

INFORMATION SHEET (1)

**Briefing document**

**What Is The Study All About?**

Teachers are key determinants of education quality and play a key role in nation building, identity construction and peace and reconciliation). What teachers do with learning resources shapes what children and young people learn, influencing their identities as well as providing them with skills for employment and peace building. Teachers’ agency “in developing values of mutual respect and tolerance” is important in “a postwar context characterized by persisting division and mistrust” (Davies, 2011b: 47). Teacher training is evidently seen as a fundamental element of post-conflict reconstruction but there are doubts about both its relevance and effectiveness

The research will explore how teachers are framed and supported in their roles as agents of social cohesion: how they experience this support; how their practices and attitudes are influenced by national and international educational policies and the outcome for learners.

The project is funded by the ESRC/DfID Joint Fund for Poverty Alleviation to research the role of teachers in peace building in the post-conflict contexts of Rwanda and South Africa and links with a wider five-country research consortium on education and peace building, which in addition to Rwanda and South Africa looks at Myanmar, Uganda and Pakistan in the areas of teachers, youth and educational policy.

**What Is The Learner Question About?**

1. The Learner Questionnaire tries to obtain learners' views about aspects of social cohesion as they experience it being taught in their classrooms and schools, as they experience it through the specific learning areas of Life skills, History and citizenship, political education, social studies and English, and through their prescribed textbooks. Learners' insights about their thoughts, lived experiences and ways of dealing with issues of social cohesion (IMIBANIRE HAGATI YABANYARWANDA) and others such as genocide ideology against Tutsi and their teachers' approaches to these same issues, are what we hope to 'get' from the document.
2. The aim of the document is to probe learners' views about issues raised in 1. The research hopes to map out these learners' views about aspects of social cohesion so as to assist policy-makers, teachers, education department officials, and the broader public to use the research findings to plug into a process in which teachers' central roles in promoting social cohesion can be better understood. Following on this, the research seeks to find pathways which can assist in establishing more focused educational thinking, planning and curriculum design to add increased rigour to national, regional, school and community-centred social cohesion practices in South African classrooms, and amongst all South Africans and immigrants.

**What Is The Teacher Question About?**

1. The target readers and group that will answer the questionnaire are teachers with multiple educational levels (Certificate to Ph.D).
2. The aim is of the Teachers’ questionnaire is to obtain Teachers’ views on social cohesion in schools according to what they understand they are supposed to be doing, their experiences at the school, their understanding of the curriculum items that deal with this, what they as teachers provide and do in the classroom. The main lens is on them as teachers in a particular context and their engagement with the policies and the curriculum in fulfilling their responsibilities.
3. The aim of the document is to probe teachers’ views about issues raised in 2. The research hopes to map out these learners' views about aspects of social cohesion so as to assist policy-makers, teachers, education department officials, and the broader public to use the research findings to plug into a process in which teachers' central roles in promoting social cohesion can be better understood. Following on this, the research seeks to find pathways which can assist in establishing more focused educational thinking, planning and curriculum design to add increased rigour to national, regional, school and community-centred social cohesion practices in Rwanda classrooms.