Institution: Ulster University

Unit of Assessment: Education (23)

Title of case study: Education for Peacebuilding: Influencing how UNICEF and other agencies analyse, plan and implement education for peacebuilding in situations of conflict and protracted crisis.

Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2009 - 2017

Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:

Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Professor Alan Smith	UNESCO Chair	2000 - present
Dr Alan McCully	Senior Lecturer	1998 - 2018
Dr Simone Datzberger	Research Associate	2014 - 2016
Dr Caroline Marks	Research Associate	2014 - 2015
Dr Kelsey Shanks	Senior Lecturer	2019 - present
Christine Ellison	Research Associate	2010 - 2017; 2019 - present

Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2013 - 2020
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N

1. Summary of the impact

This case study shows how research on education and peacebuilding at Ulster University's UNESCO Centre has made a direct and significant impact on the way that UNICEF and global actors analyse, plan and implement education for peacebuilding policy and practice in situations of conflict.

The key impacts underpinned by Ulster's research are:

I1 = Influenced and informed UNICEF's education provision of access to conflict-sensitive education for 710,834 children and 16,179 adolescents and youth across 14 conflict-affected countries;

I2 = Influenced and informed national education ministers' policy development and planning in countries affected by conflict;

I3 = Influenced and informed international organisations and practitioners in the field (British Council, DFID and Oxfam IBIS (Denmark)).

2. Underpinning research

Initial research for UNICEF led by Smith at Ulster's UNESCO Centre [**R1, R2, R3**] in partnership with Novelli (Sussex) challenged the UN's approach to 'liberal peacebuilding', which prioritises investment in security, democratisation and economic reforms, but under-estimates the importance of social services, including the provision of education. The research made a case for earlier and greater investment in education as part of conflict transformation in terms of its contribution to: (i) the protection of children and creation of safe learning spaces; (ii) changes to the governance and administration of education that support peacebuilding; and (iii) education reforms that address inequalities and grievances such as inequitable access to education, language of instruction policies and exclusion of minorities and disadvantaged groups.

Smith was a Technical Advisor to UNICEF (2013-14) with responsibility for meta-analysis of UNICEF education programming across 14 conflict-affected countries with qualitative and quantitative support from Shanks and Ellison. Smith then became Co-PI for a USD3.8m (June 2014) UNICEF funded Education and Peacebuilding Research Consortium (2014-16) involving the universities of Amsterdam, Sussex and Ulster. The team at Ulster produced research outputs including field-based research completed by Marks on equity, governance

and education in Kenya [**R4**: 2016] and field-based research completed by Datzberger and McCully on education policy and peacebuilding in Uganda [**R5**: 2016]. The consortium's research in South Sudan and Kenya [**R4**], as well as peacebuilding research on education policy, teachers and youth undertaken in Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda [**R5**], field-tested and helped refine the 4Rs Framework created by the consortium for the analysis of the role of education in peacebuilding. It argues that the key post-conflict transformations in education necessary to produce sustainable peace involve redistribution, recognition and representation, plus addressing the legacies of conflict as part of reconciliation. These four areas provide the basis for an accessible and systematic analysis of education's potential to contribute to peacebuilding:

- *Redistribution* (addressing inequalities) concerns equity and non-discrimination in education access, resources, and outcomes for diverse groups in society, particularly marginalized and disadvantaged groups.
- *Recognition* (respecting diversity) concerns respect for and affirmation of diversity and identities in education structures, processes and content.
- *Representation* (inclusive participation) concerns participation in governance and decision-making related to the allocation, use, and distribution of human and material resources at all levels of the education system.
- *Reconciliation* (dealing with past and present injustices) involves developing new relationships of trust, dealing with past events, helping new generations understand the legacies of conflict within their society, and preparing for the future.

