

**GUIDELINES for TASK LEADERS
of INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AGENCIES**

on

Fostering Respect for Diversity

through Interventions in:

- **Curriculum**
- **Textbooks**
- **Pedagogical Practices**

The impetus for these Guidelines

Ethnic and religious animosities and stereotyping have been sources of violent conflict and have helped perpetuate socio-economic marginalization for millennia. In terms of violent conflict, the consequences of those conflicts, however, have become increasingly costly in terms of human and financial impacts as the technology of warfare has advanced and as the modern nation state's integrity has been threatened by both intra-national and international conflicts which originated or were aggravated by religious and/or ethnic conflicts. In terms of poverty reduction, the consequences of longstanding prejudices have become increasingly obvious, as it has increasingly come to light that the most entrenched poor groups in some societies are those who are dismissed because of their ethnicity or their cultural or religious orientation.

As the relevant lessons of history have been absorbed, albeit slowly, the importance of fostering tolerance and mutual respect has become a concern of increasingly widespread importance, with spurts of accentuated concern following especially horrific intra-national civil conflicts and international wars. The lack of tolerance for diversity that featured in the cause of the conflict or the atrocities committed during the conflict, however, was generally not new; on the contrary, the animosity was often long-standing. Some examples:

- Jews have been the subjects of discrimination and persecution for millennia and Roma the targets of discrimination and persecution for centuries. However, the genocide aimed at Jews and the Roma as well as the economic devastation of the Second World War triggered a wide range of initiatives to attack the intolerance that was such a notorious feature of the Nazi regime. Also triggered was an attack on a long standing part of the conventional national view of many Europeans toward other European nationalities. Nevertheless, the Roma remain the poorest and most marginalized population group in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, by all indices.
- More recently, the dissolution of Yugoslavia saw such vitriolic conflict among Bosniacs, Croats, and Serbs that for many interested observers, the religious and ethnic mosaic that characterizes the Balkans (and featured prominently in the events leading to World War I) was interpreted as a root cause of Balkan conflicts, and led many to conclude that a priority challenge should be to foster tolerance and mutual respect among the religious and ethnic groups of South East Europe.
- The conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda that had simmered for decades erupted into open conflict when the atrocities committed by the parties to that conflict brought the country into international focus in the 1990s.
- In many parts of the world, the inability of Catholics and Protestants to coexist was a phenomenon of the past (The Hundred Years' War in Europe being an

example of that conflict at its peak). Not so in Northern Ireland, where the conflict varied between simmering and boiling until a domestic movement of mothers (of both confessions) for peace became a moral force of significance, and Irish and United Kingdom political leaders threw their support behind a peace process for Northern Ireland, among other reasons, no doubt, to prevent further spill-over and contagion of the conflict outside the borders of Northern Ireland.

- In Sri Lanka the Tamil ethnic minority's secession-oriented insurrection against the Sinhalese majority Government dragged on for decades, with overseas ethnic Tamil support for part of the period. The failure of the education system to recognize adequately the language, culture and traditions of the minority population contributed directly to the alienation of the Tamil population.
- Ever since the mid-20th Century establishment of the State of Israel, conflict between Palestinians, who had been a majority of the population in the Palestine mandate area, and Israelis has been a constant feature of The Holy Land that is sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims. The open warfare of 1948, 1967 and 1973 drew military involvement of some neighboring Arab States, and accentuated the potential for superpower rivalry for influence in the Middle East, including access to oil and domestic votes. As the conflict prolonged, the cause of the Palestinians has been taken up by radical Islamic movements in various parts of the world. In short, the land that has been of major interest to outside sources of influence and power, continues to be disputed by Palestinians and Israelis with support from outside, and fear has grown that the failure to reach closure of that conflict will be a source of further fueling of conflict elsewhere in the world.

