

EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

JANUARY-MARCH 2024



Sudan Emergency: Refugees Children Return to School Amidst Immense Challenges

Bakita, 11, a newly arrived refugee from Sudan, has enrolled at the Nguerendomo school in Birao CAR. © UNHCR/Stella Fatime

Central African Republic, Chad

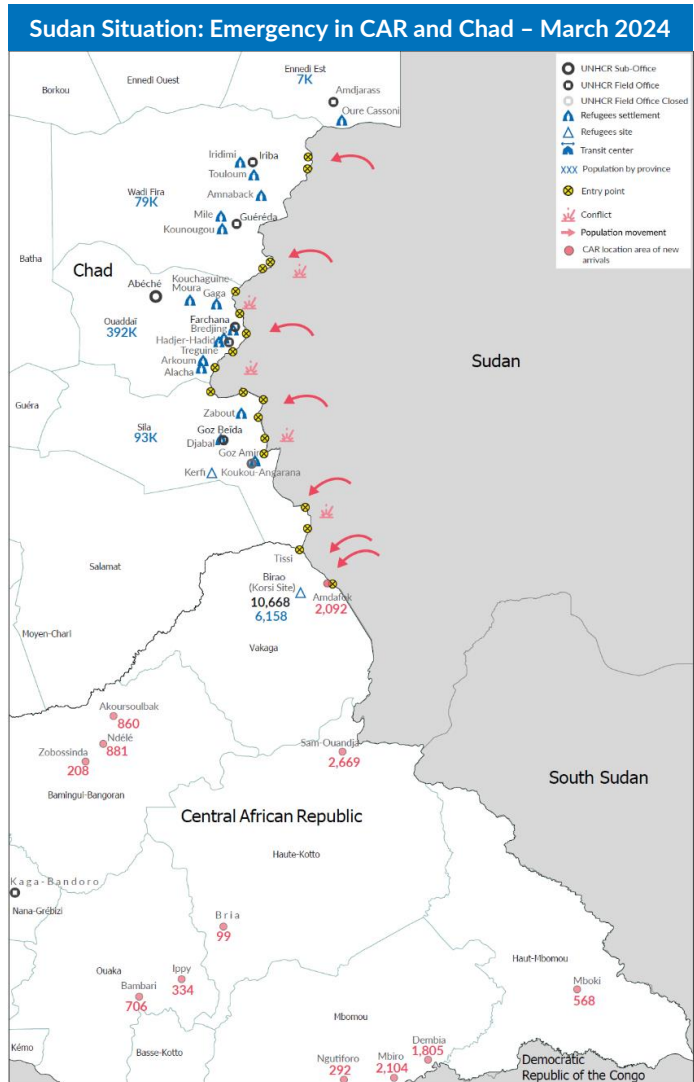
The conflict that broke out in Sudan in April 2023 has newly displaced over 6.6 million people within Sudan by March 2024, and driven over 1.7 million people into five neighbouring countries – the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, and South Sudan. The [2024 Regional Refugee Response Plan \(RRRP\)](#) for the Sudan emergency is appealing for \$1.4 billion, which includes \$103 million for education activities, covering a projected population of 2.7 million people that includes refugees, returnees, third country nationals and host populations.

From the onset of the crisis, CAR and Chad have continued to grant access to asylum-seekers from Sudan. As of end-March, nearly 594,000 Sudanese have found refuge in CAR and Chad since April 2023, including over 570,000 in Chad, the largest refugee arrivals in the country's history. UNHCR and its partners work tirelessly to support Ministries of Education facilitate the integration of refugees into national education systems. The situation remains however critical with over 88.800 new arrivals in both countries since the start of the year.

An historical influx

In Chad, new arrivals initially settle in overcrowded border sites, where they live in makeshift shelters with little access to services. Given insecurity along the border, relocating refugees to safe settlements is a priority. In one year, Chad has received almost as many refugees as it has in the last 20 years. The massive arrival of people fleeing Sudan strains already vulnerable host communities, heightening competition for limited resources, including education services. UNHCR and its partners have rapidly responded, creating ten extensions to pre-existing sites and five new sites with basic services such as shelters, health facilities, and schools. As of the end of March, of the over 570,000 newly arrived refugees, over 254,000 individuals have been relocated, receiving vital protection and assistance, including emergency education. In total, almost 300,000 refugee children are estimated to be of school-age.

