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Comments by Sida:

Sida welcomes the day of General Discussion “The right of the child to education in emergency situations” and believes this day will increase the awareness of the need for support of education activities in situations of emergency.

Education in situations of emergency can be a mechanism to use not only for teaching and learning but also a strategy to protect children and to promote the rights in, to and through education for all. It is crucial that these rights come in an early stage of intervention in an emergency or crises as it can build the foundation for a democratic, inclusive society where all women, men, girls and boys have equal rights.

Sida believes in the right to education for every learner to get equal opportunities of access to education without discrimination on any grounds.

Education should be childcentred, participatory, inclusive and gender sensitive. The learning should be of high quality and the content should be relevant for personal and societal development. In a situation of conflict, textbooks can reduce prejudices and increase understanding and tolerance of differences. Unless attention is paid to quality aspects of education in situations of emergency or stages of conflict, the potential benefits of education for the development of cultures of prevention and democratic societies may be lost. Education that is not based on human rights principles, that reproduces discriminatory practices, may on the contrary contribute to permanent conflicts and root causes of violence. Therefore, it is Sida's view that education in situations of emergency must be quality education, and that quality education is inclusive in the sense that it does not discriminate on any grounds.

In strategies for development of education in situations of emergency there is a need to balance short-term objectives such as increased enrolment with sustainable long term objectives to develop quality education.

Learning as well as the possibility to play in school creates opportunities for the child to develop in a safe environment.

The learning outcomes should be for the individual where knowledge, skills, values and abilities enhance opportunities to participate in society. In a post-

conflict country vocational training might play a vital role in building up a work force. In a country with a history of turmoil and war, there might also be forgotten skills like agriculture cultivation that can be re-introduced in the society through education.