

Engaging Teachers in Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Contexts:

The case of Rwanda

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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Team members carried out extensive field research in South Africa and Rwanda and have produced a synthesis report on the entire project, two national country reports, and five policy briefs, as well as various journal articles.

Throughout the research project, team members have provided insights into how teachers are framed and supported in their roles as peacebuilders and promoters of social cohesion, how they experience this support, how their practices and attitudes are influenced, and the outcomes for learners therein.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Teachers play a vital role as determinates of educational quality throughout the world, and serve an essential role in nation building, identity construction, and the fostering of peace and reconciliation in conflict-affected nations. Their work shapes the learning experiences of children and young people, helping to influence their identities while providing skills for employment and continued peacebuilding. The Government of Rwanda has acknowledged the essential role that education and teachers themselves play in reconstructing Rwandan society following the devastating events of 1994. The nation's long-term strategy, Vision 2020, calls for the development of highly competent, skilled workforce, particularly for advanced technology and knowledge-intensive growth sectors as a means of economic development and providing stability towards encouraging lasting peace and social cohesion (Republic of Rwanda, 2000). Towards meeting these ambitious transformative goals, education continues to play an essential role in reconstruction, reversing past trends of education as a divisive, negative force within the country.

Education is responsible for everything that is likely to happen in a society- the good as well as the bad. Education is a double edged sword- it must be handled carefully to avoid leading the society into horrendous and inhuman catastrophes such as the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 (Interviewee from the Rwanda Education Board (REB)).

This study investigates the role of teachers as agents of peacebuilding and social cohesion in Rwanda, considering the conditions under which Rwandan education interventions support teachers towards this goal. This includes how teachers experience this support, how their practices and attitudes are influenced by national and international educational policies, and the reported outcome for the learners in their respective schools, educational districts, and communities at large.

Funded by the ESRC-DfID Joint Fund for Poverty Alleviation in the areas of teachers and educational policy, this study was embedded in UNICEF's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy (PBEA) Programme (2012-2016).

Through the following specific objectives, the study, therefore sought to:

- i. Critically examine the role of teachers and teaching in supporting education for peacebuilding in Rwanda;
- ii. Enhance the national and global policy dialogue and understanding about teachers as agents of peacebuilding in Rwanda;
- iii. Create and communicate new knowledge to policy experts, policy makers, and civil society organisations at local, national, regional, and international levels on the effects of education peacebuilding interventions

These objectives were operationalised through an empirically grounded evaluation of the nature, implementation, and impact of policies and interventions that are designed to support teachers as agents of peace both in public and private schools in Rwanda. The primary research question thus asked:

To what extent do existing education peacebuilding interventions in Rwanda promote teacher agency and capacity to build peace and reduce inequalities?

1.2. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In considering these objectives and the main research question, the study examined theories of change and conception of equity that underpin the selected policies and interventions, paying particular attention to how they seek to mitigate gender, religious, and socio-economic inequities to, in, and through education. The main research question was explored through the following six specific questions:

- i. What are the global and national policy contexts within which the education interventions in Rwanda are located with particular reference to teachers?
- ii. How have the selected interventions attempted to ensure that Rwandan teachers are recruited and deployed to remote and rural areas?
- iii. How, and in what ways do the textbooks and curricula used by teachers promote peace and tolerance in Rwandan schools?

- iv. How have the selected interventions attempted to ensure that Rwandan teachers are trained for peacebuilding?
- v. How have the selected interventions managed to ensure that Rwandan teachers build trust and enhance accountability to the local community?
- vi. What pedagogies and strategies do Rwandan teachers use in the classroom to develop peacebuilding skills and attitudes to reducing conflict between students in general and between girls and boys specifically?

1.3. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

This study based its analysis on the 4Rs framework developed by Novelli, Lopes Cardozo, and Smith(2015), focused on Redistribution, Recognition, Representation and Reconciliation. In order to develop a normative framework in studying education and peacebuilding, the '4Rs' draw upon notions of social justice and transitional justice thinking, which recognizes the multidimensional nature of inequality and injustice and their joint role as a driver of contemporary conflict. Academic environments, then, are impacted by conflict legacies, and so these legacies should be addressed in and through education. This framework is congruent with broader conceptualisations about peacebuilding (Galtung, 1976; Lederach, 1997) which emphasise the role of negative peace, or the cessation of violence, and positive peace, which addresses systemic and symbolic violence that acts as a driver of conflict. The 4Rs seek to address and redress both these legacies of conflict and the drivers of conflict via the dimensions of recognition, redistribution, representation, and reconciliation. These dimensions are linked with Nancy Fraser's (1995, 2005) work with social justice as an element of peacebuilding and Galtung (1976) and Lederach's (1997) work on reconciliation, along with more recent research which explores the stance of sustainable peacebuilding in post-conflict environments. This study examines existing inequalities within the education system and seeks to capture the interconnected nature of the '4Rs':

- **Redistribution** is concerned with equitable and non-discriminatory access to education programmes, resources, and outcomes for all groups in society, with particular emphasis on historically and currently marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

- **Recognition** concerns respect for an affirmation of diversity and identities in education structures, processes, and content in terms of gender, language, politics, religion, ethnicity, culture, and ability.
- **Representation** is involved with the process of open participation at all levels of the education system, for issues of governance and decision-making that are related to the allocation, use, and distribution of human and material resources.
- **Reconciliation** is concerned with the legacies of past events, injustices, and material and psychosocial effects of conflict, and reversing these injustices through developing relationships and trust (Novelli, Lopes Cardozo and Smith, 2015).

1.4. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The following presentation of findings and analysis examines the extent to which the government is using policy as an intervention to position and empower teachers to be agents of social cohesion. It concentrates heavily, then, on the environment as structured through policy, and this analysis is interspersed with response from interviewees. The next chapter (chapter 2) deals with macro policies, and is followed by chapters that more narrowly concentrate on issues of teacher recruitment, governance, and accountability (Chapter 3), continuing professional development (Chapter 4), curriculum and textbooks (Chapter 5), and teacher beliefs and practices (Chapter 6). In the final chapter (chapter 7) we will conclude our discussion and make some policy recommendations.

Chapter 2. Macro Policies: Decentralisation, Gender and Language

This chapter considers the research questions via the expressed aspiration found in policies issued by the Government of Rwanda which underpin a teacher's work. The purpose is to both contextualise the environment in which teachers operate, and also introduce some of the crosscutting themes found throughout the entire research project, as the aspiration of policy is not always the reality. So-called "macro policies" discussed here include decentralisation, policies of gender and inclusion, and language.

2.1. THE RWANDAN CONTEXT LEADING UP TO 1994

In the past, education was used as a tool to deliberately divide, discriminate, and sow hatred among Rwandans. Historians agree that Belgian colonialists, for their own political gains, manipulated ethnic ideology among Rwandans, initially granting the minority Tutsi positions of political power and access at the expense of the Hutu majority. Ethnic divisionism was codified through the use of national identity cards with individual Rwandan's assumed ethnic group indicated (Langford, 2005). This policy of socially constructed identification fuelled hatred and divisionism among Rwandans who had previously lived in relative peace. Education was characterised by discrimination and elitism that prevented a majority of Hutus from accessing education, as the Belgians favoured Tutsis with their divide-and-rule colonial tactics. This division was reversed in the postcolonial period, as the Hutu took power and promoted anti-Tutsi ideology and violence.

In the postcolonial period, ethnic hatred was further exacerbated within the school system. The curricula from the 1960s until 1993 typically promoted and reinforced social and economic divisions within Rwandan society (Gasabo, 2006). This divisionism is evidenced by the policy of ethnic quotas initiated during the second Rwandan republic from 1973-94, codified in Article 60 of the public of Rwanda education law regarding the conditions of transitioning from primary to secondary school. Thus, regional and gender quotas system (*iringaniza*) provided a legal framework for discrimination; hatred based on ethnicity was also perpetuated via materials and teacher instruction in classrooms. Teachers thus acted as direct agents of the government, incorporating a toxic narrative surrounding ethnicity, regionalism, and other forms of inequalities into teaching and learning. This made schools a particular site for the promotion of violence and discrimination in Rwandan society. With this destructive

political and historical past, considerations of the quality of education became the one of the most pressing challenges in Rwanda's quest for social cohesion and peacebuilding following 1994.

