
Session 3: Community Prevention and Protection



Learning Objectives

At the end of this session participants will be able to:

1. Describe measures for community based protection including physical protection and provision of alternative learning sites and schedules.
2. Explain the approaches to community involvement in school management, construction and rapid response to attacks and how they can protect education from attack.
3. Conduct a stakeholder negotiation process to develop school and community based codes of conduct to protect schools from violence and political interference.
4. Make decisions about which community based approaches might be appropriate for their countries to protect education from the impacts of armed conflict.



Key Messages

1. Support community organizations and school or university management committees in protecting education from attack and from politicization.
2. Ensure full community participation in decision-making and responses.
3. Decide what physical protection will be most effective in the locality.
4. Support negotiation with potential attackers, where this is safe, and the concept of schools as safe sanctuaries/zones of peace.
5. Minimize the use of schools for sensitive political events.
6. Seek support for community actions from regional, national and international levels.
7. Always consider how to keep community members safe when carrying out protection and prevention responses.

Time:

130 minutes

Method:

Presentation, case studies, small group work, role play

Resources / Materials needed:

- Laptop, projector, screen, flipcharts, markers, VIPP (meta) cards in different colours, tape on each table
- Session 3 power point presentation
- Module 3: Community Based Protection and Prevention
- Handout 3.1: Nepal Case Study: Negotiating Schools as Zones of Peace
- Handout 3.2: Role Play Scenario
- Role Cards for Community Based Negotiations and enough name tags for all participants
- Handout 3.3 : Country Assessment: Community Prevention and Protection

Preparation for this session:

- Review this session and the accompanying Module 3: Community Protection and Prevention
- Review Session PowerPoint slides
- Copy and cut up role play cards. Make enough for all participants.

Session Outline

Minutes	Contents
10	1. Introduction to community involvement in protection and prevention
10	2. Community involvement in school management, construction and rapid response
10	3. Alternative learning sites and schedules
10	4. Physical protection
70	5. Community based negotiations and role play
20	6. Actions to consider
130	TOTAL TIME

Note to Facilitator: This session has been designed to maximize the experience of setting up and negotiating conflict free zones in schools. If this approach is not a priority for the participants, or is not feasible due to security reasons, the session can be reduced by 30-60 minutes and the focus can be placed on planning community actions in the exercise provided in Part 6 of the session.

1. Introduction to community involvement in protection and prevention

10 minutes

1. Introduce the session by explaining that community involvement is critical to protecting education from attack. A number of countries have developed community approaches to protect students, teachers, and school structures from deliberate attacks; to mitigate the impacts of the attacks; and to prevent further targeting of education from occurring.
2. Ask participants: **What approaches, if any, have been developed in your country by communities to protect education from conflict and targeted attacks?** Take 3-4 responses.
3. Show Slide 2 and review the following points about community involvement in protection:
 - Community involvement in the management and protection of schools sends a message to potential attackers that schools are local institutions supported and valued by local people.
 - All community-based responses mentioned in this module should be judged on the relevance to the particular local context and if used should be adapted to suit local needs.
 - Community approaches are not always sufficient on their own.
4. This session will address the following approaches (Slide 3):
 - Community participation
 - Physical protection
 - Alternative learning sites and schedules
 - Community based negotiations
 - Depoliticizing school management
 - Community involvement in rapid response to attacks, school management, and construction

2. Community involvement in school management, construction and rapid response

10 minutes

1. Explain that community involvement has been an important factor in a number of countries to protecting schools from attack in a range of ways. Show the corresponding slides and explain the following:
2. **Community involvement in school management** (Slide 4)
 - **Strengthening school committees** or governance to make school management more democratic and engage in protection measures. (Afghanistan and Nepal).
 - **Involvement of religious or community leaders** in school governance, teaching and curriculum design can remove ideological or religious motives to oppose or attack education. (Afghanistan).
 - **Safety and security plans.** At the school level, the school management committee, teachers and students can be involved in the development of safety and security plans to protect schools and respond appropriately in the event of an attack.
3. **Community involvement in school construction** (Slide 5)
 - **Community support for schools.** Schools requested to be built by communities may be less likely to be attacked according to survey responses in Afghanistan.ⁱ At the same time, schools built with assistance from international donors or military may be more vulnerable to attack,
 - **Community participation in construction.** Consultation in design, the use of community resources to build schools, and the use of community members to maintain schools can increase schools' resilience to attack if perpetrators understand the community's stake in protecting schools.
4. **Community involvement in rapid response** (Slide 6)
 - **Rapid response mechanisms** for repairing and rebuilding schools that have been damaged by attacks need to be improved, not only to return children to school as quickly as possible, but also to send a message to perpetrators that the education system can function regardless of attacks.
 - **Stockpiling** school supplies and building materials as part of an emergency preparedness plan can aid in rapid response.
 - **Publicizing threats.** Attracting attention to threats of attacks by publically broadcasting threats on local media can prevent attacks, as was the case in Afghanistan.