Sudanese refugees in CAR have settled in the Vakaga province – which hosts most refugees – where the Government, in collaboration with UNHCR established the Korsi refugee settlement in the town of Birao. Other refugees have settled in host communities in different provinces, mostly in hard-to-reach locations outside of the Vakaga province. The population in Korsi has tripled, from 2,866 refugees at the end of December 2023 to 10,668 by the end of March 2024. Overall, 9,620 newly arrived Sudanese refugee children are of school-age, including over 4,200 at the Korsi site.



Ensuring inclusion into national education systems

In line with [UNHCR's Refugee Education Strategy 2030](#) both Governments are including refugees into their national education system. State and humanitarian actors are working in close collaboration to facilitate return to school.

In Chad, UNHCR, the Ministry of Education and its partners addressed academic barriers to education by offering extra support to students facing school interruption, difficulties, or lack of prior schooling. Some 5,000 children have so far attended accelerated learning programs, and 8,200 children have participated in remedial classes to transition to the Chadian curriculum. UNHCR provided scholastic material to over 23,880 children and 10,000 menstrual care kits to girls and adolescents supporting their enrolment and well-being. Additionally, 15,000 refugee students received cash assistance to facilitate their enrollment associated costs in primary and secondary school.

UNHCR and partners focused on enhancing education quality by recruiting and compensating over 300 teachers. The Ministry of Education provided pedagogical training to 224 teachers, emphasizing national and accelerated curricula as well as inclusive education, while 160 teachers received Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) training. MHPSS focal points were established, and local education officials were trained on various topics, including gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and inclusive education. Support was also extended to school management committees and parent-teacher associations. Ongoing efforts aim to expand MHPSS coverage, with the goal of establishing 15 dedicated structures across settlements.

Access to school was also strengthened with an initial 81 temporary learning spaces set up by UNHCR. Significant needs persist, with classes often conducted outdoors. To address these challenges, UNHCR and the Ministry of Education plan to extend learning spaces construction as well as recruiting and training additional teachers. Efforts to support forcibly displaced children (refugees and returnees) accessing education have also been facilitated by Plan International, the Norwegian Refugee Council, UNICEF and WFP through notably the set up of temporary learning spaces, recruitment of teachers, provision of school kits and school feeding programme.



In CAR, during the first quarter of the year, the overall response, including education, has primarily focused in Korsi, with plans to expand selected interventions to other locations in the next trimester. UNHCR, in collaboration with partners, has been providing essential support to education in Birao by strengthening local schools' capacity with infrastructure improvements, materials, teacher training, and mental health and protection activities. French as a Foreign Language (FLE) classes have engaged 566 refugees, with relaunch plans in April. Teacher incentives and pedagogical and thematic training sessions have enhanced the teaching workforce and addressed key educational issues such as MHPSS and GBV prevention. The establishment of an MHPSS Focal Point Network involving 48 youths aims to provide psychosocial support. Community involvement is prioritized through activities such as 'Community Forums' and 'Community Audits', facilitating feedback and recommendations for the implementation of education activities and protection measures.

INTEROS's Child-Friendly Spaces cater to more than 200 children, with plans for expansion, while NOURRIR's infrastructure projects include administrative blocks and latrines. Moreover, UNICEF, and its partner Triangle Generation Humanitaire, have distributed school kits and erected tents and latrines in local schools and Child Friendly Spaces. Plan International has also played a crucial role, reopening Child-Friendly Spaces and conducting programs on life skills and children's clubs, albeit with decreased attendance due to funding constraints.

Continued support remains crucial

Efforts have helped increase refugee school enrollment. **In Chad**, as of the end of March, 36,500 children have returned to school. At Korsi, **in CAR**, numbers more than tripled from December to March 2024. Formal education enrollment quadrupled during the same period, with a notable increase in the gross enrollment rate across all locations, reaching 10% overall and 39% in Birao/Korsi.

Efforts to address the gaps and scale up education in emergency programs to accommodate new arrivals are therefore even more relevant. However, challenges remain, with a considerable number of out-of-school children, especially in pre-primary and secondary levels, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions. Rising enrollment underscores the urgent need for additional classrooms and recreational spaces, especially with existing structures suffering damage from harsh weather conditions in both countries. Urgent needs include the recruitment and training of additional teachers, additional learning spaces, pedagogical supplies, water points, and latrines to ensure quality education for all students.

