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Fumiyo Kagawa

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Emergency education: a critical review of the field
Fumiyo Kagawa*
*University of Plymouth, UK

Emergency education, (that is, education in emergency situations) came to the fore in the 1990s. Defining this new field is not free from contestation. This article describes the trajectory and characteristics of the field and issues arising, focusing on different international discourses as well as contents of teaching and learning, and pedagogy. A key issue addressed is the underpinning concept of development in discussions of emergency education. This article is critical of the narrow focus on economic development and suggests that emergency education needs to address comprehensive development towards quality of life for all. It also suggests that participation is key to sustainable initiatives.

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, there has been an increase in organized violence in the form of war, civil strife, armed conflict and political oppression. A new ideology (or discourse) of humanitarian intervention and protection emerged in the international community as a complex worldwide crisis formed in the 1990s: the Gulf War, the genocide in Rwanda, conflicts in Angola, Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia, parts of the former Soviet Union, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Sudan, to name but a few strands in the web of crisis. Education in crisis situations has become a major concern for the international community (Retamal & Richmond, 1988; Tawil, 1997). Education is increasingly recognized as the ‘fourth pillar’ of humanitarian aid in such crises, along with food and water, shelter and health care (Machel, 2001). Academic research concerning education during emergencies and early reconstruction has been growing. However, there is an urgent need to strengthen the literature in the field that, so far, is mostly in the form of unpublished agency documents and reports (Talbot, 2005). This article aims to contribute to the academic discussion of emergency education.

The following sections firstly describe the to-date trajectory of emergency education with a focus on different international discourses: recognition of emerging
challenges to basic education [Education for All (EFA)], addressing a dialectical relationship between schooling and armed conflicts and discussion of identity-based conflicts. Then, definitions of emergencies and emergency education are explored. Thirdly, contents and processes of emergency-related teaching and learning are examined. Finally, underlying assumptions concerning development in the discussions of emergency education are problematized.

**Trajectory of emergency education: international discourses**

**Recognition of emerging challenges: impact of armed conflicts on education (the 1990s)**

Education in emergency situations has a long history in the form of refugee education, which goes back to the creation of the United Nations High Commissions for Refugees (UNHCR) in 1950 and the United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in 1949. However, it was in the 1990s that ‘the long term destructive impact of armed conflict on formal education systems [was] explicitly acknowledged as an impediment to universalizing access to basic schooling within the framework of the EFA initiatives’ (Tawil & Harley, 2003, p. 43).

The term, ‘complex emergency’ was coined by the United Nations to describe crises requiring a system-wide response. In a 1992 UN document, entitled *An agenda for peace* (Boutros-Ghali, 1992), UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali delineated the responsibilities and responses of the UN and the international community in dealing with contemporary armed conflicts. His framework suggests major areas of activity: preventive diplomacy, peace-making, peace-keeping, and post-conflict peace-building (Lederach, 1997). A new ideology of humanitarian intervention emerged in international organizations. UN resolution 46/182 (1994) describes guidelines for a sequence of responses from early warning prevention to rehabilitation as well as interagency corporation in times of crisis. It did not, however, include a specific role for education in complex emergencies (Davies, 2004).

At the 1990 World Conference on Education for All (EFA)\(^1\) in Jomtien, there was very little mention of education for emergency situations. The 1990 World Declaration on Education for All describes ‘war, occupation, civil strife’ as part of the constellation of ‘daunting problems’ which ‘constrain efforts to meet basic learning needs’ (UNESCO, 1990, preamble). The 1996 Mid-Decade meeting on Education for All in Amman highlighted the importance of the ‘delivering of basic education in situations of crisis and transition’ (UNESCO, 2000a, p. 7). Recommendations include creating safety zones during the conflict, better understanding the role of education for conflict management and prevention, and developing education systems to meet the needs of traumatized and displaced populations (UNESCO, 2000a).

Grace Machel’s (2001) *Impact of war on children* is an influential study, which was commissioned by the General Assembly of the United Nations\(^2\) (the original document (Machel, 1996) was submitted to the United Nations in 1996). The Machel
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Emergency education report examines a wide range of issues relating to children in devastating armed conflicts and post-conflict conditions. Two million children died during armed conflicts from 1986 to 1996. Six million children were seriously injured or permanently disabled and millions were separated from their families, physically and psychologically abused, and abducted into the military. Girls were particularly traumatized by sexual violence and rape.