Fostering respect for diversity clearly is not the only means of promoting peace and equal opportunity. However, in each of the cases summarized above, someone recognized that fostering respect for diversity would be a significant contribution to the pursuit of peace and social justice, and that one of the more effective intervention points for fostering respect for diversity is in the educational process. The "champions" of the efforts to foster respect for diversity through the education system (in curriculum, textbooks and pedagogical practices), however, were often individuals or NGOs. Nonetheless, in due course, Government support for the effort is seen to be essential. The actions taken in the countries cited in the examples above were as follows:

- In post-World War II Germany, an initiative was launched to review textbooks for their treatment of minorities and neighboring nationals, particularly those who had been the "enemy" in prior conflicts and wars. The work was institutionalized by the formation of The George Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, in Braunschweig. A joint German-French review of textbooks was undertaken and adverse depictions of each other were deleted from textbooks. Later, a similar German-Polish review of textbooks was launched and resulted, after many years of patient, careful cooperative

effort, in removal of adverse references and depictions to each others nationals and inaccurate or facile depictions of the history of the two countries.

- When Bosnia became an independent country in the aftermath of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the textbooks for each of the three ethnic groups of Bosnia contained such vitriolic references to the other ethnic groups and their roles in the conflict that fractured Yugoslavia, that the international assistance agencies provided support for appointment of an international panel to review the textbooks to certify that inaccurate and derogatory references to the other ethnic groups had been removed from the narrative and illustrations of the textbooks. The Council of Europe had agreed to recruit the panelists and manage the review process.
- In Rwanda, when the civil war concluded and a Government dedicated to maintaining the peace took office, one of the actions it took was to undertake a review of the curriculum, teaching practices and textbooks to foster a sense of national unity and mutual respect for the tribal groups comprising the population of the country. The process included review panels with representation from the various civil society groups.
- Faculty from the University of Ulster took a lead role in instituting the review process of educational content and practices in Northern Ireland. Of particular interest in the work of the reviewers was the treatment of history and various historical figures. The distortions were sometimes subtle, and sometimes brazen. Eliminating the former required participation of knowledgeable nationals who were determined to eliminate the sources of slanted or inaccurate accounts.
- Sri Lanka has more diversity than Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic groups. There is also diversity of religions (Buddhists, Hindus, Christians and Moslems). When the latest truce between the Tamils and the Government took effect, the Government undertook to prepare learning materials that fostered respect for all ethnic and religious components of society. What was discovered was that it is not only the narrative, but also the textbook illustrations, that needed to be reviewed closely. Showing a Tamil wearing a traditional Sinhalese wedding garment is inappropriate as was a drawing of a Moslem boy leading a pig to market.
- Despite the ongoing conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, an Israeli academic and a Palestinian academic have formed a team to review Israeli and Palestinian textbooks to identify material that inappropriately or inaccurately depicts the history, beliefs, and roles of individuals of both sides. Their strongly held view is that the distortions are often subtle, and therefore only representatives from the respective communities can identify the inaccurate or misleading offensive material. Therefore, they doubt that review panels composed of international representatives (whom some believe would be

more neutral) can be as effective as panels of national reviewers who are dedicated to achieving the objectives of the exercise. The Israeli and Palestinian team also point to the crucial importance of an appropriate window of opportunity (when the political context is such that national leaders are supportive of the respect for diversity effort). This window of opportunity is definitely not present when conflict is ongoing, and the work of the Israeli-Palestinian team must be viewed as investments in a prospective future opportunity.

- [Eluned Roberts-Schweitzer to add a bullet on status and opportunity for Roma]
- [Livia M. Benavides to add a bullet on status and opportunity in Peru]

To support the conditions for increased equity of opportunity key to poverty reduction, and to remove some of the underlying causes of protracted conflict, it was thought timely to review and draw lessons of experience from efforts to promote peace through fostering of respect for diversity in the educational process. For that purpose, the World Bank sponsored a workshop March 24-26, 2003 on “Curricula, Textbooks, and Pedagogical Practices and the Promotion of Peace and Respect for Diversity.” Informed by presentations of participants in efforts to foster respect for diversity in educational content and practices, including the country case situations noted above, the participants from multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies, and non-governmental organizations as well as the case presenters discussed and reported summary conclusions about the fostering of respect for diversity through interventions in curriculum, textbooks and pedagogical practices.