Thus, the Government of Rwanda has sought to reverse these impacts through a spate of policies and home grown, government-initiated interventions throughout the two decades since 1994, and these, along with interventions organised by non-government organisations, have sought to reimagine the Rwandan landscape as socially cohesive and economically sound.

2.2. POLICY OVERVIEW: TOWARDS IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

A common thread through much of the reformed policy seeks to reconstruct Rwandan national identity around notions of social cohesion, integration of diversity, and protection of minority groups. Smith (1991) reflects this apparent theoretical basis in arguing that national identity represents what is most "fundamental and inclusive" (p. 143). Smith suggests a civic territorial model of national identity which emphasizes a common culture and a common civic ideology. This conceptualization was echoed by several interviewees, including policy makers and teachers. One policymaker stated that "Identity and unity are the vehicles through which Rwandans can adopt national goals into their personal lives. National identity and nationalism nurture citizens' beliefs, symbols, and sentiments about their country and themselves".

In reimagining Rwandan identity around nationalism, policy has played an important role in challenging the notion that policy and the affairs of government are conducted within an elite sphere outside of the lives of local citizens. The government has sought to challenge this, specifically with a move towards decentralisation within education from early decentralising policies in the mid-2000s (MINALOC, 2004) to the current iterations (MINALOC, 2011).

The overall goal of the Decentralisation Implementation Policy is to reinforce grassroots-based democratic governance and equitable political, economic, and social development as well as maintaining effective functional and mutually accountable linkages between central and local government entities (MINALOC, 2011). Henceforth, the decentralisation policy in Rwanda has been conceived as a tool for empowering the populace to participate in development activities and to promote social cohesion. With regard to enhancement of social cohesion, decentralisation of education has proved to be instrumental. Specifically, the policy aims at consolidating national unity and identity by fostering, enhancing, and sustaining the

spirit of reconciliation and common belonging as a nation, and building and consolidating volunteerism, community work and self-reliance based on cultural and other values of collective responsibility, personal worth and productive involvement. It emphasizes fast-tracking and translating the regional integration agenda into politically and economically fruitful ventures for Rwandans in all corners of the country, and seeks to act a strong anchor for national stability, peace, and unity (MINALOC, 2011).

2.3. EDUCATION DECENTRALISATION POLICY

In particular, the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) (MINEDUC, 2013) calls for the instilling of values that promote unity, social cohesion, gender equality, and equity in all walks of life (MINEDUC, 2003), but not ignoring the key national core values of unity, patriotism, selflessness, integrity, responsibility, volunteerism, and humility (NIC, 2011). For the purposes of this study, decentralisation is viewed as inviting the participation of community members, government officials, and parents into the workings of schools. Rwandans at the local level meet to identify and resolve their village, cell, or sector conflicts with councils of arbitrators at each local administrative level that are responsible for settling disputes and uniting them. School leadership, then, is mandated with organising and facilitating this participation. As this report goes on to state in later discussions of parental involvement, this is not always actualised by school leadership, especially in rural areas.

2.4. TEACHER RECRUITMENT, GENDER AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY

The ESSP recognizes rights in education by addressing barriers of access to education for vulnerable children, including adolescent girls, children with disabilities, children living with HIV, and children from poorer backgrounds (MINEDUC, 2013). The Rwandan constitution emphasizes that every Rwandan has the right to education and the State has the duty to take special measures to facilitate the education of disabled people (Republic of Rwanda, 2003). Based on this fundamental and irrefutable constitutional argument, these policies seek to strengthen social cohesion and peacebuilding by emphasizing redistribution of resources and opportunities in education as well as recognition and representation of marginalized groups of people.

Gender equality is enshrined in the constitution and the government has made a marked effort to engage women in positions of government and power, evident in the Parliament, with a rate of 64% female MPs serving in the lower house (Holmes, 2014). In another example

policy, the Girls' Education Policy (MINEDUC, 2008b) stresses integration of gender equity and equality issues into national, district, and community programmes and the elimination of gender disparities in education and training. It also focuses on ensuring that boys and girls have equal access to educational opportunities through promoting girls' enrolment in science, mathematics, and technology subjects, and increasing literacy rates among women.

In relation to gender parity among teachers, though, a gap remains. According to the National Institute of Statistics (NISR, 2016), "women are generally underrepresented in other government institutions schools inclusive and traditional patriarchal attitudes continue to prevail". NISR findings identify that in almost 8 out of every 10 primary schools, the majority of teachers are female. But further up the ranks in school leadership, especially in secondary school institutions, females are far less represented. In fact, according to an interviewee from the Rwanda Education Board (REB), there are about 3 female head teachers for every ten primary schools, and the trend is not any different in secondary schools.

The gender gap remains high in public sector higher education, particularly in science and engineering. In fact, more women work as tutors and lecturers compared to men, but it is the opposite when it comes to senior roles. Positions such as director of studies and discipline masters, among others, are dominated by males. Table 1 indicates an almost imperceptible change to male-domination of secondary school leadership since 2013.

Table 1: Teachers and administrative staff in pre- primary, primary and secondary education from 2011 to 2015

	2013		2014		2015	
Gender	F	M	F	M	F	M
Pre-primary	81.3	18.7	80.3	19.7	79.6	20.4
Primary	53.1	46.9	53.3	46.7	53.5	46.5
Secondary	28.5	71.5	29.2	70.8	29.9	70.1

Source: MINEDUC, 2016

2.5. LANGUAGE POLICY IN RWANDAN SCHOOLS

Rwanda's policy stipulates English as the medium of instruction (MOI) from upper primary (Primary 4) to university while the mother tongue, Kinyarwanda, is used in nursery and until Primary 3. The Government of Rwanda took a decision in 2008/2009 to use English as a

medium of as necessary for Rwanda's vision for education, business and trade, and regional and international relations as information and communication technology development propels Rwanda's economy towards the goal of a middle-income status by 2020 (MINEDUC, 2008a). This narrative is strongly conveyed through policy and was echoed by an interviewee from REB.

While this perspective champions the English language as a way to boost business and trade and to lead to the achievement of national goals and objectives, reception of the MOI shift has been mixed. As Kinyarwanda is the most widely spoken, it was a natural choice for early years before children are exposed to English, especially for households with parents who attended school in French and thus do not speak English. However, the shift from Kinyarwanda to English at Primary 4 was a cause for concern with some parents, who advocated that Kinyarwanda shouldn't be used at all. One Parent Teacher Committee member interviewee asked;

where will my child use Kinyarwanda when applying for either a job or scholarships? I want my children to enjoy East African Community fruits, go overseas and compete internationally—can that happen with weak English that will start in upper primary? I doubt.

Further, English as the MOI has some challenges for both learners and teachers. Many of them have not yet mastered the English language and therefore face difficulties in expressing themselves properly in classroom. This heavily affects learners' use and mastery of English language since they are being taught by teachers who have a similarly poor grasp on the language. Thus teacher interviewees argued that "as long as a teacher is not conversant with the language of instruction, it is hard for him/her to explore approaches or pedagogies of critical thinking, problem solving, analytical thinking, and innovation as required by the competency-based curriculum. And this contributes heavily to the present poor quality in our education system". Thus, increased training in English for teachers, including effective pedagogies for using English and instruction in the language itself, is imperative for an increase in quality and to ensure that there is little linguistic division between rural areas where English proficiency is less common, and urban areas where the access to proficient speakers, including foreign teachers from Uganda and Kenya, provides many opportunities for gaining proficiency. This is an imperative not only for educational quality, but social cohesion that accompanies fair distribution of resources.

Chapter 3. Recruitment, Deployment, Governance and Management

This chapter considers aspects of the teacher workforce lifecycle, including recruitment, deployment, governance, management, and trust and accountability measures which include the role that parents and communities play in local education environments via decentralisation.

3.1. TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND DEPLOYMENT

In Rwanda, recruitment of teachers in public schools was reformed via the ESSP and follows a supply-based construction. With decentralisation, each of the 30 districts is now responsible for the recruitment and deployment of teachers. The Teacher Development and Management Department (TDM) of REB provide guidelines for teacher employment, including district recruitment quotas. Districts have sufficient legal structural procedure and autonomy to recruit teachers at the primary level for their schools. The role of the central education office in this context is to set the general overarching standards for teachers' recruitment. Teachers typically apply for vacant positions at the district level and REB as a wing of the Ministry of Education are officially informed once recruitment decisions have been made (MINEDUC, 2013).