The report puts an emphasis on the ‘psychosocial’ recovery of war-affected children. A psychosocial approach acknowledges the dynamic relationship between psychological effects (i.e. emotion, behaviour, thoughts, memory, learning ability, perception and understanding) and social effects (i.e. relationships altered or distorted by death, separation, and estrangements), and emphasizes the importance of respecting local culture, incorporating community based approaches, and promoting children’s participation in education.

The Thematic study on education in situations of emergencies and crises (UNESCO, 2000a) examines the state-of-art in emergency education. The study concludes that ‘man-made [sic.] and natural disasters have emerged as major barriers to the accomplishment of education for all’ (p. 1). Based on a review of about fifty emergency education programmes around the world, it points out that ‘existing programmes deal most with basic education in the classical sense of traditional schooling’ (p. 34) and emphasizes the need for education programmes which promote education for human rights, peace, democracy, and the environment as well as for a participatory pedagogy.

Following the growing recognition of urgent demands for education in emergency situations, the 2000 Dakar framework for action (UNESCO, 2000b) highlights deprivation of educational opportunities because of emergency situations as a major barrier to access to schooling, in addition to poverty, gender and disability. The Framework calls for national EFA plans to include provision for education in emergency situations. One of the twelve stated strategies is to: ‘Meet the need of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and help to prevent violence and conflict’ (paragraph 8, UNESCO, 2000b). Education in emergency situations is emphasized as one of the nine EFA flagship programmes.

Along the same lines, the 2000 Oxfam education report (Watkins, 2000) recognizes the absence of peace and stability in many developing countries as one of the greatest obstacles to achieving the goal of basic education for all since it undermines the educational infrastructure and the capacity of states to support basic education (Tawil & Harley, 2003).

Addressing a dialectical relationship between schooling and armed conflicts (since 2000)

Since 2000 the international discourse of emergency education has shifted its focus from simply addressing the impact of armed conflicts as an impediment to basic education towards the dialectical relationship between formal schooling and armed
conflicts. The idea of the dialectical relationship between schooling and society has been discussed previously (e.g. Freire, 1970), and, more generally, the sociology of education has been examining the role of schooling in relation to the reproduction of social inequalities. However, the special application of the idea to conflict affected society is a more recent development.

Among the various factors that exacerbate inter-group hostility under conditions of ethnic tension, Bush and Sartarelli (2000), and UNESCO (2003) have critically reflected on the role of formal education. Bush and Sartarelli (2000) closely examine the dynamics of the negative and positive impacts of schooling. They explore how educational contents and processes perpetuate social exclusion rather than promoting social inclusion and conclude that formal education can be one of the sources of identity-based conflicts when the following elements exist independently or in combination:

- The uneven distribution of education as a means of creating or preserving positions of economic, social and political privilege;
- Education as a weapon in cultural repression (i.e. a culturally distinct people lose their identity as a result of policies designed to erode their distinct language, religion, culture);
- Education as a means of manipulating history for political purposes;
- Education serving to diminish self-worth and encourage a hate for others;
- Segregated education as a means of ensuring inequality, inferiority, and stereotypes;
- The role of textbooks in impoverishing the imagination of children by manipulation of information;
- Authoritarian systems and processes of teaching and learning.

Donor agencies have also started to examine the link between education and armed conflicts with a particular focus on the negative influence of formal education. For instance, a World Bank Study by Salmi (2000) observes that educational context, structure, and delivery systems may themselves be catalysts of violent conflict. The study offers an analytical framework to examine links between various forms of violence and education. Similarly, a paper published under the auspices of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) (Issacs, 2002) explores the role of education in peace-building with an emphasis on formal education as a possible contributor to conflict. It comes up with a broad outline of conflict monitoring and risk indicators with regard to the political, economic, social/cultural and institutional factors to be taken into account for warning purposes. By the same token, a paper issued by the Department of International Development (DfID) (Smith & Vaux, 2003) claims that education is ‘part of the problem as well as part of the solution’ in terms of conflict (p. 2) and emphasizes the urgent need to develop indicators for a ‘conflict sensitive education system’ (p. 3). It suggests that insights from educational initiatives in conflict situations should also inform the mainstream education sector. However, the authors do not elaborate the characteristics of a conflict sensitive education system.
Discourse of (ethnic) identity based-conflict