→ [More information on the Sudan Situation](#)

UNHCR expresses its gratitude to [Education Cannot Wait](#) (ECW) for its generous support in providing quality education to thousands of Sudanese refugees and their host communities in CAR and Chad.

UNHCR'S EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS

 Ghana

Togolese Refugee Youth Leader Takes a Stand for Quality Education in Ghana



Growing up in a remote refugee camp in western Ghana, Louange Koffi's childhood was shaped by the harsh realities of limited access to essential health services. Living amidst the struggles of her community, one incident remains deep-rooted in her memory: at the age of 14, a woman, in dire need of medical assistance, gave birth behind her window due to the camp's considerable distance from the nearest health facility. This experience served as a catalyst for Louange's determination to make a difference. Despite the arduous two-hour daily walk to the camp's sole secondary school, she remained determined in her pursuit of education, driven by the ambition to become a medical professional and provide critical assistance to fellow refugees.

Louange's academic journey, though marked by challenges, bore fruit when she secured a [DAFI scholarship](#) in 2016, enabling her to pursue a nursing degree in Accra. Today, equipped with her nursing degree, Louange is at the forefront of saving lives and effecting positive change within her community.

Passionate about advocating for quality education and healthcare, Louange dedicates her time to volunteer work with local organisations, leading youth initiatives and conducting mobile clinics to serve the needs of refugees and host communities, particularly focusing on the empowerment of women and girls. Beyond grassroots efforts, Louange actively engages with policymakers and development organisations in Ghana, amplifying the voices of young people and refugees alike. Her advocacy efforts culminated in her participation at the [Global Refugee Forum](#) in Geneva in December 2023, where she championed the untapped potential of refugees and emphasized the transformative impact of providing access to quality education and healthcare.

As a member of the [Refugee Education Council](#) and through collaborations with UNHCR and partner organisations, Louange continues to advocate for the inclusion of refugees in national health and education policies, determined to ensure that every displaced individual is afforded the opportunity to thrive and contribute meaningfully to society.

→ [More on unhcr.org](#)

 **Cameroon**

DAFI Students and Alumni Shine during Cameroon's Month of Youth

February 2024 saw enthusiastic participation from Cameroon's DAFI Program students and alumni in significant events, showcasing their dedication, skills, and entrepreneurial spirit.

The 58th edition of the Youth Festival, an annual celebration on 11 February, was marked by a global camp involving over 5,000 young individuals. Notably, a dozen students and alumni from the DAFI program actively contributed to the event. Under the patronage of the President and organised by the Minister of Youth and Civic Education, the camp aimed at fostering community inclusion and coexistence through various activities, including first aid training and skills workshops. These opportunities allowed DAFI students to enhance their teamwork, determination, and problem-solving abilities.



DAFI students received photography training.
© PLAN/William

At the PROMOTE 2024 Trade Fair, held 19-24 February in Yaoundé, seven students and eight alumni from the DAFI Program showcased their talents at the Plan International partner booth in the digital sector. Among them, two refugee finalists designated by Plan International in the 'Grand Pitch Final' of the Digital Startups competition were recognised for their outstanding achievements in social added-value and innovation in e-pharmacy. Their innovation and social impact were acknowledged, earning them support for application development and subsequent commercialisation. This opportunity also entails a six-month work environment, follow-up, and training, supported by various financial and technical partners. The participation of DAFI scholars and alumni in PROMOTE 2024 not only bolstered the visibility of the program but also fuelled their enthusiasm to pursue more digital projects and inspire others in this field.

Closing the month of Youth, on 28 February, young students from the DAFI Program organised an educational discussion at the Bilingual High School of Nkol-Eton in Yaoundé. The dialogue focused on fostering social cohesion between local and refugee youth, with Cameroonian and refugee students exchanging ideas on creating conducive environments for refugee youth to interact freely, enriching each other's experiences.



Month of Youth closing at Nkol-Eton Bilingual High School.
© UNHCR/Mbabazi Mugemana

 **Nigeria**

Connected Learning: Transforming Refugees and Host Community Education

Despite Nigeria's commitment to enrol all refugee children in primary schools by 2023, only 49% of refugee children currently attend primary school, compared to the national enrolment rate of 86%. This disparity is more pronounced at the secondary education level. In areas hosting refugees, challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, limited resources, and a lack of basic infrastructure persist, depriving students of a well-rounded education, including opportunities for sports and recreation.

