

# **Integrating Quality Education With Humanitarian Response For Humanitarian Accountability: The Sphere-INEE Companionship**

**The Sphere Project and the  
Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies**

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**The Sphere Project**

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Réseau Inter-Agences pour l'Éducation en Situations d'Urgence  
La Red Interagencial para Educación en Situaciones de Emergencia

The paper was initially prepared as background reading for participants in the learning session 'Integrating Quality Education within Emergency Response for Humanitarian Accountability: The Sphere-INEE Companionship' at the INEE Global Consultation (31 March – 2 April 2009).

It has since been updated jointly by the INEE and Sphere secretariats to incorporate the outcome of discussions during that session and to describe the history and implications of the 'Companionship Agreement' signed in October 2008 between INEE and the Sphere Project. By this agreement the Sphere Handbook, *Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response*, and INEE *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction*, became 'Companion Standards'.



<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. History and Foundations: Where does the companionship agreement come from?</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>The absence of education within Sphere</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>The early days</i>	
<i>Sphere Handbook, 2004 edition</i>	
<b>The INEE Minimum Standards</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Background and founding of INEE</i>	
<i>Developing the INEE Minimum Standards</i>	
<b>Companion Standards to Sphere</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Background</i>	
<i>INEE Minimum Standards as Companion Standards to Sphere</i>	
<b>3. Implications: What does the companionship agreement mean?</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Companion standards in practice</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>Provisions of the Companionship Agreement</i>	
<i>The use of the Sphere and INEE Minimum Standards as companion standards</i>	
<b>The integration of education as part of humanitarian response</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>Making the case for education in emergencies</i>	
<i>CASE STUDY: WASH and Education</i>	
<i>CASE STUDY: Protection and Education</i>	
<i>Linkages and coordination between education and other humanitarian sectors</i>	
<i>CASE STUDY: Camp Management and Education</i>	
<i>Accountability to disaster-affected communities</i>	
<b>4. Conclusions</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Annex</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Notes</b>	<b>16</b>

## Abbreviations

ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
Groupe URD	Urgence Réhabilitation Développement
HAP International	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
IDP	Internally Displaced Person/People
IRC	International Rescue Committee
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
LRRD	Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development
MDG	UN Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene promotion

## Abstract

The paper *Integrating Quality Education With Humanitarian Response For Humanitarian Accountability: The Sphere-INEE Companionship*, jointly produced by the Sphere and INEE Secretariats, aims to document the history and implications of the Sphere-INEE Companionship Agreement, signed in October 2008. The paper provides background on the rationale for the inclusion of education within humanitarian response, outlines the development of the INEE Minimum Standards of Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction, and explains the subsequent companionship that formally defines the relationship between Sphere and INEE. Case studies and examples are included to demonstrate how education services can be integrated into humanitarian response with the goal of enhancing accountability and improving the quality of assistance provided to people affected by crisis. The paper was initially prepared as background reading for participants in the learning session 'Integrating Quality Education within Emergency Response for Humanitarian Accountability: The Sphere-INEE Companionship' at the INEE Global Consultation (31 March – 2 April 2009). It has since been updated to incorporate the outcome of discussions during that session.

## 1. Introduction

Wars and natural disasters deny generations the knowledge and opportunities that quality education can provide. Education in emergencies, chronic crises and early reconstruction protects the well-being, fosters learning opportunities, and nurtures the overall development (social, emotional, cognitive, physical) of children and youth affected by crises.

Numerous international instruments<sup>1</sup> have established the right to education. However, according to Save the Children Alliance, more than half of the estimated 72 million children<sup>2</sup> who are out of school are living in conflict affected and fragile states. Millions more are in emergency situations created by natural disasters. On average, displaced children spend eight years in displacement; their education cannot "wait" until they return home or are locally integrated.

Beyond this, education does save lives. An IRIN report recently quoted Brian Casey, Director of GOAL, working on the response to the cholera epidemic in Zimbabwe: 'We're here addressing the prevention and cure of cholera. Education is a crucial element of this emergency response and cannot be ignored. There's no point distributing goods to people if they don't know how to use them. In fact, it might just jeopardise them further'. Other examples include teaching children about landmine risks, informing them what to do in an earthquake, or teaching those in flood-prone areas how to swim<sup>3</sup>.

Education is prioritized by communities and offers a lifeline to them. From Sudan to Afghanistan, refugees describe education as a key protection mechanism and a means of bringing light into the darkness of their lives. Indeed, as the International Rescue Committee has highlighted, 'despite the folklore of our work, these crises are more often not life-or-death situations. Rather the predominant experience of refugees is a hopeless and purposeless existence'<sup>4</sup>.

The signature of the Sphere/INEE companionship agreement in October 2008 is a key achievement for humanitarian action as it formally recognizes the importance of education as a humanitarian response and the quality of the INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early reconstruction as the reference tool for the provision of these services – along with food,

shelter, health, and water and sanitation – in emergency and post-crisis recovery contexts. Today, the question is no longer 'is education life-saving?' but 'how can the Sphere/INEE companionship better ensure that humanitarian responses meet the needs and rights of populations affected by crises?'. This paper examines the history and implications of the Sphere/INEE companionship agreement, and its promises for greater quality and accountability in humanitarian action.

