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The Second Opportunity

Education, Peacebuilding and Transformative Justice

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Abstract

Traditionally, transitional justice and children's education have been considered as two separate fields with little crossover. Education and children's participation in general fit uneasily with legalistic paradigms of transitional justice, which prioritise fighting impunity, delivering truth and reparations, and institutional reform. They also often fall outside the scope of peacebuilding, which seeks to neutralise immediate security threats, and considers education as part of a development process which itself is dependent and therefore secondary to the cessation of hostilities. This essay will argue that such approaches overlook both the role of children and the transformative capacity of education, and the contribution it can make to sustainable peace. To mobilise this capacity, it proposes shifting the approach to post-conflict reform from transitional to "transformative" justice, considering education as a tool for transformation, and recognising children as agents of change.

Tradicionalmente, la justicia transicional y la educación de niños se han considerado principalmente como dos campos que tienen poco en común. La educación y la participación de niños en general no caben bien con los paradigmas jurídicos de la justicia transicional, los cuales dan prioridad a la lucha contra la impunidad, la búsqueda de verdad, y la reforma institucional. Tampoco suelen coincidir con el ámbito de la construcción de paz, la que busca neutralizar amenazas inmediatas de seguridad, y considera la educación como parte de un proceso de desarrollo, el que es dependiente y por ende secundario al cese del conflicto. Este ensayo discutirá que tal paradigma subestima el papel de los niños tanto como la capacidad transformadora de la educación, y la contribución que pueden hacer hacia una paz sustentable. Para movilizar dicha capacidad, propone cambiar el enfoque en procesos de posconflicto desde la justicia transicional a la justicia "transformadora," considerando a la educación como una herramienta para la transformación, y reconociendo a niñas y niños como gestores de cambio.

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