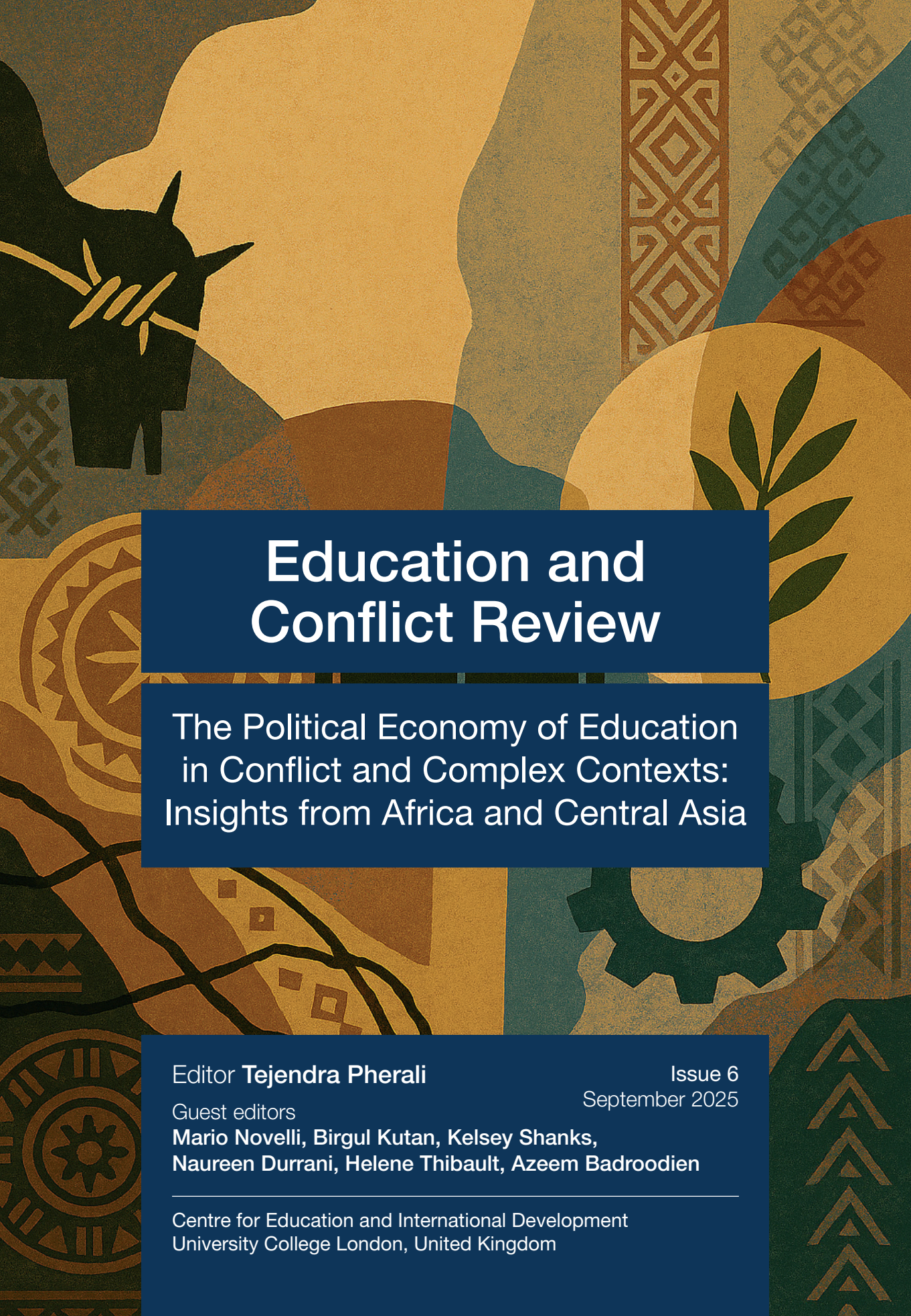




Education and Conflict Review

The Political Economy of Education
in Conflict and Complex Contexts:
Insights from Africa and Central Asia

Editor **Tejendra Pherali**

Guest editors

**Mario Novelli, Birgul Kutan, Kelsey Shanks,
Naureen Durrani, Helene Thibault, Azeem Badroodien**

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About Education and Conflict Review

Education and Conflict Review is an open-source journal published by the Centre for Education and International Development, University College London. It focuses on debates about broad issues relating to education, conflict and international development and aims to provide succinct analyses of social, political, economic and security dimensions in conflict-affected and humanitarian situations. It provides a forum for knowledge exchange to build synergies between academics, practitioners and graduate students who are researching and working in these environments.



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Editor



Professor Tejendra Pherali

Editor – Education and Conflict Review

Professor of Education, Conflict and Peace

IOE – UCL's Faculty of Education and Society,
University College London

We are delighted to publish this ECR Special Issue on the political economy analysis (PEA) of education, showcasing the work of early career researchers from the Global South. ECR is a unique academic space that is committed to building solidarity with academics, practitioners and activists who work in the field of education in conflict-affected settings. At the heart of this endeavour is a commitment to social transformation through education and the pursuit of peace with justice.

Stories of the most insightful research and transformative educational practice in conflict-affected settings do not often make it to international journals that demand rigorous standards for originality, theoretical sophistication and methodological precision. Even though these criteria are key for upholding quality, they often create barriers to early career researchers and scholars in the Global South who may find it difficult to navigate the complexities of academic publishing. As a result, despite commitments to diversity and inclusion, academic journals struggle to rupture their own dominant paradigms and stylistic expectations.

ECR is unique in the sense that it collaborates with research groups that act on the above barriers by providing research funding, mentorship and institutional support to early career researchers to disrupt the structural inequalities and established norms in academia that privilege scholars with elite affiliations. Our goal is to promote alternative

epistemologies, grassroots knowledge and decolonial perspectives. This process requires dedication, commitment and in-kind contributions of experienced academics who collaborate with, provide mentorship and extensive editorial support to authors to enable them to express their critical voice in the global academic space. We seek to create space for such voices and to recognise the importance of broadening what is valued as rigorous and relevant knowledge in the field of education.

This Special Issue not only features contributions of Southern scholars in advancing the knowledge in the political economy analysis of education but also exemplifies the impact of a rigorous research and training process, enabling these scholars to conduct their research and prepare high quality academic outputs. Focusing on politics of education in Central Asia and Africa, the PEER Network has championed a model of impactful research collaboration through creation of online tools and resources, development of a critical and locally grounded approach to PEA of education and working with a selected early career scholars from these contexts who will make a meaningful contribution to debates about how to promote socially just decisions in education that serve the needs of most marginalised communities in contexts of conflict and protracted crisis.

Drawing upon studies from South Africa to Kazakhstan, Zimbabwe to Namibia, the common message of these analyses is that education is

never neutral, and colonial legacies continue to perpetuate social inequalities and marginalisation of historically disadvantaged communities. Education in all these contexts intersects with issues of race, language, displacement, environmental degradation, and national identity. It is embedded in and shaped by historical injustices, political power, and socio-economic inequality. This Special Issue collectively argues that education must be reimagined not just as a tool for inclusion, but as a space for resistance, healing, and justice.

I hope this Special Issue will make an important contribution to education research in conflict-affected settings of Africa and Central Asia. Sincere congratulations to the authors and guest editors on this remarkable achievement and deep appreciation to all the reviewers whose constructive feedback helped shape these contributions!

Professor Tejendra Pherali

Editor

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IMAGE: PEER Network Fellows Workshop, Istanbul, Turkey, November 2023

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