva, March 2012).

⁷⁶ Ibid

⁷⁷ Ibid.

NGO's are also invaluable at the ground level for implementing and enforcing education programs. For this reason, international NGOs and government agencies rely heavily on their local partners, as was seen in the Ivorian refugee Crisis in Liberia last year. To facilitate and accelerate coordination in the camps, 12 Letters of Intent were signed between various international and national NGOs.⁷⁸

Therefore, there is no doubting the increasing level of cooperation and coordination between different humanitarian actors in terms of refugee education. However, in what capacity and to what level these agencies participate varies between organisations.

VII. Case Study: The effectiveness of the International Response in ensuring Quality Teaching in the Refugee Camps in Eastern and Southern Chad

Background

Despite its tradition as a place of asylum for neighbouring nations, the present situation in Chad is anything but desirable from a developmental standpoint. It ranks as one of the poorest countries in the world; lower than the regional average, and was placed as 183 out of 187 countries on the UNDP Human Development Index in 2011. According to the IOM Assessment Report that examined the Impact of returnees from Libya on their home communities in Chad, “The conflicts, scarce natural resources and unfavourable climatic conditions have contributed to persistent underdevelopment and weakened any efforts to create sustainable economic and social improvements and infrastructure.”⁷⁹ This is supported by some significant statistics on the overall state of Chad's development. Over 80% of the national population is employed in

⁷⁸ UN in Liberia, *Response to Ivorian Refugee Crisis in Liberia* (Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator, United Nations, Liberia, 2011)3.

<<http://www.unliberia.org/doc/Humanitarian%20Sitrep%2029%20January-4%20February.pdf>>.

⁷⁹ IOM, *Impact of the Returnees from Libya on Their Home Communities in Chad* (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2012)13.

agriculture, but this only counts for 20% of the overall gross domestic product.⁸⁰ The level of literacy is staggeringly low, with only 33.6% of adults (both male and female) being able to read.⁸¹ On an optimistic note, prior to 2009 Chad was considered a potential failed state due to the many years of conflict and corruption within the government, but since 2009 it has entered into a period of peace that is necessary to cultivate post-conflict development.⁸² However, the 2011 record of an overwhelming 49% drop in the annual harvest has cast doubts on the potential development of Chad as an emerging food crisis seems to be inevitable in the near future.⁸³

In regards to asylum seekers Chad is hubbub with a total of 20 refugee camps located along the East and Southern borders.⁸⁴ Due to its location in Central Africa, Chad is bordered by six different countries. Libya to the North, Sudan to the East, the Central African Republic to the South and Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger on the Western frontier. Its many neighbours coupled with the landlocked nature of the country have made it a key recipient of refugees from Sudan, Central African Republic and various other African nations. Based on UNHCR statistics from January 2012 there were 548, 400 refugees present in Chad and due to the increasingly volatile nature of Darfur it is unlikely that many Sudanese refugees (which make up the bulk of the refugee population) will be repatriated in 2012-2013.⁸⁵ The UNHCR are working to search for more durable solutions for refugees situated in Chad as voluntary repatriation is very weak and the number of resettlement cases remains low, but an increase in the annual 2012 budget

⁸⁰ Ibid, 13.

⁸¹ "Country Profile: Chad." *International Human Development Indicators*. (UNDP) <<http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/TCD.html>>.

⁸² IOM, *Impact of the Returnees from Libya on Their Home Communities in Chad* (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2012)14.

⁸³ Ibid, 11.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 11.

⁸⁵ "2012 UNHCR Country Operations Profile - Chad." *UNHCR: UN Refugee Agency*. <<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e45c226>>.

allocates \$159.4 million for refugee requirements out of a total budget of \$176.9 million may help to improve conditions in the coming year.⁸⁶

In terms of refugee education in Sudanese camps the access to education is optimally high, with 95% of refugees, between the ages of 6-11, enrolled in primary education.⁸⁷ Although this is positive news, the quality of this primary education needs to be analysed and research needs to be conducted to measure the dropout rates and number of children that graduate from this primary level of education. Enrolment is one thing, but sustaining this education is a different thing altogether. Access to primary and secondary education will remain a top priority for UNHCR in terms of refugee education in Chad refugee camps, with particular attention placed on the training of teachers.⁸⁸ This is important that the development of quality education seems to be part of the 2012-2013 UNHCR strategy in Chad and a more in-depth look at the work within the Eastern and Southern Refugee Camps will help to analyse international effort at the ground level. A comparison of these efforts to the national education system in Chad will also serve to identify the successes and problems that still need to be addressed in terms of quality teaching.