Although contemporary armed conflicts are diverse in terms of duration, intensity, and causes, there are some common characteristics. Firstly, conflicts today primarily take place within a nation state. Except for one interstate conflict between India and Pakistan, the 25 armed conflicts in 1997 were civil wars (Machel, 2001). Secondly, there is an increasing number of civilian casualties. More specifically, children of all ages have become the deliberate targets of war. They have been injured, disabled, killed, exploited, sexually abused, to name but a few forms of harm (Women’s Commission for Refugee Women & Children, 2002). Thirdly, the involvement of children and young people as child soldiers in combat has grown (Sommers, 2002). Fourthly, today’s conflicts are ‘complex emergencies’ which are combinations of the following elements: armed conflict, displacement of a large number of people, the collapse of an economy and a disruption of or decline in basic services including food, shelter and health (Evans, 1996; Bush & Saltarelli, 2000).

In addition to the above-mentioned characteristics, there is a tendency to label today’s conflicts as ‘ethnic’. Although the process which leads to ethnic intolerance and violence is highly complex, proponents of this view think that ethnicity and ethnic identity become salient and potential sources of social division when there exists systematic economic exclusion (i.e. exclusion from employment, means of production, and land), social exclusion (i.e. exclusion from education, health care, housing, and other social services), and political exclusion (i.e. denial of security, representation, basic political and cultural rights) of certain ethnic groups (Tawil, 2001; UNESCO, 2003). These circumstances commonly put basic moral and survival needs at stake. Rothman (1997) states that identity-based conflicts are ‘rooted in the articulation of, and the threats of frustration to, people’s collective needs for dignity, recognition, safety, control, purpose, and efficacy’ (p. 7).

On the other hand, Rothman (1997), Bush and Saltarelli (2000) and UNESCO (2003), among others, claim that considering ethnicity/ethnic identity as a source of conflict is misleading and over-simplistic. Particularly in anthropological circles, there is a strong questioning of the validity of a lexicon of ethnicity (UNESCO, 2003). They all argue that ethnicity is socially constructed. In Brass’s words (in Bush & Saltarelli, 2000), ethnicity is the ‘subjective, symbolic, or emblematic use by a group of people of any aspect of culture in order to create internal cohesion and differentiate themselves from other groups’ (p. 2). The ethnic affiliation establishes a distinctive boundary in one way or another. However, from the perspective of ethnicity as a social construction, such a boundary should not be seen as unalterable and immutable. Therefore, it is important to analyse conditions that make ethnicity salient as a source of hostility and violence.

[A] certain form of identity—be it individual, social, cultural, professional, religious, or political—constitutes the point of departure from any and all relations with others. Identity is what makes us what we are and who we are. And yet, the experience of identity invariably evokes codes of exclusion, difference and distinction. Belonging to a collectivity always concerns the delimitation of that collectivity and the application of a logic of conflict and contention. (Burgess, quoted in UNESCO, 2003)
Definitions of emergencies

As described earlier, the discourse of emergencies appeared within the international community in the 1990s. ‘Emergencies’ often fall into two broad categories: natural disasters (i.e. earthquake, flood, and drought) and human-made crises (i.e. war, internal conflict, and genocide) (Obura, 2003). In addition to these, Pigozzi (1999) highlights silent/chronic emergencies such as persistent poverty, growing numbers of street children, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. She further states that, in a broad sense, countries in transition and newly independent states face tremendous challenges that we can construe as emergencies. In those countries the source of an emergency is the, often financial, collapse of a system. Challenges then faced have some commonalities with countries that suffer from above mentioned emergencies in terms of restructuring and rebuilding systems. ‘Complex emergencies’ consist of a combination of the above-mentioned different elements. Based on emergency education projects around the world undertaken by Save the Children, Nicholai (2003) states that the majority of the countries in which emergency education takes place are at risk from both conflict and natural disaster. It is important to note that ‘every emergency is different, and there are no sure formulae for a successful response’ (Sinclair, 2002, p. 26).

