

**INITIATING A PROGRAM IN  
EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING IN A NATION IN  
CRISIS:  
THE CASE OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA**

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**ABSTRACT:**

This paper discusses an ongoing involvement of the Institute for International Studies in Education (IISE), School of Education, University of Pittsburgh with the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) to reconstruct the Bosnian educational system. A core funding for this *Program on Educational Policy, Planning and Development for National Renewal in BiH* is provided by UNICEF. The purpose of the Program is “to respond to the needs of the Governments of the Republic and the Cantons for help in policy, planning and reconceptualizing the education system of the country and to help them in initiating programs of educational renewal and in-service training appropriate for the future” (2). The BiH Program is part of a larger IISE Program in Education in Nations in Crisis and/or in Transition which is being implemented in collaboration with UNICEF, USAID and other partners.

In early 1995, the BiH Program fielded a resident Program Coordinator. Since then, among ongoing activities in BiH, IISE has been providing support to teachers and administrators despite the war by conducting a series of seminars in Active Learning in collaboration with UNICEF and the BiH government. Now that the perspective for a peaceful settlement of the conflict has considerably improved, the Program foresees several initiatives involving faculty members and graduate students. These are: “Policy, Planning and Administration: Management for Renewal”; “Teacher Development for Educational Renewal”; “Content, Methods and Materials: Innovation for National Renewal”; and “Non-Formal Education: Youth and Family Development for National Renewal”.

This paper highlights the work being done under the first initiative: “*Policy, Planning and Administration: Management for Renewal.*” It elaborates on the various moments of the development of this initiative with a particular emphasis on a seminar in Strategic Planning that took place in Zenica, Central Bosnia in the Fall of 1995. The purpose of this paper is to share some of the observations and the lessons learned for over a year of work in BiH, with the hope of advancing knowledge building in the broader field of study of education in nations in crisis. This paper is also intended to contribute to a deeper understanding the dynamics of educational reconstruction, so as to inform future efforts at providing education in nations affected by armed conflicts.

**FOREWORD:**

The involvement of the Institute for International Studies in Education (IISE) in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) began with a mission led by Seth Spaulding, IISE Director, to carry out a sector study of the educational system under the aegis of UNICEF. The visit took place during the cease-fire of the Fall of 1994 and coincided with a national conference on education that took place in

Sarajevo. The conference was attended by over 100 participants representing virtually all sectors and levels of the educational system of BiH, and by representatives of bilateral and international agencies to discuss the future of education. The mission produced a report on *The Education Sector in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Possible Long-Term Options for Educational Policy, Planning and Development Assistance* (3) identifying the major areas of future international cooperation. Based on some of these findings, the UNICEF/IISE Program on Educational Policy, Planning and Development for National Renewal in BiH was initiated in early 1995. IISE is now a UNICEF Implementing Partner in education with Lynn Cohen as a resident Program Coordinator in BiH.

Given UNICEF's mandate and the events in BiH in 1995, the University of Pittsburgh team has been focusing its work on assisting teachers and administrators so that they can effectively continue to foster children's intellectual growth while helping them deal with the war-related trauma and stress. Over the past year, IISE has been conducting a series of seminars in Active Learning in collaboration with UNICEF and the Bosnian government. These seminars introduced innovative teaching/learning strategies that foster active and student-centered classrooms with the intention of relieving the teachers' and children's stress and psychological trauma due to the war. At the same time, as the perspective for a peaceful settlement of the conflict began to considerably improve, an important step was taken in beginning to address the overall issue of educational reconstruction in BiH by focusing on developing the national organizational capacity in educational planning. This effort resulted in the holding of a seminar in educational planning in Zenica (BiH).