The intended audience of these Guidelines

A recommendation of the March 24-26, 2003 workshop was that Guidelines should be prepared for Task Leaders of International Assistance Agencies, including but not limited to the World Bank, on what to do and when and how to assist countries that wish to promote peace and more equitable opportunity by removing biases and stereotypes, and fostering critical thinking and mutual understanding in the outlook of youth, as an integral part of their education. Developing these capacities and outlook strongly influences the productivity of education in terms of its social consequences. It is for those Task Leaders of Education Projects (or projects with an Education component) for whom these Draft Guidelines have been prepared.

What to do and what not to do as a Task Leader

There is consensus that efforts to foster respect for diversity should include a coherent and coordinated review and revision of curriculum, textbooks and pedagogical practices. This is in keeping with sound practice for the design of any intervention that attempts to introduce new or modified content in the teaching/learning process. The lessons of experience show that attempts to change the curriculum without reflecting those changes in textbooks and ensuring that teachers are trained and given incentives to teach the new curriculum are likely to fail. In addition, in countries with “high stakes”

examinations (for certification of cycle completion and/or selection for the next stage of education), unless the exam includes some questions on the new or revised curriculum objectives, teachers are unlikely to teach that material and students are unlikely to focus on it.

Fostering respect for diversity can be defined narrowly (e.g., only ethnic groups) or broadly (e.g., gender, religion, cultural identity, and ethnicity). The decision will have to be made on a case by case basis as to the breadth of the definition of diversity that is to be the focus of the review of curriculum, textbooks and/or teaching practice. The broader the definition, the larger the array of stakeholders that should be involved in the consultation and review process, and the longer the review and re-design and re-training processes are likely to take. This needs to be balanced against the undesirable phenomenon of sequential reviews and revisions of curriculum, textbooks and teacher training, and the attendant costs and drain on the time and attention of officials of the education system. The decision will be influenced by the severity of the various dimensions of the diversity concerns, and whether there have been recent reviews for one or more of those concerns (e.g., whether there had been a gender review of curriculum, textbooks, and or teaching practice).

In the case of World Bank staff at least, and the same is likely to be true for other multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies, the review of curriculum content or textbooks or pedagogic practice to identify needed revisions in order to foster tolerance and respect for diversity is not a task that can or should be undertaken directly. The Bank certainly should not be telling countries what is offensive to, or supportive of, fostering respect for diversity, even if the staff or consultant resources were available to do so. Thus, such a review would be inappropriate as part of sector work or any Analytical, Advisory or Assistance (AAA) activity. What the World Bank can do is to provide financial support under a Lending Operation (Project) for the conduct of a review process under the direction of the Borrower (and no Bank staff member should serve on such a panel). In addition, a Bank-assisted project can provide technical assistance for appropriate revisions in curriculum, textbooks, and teaching practices as flagged in the review process.

As a general rule, World Bank staff should not *insist* that countries launch a review process of curriculum, textbooks and pedagogical practices to foster respect for diversity. However, the Bank staff can raise this as representing good practice (see below). In those rare cases where the curriculum or textbook contents or pedagogical practices are so egregious that they are a source of open dispute between one or more subpopulation groups and the Government, the Bank staff may consider requiring that the Borrower establish a review process as a condition of receiving assistance under a Bank Group assisted project. The Bank's insistence upon establishment of a review process would be done only when the Bank's reputational risk would be so great that protecting against that risk outweighs the risk that the Borrower might not feel sufficient ownership to carry out the review with full vigor and enthusiasm. Each international assistance agency will have its own rules on direct involvement in decisions on curriculum, textbook content and pedagogical practices, but it is expected that most agencies will

have a similar approach to that of the World Bank in terms of direct involvement of staff in the review process.

A very helpful role that the international assistance agencies (and this may apply particularly to the World Bank) can play is to marshal the evidence for the economic benefits of fostering respect for diversity, and this economic rationale may be included in the policy dialogue with Government. This should be distinguished from insistence that the Government launch a respect for diversity initiative.

What can be very helpful to countries is the opportunity to hear from organizations with experience in setting up review processes for curriculum, textbooks and pedagogical practices. There are some that can provide advisory assistance on structuring the review process based on firsthand experience. Some also can provide training for government staff and prospective panelists for the review process, and in some cases the organizations can structure a study tour to provide opportunities for a country to meet and hear directly from participants in the review process carried out in other countries. Two such organizations are the George Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, Braunschweig: contact Wolfgang Hopken at hoepken@gei.de and the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland: contact Alan Smith, UNESCO Chair at a.smith@ulster.ac.uk.