Implications of Galtung’s concepts for emergencies

As an analytical tool, it may be helpful to apply Johan Galtung’s concepts of positive and negative peace to the definitions of emergencies. According to Galtung (1969) at the Peace Research Institute, Oslo, ‘personal and direct violence’ refers to physical and psychological violence directed toward individuals caused by war, assault, torture and terrorism. He describes the situation of absence of personal and direct violence as ‘negative peace’.

On the other hand, there are sociopolitical and economic systems that oppress and cause people to suffer. Galtung describes such violence as ‘indirect and structural violence’. Structural violence is used as a synonym for social injustice. This form of violence denies human rights and curtails human well-being and potential. Economic and social systems that exacerbate poverty, malnutrition, and unemployment are examples of structural violence. The absence of structural violence is called ‘positive peace’, in other words, social justice. ‘Positive peace’ is identified by the presence of social, economic and political structures that contribute to safe, fair and healthy living for all citizens.

Galtung (1996) further elaborates the concept of violence by incorporating cultural violence. Cultural violence means ‘those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence—exemplified by religion, ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics)—that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence’ (p. 196). Cultural violence is difficult to identify since it is embedded in social structures as well as peoples’ unconsciousness. Galtung argues that direct, structural and cultural violence are strongly linked and it is important to work on all three simultaneously.
Table 1 illustrates the interface between definitions of emergencies and Galtung’s definitions of violence. Definitions of human-made emergencies (wars, armed conflicts, and genocide) are in line with Galtung’s direct violence. Natural disasters can be understood as, in part, manifestations of structural violence. Shiva (2005) points out, for instance, that devastation caused by the recent Asian Tsunami was worst in coastal areas where industrial shrimp farms had led to the destruction of local ecosystems. In contrast, the areas where the natural walls of mangrove and coral reefs continued to exist had the lowest casualties in spite of their proximity to the epicentre of the earthquake. This example clearly shows that the human economic activity toward rampant development has made us more vulnerable to environmental tragedy. From this point of view, the common distinction between human-made and natural disasters is problematic in that ‘natural disasters’ are not always or entirely ‘natural’.

The link between structural violence and natural disasters, however, seems to receive very little attention in the current discussion of emergencies. Therefore, not surprisingly, serious and mounting environmental degradation, global warming, and climate change—examples of ‘creeping’ emergencies⁶—are rarely mentioned in ‘emergency’ discourse. Silent/chronic/creeping emergencies chime with Galtung’s understanding of structural violence, but dominant emergency education does not deal with this kind of emergency ‘except in so far as they occur during situations arising from armed conflict or natural disaster’ (Sinclair, 2002, p. 23). The concept of complex emergency addresses both direct and indirect violence and offers the most comprehensive understanding of emergency.

In sum, although emergencies are broadly defined at the conceptual level by including natural and chronic emergencies, human-made emergencies remain the central concerns at an operational level. From observation of the early trajectory of emergency education, the discussion has evolved to address negative impacts of armed conflicts on education. As a consequence, dominant emergency education is interchangeable with educational responses to armed conflicts; that is, in Galtung’s terms, negative peace education. Examination of the underpinning cause of emergencies, structural and cultural violence, is missing in the discussion of emergencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of emergencies</th>
<th>Human-made emergencies (e.g. war, internal conflict, genocide)</th>
<th>Natural disaster (e.g. earthquake, flood, draught)</th>
<th>Silent/chronic emergencies (e.g. poverty; HIV/AIDS)</th>
<th>Complex emergencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Galtung’s definitions of violence</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/direct violence</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural/indirect violence</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural violence</td>
<td>Cultural violence is not addressed in emergency discourse.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Interface between emergencies and Galtung’s definitions of violence
Definitions of emergency education

Definitions of ‘emergency education’ are contested just like definitions of ‘emergency’. In a broad sense, emergency education programmes take place ‘in situations where children lack access to their national and community education systems due to occurrence of complex emergencies or natural disasters’ (Nicholai & Triplehorn, 2003, p. 2). They are situations which overwhelm ‘the capacity of a society to cope by using its resources alone’ (Nicholai, 2003, p. 11).