### **BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STATUS OF EDUCATION IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA:**

Prior to the beginning of the war in April 1992, BiH had a well developed educational system with a teacher workforce of approximately 27, 000 teachers at primary and secondary levels serving 500,000 students throughout the 8 years of primary education and 4 years of secondary education. The country had 4 universities with 46 colleges, art academies or advanced higher education institutions, and higher education employed 1,600 university teachers serving about 30,000 students. People were enjoying a relatively high standard of living compared to other countries of that part of the world and the whole region of the former Yugoslavia was becoming rapidly one of the favorite vacation spots of Europe. Bosnia-Herzegovina itself had gained a considerable international prestige especially with the hosting of the XIV Winter Olympic Games in 1984/85 in Sarajevo.

The past four years of war has dramatically changed this picture. Dr. Srebren Dizdar, BiH Permanent Secretary of Education points out in his November 1995 study (1) that since the beginning of the war, some 50,000 children lost their lives or were wounded. In Sarajevo alone, 1,600 children were killed out of the 10, 000 people who have been reported to have died. About 80% of the 2, 235 school buildings have be destroyed, damaged, or are being used for other purposes. Today, the country is left with 278 primary schools with 199, 263 children and 10,541 teachers and other staff operating under the government controlled territory; while in the territory under the control of the Croatian Defence Council (HVO), there are 85 eight grades and 145 four grades primary schools with 2,952 teachers serving 65,000 pupils. In secondary education, in the government controlled territory, there are 143 schools employing 5,210 teachers and other staff and serving 65,649 pupils; while in the territory controlled by the HVO, there are 34 secondary schools employing 10,180 teachers and serving 16,620 pupils. Higher education institutions of Mostar, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zenica and Bihac have 41 faculty employing 1,087 teachers and serving 14,200 students on the government controlled territory. With the assumption that education is to play a key role in the socioeconomic reconstruction and development of BiH, the country now finds itself at one of the most difficult moment of its history.

Today, the Bosnian government is faced with many emergency needs including school repair and reconstruction; teacher training; psychosocial programs to address children and teachers trauma; provision of educational materials, etc. Because of the shellings, destroyed buildings, and lack of heat and electricity, the overall working conditions have become extremely difficult and barely conducive to the formation of long-term visions. Roads were often closed; travel inside the country, life-threatening; and the means of communications often taken for granted in all other European cities, such as telephone and faxes, were unreliable. Under these circumstances policy makers have been primarily concerned with emergency needs. This was compounded with the fact that limited access in and out of Sarajevo over the past three years and the break-down of communications between Sarajevo and educational institutions throughout the country, seriously hampered policy makers' ability to collectively plan for the future. On the other hand, because of these many war-related constraints, the decision-making powers of local authorities have de facto expanded into new areas of educational planning and day-to-day operation of the educational system; whereas their ability to find resource to respond to the needs of school directors and teachers remain very limited.

After three years of war, and with the peace process well underway, it was urgent that BiH educators develop a common vision of what the overall educational system should look like in the very near future. Some of the key educational planning issues which needed to be addressed

were: what would be the long-term goals and objectives of education taking into account the emergent new socioeconomic needs of the country? What would be the ways and means of realizing such goals and objectives? What would be role of the various “stakeholders” in the definition and implementation of future educational policies? How would responsibilities for educational planning be shared among the concerned institutions especially in view of the projected decentralized administrative and political structures in BiH? It was to begin addressing these emergent problems that a seminar on educational strategic planning was organized by the UNICEF/IISE Program.

## **THE SEMINAR IN EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING IN ZENICA:**

### ***Purpose of the Seminar:***

The UNICEF/IISE seminar in educational strategic planning was seen as a first step in a major process of starting to think about the future of education as a whole in BiH. The seminar was organized during a short break in hostilities during the cease-fire of October 1995. Specifically, the purpose of the seminar were:

- To provide an initial opportunity for individuals to make contact with their counterparts and to begin discussing what education would look like in the future. The intention was to address the problems due to the break-down of communication between and among the various educational institutions dealing with educational planning over the past three years.
- To assess the educational strategic planning capabilities and potentials that are now available in BiH. Before initiating any effort in strengthening the existing mechanism for educational planning in BiH, it is important to first make an initial assessment of needs so as to design the most appropriate future training programs in educational planning.
- To begin to identify some of the major longer-term issues and problems that need to be addressed. There is a whole plethora of issues and problems that now affect the educational system in BiH and clearly, there is a need to establish priorities as to what issues need to be dealt with immediately.
- To develop a general understanding of the sequence of activities that are involved in the development of strategic plans. Prior to the war, BiH had a well-developed, yet highly centralized system for educational planning. Today, it is essential to up-date educators on some of the current thinking in strategic planning in other countries, especially in Western

Europe and in the United States, particularly under conditions of decentralization. BiH educators have been virtually cut-off from the rest of the world over the past three years.