Although recruitment is done at the district level (especially for primary placements), a number of other ministries are directly or indirectly involved with teachers' recruitment (for secondary placements). A senior official interviewee at REB explained that the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) is involved since districts are located in a given region which belongs to local government. The process of teacher recruitment also involves the Ministry of Labour, which is concerned with public personnel and the Ministry of Finance, which is key in financial planning. However, all of these exist at a macro level of government, and their impact on day-to-day decision-making is negligible.

The budget is drawn at a central level and approved by the cabinet with budget ceilings for each sector and sub sector that must not be exceeded. In response to this, majority of the head teachers interviewed particularly from rural areas stated that, to a certain degree, REB imposes quotas of teachers to be recruited, which comes into conflict with budget ceilings which cannot be lifted. One head teacher reported the resulting problem of distribution:

Teachers have become unevenly distributed and thus school administrators have difficulties finding qualified teachers who are appropriate for rural schools and who will stay on the job due to strict measures in the recruitment process, such as imposition of the ceiling that districts should not go beyond. This situation impacts negatively on the quality of education provided particularly with rural schools compared to their counterparts in urban locations.

3.2. THE CHALLENGES OF RURAL DEPLOYMENT

Teachers deployed to rural schools indicate that their teaching experience is very different from that of their urban-based colleagues. Social cohesion quite often goes hand in hand with social amenities, and, unfortunately, rural postings are often accompanied by poor access to these amenities. Like any other society, teachers in Rwanda cannot comprehend social cohesion without fulfilling their own needs. Rural schools visited for this study demonstrated a wide range of need: there are serious issues of both teachers and students travelling long distances to reach schools sites, campus water shortages, poor sanitation facilities, insufficient pedagogical materials, overcrowded classrooms, and poor institutional support, to name a few. Combined with poor access to health facilities and other urban amenities, few teachers are willing to accept and remain in rural posts. At present, there is no dedicated intervention sponsored by the government to incentivize such rural postings.

Rwandan teachers receive low salaries, even in comparison with other African standards, and often expect for these salaries to be supplemented through parental contributions. In the poorer rural areas, parents cannot afford to supplement or “top up” teacher salaries. One teacher interviewee reported that while pay was the same between rural and urban teaching posts, the opportunities to top up that income, such as selling goods in the market, were fewer.

Often due to the lack of teachers, class sizes in rural areas are larger, essentially lowering the pay of teachers as they are required to do more work for the same amount of money paid to their urban colleagues. This presents a serious threat to social cohesion as children from wealthier families, typically in urban areas, receive a better quality of education in smaller, better stocked classrooms, which improves their later income, health, and quality of life in comparison with that of their rural peers. Rural learners, conversely, receive the lowest quality of teachers, or overworked, overextended teachers, and thus a consequently low quality of education (VSO Rwanda, 2004).

Such situation undermines the effort of social cohesion among teachers who, moreover, have the same qualification and experience and yet experience different treatment. The result is a situation where teachers in rural schools feel rejected and resort to other means to make ends meet or even resent the profession all together,” reported a head teacher interviewee. To combat this growing threat to social cohesion, rural schools need to recruit personnel at least as qualified and able as those of urban areas, and monetary or non-monetary incentives such as housing are required.

3.3. POLICY BASIS FOR TEACHER GOVERNANCE

Concerns surrounding quality of education have led to a movement that demands strong teacher governance. Rwanda’s Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS2)(MINECOFIN, 2007) highlights the key objectives for improving education, focusing on access to high-quality, equitable education with an effective and efficient system that engages a variety of external stakeholders. It specifically calls for improvement to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects and information communication technology (ICT) programming, and the explicit promotion of peacebuilding through teaching positive values, critical thinking, Rwandan culture, unity, and reconciliation. These high-level objectives crosscut education from pre-primary to the tertiary level. Such objectives demonstrate the government’s aspiration for teachers to be actively involved in the (rec)construction of a socially cohesive society and thus they must be held accountable for towards meeting these objectives.

Put simply, Ballard and Bates (2008) observe that it is necessary to hold teachers accountable for learning to take place. One policymaker interviewee noted that the accountability of teachers is at the heart of effective implementation of educational policy initiatives in Rwanda because the real materialization of education policy intentions takes place at class. Rwandan teachers are required by the Ministry of Education to carry out their work in a trustworthy manner and they are held accountable by REB, their District Education Office, their specific school leadership and the broader community at large, with the accountability commitment at the local level the most pressing.

With public service reform and decentralisation currently being carried out across Rwanda, responsibilities at the district level for any educational programme, planning, implementation and monitoring is held by the Office in Charge of the District Education, headed by District Education officer, and, above them, the Sector Education Officer (MINEDUC, 2008c). It is

through these two officers that teachers are supposed to be held accountable due to office mandates to follow up and report on the implementation of education activities. While these responsibilities do not appear to have a clear, policy-based structure for application, there are several tools used for teacher accountability considered here, along with response from interviewees: *imihigo* contracts for social responsibility and professional notions of conduct.

3.4. ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES: IMIHIGO CONTRACTS

Like all other civil servants, teachers annually sign performance contracts known as *imihigo* and these contracts are held by respective institutions as a debt for the objectives that they have set for themselves. Performance contracts are measured against an agreed-upon set of fulfilling responsibilities that one has to carry out, with governance, social, and economic indicators designated as performance indicators. This contract system is meant to ensure a just experience of the society in that social institutions are held accountable to the population that they serve. This is applicable to teachers, students, and school authorities. In terms of education, teachers commit themselves to accomplish curriculum objectives, government requirements, and community engagement. *Imihigo* requires an extensive planning and evaluation process that, when applied completely and consistently, promotes social cohesion and reduces social disturbances (Republic of Rwanda, 2006).

However, many of the head teachers, teachers, lecturers, and principals interviewed asserted that the performance contract process among teachers still encounters problems, such as poor monitoring of agreed-upon indicators and the setting of unrealistic targets due to a lack of both financial and material support to carry out the required objectives in their daily work.

On head teacher interviewee argued that

Adequate measures and conditions such as improving teaching and learning conditions to strengthen teachers' attitude towards their duties and invariably quality instruction to guarantee successful and effective learning should be put in place in order to hold teachers accountable. While teachers ought to be accountable for learners to receive quality education, there is no evidence that the financial and pedagogical material support for teacher can guarantee such outcomes. Accountability is more than obeying the laid down rules; it is results oriented as the attention of good governance is more on outputs than on inputs.

3.5. ACCOUNTABILITY: PROFESSIONAL

In governing teachers' behaviour, the Rwandan National Teacher Code of Conduct articulates a clear set of expectations that should govern the professional behaviour of all teachers both

inside and outside the classroom: the Teacher Appraisal and Evaluation System, which presents a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating teacher performance in general to facilitate continuous teacher assessment, and the National Teacher Professional Standards. They express statements of classroom competencies which all Rwandan teachers are expected to demonstrate. An official cited some of the rights and responsibilities illustrated in the teachers' code of conduct which include but not limited to the following:

A teacher is prohibited from vulgar or disrespectful language; prohibited to share private information about the learner except with a parent or guardian; avoid abuse of alcohol and tobacco, dress code, sexual contact and romantic relationships with learners. The teachers' rights proposed in the code include: Equal opportunity, right to engage in Religion and political activities which do not conflict with the professional responsibilities, contract and income, where a teacher is allowed to have external employment which does not interfere with the contractual obligations among other many rights.

However, the code encounters limitations in implementation since the officials who are supposed to be involved in investigating misconducts, such as school directors, school boards, and District Education officers, are unable to dedicate the time needed given their other work commitments.

As is evident throughout this research, policy is ambitious in its pursuit of accountability measures, but other factors, such as the systemic capacity to operationalise the stated goals of the policy, or stakeholders' willingness to implement it, endanger the policy's longevity. For professional conduct, for example, interviewees suggested that few, irregular visits are made to schools by both central and local inspectors, and it is evident that it is still difficult for inspection to measure teacher accountability in terms of learner's knowledge, skills, and competences according to these standards, which are more focused behavioural irregularities than teacher performance.

