REGIONAL BUREAU FOR **WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA**

EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

Two Thirds of School-Age Refugee Children and Adolescents in West and Central Africa Remain Out of School

With the start of the new school year, UNHCR has published its annual report on the state of refugee education worldwide: *Unlocking Potential: The Right to Education and Opportunity*.

The report includes data from 70 refugee-hosting countries around the world and first-hand accounts of the importance of access to education. The report shows that despite increasing numbers of refugees enrolled in secondary and tertiary education, more than half of the world's **14.8 million school-age refugee children** remain out of formal education, putting their future prosperity at risk and denying them the chance to fulfil their potential.

In West and Central Africa, this proportion is even higher with 67% of school-age refugee children currently out of school, representing nearly **500,000 children** whose futures are at risk.

In addition, enrolment rates for refugees in the region remain well below the overall enrolment rates for refugees, at 50% compared to 65% for primary education, 28% compared to 41% for secondary education and 4% compared to 6% for tertiary education and are also well **below the national enrolment rates** in most countries.

Review key data and figures on refugee education in the region on the **WCA ANNUAL EDUCATION DASHBOARD 2022-2023**.

UNHCR'S EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS

[REGION] Diversified and High-Quality Vocational Training to Improve the Integration and Employment of Refugee Youth

This year's **International Youth Day**, held on 12 August, was themed *"Green Skills for Youth: Towards a Sustainable World"*. To effectively address and hopefully mitigate the growing impact of the global climate crisis, we must invest in the education of today's young people and strive to create the conditions for them to acquire relevant skills for tomorrow's world.

According to UNESCO, **young people account for up to 60% of Africa's unemployed**. Among young refugees, unemployment rates are even higher, and access to employment is severely limited by numerous legal, administrative, and practical barriers. Refugees also face additional difficulties such as lack of recognition of pre-displacement diplomas/credentials, xenophobia/discrimination and lack of social capital to access job opportunities in markets where these are limited.

To address the continent's economic challenges and build a future for young people, including forcibly displaced youth, there is an urgent need to **strengthen the effectiveness of vocational training systems**. With this in mind, UNHCR is working to diversify and expand its partnerships with the public and private sectors to improve young refugees' and displaced persons' access to quality and relevant vocational training leading to qualifications recognised in their country of asylum.

For instance, thanks to the partnership with the **BIOFORCE** humanitarian training institute and with the support of the Government of Monaco, almost **50 scholarships** have been awarded to refugees from six countries in the region to enable them to benefit from short and long training courses in various humanitarian professions. In Burkina Faso, the partnership with the **SIMPLON** start-up, with the support of the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie has also enabled nearly **30 refugees** to be trained in digital professions, while at the same time supporting their integration into the local job market.

Ceremony to award certificates to refugee students benefiting from the Web and Mobile Development project and launch phase 2 of the project. ©UNHCR Burkina Faso

Graduation ceremony for some of the Bioforce students trained in Dakar. ©UNHCR RBWCA/Charlotte Berquin

[CHAD-CAR] Ensuring the Return to School of Newly Arrived Refugee Children from Sudan

In the **Central African Republic**, UNHCR, in collaboration with the Vakaga Academic Inspectorate, its implementing partner NOURRIR and the Alliance Française of Bangui, launched a 10-day **training of trainers in French language** teaching for 26 local educators. Language and **literacy classes** have also started for more than 300 refugee children, while **support courses** are underway in the two schools in Birao to ensure a smooth integration into the national system.

In **Chad**, enrolment of school-age refugee children and teachers continues, with more than 6,000 children and **1,068 teachers enrolled** in all refugee camps. Of the 1,068 teachers identified, 331 took the recruitment tests. Over 180 **temporary learning spaces** were set up in collaboration with UNICEF, and catch-up courses started in two refugee camps and will be gradually extended to other camps. The **catch-up programme** aims to address the gaps that refugee children may face in their integration into the national education system.

Training of trainers for 26 local teachers conducted by the Alliance Française of Bangui. ©UNHCR CAR

Refugee teachers during the recruitment test to work in camp schools in Chad. ©UNHCR Chad

Since the start of the conflict in Sudan in mid-April, large numbers of civilians have been forced to flee, including people who were already internally displaced and refugees from other countries who had sought safety in Sudan. Hundreds of thousands of people have fled into neighbouring countries or returned home in adverse circumstances – notably to the Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia and South Sudan.