Overall, this seminar was intended to develop a very flexible planning framework that would accommodate rapid and sudden shifts as BiH sought to develop its educational system as new administrative/political infrastructure would emerge as part of future peace agreement.

*Narrative of the Seminar in Zenica:*

The seminar took place at the Hotel Metallurg, in Zenica, Central Bosnia-Herzegovina. It was attended by 28 participants from such institutions as the National Ministry of Education (Sarajevo), the Pedagogical Institute of BiH (Sarajevo), the Ministry of Education of the Tuzla canton. There were also some representatives from Pedagogical Institutes and Pedagogical Academies. For some of the participants, it was the first time that they ever traveled outside Sarajevo since the beginning of the war. They were brought to Zenica by bus and travelled through some of the most devastated areas of the country. The list of participants was established by the national Ministry of Education and by the various local authorities and provided a wide variety of representatives from the many institutions involved in education. The seminar was conducted by John L. Yeager with contributions from Rob Fuderich (UNICEF) and Michel Rakotomanana.

The meetings lasted three days and included lectures and group projects. The language barrier was a constraint. Fortunately, there were some interpreters and a few of the participants spoke English. Overtime, however, language became less and less of an obstacle, especially as the meetings grew more informal. Each participant was assigned to one of four groups in an effort to encourage interaction with other colleagues from different institutions and different parts of the country. For example, an effort was made to foster an interaction between representatives from East and West Mostar. Educators from either side of the Neretva river rarely met each other since the beginning of the hostilities. Plenary meetings took place in the hotel's Conference room and group work took place in other smaller meeting rooms on the second floor. What started as a fairly formal and structured seminar became over three days very informal and comfortable. The level of informality was further enhanced by the fact that most participants were staying at the hotel and shared breakfast, lunch and coffee breaks with their colleagues and with the team from Pittsburgh. This level of informality was most instrumental in building relationships, sharing information, and exchanging views on the current state of education and on the reconstruction work that lays ahead.

The seminar focused on several key issues in strategic planning including an introduction to educational planning covering such topics as strategic planning at the national level (e.g. the need

to coordinate planning at national, cantonal, municipal and schools levels; the need for a genuine participatory approach and for consensus). The seminar also discussed such topics as the definition of strategic planning (e.g. long-range planning v/s strategic planning; strategic planning as an interactive and flexible process; strategic planning, evaluation and responsiveness), along with the issues of how to link planning resource and allocation-performance. Time was also devoted to a discussion on the different stages of the planning process and a review was made of such topics as the “plan to plan”, organizational analysis in the planning process, planning groups, environmental assessment, vision statement, mission statement, goals and objectives, strategies, and priorities in strategic planning.

Throughout these meetings, an effort was made to draw upon issues and concerns that are directly relevant to the BiH context. Of a particular interest, for example, was a session when all the participants as a group were asked to reflect on “*internal strength and weaknesses*” of the existing educational system. Some of the items on which there was substantive agreement were:

*“Strength: extended school’s network; high skilled cadre; adequate curriculum; favorable structure of ages; student’s desire to learn; a level of general knowledge; a good conception of education; good Ministers and directors; effective Pedagogical Institutes; multicultural environment; teacher’s enthusiasm; good tradition of coordination”*