The 4Rs conceptual framework was peer-reviewed and subsequently published [**R6**: 2017]. This case study highlights evidence that the framework had significant impact on UNICEF education programming and wider impacts on other international development agencies. The 4Rs also became the basis for the establishment of a Political Economy of Education Research (PEER) Network led by Ulster (PI: Smith) which received a GBP178,405 Development Award from GCRF (via AHRC, 2019) and was subsequently awarded a GBP1,845,033 GCRF Network+ full award (2020-23).

Key findings:

- A lack of attention to redistribution, reconciliation, representation and recognition undermines the potential for education to contribute to peacebuilding.
- At the global level, there has been a neglect of the historical, social, cultural and political economy aspects of conflict drivers in relation to education.
- At the policy level, redistribution has dominated the agenda, with the assumption that the other aspects of social justice will occur afterwards.
- National and global policy can both inhibit and promote teacher agency for social cohesion and peacebuilding. At the classroom level, textbooks and curricula tend to promote social cohesion in terms of national unity and assimilation, rather than addressing current drivers and historical legacies of conflict.
- Youth engage in many peacebuilding roles but face key challenges such as unemployment, education not serving its purpose and exclusion from decision-making.

3. References to the research Outputs can be provided by Ulster University on request.

R1: Smith, A. (2010) 'The influence of education on conflict and peace building', Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011 The Hidden Crisis: Armed conflict and education, Paris: UNESCO.
R2: Novelli, M. and Smith, A. (2011) The Role of Education in Peacebuilding. A synthesis report of findings from Lebanon, Nepal and Sierra Leone. New York: UNICEF.
R3: Smith, A. (2014) 'Contemporary Challenges for Education in Conflict Affected Countries', Journal of International and Comparative Education, (3) 1: 113-125.
R4: Smith, A., Marks, C., Novelli, M., Valiente, O. and Scandurra, R. (2016) Links between Equity, Governance, Education and Peacebuilding in Kenya. Nairobi: UNICEF.
R5: Smith, A., Datzberger, S. and McCully, A. (2016) The Integration of Education and Peacebuilding: Synthesis Report on Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda. New York: UNICEF.
R6: Novelli, M., Lopes Cardozo, M. and Smith, A. (2017) 'The 4Rs Framework: Analysing the Contribution of Education to Sustainable Peacebuilding in Conflict-Affected Contexts', Journal on Education in Emergencies, Vol. 3, No. 1.
The Education and Peacebuilding Research Consortium's research outputs each went through rigorous review by a UNICEF panel of academic experts, UN staff and national policymakers and practitioners. The research outputs are archived by the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) - a global network of more than 17,000 individual members and 130 partner organizations in 190 countries. The research findings have also been published by multiple international agencies such as UNICEF, UNESCO, Save the Children and Reliefweb.

Grants:

2014-15   Education Governance and Peacebuilding (Co-PI with Novelli, Sussex), UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, Nairobi (Ulster received GBP95,088)

2014-16   Education and Peacebuilding, Research Consortium (Amsterdam, Sussex and Ulster), UNICEF, New York USD3.8m (PI Ulster: Smith, GBP544,545)

4. Details of the impact

The research has provided benefit for three key groups of stakeholders: UNICEF; national education ministries; and professionals in other international organisations engaged in the field of education and conflict.

I1: Influenced and informed UNICEF's education provision of access to conflict-sensitive education for 710,834 children and 16,179 adolescents and youth across 14 conflict-affected countries

There is strong evidence that this body of research has changed UNICEF practice for the benefit of children affected by conflict. The research impacts are based on a body of work related to education, conflict and peacebuilding first reported internationally in the Education for All, Global Monitoring Report by Smith [**R1**: 2010], Novelli and Smith [**R2**: 2011] and Smith [**R3**: 2014]. The impacts for this case study are based on additional, more recent research [**R4**: 2016; **R5**: 2016 and **R6**: 2017] undertaken as part of a USD150m UNICEF Education, Peacebuilding and Advocacy (PBEA) programme across 14 conflict-affected countries. At a practical level PBEA was in response to the fact that "2*8 million children are out of school in conflict-affected countries, 42% of the world total. Children in conflict affected countries are twice as likely as children in other low-income countries to die before their fifth birthday. Refugees and internally displaced people face major barriers to education, and conflict-affected countries have some of the largest gender inequalities and lowest literacy levels in the world.*" (Smith, 2010) [**R1**].
UNICEF has verified that "*In terms of practical outcomes, conflict analysis of education was used by UNICEF country offices as a starting point to design and implement their education and peacebuilding programmes. The methodology for this conflict analysis was initially piloted in three country settings (Lebanon, Nepal and Sierra Leone) led by Novelli and Smith. Their findings provided the basis for further conflict analyses in all PBEA countries.*"