With the support of

EDUCATION CANNOT WAIT

[NIGER] Launch of the First Certificate of Open Studies on Community Health for Refugees

InZone at UNIGE (University of Geneva) has launched the first **Certificate of Open Studies in Community Health for refugees in humanitarian settings**. The first InZone **Connected Learning Centre** in Niger, hosted by the University of Diffa and run by the NGO Yara, has welcomed its first students, 19 Nigerian refugees who have joined the first cohort of learners of the Certificate of Open Studies in Community Health.

This new programme will take students on an exciting nine-month learning journey from September 2023 to June 2024. It will equip students with the knowledge and skills to support their local health system and contribute to better health in their communities. It is a **blended learning programme** that combines online learning, field projects and workshops that will allow students to learn and practice in hospitals, laboratories and the community.

Opening of the first InZone Connected Learning Centre in Diffa, Niger. ©UNHCR/Yara

[CAMEROON] UNIV'R: Refugee Scholars Continue their University Studies in France

Since 2021, the **UNIV'R project**, a partnership between UNHCR and the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie with the support of the MEnS network, has been facilitating **access to higher education in France** for French-speaking refugees from several African countries. This multi-stakeholder project has already enabled dozens of young refugees to continue their Master studies in France.

The programme is a **multi-stakeholder project** involving several ministries, local NGOs, civil society, the private sector, universities, and French embassies/consulates in the countries of asylum. Students selected for this Master programme receive a grant to cover tuition fees, visa and airfare to France. They also receive a living allowance to cover all costs associated with living in France, including accommodation, food, health insurance and transport.

For this new academic year, 5 refugee students from Cameroon arrived in France at the beginning of September. Since the start of the programme in 2021, 12 refugee students from Cameroon have benefited from these scholarships. A total of **50 scholarships** will be offered by **13 French universities** between now and 2025.

The five refugee students from Cameroon who received a UNIV'R scholarship to study in France during their journey from Yaoundé to Paris.
©UNHCR Cameroon

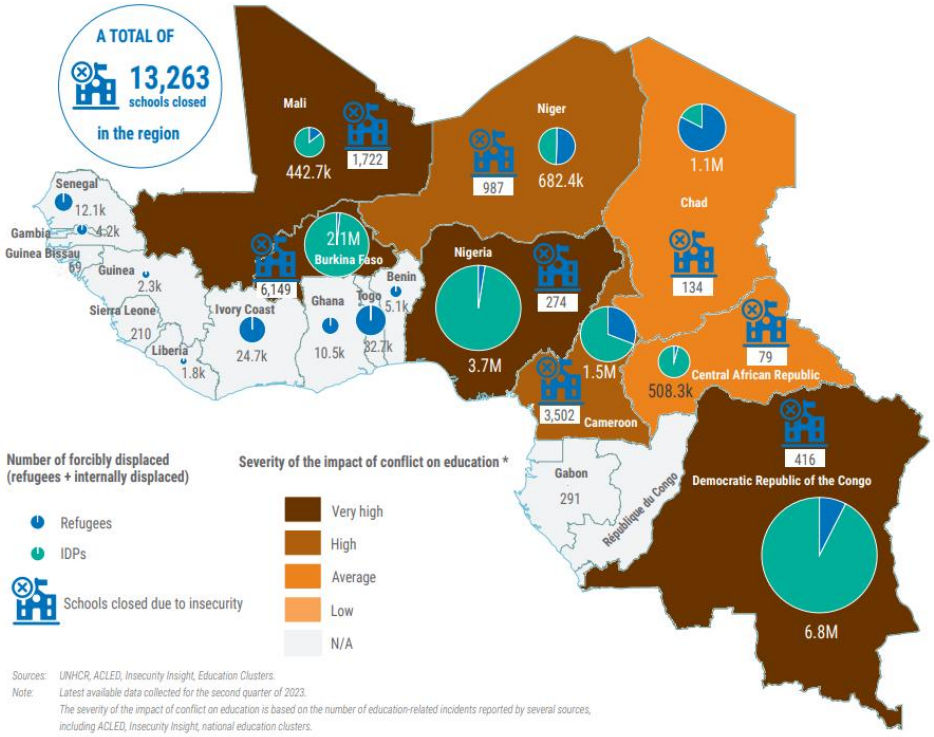
EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES

Increasing Attacks on Education Continue in West and Central Africa

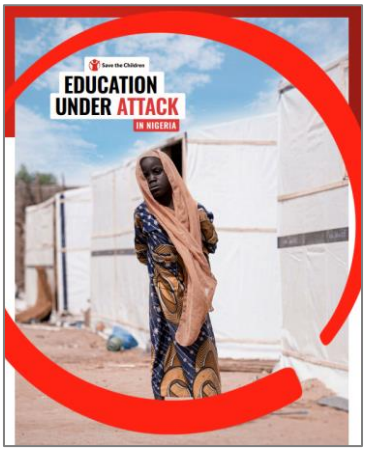
The Regional Education in Emergencies Working Group (R-EiE WG) has published its annual advocacy note on the protection and continuity of education in the WCA region. The note highlights that over the past four years, the number of school closures due to insecurity has almost doubled, reaching more than **13,200 closed schools** in eight countries in the region.

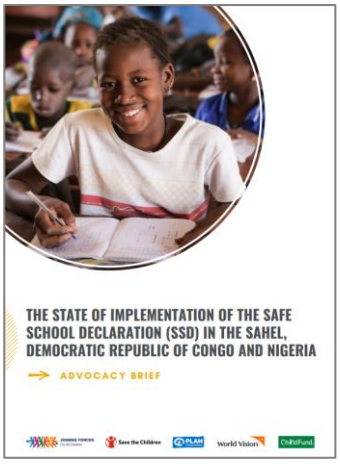
Education stakeholders in the region call on governments, armed forces, other parties to the conflict and the international community to take concerted action to end attacks and threats against schools, students and teachers, and to strengthen sustainable support for quality learning for every child.

*Access the report **here** and the joint NRC-UNHCR-UNICEF press release **here**.*



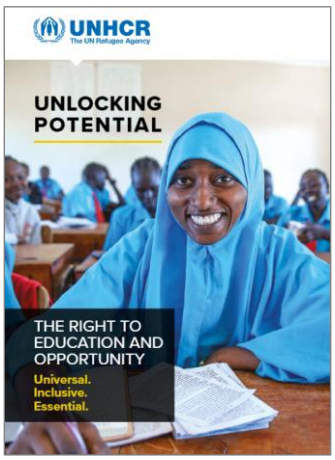
Read more:





EDUCATION RESOURCES

[UNHCR] Annual Education Report



The 2023 UNHCR Refugee Education Report - *Unlocking Potential: The Right to Education and Opportunity* - draws on data from more than 70 countries worldwide to provide the most detailed picture yet of the state of **refugee education and enrolment**.

Its findings reveal that despite areas of progress, more than **half of the world's 14.8 million school-aged refugee children remain out of formal education**, risking their future prosperity and denying them the chance to fulfil their potential.

The report also highlights the **achievements and aspirations of refugee youth** who, with the right support, have attained the highest of educational goals through perseverance, resilience, determination, and sheer hard work.

*Access the report **here**.*

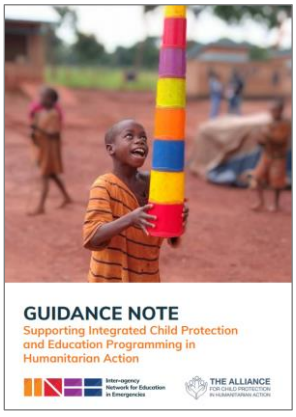
[ECW] Annual Results Report

Education Cannot Wait (ECW) has released its 2022 Annual Results Report - *With Hope and Courage* - highlighting the results of its active grantmaking in **30 crisis-affected countries**, which aims to ensure access to quality education for millions of girls and boys in humanitarian crises.

The report also provides **cumulative data and analysis on ECW's achievements** in its first strategic period, from the start of its operations in 2017 to the end of 2022 and describes the key outcomes of its first high-level financing conference in February 2023.