## 2. History and foundations: Where does the companionship agreement come from?

### The absence of education within Sphere

#### *The early days*

The Sphere Project<sup>5</sup> was launched in 1997 by a group of humanitarian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. Its original goals were:

'To develop a humanitarian charter for people affected by disasters, in style similar to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGO Code of Conduct'

'To compile from existing material and current best practice, a set of minimum standards covering minimum and relative essential goods and services, implementation of assistance, and stake holder accountability. Where necessary, the project will draft new standards if no suitable ones presently exist'<sup>6</sup>.

On this basis, and through a process of extensive consultation with humanitarian practitioners, the Humanitarian Charter was framed, and Minimum Standards to be attained in disaster assistance were identified. A draft version of the initial Sphere Handbook was launched in 1998, with chapters on food, nutrition, water, health and shelter. These were considered to 'represent the core of humanitarian emergency relief'<sup>7</sup>, underpinned by a rights-based approach set out in the Humanitarian Charter. Following field testing and revision, the first edition of the Sphere Project *Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response* was launched in 2000.

In the process of establishing consensus on the sectors addressed in the Sphere Handbook, there was robust discussion over whether a section on education should be included. UNHCR, UNICEF and Save the Children,

amongst others, argued that the provision of quality education in refugee and IDP camps, on the edges of conflict zones, was an essential protection<sup>8</sup> and conflict prevention<sup>9</sup> measure. As such it was considered an urgent life saving provision, and the 'fourth pillar of humanitarian assistance..... alongside nourishment, health services and shelter'<sup>10</sup>. However, there was no consensus within the Sphere Project Management Committee that education constituted an 'essential sector of relief assistance'. The initial proposal noted that 'other sector programmes such as education or training which may take place during relief operations may be examined in later stages of this project'<sup>11</sup>.

### **Sphere Handbook, 2004 edition**

As early as May 2000, the Sphere Management Committee was asked to clarify its position on 'whether or not the handbook would be expanded to include additional chapters for areas such as education, psycho-social services, and separated children'. The conclusion was that 'Sphere would consider additional chapters but that there was no guarantee of additional chapters'. At the same time, 'other groups should be encouraged to use the Sphere approach and process to develop additional standards'<sup>12</sup>.

This decision was confirmed in January 2002. Although at least 2 member organisations of the Management Committee were in favour of an Education chapter, the conclusion of discussions was that 'in keeping with the general agreement to consolidate, not expand, the Management Committee agreed that no new chapters.... would be added to the second edition' (published for 2004). However, it was recognised that potential new Sphere chapters included Education as 'the most evolved'.

## **The INEE Minimum Standards**

### **Background and founding of INEE**

The Sphere Project Manager had already been involved in preparations for a workshop entitled 'Education in Emergencies: Experts' Workshop on Appropriate Humanitarian Response'. This was held in March 2002, to 'determine the

feasibility of developing and implementing a set of standards for education in emergencies'.

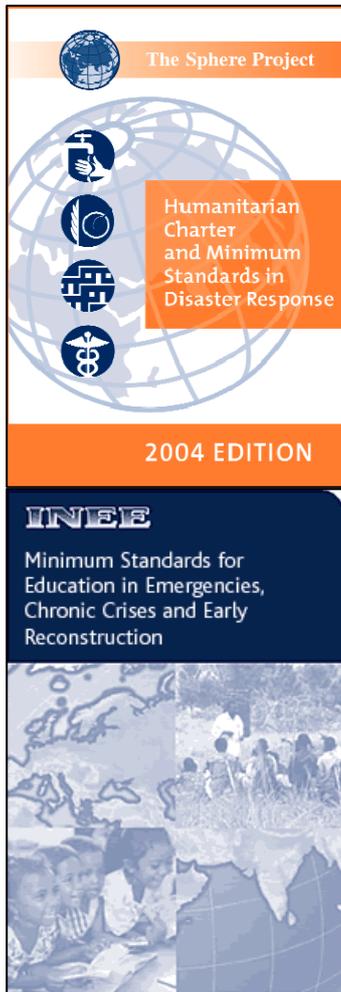
As background to this, in 2000, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) had been created as a global, open network of members working together within a humanitarian and development framework to ensure all persons the right to quality education and a safe learning environment in emergencies and post-crisis recovery. In this context, education in emergencies, chronic crises and early reconstruction is defined broadly, as education that protects the well being, fosters learning opportunities, and nurtures the overall development (social, emotional, cognitive, physical) of people affected by conflicts and disasters.

The founding of INEE contributed to increased awareness of the need for non-formal and formal education programmes in emergency situations. Two issues in particular came to the fore: how to ensure a certain level of quality and accountability in emergency education; and how to 'mainstream' education as a priority humanitarian response. In 2002, INEE began looking at the Sphere Project's example of how to accomplish these two objectives.

Given the position of the Sphere Management Committee, participants in the March 2002 Experts' Workshop recognised that the group would have to work outside the context of Sphere in order to move forward with the development of minimum standards for education in emergencies. However, they looked at the implications of what was involved from the example of Sphere, to understand the complexity of the process. It was decided that standards for education in emergencies should be developed, 'building on Sphere formats and processes as models'. The Sphere Project acknowledged that INEE 'should be the major vehicle for information and dissemination'<sup>13</sup>.