Agencies, donors and educators working in the field of emergency education have specific approaches and types of involvement depending on the different stages of an emergency. For instance, UNICEF conceives of three stages of conflict: loud,7 transition, and rehabilitation/reconstruction Evans, 1996. UNHCR (1995) and Auguilar & Retamal (1998) introduce three phases of educational responses during the emergency. The first is the recreational/preparatory phase, in which community members are mobilized to initiate activities such as games and sports. Community members are also trained in needs assessment. The second phase is devoted to non-formal schooling, where basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills are taught. In the first and second phases, the distribution of pre-arranged recreational kits and educational kits is popular among the UN organizations. The third phase involves the re-introduction of a curriculum with which both teachers and students are familiar.

Although the above categories are used by different organizations and donors in their interventions, such approaches remain controversial because there is no agreement on definitions for each phase and consensus about when each phase starts and ends (Obura, 2003). These definitions have led to a question regarding the scope of emergency education: should or should not post-emergency rehabilitation and reconstruction be construed as ‘emergency education’? The 2000 Education for All Dakar Framework of Action emphasizes the need to support populations still severely ‘affected by’ conflict, disaster or instability. According to this view, educational initiatives during the post-conflict reconstruction are also understood as part of emergency education (Sinclair, 2002). This suggests that the field of emergency education is, indeed, broad. Sommers (2002), on the other hand, states that the reconstruction immediately after the war and longer-term post-war reconstruction are separate areas which have their own sets of experiences and, consequently, literature.

The breadth of educational initiatives in emergency affected contexts becomes clearer if we enumerate the range of tasks involved. They include physical reconstruction (e.g. school buildings, electricity and water facilities), ideological reconstruction (e.g. democratization), psychological reconstruction (e.g. dealing with trauma), policy and curricular reconstruction (e.g. national educational policy, curriculum and textbook development; supplies provision), school management and administration (e.g. certification and validation of pupils and teachers, funding), human resource development (capacity building of teachers and community members), inter-agency co-ordination, and school feeding (Arnhold et al., 1998; Nicholai, 2003; Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies, 2004).
Moreover, approaches, contents and emphases differ depending on the needs of specific target groups: refugees; internally displaced populations (IDPs); different age groups (early childhood, primary school age, secondary school age, adolescent, and adult) and gender; special need groups (child soldiers, ex-combatants, children with disabilities, separated children); minorities (Sinclair, 2001). The sociopolitical conditions of the country, especially whether there is a functioning government mechanism or not, have tremendous implications for educational undertakings such as national curriculum and policy development, delivery of education, and coordination of international donor and aid agencies (Sommers, 2004).

**Rationales for education in emergency**

A main rationale for emergency education is based upon an insistence that access to education is an inalienable right for all children. There has been an increasing focus on reinforcing the legal framework for the protection of the rights to education in conflict-affected society (Machel, 2001). The 1989 United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC) sets out the overall framework for any discussion of education and conflict. The CRC and other key international instruments\(^8\) oblige ratifying states to:

- actively prevent discrimination, on the grounds of ethnicity, against children and their families, with additional specific protections for children of minorities and indigenous peoples;
- ensure the right to education without discrimination;
- ensure that education is directed to encouraging respect for human rights, peace, tolerance, non-discrimination and non-violence;
- ensure the protection of the child’s right to freedom of religion;
- ensure the child’s right to diverse information and encourage the positive involvement of the mass media;
- protect children from all forms of physical and mental violence (with specific provisions protecting the child from various forms of violence and exploitation of children affected by armed conflict) (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, p. 36).

According to Smith and Vaux (2003), the rights-based approach is strategic in advocating emergency education nationally and internationally. However, it is often controversial to prioritize a specific right over other rights and rights can conflict. For instance, Maoists in Nepal have been attacking schools, which for them symbolize governmental authority, as part of their struggle for social justice. The right to education is undermined in this context.

