Navigating Ethical Dilemmas in Education in Emergencies (EiE):

A Compendium of Vignettes for Research & Practice

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Guidance Note

What is the Navigating Ethical Dilemmas in Education in Emergencies (EiE): A Compendium of Vignettes for Research and Practice?

Despite careful planning and preparation to initiate Education in Emergencies (EiE) research and programming in crisis-affected contexts, often unforeseen challenges emerge. Uncertainty about these challenges necessitates that researchers and practitioners develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be adaptive and responsive to emerging dilemmas. Entangled in these challenges are questions of positionality, identity, power, purpose, and individual and collective commitments to research and program participants and communities. And yet, researchers and practitioners rarely have opportunities to formally learn about, reflect on, and plan for the inevitable ethical challenges that emerge while conducting fieldwork and education programming in crisis- and conflict-affected settings. This is particularly worrisome for individuals new to EiE who frequently find work in some of the most difficult situations with minimal experience and mentorship to navigate the challenges that arise.

To bridge this gap, a group of researchers, practitioners, and graduate students contributed to a curated collection of 18 short vignettes based on the real-life challenges and ethical dilemmas they faced while completing education in emergencies-related work across a number of world regions, including the following countries: Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Mexico, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, State of Palestine, Syria, Tanzania, Turkey, Uganda, and Yemen. By integrating real-life scenarios, this compendium aims to strengthen and support emerging and future researchers and practitioners' skills to identify, reflect on, and mitigate current and future ethical dilemmas accompanying educational research and programming in crisis- and conflict-affected settings.

Why was this resource created?

This compendium of vignettes was created to:

- Highlight the range of issues, dilemmas, and opportunities that researchers and practitioners need to consider beyond day-to-day data collection and programmatic activities as they prepare to conduct fieldwork and program activities in crisis- and conflict-affected settings.
- Illustrate through real-life scenarios the many challenges that can arise and help participants think through and plan for constructive strategies and solutions that mitigate harm to participants and themselves.
- Enable opportunities for individuals to learn and reflect on how their identities, institutional affiliations, and other positionalities influence research and programming on education in crisis- and conflict-affected settings.
- Provide instructors and trainers with a handy guidance note to accompany the vignettes.

What are vignettes? Why is this a good approach for learning about ethical dilemmas in EiE?

Vignettes, sometimes described as stories without endings, provide opportunities for individuals or groups to review "a real-life scenario containing a field-related problem situation" that they can use to explore alternative approaches to solving the problem (Barkley, Major & Cross, 2014, p. 238). The stories illustrated in vignettes have multiple benefits for teaching, learning, training, and personal and professional development. They are: easy to construct, useful for exploring sensitive topics, helpful for bridging the gap between theory and practice, and support the development of critical thinking and decision-making skills amidst alternatives for solving a particular problem (Barkley, Major & Cross, 2014; Jeffries & Maeder,

2005). When facilitated well, they provide deep learning opportunities for reflection, deliberation, and perspective-taking, allowing individuals to "step-in" to someone else's shoes (Nohria, 2021).

The vignettes presented in this compendium focus on the ethical challenges that may emerge during data collection for research, monitoring, and evaluation activities, and other program-related work carried out in crisis- and conflict-affected settings. Each vignette is accompanied by a shared set of discussion questions that ask participants to identify the ethical dilemmas present in the vignette, to think through how best to address the dilemma in the moment, and what steps might have been taken to avoid or mitigate this dilemma from the beginning. Additional discussion questions encourage participants to consider what individual and/or structural factors may have further contributed to the dilemma and how different identity markers of those involved (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion, etc.) may lead to different ways to consider the dilemma and the appropriate responses.

Who should use the resource?

The vignettes can be used by instructors at colleges and universities to support undergraduate or graduate curricula related to EiE, research methods, and/or other relevant subjects. They can also be used by practitioners at local, national, and international organizations to prepare future practitioners and upskill current practitioners through workshops and other professional development activities.

Whether used in group-based teaching/ training activities or in self-directed learning on an individual basis, users can leverage this compendium to better orient and prepare for the ethical challenges, uncertainties, and dilemmas that researchers and practitioners confront when conducting research in EiE contexts and/or implementing EiE programs.

What are different ways to use this resource?

This resource can be adapted for a range of participants across different settings.

Collaborative group learning: We encourage instructors/facilitators to bring participants together in small groups to create opportunities for discussion, "co-laboring," and "meaningful learning," recognizing that shared knowledge and understanding is generated through interactions and relationships with one another (Barkley, Major & Cross, 2014, p. 17). The compendium covers a range of diverse ethical dilemmas and situations, none of which have a correct answer or resolution. Based on the teaching/training time, learning objectives and instructional goals, instructors/facilitators might choose to use some or all of these vignettes to suit their needs.

As you think about bringing different groups together, we have provided some additional instructional tips below for you to consider.

Pedagogical and facilitation tips
- Ask participants to think about a particular context as they work through the scenarios in an effort to surface other issues worth considering in their discussions and deliberations. The vignettes have deliberately been geographically decontextualized as many of the ethical dilemmas presented could emerge across a range of cultural, geographical, political, and socioeconomic settings, but it may be helpful to situate the vignette in a particular place and time.
- Choose to have all or some of the participants/ groups focus on the same vignette(s) in order to compare and contrast different responses to the same dilemma, or have individuals or small groups engage with different vignettes in order to reflect on more examples.
- Participants can use the enclosed discussion questions that accompany each vignette or develop their own discussion questions to better align with their course/workshop objectives.

- Encourage perspective-taking so participants can see the issues from different sides and vantage points. While each of the vignettes have a protagonist facing a central dilemma, there are a variety of other background actors in the vignette as the dilemma unfolds. Encourage participants to view the dilemma and its resolution from multiple perspectives.

- Ensure adequate time for participants to read, reflect, and discuss the vignettes; encourage participants to read the vignettes prior to coming together to further support engagement by everyone.

- Consider using the vignettes as an assignment or activity that individual and/or groups of participants can work on separately; participants might be asked to record their responses to these scenarios through writing and/or multimedia resources (e.g. written essays, videos, etc.).

The vignettes can also be used to support learning and reflection through online engagement. The pedagogical and facilitation tips are also relevant to the virtual space. However, you might consider the best ways to group participants online and provide a collaborative online workspace for capturing ideas (e.g. Jamboard, Google Docs, etc.).

Individual self-directed learning: Individuals may also choose to work through this resource at their own pace. When working through the vignettes through self-direction, take time to critically reflect on your positionality to this work (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007).

We also encourage all instructors, facilitators, and participants to read through and/or assign the supplementary materials enclosed in this resource. These materials may serve as required readings or helpful resources to support teaching and training activities.

How is this compendium organized?

There are 18 vignettes enclosed in this resource. They are presented in no particular order. Each vignette is accompanied by a few keywords to help instructors and users understand the main focus of the story. As stated above, the vignettes have been decontextualized. Any specific references to geographical settings, regions, countries and/or populations have been removed both to ensure usability across settings and to mitigate stereotypes and facile generalizations about contexts. To protect and preserve contributors' relationships with their field sites, participants, and partner organizations (where relevant), we have decided not to attach names of contributors to specific vignettes. See above for a complete list of contributing authors.