### **Developing the INEE Minimum Standards**

The work of a 'transition team' from the March 2002 workshop led to the establishment of the INEE Working Group on Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, which first met in January 2003<sup>14</sup>. Over 2,250 individuals from



more than 50 countries participated in the consultative process that followed, to facilitate the development of minimum standards, indicators and guidance notes. Contributions were made through:

- On-line consultation inputs via the INEE listserv
- Community-level, national, sub-regional and regional consultations
- A peer review process

Information gathered from each step was used to inform the next phase of the process. The model reflected lessons learned from the Sphere Project's process, emphasizing broad, transparent, cost-effective and consultative decision-making. An important change, compared with Sphere, was that while the Sphere Project has been an NGO-led initiative, the INEE Working Group on Minimum Standards was made up of both UN, donor and NGO organisations. The Working Group made special efforts to ensure that representatives from a variety of levels, including households, schools and communities, local authorities, ministry officials, funding agencies and implementers, were actively involved throughout the consultative process in order to ensure relevance to and buy-in from all education stakeholders<sup>15</sup>.

The first edition of the INEE *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction* were launched in December 2004 at INEE's second Global Consultation. The handbook was well received by delegates and the consultative process in developing the standards was judged to be as significant as the product itself.

The INEE Minimum Standards constitute the first global tool to define a minimum level of educational quality in order to provide assistance that reflects and reinforces the right to life with dignity. The INEE Minimum Standards are founded on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Dakar Education for All (2000) framework, the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Sphere Project's Humanitarian Charter. In addition to reflecting these international rights and commitments, the standards are an expression of consensus on good practices and lessons learned across the field of education and protection in emergencies and early reconstruction situations. They were developed by stakeholders from a variety of levels and have evolved out of emergency and early reconstruction environments around the world.

## Companion Standards to Sphere

### Background

During 2006-7, the Sphere Board (which evolved out of the Sphere Management Committee in April 2005<sup>16</sup>) began considering the process for the revision of the 2004 edition of the Sphere Handbook. Once again, the question of additional chapters was raised. Discussions took into account the practical aspects of increasing the size of the Handbook, based on feedback that it is already considered too big to be practical by some users. In May 2007, the Board concluded that for the revised Handbook, planned for 2010,

'the content of the Sphere handbook will remain... focusing on life-saving sectors (water, sanitation and hygiene promotion; food security, nutrition and food aid; shelter, settlement and non-food items, and health services)...'

However, in recognition of changes within the humanitarian context, and particularly 'new' sectors, the Board decided that:

'a process will be developed to establish 'companion modules' to the 'core' handbook - i.e. initiatives/sectors that support the 'core' Sphere sectors, which, while regarded as not being immediately life-saving, do contribute to the overall livelihood of those affected by emergencies, especially in the post-emergency phase<sup>17</sup>.

The Sphere Project team drafted supporting documents for a process of establishing 'companion standards' to Sphere, which were endorsed at the Board meeting in May 2008. The rationale for formally relating other Quality Standards initiatives with the Sphere Project was summarised as to:

- **Acknowledge that the humanitarian sector has evolved** since the Sphere Project was established, with an increased focus on issues of Quality and Accountability.
- **Avoid the development of new Sphere Standards** in response to increased needs and expectations, if those Quality Standards have already been developed by other Sphere-like initiatives.
- **Establish mutually beneficial relationships:**
  - The Sphere Project broadens its scope, while consolidating its position as an acknowledged "global brand" in terms of a rights based approach to Quality Standards in Disaster Response.
  - Other Quality Standards initiatives increase the status of their respective sector to any Disaster Response (from the fact that they

will be linked with Sphere), avoiding heavy investments and cutting down on the time it usually takes to foster a global brand and recognition.

- **Promote the link** for Quality Standards initiatives between Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD).
- **Provide a pool** of harmonized and complementary sets of Quality Standards that is easy to use and refer to: "The Sphere Standards family".
- **Provide a precedent** on how to concretely enhance networking and promote complementarities between different initiatives, rather than competition.
- **Benefit from mutual promotion and increased outreach** to a wider number of humanitarian workers<sup>18</sup>.



### Companionship: Sphere-INEE

INEE Director and Sphere Project Manager signing the Sphere-INEE Companionship Agreement at the Sphere Board Meeting, October 2008

were immediately accepted as the first Companion Standards to the Sphere Handbook at the May 2008 Sphere Board meeting<sup>19</sup>. The arrangement was finalised at the October 2008 Board meeting, when the 'Companionship Agreement' was signed between INEE and Sphere<sup>20</sup>. By this Agreement, the Sphere Project recommends that the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction be used as 'companion and complementing standards' to the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response.

## 3. Implications: What does the companionship agreement mean?

### Companion standards in practice

#### Provisions of the Companionship Agreement

The Sphere Handbook and the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook will remain stand-alone publications with their own recognizable identity. At the third INEE Global Consultation in 2009, participants endorsed the value of the Sphere/INEE companionship. The Companionship Agreement strengthens both handbooks, by supporting advocacy for the inclusion of education as part of humanitarian response, and enhancing opportunities for the promotion of the Sphere handbook, through INEE beyond. The Companionship Agreement should increase awareness and the readership of both handbooks, and therefore increase membership of both INEE and the Sphere Community of Practice.

The criteria for Sphere Companion Standards include: standards should explicitly be linked to the Humanitarian Charter and to the core sectors of the Sphere Handbook; a 'Sphere-like' process of broad consultation and field testing should have been used to develop them; and the content, structure and terminology of the standards should be compatible with the Sphere Handbook.