Another rationale for emergency education is that it plays an important role in protection. This viewpoint is getting stronger within the international humanitarian community (Smith & Vaux, 2003). Attending school is a measure of protection since it physically keeps the children away from risks. There is a psychological rationale as well. Providing formal education is considered to give a sense of normalcy to children and their community. Educational activities also allow children to express themselves
and to engage with peers. According to Sinclair (2001) many agency staff members feel that structured activities have a beneficial effect on the mental state of children and adults. Through education, children can learn the skills and knowledge to cope with increased risks, which in turn, allow them to protect themselves (Nicholai, 2003; Nicholai & Triplehorn, 2003).

The limitations of this view are twofold. Firstly, schools are not always safe since school buildings are often active targets in conflict zones (Sommers, 2002). Secondly, creating a sense of normalcy through organized activities is seen as insufficient by many emergency educators. Proponents of this view believe that there should be appropriate interventions direct towards addressing psychological needs of conflict-affected children through story-telling, drawing, drama, writing, music, and games (Sommers, 2002).

**Content and process of learning and teaching**

In emergency-affected contexts, like elsewhere, defining the contents of learning and teaching can be highly controversial. As far as national curricula are concerned, there seem to be two tendencies: resumption of previously used curriculum, on the one hand, and renewal of curriculum by infusing new elements, on the other. However, the two are sometimes mixed and a choice of one or the other is not always ideological and philosophical but practical and pragmatic. For instance, examining educational reconstruction in Kosovo, Sommers and Buckland (2004) highlight real tension between the need to resume schooling as quickly as possible and the urge for significant curricular reform in the light of conflict.

One of the examples of the former tendency is ‘education for repatriation’, an approach using a home country curriculum for refugees, that gained recognition in the 1990s. The main rationale for education for repatriation is that familiar classroom materials provide practical convenience and a sense of security and identity for refugee children who have been uprooted from their own place and national education system (i.e. national curriculum, textbooks, assessment and evaluation procedures, teacher training and validation, certification, familiar languages of instruction) (Sinclair 2001, 2002). It is often the case that refugees do not know if and when they can go back to their own country. For prolonged refugee situations a curriculum that can ‘face both ways’ (i.e. to home country and asylum country) is desirable (UNESCO, 2000a) but becomes increasingly problematic in that, over successive generations, a process of distancing from home culture occurs. In either case, existing curricula from both sides are accepted in spite of ever-evolving cultural frames and, hence, learning needs.

Another example of the continuation of an existing national curriculum is manifested in accelerated learning programmes. Such programmes aim at assisting out-of-school children (e.g. displaced children, girls, and child soldiers) to return to school through ‘catch up’ classes. They intend to cover essential elements of formal school curriculum content that have been missed out on during emergencies. At the end of the accelerated learning programme, children are integrated into a formal school
The latter tendency—infusing new teaching and learning content in response to emergencies and actively changing some of the content previously used—often involves introducing skills, knowledge, and attitudinal goals relating to the themes of peace, environment, health, and human rights. Racial and gender biases and manipulation of history in the curriculum are examined and eliminated (Pigozzi, 1999; Sinclair, 2002; Tawil & Harley, 2004). Dealing with psychosocial elements of learners is also of vital importance (Machel, 2001). In addition, vocational training programmes are strongly supported by major international agencies and donors. Proponents of vocational training programmes think that increasing employability of an emergency affected population is key to the process of recovery from natural or human-made disasters and in building peace (UNESCO, 2000a). Table 2 summarizes key skills, attitudinal, and knowledge goals identified under this approach.