In collaboration with the [ProFuturo Foundation](#), UNHCR is implementing an innovative educational project in Benue and Cross River States. The programme is the first-of-its-kind in these areas, aiming to transform learning through technology and solar power. With over 3,500 children and 90 teachers reaping the benefits, the project has provided access to tablets, laptops, and a more interacting learning environment.



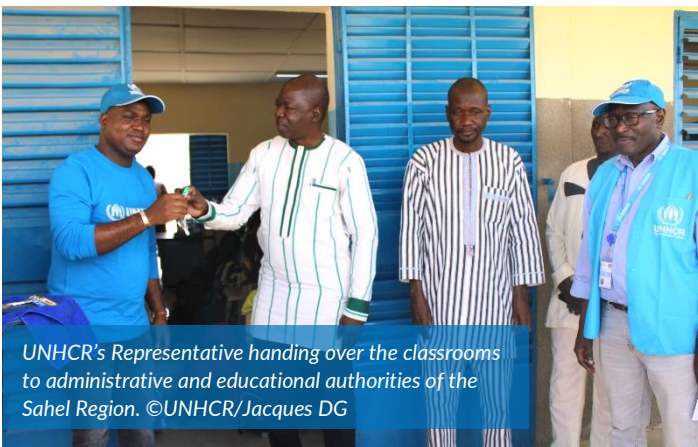
Cameroonian refugees and locals learn using digital methodologies in St. Eugene Primary School Ukende, Cross River State. © UNHCR/Lucy Agiende

Students at St Peter's Primary School Adagom have expressed how visual learning aids has enhanced their understanding. These methods, incorporating visual aids and interactive digital content, have proven highly effective for young learners. Moreover, the project encourages active student involvement in classrooms, aiming not only to boost enrolment and retention rates but also to enhance their digital literacy skills and adaptability to online platforms. Yet the project's reach remains limited, emphasizing the urgency for broader, more inclusive educational efforts. Many refugee children are still excluded, underscoring the imperative to expand the program's outreach.

→ [More on unhcr.org](#)

 **Burkina Faso**

UNHCR Enhances Education in Sahel Region with New Infrastructures



UNHCR's Representative handing over the classrooms to administrative and educational authorities of the Sahel Region. ©UNHCR/Jacques DG

On 15 February, as part of efforts to enhance education in the Sahel region, UNHCR handed over two blocks, each comprising three classrooms, to the administrative and educational authorities of the Sahel region in Burkina Faso. These newly facilities, equipped with latrines and a borehole, were made possible through funding from UNHCR's Primary Impact project. Located in the Wendou neighbourhood of Dori, these classrooms are set to benefit a total of 1,025 students, including 714 refugee students, as well as children from the host community. This initiative aims to provide access to quality education within a safer environment.

The Secretary-General of the Sahel Region, upon receiving the keys to these newly inaugurated facilities, expressed optimism regarding their effective use. He emphasized the significant potential impact these classrooms hold for enhancing the educational landscape of the community.

 **Niger**

110 Community Agents to be Trained in Collaboration with Bioforce Institute

The Refugees Capacity Building In Humanitarian And Development Professions - [ReCAPREF](#) project, funded by the Principality of Monaco and executed in partnership between the Bioforce Training Center and UNHCR, is currently advancing into its fourth phase. This phase is dedicated to crafting and implementing a tailored training program designed to address specific needs within Niger. A collaborative effort involving three external experts, a UNHCR representative based in Niger, and a skilled Bioforce trainer has been instrumental in shaping the content of this program. The objective is to raise awareness among 110 community agents and facilitators from diverse backgrounds including refugees, internally displaced persons, and members of host communities in Niger.



Training session © Bioforce

Scheduled across Niamey and Tahoua between February and April 2024, four five-day training sessions are planned. The inaugural sessions held in Niamey welcomed 55 participants, providing them with a unique platform to engage with stakeholders in the humanitarian. This event fostered exchanges centered around crucial topics such as enhancing the efficacy of community facilitators' efforts in Niger. Salissou Ibrahim, a community agent, expressed his gratitude, remarking, "Participating in this training alongside the experts from Bioforce was truly enriching. Their expertise and encouragement served as great motivation, offering us a clearer perspective within the humanitarian landscape."