What is the best way to reference or cite these materials?

We encourage all instructors and facilitators to widely use and adapt this resource to their needs. We kindly ask that you cite the original source. Please see below the suggested citation.

Suggested citation: Mendenhall, M., Chopra, V., & Bazlen, R. (2022). Navigating Ethical Dilemmas in Education in Emergencies (EiE): A Compendium of Vignettes for Research and Practice. Teachers College, Columbia University.

We also encourage you to be in touch with suggestions for further strengthening this compendium. Please share feedback about your use of this resource and/or interest in contributing to future editions by emailing mendenhall@tc.columbia.edu.

VIGNETTE 1: Can You Hear Them?
Elevating Beneficiary Voice during Research

Stakeholders: Independent consultants, donors, and research firms
Keywords: Remote data collection, participatory research, evidence-based policy making

You have been hired as a consultant by an agency that is carrying out research for a large, well-known donor in the Education in Emergencies (EiE) community. The purpose of the research is to inform their next multi-year EiE strategy for a well-documented, crisis-affected refugee population.

You are tasked with collecting information that covers a wide range of areas of inquiry that include: a) the appropriateness of the curriculum in the refugee-hosting countries to the needs of the population; b) the degree and quality of social and emotional skills development occurring in the classroom; and c) the feasibility of facilitating voluntary repatriation of the school-aged refugee population based on an analysis of the commonalities between the host country curriculum and that of their home country. To feel reasonably well-assured that the strategy you propose is sound, you believe you need to collect and triangulate information from a wide range of stakeholders. These include primary through secondary school children, their teachers and school administrators, their parents and caregivers, local and international NGOs, and ministry of education representatives.

In the methodology that you draft for the agency, your suggestions include the following:

1. Hiring teams of locally-based researchers, fluent in the local language and dialect and known to the communities in which they will gather information.
2. Strictly following the COVID-19 prevention protocols in place in each country of the study, while also being well-informed of the sociocultural norms (informally chatting over a cup of tea, for example) in the areas in which you will be collecting data.

3. Collecting data electronically via secure means (small tablet or mobile phone using KoBo or a similar application).
4. Collecting multiple classroom observations via video of the same teacher and class over the data collection period (using a mobile phone or small tablet) or using previously recorded lessons, if any are available.
5. Including the voice of research participants whenever possible.
6. Concurrent triangulation and quality assurance.

The donor requests that you not contact any ministry of education staff in any of the refugee hosting countries or in the refugees' home country. They also ask that your recommendations align with their formal stance about voluntary repatriation rather than resettlement and integration.

The hiring agency states that:

1. Interviewing primary school-aged children is unnecessary, and "too difficult" with too little added value.
2. COVID-19-related protocol requires the use of remote data collection only, i.e. via mobile phone/Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP).
3. They do not have the budget to reach a representative sample of the three main languages spoken in the refugee-hosting area; only one of those languages can be supported via translation.
4. They would like you to remove the distance classroom observation component.
5. They would like all data collected first before any analysis of it takes place.

You are asked to revise your proposed methodology.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?

- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?

- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?

- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?

- How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

VIGNETTE 2: Working with Governments on School-based Research

Stakeholders: Researchers, government representatives, head teachers, and teachers
Keywords: Governments, protecting research participants

You are a researcher at an international organization who has been tasked with conducting research that includes data collection at schools, which will involve interviews with head teachers and focus groups with teachers. The government will be one of the end-users of the research and they have also expressed interest in improving their own capacities to undertake research. Furthermore, the government has provided essential support to the research. They have facilitated your access to the schools and have ensured you have been provided with the necessary approvals and documentation to proceed with data collection, including a list of schools to visit, contact information, and formal introduction letters from a government representative addressed to head teachers in support of the research.

When school visits were about to commence, the government requested that members of their research team accompany you and your co-researchers on school visits and sit in on interviews and focus groups as part of governmental quality assurance and knowledge-sharing processes. While you see the value of working with government representatives in this way, one of your colleagues is slightly concerned that there may be issues with data confidentiality and that research participants may not feel they can speak openly if government representatives are present. However, as school visits cannot proceed without the support of the government, and you believe that this is an important opportunity for collaboration and learning, you and your colleagues move ahead with the school-based data collection.

Most of the school visits went smoothly and research participants appeared to speak candidly, even with government representatives present who provided added value to discussions by asking insightful follow-up questions and comments. However, problems arose at two of the schools.

At one school, the head teacher provided very brief responses to interview questions and seemed reluctant to elaborate when asked follow-up questions. Further, during the focus group with teachers at this school, participants appeared to take the presence of the government representative as an opportunity to air their concerns more broadly, resulting in a heated discussion and the government representative stopping the focus group, asking to see the focus group guide and telling researchers which questions they could and could not ask (despite the guides having been reviewed as part of the initial approval process), before the focus group could be started again.

At another school, the government representative challenged research participants' experiences, noting that what they were saying was incorrect. You and your colleagues felt uncomfortable with these exchanges: not only were you concerned about the overall comfort of the research participants, but it was difficult for you to determine whether or not the government representative actually felt that what was being said was incorrect or if their challenges of participants' experiences were politically motivated.

While you and your fellow researchers believe that you were able to collect quality school-level data, and that government representatives' contributions added value to the process in most cases, your experiences at these two schools have left you wondering what you could have done differently to mitigate the problems that arose.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
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VIGNETTE 3:
"What Do I Do?": Child Pregnancy & Research Ethics Boards[1]

Stakeholders: Graduate student researcher, female refugees, research ethics board
Keywords: Minors, participant safety, IRB negotiation

As a male, graduate student embarking on conducting research on refugee education for the first time, you are spending two months in a refugee camp. You use YPAR (Youth Participatory Action Research) methods for your study where you work with 8 youth researchers (between 15-24 years old), who conduct interviews with a group of 50 youth within the camp. You meet each morning as a team, and again during the early evenings when you are no longer allowed to be in the camp. When you are in the camp collecting data, the youth researchers work in pairs (every minor under 18 is paired with an 'adult' youth researcher) to interview other youth. A few weeks later when the research finishes and you return to the country's capital where you are working and living, one of the youth researchers calls and informs you that a 16-year-old youth researcher on your core team is pregnant.

The youth researcher who informs you cannot confirm if the pregnancy is a consequence of sexual assault. Your main concern at this point is if your research has in any way compromised this minor's safety, particularly if she had interviewed other youth alone, despite the guidelines you established. The minor is an orphan, and at 16, is the head of her household, and does not have a cell phone where you can directly reach her. As a male outsider in this setting, you are unsure of how to begin this conversation without a translator, and particularly when you don't know how to reach this minor. Though the minor speaks some traces of French, she is most comfortable in Kiswahili, a language you do not speak or understand.