3. Alternative learning sites, school schedules, and education delivery methods

10 minutes

1. (Slide 7) Explain that one of the most widespread practices for ensuring access to education is to provide alternative learning places and delivery mechanisms. This has been done in countries such as Afghanistan, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Sudan, Colombia, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Among the approaches employed are the following:

- **Relocation to less visible buildings or locations.** Relocation may involve creating safe learning environments in homes, mosques, basements, or in more remote locations, sometimes requiring the movement of families or students away from the conflict. (Examples: Afghanistan, Eritrea, former Yugoslavia.)
- **Government camps.** Schools have been set up by the government in camps away from the areas of conflict. (Example: India)
- **Movable schools.** In regions with shifting conflict locations, schools, students and teachers have been packed up and moved from one location to another to avoid being targeted. (Example: Central African Republic)
- **Community schools.** To improve the protection of schools community based education approaches have been implemented, restricting or eliminating donor visibility, hiring teachers from the community, and using unbranded materials and vehicles. While this approach has succeeded in some countries, it has been problematic in others. In Nepal, community schools were viewed by the insurgent Maoists as private, a symbol of a privilege and counter to their ideology of universal government-funded education. (Examples: Afghanistan, Nepal)
- **Distance learning.** The use of radio or television broadcasts and distribution of teaching packets have proven effective in delivering education to children during armed conflict and attack in countries. (Examples: Sri Lanka, Burundi, OPT and Iraq)
- **Accelerated learning programs.** Providing accelerated courses for students denied access to schooling for months or years has been implemented in countries such as Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Occupied Palestinian Territories.

2. Ask participants

- *Which of these strategies, if any have been implemented in your country?*
- *What has been their success?*
- *What are the drawbacks? Is quality education affected?*

4. Physical protection

10 minutes

1. (Slide 8) Explain that among the physical protection measures documented in a range of countries to keep students and teachers safe and minimize damage to schools buildings include the following: documented in a range of countries include the following:
 - **Armed escorts.** Armed security guards have been deployed to schools in Iraq and Afghanistan. Armed escorts for students and teachers on their way to and from school, and bullet proof vehicles to transport teachers or students. These measures have sometimes backfired and in some cases have triggered violence against the escorts and guards.
 - **Unarmed escorts.** Communities, families and NGOs have provided unarmed escorts to accompany children to school in countries such as Iraq, Kosovo, India, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
 - **Arming teachers.** In Southern Thailand, nearly 2000 teachers were given guns for protection and received training from the military in defense and negotiations with hostage takers.ⁱⁱ
 - **Security guards at schools.** Both armed and unarmed night guards have been deployed to protect schools. Ministry of Education protection officers have been deployed to collect information on threats and attacks and report back to the MoE

- **School defence and protection committees.** Unarmed school protection committees have been established to patrol and guard schools, especially at night. Community protection teams have been organized in Afghanistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Liberia.
- **Teacher housing.** Teachers moved into housing on campuses to reduce attacks on teachers by eliminating their travel from school to home. However, an unintended consequence is that teacher housing can also be a target for attacks.
- **School infrastructure.** Building a wall around school perimeters and reinforcing school infrastructure, such as installing shatter proof windows, have been done to prevent attacks, damage to buildings and injury to students and teachers.