In terms of the process of learning and teaching, progressive pedagogies (i.e. activity-based, child-centred, learner-centred and participatory approaches) are suggested in both orientations of emergency education (Pigozzi, 1999; Nicholai, 2003). Participatory methodologies are considered to help children and youth internalize the issues more efficiently than teacher-dominated and top downwards approaches (Pigozzi, 1999; Sinclair, 2002). According to Tabulawa (2003), such participatory learning is strongly favoured by international donor agencies not for pedagogical reasons but for political reasons. Democratization has become a buzzword among donors after the fall of the Berlin Wall and political democracy is considered as a prerequisite for receiving overseas aid, which supports economic development and promotes the free-market economy. Although the link between learner centred methods and democratization of society, especially in developing countries, is highly contested, education has become a central project and participatory pedagogies have become convenient tools for donors. Tabulawa (2003) asserts that this ‘one-size-fit-all pedagogy’ should be introduced more carefully in developing countries. Applying new participatory methodologies is very challenging and even becomes a burden for teachers, who are not properly trained and lack sufficient support and materials. Continuous training and constant support are indispensable in introducing new methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Skills, attitudinal and knowledge goals in emergency education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
<td>conflict resolution/conflict prevention, problem-solving, decision-making, communication (assertiveness, self-expression), critical thinking, dealing with emotions, cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes</strong></td>
<td>tolerance, self-esteem/self-respect, commitment to justice and equity, bias awareness, respect for rights and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>safety (e.g. landmines), the environment, health and healthy life style (HIV/AIDS), peace and conflict, rights and responsibility, cultural heritage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Debate on development: for what?

Central questions in emergency education are raised around the issue of development. Should an emergency education intervention focus on short-time and immediate relief or be conceived of as a long-term ‘development’ initiative? Education at the stage of humanitarian crisis has often been a secondary priority among donor agencies; rather, their primary efforts are directed towards meeting basic survival needs, such as shelter, food, water, and health. They do not think that education should be part of a humanitarian intervention at the early stages of emergency (Tawil, 1997; Sinclair, 2001; Sommers, 2002). However, as described earlier, the view that education must be a priority of emergency assistance has been growing and the dichotomy between humanitarian intervention and development activities among donor agencies is criticized by Pigozzi (1999) and Sommers (2002), among others. Pigozzi (1999) suggests that emergency education should take a ‘development approach’, in which education is regarded as a tool for nation building from the very beginning of the humanitarian intervention. She claims that emergencies can provide ‘an opportunity for transforming education along the lines envisioned at the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All’ and further states that emergencies ‘allow for the possibility of reconstructing a social institution that helps develop and form the human resources that determine the way a society functions’ (p. 4). Along the same lines, UNESCO (2000a) points out that ‘education in emergency is a humanitarian imperative which has development-promoting outcomes’ (p. 9).

What is lacking in this current ‘relief’ and ‘development’ debate in emergency education is a critical examination of notions of development. The above quotations from Pigozzi (1999) and UNESCO (2000a) do not go further to elaborate the controversial concepts of ‘development’ and ‘nation building’. The EFA based notion of development, which Pigozzi advocates, as well as the 2000 United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set time-bound targets to monitor progress. Smith and Vaux (2003) state that quantitative approaches to development targets lack consideration of ‘quality’ of education, which is vital in relation to conflict-affected contexts. Tawil (1997) points out how a component of sustainable development is lacking in relief and rehabilitation efforts in conflict affected societies.

Samoff (1999) and Torres (1991), among others, claim that EFA is based on a one-dimensional economic development model and that EFA reform can be easily traced back to the human capital theory. Human capital theory is considered to work in the framework of a theory of modernization in which development means economic growth following in the footsteps of western industrialized nations. Modernization theories commonly see human progress as a linear progression. The idea that education contributes to economic growth has spread since the early 1960s and has impacted on the educational policies of the World Bank. Economic dominance of educational discourse has become a current phenomenon (Haavelsrud, 1996; Samoff, 1999). The view that education is one of the most important tools for human development and poverty reduction has remained strong in recent years (Smith & Vaux, 2003).
Opposing the narrow view of development, Galtung (1996), Haavelsrud (1996) and Pike and Selby (2000), among others, argue that development is a multidimensional process. They are critical of the narrow view of development that focuses predominantly on economic growth at the expense of the poor, the disadvantaged, the environment and future generations. In this perspective, the central concern is the improvement of quality of life for all to meet the needs of human and non-human nature. Socio-cultural developments enhancing diversity are of vital importance as well. Therefore, it is too limiting to target education as serving only the cause of economic prosperity. At a personal level, it is important to foster comprehensive growth of the child. Machel (1996) affirms this view:

Armied conflict affects all aspects of child development—physical, mental and emotional—and to be effective, assistance must take each into account ... ensuring, from the outset of all assistance programmes, that the psychosocial concerns intrinsic to child growth and development are addressed. (p. 49)

**Sustainability through participation**

What are the implications of holistic and multidimensional development with regard to education in emergency affected societies and populations? It is clear that simply increasing the number of children enrolled in schools is not sufficient. Quality and types of education should be more important than any other aspect; they should be developed and examined together as much as quantitative aspects of education such as increasing enrolment, levels of literacy and numeracy (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Smith & Vaux, 2003). The contents and processes of learning need to be particularly sensitive to the psychosocial aspect of learners (Sommers, 2002). They should help to restore and enhance their sense of purpose, self-esteem, and self-worth through the process of learning (Pike & Selby, 1999).