Since this is your first time confronting a situation like this, you reach out to your university faculty advisors, who in turn ask you to connect with the IRB (or research ethics board), to follow due diligence. The IRB at your university goes into panic mode and is unable to provide any guidance about how to navigate this in a way that is in tune with the local realities of young peoples' experiences in the camp, or the constraints you face in accessing the minor, or even the impossibility of your physical return to this camp. You have exhausted your research budget for travel to the camp, your camp permit has expired and you are therefore unable to return to the camp. The IRB wants you to provide some assurance that this incident did not occur as a consequence of the minor participating in your YPAR study.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
- How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

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1   A research ethics board oversees research with human subjects. Comparable titles might be Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Independent Ethics Committee. In addition to approval from your university or institution, you may need additional research clearance from national government bodies dependent on the rules and regulations in the context of your research study.

VIGNETTE 4: When Protection Fails, Who Do You Turn To?

Stakeholders: Practitioner, NGO staff (education and protection) teachers, and students
Keywords: Child protection, NGO practices, anonymity

You are a new practitioner with six years of international educational experience in developing countries, the last two being in contexts of crisis and displacement. Recently, you were managing a teacher professional development program for refugee and national teachers in a large refugee camp. During one of the training workshops, a teacher shared with the group that the headteacher and deputy headteacher at her school had impregnated two young female students (around the ages of 15-16 years old). The girls dropped out of school, with one of them eventually marrying the teacher who had impregnated her. While most teachers in the school knew what had happened and were deeply upset by the situation, they were also fearful of reporting this case as both the teachers in question wielded power in the school and the community.

The incident, though a child rights violation and legal crime in the country, went unreported for several months. Tired of keeping this information to herself, the teacher sought advice from fellow teachers in the training (who worked in different schools), as well as our team of facilitators, about how she could support these girls, if at all. Collectively, you and the teacher decided to get in touch with a colleague at an international organization, in the hope that the case can be addressed swiftly and with care.

In the following weeks, the teacher met with education and protection staff at the international organization to share details of the incident. She also noted her growing concern for her and her family's safety and any possible repercussions of reporting this incident. The teacher was from a different nationality than

the majority of teachers and students at her school, including the teachers who impregnated the girls, and she felt that as soon as it appeared that this case was being investigated, it would be clear to her colleagues that she was the one who reported it. The representatives at the international organization assured her that her identity would be protected (a practice guaranteed within the reporting system). Since several organizations are active in the camp and have different responsibilities, the person you spoke with at the international organization reached out to the partner organization responsible for child protection to describe the severity of the case and the importance of protecting the teacher's confidentiality as they looked into it further.

Despite these meetings and the confidentiality policy in place to protect those who report abuses, a child protection staff member visibly dressed in the organization's uniform and traveling in their organization's vehicle went to speak to the teacher in the middle of a teacher training, surrounded by other teachers (many of whom taught at her school). Shaken by this experience and nervous that her colleagues may find this meeting suspicious, the teacher expressed her concerns to the UN agency, which in turn, spoke with the implementing organization a second time about respecting the teacher's confidentiality. Nonetheless, the next week, the same incident occurred.

Throughout this process, the teacher felt increasingly concerned about her own safety, and that of her family. Further, she saw slow progress from the child protection organization in following up with the girls. During this

time and in the following weeks, the teacher repeatedly called you to express concern for her family's safety. While you tried your best to assuage her fears, you also did not know what to say as you recognized the limited agency you had to intervene in this situation.

In the end, one of the teachers who impregnated the girls was fired (for budgetary reasons), and the other resigned. The girls remain out of school, and while the teacher checks in with them from time to time, she feels frustrated that more was not done to support these girls.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
- How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

VIGNETTE 5: A Typical School Visit?

Stakeholders: Researcher, NGO staff (local and expatriate), teachers, and students
Keywords: NGO practices, respect, consent

You are a researcher who has been tasked with conducting research as part of a larger project being implemented by a non-governmental organization (NGO). Some of your research activities coincide with a school visit that the NGO has organized for the various partners working on the project. The delegation of partners includes both expatriate (from other countries) and national staff members. Coincidentally, you happen to be collecting data at one of the schools that the delegation is visiting. The large delegation is divided into smaller groups that move in and out of the school throughout the day as they visit different schools participating in the project.

While the different groups of project partners are visiting, you observe their interactions with the teachers and students at the school. Some of these interactions make you feel very uncomfortable.

For example, the visitors don't actually seem to know much about the project and keep asking the teachers very rudimentary questions about what they are doing. Though they are looking for answers, the visitors seem to do most of the talking. You then observe another group of visitors talking with some students, including 5 boys and 1 girl. One of the visitors asks the girl to explain what kinds of "girl challenges" she is facing at the school. Even when the student appears reluctant to answer, the visitor continues to press her for answers. The teaching staff don't seem to know the schedule for the different groups, how long the visitors are staying, and how to manage the demands of talking with them while simultaneously tending to their lessons.

Each time one of the small groups visits the school, instructional time is lost as some students perform a song and dance to welcome them. The group of students hasn't attended class all day as they are waiting eagerly for the next group to arrive for their

school visit. It is an incredibly hot and humid day and while the vehicles carrying the staff members around to the different schools are stocked with drinks and snacks, the student performers who, by the end of the day, are very hot, tired, hungry and thirsty, are not offered anything.

Throughout the day, communications staff members from the project are moving around the school and in and out of classrooms taking photographs for promotional materials about the project. They don't appear to ask permission or to explain how the images will be used from any of the teachers or students being captured in the images.

What you observed is bothering you and you think the school visit could have been conducted differently, but you are unsure how to express these concerns.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
- How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

VIGNETTE 6: Disciplinary Norms and "Cultural Clashes": Upholding the Right to Protection in a Refugee Camp School

Stakeholders: UN agency, teachers, students, researcher
Keywords: Corporal punishment, ethnography, mandatory reporting, cultural clashes

You are an ethnographer working on school transitions among refugee youth. As part of your study, you attend classes and school-based activities in a refugee camp throughout the day. Being in the school for formal and informal interactions is an important source of data for your study, and to establish long-term relationships with youth. By now, most of the students and teachers in this school have grown accustomed to your presence as someone from abroad, but are puzzled why you would be seated at a desk in their overcrowded, dusty classroom, scribbling notes for a "report" and "maybe a book". Physically identifiable as a foreigner in the camp, community members usually assume you are working with an international organization offering services in the camp. You often explain that you work "*with* an international organization, but not *for* it". You seek to distinguish yourself from the organization so that students feel like they could speak openly with you about their experiences, including sharing negative impressions or interactions at school. Meanwhile, you hope your findings can inform key stakeholders' decision-making in the camp and want to assure young people that their voices will make their way to the organizations that shape opportunities in the camp. This balance is difficult to accomplish, as you often arrive at the school in a humanitarian organization's car, a security requirement you are obliged to meet. Every day as you exit the car, you tuck your identification card—another visible marker of your organizational affiliation—into your bag and join the classroom or the staff room, trying to just be you. But the organizations always seem to be in the room.