The association between Sphere and other sets of Quality Standards is formalised in a 'Companionship Agreement'. By this agreement, the Sphere Project and the 'companion' standards commit themselves to mutual promotion and advocacy, through cross-referencing in all future editions of the Handbooks, and through training, on their websites, and regular coordination meetings. At the same time, each publication and supporting secretariat and network, maintains its own identity, strategy and activities.



#### The INEE Minimum Standards as Companion Standards to Sphere

On the basis of the ongoing contact between Sphere and INEE, the INEE Minimum Standards were already recognised by the Sphere Board as the first candidates for 'companionship'. They

Certain elements of each publication will clearly demonstrate the formal relationship, following the update processes for both (2009-2010). An education<sup>21</sup> icon will be introduced, compatible with the Sphere icons. In addition, the two handbooks will be cross-referenced, and mutually relevant issues highlighted.

The agreement also serves to formalize training linkages and strengthen advocacy, promotion and communication linkages between INEE and the Sphere Project. It envisages mutual participation in themed workshops and in other consultations or fora, held by either the Sphere Project or INEE. The two Secretariats are committed to liaising with each other and sharing relevant information.

### ***The use of the Sphere and INEE Minimum Standards as companion standards***

The concrete links between the INEE and Sphere Minimum Standards have been set out in a paper produced by INEE shortly after the launch of the INEE Minimum Standards: *INEE Minimum Standards Linkages to Sphere Minimum Standards*.(see Annex).

At the 2009 INEE Global Consultation, participants also confirmed that effective use of the two handbooks side by side supports coordination between the Sphere sectors and education and contributes to integrated proposal design and a more comprehensive approach. Positive outcomes, for example, have included increased school attendance by girls as a result of improved school sanitation facilities<sup>22</sup>. On the other hand, learning session participants noted that identifying the impact of minimum standards is complicated because it is hard to isolate this from other influences. Nevertheless, examples of probable impact of the INEE Minimum Standards include children saving lives during a cyclone in Bangladesh<sup>23</sup> and preventing a dengue fever outbreak in El Salvador.

One unintended effect of using Sphere and INEE standards together may be to move thinking beyond the response sector, to include risk reduction and reconstruction. This is useful for the disaster risk management community generally, and should be reflected in the Sphere and INEE revision and update processes.

Documentation of the use and impact of the Sphere and INEE Minimum Standards together is essential to support their use and advocacy for their use. Support to research and documentation was noted under both the recommendations of the learning session, which are listed under 'Next steps' at end of the paper.

### **The integration of education as part of humanitarian response**

#### ***Making the case for education in emergencies***

Education can be both *life-sustaining* and *life-saving* in emergency situations, providing physical, psychosocial, and cognitive protection



### **Case Study: WASH and Education**

Since the outbreak of cholera in Zimbabwe in August 2008, the pandemic has claimed thousands of lives, affecting many more. Since children are especially made vulnerable because of this disease, there is an ongoing need to increase education initiatives and capacity building that strengthens the preventive capacity of education personnel and local communities with regards to cholera.

The Education Working Group in Zimbabwe jointly developed an anti-cholera programme designed around two sub-projects: an *Awareness and Hygiene materials* project and *Cholera prevention training for Education personnel*. The main objective of these projects is to strengthen the capacity of school communities in 10 districts and to provide teachers, children and community members with knowledge on hygiene, sanitation and life skills with a view to prevent cholera and to be able to respond when cholera cases arise.

In these projects, the WASH cluster and Education Working Group worked closely to develop the prevention and hygiene materials that target schoolchildren, while the logistic sector also was driven into this exercise mainly on matters related to coordination of inter-agencies distribution and implementation modalities and geographical coverage.

Besides finding guidance in the Sphere Handbook, the project benefited from the INEE WASH toolkit for schools and the INEE Minimum Standards, especially those related to policy and coordination, and teachers and other education personnel.

The project is ongoing.

**Photo Above:** Children learn proper handwashing techniques in Zimbabwe. Photo courtesy of Ms. Tapuwa Mutseyekwa, Assistant Communications Officer. UNICEF Zimbabwe/2009

to both students and teachers. It can play a crucial role in helping children cope with their situation by gaining additional knowledge and



### Case Study: Protection and Education

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) launched non-formal education and recreation activities for Chechen internally displaced children and their families in Ingushetia, Russia in January of 2000. The program encouraged parental and community involvement and positive leadership roles for young people, with goals including the implementation of normalizing, structured activities for children and adolescents to address both psychosocial and learning needs.

A study conducted at this time with Chechen adolescents found that both young people and their families faced a number of physical and emotional stressors, ranging from poor or crowded living conditions, to concerns about the lack of dignity or about getting an education. While the interventions neither provided the complete normalcy that the adolescents desired, nor could be considered a replacement for formal, mainstream education, the data indicated that the emergency education program provided benefits by enriching sources of social support, providing meaningful activity and a sense of hope for the future, and creating a space for young people to spend time and connect to others.

In summary, the research provides evidence that a locally run emergency education program had important psychosocial dimensions for promoting mental health and enriching the support networks that care for children in IDP settlements. (Betancourt 2005)

**Photo above:** Mine awareness for children in Ingushetia. Credit: IRC

skills for survival and to regain normalcy in their lives. It provides *cognitive protection* by supporting intellectual development through the teaching of literacy, numeracy, and study skills. It can also teach peace building and conflict resolution. In providing safe space for learning and socialization, education also gives refugee

girls *psychosocial protection and support*. In addition to supporting children's social and intellectual development, education programs can provide *physical protection* from the dangers of a crisis environment. It can save lives by protecting against exploitation and harm. When a child is in a safe learning environment he or she is less likely to be sexually or economically exploited or exposed to other risks, such as recruitment into or joining a fighting group or a gang.