Taking into consideration that there is a significant power imbalance between international agencies (i.e. donor and aid agencies) and national organizations in emergency affected situations, it is challenging but critically important to facilitate the participation of locals in decision-making processes. They should be consulted on visions of the future of the society; a specific agenda from outside should not be imposed. Reflecting on refugee environmental education, Talbot and Muigai (1998) state that maximizing the perception of ownership in the process of change is key to empowerment and sustainability. They emphasize the importance of empowerment of refugees through a participatory approach and community building process. They stress that the methodology and process in education need to enhance learners’ self-confidence. ‘The greater the involvement of the target population in determining objectives, initiating, implementing and managing projects, the more sustainable the positive outcomes of those project will be’ (p. 229).

**Conclusion**

The new field of emergency education is by no means free from ambivalence and challenge. There is tension between the need for rapid interventions and for socioculturally
appropriate responses that require time to plan and prepare. It should be noted that
any short-term, temporary intervention has long-term implications and effects; there-
fore, immediate interventions should be based on visions of long-term comprehensive
development of the society in consultation with local people. But it is a daunting chal-
lenge. Obviously education is not a panacea; it is but one of a number of sociopolitical
interventions needed to rebuild violently torn or environmentally devastated societies.
Addressing these issues not only has educational dimensions but also political and
economic dimensions. In this sense, it is important for emergency education to deal
with the interface between direct violence and indirect violence at the implementation
level.

There is a strong rationale for educators everywhere to learn from the insights and
experiences of emergency education. Sinclair (2002) articulates this point stating that
‘principles of emergency education are not very different from good practice in any
education situation’ (p. 30). Given the present crisis-ridden world, with its conflu-
ence of multiple crises, we all need to be ready for, and to have thought about, educa-
tion for and in emergency. Experience in emergency education could inform
educators, educational policy-makers and administrators to prevent future emergen-
cies; at the very least, lessons learned from emergency education will raise the
consciousness of stakeholders in educational systems about the potential negative
effects of education or, more particularly, schooling.

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opinions expressed are my own.

Notes

1. Led by the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United
Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the United
3. The study was originally published by UNESCO for the International Consultative Forum on
Education for All, as part of the Education for All 2000 Assessment leading up to the World
Education Forum held in Dakar in 2000 (UNESCO, 2000a).
4. The nine flagship programmes are school health, HIV/AIDS, early childhood care and educa-
tion, literacy, girls’ education, disabilities, education for rural people, education in situations of
emergency and crisis, and teachers and the quality of education.
5. Theories regarding the causes of conflict are beyond the scope of this paper. Davies (2004) lists
them as follows: attribution theories; equity theories; field theory; interactionist theory; psycho-
logical theory; social exchange theory; phase theory; system theory; transformational theory.
6. This term was coined by Professor David Selby during discussions with the author in June 2004.
7. ‘Loud’ is ‘when the violence is actually occurring’ (Evans, 1996, p. 12).
8. Key instruments include the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the 1949 Geneva
Conventions and the 1977 Additional Protocols; the 1951 Convention on the Status of

Notes on contributor

Fumiyo Kagawa is a research assistant at the Centre for Sustainable Futures of the University of Plymouth, UK. She completed her Masters of Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, Canada, with a focus on global and peace education. From 2001 to 2003, she was a country-specific researcher for South Africa with the University of Toronto Ford Foundation Education for Global Citizenship Education Project. Since 2002 she has served as Graduate Coordinator for the UNICEF CARK (Central Asian Republics and Kazakhstan) Global Education Project jointly run by the Universities of Plymouth and Toronto.

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