You arrive late one morning and come across a set of teachers in the staff room talking with a small group of 16 Form 4 students. Given the tone, you are fairly certain that these students have been caught doing something wrong. The students stand around in a circle, many with their hands folded and heads hanging down. Rodgers, a newer teacher, is leading the conversation, asking students why they skipped class. Other staff members join in, suggesting that the students do not recognize the value of school and are disrespecting their teachers. You sit down with your back to the circle, uncertain where things are heading but knowing that your presence is likely a deterrent for corporal punishment, which is commonplace in this context, despite the fact that physical discipline has been outlawed for several years. Though teachers have already been offered various trainings introducing alternative disciplinary methods, there remain strong cultural attachments to public and physical forms of punishment, particularly caning.

Things escalate quickly, and soon Rodgers is encouraging other teachers to help him discipline the students so that they can learn their lesson. Four male teachers go around the circle, whacking every student with a branch. Students wince, adjusting their bodies to indicate their preference for caning—some offering their wrists and others turning to offer their backside. You fixate on Mohammed, who has tears coming down his face, even before the caning began. At one point, Mohammed says aloud that they are refugees and are supposed to be protected.

Your heart is racing. You are unsure whether to say something or stand up and physically try to stop them. But your interruption would be seen as a transgression to teachers' authority, which seems dangerous and could lead to further repercussions for these students when you are no longer at the school. You turn around to face the circle, to make

your presence visible. You stare into Rodgers' eyes, shaking your head, signaling your disapproval. You are stunned as the teachers continue. Once students are dismissed, you follow Mohammed to his classroom, whispering to ask if he is ok and telling him that he is indeed right, that teachers are not allowed to do this. You leave school shortly after and report the incident to the organization you are affiliated with.

The next day at school, you sit in the classroom. The class prefect rings the bell, but no teacher arrives. As you arrange your books on the desk, you realize that students are staring at you. Mustafa, one of the students you have known for years, pulls you aside to tell you that you shouldn't have done what you did. You know immediately what he is referencing. In a low voice, Mustafa explains that Rodgers came to class yesterday afternoon and told everyone that you are "a *foreign* spy" who could not be trusted. Rodgers explained to them that you are pretending to be their friend, but you don't really like refugees and that foreigners cannot be trusted. It is clear that damage has been done to your relationships with the students, as well as teachers.

You find Rodgers in the staff room, and soon learn that the entire teaching staff has been waiting to confront you, collectively, about the fact that you reported them. "We are in trouble now, because

of you," they say. The principal explains that you should have talked with him before reporting the incident. Teachers you have never interacted with give you disapproving looks from across the staff room. One man physically walks into you while moving between school structures, seemingly on purpose. It is clear that you are being punished by the teachers for your decision to report the incident. Students are also being punished, as no teachers are teaching their classes that day. Rodgers sits up in the tree outside the staff room during his afternoon classes, resting his eyes under the sun.

In an effort to redress with teachers, you invite them to an open dialogue about the incident and disciplinary practices to see how you can support them. You admit to what they saw as a betrayal, although you still feel it was the right thing to do. Teacher after teacher shares their perspective, justifying caning as a culturally relevant practice aimed at respect rather than domination. They emphasize that you, an outsider, are not in a position to understand or judge.

Though Rodgers is eventually dismissed for gross misconduct, the process takes longer than you anticipate. You remain in the camp for another month, though being there never feels the same. Rodgers and the other teachers are still working at the school when you leave.

Discussion Questions:
- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
- How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

VIGNETTE 7: "They Will Misbehave": Navigating Corporal Punishment during a Classroom Observation

Stakeholders: Classroom teacher, grade-level lead teacher, students, researcher
Keywords: Corporal punishment, teaching, classroom management

You sit at the back of a primary school classroom (grade/level 2) eager to begin your first day of classroom observations. The teacher has generously cleared a space for you. You start to take notes as 110 second graders scribble diligently in their notebooks. The teacher is writing out a math lesson on the board and talking gently to them in English. You observe a couple of children near you: one needs a pencil and the other has finished his notebook. Very few of the children seem to follow the lesson, and as one hour turns into two, they become less and less focused. Slowly, the quiet whispering and scribbling of over a hundred children turns into louder chatting, then raucous tussling. The teacher shifts from asking the students for their attention, to calling for it using clapping games, to slamming the thin, plastic pipe in her hand onto the desks in front of her. Then, as both teacher and children lose their patience, she begins to raise the plastic pipe and hit children she can reach on the hand, the arm, the back. She calls out the names of those who are talking as she moves through the crowd, but the huge class of children has disintegrated. You are frozen at the back, completely unprepared to watch this kind, welcoming, second grade teacher hit her students. You are unsure how to respond. You consider speaking out or getting up and leaving but you end up sitting quietly and taking notes.

About twenty minutes later, a school leader calls the teachers to a meeting, and the teacher you are observing asks you to take over the class. A bit stunned, you agree to do so, wanting to be helpful while also not wanting to undermine her authority or overstep. Based on your experience teaching, you ask the students to call out words starting with different letters. At first, they are engaged and excited by the stranger at the front of their classroom so they participate, but slowly your accent and their desire to play become too much, and the classroom is in chaos again. A child comes forward to hand you the plastic pipe, telling you to slam it on the desk to get their attention or to hit the children who are loudest. "They will misbehave if you don't," this child says. You know that you have no strategy for helping the children focus, but you also know that you will not use the pipe. Instead, you begin trying to engage the children in a song together, until, mercifully, you hear the lunch bell. As you sink into your seat at the back of the empty room, you think: how can you level criticism at teachers who use corporal punishment to control their classes when you lasted no more than ten minutes in front of 110 eager, playful second graders?

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
- How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

VIGNETTE 8: Navigating Culturally Responsive Research Ethics and Methodologies

Stakeholders: Primary school teachers and academic counterparts
Keywords: Cross-cultural ethics, holistic safety, local methods

For three years you have been leading a youth development project in a low-income country context. Over this time, you have developed a reasonable understanding of how local institutions undertake research. However, your work is in a 'practitioner' capacity where, for various reasons, processes around research ethics and methodology could be perceived as less rigorous than those of the university abroad where you are also studying. Nevertheless, as guided by local colleagues, these processes were informed by culturally and contextually appropriate ways of working at the local level and always placed people's holistic safety and wellbeing at the center.

When the time comes to conduct fieldwork for your dissertation, you find differences between the ethical and methodological expectations of your university and the locally informed ways of working you are familiar with through your previous work in the area. You will be engaging with teachers from a range of elementary schools who have experienced a major disruption caused by a sudden onset and severe earthquake, involving significant loss and trauma to themselves, their families, schools and communities. Moreover, your research focuses on teachers' experiences working with international humanitarian agencies, the additional performance expectations placed on them due to the earthquake, and the personal and professional consequences of this time. You do not want to exacerbate the very dynamic you are investigating and possibly critiquing.

Given the sensitivity of the context and the fact that you will be working with a 'vulnerable human population', you are aware of the additional ethical measures you need to demonstrate to be granted approval from your university's ethics committee. At the same time, you worry that if you uphold the university's ethical standards as prescribed, then you will struggle to get insightful data due to a lack of relationship, trust, or sense of cultural safety and comfort. Or worse, you fear the research just won't take place for a lack of willing participants. A compounding factor is that you only have a 6-week window to complete your fieldwork.