3.6. PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE

Rwandan schools are tasked to maintain close relationships with different private and public local institutions and figures, such as vice mayors in charge of social affairs, members of the police and locally stationed military, and locally-operating non-government organizations. Such institutions and agencies come to schools and talk to both teachers and learners in view of enhancing social cohesion and peace values among learners and hence in the local community. Others, such as Aegis Trust and the Institute for Research for Peace and Dialogue (IRPD) provide continuing professional development for teachers directly (more on this is found in Section III). This approach was explained by a head teacher interviewee, who stated that:

The rationale of parental and communal involvement in school leadership is to give learners another source of information by sharing with them of what happened in Rwandan past, how it happened, its consequences and how to avoid it happen again. Teachers and learners are given an opportunity to listen to a number of various speakers on peacebuilding need and requirement for all Rwandans as an addition to what is taught by teachers in day to day class room setting. Once the community retains contact with teachers, teachers in return feel supported by the community to carry out their responsibilities.

Through decentralisation, community involvement is meant to both empower teachers and hold them accountable to the communities they serve. Interviewees cited problems such as poor learner behaviour and teachers and truancy, both from teachers and students that were solved due to community interaction with school leadership. Multiple head teachers ascertained that teachers often shared with parents the status and growth of their children's education during individual parent-teacher meetings or in general assemblies. Through school leadership, teachers can communicate regularly with parents and guardians and share broader school concerns. Accountability is viewed as bilateral: parents who do not give learners enough time to study or come to school in time are usually called to meet teachers particularly class teachers and school leadership.

Unfortunately, despite the emphasis on parental involvement in the learner's day-to-day life for better accountability, generally parental follow-up of their children's education is weak. Interviewees expressed that parents blindly over-trust teachers to do everything for their children and this makes accountability unbalanced. Conversely, some parents are too busy to be involved with their child's education. An REB official interviewee commented that:

In particular, parents from urban schools are too busy seeking for a living. On the other hand, in rural areas lack of parental guidance is due to the fact that parents are not educated. They are not interested in knowing how their children are taught. They even don't want to discuss what the teacher teaches learners or problems that school leadership faces. They claim that their work is to pay school fees and the rest is for the teachers and head teachers. Learners are quite followed up by parents who know the value of education.

School leader interviewees echoed these concerns about parental involvement and identified several challenges in implementing such policies. First, some school head teachers do not form strong and well-informed parents' committees to help them manage schools. Others have been known to elect weak and old parents without the ability and courage to question the head teacher, resulting a sycophantic parent-teacher committee. Finally, in limiting access to involvement, head teachers would avoid some parents who are seen to domineering, with these trends being most common in rural areas.

The level of parental involvement and the corresponding teacher accountability offered by parents were found to be complementary with the parents' level of education and socio-economic status. Learners with college-educated parents expressed having a network of social relationships to facilitate their success. In rural areas, the availability of a personal network was far more limited, as parents were less likely to be college-educated. The issue of socio-economic status, then, presents a potentially damaging factor for building and maintaining social cohesion.

Chapter 4. Teachers' Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in Rwanda

From independence in 1962 until the genocide in 1994, teacher education was not made a priority and operated in a near-constant state of change and reform. Today, especially in light of continued policy change with the launch of the competency-based curriculum (CBC), the provision of teacher training continues to be of paramount importance. In addition, with the reforms to school enrolments and access to free basic education, there is a dire need for continuing, in-service training to handle these changes, which necessitates a large workforce of well-trained, motivated, and professionally up-to-date teachers. Besides its essential role for education quality, a commitment to effective and well-designed initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing or in-service professional development (CPD) are vital to ensuring that teachers develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become active agents of peace and social cohesion in classrooms, schools, and communities.

4.1. POLICY FOR EMPHASISING CPD

All education policy pronouncements in Rwanda appear in agreement that improving the quality of education demands well-trained teachers who will ensure a complete understanding of the overall principles of the curriculum and a detailed understanding of subject curricula of individual teachers (MINEDUC, 2008c). For this reason, from 2000, the Rwandan Ministry of Education has raised concerns with regard to the relevance of its teacher education system's conceptualisation and organisation. It was stipulated that the training of future teachers through ITE is crucial for producing a quality teaching workforce (MINEDUC, 2007). Teachers, specifically addressed in Vision 2020, are expected to be "sufficiently trained and competent to help in the moulding of the young people to translate theoretical knowledge into employable skills" (Republic of Rwanda, 2000). Poorly qualified teachers were also acknowledged as a contributing factor to the decline of educational quality. Despite this being acknowledged in policy, a review of operations and interviews with various stakeholders revealed that there appears to be no consistent programme for CPD in Rwanda, nor a consistent course for in-service teachers to improve their skills towards peacebuilding and social cohesion.

Rutaisire (2012) reported that despite the widespread recognition of the need to accelerate or intensify in-service teacher training, the current REB provision for CPD is ineffective since it is largely supply driven, with little or no reinforcement. However, an official from REB acknowledged the government's responsibility, indicating that some ad-hoc CPD offerings were taking place:

CPD is one of the REB's key responsibilities through In-service training (INSET) to empower Rwandan teachers to perform their duties responsibly and professionally. INSET remains with Rwanda Education Board through its Department of Teacher Development and Management. INSET programmes involve mainly school-based and off-site training programmes, many of which take place during holiday periods and REB has the responsibility to design, schedule and to oversee all activities related to these programmes.

4.2. THE NEED FOR CONSISTENT CPD

It was quite evident during this study that Rwanda needs a structured, permanent, and *consistent* system of continuing professional development for teachers. The education and training of teachers should not be limited to teacher's subject knowledge, but should transcend and emphasize knowledge of human rights, conflict, culture and historically marginalized groups (Mafeza, 2013).

The Ministry of Education should, therefore, develop its own capacity to provide training at both central and district levels as well as contract other institutions to provide training services. It is recommended that a CPD Advisor be appointed in each district to be responsible for developing a CPD strategy and plan for each district as well as directly facilitating district and school-level training activities, especially in teaching methods.

From the policies reviewed and data gathered from interviews, the following needs were indicated as having relevance for CPD for peace education specifically, as well as towards the more general CPD needs of teachers.

4.2.1 The need for training for the CBC and instructional English

Teachers and other stakeholders emphasised the need for CPD focused on implementing the new curriculum, which itself relies on topics related to peace and social cohesion. A REB official interviewee mentioned the need for training with the curriculum, which involves not only understanding new content but managing a wholly new style of delivery via learner-centered pedagogies:

Most importantly, teachers especially in Rwanda, where teachers are implementing a new curriculum whose content is mediated by teachers through learner centred pedagogies to create meaning in the Rwandan learners' specific social contexts of genocide against Tutsi and other forms of discriminations, there is an acute need, through CPD to reach the degree of agreement or discrepancy between textbook content and a teacher own positionality and experiences.

Furthermore, teachers with a French language background expressed their desperate need for special CPD in teaching skills for the English language, along with translating their previous content knowledge that was gained in French to the now-English classrooms. This is also a key to implementing the new curriculum and effectively relaying content and pedagogies that promote peace. More information about this curriculum and its role in enabling teachers as agents of social cohesion is discussed in Section IV.

4.2.2 The need for CPD that contributes to teacher professionalization

Stakeholder interviewees noted that Rwandan teachers are often viewed as unprofessional as they engage in routine activities without critically reflecting on the extent to which they are accountable to learners and ensuring that their practice is effective. This lack of professional accountability understanding often leads teachers to exhibit unprofessional conduct, disrespect and despise of parents and learners. So, CPD training to emphasise and imbue these professional practices will improve not only the delivery of content, but the overall value placed on the classroom. As teachers improve their social standing through professionalization, they will be better enabled to act as agents of social cohesion within their communities. A head teacher from school C stated that, teachers should be reminded that

Teaching involves aspects of mentoring and guiding learners to build their sense of humanity and, eventually, the outcome which leads to brighter future bring with it values of peace. Unfortunately, some teachers still believe that teaching is just pumping knowledge into the learner.

A principal interviewee seconded this assessment, noting that “Many teachers and parents equate learning with passing examination and obtaining good national examination results forgetting the most important aspect which is the bedrock of everything – attitude formation, values and what the learners do with the knowledge that they acquire”. The issue of professionalism is thus key for the improvement of educational quality and the delivery of peace-related content.

4.2.3. The need to network and share best practices

One valuable aspect of CPD is the networking, sharing, and personal development that occurs when a teacher is able to engage with colleagues. A REB official interviewee stated that “where teachers are able to access new ideas and to share experiences more readily, there is greater potential for schools and classroom improvement to invest in the development of staff and create opportunities for teachers to collaborate and to share best practices”. This further creates opportunities for cascading models of CPD, as teachers attend sessions and then can report back to their school and provide secondary training sessions: “Through CPD teachers expand and develop their own teaching repertoires and are clear in their purposes, hence, they are more likely that they will provide an increased range of learning opportunities for learners”. It is advised that CPD be offered at different levels from national to district level which allows each school sends teacher representatives from across the curriculum along with school-based mentors, senior mentors, head teachers, district education officers, and inspectors of schools. Thus, when they return to their respective schools, they can organize mini-workshops to share the techniques acquired.