When to assist countries

More than on any other point, there is consensus among those involved in reviews of educational content and practices that the initiative will only succeed if it launched when there is a “window of opportunity.”

- Typically this has been in post-conflict situations, when the disputing factions have abandoned conflict in favor of some form of Government of reconciliation and reunification. In the early stage of this new Government, memories of the high price of conflict are fresh, and there is a willingness to try a new approach, i.e., reconciliation and unification of the various factions. If at this time there are “champions” of efforts to include fostering of respect for diversity, an initiative to review curriculum, textbooks and teaching practices has a high chance of success.
- Alternatively, a window of opportunity may occur when the society is opening to democracy, and/or the government is making commitments to rectify long-standing social inequities. In the early stages of such socio-political change, the government has a mandate to address social exclusions and sources of protracted poverty, and a willingness to try new approaches to rectify longstanding problems. This is a time when the broad vision of a new, more open society can produce “champions” of efforts to include fostering of respect for diversity and

more pluralistic participation in the society and economy, and an initiative to review curriculum, textbooks and teaching practices has a high chance of success.

An attempt to launch an initiative to foster respect for diversity when conflict is still in process is highly unlikely to succeed. The Palestinian-Israeli team referred to above was adamant at the workshop that an effort to launch an initiative (for which they had prepared much background work) would be premature and unsuccessful while the conflict continued. That view was reinforced by the head of the George Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research and the UNESCO Chair at the University of Ulster. What can be done in some situations of ongoing conflict, however, is to provide training for the prospective “champions” of the respect for diversity review process. Given the conditions necessary for World Bank assistance to a country, it may be that bilateral international assistance agencies or NGOs may be better positioned to provide the support for the training of the “champions.”

For countries not immersed in conflict, there should be no reason to hesitate to support review processes that are wanted by the Government. *Preventive measures are generally more cost-effective approaches than remedial efforts*, in education as much as in health. The challenge, however, is to find situations where there is need as well as receptivity and “champions” ready to lead the effort. When these conditions are found, Task Leaders should provide appropriate support through projects.

A point that relates to both questions of whether and when to intervene is the need for a careful country assessment to ensure that the various critical groups within the country are understood fully. That analysis should include the social, institutional and economic dimensions of the situation in the country. To borrow conclusions and approaches from other countries is generally misleading and could be seriously counterproductive. A review process that is carried out with appropriate national members is likely to have better local insight and understanding of the various critical groups, and may be less likely to be tempted to borrow inappropriately from reviews in other countries.

A Government (usually this is the Ministry of Education) that embarks on a respect for diversity initiative (in any or all of the three areas of curriculum, textbooks and pedagogical practices) should be assisted to strengthen its ability to work with the media to explain the objectives of the initiative by providing examples of the kinds of problems that would be avoided and the benefits that would be obtained through the initiative. Failure to do so may result in media attacks that could damage, or even destroy, the initiative.

Any initiatives that are launched in the areas of curriculum, textbooks and pedagogical practices need to be audited for effectiveness of the process. Provision in a project to support such an initiative should include assistance for assessments of the intervention’s process. Particularly important would be that the capacity of the Ministry of Education should be built to carry out the evidence collection and analysis on teaching/learning outcomes of the respect for diversity initiative.

The guidance above on what to do and not do, and when to do it is general, for the total effort on review and revision, as necessary, of curriculum, textbooks and pedagogical practices. What follows is guidance specifically on the design and conduct of interventions on curriculum, textbooks, and pedagogical practices, respectively. In the boxes at the end of each section, the initial checklist items are “What to look for.” Typically this “look” by a task leader would be brief and triggered by widely known complaints or obvious inappropriate treatment of population groups in the curriculum, textbooks of teaching practice. The detailed “look” would be undertaken during the review process.