The table on the next page briefly outlines examples of your university's requirements compared with your local academic counterpart's advice.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
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Dimension	University research ethics board's[2] requirements	Local academic counterpart's advice (Note: The comments below intend to capture the "essence" of the feedback shared by the local colleague.)
Participant recruitment:	Participants must volunteer freely to participate in the research and should not be previously known to the researcher. Recruitment should be conducted through advertising, with permission, in schools and/or community centers.	"This will never work. Relationships and trust are everything. Before you conduct this research, participants need to get to know you, your story, your intent, and your commitment to their community. After this happens, they might agree to participate and then they might feel confident to share their story with you." "Give me your participant information sheet, I will go out to schools and ask if you can come and meet some teachers first. Or, if you tell me what you're looking for I can select teachers that know me well and we can use them."
Research methods and data collection:	The dissertation proposal that your university's research ethics board approved calls for the following: • Individual life history interviews will be held 1:1 in a private location that protects the identity of the participant. Participants will be asked to participate in one interview of 45-60 minutes in duration.	"Here we do not share personal stories in formal settings, especially if they involve hardship or loss. We need the setting to be relaxed, not like a clinic or meeting. It needs to be relaxed, more like an informal conversation, over one or many get-togethers, where the conversation will take its own course, but the stories will emerge if the setting is right." "You will have to wait and see if you're invited to teachers' homes, but it's highly unlikely that they will be one on one interviews. You'll have to include family and friends also, and many people might contribute to the individual teacher's story on their behalf."
Incentives:	Participants cannot be offered any financial or in-kind payment to participate in the research. However, costs incurred to participate in the research study, such as transport, can be reimbursed.	"After the disaster there has been a lot of research in this area with little or no benefit to the teachers or schools. You can describe how your research might benefit teachers in general. But what direct benefit can your research provide these teachers and their schools now?" "You will also need to cover their time out of school and provide meals. Our people connect best over food and that will be expected of you." "Maybe you can provide book vouchers or technology vouchers for their family and schools?"
Research verification:	Transcriptions of interviews must be provided to participants in the national language and English, and verified as accurate or amended as required.	"The only story you can tell is our experience working together. That story now belongs to all of us. By including teachers' voices, you are simply retelling our conversations as you interpret them. No need to share transcripts."

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2   A research ethics board oversees research with human subjects. Comparable titles might be Institutional Review Board or Independent Ethics Committee. In addition to approval from your university or institution, you may need additional research clearance from national government bodies dependent on the rules and regulations in the context of your research study.

VIGNETTE 9: Obtaining Voluntary Consent

Stakeholders: Graduate student researcher, school administrators, female refugee youth
Keywords: Voluntary consent, research partnerships

You are a doctoral student undertaking your dissertation fieldwork in a refugee-hosting context in a low- and middle-income country. To conduct your fieldwork you have partnered with an organization implementing education programs for refugee youth and host country nationals, which has granted you access to visit their schools for ethnographic research. For part of your study, you negotiate spending time observing classes and interactions among female students and teachers. The organization, however, sees itself as a strong gatekeeper when it comes to student interviews and observations, not allowing you to engage in these activities without the presence of a representative from the organization. For example, when you try to conduct interviews with students and teachers, the School Director, who reports to the organization managing the school, makes you jump through a range of bureaucratic hurdles before granting you permission. The Director insists that a local staff member sits in on all interviews.

When conducting interviews, one of the organization's male staff members accompanies you, and this staff member is also tasked with selecting the students you may interview for the study. You enter the classroom, and without asking for volunteers, this staff member calls on three female students to speak with you. When you reach the room the organization has designated for your interviews, you go through your process of obtaining consent and explaining the purpose of your study to the three selected students. As you move through the consent process as outlined by your university's Research Ethics Board[3], you are well aware that this is a mere formality. The nature of the context within which the research is taking place, coupled with the deference to authority, means that the three students will provide consent, even if they would prefer not to.

You find yourself questioning how voluntary the consent process is in this case. You want to ensure you make the best use of the time you have in the field and are equally eager to commence your data collection process after several delays from the organization managing the school. However, you remain concerned about whether students are voluntarily consenting to participate in your study or if they understand their rights as research participants.

> **Discussion Questions:**
>
> - What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
> - What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
> - What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
> - What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
> - How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

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3   A research ethics board oversees research with human subjects. Comparable titles might be Institutional Review Board or Independent Ethics Committee. In addition to approval from your university or institution, you may need additional research clearance from national government bodies dependent on the rules and regulations in the context of your research study.

VIGNETTE 10: Counting Refugees: The Ethical Dilemmas of Showing Results

Stakeholders: NGO staff, donors, youth with diverse migratory statuses
Keywords: Target population, limited resources, reporting

For the past five years, you have worked as an employee of an international non-governmental organization (INGO) working in the field of refugee protection. Through your hard work, you have gradually risen through the ranks of the organization. The different positions you have held have helped you understand the difficulties faced by the refugee population in this country, particularly in this large city where you are located. These experiences have also made you aware of the organization's existential financial challenges. Since the outbreak of conflict in a different part of the world, you have observed drastic cuts in funding for the refugee population your organization is trying to reach. Although the asylum-seeking population has not stopped arriving, little by little, other organizations in the sector have closed their doors and moved away to respond to other crises.

Despite these difficulties, your organization appoints you to head a new office. The office is located in an area of the city recognized for its high refugee population. With a small budget— provided by one of the three donors that fund the refugee operation throughout the country— you must design and implement programs for refugee youth.

Because the Ministry of Education has prohibited NGOs from working directly in schools, you design a non-formal education program to serve the young population. The program aims to generate a space for collective reflection on identity, a sense of belonging, and the possibilities for participation offered by the city through strengthening oral, visual, and written communication skills. In contrast to what other organizations in the sector offer, your program is unique in its approach. The donor perceives it as promising, and you receive extra funding for your program, the only condition being that you prioritize youth with refugee status to ensure they make up 50% or more of the total target population.

To recruit potential candidates, you use your organization's directory of beneficiaries/ participants, and call all families in the area. You also ask for support from other organizations and visit schools to ask principals to distribute information about the program to middle- and high-school students. Recruitment takes more time than initially planned, and time is running out to implement the program.

After much effort, you have enrolled 15 young people:
- 6 were not born in the country where you are working but are children of parents originally from the country;
- 3 have been officially recognized as refugees;
- 3 are citizens but are children of parents with refugee status;
- 2 are citizens of the country, as are the members of their families;
- 1 preferred not to report their migratory status.

Despite knowing that the funds are meant to target a majority refugee population, you decide to kick off the project. In the final evaluations, participants claim to have expanded their understanding of their identity as urban youth, discovered previously unknown spaces for participation, and learned to express themselves using new visual forms.