4.2.4 The need for peace-specific CPD

In reviewing the data from interviews and focus groups, it was evident that there is a desperate need to facilitate Rwandan teachers’ learning of strategies for dealing with sensitive or traumatising topics, and enhancing peace values among learners. Further, they requested sufficient, consistent, and well-coordinated CPD which would provide training and development around issues of peace values, equity, negotiation skills, critical thinking skills, and tolerance. While no consistent peace-oriented CPD offerings were apparent to the research team, several ad-hoc or occasional interventions were investigated as partial responses to the need for CPD in peacebuilding and social cohesion.

4.3. INTERVENTIONS FOR PEACE-ORIENTED CPD

Reich (2006) identifies “home grown initiatives” as the comprehensive involvement of local actors in a wide range of activities that contribute to the prevention of violence and resolution of conflict. Accordingly, for peace processes to be sustainable within the community, local people have to be actively involved with limited external involvement that is context specific. CPD, then, should emphasise local responses to recovering from the conflict, and emphasise at home grown peace education initiatives.

In Rwanda, there are some well-designed and articulated interventions focused on peace education carried by both government and private organizations, including the National *Itorero* Commission, Never Again, Aegis Trust, the Institute of Research for Peace and Dialogue, and the Council of Protestant Churches in Rwanda, all of whom contribute to the landscape of peace-oriented training and development opportunities available both to teachers and non-teachers alike. Especially for teachers, there is important relevance: teaching about the danger of genocide ideologies is a complex subject that requires qualified personnel and appropriate teaching strategies and materials. For the purposes of this study, interventions that offer ad-hoc CPD focused on peace education were reviewed, with two mentioned in detail here: Aegis Trust and the Institute of Research for Peace and Dialogue.

First, Aegis Trust is an international non-government organization working to prevent genocide. AT offers Onsite Peace Education programmes at the Kigali Genocide Memorial site, and outreach programmes around the country, known as Community Peace Education. For teachers, these programmes provide methodology and practical knowledge using proven peace education theories, relevant practice, and inspiration from stories and testimonies from the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, as well as peacemakers' stories. After the training, teachers are given educational support materials that they can use to teach the peace component in class but also to drive a conversation in their communities. This is viewed as a potential response to teachers' lack of comfort with teaching about the genocide directly, according to an interviewee from Aegis Trust.

Second, the Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP) seeks to contribute to the construction of peace through the establishment of a neutral political space which is used to debate issues related to peacebuilding. It involves the promotion of critical thinking among youth both in schools and in villages. Teachers are key partners within the programme, as they play also the role of debate facilitators in their respective schools. For this, they engage in reflective group training sessions and discussions surrounding how aspects of the teaching field, such as implementing the new competency-based curriculum, can be congruent with teaching values of peace, according to an interviewee from IRDP.

Chapter 5. Rwanda National School Curriculum and Text Book Analysis

As was previously mentioned, before 1994, the Rwandan school curriculum and textbooks emphasized the teaching of divisionism based on socially constructed ethnicities. This curricula cultivated the language and mentality of genocide and thus education acted as a key driver of the social conflict in Rwanda that culminated into 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi (Langford, 2005). Thus, one of the most important goals of the new competency-based curriculum, textbooks, and teaching materials is to emphasize the teaching of peace values across all subjects, regardless of the nature of the subject.

The curriculum in particular is meant to be a vehicle of social cohesion. A REB official interviewee stated that, given the aspiration of Rwandan development and education policies, “it was technically mandatory for Rwanda to design a new curriculum not only fit for Rwanda’s purpose of peacebuilding but also for the region beyond her borders. Rwanda has to ensure that the Rwandan learners before leaving schools are equipped with technical and vocational skills as much as those who are proceeding to university”.

Towards that, this section examines both the curriculum and textbooks which serve as essential tools for standardising teaching within Rwanda. This analysis therefore sought to highlight how Rwanda’s history has necessitated the reform to curriculum and textbooks and how peacebuilding and social cohesion are now incorporated into both.

5.1. THE RWANDAN CURRICULUM BEFORE 1994

The transmission of ethnic hatred was strongly integrated into the curriculum and materials used throughout the colonial postcolonial years. Examples of this can be found in Kinyarwanda proverbs used in schools. Translated by Jean Paul Icyimpaye in 2013, many reflect the discriminatory and divisive tendencies within school materials during those eras:

- *Ababiribicaumwe: two people may kill one person*, implying the power of the majority Hutu over the minority Tutsi;
- *Ingomaidahoraniigicuma: the regime that does not revenge is redundant or passive*, encouraging Hutu to seek revenge against Tutsi; and

- *Uruvuzemugoreruvugaumuhoro: a family that is ruled or managed by a woman is ruined or gets demolished*, implying the low status and supposed incompetence of women in Rwandan society at that time.

These proverbs were used in schools to cultivate divisionism, gender bias, hatred, and negative attitudes among learners from their early years. For over four decades, instead of teaching and advocating unity, equity, and equality among Rwandan learners, schools were constantly and deliberately encouraged teachers to employ poisonous and vengeful content and pedagogical approaches.

5.2. DRAFTING THE COMPETENCY-BASED CURRICULUM

Several different iterations of curriculum were used throughout the post-genocide era through the early 2000s. At this time, the emphasis was on a knowledge-based curricular (KBC) approach, which focused mainly on imparting knowledge with little or no emphasis laid on competences and social skills. A REB official interviewee indicated that the competency-based curriculum (CBC) was developed to account for this shortfall and train up a competent workforce that reflects not only skills of employability but also humane, social skills fit for a socially cohesive Rwanda. Learners under the KBC were limited in being able to apply what was learned in school to daily, social life. The official went on to argue that

the CBC gives Rwandan learners the ability to use an appropriate combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values in order to accomplish a particular task successfully. That is, the ability to apply learning with confidence in a range of situations. Among the aims and objectives stated in CBC framework, there is a need to develop a learner who is patriotic and responsible citizen ready to play a full part in Rwandan society and beyond.

Towards the end of training up a workforce able to meet the capacities of the twenty-first century, the government has begun the full adoption of the CBC. The objectives of this curriculum are similar to those found throughout other Rwandan policy documents

to operate an education system which liberates citizens from discrimination in all forms, to contribute to a general culture of justice, peace, and tolerance, to establish a moral, intellectual, and professional academic programme towards the reconstruction and sustainable development of the country, and promote such the themes mentioned throughout: ICT and STEM, human capital for development, and patriotism, civic pride, and global awareness (Rwanda Education Board, 2015).

Within the curriculum, the content of all subjects are supposed to be integrated with peace values through various activities such as drama and debate clubs, and to promote language for social cohesion. The new CBC approach hence required strong input from different stakeholders in education, with both local and international groups giving guidance, including the National Itorero Commission, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, Aegis Trust, and Institute of Research for Peace and Dialogue. Their participation was not only essential in designing the curriculum, but also through their offering of continuing professional development, guidance, and counselling to Rwandan teachers and learners as well.

In view of this, the study conducted a critical analysis of the newly drafted curriculum (Rwanda Education Board, 2015) alongside the relevant policies mentioned throughout this report. Analysis of the policy and curriculum necessitated a careful of textbooks for both the old, pre-CBC curriculum and those being used in conjunction with CBC, the findings of which are presented here.

5.3. PEACE AND SOCIAL COHESION WITHIN THE CBC

The 2016 competency-based curriculum is the first curriculum to overtly put emphasis on the teaching of national values. Such national values include but are not limited to dignity and integrity, self-reliance, national and cultural identity, peace and tolerance, justice, respect for others and for human rights, solidarity and democracy, patriotism, hard work, commitment, and resilience. A REB official interviewee argued for an explicit approach to value instruction, saying that “once Rwandan learners acquire such national values, along with social cohesion and a peacebuilding attitude, Rwandans will become both skilled and humane citizens”. Thus, teaching Rwandan learners national values is seen to address issues of recognition through emphasising an inclusive national and cultural identity as well as respect for others and human rights.