*“Weaknesses: deficiency in the number of cadre; inadequacy of curriculum; small material base; lack of textbooks; destroyed teaching aids and bad equipment; impossibility of using computers, television, and radio; information blockade; traumatized students; level of the students’ knowledge in a previous four years; leaving teachers; physically exhausted students; teachers’ health; lack of coordination of present needs; raising teachers to the proper training level”.*

Further, the participants were asked to work in small groups, to think about the respective organizations to which they belonged and to outline what could be their “*goals and objectives*” and “*organizational mission*” . Some of the comments that were made include:

*“Goals: to provide snack for each student in primary school; to establish a planning period of 5 years; to increase the work with talented students by including a large number of talented students in schools (10%) and to identify schools according to the prevailing student talents that are available”*

*“Objectives: to control the percentage of registration and the number of student;s to test the students in order to separate them into different classes; to analyze the different level of achievement of students (if they have not been in pre-school institutions); to introduce two foreign languages at primary level; to introduce computer science in higher level of primary schools; to enable the realization of private primary school establishment; to coordinate program contents in national group of subjects at the cantonal level under the projected new arrangement for the educational system; to provide snack for each student in primary schools”.*

*“Mission: To implement the curriculum with the help f annual and monthly planning lessons; to define the missions of teacher’s council and professional groups; to provide*

*teaching materials, supplies and other equipment; to improve the methods and ways of working; to examine optional instructions.*

Other comments on mission included:

*“To reform, in part, the existing system of primary education; “to define the number of students from the school’s kitchen and distribution from central kitchen; to define the content of snack; to define minimum of kitchen equipment; to define the total funds”*

These observations were then brought before the total group and discussed. Several comments can be made here. First, it appears that the immediate and real needs of schools and children at the time of the seminar was food. This is understandable in view of the fact that during the war, teachers were not paid and barely survived with the food and other commodities provided by relief agencies. These observations also reflect the fact that the participants to the seminar came from a variety of organizations, with a variety of needs, concerns and priorities. They tend to reveal that there were different levels of knowledge and appreciation of some of the fundamental concepts of strategic planning among the participants. This touches upon the key issue of the identification of participants for future seminars, which will be discussed in detail below.

Several cautionary remarks, however should be made. The timing of the seminar coincided with one of the many cease-fires that took place in BiH. It was common knowledge that in the past, many of these cease-fires were broken. Under that constant sense of uncertainty that was brought about by four years of war, many of the participants to the seminar did not yet appear to be ready to think about the longer term. Another cautionary remark is that the information given above were taken from a translated transcript of a series of sessions that were conducted with the help of translators. In all likelihood, some information may have been either “diluted” or lost through the translation process. The issue of translation will also be discussed below.

Further, the daily interaction that the team from the University of Pittsburgh had with the participants confirmed that many of them were understandably absorbed by the need to resolve the immediate problems. However, we encouraged them to concentrate on anticipating factors and events that will affect their organizations since they are responsible and accountable for decisions and actions that their respective organizations make. The topics of decision making, accountability, and flexibility need to be further explored. In a few instances, we noted that some participants preferred to use the educational system of ten years ago as the model for future development and were reluctant to entertain ideas of change. Change was anticipated by most but many were unsure as to what the consequences would be. We shared our view that it is important to consider all options before making any final determination as to the new direction for education

in BiH as a whole and in the cantons. Strategic planning helps structure a problem and facilitates a consideration of options and educational plans are intended to continually evolve.

Altogether, the seminar offered a forum for discussing trends, priorities, and strategies in educational reconstruction. It also provided an opportunity for all involved to reestablish contact and to share information, experiences, and view points on the reconstruction of the postwar educational system in BiH. It was an opportunity for the National Ministry of Education and Pedagogical Institutes to reestablish direct contact with each other; while fostering among the participants a deeper understanding of strategic planning issues. For many, it was also an opportunity to catch up on personal stories of hardship and hope, from where they were left, months, if not years ago.