It's time to submit your evaluation report. In drafting the contents, you need to consider how best to explain whether the project was successful, how many refugees were served, how to characterize the challenges you faced in recruiting young people to participate in the project, and anything you would have done differently based on available resources within the project timeline.

The funding for future projects, including the viability of the new office, depends on what you write in the report.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
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VIGNETTE 11: "Are Those People Your Friends?": Maneuvering Relationships and Power Dynamics in the Field

Stakeholders: Graduate student researcher, local NGO, UN agency
Keywords: Power dynamics

You are a graduate student who is conducting a participatory research study as part of your doctoral dissertation. Your research focuses on an educational program largely funded by a UN agency and carried out by a local non-governmental organization (NGO). The bulk of your research activities center around the voices and experiences of the local NGO, which is mostly composed of working class, Indigenous, and Black women. However, because of your professional background as an NGO worker, as well as your previous education at a university in the Global North, you have been friendly for many years with multiple international and local staff members from the UN agency that funds this project.

During online interviews and in-person field visits, the local NGO staff often express their dissatisfaction with the UN agency's working style and staff. Specifically, they mention how hard it is to communicate with them, the agency's high staff turnover, general lack of understanding about the conditions in which the local NGO operates, and overall lack of respect for them and their work.

For example, they show you proof of how they have requested basic teaching materials from the UN agency–including notebooks, pens, and paints–more than six months ago, and have still not received them. You also confirm that the agency has failed to provide psychosocial support to the local staff, despite initially having agreed to provide it. In this case, you offer to find a donor who could provide it, but the contract with the UN agency prevents the local NGO from receiving any other funding for staff psychological support. Lack of emotional help has led local staff members to resign. Finally, they tell you that the UN agency staff, mostly located in the capital city of the country, have only showed up to the field site once to supervise teaching in numeracy and literacy. You

are concerned for the well-being of the local NGO members and are unsure how to proceed.

That same week, you receive a message from some of your acquaintances at the UN agency inviting you to apply for a research consultancy in the context you are working in. You ask if this consultancy has been shared with the local NGO. At first, your acquaintances do not recall the organization; once they do, they say that the organization does not have the expertise the agency is looking for, despite being one of the few organizations in the country doing work with the theme and population of interest.

The behavior you have observed from the UN agency staff is confusing, especially because you have known some of them for a long time, yet you are afraid that approaching this matter through a casual personal conversation may bring retaliation to the local NGO.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
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- How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

VIGNETTE 12: Securing Informed Consent in Humanitarian Settings

Stakeholders: UN agency, NGO, Ministry of Education (MOE), teachers, refugee students, research team

Keywords: Youth, informed consent, forced displacement

As a researcher based at a Western university, you are undertaking a research study on the safety of learning environments in a conflict-affected context. You spend one month in this location to conduct fieldwork in selected schools. Participants include refugees, internally displaced, and host community children and youth, as well as their teachers and parents. Data collection is conducted in temporary learning spaces, tents, and straw-made schools in refugee camps located in isolated, harsh, and rocky terrains. Because of the volatile and resource-limited settings, the methodology is designed to be flexible, simple, and adaptable to sudden changes in schedule. Visual participatory methods, ethical protocols, and safety checklists are designed and adapted to the context.

For safety reasons, your research team is allowed to visit each school once and in-school time is rather short. This limits the prospect of extensive and more relaxed data gathering and involves careful planning of each day's schedule. The local departments of education, UN agencies, and local partners facilitate access to the schools and help select and invite participants to each session. In this context, you have little control over the sampling process. It is not unusual that participation by 'vulnerable' and less educated groups is not genuinely voluntary, especially when influential organizations are involved. In some cases, when refugee parents are contacted and requested to show up for an interview, the purpose of the meeting may not be explained clearly to them. Some of them might feel motivated to take part with the hope of material or other gains.

Once parents grant written permission, children are approached and invited to participate. You plan to include children in your study to enable them to be respectfully heard in crisis-affected contexts. The aim is to ensure that not only can children participate, but that the process is meaningful and engaging for them. This requires rigorous research protocols to ensure they will not be exploited, traumatised, or retraumatised during data collection. However, you are presented with several challenges when seeking to gather informed consent from the students. These challenges include: ensuring that participants understand their involvement; power dynamics with organizations, parents, and teachers; and building relationships with participants.

Your first concern is whether the students understand the risks and benefits of participating in the research. Although you have tried to use short and simple language to improve readability and comprehension of the informed consent forms for children and youth, you worry that the students do not completely understand their participation in the study. In addition, you do not speak the local language and you and your team have to pause between statements to allow for interpretation. You are also concerned that some participants might want to comply with what you as a researcher are expecting from them or might feel anxious to express what they really think.

You also have several concerns regarding the dynamics affecting parents' consent and the children's ability to properly give their consent. Some parents are uncomfortable and unwilling to provide verbal or written consent. Another issue is related to whether the children are mature enough to give their consent, especially considering the short time frame and volatile context. Although age and grade are often used to determine a

child's ability to give consent, dealing with refugee children involves other factors, including their psychological well-being and background. Because of the research team's limited time in school and security concerns, teachers and principals help determine whether children can articulate their consent to participate prior to data collection. Although the child participants' ability to give their consent has been established in advance, you are worried that their capacity to decline to participate (in all or part of the study) is not fully understood.

Based on best practices outlined in methodology texts, you were hoping to establish relationships with participants before collecting data, however, due to the tight time frame, mistrust, and security concerns you are unable to do this. In this context, the risk of participants being physically harmed or suffering reprisals remains particularly high. You want to ensure that the research contributes to children's safety and well-being *during*, as well as *after*, data collection activities.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
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VIGNETTE 13: Working with Children & Youth in Contexts of Mass Displacement

Stakeholders: University academics, digital media professionals, refugee children/youth, refugee teachers/education practitioners and university ethics committees

Keywords: Children, research, displacement

You are part of a team of researchers based at a European university. Your research team is investigating how refugees are engaging in innovative educational practices in exile. This study was motivated by an earlier exploration in the area where some refugees were mobilising their own resources to set up schools to provide learning opportunities to their children and communities. The host government does not allow non-state actors to establish new schools and does not have the capacity to offer school places to all refugee children.

There are a number of refugee-led non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the area that receive occasional funding from UN agencies and/or philanthropic organisations to support educational activities and vocational training. Your team develops links with several NGOs that operate non-formal learning centres and invites their teachers and educational managers to participate in workshops your team is facilitating to explore the key challenges they face in maintaining education for refugee children.

In this process, you identify an NGO that operates three non-formal education centres supporting those refugee children who do not have access to formal schooling. Your team intends to produce a research-informed digital resource to demonstrate how refugee teachers are engaging in innovative pedagogical practices in this challenging environment. The digital product is planned to be used as teaching and learning material for teacher professional development through an open online learning platform. Your team needs to film the children and their teachers in the classroom and playgrounds and might also interview teachers and youth about their educational experiences and life conditions in exile.

Your team arrives at one of the learning centres with the camera crew and asks the school principal for permission to video record interviews with children and teachers. The school principal is pleased that the work of his school will be showcased internationally and agrees for his school to participate in the study.