In order to form this kind of a complete Rwandan citizen, the CBC suggested some crosscutting themes to be integrated into all the subjects, including peace values and the study of anti-genocide rhetoric. CBS uniquely requires that peace values be integrated into all subjects, including natural science and mathematical subjects, along with history, humanities, and the arts. Teacher interviewees agreed with this approach, with one saying,

‘To me as a Rwandan teacher, if I don’t include peace values in my teaching, the lesson would be incomplete. When you want to cover from sickness you talk about it. We must teach Rwandan learners a culture of forgiveness, a sense of citizens’ equality, equity and fairness in all aspects of life whether economically or socially before the law in order for them to live in peace with each other’.

The CBC attempts to address past injustices within the Rwandan education system which continually divided students along ethnic, gender, and class lines. Efforts are made to reform the system into a meritocracy. In examinations, for example, students’ names are hidden to avoid any bias on behalf of the exam marker. Additionally, continued emphasis on the topics of social cohesion and peacebuilding emerged in school site and classroom observations; teacher classroom language, student discussions, composition topics, and student club debates, among other aspects, were all seen as vehicles for building cohesion, encouraging conflict management, understanding of human rights, emphasising the role of family in maintaining peace and harmony, considering the consequences of disharmony in the society, and rights and responsibilities which are the foundation for peacebuilding.

While teacher interviewees and focus groups gave a mostly positive response to the content of the curriculum, some challenges surrounding its implementation were raised. While across many subjects, “democratisation process” as a topic essential for peacebuilding, teachers in the maths and sciences struggled to this into their teaching practice. They indicated that within the CBC, peace values are not clearly reflected and well-articulated in natural and mathematical subjects, yet these values are expected to be crosscutting. To this challenges, one maths teacher was able to give a creative response:

When I am teaching mathematics using a geometry set, I tell learners that, when some items or even one item gets lost from the set, the set is no longer a ‘set’ and so is a nation that excludes any one of its members. From here I am able to teach about peace values and social cohesion, i.e. how every Rwandan needs each other in order for Rwanda to be a full nation. This is how and why every Rwandan needs to be integrated in Rwandan society the way all items in the mathematical set need to be integrated in order to be a full set.

This creativity is evident of the role that teachers can play in influencing the curriculum, and thus more training, including teachers sharing their own methods and activities, will assist teachers in implementing the CBC.

5.4. TEXTBOOK CONTENT

Textbooks serve as instruments of extraordinary power in that they contain the knowledge and wisdom that a nation agrees to pass onto its younger generation through prescribed content (Heyneman, 2006). Given Rwanda's history with textbooks as advocating hatred and making use of genocidal language, the content of these materials is especially salient in reformed nation. A REB official interviewee concurred with this, stating that understanding of this past "drove REB to revise textbooks to eradicate the ethnically-biased textbooks that contained a lot of negative mastery symbols such as portraying Tutsi as foreigners in their own country and having animalistic features". Therefore, REB is producing new textbooks in an attempt to teach Rwandan learners how to use the academic knowledge in the interest of creating a harmonious society.

In light of this, textbooks for the CBC were analysed for textual and visual representations of diversity, including diversity surrounding gender, apparent sexual orientation (through presentation of families), and differently-abled persons, to ascertain if within the units, topics, illustrations, and other images reflected peacebuilding principles and values. While on the whole, a range of gender roles and illustrations of disability were present, including presentations of blind children using Braille books and children in wheelchairs in sections not focused on disability, the analysis identified some potential issues, which are summarised here.

The presentation of gender in the textbook illustrations focused on gender parity as "all about" helping women specifically, rather than centring it in a broader discourse that constructs parity as a social cohesion and equity issue. There was some reliance on traditional, unquestioned gender roles, such as a picture portraying "children enjoying the right to clothing" which shows only women or portrayal of women, without any men, collecting and carrying water, reinforcing the bias that it is "women's' work". Pictures of only boys playing football similarly conveys that it is a "male" game, rather than one to be enjoyed by males and females alike.

Focus groups and interviews with teachers suggested a further challenge in use of the prescribed books: the low level of language capacity impaired the ability of both teachers and students to understand and adequately make use of the material. Involvement of teachers, both in writing the books and training them in their use, is a partial solution to this problem.

On the whole, teachers felt excluded from the textbook drafting process. While a few do participate in writing textbooks, there are very few publishing houses in Rwanda and consequently, REB often relies upon textbooks published from outside the country. Those coming from Kenya or Uganda, for example, are subject to external influence and the textbooks are thus not as well contextualised as those written in-country. Names used in the textbooks were one area identified in the analysis and in focus groups. Westernised names like Andy, Grace, Nathalie, Amanda and Emeline, to name a few, are common names found in Rwandan textbooks. While some of these names are used in Rwanda, it can be viewed as a missed opportunity to incorporate more peace values into the work. Among traditional Rwandan names, there are some that directly denote peace and social cohesion. This includes Mahoro (*the peaceful one*; a male or female name), Uwamahoro (a variation that also means *the peaceful one*; a male or female name), Turikumwe (indicates *togetherness*), Ntamugabumwe (translated to *two heads are better than one*), and Dufatanye (indicates *cooperation*). Towards these concerns, an official from REB reported that:

Though many books are published from outside of Rwanda, it is REB that evaluates them. So when REB officials notice any error in the content, illustrations and representation, concept, symbolism or choice of words such as ‘civil war’ in 1994 instead of ‘genocide against Tutsi’, they are immediately corrected through our error checking mechanism and approval committee. No textbook can pass the tender regulations without fulfilling all the REB requirements.

While textbooks appear to pass this political and historical test, those not developed specifically for the CBC can present an added barrier to teachers attempting to convey peacebuilding and social cohesion as they are required in the curriculum.

While they represent only a small force among the thousands of Rwandan teachers, expatriate teachers, such as those from other countries in the East African Community, expressed concerns that some textbooks contained topics that were too sensitive for an “outsider” to teach. An expatriate teacher interviewee noted, “Topics such as genocide ideologies are too sensitive for us as expatriate teachers... At times we have to look for resource teachers who were either in Rwanda during genocide or who have went through local meetings, workshops, seminars, and NIC training that equip them with knowledge of what happened in Rwanda to teach for us such sensitive topics amicably without hurting learners”. This manifests as a cross cutting issue: expatriate teachers struggle with sensitive content while native teachers similarly struggle, though perhaps for different reasons. It is an

important factor to consider in designing CPD and equipping teachers to adequately carry out their duties with textbooks that facilitate the topics that need to be addressed.

5.5. TEXTBOOK SHORTAGES

In addition to content, there was a more pressing issue surrounding textbooks identified: it was ascertained that schools in rural areas face an acute shortage of both the prescribed textbooks and supplemental reading materials for the smooth delivery of the CBC. Of the rural head teachers interviewed, particularly those working in basic education programmes, many complained that they lacked enough REB-issued textbooks and had no additional funds to purchase them without REB's assistance. This means using books or materials, when available, that are out of the Rwandan context and lack a specific focus on peacebuilding and social cohesion, a challenging task for an inexperienced teacher. Thus, rural schoolchildren suffer from not only the myriad challenges that face their schools (as discussed in Section I), but are not able to gain the full impact of the CBC and its peacebuilding agenda.

Some teachers admitted to remedying this problem by searching the internet for materials and ideas. However, this requires teachers to pay extra attention to what is being used because of the span of information, from accurate to wildly false, found online, and the additional challenge of finding material which is suitable for the Rwandan context, while the CBC is meant to offer an approved, standardised approach to teaching.

Towards addressing this situation, the research identified several areas of problem around textbook distribution:

- Textbook distribution is heavily dependent on the availability of funds, which affects the government's ability to conduct adequate planning, and it may not effectively respond to supply and demand;
- Textbooks that make it to schools may be damaged because of poor distribution and stock management;
- There is a discrepancy between the number of textbooks issued to schools and the number of pupils – distribution must take into account site-specific student-to-textbook ratios; and
- Rural schools, rather than being further burdened, need access to textbooks perhaps more seriously than their urban counterparts, and free distribution to rural sites should be a top priority for REB.