The seminar fostered among participants the need to consider their work in a larger context beyond such immediate needs as the repair and/or reconstruction of damaged schools, and the provision of educational materials and supplies. While acknowledging the importance of these issues, the seminar underscored the many opportunities now offered to BiH educators to re-think and re-shape their educational system so as to address today's emerging educational and socio-economic needs at regional, national and global levels. Ultimately, the seminar initiated a momentum that will be maintained over the next few months through a series of additional training sessions. As a direct result of the seminar, a permanent mechanism of communication has now been established between BiH educators and the School of Education.

### ***Evaluation of the Seminar by Participants:***

The first UNICEF/IISE seminar was evaluated by the participants as good. The participants appreciated the clarity of presentations, their close reference to the BiH context, the depth of knowledge of strategic planning that was shared, the friendliness and open-mindedness of the facilitator, and his interest in learning from the participants. The participants felt that the facilitator should return again for another seminar. They also agreed that given the current state of the educational system in BiH, training seminars are essential for the future of the BiH in order to foster a planned approach to development. It was indicated that such seminars are useful and should be continued in the future.

On ways of improving future seminars it was indicated that additional literature on educational planning is needed; and that future seminars should be enriched with more discussions of the positive lessons learnt from the US and other educational systems as well as their eventual

implementation in the BiH context. Some indicated that a three-day session was too intensive and that effort should be made to spread the work, perhaps over a five-day time period. Some also said that the seminars should include more practical planning for individual participants using concrete examples with more time devoted to small group work and greater individual interaction with the facilitator. Generally, there was an agreement that in the future, the participants should be organized into homogeneous groups, that is, they should be made up of participants coming from similar professional background and possibly the same levels of training. It was also indicated that translators should be more aware of the topic being discussed so that translation can be easier to understand.

### ***Lessons Learned for Future Strategic Planning Seminars in Bosnia-Herzegovina:***

From this experience, and in light of ongoing communications with educational authorities in BiH, future strategic planning activities should demonstrate a high level of flexibility and adaptability. In the immediate future, educational planners should focus on fundamental issues such as direction, consideration of what education is attempting to accomplish at all levels, and how it should organize itself. At this time, it is not be advisable to develop specific detailed plans. Rather, the priority should be on the development of a “*planning culture*” within which the participatory development of macro level plans are to be considered. It appeared that the participants to the seminar were eager to move ahead, but were at the same time, because of the conflict over the last several years, weary and unsure of what the immediate future would hold. To define the strategic planning needs is most likely to take time, and is likely to require an incremental and continuous process at all levels of the planning system. Of a particular importance will be the selection of participants who will play a key role in future educational reforms.

With regard to the format of future educational planning seminars, as indicated in some of the evaluations made by the participants, it would be more efficient to have homogeneous groups, for example, Ministers of Education at the canton level, participate in the seminar. This would probably facilitate relevancy of the information as well as increase in the range of material that could be covered. Another approach would be to have teams consisting of possibly a Minister, two or three other major assistants, or representatives from municipalities and the local schools within the canton. This way, there could be more of a team-building approach that would actually be responsible for conducting a strategic planning process over the longer-term.

Further, instead of having an outside consultant come over briefly, and then leave, it would be more effective, that the consultant works with between three or five participants from various educational organizations at the canton, national and/or municipal level, who would have a

working knowledge of English. The participants would work together and become a “core team” of trained planning experts. They would receive an in-depth knowledge of strategic planning, including the skills needed to conduct strategic planning workshops and to initiate a planning process. This format has several advantages: there would be a number of resident BiH educators who would have expertise in strategic planning to conduct future workshops who fully understand the BiH culture; and the history of the educational system, its structure, and problems. These planners would come from the Federation, cantonal, and municipal levels. In this way, future workshop costs could be minimized because of the elimination of consultant’s costs. Further, the organizations where the trainers work would directly benefit from the availability of “in-house” expertise to develop strategic plans. The strategic plan trainers would have access via e-mail to educators abroad when they have specific questions to be discussed. Since the trainers would understand English, planning materials could be shared with colleagues and where needed, translated for general use. Since the trainers speak the native language, a great deal of strategic planning content could then be communicated in a much shorter amount of time with a great deal more relevancy to local context and needs.