Global Consultation participants confirmed that a 'companionship' between INEE and Sphere should help make the case for education as part of humanitarian response. However, despite all the evidence, it is still a challenge to convince certain organizations that education can be life saving. Better engagement with donor and host governments, including awareness-raising and training on Sphere and INEE, is essential.

Many donors still do not fund education in emergency contexts. For example, education is not yet considered part of humanitarian response by the United States Congress, and this would need to change if substantial funding for education were to be released. Such a change will take a long time and require lobbying by NGOs, as the US Agency for International Development (USAID) cannot lobby Congress. On the other hand, funding for the delivery of other services through schools, or for 'risk reduction', has been made available, particularly at national and regional levels. The potential provided by such examples should be exploited, and advocacy is supported by the Sphere-INEE relationship.

As important as it is to have support from donor governments is to have a commitment from host governments. Participants in the 2009 INEE Global Consultation session noted that host governments are often wary of standards coming from outside. The INEE and Sphere handbook update/revision processes will be an opportunity to involve government representatives, and enhance their sense of ownership of both sets of standards. This should support advocacy for the inclusion of emergencies in national education plans in disaster prone countries. Children and young people can be the best advocates for changes in government policy, and facilitating their participation should be a priority.

### **Linkages and coordination between Education and other humanitarian sectors**

The Companionship Agreement between Sphere and INEE is an important achievement towards one of the main objectives of the INEE Network

itself - that education services are integrated into all humanitarian response. Indeed, for an effective education response that addresses children's holistic needs, coordination and close collaboration between education and other sectors is essential - particularly Water and Sanitation, Shelter, Camp management, Health and Hygiene, Protection, Food aid and Nutrition. The use of the INEE Minimum Standards as a companion to the Sphere Handbook will help to ensure that these crucial linkages are made at the outset of an emergency - through multi-sectoral needs assessments, followed by joint planning and holistic response.



**Case Study:**  
**Camp Management and Education**

4000 out of the 24,000 Sudanese refugees in the Bredjing camp in Chad are children. They attend school in the morning and in the afternoon. The teachers are volunteers and refugees themselves, living in the same camp. Teaching is in Arabic and teachers try to follow the Sudanese teaching programme. (Bredjing Refugee Camp, Chad, November 2006. Photo Credit : Daniel Cima/IFRC

Concrete examples of where education links to sectors and cross-cutting issues addressed in the Sphere Handbook include:

- **Shelter:** School shelters (tents, temporary structures, reconstruction of education infrastructure) should be jointly planned to ensure that minimum standards for schools and classrooms are applied (e.g. size, construction, distance, and lighting).
- **Camp management (included within Shelter in the Sphere Handbook):** Education in camp environments helps to re-create elements of a social structure and a sense of normalcy in the lives of children, their parents and their communities. In collaboration with camp management agencies, school areas, child friendly spaces, play and recreational areas can be planned jointly within a camp setting at the outset of an emergency with guidance on standards provided to ensure safe and protective environments (e.g. safe distances, adequate latrine and sanitary conditions).
- **Water and Sanitation:** Safe water and gender-segregated and appropriate sanitation facilities for learning spaces and schools. Another important area for collaboration is hygiene promotion.

- **Health:** Schools and temporary learning spaces provide an environment in which children can have safe and reliable access to various health services, be provided with basic knowledge on health and hygiene, and urgent life-saving health information.

- **Nutrition:** Children's nutrition can be improved by the provision of meals or nutritious snacks as part of school feeding programmes

- **Protection (a cross-cutting issue within the Sphere Handbook):**

Education in emergency spaces for children provides psychosocial support and protection by establishing daily routines and a more stable sense of the future; reduces vulnerability to trafficking, exploitation and child labour; engages children in positive alternatives to military recruitment, gangs and drugs; provides a means to identify children with special needs, such as experience with trauma or family separation; facilitates social integration of vulnerable children.

**Accountability to disaster-affected communities**

The Companionship Agreement is an important achievement for the humanitarian community and disaster-affected populations. Used together, the Sphere *Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response* and the *INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction* will improve the quality of assistance provided to people affected by crisis, and enhance the accountability of disaster preparedness and response.

This is significant because in times of crisis, education is often prioritized by communities themselves, but is not always provided by humanitarian and donor organizations. Indeed, in countless assessments, schools have been identified as the priority intervention. In many cases, the demand by refugee leaders for

children's education often exceeds requests for food, water, medicine and even shelter<sup>24</sup>. The formal link that the Companionship Agreement provides between education and the more 'traditional' humanitarian aid sectors covered by Sphere, should help to ensure that the priority attached to education by people affected by disaster is better recognised.

Holistic assistance, with a view to supporting 'life with dignity' as articulated in the Humanitarian Charter, needs to include support to education and the various life saving and sustaining benefits that it can provide.

#### 4. Conclusions

The link between Sphere and INEE has always been important in terms of mutual reinforcement, promotion and advocacy, with a view to providing better quality and more accountable humanitarian assistance to people affected by disaster. Now that the INEE Minimum Standards are formally 'Companion Standards' to Sphere, there is added incentive to ensure that the Companionship Agreement is put into practice and all opportunities taken to make the most of all possible links.