5.6. ENGLISH AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION WITH CBC

The government of Rwanda's decision to switch to English as a medium of instruction in 2008 was apparently motivated by both regional and international relations, as discussed in Section I. Many teachers within the study indicated that English as the medium of instruction has negatively impacted educational quality as Rwandan learners were suddenly navigating a language with which almost no prior experience and teachers were required to not only learn this foreign language, but also how to effectively teach subject-specific content within limited language capacity. One teacher argued that

This lack of English language knowledge, skills, and competences and consequently lack of confidence are serious hindrances among us Rwandan teachers to teach in English, such hindrances prevent us from conveying comfortably our thoughts, and peace related values in classroom. Surely, there is a desperate need for training and empowering Rwandan teachers with not only English language knowledge but also pedagogical skills to face the new challenge of using English as a medium of instruction.

Another interviewee teacher expressed similar challenges: “with English I experienced a lot of problems to explain some issues to my learners”. This correlates with arguments asserted by Aniga (2004) that “incapacity of language in education can cause or mitigate conflict because of its positive and negative powers”. A teacher not being able to do their most basic job because of language is frustrating; to consider that it causes conflict and impedes their ability to act as an agent of social cohesion presents an even more damaging precedent.

5.7. CBC IN THE FUTURE

Though competency-based curriculum models have been successful in many some countries, there is a need to engage all stakeholders, including parents, to get involved and support it in Rwanda. Teachers are required to change their attitudes and demonstrate a change in mind-set especially because learners look at the teachers as role models in the values to be taught to them through CBC. At the District level, great synergy should be fostered between the districts and REB to ensure that the curriculum is rolled out smoothly and any challenges are resolved effectively. CBC seeks to provide tools for teachers to act out their roles as agents of social cohesion, but it should be noted that teachers need continued support to effectively achieve this.

Chapter 6. Teachers' Classroom Experiences: Beliefs and Pedagogies

The beliefs and behaviours of teachers have a serious impact on the academic environment. During the postcolonial era, stakeholders in the Rwandan education system, with principals and teachers in particular, rewarded attitudes of superiority among Hutu learners and conversely bred inferiority complexes among Tutsi learners. A teacher interviewee who recalled attending school prior to the genocide commented that:

While a teacher was teaching, it was very common and supported by school leadership to use divisive examples such as 'long nose, height, calling Tutsi learners foreigners within schools, cockroaches-which were all attributed to Tutsi'. It was quite common taking role-calls based on ethnic groups. Learners could be forced to respond by saying: Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. Any Tutsi learner who could respond 'Hutu' in an attempt to protect him or herself from humiliation, s/he would have a big case to answer to the school leadership, the case that more often would end in dismissal.

This exemplifies the importance of beliefs and behaviours, which here include pedagogies, as the two final aspects of teachers' work within Rwanda. This section deals first with teachers' purported beliefs about peace education and social cohesion, and considers their pedagogical approaches in the light of the new curriculum and its push for collaborative, student-centred practices.

6.1. TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT PEACE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL COHESION

This research sought to understand teachers' conceptualisation of peace values, considering that teachers are not able to teach or actualise that which they do not understand. Thus, interviews and focus groups sought to understand their interpretations of social cohesion and peacebuilding within the Rwandan system. Several common, repeated themes emerged.

6.1.1. Concern for tolerance, harmonious living and solidarity

Teachers expressed a belief in tolerance as a main characteristic of social cohesion. One teacher interviewee indicated that tolerance implies forgiving a neighbour when he/she has offended you, not discriminating against that neighbour because of what s/he is "naturally" or because of their poverty, and sharing national resources equally and fairly: "One cannot talk of social cohesion when there is no harmony, not living together peacefully, but rather fighting over national wealth. This makes it paramount for incorporating peace values into

the Rwandan education system for teachers to teach peace values to learners when they are still young”. Tolerance, it was suggested, when combined with a fair and equal society, is the foundation of social harmony.

Another teacher interviewee addressed harmonious living directly:

On top of socio-economic development, harmonious living is a key avenue for Rwanda to develop. Rwanda cannot dream of fair and full socio-economic development where every Rwandan is respected, recognized as an important citizen with full rights without being at peace with each other. The only way of achieving this, is through giving holistic education to Rwandan learners still at a tender age ready to change for the best. This demands, however teachers themselves to understand what peace and social cohesion is all about. Harmonious living requires developing peace values among learners.

Socio-economic development, then, is given as the avenue for prosperity, which is to be equally shared among Rwandans. Another teacher interviewee expressed similar beliefs, using instead “solidarity” as the core of social cohesion:

Social cohesion is all about solidarity among learners and solidarity among teachers and in the end to the whole Rwanda. Otherwise how can we talk of economic development or peace when the citizens are divided? Unfairly treated? Some are treated in a special way getting all the niceties of life while others are perishing with poverty? This sodality in the final analysis becomes the foundation for tolerance when there is any error from individual citizens.

Thus, teacher responses indicated that ideals of tolerance, harmony, and solidarity are combined and interrelated, and essential together for social cohesion within the country.

6.1.2. Student interaction for social cohesion

One teacher interviewee considered not only his/her beliefs about social cohesion, but the specific route in education to arrive at social cohesion: “for Rwanda to live together and make sure that it develops constantly, consistently and fairly, there is a need for all Rwandan learners to interact with each other, know how share and appreciate ideas of what happened in Rwanda, why it happened and how they can together solve such problems for the enhancement of peace and social cohesion”. This reflects the beliefs expressed in the CBC that student interaction is a vital component of social cohesion, and should be actualised through learner-centred pedagogies.

6.1.3. Teachers: Peace “professionals”

Teachers clearly indicated their position within the social healing process, and a majority of teachers, even in spite of the challenges posed by the environment, expressed zeal and determination to play their role as agents of peace by incorporating such values in all subjects. They further acknowledged this goal within recent educational reforms, with one teacher interviewee stating that “Rwandan teachers must embrace the teaching of peace values through learner centred pedagogies because it is a key avenue to create a socially cohesive Rwandan society. This can be done by revisiting Rwandan traditional social values –the very social fabrics that used to unite all Rwandans but were destroyed by colonial powers for their own selfish interests”.

Despite the tenor of these affirmations about peace education and their role within it, an official from REB cautioned that achieving social cohesion and sustainable peace is a slow and demanding journey, especially in Rwanda, given the state of society following the colonial, postcolonial, and genocide eras. While adults in Rwanda have lived through these periods of hatred, marked with bad politics and power abuses, children in schools today do not remember them, and thus are more flexible and able to avoid such hateful ideologies in the first place.

To accomplish above issue, an official interviewee expressed that “Rwanda cannot just copy and paste the same Western models of leadership and liberal democracy and start teaching it to her learners without applying it to Rwandan context. Rwanda as a sovereign state must have her own concept of peace or social cohesion that fits her own situation”. Clearly, the nation has a conception of a socially cohesive environment, and seeks to actualise it through the CBC and the accompanying materials.

Thus, this study moved to investigate how these beliefs and values were translated into classroom practice, exemplified in teacher pedagogies. The CBC, in contrast with the previous curriculum’s teacher- and knowledge-centred orientation, advocates for pedagogies which are learner-centred and collaborative, seeking to instil cohesion through increased interaction among learners and positive, bilateral communication between teachers and students.

6.2. LEARNER-CENTRED PEDAGOGIES

The competency-based curriculum exhorts use of learner-centred pedagogies (LCP). A learner-centred approach is different from the previous knowledge-based curriculum which

limited the interaction between the learners and the teacher, only promoting lecture which positioned the teacher at the forefront of the classroom as the custodian of knowledge. Within this model, learners absorb knowledge but their power within the classroom and their ability to share experiences and contribute actively to the lesson are severely limited.

The shift to LCP demonstrates the CBC's commitment to actualising values of social cohesion, as a learner-centred, interactive, and collaborative classroom undermines traditional positions of power for the teacher and the most outspoken students, giving all an opportunity to engage with the teacher and their classmates. Teacher interviewees agreed with this notion, stating that the group work found in a learner-centred approach is fit for a "social cohesion purpose". A REB official interviewee concurred that the curriculum is to be mainly focused on these pedagogies, which would assist teachers to connect classroom peace values to the experiences from learners' day to day lives.

