

REGIONAL BUREAU FOR **WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA**

EDUCATION NEWSLETTER



Why is Education the Best Protection Tool in Forced Displacement Contexts?

The West and Central Africa region hosts **11.4 million** people of concern to UNHCR, including **1.4 million refugees** and **7 million IDPs**, over **55%** of whom are **children**. Forced displacement is on the rise in a region severely affected by armed conflicts, human right violations, political instability, weak governance and corruption, climate change, natural disasters, extreme poverty, and the disastrous impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on livelihoods.

Despite access to quality education being a defined **human right** for all and an essential **protection tool** as articulated in the aim of **SDG 4**, forcibly displaced communities face significant challenges in accessing quality early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary education, and overall, lifelong learning opportunities.

In 2020, **more than half of the refugee children** in the West and Central Africa region were not in school!

Barriers to accessing education make the situation of refugees and internally displaced children even more precarious exposing them to very serious **protection risks**: forced recruitment, trafficking and smuggling, labour and sexual exploitations, etc. The impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic has only amplified these chronic challenges, jeopardising the continuity of education for millions of forcibly displaced children in the region and potentially leaving a number of them permanently **out of school**.

Convinced that education is the best protection tool for children in contexts of forced displacement or emergency, UNHCR works tirelessly to ensure access to **safe, quality education for all** displaced children and youth by strengthening the **protective capacities of teachers and school facilities**, while promoting access to **alternative and flexible learning opportunities** for those out of school.

UNHCR'S EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS



Rethinking Education Interventions to Strengthen Child Protection and Prevent Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Schools

For schools to play their full role in protecting vulnerable children, including forcibly displaced children, infrastructure must be adequate, appropriate and safe, children must be able to thrive in a healthy, inclusive and violence-free environment, teachers and members of the educational community must be trained and supported, and parents must be encouraged to participate fully in their children's education.



In a region where [gender inequalities](#) in the education sector are glaring, a better understanding of the specific implications of GBV in schools, particularly in contexts of forced displacement, is essential to ensure the protection of children.

To tackle this issue and improve the [protection of girls and boys](#) in schools, UNHCR's Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa has developed various tools for teachers, parents, and community mobilisers to raise awareness, prevent and respond to GBV in schools. Among the tools developed, a collaboration with the Senegalese cartoonist **Seydina Issa Sow** allowed the creation of a [series of 10 illustrations](#) (with audio) on the different forms

of GBV and the reactions to adopt. These illustrations can be used in digital campaigns (WhatsApp, Facebook, etc.), as a poster or as a support to engage in conversations, create participative stories or organise role plays. A black and white version has also been created, which can be used as colouring material for children or as graphic elements for digital platforms or social networks. A [dedicated educational booklet](#) has also been developed with examples of key messages and tips on how to respond to and prevent GBV in schools.

Developed and launched as part of the [CWC's regional multi-media campaign](#), these tailored educational tools aim to [build and strengthen local community-based child protection systems](#). For example, the short booklet will be used by teachers and educators, while the cartoons will be shared with students and parents. Local child protection committees, IDPs and refugees will also receive the audio and visual versions through specially designed WhatsApp group messages to engage peers in conversations about these difficult topics. This should allow for greater involvement and empowerment: internally displaced youth have offered to translate the audio campaign into several languages since day one, for example, and have led this process themselves.



Access all the tools on the [WCA Platform for Community Mobilisation and Engagement](#) [here](#).
 More information? Contact Vincent Briard, Senior Community-Based Protection Officer, briard@unhcr.org

[CHAD] Supporting Teachers to Improve Children's Learning



Teacher in Touloum refugee camp, Chad
@UNHCR/Aristophane Ngargoune

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, increased support has been provided to teachers in refugee camps in Chad, both during the period of school closure to ensure [continuity of learning](#) for students, and after school reopening to ensure a [safe return to classes](#).

By the middle of the 2020/2021 school year, **98,965 refugee children** were enrolled in school, from pre-primary to secondary school, representing 45% of refugees aged 6 to 18 living in Chad (see the latest [UNHCR Chad Education Dashboard](#)).

With the financial support of the **Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)**, UNHCR Chad has been supporting teachers to:

- provide children in refugee setting with distance learning materials, as well as health, nutrition, child protection and psycho-social support;
- continue to work in the education system during the pandemic (by ensuring the continuity of their salaries) and ensure preparations for school return.

In total, over **1,100 national and refugee teachers** have been supported by UNHCR Chad between September 2020 and May 2021 thanks to FCDO funding.