You learn that the NGO is struggling with a lack of adequate funding and facing financial difficulties to maintain its educational centres. The host country's educational authority is increasingly hostile towards the NGOs that are operated by refugees, and holds the position that no educational provisions should operate outside the direct management of the state. You wonder how to proceed in this context and to balance the potential benefits of the film recording with any subsequent harm it might cause.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
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VIGNETTE 14: A Seat at the Table

Stakeholders: Graduate student researcher, national and international INGO staff
Keywords: Staff relations, power hierarchies, identity, research

You are a graduate student researcher based at a university in the Global North. Your thesis explores themes of access to education in crisis-affected settings. You have been given the exciting opportunity to collect your data in partnership with a prominent international non-governmental organisation (INGO) through a short-term consultancy facilitated by your faculty adviser. This four-week secondment will enable rare access to data in a crisis setting, ensure security protections, and facilitate introductions to participants for your study. After lengthy travel to the capital city in the country where you will be collecting data, you begin your first day visiting the local headquarters office of the INGO and attending meetings with national and international staff.

At the first meeting, you are warmly welcomed and invited to sit around a large table in the center of the meeting room. You take a seat between a Black man and a white woman who both introduce themselves. The man tells you that he is originally from a lower-middle income country and has lived at this duty station for three years. "Around here, that's considered an old-timer!" the woman jokes. She adds that most international staff at this duty station move away within one year. As people take their seats, she quickly tells you about each staff person at the table, and you note that most come from Global North countries. You ask how often they return home. She explains that in addition to annual leave, they receive rest and recuperation (R&R) every 12 weeks to "take a breather," because conditions at the duty station are stressful.

You look around the room and notice that the table is surrounded by a separate outer circle of chairs, with what appears to be national staff

sitting in each, holding pens and pads of paper. You're about to turn around in your chair to introduce yourself to those sitting behind you, when the director of the INGO office–a white man from the Global North–stands at the head of the table and begins to speak.

"Good morning," he begins in English, "I'm so happy to start this meeting by sayin' a hearty hey to our latest partner in crime!" He beckons to you, encouraging you to stand. You are met with applause. The meeting continues with the director providing updates on the INGO's activities in the country. He asks for opinions on how to handle challenges they are facing with accessing certain schools in more volatile areas. This begins a deeper discussion among those sitting around the table. You feel flattered when they ask for your opinion.

You notice that throughout the meeting, the national staff, who remain seated in the outer ring of chairs behind those at the table, do not speak at all. Instead, they all appear to be taking notes on their notepads, with their heads down. At no time does the director, or any other participant seated at the table, ask a national staff member for their views on the challenges.

Over the course of your first week in the country, you are invited to several similar meetings; some at the head office, others at offices of partner NGOs. The dynamics of each meeting are very similar, with national staff silently sitting behind international staff, taking notes. You begin to notice that national staff are also repeatedly excluded from email communications that are central to meeting discussions, yet surprisingly, you are always one of the recipients.

You feel very uncomfortable with many aspects of the meetings, which separate you and other people from the Global North from the national staff, both physically and in other ways.

After work one day, you walk out to meet your assigned driver with a new friend from the INGO who happens to be from the same country as your university. You spot a national staff member on the street and are about to offer her a ride home, but your friend stops you and says, "Let her take a taxi so we can speak freely."

On the drive, you mention offhandedly that you find the meetings "a bit weird" because none of the national staff sit at the table, or even speak much. Your friend laughs and replies: "Yeah, I get how that must seem totally weird! But you'll get used to it. Trust me, they prefer it that way! They feel more comfortable in the background."

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
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VIGNETTE 15: The Dilemma of Remote Research in High-risk Contexts

Stakeholders: National researchers, internally displaced communities, armed groups
Keywords: Remote research, researcher safety

You are a doctoral student researcher carrying out research on education in a context of ongoing violent conflict. You chose a context affected by acute conflict for two reasons: First, you seek to better understand how recently internally displaced communities organise educational activities. Second, you seek to analyse to what extent education is a priority in a context where all other basic human needs are barely satisfied. You obtained your university's research authorisation under the condition that you will plan all movements carefully, relying on the security guidance of the local research institute you are partnering with. As you do not speak the main regional languages, you are working with domestic researchers from this research institute.

A few days before you are planning to travel to your field site, which is in a more rural and remote area in the country, the regional government cancels your research authorisation. Your national counterparts from the local research institute are still able to travel. After several conversations, the local researchers and you decide that they will carry out the data collection without you. Both of them are experienced researchers, have worked on education in emergencies, and are familiar with the research design and semi-structured questionnaires. Your plan is that once they have carried out interviews, they will send the audio files to their colleagues for transcription and forward all content to you. The research institute is responsible for the safety and well-being of the local researchers.

After two weeks you receive the first set of interview transcripts via email. While there are some interesting aspects to the interviews, the answers are fairly short and brief and don't allow for nuanced analysis. The researchers carried out the interviews in a linear and structured manner, not probing at relevant places with follow-up questions.

Surprised by this, you call the researchers to discuss the matter. The researchers seem a bit uncomfortable during the conversation, but explain that people are living in an extremely difficult situation and are not particularly motivated to engage in interviews or extended conversation. Afterwards, you talk to another friend who works at the same research institute. She suggests that, in fact, the researchers did not want to spend too much time in the field asking questions related to violence and displacement, as they felt that armed groups might not appreciate their presence and discussions. According to her, they carried out the interviews rapidly so that they could return to the relatively safe area. When you speak to the researchers again, they insist that the rather low-quality interviews were not due to security concerns and that they are happy to continue the data collection.

You feel convinced that your research would make an important contribution to the ongoing debate about the importance of rapidly providing education in conflict-affected settings. You also need this round of data collection to finalise your dissertation research, as you risk your dissertation and university funding running out.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?

- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?

- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?

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VIGNETTE 16: To Pay or Not to Pay?

Stakeholders: Researcher, school managers, principals, teachers, parents and learners
Keywords: Financial rewards, participant expectations, researcher safety

You are a doctoral student researcher investigating the role of education in building sustainable peace in a conflict-affected country. During data collection, you are planning to meet with educational stakeholders, including school managers, principals, teachers, parents and learners. Among others, you are hoping to interview teachers from schools in a camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in one of the nearby towns.

The school you are planning to visit is located 20 km from the urban centre where you are staying. After obtaining the research authorisation and requesting appointments for interviews with the camp and school officials, you decide to travel to the school to conduct key interviews and a focus group discussion (FGD).

You arrive at the school compound, which operates in an IDP camp, where you realise that teachers, IDP representatives and school officials have been mobilised and are waiting for you. People welcome you with greetings and smiles that make you happy and ready to engage with the discussions. At the beginning of the FGD with teachers, you flag the voluntary nature of the research and the absence of rewards after participation in the study.

The FGD is dynamic and interesting and goes on for three hours. You receive various relevant contributions on the issues under discussion, all of which are helpful for your research study.