[**C1**: 2021]. An independent evaluation of PBEA outcomes [**C2**: 2015] indicated that research by Smith and Novelli "*led to important learning that informed the design and implementation of the PBEA*" [**C2**: 2015, p16]. "*One recommendation stemming from the research was to move away from generic programming towards education interventions that are informed by high-quality conflict analysis and sensitive to local contexts while emphasising that the education sector has transformative potential in post-conflict societies*" [**C2**: 2015, p16]. The independent programme evaluation also confirms that their analyses were employed directly by country offices to introduce conflict sensitive approaches into existing programmes, and "*meaningful results were achieved in integrating conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding into education sector reform and other policies*" [**C2**: 2015, ppxiii & xiv]. Consolidated results from this evaluation indicated that the overall PBEA programme provided access to conflict sensitive education for 710,834 children and 16,179 adolescents and youth [**C2**: 2015, p20]. UNICEF further confirms that "*the research undertaken by Professor Smith and his research team at Ulster also had significant impact on the implementation of the PBEA research programme through their involvement in field-based research in Kenya and Uganda (2014-16). This was undertaken in partnership with UNICEF as part of a Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding involving the universities of Amsterdam, Sussex and Ulster. One of the most influential outcomes from this collaboration was the development of a conceptual framework called the 4Rs (Novelli, Lope Cardozo and Smith, 2017)."* [**C1**: 2021]The 4Rs approach [**R6**] was a guiding framework which influenced and informed multiple interventions at a practical level across 14 conflict-affected countries (incl. Myanmar, Pakistan, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda) [**C3**: 2018, pp16-24], and states that "*for education programmers seeking to link programmes to peacebuilding, the '4 Rs' can be used as a diagnostic tool to inquire into the conflict factors of social systems, and for analysing education's potential to redress both the drivers and the legacies of conflict*" [**C3**: 2018, p28 and Fig 1, Section 1.2]. Subsequent programme innovations in the field included monitoring education provision for children and young people in Rakhine State, Myanmar; analysis of education materials in schools and implications for social cohesion in Pakistan; school-based training for teachers in Sierra Leone; and early years and youth skills development in Uganda [**C3**: 2018]. There is also evidence that this approach was adopted by other sectors in some UNICEF country offices: "*Some countries, such as Uganda, integrated peacebuilding into policies for other sectors, for example, in the Conflict and Disaster Risk Management Guidelines, as well as the national strategy, action plan and reporting guidelines to protect children from violence*" [**C3**: pp64-65]. UNICEF has also highlighted the contribution of the 4Rs to early childhood development programming [**C4**: 2018], including the recommendation to develop conflict prevention frameworks for Early Childhood Development (ECD) using the 4Rs framework. It also advocates multi-level ECD services based on the 4Rs framework that ensure "*equitable distribution, inclusion of all identity groups, recognition of all cultural voices and identities and reconciliation of past injustices*" [**C4**: 2018, p6].