*Access the report **here**.*

[INEE] Guidance Note for Integrated Child Protection and Education Programming



The Guidance Note on Supporting Integrated Child Protection and Education Programming in Humanitarian Action, developed by INEE and the Alliance, aims to promote **integration and collaboration** across the two humanitarian sectors **of education and child protection**. It orients stakeholders in both sectors to principles, frameworks, opportunities, and resources for program integration in order to ensure efficient, targeted, and effective interventions that result in improved outcomes for children.

This tool is organized by **programmatic areas**, which align with the domains and standards from both the Alliance's Child Protection Minimum Standards and the INEE Minimum Standards.

*Access the guidance note **here**.*

[CE International/CPL] Open Educational Resources for Teacher Professional Development in Displacement Settings

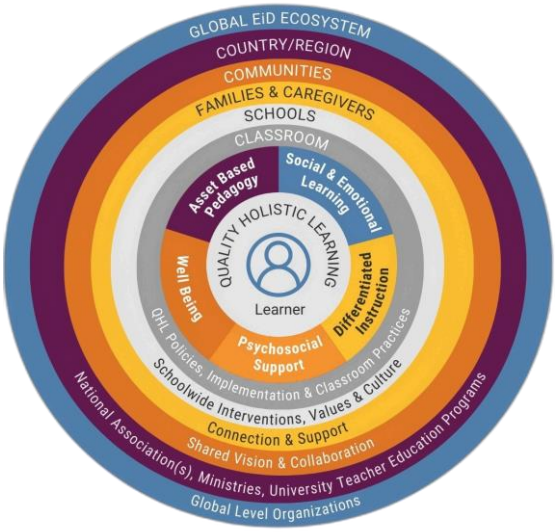
The Center for Professional Learning at Childhood Education International has announced the publication of **27 new open educational resources (OERs) for teacher professional development** in Arabic, English, and French. These OERs focus on the provision of quality holistic learning in education in **displacement settings**. They are accessible in CE International's OER Library, as well as on Learning Equality's Kolibri platform and in UNESCO's Global Teacher Campus. Resources can be adapted to meet local contextualized needs and to align with national and ministry priorities. They support online, blended, and offline workshops, teacher learning circles, and dialogue.

Thanks to support from Childhood Education International through the **Quality Holistic Learning (QHL) Project** and from the MIT Migration Summit 2023, QHL Senior Project Fellows in **Niger** were able to organize four in-person workshops to share the QHL Project OERs and raise colleagues' awareness on the crucial need to adopt a holistic teaching approach to meet students' needs.

Hadizatou Amou Ali, a QHL Senior Project Fellow and English teacher working with refugee and displaced youth in Niamey, describes these workshops: "*Over one hundred primary and secondary school teachers, administrators, and advisors from public, private, and even informal schools attended the workshops and were very interested in learning about Holistic Learning Approaches, as they were really new for most of them…[We offered] activities such as planning lessons that implement pedagogies such as Social Emotional Learning, Psycho-Social Support, and Asset-Based Pedagogies.*" Hadiza notes that she is able to follow up with colleagues' implementation efforts thanks to a WhatsApp group.

*Access the resources **here**.*

If you would like to learn more about the QHL Project, the OER Library, or anything else related to professional development for educators working in displacement and other challenging contexts, please contact Julie Kasper, Director of Teacher Learning and Leadership at jkasper@ceinternational1892.org



Childhood Education International

CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

CAPACITY BUILDING & EVENTS

[Webinar] Launch of the CSSF 2022-2030 for West & Central Africa

Schools should be safe learning spaces, where children and staff are protected from all risks. Yet children, particularly in the most vulnerable regions, are facing unprecedented threats from climate change, epidemics and pandemics, violence, and conflict. Compelled by the rising threats to children and education, the **Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES)** globally launched in September 2022 the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF) 2022-2030, calling on governments and partners to act now for child rights and resilience in education.

The **regional launch of the CSSF 2022-2030 in West and Central Africa** took place in early September and provided an opportunity to: introduce and showcase the CSSF 2022-2030 in West and Central Africa; reflect on progress made in school safety and resilience in the education sector in the region; and advocate for key stakeholders' endorsement, commitments and coordinated efforts and mutual support at national and regional level towards school safety and resilience in the education sector.

*Watch the recordings **here**.*

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