UNHCR Field Office on the state of teaching in Southern Refugee Camps in Chad

Based on the characteristics that make up an effective teacher and the problems that often directly affect quality teaching in the refugee setting, it was interesting to hear from three Education Focal Points within the UNHCR field offices in Southern Chad on their perspective of the current educator and learner quality in their respective camps.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

In terms of the measuring the quality of the teaching staff, they expressed several methods. They advocated examining the progression of student's level throughout the school year based on the results from tests and schoolwork, along with observing the overall percentage of students who pass major exams. Taking advantage of inspector classroom observations and even the use of an outside, neutral source to monitor and correct student exams were other methods that were identified to help establish an unbiased and fair assessment of the quality of classroom learning.⁸⁹

Regarding the teacher training programs already implemented within the camps the UNHCR team felt they were effective but that they needed to be intensified to really see positive effects. In collaboration with a specialised program within the Ministry of Education that has the abbreviation, IDEN, the two partners established 'les journées pédagogiques,' and 'les ministages' to train teachers in successful interactive classroom techniques and help them with certain gaps in their knowledge. The Field Officers also mentioned a 45 hour intensive training program for incoming teachers that had a 'niveau zero,' which is the case for the 'maîtres communaitaires,' who serve as teachers with no pre-existing experience because trained educators are not readily available. Throughout the year to assess and monitor educator learning and effectiveness, directors of the schools will examine the teaching plans created by the educators and UNHCR conduct spontaneous classroom visits (les controles inopinés) to measure the teaching pedagogy in the classroom setting.⁹⁰

The UNHCR field officers explained that teacher absenteeism, a major factor contributing to a lack of adequate teaching, was not a severe problem this year in the CAR

⁸⁹ UNHCR Field Offices: Chad, "Interview with UNHCR Field Offices in Southern Chad," (E-mail interview. 10 Apr. 2012).

⁹⁰ UNHCR Field Offices: Chad, "Interview with UNHCR Field Offices in Southern Chad," (E-mail interview. 10 Apr. 2012).

camps. The reason for this was attributed to the system of accountability that was set up between directors and the local partner organisations. A register (fiche de présence) is signed by the director to mark the date, time of arrival and time of departure for each educator, which is then passed on to the partner organisation in charge of paying the teachers. Consequently, if a teacher is absent for several days in a month, he/she does not receive the total amount of their financial incentive. Apparently, this accountability system has worked wonders to reduce the percentage of absent teachers in the classrooms. The field officers were also positive about the usage of incentives, as it was an opportunity for the maître communaitaires to raise their social status in the community. ⁹¹

However, there are still some problems that exist in terms of the quality of educators. The lack of education or prior teaching experience is a huge problem for education programs in the CAR camps. Over 90% of the teaching staff is made up of the maître communitaires because there are not enough readily qualified educators to make up an adequate teaching force. The field officers were weary of the negative role uneducated teachers could have not just on the students in the classroom setting, but also for the parents within the community who will be disheartened and discouraged with the system. Fortunately there are some strong programs in place to try and combat this problem, with a 45 day intensive training program being much more substantial than the UNHCR minimum of 10 day teacher training, but the field officers argued that more funding was needed to intensify and expand these programs. A lack of supplies and teaching materials and out of school academic programs, coupled with a weak school governing body were some other identifiable crippling factors that affected the quality of teaching and learning. ⁹² Another

⁹¹ UNHCR Field Offices: Chad, "Interview with UNHCR Field Offices in Southern Chad," (E-mail interview, 10 Apr. 2012).

⁹² UNHCR Field Offices: Chad, "Interview with UNHCR Field Offices in Southern Chad," (E-mail interview. 10 Apr. 2012).

problem facing CAR camp education is the lack of holistic elements, as no psychosocial program or element exists for addressing teacher's needs. However, field officers did acknowledge that refugee children were allowed to integrate into the local community and so some programs were in place to prevent discriminatory behaviour and reinforce social cohesion. Gender parity also seems to be a significant problem in these camps. There is no longer a huge divide in the enrolment of girls to boys in primary education, but the problem occurs in keeping girls in schools. Therefore, female teachers are given preference to try and serve as positive role models, but there still are only a small percentage of women educators, particularly because the incentives are not motivating and there aren't even any basic maternity benefits given if the teacher becomes pregnant. Finally, a lack of teaching aids and no access to ICT (as the camps have no electricity) leaves very basic resources at teachers' disposal when trying to create dynamic, interactive lesson plans.⁹³

Overall, it seems that the quality of teaching needs to be improved in the refugee camps in Southern Chad, but at the same time there are several good steps in place to try and address various problems. From the logistic standpoint, the only way to increase the quality of pre-existing programs or to get more teaching materials would be to increase funding, which is not the most realistic solution. An effort could be made to offer more non-financial incentives to educators to try and spark interest amongst the refugee and local community in the field of education. This would be a cost-effective solution for UNHCR and would at the same time help maintain a continuous influx of teachers. In response to the weak governing bodies that oversee the administration and management of the schools, perhaps more responsibility could be put in

⁹³ UNHCR Field Offices: Chad, "Interview with UNHCR Field Offices in Southern Chad," (E-mail interview. 10 Apr. 2012).

the hands of the community itself or UNHCR could work to foster better relations between all the links in the education service chain: school principals, educators, students and parents.