#### Next Steps

**The INEE Minimum Standards Update and the Sphere Handbook Revision (2009-2010).** The structure, timeline and process of the INEE Minimum Standards update have been aligned to that of the Sphere Handbook revision in order to ensure harmonization in the processes and linkages between the two sets of standards. This effort is further supported through the mutual representation in both processes.

Education will not be represented in a separate Sphere chapter but mainstreamed throughout the current technical chapters, which include Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; Nutrition, Food Aid and Food Security; Shelter, Settlements and Non-Food Items; and Health Services. Reference will also be made in the introduction to the INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises, and Early Reconstruction as companion and complementing the Sphere standards.

**Develop joint training materials.** The Sphere Project and INEE Secretariat are developing a joint training session on inter-sectoral linkages and the use of the Sphere and INEE Minimum Standards in emergency contexts. This training

session will be supplemented by a module on education in emergencies which is being developed as part of the Sphere e-learning tool. In addition, participation of education practitioners in Sphere Trainings of Trainers and vice versa will continue to be promoted.

**Provide tools,** for example one page matrices for the links between education and the Sphere sectors, practical activities on ways to integrate the two, documentation of successful programme experiences.

**Carry out and documenting research** on the use of the two sets of standards, and build on the lessons from this for ongoing promotion and training (see also Recommendation 1).

#### Recommendations

If humanitarian action is to better address the needs and rights of populations affected by crises, education and other relief sectors need to be better integrated. This requires the following:

**Include key education questions** in initial joint rapid assessment. This can be the basis for joint or complementary work on establishing baselines including Sphere sectors and Education, case studies and monitoring and evaluation.

**Set up safe spaces for children** with a view to providing them a sense of normalcy, psychosocial support, protection of children against harm, and a place for delivery of other vital services.

**Promote and engage in inter-sectoral/inter-cluster collaboration** from the outset of emergencies through to early recovery.

**Involve children/young people** in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery through integration of humanitarian response into schooling and other education opportunities.

For further information on the Sphere and INEE Handbooks and the Companionship Agreement, please contact:

**INEE:**  
minimumstandards@ineesite.org

**The Sphere Project:** info@sphereproject.org

## Annex

### INEE Minimum Standards Linkages to Sphere Minimum Standards

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION	
<p><b>INEE Community Participation Standard 1: Participation</b> Emergency-affected community members actively participate in assessing, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the education programme.</p>	<p><b>Sphere Common Standard 1: Participation</b> The disaster-affected population actively participates in the assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the assistance programme.</p>
ANALYSIS	
<p><b>INEE Analysis Standard 1: Initial Assessment</b> A timely education assessment of the emergency situation is conducted in a holistic and participatory manner.</p>	<p><b>Sphere Common Standard 2: Initial Assessment</b> Assessments provide an understanding of the disaster situation and a clear analysis of threats to life, dignity, health and livelihood to determine, in consultation with relevant authorities, whether an external response is required, and if so, the nature of the response.</p>
<p><b>INEE Analysis Standard 2: Response Strategy</b> A framework for an education response is developed, including a clear description of the problem and a documented strategy for action.</p>	<p><b>Sphere Common Standard 3: Response</b> A humanitarian response is required in situations where the relevant authorities are unable or unwilling to respond to the protection and assistance needs of the population on the territory over which they have control, and when assessment and analysis indicate that these needs are unmet.</p>
<p><b>INEE Analysis Standard 3: Monitoring</b> All relevant stakeholders regularly monitor the activities of the education response and the evolving education needs of the affected populations.</p>	<p><b>Sphere Common Standard 5: Monitoring</b> The effectiveness of the programme in responding to problems is identified and changes in the broader context are continually monitored with a view to improving the programme, or to phase it out as required.</p>
<p><b>INEE Analysis Standard 4: Evaluation</b> There is a systematic and impartial evaluation of the education response in order to improve practice and enhance accountability.</p>	<p><b>Sphere Common Standard 6: Evaluation</b> There is a systematic and impartial examination of humanitarian action, intended to draw lessons to improve practice and policy and to enhance accountability.</p>
ACCESS AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	
<p><i>SPHERE Minimum Standards in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Health Services may be cross-referenced to promote a range of education opportunities and community participation in those activities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Food Security, Nutrition and Food Aid may be cross-referenced to promote nutritional and short-term hunger needs of learners.</i></li> <li>• <i>Shelter, Settlement and Non-Food Items seek to embrace all aspects of settlement provision. The guidance on planning and construction is as valid for public and communal buildings, such as schools, as it is for household shelters.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>INEE Access and Learning Standard Standard 1: Equal Access</b> All individuals have access to quality and relevant education opportunities.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of formal and non-formal education opportunities is progressively provided to the affected populations to fulfil their education need.</li> <li>• Through training and sensitisation, communities become increasingly involved in ensuring the rights of all members to a quality and relevant education.</li> <li>• Learners have the opportunity to safely enter or re-enter the formal education system as soon as possible after any disruption caused by the emergency.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sphere Control of Non-Communicable Diseases Standard 3: Mental and Social Aspects of Health</b> People have access to social and mental health services to reduce mental health morbidity, disability and social problems.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As soon as resources permit, children and adolescents have access to formal or informal schooling and to normal recreational activities.</li> <li>• Adults and adolescents are able to participate in concrete, purposeful, common interest activities, such as emergency relief activities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sphere Food Security Standard 1: General Food Security</b> People have access to adequate and appropriate food and non-food items in a manner that ensures their survival, prevents erosion of assets and upholds their dignity. <i>See guidance notes on exit and transition strategies (4); access to knowledge, skills and services (5); coverage, access and acceptability (7); and monitoring (8).</i></p> <p><b>Sphere General Nutrition Support Standard 1: All Groups</b> The nutritional needs of the population are met. <i>See guidance notes on nutritional requirements (1); preventing micronutrient diseases (2); and monitoring access to micronutrients (3).</i></p>