#### **THE EMERGING CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA:**

Building upon IISE’s experiences in BiH over the past year, and after discussing future perspectives with other colleagues interested in and/or operating in BiH, IISE has come to the following understanding of the future of educational planning in Bosnia.

Although the recent peace agreement constitutes a major breakthrough, there still is some degree of uncertainty as to the nature of the final administrative and political structure of the country. On a macro-level, there is an agreement on the establishment of four main levels of administration: the *Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina* (to deal essentially with foreign affairs, international communication and trades, information, and justice - excluding education); the *Federation* (which would deal with education - with the Ministry of Education to be moving from Sarajevo to Mostar); the *cantons* (Bihac, Gorazde, Mostar I and Mostar II, Posavina, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Travnic and Zenica); and the *municipalities* (which would also have their political and educational infrastructure). To date, only Bihac and Tuzla have been formally established as cantons, while the others are being formed. Still to be resolved is the issue of the 49 percent of the territory under the control of the “Serbian Entity”.

Each canton would have a cantonal Ministry of Education with more autonomy and decision-making powers to plan according to regional and local needs. Of the moment, only Tuzla

has a cantonal Ministry of Education and plans have been made to establish a similar Ministry in Zenica. Similar plans are also being considered in other future cantons. The Ministry of Education of the Federation would remain, but would be smaller. In sum, and with some reservations on possible new institutional arrangements, there are several key educational institutions dealing or are likely to be increasingly dealing with educational planning in BiH. These are the *Federation Ministry of Education* (now located in Sarajevo, and perhaps moving to Mostar); the *Pedagogical Institute of BiH* (Sarajevo); the *Ministries of Education* of each canton; and the *Pedagogical Institutes and Academies*. Although the picture may appear relatively clear, there are many complex political issues to be dealt with. For example, in some canton, the Pedagogical Institutes/Academies have existed for many years and the transfer of responsibilities and decision-making authority to a newly-formed Ministry of Education could raise some difficulties.

In any case, while there appears to be a general agreement on this new structure, some important issues such as the distribution of responsibilities between the Federation, the cantons, and municipalities on such key questions as educational financing, remain to be resolved. For the time being, there is still little federal, cantonal or municipal budget for education. So far, schools have been operating thanks to volunteer teachers and administrators and to the support given by emergency assistance agencies, for example in the forms of teaching materials and food supplies.

Ultimately, there is an urgent need to make a full assessment of existing capabilities and human resources potentials that are available at all levels, especially at the level of the newly formed cantons and municipalities. Recent information seem to indicate that there will be a high level of turn-over, especially at the national level, not only because of the projected administrative reform, but also because many of today's high level administrators come from a wide variety of sectors. They are likely to return to their respective professional sector as soon as the reconstruction effort intensifies. This explains the urgency of conducting training programs that will address the needs of educational policy planners and administrators to work at the levels of the Federation, the cantons, and the municipalities. Finally, such training activities should also address the issues of inter-institutional coordination within and across the projected/existing levels.

These fundamental questions are part of the larger issue of administrative and political decentralization. Some of the earlier discussions on how the new structure would operate suggested that income should come from three levels of taxes: *Federation* (customs taxes, sales taxes on certain products, and several other kinds of specialized taxes); *cantons* (business and income taxes); *municipalities* (property taxes and business taxes). On the issue of educational

financing, some of these discussions suggested for example that the cantons and municipalities should control and to a large extent, provide the financial means to support their schools, especially in the primary and secondary levels; while higher education would be supported primarily by the Federation and by other sources (e.g. tuition, grants) (3). For now, the cantons and municipalities do not have yet a fully functional infrastructure, tax base or human resources to operate a decentralized educational system. Once the political and administrative infrastructures are in place and once an agreement is reached on financing issues, there will be a need to rapidly reconstruct the destroyed industrial and commercial bases of the cantons and municipalities so as to make the Federation fully operational and financially sustainable.