5. Community based negotiations

80 minutes

1. Explain that different negotiation strategies with perpetrators have been implemented in several countries.
 - **Negotiation of schools as safe sanctuaries/zones of peace.** (Slide 9) Negotiation with stakeholders, including perpetrators, government, community members, school personnel, and community organizations to make agreements on codes of conduct to keep schools safe from all political and military interference or attacks, as has been done in Nepal.
 - **Negotiations before or after attacks.** Religious and other community leaders have been successful at negotiating agreements not to attack schools after threatening letters were sent to some schools in Afghanistan. Negotiations with perpetrators have also been conducted after attacks in order to prevent further attacks.
2. Ask participants the following questions:
 - *Have negotiation strategies been attempted in your country, what has been the result?*
 - *What are the benefits of this approach?*
 - *What are the concerns about this approach?*



Role play in community based negotiations

Note to Facilitator: *The role play provided can be adapted to the local context whereby the scenario and roles are changed to reflect the actual conflict situation and appropriate parties to a possible negotiation process. In addition, the suggested steps in the negotiation process can be modified to reflect community based and/or traditional negotiation processes that exist in the affected areas.*

1. Tell participants that they will have an opportunity to negotiate a code of conduct at the school level to experience conflict resolution and peace building processes that are necessary at all levels in conflict affected countries. (Slide 10)
2. Divide the larger group into groups of 10. There are roles and name tags for 10 stakeholders. Distribute role play cards to each group of 10. Tell participants they should play their

3. Review the Scenario in Handout 3.2 (Slides 11-13). Explain that the two community leaders have been selected to lead the negotiation of a code of conduct for Delta School.
4. Tell participants they can read through the Nepal Case Study on Handout 2.1 as an example of a successful negotiation.
5. Tell groups to prepare their roles. Negotiators should set up chairs in a circle with chart paper and markers to record the process.
6. Review the Steps in Negotiation.
7. Give groups about 45 minutes to complete their negotiations. Stop them regardless whether they have achieved consensus on the code of conduct.
8. After time is called, ask the following questions:
 - *How did the process work in your group? Were you able to reach agreement on all points?*
 - *Which issues were most difficult to resolve? How did negotiators manage to gain agreement?*
 - *What motivated stakeholders to reach agreement on points they were opposed to?*
 - *How would this process apply to communities and schools affected by conflict in your country?*
 - *What skills and training would have to take place to build capacity to community members and negotiators to be able to make codes of conduct?*
 - *What political will would have to be achieved?*

5. Actions to consider

15 minutes



Actions to consider: Country assessment of community protection and prevention

1. Use Handout 3.3: Country Assessment of Community Prevention and Protection. Tell participants that they will assess five categories of community protection to determine 1) the current status of the measure in their country, 2) the appropriateness of the measure for the local context. If time permits (or if the Role Play is not conducted), groups can also identify next steps and identify parties they recommend to implement the measures.
2. Divide participations into 5 groups and assign them to one of the five measures listed on the Country Assessment form:
 - Group 1: Ensure full community participation in responses
 - Group 2: Provide appropriate and safe physical protection
 - Group 3: Provide alternative learning sites, school schedules, and education delivery methods
 - Group 4: Implement community based negotiations
 - Group 5: Depoliticize the school environment
3. Have groups write down in VIPP cards which actions in their assigned category are appropriate put them on the wall under the sign COMMUNITY PROTECTION AND PREVENTION.
4. Let participants know that they will be returning to the list during the planning sessions of the workshop.

Handout 3.1: Nepal Case Study: Negotiating Schools as Zones of Peace

Case Study: Negotiating Schools as Zones of Peace in Nepal

Nepal experienced a 10- year Maoist insurgency in which schools were literally and ideologically caught in the crossfire of the Maoists and the army. Maoists introduced curriculum that was in conflict with the state curriculum. Schools were taken over by army to use as military staging grounds, and students were taken for Maoist indoctrination and recruited to join the insurgency. Strikes and occupation closed the schools for prolonged periods and 344 students and 145 teachers were killed in the conflict.

UNICEF, in partnership with local administrators, parents, community leaders, trained community facilitators, and local NGOs and INGOs, developed the Schools as Zones of Peace initiative. The partners mobilised community support to keep the conflict out of the schools. Community facilitators conducted back door negotiations with the Maoists to respect the concept of zones of peace. Open negotiations with all parties were not possible because they could have compromised the negotiators. The components of the programme included: 1) Analysis by parents, teachers, and community members about how the conflict affects the school and how the school can contribute to peace; 2) Negotiation of a codes of conduct with all parties to keep the conflict out of the schools; 3) Provision of psychosocial counseling for students and teachers to support them in dealing with the impacts of violence.