<p><b>INEE Access and Learning Standard Standard 2: Protection and Well-Being</b> Learning environments are secure, and promote the protection and mental and emotional well-being of learners.</p> <p>Indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The nutritional and short-term hunger needs of learners are addressed to allow for effective learning to take place at the learning site.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sphere General Nutrition Support Standard 2: At-Risk Groups</b> The nutritional and support needs of identified at-risk groups are met. Indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific attention is paid to the protection, promotion and support of the care and nutrition of adolescent girls.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sphere Correction of Malnutrition Standard 3: Micronutrient Malnutrition</b> Micronutrient deficiencies are addressed. <i>See guidance notes on diagnosis and treatment (1) and preparedness (2).</i></p> <p><b>Sphere Food Aid Planning Standard 1: Ration Planning</b> Rations for general food distributions are designed to bridge the gap between the affected population's requirements and their own food resources. <i>See guidance notes on nutritional requirements (1) and economic context (2).</i></p> <p><b>Sphere Food Aid Planning Standard 3: Food Quality and Safety</b> Food distributed is of appropriate quality and is fit for human consumption. <i>See guidance notes on food quality (1); genetically modified foods (2); complaints (3); and storage areas (5)</i></p> <p><b>Sphere Food Management Standard 1: Food Handling</b> Food is stored, prepared and consumed in a safe and appropriate manner at both household and community levels. Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no adverse health effects resulting from inappropriate food handling or preparation at any distribution site.</li> <li>• Where food is distributed in cooked form, staff have received training in safe storage, handling of commodities and the preparation of food and understand the potential health hazards caused by improper practices.</li> </ul> <p><i>See also guidance notes on food hygiene (1) and special needs (5).</i></p>
<p><b>INEE Access and Learning Standard 3: Facilities</b> Education facilities are conducive to the physical well-being of learners.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The physical structure used for the learning site is appropriate for the situation and includes adequate space for classes and administration, recreation and sanitation facilities.</li> <li>▪ Communities participate in the construction and maintenance of the learning environment.</li> <li>▪ Class space and seating arrangements are in line with an agreed ratio of space per learner and teacher, as well as grade level, in order to promote participatory methodologies and learner-centred approaches.</li> <li>▪ Adequate sanitation facilities are provided, taking account of age, gender and special education needs and considerations, including access for persons with disabilities.</li> <li>▪ Basic health and hygiene are promoted in the learning environment.</li> <li>▪ Adequate quantities of safe drinking water and water for personal hygiene are available at the learning site.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sphere Shelter and Settlement Standard 1: Strategic Planning</b> Existing shelter and settlement solutions are prioritised through the return or hosting of disaster-affected households, and the security, health, safety and well-being of the affected population are ensured. Indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water and sanitation services, and social facilities including health care, schools and places of worship, are available or can be satisfactorily provided.</li> </ul> <p><i>See guidance notes on collective settlement (3); natural hazards (5); hazardous materials and goods (6); and availability of services and facilities (9).</i></p> <p><b>Sphere Shelter and Settlement Standard 2: Physical Planning</b> Local physical planning practices are used where possible, enabling safe and secure access to and use of shelters and essential services and facilities, as well as ensuring appropriate privacy and separation between individual household shelters. Indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All members of the affected population have safe access to water, sanitary facilities, health care, solid waste disposal, graveyards and social facilities, including schools, places of worship, meeting points and recreational areas.</li> </ul> <p><i>See guidance note on access to services and facilities (2).</i></p> <p><b>Sphere Shelter and Settlement Standard 4: Design</b> The design of the shelter is acceptable to the affected population and provides sufficient thermal comfort, fresh air and protection from the climate to ensure their dignity, health, safety and well-being. <i>See all indicators and all guidance notes.</i></p> <p><b>Shelter and Settlement Standard 5: Construction</b> The construction approach is in accordance with safe local building practices and maximises local livelihood opportunities. <i>See all indicators and all guidance notes.</i></p> <p><b>Sphere Non-Food Items Standard 2: Personal Hygiene</b> Each disaster-affected household has access to sufficient soap and other items to ensure personal hygiene, health, dignity and well-being.</p> <p>Indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and girls have sanitary materials for menstruation.</li> </ul> <p><i>See guidance note on sanitary protection (4).</i></p>