[MALI - NIGER] New Classrooms for Children Displaced by Insecurity

The increase in the frequency of attacks on civilians in the [central Sahel](#), particularly in the [tri-border region](#) between Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali, has increased the concentration of [refugee and IDP populations](#) in urban and semi-urban areas considered to be safer, putting pressure on schools in these towns to absorb the new arrivals.



Children in front of a new classroom in Timbuktu, Mali @UNHCR Mali

In [Mali](#), three new fully equipped classrooms have been handed over this month

by UNHCR to Timbuktu education authorities. Thanks to **Japan's Emergency Grant Aid**, since last year UNHCR Mali has constructed, rehabilitated and equipped **30 classrooms** in IDP, refugee and returnee hosting areas in central and northern Mali. The project also included distribution of [learning materials](#) for 1,500 school age children, and [teacher training](#) on inclusive education, psychosocial support, peace education and education in emergencies. The project

contributed to enhancing the quality of educational supply, considering the specific protection and retention needs of [girls and children with disabilities](#).

In [Niger](#), UNHCR has increased the capacity of the secondary school in the [refugee reception area of Intikane](#), in the Tahoua region, by building three new classrooms to accommodate the new arrivals.



Student in a new classroom in Timbuktu, Mali @UNHCR Mali



New classrooms at Intikane secondary school, Niger @UNHCR Niger

EDUCATION RESOURCES



[INEE] 2018-2021 Working Groups: Compilation of Resources

As the [INEE 2018-2021 Working Groups](#) have come to a close in May, a catalog of all the resources produced by this cohort has been published online.



**Inter-agency Network for
Education in Emergencies**

Amongst the [resources available](#), you can find information on:

- Alternative and non-formal education - policy notes and taxonomy;
- Teachers in Crisis Contexts - training materials and teacher stories;
- PSS and Social and Emotional Learning - guidelines, measurement tools, etc.;
- Information on Data in EIE and ways of improving data collection and gathering evidence on interventions;
- Advocacy messaging on education in emergencies;
- Professional standards for EIE practitioners.

Access the resource catalogue [here](#).

[EdTech Hub] EdTech and Covid-19: Lessons from Around the World



Experts from [10 countries](#) collaborated with EdTech Hub to document the [education response to Covid-19](#) and the [use of EdTech](#) through these case studies.

Key lessons that emerge from the case studies and workshop include:

- Across the 10 countries there were considerable differences in both investment and plans to move towards EdTech solutions pre-Covid-19;
- Rapid response was enabled by a range of factors;
- Low-cost data “bundles” and smart-phone technology facilitated better access to technology for distance education;
- Government agencies have relied mainly on just-in-time data when managing school closures and distance learning.

Read the full blog [here](#).

[SWI] Education: Making it a Priority in Humanitarian Emergencies

Why does education seem to come a poor second during humanitarian crises?

In this episode of [Inside Geneva](#) host Imogen Foulkes talks to experts on education in emergencies, including [Yasmine Sherif](#), Director of Education Cannot Wait (ECW), [Julienne Vipond](#), head of the Unicef-led education cluster in Sudan, and [Manuel Bessler](#), head of Swiss Humanitarian Aid.



Listen to the podcast [here](#).

CAPACITY BUILDING & EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES



[GPE-IIEP] Training on the Fundamentals of Independent Appraisal of Education Sector Plans

Education sector plans help countries set a path towards improved and more equitable learning outcomes and [greater equality and inclusion for all](#). An independent appraisal of a plan is a crucial step in maximizing its potential to foster change in an education system. This free online training course, developed in partnership by the [UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning \(IIEP\)](#) and the [Global Partnership for Education \(GPE\)](#), aims to provide participants with a basic understanding of the various issues to be considered when undertaking the appraisal of an education plan (for both ESPs and TEPs).

Built upon the [GPE-IIEP plan preparation and appraisal guidelines](#) this interactive course features eight dynamic modules and requires 10 to 15 hours to complete. Participants can start and complete it at any time. A variety of self-assessment exercises complements the course. Participants who successfully complete the training will receive a certificate from IIEP-UNESCO and GPE.

Read more about the course and apply [here](#).



DATES:
12 DECEMBER 2020 to 12 DECEMBER 2021

APPLY

LANGUAGE:
French, English

PRICE:
Free of charge

CONTACT:
j.lecavalier@iiep.unesco.org

CONTACT US

Charlotte Berquin, Education Officer
Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa, Protection Service
berquin@unhcr.org

LINKS

[West Africa](#) | [Global Focus](#)

Twitter: [UNHCR West & Central Africa](#)

Facebook: [UNHCR West & Central Africa](#)