6.3. COLLABORATIVE LEARNING FOR SOCIAL COHESION

Collaborative learning is a subset of learner-centred pedagogy, and is based on the model that knowledge can be created within a population where members actively interact by sharing experiences and taking on symmetrical roles. It uses group- and pair-based classroom activities to create academic and social experiences for learning, with tasks structured to meet academic goals, and students work collaboratively to meet those goals (Gokhale, 1995). Teachers view this pedagogy as fitting for the Rwandan context. A head teacher interviewee stated that "collaborative learning pedagogy is very fitting for Rwanda because in Rwanda there are no schools for a given group of people. Learners in Rwandan schools come from all walks of life". This diversity presents an opportunity for social cohesion taking place on a person-to-person basis within the classroom. Another teacher interviewee agreed with this, stating that "when working in groups, learners develop social skills like tolerance, supporting each other and in this way, learners learn how to live together regardless of their differences in social and any other background". Groups were to be formed of students from diverse backgrounds, but within the group itself, there would be no differentiation or favouritism, encouraging equality of gender, socio-economic status, and place of residence, whether urban or rural.

Collaborative learning can be implemented in Rwandan classrooms with some modification to current pedagogical techniques. Learning groups where members can work together to revise a portion of material before writing a test is one such application. This would motivate

those learners who have fear of test taking and help them to learn and reinforce what has been already delivered within a comfortable environment and drawing upon the collective knowledge of the group. This form of organisation seeks to not only increase learners' academic skills, but their skills for interaction and their self-esteem.

6.4. CHALLENGES FOR LEARNER-CENTRED AND COLLABORATIVE PEDAGOGIES

The issues in implementing learner-centred and collaborative approaches were clearly expressed by teachers in interviews and focus groups. One teacher interviewee commented that collaborative learning requires a well-equipped environment:

Most of our Rwandan schools are poorly equipped and you find learners more often than not just idling and moving around school campus or cramming/memorizing notes-popularly known as rote learning. Items like tennis, volleyball, table tennis, TV and musical instruments etc. that motivate young people merry together for collaborative learning enhancement are quite rare in Rwandan schools. This is not effective learning, rather frustrating learners making them robots-like beings. Collaborative learning requires modern equipment and technologies in order to be successful.

While some might disagree with the statement that collaborative learning requires social or sporting equipment, this statement demonstrates that Rwandan teachers need training in understanding collaborative techniques and how to implement them in low-resource environments. This training should be conducted in all pre-service programmes, as the lack of materials in Rwanda is a well-documented issue. A head teacher interviewee pointed to the example being set a teacher training colleges, which don't rely on collaborative methods themselves:

Though collaborative learning requires sufficient items and teaching materials to be successful, at the same time it requires strong teachers' commitment, strategies and experiences. But when you look at some of the teachers training colleges in Rwanda, they are still very traditional i.e. they only use lecture kind of teaching. Due to big numbers they handle, lecturers rarely use all these modern pedagogies aiming at learner centeredness. Consequently, our graduates lack the required skills, training, knowledge and courage of how they use learner centred strategies.

Thus the issue of class sizes, raised in Chapter 3 (section 3.2) on rurality inhibits teachers' abilities to implement this pedagogy and thus lose an opportunity for creating environments of interaction and social cohesion between learners within the classroom space.

Other issues with implementing learner-centred pedagogies included the following.

6.4.1. Barrier of English

At times teachers cannot avoid using demonstration or lecture as the form of teaching, particularly in lower classes because a majority of learners in Rwanda do not understand English which they are supposed to use as their language for discussion. Skills required in learner-centred pedagogies include brainstorming activities and critical thinking, but both are extremely difficult for students with low language abilities who lack sophisticated understanding and confidence to use the language. This was frequently expressed as an acute problem among Rwandan learners due to lack of competence and skills in English.

6.4.2. Lack of teaching aids to facilitate learner-centred pedagogies (LCP)

Within LCP, a teacher is should to be more of a facilitator than a provider, if the ideal of forming an independent thinking Rwandan learner is to be achieved. But teachers lack the teaching aids to pedagogically assist students; charts, visual aids, or videos provide something for learners to see, listen to, and, finally, discuss amongst themselves. Particularly in rural areas, learning aids are rarely found and difficult to access or even create.

6.4.3. Insufficient time periods

On top of insufficient teaching materials, there is also the issue of insufficient time in terms of the teaching period. LCP require enough time to form groups, encourage activities within them, and feed back to the entire class, but teachers are held to a short, 40-minute period. This is very little time to finish the required content if teachers are to use group work fit for social cohesion enhancement within the CBC.

Again, the need for training is reinforced. As seen throughout this report, issues of teacher training and readiness, along with availability of materials, crosscut this research. To be able to act as agents of social cohesion and implement the curriculum meant to guide them towards this, they require extensive support.

To address this, some CPD programmes provided by REB, Aegis Trust, and IRDP attempt to model collaborative learning and other learner-centred approaches. Other organisations have attempted to provide materials and equipment to engage learners in socially collaborative activities on the weekend, such as poetry readings, dances, and competitions, which are oriented both socially and academically to assist Rwandan learners in deeply internalizing,

appreciating, and sharing other others' experiences. While these interventions are useful for students, they fail to address the desperate need for training expressed by teachers.

Chapter 7. Conclusion and Recommendations

In spite of the many challenges facing Rwandan teachers, this research demonstrates that teachers strive to act as agents of social cohesion and peacebuilding, a partial solution towards addressing Rwanda's social problems peacefully. Rwandan policy, drafted after the horrific events of 1994, emphasizes human rights and the value of each life, and these values are similarly present in education-specific policies and the resulting materials and curriculum. However, as this research demonstrates, more attention to problem areas is needed to support teachers within this role.

7.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS

This research acknowledges the debt owed to teachers for their honesty and openness in sharing their successes and challenges when attempting to take on roles as agents of social change. To all teachers, then, the research team offers these recommendations for best practice in instilling and nurturing peace values:

- Treat all learners equally by avoiding any form of discrimination in schools, either based on ethnicity, gender, region, or any differences among learners in order to provide strong social cohesion enhancement among learners and Rwandans at large.
- Be ready to discuss learners' problems, whether social or academic, and do so amicably and professionally for the holistic development of all learners without discrimination based on ethnicity, region, socio-economic status, religion, sexual orientation, range of physical ability, or other factors.
- Employ relevant pedagogies that might nurture a spirit of tolerance, nationalism, self-esteem, respect, dignity, and a communal sense of care.
- Advocate for continued training with your head teachers, principals, and community leaders and work to initiate and share amongst yourselves best practices.

7.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS

Towards strengthening teachers' abilities to act as agents of peace and reconciliation, this research offers the following suggestions for improving both the narrowed school and classroom environments and the broader context in which teachers live, work, and participate in communities.

7.2.1. Education sector coordination

Enhance coordination of educational activities at local levels is needed to address the confusion sometimes caused by the lack of clear definition of departmental boundaries. This is important for questions of educational quality in particular, and how criteria are being operationalised to review and evaluate teachers' classroom practice. There should be clear, concrete indicators showing the extent to which educational quality standards are being met and how they should be achieved, and teachers should be actively involved in the drafting of such quality indicators.

7.2.2. Peace values as cross-cutting

There is a need to mainstream peace values across the curriculum, especially in the natural sciences and mathematical subjects. In particular, teachers in these subjects need training to be able to incorporate peace values in their everyday teaching, as they is more easily accomplished in arts and history subjects.

7.2.3. Reduce class sizes and provide materials

There is a need to reduce the excessive number of learners in Rwandan classrooms, especially in rural areas, and avail the necessary prescribed textbooks and relevant instructional materials that are fit for the purpose. Smaller classes, a near requirement for effective learner-centred pedagogy, allow teachers to have increased contact with students and thus allow for increased monitoring of how students are reacting to and applying values of social cohesion and peace.

7.2.4. Ongoing curriculum review

There is a need for both teachers and policy makers to constantly review the curriculum, textbooks, and teaching methods in order to promote critical thinking and problem solving skills among Rwandan learners.

7.2.5. Enhance teacher participation

Teachers' participation in decision-making processes that affect their profession needs to be enhanced; they deserve recognition for their experience, professional judgment, and the valid contribution they bring to educational debate and policy formulation as a group, but also as individuals. Further, their on-the-ground experience can inform the success and failure of peace-oriented materials and interventions.

7.2.6. Improve training and access to CPD

Rwanda needs teachers who are well trained, trusted and accountable and who can demonstrate rigor in their search for common good, in order to transcend the events and prejudices of the past. This also includes the need for extensive language training, mentioned in nearly every section of this paper, that will enable teachers to communicate effectively and allow students to communicate between themselves without hesitation. Lack of English competence and skills is an acute hindrance and stumbling block to articulately and clearly teach peace values to Rwandan learners.

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