Thus these broader political and administrative issues will directly influence future trends in international assistance in the educational sector. They will determine whether the work will be done directly with the cantons or in a more coordinated fashion, through a central agency dealing with BiH as a whole. It is our conviction that it might not be fully efficient nor equitable if funding agencies were to approach each canton individually since some have been more devastated than others.

Clearly, educational planning in BiH is about to enter a new phase. While there is a relatively long tradition in national and regional planning in the Republics of the former Yugoslavia, such tradition existed in a different historical, socioeconomic and political context of a relatively centralized economy. Prior to the war, the educational system was centralized and required a limited amount of policy, planning and financial management work at the local level. The new decentralized system that is proposed today will require a new structure that would allow the canton to manage education effectively, but would also require new skills and a new understanding of educational planning which were not always there prior to the war. We believe that in the new context of the emergent market-economy in BiH, current Western understanding of planning would suggest first the development of a new kind of planning culture that would include new concepts of initiative, creativity and accountability. Although there appeared to be some attempt to engage onto this path in the late 1980s and early 1990s, this effort was stopped by the outbreak of the conflict.

### **WORKING TOGETHER ON EDUCATIONAL PLANNING IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA:**

Since the holding of the seminar in Zenica, two major developments took place at the University of Pittsburgh. The first one was the convening of a “mini-donors’ conference” that was attended by representatives from international agencies and organizations, and by other

concerned parties such as US-based foundations, from January 17 to 19, 1996. The list of participants included representatives from UNICEF, USAID-Global Bureau (Washington, DC), and from the World Bank. The conference reviewed the work being done by IISE in BiH; discussed the current and projected activities of the attending agencies in BiH; and outlined a common strategy for cooperation. During these meetings, the participants agreed to the importance of a careful educational planning in the reconstruction of the educational system in BiH. They also emphasized the importance of the coordination of the activities of all that are involved in this effort and recognized the role that IISE could play in this regard.

The second important event was a visit to the University of Pittsburgh by Dr. Srebren Dizdar, Permanent Secretary of Education of BiH from January 31 to February 2, 1996. The purpose of his visit was, in light of the “mini-donors’ conference” to meet with the faculty members working on the Program to discuss the current work done by IISE; to outline the government priorities in education; and to develop a common strategy for future collaborative work, now that the perspective for peace have considerably improved. During these meetings, the role of IISE in fostering a coordinated approach to educational reconstruction in BiH was also discussed.

It is in light of these developments IISE’s work under the Program’s initiative in “Policy, Planning and Administration: Management for Renewal”, IISE will include the following activities within the next few months:

- To foster the establishment of a National Educational Planning Group (Federation) and Cantonal Advisory Groups. These Groups are expected to play a key role in organizing a Second National Conference in Education (the first one was held in the Fall of 1994), which is a necessary first step for national concertation on future work in education. These Groups are also to work as fora for discussing future educational initiatives at their respective levels. In particular, they are expected to include representatives of all “stakeholders” involved in education. Their terms of reference would be to discuss and advise the UNICEF/IISE Program (and all other interested parties) on issues dealing with educational reconstruction. The idea is to develop a coherent, coordinated and meaningful approach to the work of agencies and organizations operating in BiH.
- To organize additional seminars in educational strategic planning in the Spring and the Summer of 1996 at cantonal, Federation, and possibly municipal levels. The idea is first to continue our work in assessing the current needs and existing capabilities; and second, to

work with BiH planners in addressing educational policy issues at cantonal and Federation levels. The seminars will be facilitated by faculty members and graduate students from the School of Education.

It should be understood that these projected activities will be undertaken in full coordination with the other three initiatives under the Program, which are: “Teacher Development for Educational Renewal”; “Content, Methods and Materials: Innovation for National Renewal”; and “Non-Formal Education: Youth and Family Development for National Renewal”.

Finally, it should be emphasized that although the situation in BiH is very complex and to some extent, unpredictable, it also offers tremendous opportunities for taking part in the overall effort of post-conflict reconstruction, which we hope, will contribute to strengthening the implementation of the peace agreement.

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