What to do and how to do it – specifically on curriculum

Curriculum revision undertakings are expensive and time consuming. Consequently, it is irresponsible to recommend to governments that curriculum revisions be undertaken frequently and without regard for the financial and other implications, particularly for the new textbooks required and the training of teachers to be able to effectively deliver the new curriculum. Depending on the country’s textbook provision policy, textbooks may last from one to three or four years, depending on physical specifications (paper weight, cover strength and coating, etc.) stipulated for the textbooks. Specification for three or four years of book life to enable re-use is the most economical (some 1/3 of the unit cost of a book designed to last only one year). If curricula are changed more frequently than three or four years, either the textbooks will not match the curricula, or the cost-effectiveness of the textbook provision strategy will have been undermined.

Often there are multiple requests for curricula revisions (e.g., improved gender sensitivity, greater attention to environment issues, introduction of HIV/AIDS awareness, etc.). The sensible, cost-effective approach is to handle all of the curriculum revision objectives in the same revision process. This must be tempered, however, by the complexity of the task; pragmatism may dictate that only selective revisions are affordable during one round of revision of curriculum.

As a general principle, respect for diversity should be well integrated throughout the curriculum. Treating it as a special subject can balkanize it, unless the content is complemented throughout the curriculum, in the way students are taught, the way the classrooms are organized, the diversity of holidays that are celebrated, and the behaviors that are encouraged in students, teachers, and school administration. In some cases, it may be useful to prototype curriculum changes in particular schools, as the first stage of system-wide reform (e.g., The East Bay Conservation Corps School charter school in the USA, which serves a poor area with troubled youth, integrates respect for diversity and service learning (civic engagement) throughout its curriculum). [\[put image of document on the web\]](#)

When curricula are being revised to foster tolerance and respect for diversity, good practice is to encourage the Government to appoint an advisory committee with

representatives of all of the relevant stakeholders, particularly the various ethnic and religious groups. The transparency of a process with broad stakeholder involvement, in fact, is likely to generate significant political credit for the Government. Some argue that rather than an advisory committee or advisory board, the Government should establish a panel of “critical friends.” Obtaining early pro-active input and feedback from minority groups and other relevant stakeholders early in the revision process is much more sensible and cost-effective than revising the curricula, trialing it, and then getting reactions from the elements of society that have felt aggrieved by their treatment in the curriculum. In particular, it is important that the views of the ethnic and religious groups (and any others included in the respect for diversity initiative) be enlisted to participate in the review of the curriculum to identify those aspects that have caused resentment or tensions. In other words, the advisory committee or “critical friends” panel should be used to help identify the problem areas and provide advice during the curriculum development process as well as to review the proposed solutions.

In the establishment of advisory and/or review panels, it is useful to enlist expertise from outside of the education community in order to benefit from the fresh views that they can bring to the process.

If at all possible, the project should include support that will enable national teams working on curriculum revision to be linked across countries into communities of practitioners.

Once the curriculum initiative has been designed, it is important for the Government to carry out advocacy/awareness raising efforts among publishers so that they understand the curriculum reforms that will need to be reflected in new textbooks.

A member of the team working on the curriculum dimension of the initiative should also serve on the textbooks team, and similarly a member of the curriculum team should serve on the pedagogical practices team, to ensure coordination and coherence of the three elements of the initiative.

Checklist on Curriculum

What to look for:

Is the coverage of the country’s history and culture –

complete, in terms of including gender, religion and ethnicity dimensions of the country’s population groups?

balanced, in the allocation of time and objectives in terms of the gender, religion and ethnicity dimensions of the country’s population groups?

Do the curriculum objectives foster over-development of national pride to the extent that it reduces the perceived value of peace?

Does the curriculum appropriate place the country's history and/or culture in the regional and/or international context? e.g.,

selective or unbalanced treatment of conflict/relations with neighboring or other countries?

distorted depiction of history or culture of neighboring or other countries?

What to do about it:

Are some diversity issues acute in comparison with others? e.g., ethnicity a major problem, but religion not a severe issue.

Has there been a recent review of curriculum for appropriateness of treatment of any particular population group? e.g., a gender review.

If so, what representation of the relevant population groups was there in the review process?

Is there a "window of opportunity" for a review of the curriculum to assess one or more of the diversity dimension issues?

Is there a "champion" for the idea of a curriculum review for identifying diversity issues?

If it appears to be appropriate to proceed with a review, what panel composition seems most appropriate?