Once the FGD is over, however, you are surprised by the attitude of the teachers participating in the FGD who take you "hostage" by demanding rewards in the form of payment. They close the doors and ask you to sit down on a chair and think about their situation. You feel embarrassed and wonder how people can change so dramatically over the course of a few hours. When you began the FGD, they agreed that they understood the conditions of participation in the study, but now they believe it is unfair to participate in interviews and FGDs without receiving a financial reward. They justify their actions by stating that all the researchers and data collectors who pass through their refugee camps are humanitarian workers who always offer some kind of financial assistance to participants in FGDs or other meetings.

The discussion becomes more tense, with teachers raising their voices, and this attracts the attention of the students in the courtyard and neighbouring classrooms who now surround the classroom where your meeting is taking place. They too start shouting, without having any background or context to the unfolding situation.

With tensions rising on the side of the teachers, who do not seem to know the difference between academic research and humanitarian-sponsored research (or for whom this difference has little immediate value), you begin negotiations in their language. Your knowledge of their language helps the negotiations go more smoothly, but it soon becomes apparent that all the teachers know the minimum amount of money the humanitarian workers usually distribute to the participants after conducting meetings in the camps (between US$5-10 to each participant). Under pressure, you call a friend in the city and ask if he could please bring a sum equivalent to US$5 for each of the 12 participants, as soon as possible. After an hour and a half of "captivity", you are safe. Unfortunately, classes at the school have been disrupted during the negotiations.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
- How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

VIGNETTE 17: Deceit in Fieldwork

Stakeholders: Researcher, local organization
Keywords: Identity protection, safety protocols, deceit

You are waiting on a busy pier to get on a speedboat. You are carrying a big red waterproofed bag keeping safe 150 booklets containing activities and topics on conflict resolution and peace education tools for schools. You have been tasked with 'socializing and validating' them with teachers and young people in a rural area only accessible after some hours traveling through an intricate path of rivers and mangroves. You are going as part of a local organization with links to the Catholic Church, dedicated to working with victims of the armed conflict in this part of the country. This organization is implementing a peace education project in rural schools with funding from one of the United Nations offices, in conjunction with an international NGO, and under the support of the local government Office of Education.

Even though the country is undergoing a peace process, the stability of this peace is under constant threat because of the emergence of new armed groups disputing rural territories. The day before your trip, you hear in the news that the situation in the area is complicated, there seems to be curfews imposed in some of these places by different armed groups. When you ask about safety protocols, your colleague in the local organization tells you they have decided against using recognizable vests or badges provided by the international NGO. This was both a matter of principle for them —through years working in popular education in the region, they feel this helps create more 'authentic' relationships with communities— but also part of their own safety measures. Your colleague explains that anyone trying to bring peace to the region is viewed as the enemy and that community leaders involved in peace implementation projects continually face threats and violence.

Naturally, you feel a bit anxious and fearful. On the one hand, as a practitioner, this seems to go against the safety measures you have been advised to follow from the international NGO. On the other hand, you feel uncomfortable with 'concealing' your true identity as a researcher and being seen as affiliated with the church's activities. You wonder how to reconcile these tensions while upholding ethical and personal safety considerations.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
- How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

VIGNETTE 18: Risks of Retraumatising Study Participants for Research Gains

Stakeholders: Academic research team, research participants, school leaders
Keywords: Retraumatisation, research fatigue, balancing COVID-19 research and well-being needs

You are a researcher, part of a collaborative research team across two countries and different kinds of stakeholders, including university research centres, independent research centres, and I/NGOs. The team is studying the implications of teacher professional development for providing inclusive and quality education for marginalised refugees and internally displaced learners and schools in contexts of emergency and fragility.

Your study focus has been modified to assess the impact of COVID-19 on teachers' and learners' emotional well-being and what support (if any) they have been provided with, and the support they would need moving forward. With the pandemic receding in your study site, you plan to collect data by administering quantitative survey tools and interacting with learners, teachers, and school leadership through semi-structured interviews to understand experiences of trauma and material adversities faced by teachers, learners, and their families during school closures. It is an opportunity to develop empirically grounded research accounts of what the pandemic meant for teacher and student well-being. Such first-person accounts are crucial for designing specific interventions for emotional support and healing for learners and designing relevant continuous professional development for teachers while addressing their emotional well-being.

When in the field, your preliminary interactions with the field teams suggest that COVID-19 has had a severe impact in the study site, where school closures closed off access to the safety and security of school spaces for learners in fragile contexts. Additionally, the pandemic has added to the financial and infrastructural dependence of schools and communities for basic needs (soap, water, food rations) on external actors (NGOs, INGOs). Emerging stories suggest that school closures meant the loss of academic learning and increased vulnerability of young children to hunger, exposure to violence, and denial of a safe space to interact with peers, friends, and the community. Learning support during school closures has been sporadic and partial, and its ultimate effect on students' learning and emotional well-being is yet to be known. Further, initial accounts from community members suggest that school closures have increased the risk of children's involvement in clashes between ethnic groups and exposure to violence at home and in the larger community. However, empirical accounts and details of the trauma faced by children are not available. This is a crucial focus of the research study.

When you reach the field, you realise that schools have resumed 'normal' working routines and learners, teachers, and other staff are focused on a smooth-as-possible resumption of academic and other school activities. It appears that being back in school for learners and teachers provides a means to address anxieties and trauma from school closures. In this context, your research instruments and planned interactions focus on asking learners and teachers to relive the trauma experienced throughout previous months. This may involve learners reliving harrowing experiences of hunger, loss of family members, loss of family income, violence in the community, or abuse at home. You worry that your questions may trigger additional anxiety, given the gravity of trauma faced, which you may not have anticipated while designing the study, or which may not be wholly addressed through institutional ethical clearance requirements. Further, the questions you plan to ask could potentially be considered intrusive;

given that you as a researcher are perceived as an 'outsider' in the IDP/refugee community, learners and teachers may be uncomfortable exposing their traumatic experiences to you or sharing their coping strategies related to personal or cultural belief systems. However, you also realise that progressing with this research is vital for understanding experiences and ensuring the appropriate kinds of support for learners and teachers through various policy and programme measures that address academic needs and focus on the process of healing in schools.

Additionally, you note that three other organisations and their researchers are in the school in the same week you have planned your data collection. Along with the likelihood of research fatigue at the school, there are real resource constraints in the schools exacerbated by COVID-19, so leadership requires immediate material support. As a result, there is a reluctance by school leaders to participate in a study that does not address immediate well-being needs but rather gathers information to design medium-term support interventions, which may or may not eventually materialise. This overall reluctance inhibits your potential to develop a rapport with the participating learners and teachers, exacerbating the earlier dilemma regarding how comfortable participants are about sharing personal difficulties and traumatic experiences.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas portrayed in this vignette?
- What are the individual and/or structural factors contributing to the ethical dilemma?
- What would you do **in the moment** if you were confronted with this situation? What steps might you take to redress the harm and make amends?
- What steps might you take **in the future** to avoid or minimize the harm related to this situation?
- How might different identity markers (e.g. nationality, gender, race, class, sexuality, dis/ability, religion) influence the steps you take in the present and the future?

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