	<p><b>Sphere Hygiene Promotion Standard 1: Programme Design and Implementation</b> All facilities and resources provided reflect the vulnerabilities, needs and preferences of the affected population. Users are involved in the management and maintenance of hygiene facilities where appropriate.</p> <p>Indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Users take responsibility for the management and maintenance of facilities as appropriate, and different groups contribute equally.</li> </ul> <p><i>See guidance notes on managing facilities (5) and overburdening (6).</i></p> <p><b>Sphere Water Supply Standard 1: Access and Water Quality</b> All people have safe and equitable access to a sufficient quantity of water for drinking, cooking and personal and domestic hygiene. Public water points are sufficiently close to households to enable use of the minimum water requirement.</p> <p>Indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water sources and systems are maintained such that appropriate quantities of water are available consistently or on a regular basis.</li> </ul> <p><i>See guidance notes on water source selection (2) and access and equity (8).</i></p> <p><b>Sphere Excreta Disposal Standard 1: Access to, and Number of, Toilets</b> People have adequate numbers of toilets, sufficiently close to their dwellings, to allow them rapid, safe and acceptable access at all times of the day and night.</p> <p><b>Sphere Excreta Disposal Standard 2: Design, Construction and Use of Toilets</b> Toilets are sited, designed, constructed and maintained in such a way as to be comfortable, hygienic and safe to use. <i>See all indicators all guidance notes.</i></p> <p><b>Sphere Planning guidelines for minimum water quantities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools: 3 litres/pupil/day for drinking and hand washing (use for toilets not included)</li> </ul> <p>Public toilets: 1-2 litres/user/day for hand washing and 2-8 litres/cubicle/day for toilet cleaning</p>
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**TEACHING AND LEARNING**  
*SPHERE Minimum Standards in Health Services may be cross-referenced to promote information sharing on HIV/AIDS in the relevant curricula.*

<p><b>INEE Standard 1: Curricula</b> Culturally, socially and linguistically relevant curricula are used to provide formal and non-formal education, appropriate to the particular emergency situation.</p> <p>Indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The curricula and methods of instruction respond to the current needs of learners and promote future learning opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Guidance note 8:</i> <i>When determining learning content, consideration should be given to the knowledge, skills and language(s) useful for learners at each stage of an emergency and those skills that would enhance their capacity to lead independent, productive lives, both during and after the emergency, and to be able to continue to access learning opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Appropriate learning content and key concepts should draw on the following: skills-based health education (appropriate to the age and situation), first aid, reproductive health, sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS.</i></p>	<p><b>Sphere Control of Communicable Diseases Standard 6: HIV/AIDS</b> People have access to the minimum package of services to prevent transmission of HIV/AIDS.</p> <p>Indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People have access to relevant information and education so that individuals can take steps to protect themselves against HIV transmission.</li> </ul> <p><i>See guidance note on HIV control (1).</i></p>
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## Notes

<sup>1</sup>1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (primary education should be free and compulsory and that the higher levels of education should be accessible to all on the basis of merit); Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951); the Geneva Convention (IV) Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War; the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989). Many regional human rights instruments as well as major conferences resulting in international declarations also articulate this right, such as the Education For All and Millennium Development Goals.

<sup>2</sup>Education for All *Global Monitoring Report 2007*

<sup>3</sup>IRIN. *Does Emergency Education Save Lives?* Dakar. 8 January 2009.

<sup>4</sup>International Rescue Committee, *Educating Children in Emergency Settings – an Unexpected Lifeline*. 2007. quoted in IRIN *Does Emergency Education Save Lives?* Dakar. 8 January 2009.

<sup>5</sup>Note that 'Sphere' is not an acronym, so should not be written in capital letters. It was chosen as the name of the Project to suggest the global reach of the standards being developed. It was preferred to an acronym, as it can be more easily translated, is more memorable, and can be represented graphically (see Walker and Purdin, 2004, page 103).

<sup>6</sup>SCHR, 1997, quoted in Walker and Purdin, 2004, page 103.

<sup>7</sup>Walker, P, 1997, page 6 (unpublished)

<sup>8</sup>Nicolai and Triplehorn, 2003, page 9.

<sup>9</sup>Walker and Purdin, 2004, page 108.

<sup>10</sup>UNESCO, 2003, pages 7-8

<sup>11</sup>Walker, 1997, page 6 (unpublished)

<sup>12</sup>Sphere Project, 2000, page 7 (unpublished)

<sup>13</sup>INEE EiE Experts' Workshop, 2002

<sup>14</sup>See <http://www.ineesite.org/page.asp?pid=1255>

<sup>15</sup>INEE *Talking Points on Education in Emergencies 2008*

<sup>16</sup><http://www.sphereproject.org/content/view/99/68/lang,english/>

<sup>17</sup>Sphere Project, 2007, page 16 (unpublished)

<sup>18</sup>Sphere Project, 2008b, pages 3-4 (unpublished)

<sup>19</sup>Sphere Project, 2008a, pages 26-7 (unpublished)

<sup>20</sup>See

<http://www.sphereproject.org/content/view/377/32/lang,english/>

<sup>21</sup>The icon represents a learning/building block, which could also depict a school or other place for learning. The letters will be changed to the appropriate script for the language of the handbook.

<sup>22</sup>Gender Strategies in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction Contexts

[http://www.ineesite.org/uploads/documents/store/doc\\_1\\_58\\_Gender\\_Strategies\\_in\\_Emergencies1\\_sanitation2.doc](http://www.ineesite.org/uploads/documents/store/doc_1_58_Gender_Strategies_in_Emergencies1_sanitation2.doc)

<sup>23</sup>Action Aid, *Disaster Risk Reduction Through Schools: A Groundbreaking Project*, 2007, page 4.

<sup>24</sup>Anderson et al 2006, page 2



**The Sphere Project**

[www.sphereproject.org](http://www.sphereproject.org)

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