Refugee Education Trust and its role in Eastern Chad Refugee Camps

The RET has been working in the Sudanese refugee camps in Eastern Chad for the past seven years alongside national government organisations such as the Ministry of Education and other international NGO's like the Norwegian Refugee Committee.⁹⁴ The major mission of the RET is to work with youth and adolescents in refugee camps in the post-primary and early secondary years of education. However, understanding the interrelated nature of refugee education and the impossibility of addressing one issue without considering several others problems in tandem, led the RET to implement a lot of programs that had a multilevel and holistic approach.

Recognising that having a diploma was the key to success and being an active member in the work force, RET worked hard with the Ministry of Education in Sudan to ensure that the qualifications refugee children or teachers gained in a camp based school setting would be recognised back in their country of origin when the time came for more durable solutions to be explored.⁹⁵ The RET certification programs for primary and secondary education are the only ones accredited by the Ministry of Education in Sudan and are also recognised by several African Arab countries. This holistic program is innovative and effective because it not only addresses the immediate educational needs of refugee youth but takes a more long-term approach.⁹⁶ It recognises their future needs and indirectly gives back to the refugee community

⁹⁴ Marina L. Anselme, Interview at RET Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012).

⁹⁵ Nicolas Servas *Secondary Education through Distance Learning- Chad* (Geneva: RET) 1.

⁹⁶ Marina L. Anselme, Interview at RET Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012).

and improves the quality of teaching as a lot of these young, qualified youth will go on to serve as the next generation of teachers.⁹⁷

The Secondary Education through Distance Learning Program and the Self-Learning Secondary Program, established by RET to improve quality secondary education was also beneficial in improving the standard of teaching. Even though these programs were self-taught, the strongest students were selected to serve as Peer Educators who were then trained in different subjects and teaching skills so that they could help tutor other students.⁹⁸ Ms. Marina Anselme, Chief Education Coordinator at the RET, acknowledged that the Self-Learning Secondary Program had mitigating results because not all students can learn successfully in a self-taught manner and need a more formal system to succeed. For this reason, RET plans to spend more of its human and financial resources this year on teacher training programs in Sudan to bring a more formal element to this secondary education program.⁹⁹ The SEDL program is also valuable because it incorporates the learning of life skills such as leadership, learning to live together, human rights, sport and health to promote their overall emotional well-being.¹⁰⁰

In terms of coordination RET has, over the past seven years, established strong partnerships with international agencies such as the UNHCR, that has field offices in Eastern Chad refugee camps in addition to its southern field offices, national government agencies both in the host country and the country of origin of the refugees, it has worked with other international NGOs such as the NRC and locally based NGOs.

National System of Education in Chad

⁹⁷ Nicolas Servas, *Secondary Education through Distance Learning- Chad* (Geneva: RET) 1.

⁹⁸ Nicolas Servas, *Secondary Education Through Distance Learning- Chad* (Geneva: RET) 1.

⁹⁹ Marina L. Anselme, Interview at RET Headquarters (Geneva, April 2012).

¹⁰⁰ "Chad." *RET: Protecting Through Education*. Web. <<http://theret.org/en/where-we-work/1/chad>>.

Eastern Chad is plagued by an extreme lack of teaching professionals which creates, what the IOM calls, “a vicious cycle of underdevelopment.” the majority of the teaching staff is made up of local volunteers (maîtres communitaires) that get paid a small sum of money to compensate for their work.¹⁰¹ A unbelievable 4/5 teachers are unqualified and the rural areas suffer more because they cannot attract qualified teachers from the city and even if a teacher is nominated, the bureaucratic formalities are so extensive that half a school year could pass before the teacher is in the classroom.¹⁰² For returnees, the situation is even worse because schools in the rural settings are often extremely spread out and so children have to walk great distances to get to school and then the financial costs of uniforms and paying the voluntary teachers is often more than the parents can afford.¹⁰³ Mr. Mattila described his experience visiting local schools in the rural parts of Chad and explained how basic the resources were for teachers and students. Often classes would hold up to 100 children and there would be 1 schoolbook for 7 students.¹⁰⁴ This situation is similar in the South, and according to the IOM assessment report, “the sector of education suffers, as elsewhere in Chad, of a serious shortage of qualified teachers.”¹⁰⁵