National panelists only;

International panelists only: or

A combination of national and international panelists.

How would the appropriate representation of the relevant population groups in the review process be effected? (choices are not mutually exclusive)

Inclusion as members of the review committee?

Review process to enlist input of the relevant population groups?

Review process to provide opportunity for feedback from relevant population groups?

What to do and how to do it – specifically on Textbooks

The textbooks component of a respect for diversity initiative must be designed in the context of the country's textbook policy and practices. It is important to situate the country on the spectrum that extends from all state authorship, publishing and printing to the other end, i.e., a limited state role (for example, to set the criteria for textbooks, select books that are eligible for selection by schools, etc.) and major reliance on private publishers to actually produce the textbooks. For World Bank staff working on a respect for diversity initiative with a textbook element, it would be useful to consult the Bank's Operational Guidelines for Textbooks & Reading Materials. This is available online at: http://imagebank/servlet/WDS_IBank_Servlet?pcont=details&eid=00094946_02082804004785 . Also useful to consult is the Standard Bidding Documents: Procurement of Textbooks and Reading Materials User's Guide & Technical Note (Trial Edition) issued by the World Bank, September 2002.

Given the length of time required for textbook authorship, publishing and printing, it is important to be realistic in setting up timetables for the initiative. A rule of thumb time frame is two years from a call for new textbooks (with criteria for the new textbooks issued with the call) until delivery of textbooks, and this time can vary depending on the extent of trialing of the new textbooks. Remember that textbook authorship should only begin after the curriculum review and revisions have been completed. Capacity building in the Ministry of Education and in the publishing industry, however, can (and often should) be done prior to the launch of the call for new textbooks.

In addition to textbooks, there is need for teachers' manuals and other materials if the initiative is to have maximum impact. The content and way to structure problem-solving groups and practical exercises can be as important as ensuring that texts and illustrations do not, for example, stereotype, insult or ignore various population groups.

When distance learning is, or could be, used, materials for distance learning need to be prepared as well as traditional textbooks.

Transparency is essential for any textbook initiative. Partly this can be assisted by the media relations program suggested in the general What to Do section above, and partly this can be achieved by setting out very carefully and clearly the criteria for improving respect for diversity in textbooks.

Further suggestions on design and implementation of a textbooks component of a respect for diversity initiative may be found in the UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision, by Falk Pingel, George Eckert Institute for International Textbook Revision, and UNESCO (ED-99/WS/27).

Checklist on Textbooks

What to look for:

Do the textbooks allocate adequate and balanced space/coverage to the roles of relevant population groups, e.g. ethnicity, religious and/pr gender?

Is the treatment in textbooks of various population groups respectful?

Are any population groups stereotyped in the textbooks?

Do the textbooks over-use terminology familiar to one particular population group?

Do the textbooks use words or phrases that convey a particular population group's perspective on history, culture, or roles played by various population groups?

Do the textbooks fairly and accurately describe current and past relations with neighboring countries, without derogatory or inflammatory references to those neighboring countries?

Do the textbook illustrations and art work portray ethnic groups of other population groups in stereotypical ways?

Do textbook illustrations and art work accurately portray the attire and behavior of the various population groups?

Do maps in textbooks accurately depict current or past national boundaries, especially in the context of current or past territorial disputes?

Are there teachers' manuals for the various textbooks, and do they provide guidance on handling alternative perspectives/interpretations of national history and culture?

What to do about it:

Do some diversity issues appear much severe than others? e.g., treatment of one particular ethnic group seems especially contentious.

Has there been a recent review of textbooks for treatment of any particular population group? e.g., religion

If so, what representation of the relevant population groups was there in the review process?

Is there a “window of opportunity” to undertake a textbooks review for diversity issues?

Is there a “champion” for the review of textbooks for diversity issues?

If it appears to be appropriate to proceed with a review, what panel composition seems most appropriate?

National panelists only;

International panelists only: or

A combination of national and international panelists.

How would the appropriate representation of the relevant population groups in the review process be effected? (choices are not mutually exclusive)

Inclusion as members of the review committee?

Review process to enlist input of the relevant population groups?

Review process to provide opportunity for feedback from relevant population groups?