I2: Influenced and informed national education ministers' policy development and planning in countries affected by conflict

There is also evidence that the research has changed the way in which national education ministries undertake national education policy and planning. For example, in June 2016 researchers from the consortium presented at the Pan-African Symposium on Education, Resilience and Social Cohesion held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Smith drew on the PBEA research [**R3, R4**: 2016] to highlight the various roles education plays in the context of conflict and the importance of system-wide policy reforms [**C5**: 2016, pp13-14]. Subsequently, 14 Ministers of Education (Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda) adopted a communiqué which recognises the multiple roles of education in fuelling and contributing to peace, holds the Ministers to strengthening education systems through conflict analysis and combatting violence through ensuring a curriculum that is culturally and economically relevant [**C5**: 2016, pp6-7]. The 4Rs have also been adopted as an underpinning framework for the guidelines used by national

education ministries in undertaking education sector analysis, a key requirement for applying for funding through the Global Partnership for Education [**C6**: 2021, pp73-75]. The Education Sector Analysis Methodological Guidelines are jointly produced by the major international organisations in the field, UNESCO IIEP, UNICEF, World Bank, GPE to guide education policymakers. Volume 3 includes explicit, direct reference to the 4Rs which are disseminated in English, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish to ministries in over 170 countries.

I3: Influenced and informed international organisations and practitioners in the field (British Council, DFID and Oxfam IBIS, Denmark) The research has attracted the attention of other international organisations who have made use of the 4Rs framework. For example, the 4Rs framework is included in a British Council thought leadership publication on the role of education in peacebuilding. The report concludes that international organisations should 1) put conflict analysis at the heart of programme design and 2) draw on "*well-established strategic frameworks such as the 4Rs approach*" [**C7**: 2019, p18]. The report was launched in April 2019 at an event hosted by British Council Country Directors from Ukraine, Yemen and Libya with participants from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the House of Commons and International Alert. The 4Rs framework has also been used in professional development for DFID staff [**C8**: Sept 2019]. A DFID Education Adviser has subsequently confirmed that she uses the 4Rs framework in her work on the UK Conflict, Security and Stability Fund in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, stating, "*I have to show that the education intervention will contribute to stability and security (i.e. peacebuilding), so I've drawn on the 4Rs framework for that. I also draw on it when reviewing our existing interventions under that fund*" [**C9**: 2019]. Also, at the country level, other organisations are applying the framework to their project planning processes. For example, Oxfam IBIS (Denmark) indicates that "*we are very much inspired by this concept, approach and [4Rs] framework on peacebuilding and education*" and has used it in its work with partners and communities in Mali and South Sudan [**C10**: 2019]. Oxfam IBIS used the framework to highlight themes and links between existing project activities, "*strengthen their theory of change*", "*explicitly underline that (social) justice and equality are important parts of peacebuilding and of redistribution, recognition, representation and reconciliation*" and "*better understand sources and root causes of conflict*" [**C10**: 2019].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

C1: PBEA Programme Manager, UNICEF, New York confirming the influential role and impact of Ulster's research on education and peacebuilding

C2: UNICEF Evaluation Office (2015) Evaluation of UNICEF's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme (PBEA)

C3: UNICEF (2018) Learning for Peace: Narratives from the Field. New York

C4: Early Childhood Peace Consortium (2018). Contributions of Early Childhood Development Programming to Sustainable Peace and Development. New York: Early Childhood Peace Consortium. (pp.17-19)

C5: UNICEF (2016) Report on the Pan-African Symposium on Education, Resilience and Social Cohesion: Strengthening education policies and programmes to achieve SDGs and Africa's Agenda 2063

C6: UNESCO, UNICEF, The World Bank and the Global Partnership for Education (2021) Education Sector Analysis Methodological Guidelines: Volume 3 (publication delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic) – final draft available highlighting the influence of Smith's publications and references to 4Rs

C7: British Council (2019) Teaching for Peace: Education in conflict and recovery.

C8: Contribution to UK DFID staff professional development programme on the role of education in peace and stability (10 Sept 2019)

C9: Email from DFID Education Adviser, British Embassy, Rabat confirming use of 4Rs for education programming in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia (Oct 2019)

C10: Statement from Senior Programme Advisor, Oxfam IBIS re application of framework to country planning, supplied by Oxfam IBIS (March 2019)