The depressing nature of education for the native Chadian population is also alarming for the refugees based in camps because when there is such as a shortage of resources as it is, the national system cannot possibly accommodate the influx of thousands of refugees. Therefore, the camps are forced to set up their own parallel systems of education, as seen through the variety of programs in the Eastern and Southern camps. Interestingly, Chad is an exceptional case where the system of education in refugee camps is slightly better than the education in the local society

¹⁰¹ IOM, *Impact of the Returnees from Libya on Their Home Communities in Chad* (Geneva:International Organization for Migration, 2012) 21.

¹⁰² Heikki Mattila, Interview by IOM specialist in Geneva (Switzerland, April 2012).

¹⁰³ IOM, *Impact of the Returnees from Libya on Their Home Communities in Chad* (Geneva International Organization for Migration, 2012) 21.

¹⁰⁴ Heikki Mattila, Interview by IOM Specialist in Geneva (Switzerland, April 2012).

¹⁰⁵ IOM, *Impact of the Returnees from Libya on Their Home Communities in Chad* (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2012) 26.

and where as refugees have access to all the humanitarian aid and programming for free, national Chadians have to pay extraneous fees to send their children to school. This has led to feelings of resentment, especially along the recently returned Chadians from Libya, who have gone through the repatriation process and so no longer receive the aid and support from the international community.¹⁰⁶ Mr. Mattilla, IOM, acknowledged that in his discussions with returnees they seemed to regard the protracted camp situations in the East and South with bitterness, believing the refugees to be privileged and privy to better living conditions.¹⁰⁷

Ms. Anselme, RET, recognised this same problem, particularly in the local areas surrounding the Eastern refugee camps that are crippled with poverty. In situations where the local society may regard the refugee situation with jealousy, it is necessary for the field based organisations to find ways to ease the tension. RET was very proactive in creating innovative programs to incorporate and benefit the local community and to help it establish better relations with the refugee population. They provided language courses that were accessible to the local community and organisation recreational activities and sports games between the refugee and local children, and their efforts (particularly the sports recreational games) were extremely successful.¹⁰⁸

This close examination of refugee and local education systems in Chad illustrates that a lack of quality teaching is one of the most fundamental and pressing problems in education and the comparison with the national education system demonstrates the positive role the international community can play in terms of fostering and creating solid refugee education environments. Obviously there is still huge room for improvement, but the programs already in place within the Eastern and Southern camps is promising for the next five coming years, as

¹⁰⁶ Heikki Mattila, Interview by IOM Specialist in Geneva (Switzerland, April 2012).

¹⁰⁷ Heikki Mattila, Interview by IOM Specialist in Geneva (Switzerland, April 2012).

¹⁰⁸ Marina L. Anselme, Interview at RET Headquarters, Geneva (Switzerland, April 2012).

UNHCR launches its new Education Strategy that plans to take a more systematic approach. Finally, the case study was important for illustrating the overlapping nature of the international community in the role they play in refugee education, and the coordination on all levels from big international UN agencies to local NGO partners.

VIII. Conclusion

Trained teachers are one of the three identifiable standards that the UNHCR Global Review believes needs to be addressed in order to improve the overall quality of education in refugee camp settings.¹⁰⁹ They not only are essential for academic stimulation but also help to bring a healthy balance to children's lives through the ability to socialise, play and interact with peers and teaching staff. The teacher is necessary for holding all the parts of the puzzle together because, "while schools can provide safe environments where structure, stimulation and opportunities for learning healthy socialisation with peers and adults can help mitigate the trauma of war, it is teachers who determine the availability and quality of these programs daily."¹¹⁰ This demonstrates that an investment in quality educators is the future for refugee education. Unfortunately there are many interlinking problems that inadvertently can affect the standard of teaching and a continual lack of funding from the international community is a factor slowing down progress. However, the increasing level of coordination and cooperation amongst international humanitarian bodies and the creation of clear, succinct strategies that outline methods to use their funds in a more effective and efficient way is a positive development for the future of refugee education. The protracted refugee situation in Chad, was just one example of the effectiveness and rallying nature of the international community to create innovative

¹⁰⁹ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2011) 30.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 54

programs even when there are only the most basic of resources at their disposal. In the next five years as UNHCR launches its Education Strategy, it will be important to encourage its fieldworkers and global partners to take risks and think creatively to solve teacher based problems because some of the most effective programs that have worked in the field so far, have been the programs that moved outside of the traditional teaching-training framework.

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