Terms of Reference:

Conflict & Fragility Annex to Equity Initiative Landscape Review and Development of Standard Education Equity Indicators for Conflict & Fragility Contexts).

Task Statement and Background:

The Education Equity Research Initiative has effected a shift toward task team structured work where small teams are being organized around specific tasks. In the Conflict and Fragility work stream, the first such task to be identified involves two linked products: 1) a conflict and fragility focused landscape annex that capitalizes upon literature review initiated in 2016 but with a sharpened focus on informing the development of equity-focused indicators; and 2) standard equity-focused indicators for conflict and crisis contexts. Relevant background to this selected task is as follows:

In September, 2016 the Measurement and Metrics work stream of the Equity Initiative published a Landscape Review entitled Measuring Equity in Education. This review has provided a useful overview of how various dimensions of educational inequality have been defined and measured for global and programmatic data collection and analysis, with a particular focus on the measurement of poverty, ethnicity, and disability. This landscape review has been supplemented with a second document offering practical recommendations for study design, sampling, and data collection to facilitate equity analysis, particularly of learning outcome data.

The Equity Initiative’s Conflict and Fragility work stream had also previously begun work on a separate landscape review focused on equity issues and dimensions specifically in Conflict and Fragility contexts. It has now been deemed more efficient to scale back this review by instead producing a Conflict and Fragility-focused annex to the above-mentioned Measuring Equity in Education landscape review. Also in 2016, an Analysis of Indicators Used in USAID Education Projects in Crisis and Conflict Environments, produced by the Education in Conflict and Crisis Network (ECCN), highlighted systemic omission of equity-focused indicators - even in some projects whose descriptions explicitly point to equity outcomes - and has confirmed the impression among actors in Conflict and Fragility education that there is a need for equity indicators to be better and more consistently conceptualized.

As a result, there is clear consensus among the full membership of the presently formed Conflict & Fragility work stream on prioritizing the development of equity focused indicators, and on the completion of the landscape review annex that will inform development of such indicators.

Objectives:

The main objectives of the task can be stated in terms of the two key deliverables:

1) An EiCC-focused narrative annex to the Measuring Equity in Education landscape review. This annex will build upon previous relevant literature review begun in 2016. While its precise content will be subject to deliberations among the task team, the general focus will be on existing evidence and theory that can inform the development of equity indicators for education in contexts of Conflict and Fragility (see number 2 below).

2) Standard equity indicators for inclusion in EiCC activity results frameworks to enable clearly conceptualized and consistent measurement of activities’ outputs towards and outcomes in improved equity, and to facilitate

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1 The term “Conflict and Fragility” is used broadly and intended to include contexts of ongoing or recent armed conflict, in recovery from conflict, contexts into which populations have fled ongoing or recent conflicts, as well as contexts in the aftermath of natural disasters or emergencies.
the comparison and aggregation of such measurement across activities.

The priority for this initial pair of deliverables (on a six-month time frame) will be indicators related to equity of educational access in C&F contexts.

These objectives serve the overarching goal of improved program design and measurement in C&F education activities/projects through IPs’ adoption and application of both the delivered indicators and the supporting knowledge synthesis provided in the landscape annex. Organizations that implement educational activities in conflict and crisis environments are therefore the target audience of the landscape annex and the intended users of the indicators.

**Methodology**

The envisioned process is based loosely on last year’s work plan for the landscape review, but necessarily begins with explicit steps to take stock of the work previously accomplished and to devise necessary adaptations:

1) **Landscape annex:**

   a. Recover analysis and synthesis conducted on literature previously gathered (and interviews conducted?) for landscape review in 2016 (seeking guidance from those previously involved); review elements of previous landscape review work plan for what has been accomplished, what is feasible, and scale back accordingly (lead: Coordinator, plus Annie or someone else with institutional memory)

   b. Fully hone focus of guiding questions from previous landscape review as necessary to ensure relevance of analysis to development of indicators (full task team input).

   These guiding questions were:

   1. How is equity currently being measured in areas of conflict and fragility, and for what purposes (e.g., context analysis, M&E, etc.)? Specifically:

      a. Which dimensions of education have been the focus of equity measurement (e.g., access, retention, EGR & EGM outcomes, safety, SEL outcomes), and which dimensions have not?

      b. Which domains of vulnerability have been commonly considered (e.g., gender, mobility status, ethnicity), and which have not?

   2. Which approaches, metrics, and tools have demonstrated success or promise, and what key challenges to equity measurement remain?

   c. Building on ECCN indicator study, assemble and review any additional EiCC project documents and reports for equity components of their ToC (with or without explicit indicators), their equity results and lessons learned (Coordinator, Core Team member(s)).

   d. Additional literature scan as feasible/necessary (full team contributions).

   e. Analysis: specific division of labor and process TBD based on decisions made in (a) above.

   f. KII phase (interviews or expert consultations and its analysis) (Core Research Team, Assistants, Full Team(?))

   g. Draft narrative annex focused on evidence concerning mechanisms by which learner characteristics result in educational inequality in EiCC settings, promising ToC and interventions to influence these mechanisms, and implications for indicators. (Core Research Team, Assistants)

   h. Develop presentation version (optional; can wait for later relevant occasion). (Core Research Team, Assistants)
i. Review of both products (g and h) by full team (Equity Initiative C & F), and revisions.

2) Indicators:

a. Compile *equity* indicators from EiCC projects (as noted, much work has been done in ECCN review) (Assistants)

b. Categorize and determine gaps. (Core R & A Team and assistants).

c. Synthesis (and innovation as required) for proposed standard indicators (Core R & A team).

d. Submission for expert review, full Equity Initiative (C & F) review, and USAID review commentary / followed by revision.

**Coordination mechanism**

The task coordinator will be responsible for regular, frequent coordination of the work of the Core Research Team and assistants, with approximately weekly (Skype / WebEx) meetings or briefer check-ins. Communication with (or at least updating of) the broader consultative team for this task is envisioned as bi-weekly. In person meetings may be held among DC-based members if practical.

Documents towards the drafting of the annex and development of the indicators will be housed in a sub-folder in Google Docs and or the Equity Initiative SharePoint, within the overall folder created for the Equity Initiative Conflict and Fragility Working Group.