Does the country have one or more neighboring country with which there are or have been conflicts, and if so, is an effort timely/feasible to undertake a joint review of the countries’ textbooks to detect derogatory or inflammatory material?

What to do and how to do it – specifically on Pedagogic Practice

New curriculum and new textbooks may have no appreciable impact unless teachers are teaching to the new curriculum and using the new textbooks. A pedagogical practices element of a respect for diversity initiative, therefore, is critical.

The pedagogical practices part of the initiative should include both in-service and pre-service training components, and they need to be linked to each other.

Linkage of the pedagogical practices element of the initiative to the curriculum and textbooks elements of the initiative should be strong. Having team members from the curriculum and textbooks teams on the pedagogical practices team is one important means to enhance the needed linkage.

Experiences of respect for diversity initiatives suggest that as part of teacher education and training, there should be mandatory courses on local traditions, diversity and its importance.

Experiences with respect for diversity initiatives also suggest that every teacher should be trained in mediation and conflict resolution.

Teachers need to learn that they often they are not aware of their own biases.

Teachers also need to recognize that non-curricular and non-subject-specific aspects of education can foster prejudice and bias, e.g., illustrations and classroom wall hangings, seating arrangements, use of language, songs, and even sports.

Programs for *mentoring* teachers and facilitating *networks* of teachers should be supported to enhance respect for diversity in pedagogical practices. This is critically important and provides an ongoing way for teachers to provide advice and suggestions to each other, to tackle problems as they arise, and develop a growing repertoire of teaching material and techniques.

Success of initiatives to change teacher behavior appear to have been strengthened greatly by enhancing the involvement of parents and the community in the teaching/learning process. Parents are an important constituency to involve; outreach to them and participation by them is important both to elicit their support, relieve concerns and confusion, and reduce the risk of the community undermining the school's effort.

The timing of implementation of the pedagogic practice element of the respect for diversity initiative can be challenging. Typically, textbook revision follows completion of the curriculum revision, and teacher training is often scheduled only after the new textbooks are available. Teacher training, of course, can be launched earlier, especially if the training objective is to raise awareness of teachers about the objectives and timeline of the respect for diversity initiative. In fact, it is critical that teachers be brought on board *as early as possible* to support the initiative.

Training in mediation and conflict resolution and generally on how to foster respect for diversity through classroom behavior can be carried out while the curriculum and textbook elements of the initiative are under preparation. Eventually, it would be

expected that teacher training would be required to ensure that they understand the revised curriculum and new textbooks.

Checklist on Teaching Practices

What to look for:

Do pre-service courses for teachers include –

awareness raising about handling diversity issues, and provide guidance on how to do so?

training on reviewing for and becoming aware of personal bias by teachers?

training on use of conflict management techniques, especially among various population groups among the students?

Do in-service courses for teachers include –

awareness raising about handling diversity issues, and provide guidance on how to do so?

training on reviewing for and becoming aware of personal bias by teachers?

training on use of conflict management techniques, especially among various population groups among the students?

Through classroom observation, do classroom decorations, wall hangings and/or teaching illustrations foster prejudice, bias or stereotyping?

Through classroom observation, do teachers call on or otherwise encourage participation of all students, or are there patterns of “favored” groups being called upon and/or encouraged to participate?

What to do about it:

Do some diversity issues appear much more severe than others? e.g., teachers practices regarding classroom participation of one particular ethnic group seems especially contentious.

Has there been a recent review of teacher practices for treatment of any particular population group? e.g., girls' participation in science classes.

If so, what representation of the relevant population groups was there in the review process?

Is there a "window of opportunity" to undertake a teaching practices review for diversity issues?

Is there a "champion" for the review of teaching practices for diversity issues?

If it appears to be appropriate to proceed with a review, what panel composition seems most appropriate? (Note: Panelists need not be exclusively teacher trainers, and should include representatives of the relevant population groups.)

National panelists only;

International panelists only: or

A combination of national and international panelists.

How would the appropriate representation of the relevant population groups in the review process be effected? (choices are not mutually exclusive)

Inclusion as members of the review committee?

Review process to enlist input of the relevant population groups?

Review process to provide opportunity for feedback from relevant population groups?