After the peace accord and elections, new violence and political unrest broke out among groups claiming exclusion from the political process in the Terai plains region, causing additional school closures, harassment, attacks and extortion of teachers, and recruitment of students and teachers for political purposes. A reformulated SZOP program was initiated in 2008 targeting 9 districts which included the following components: 1) national and district level advocacy and media campaigns; 2) negotiation of national codes of conduct and statements supporting SZOP; 3) negotiation of district codes of conduct and 4) negotiation of school codes of conduct embedded in child friendly school initiative. Programs also addressed one of the sources exacerbating the conflict and the targeting of schools: dysfunctional, politicized, and inequitable school governance, which left schools vulnerable to attacks and discrimination against members of cultural and linguistic minorities. By supporting the democratic election of representatives to school management committees and ensuring full participation of excluded groups in negotiation and enforcement of codes of conduct, schools were strengthened and threats to schools, teachers and students were reduced.

Sample School Code of Conduct: Nepal

1. No weapons in the perimeter
2. No political rallies other activities which are not included in the teaching programme.
3. No arrest or abduction of any individual within the premises.
4. No harassment to children in and outside schools.
5. No interference with normal development of education activities. (Strikes, teacher harassment, attacks on schools.)
6. No use of school uniforms or premises in warfare.
7. Never consider school premises as possible target, no use of school as armed base, no use of school uniforms for camouflaging purposes.
8. We request all the parties, the security forces and the Maoists respect these rules to help us make this school a Zone of Peace.

Handout 3.2: Role Play Scenario: Negotiating Codes of Conduct to Protect Education from Attack in District Delta

The Scenario:

A five year armed conflict in the country of Alphaland, which was based on access to resources and land in the rich delta region, was settled with a cease fire which has been respected by all parties for 6 months. A peace agreement is being negotiated about land rights and reforms that include three political parties, A, B, and C.

- **Party A**, comprised mostly of the dominant ethnic/linguistic group, has been in power during the conflict and is trying to get Party B to agree to a coalition government.
- **Party B**, comprised of an ethnic minority but having considerable land and wealth, was demanding an independent state. However it gave up its demands in the peace negotiations. It does not trust Party A and wants to continue to get support from members of Party C.
- **Party C** represents farmers and the poor. It has a militia and negotiations involve arms surrender and combining the militia with the country's armed forces.

Impact of armed conflict on education

- Attacks on schools, threats of attacks, and political interference were constant during the five years of conflict.
- District Delta was especially hard hit since much of the disputed land and resources are located there. Over 50 schools in District Delta were occupied by the army.
- There were fire fights between the army and armed groups, resulting in death and injury of over 100 students and 50 teachers.
- Over 25,000 children were displaced in the conflict. The government established temporary learning centres in neighbouring districts.
- 20 schools are to be used for upcoming provincial elections. During the last election there was some post-election harassment and violence against teachers by political parties if they didn't support their candidates.
- Students were recruited into Party C's militia and to government sponsored armed groups.
- Schools are being targeted by all political groups during the ceasefire and peace negotiation period to recruit students and teachers to their political ideologies. Over 40 schools have used for political rallies and meetings.
- Several strikes were also called to protest terms of the peace negotiations, and all schools in District Delta were closed.

Negotiation of school level codes of conduct

- Advocacy by the national and provincial Child Rights Commission has resulted in a climate favourable to local negotiations to protect schools from attacks and political interference.
- School management committee representative and community leader agree to lead a negotiation process to bring stakeholders together in a community meeting for Delta School.

Suggested Steps in the Negotiation Process

Hold a community meeting with stakeholders representing all perspectives negotiate a code of conduct for Delta School in District Delta. This is the first negotiation of its kind and if it is successful other schools will conduct the same process.

Step 1: Establish ground rules and get agreement on them

- One person speak at a time
- Limit your time to give others a chance to speak
- Speak and listen respectfully

Step 2: Ask representatives to identify the problems of targeting schools from their perspective

- Each representative has one minute to speak
- Negotiators summarize each point on chart paper

Step 3: Identify points of agreement and disagreement

- Confirm points of agreement
- Confirm points of disagreement

Step 4: Negotiating code of conduct

- Write areas of agreement into the school code of conduct
- Discuss and resolve areas of disagreement.
- Representatives offer solutions to areas of disagreement.
- Consensus reached on all points of the code of conduct

Step 5: Enforcement of code of conduct

- Discuss and agree on how code will be implemented.
- Discuss how code will be enforced
- Agree on consequences to stakeholders of not adhering to code of conduct.
- Set a date for evaluating code of conduct.

Role Cards for Community Negotiation of Codes of Conduct

1: School management committee chair (negotiation team)

- Community leader trusted by all groups despite affiliation with Party B
 - In charge of organizing negotiation
 - Has been involved in school protection and management for many years.
-

2: Community leader/elder (negotiation team)

- Trusted by all groups and parties
 - No political affiliation
 - Has grand children attending the school
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3: Local head of political party A in power during the armed conflict (representing dominant linguistic/cultural group)

- Depends on recruitment of teachers and students in political events to get support for its domination of local politics. Wants to continue the practice.
 - Wants to continue to hold elections in schools and have teachers serve as poll workers
 - Supports keeping schools open during strikes because strikes are called by the opposing political parties and wants to reduce their influence
-

4: Local head of political party B (representing an ethnic/linguistic minority with ties to dominant group)

- Wants to continue to recruit teachers and students for political events to show its strength against Party A.
 - Wants schools to close during strikes because it is an important tactic for expressing grievances about lack of equity in education.
 - Opposed to the school curriculum because it doesn't allow children to learn their mother tongue and doesn't like the way history is being taught.
 - Is opposed to using schools for elections since its members were targeted at the last election.
-

5: Representative of political party C which has armed militia (representing farmers and the poor)

- Wants to continue to recruit teachers and students for political events to show its strength against Party A and B.
 - Wants schools to close during strikes because it is an important tactic for expressing grievances about lack of equity in education
-

6: Head of security forces in district

- Doesn't trust Party B and C and wants to reserve the right to use schools for military purposes during the peace negotiations. Is concerned about violence on from Party C since its militia has not surrendered all of its arms.
 - Willing to forbid the use of schools for elections.
 - Willing to
-

7: Representative of Parent/Teacher Organization

- Wants all political use of schools to stop immediately.
 - Wants schools to remain open during strikes with no fear of retribution.
 - Wants to stop the practice of holding elections in schools.
 - Doesn't want schools to be used as IDP shelters during emergencies.
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8: Head of local youth club

- Wants schools to remain open during strikes and wants the political parties and security forces to agree to this.
 - Is opposed to having teachers and students recruited for political rallies and strikes.
 - Is opposed to using schools for elections and wants District Delta to make a law forbidding it.
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9: District education officer

- Wants to keep schools open during strikes but is afraid of retribution and harassment by political parties so has closed schools during strikes for safety reasons. Tried to keep school open during a recent strike but students and teachers were harassed.
 - Wants to be able to use schools for certain events so is hesitant to keep political parties from using the school for rallies. Is related to members of Party A.
 - Is not viewed as neutral by members of Party B or C or my some members of the community.
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10: Other community members and parents

- You are tired of the conflict and the impact of the conflict on your lives and children's schooling
 - You want to see the schools remain open, regardless of whether there are strikes called.
 - You are afraid to send your children to school during strikes, even if they are open, since you fear retaliation. The school was open during a recent strike but students and teachers were threatened and harassed on their way to school.
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Handout 3.3: Country Assessment: Community Protection and Prevention

Recommendation	Current status of measure	Next steps	Who should be involved
1. Ensure full community participation in responses			
• Ensure fair stakeholder representation and identify trusted leaders			
• Encourage youth participation if appropriate			
• Strengthen school management committees, making them more democratic and inclusive to ensure access to education for all.			
• Involve religious or community leaders in school governance.			
• Jointly prepare safety and security plans.			
• Involve communities in school construction and repair and rapid response.			
2. Provide appropriate and safe physical protection			
• Armed/unarmed escorts			
• Security guards in schools			
• School protection and defense committees			
• Teacher housing			
• School infrastructure			
3. Provide alternative learning sites, school schedules, and education delivery methods			
• Relocate schools to homes, basements, or religious buildings			
• Support community schools and eliminate branding from outside donors			
• Relocate schools away from affected areas, including camps			
• Provide distance learning			
• Provide accelerated learning			
4. Implement community based negotiations			
• Negotiate agreements on schools as conflict free zones			
• Hold negotiations before or after attacks			
• Negotiate to end military use of schools			
5. Depoliticize the school environment			
• End the use of schools and teachers in elections			
• Restrict the use of schools for political events and purposes			