 **Cameroon**

ECW/MYRP Programme Supports Training of 113 Educational Staff



© UNHCR/Louis Marie Ayissi

Ninety-five teachers from the Littoral, North-West, South-West, and West regions, and 18 representatives from the Ministry of Secondary Education, recently engaged in a comprehensive training workshop on subject didactics. This workshop was organized as part of the Multi-Year Resilience Programme of Education Cannot Wait (MYRP-ECW). Over three intensive days, these educators received invaluable training from pedagogical inspectors and coordinators from the Ministry. The focus was on refining teaching techniques specifically tailored to meet the diverse needs of forcibly displaced children and those living with disabilities.

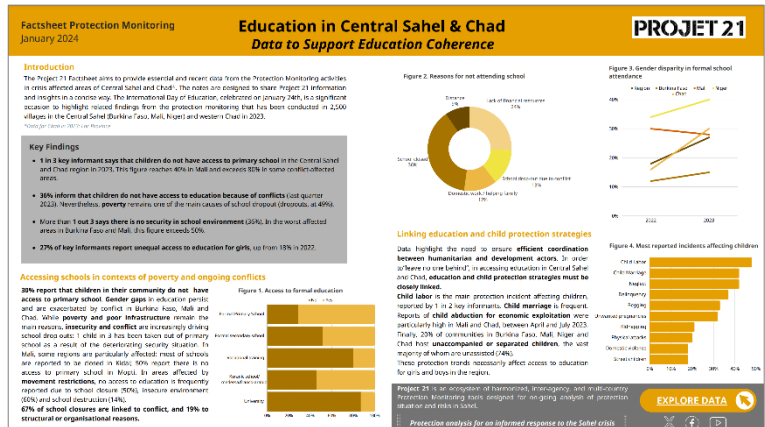
The [MYRP-ECW](#) aims to benefit 227,000 children and adolescents across 477 schools in 64 municipalities nationwide. Over the three-year span of the program, 23% of refugees are projected to benefit, including more than 6,000 secondary school students. This training workshop builds upon the success of a similar event held in Bertoua in December 2023, where 50 out of the anticipated 55 teachers participated, emphasizing the commitment to enhancing educational quality and inclusivity.

EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES

Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Western Chad

PROJECT 21 Findings: One in Three key Informant Reports Lack of Primary School Access for Children in 2023

Findings from the **PROJECT 21** (P21) inter-agency's protection monitoring conducted across 2,500 villages in the Central Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger) and western Chad throughout 2023 reveal critical challenges in education access. In most conflict-affected areas, 80% of interviewed key informants report children lacking primary school access. The prolongation of such a protracted conflict remains a significant barrier, cited by 36% of informants, while poverty (incl. conflict-induced pauperization of communities) drives 49% of school dropouts. Security concerns remain prominent, with over 50% of informants highlighting inadequate safety in school environments, in the hardest-hit regions of Burkina Faso and Mali. Gender disparities increase, as +9% of informants note unequal access to education for girls, from 2022 to 2023.

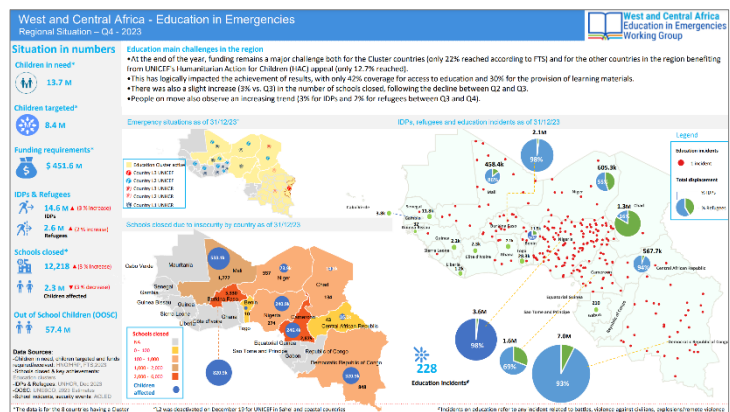


P21 data highlights the urgent need for coordinated efforts between humanitarian and development actors to ensure inclusive education access to better protect children in Central Sahel and Chad. Whereas child labour as well as incidents of child marriage have been frequently observed, heightened risks of family separation, child abduction for economic exploitation, as well as forced recruitment and/or association in armed forces and/or groups have become major concerns in the region. Furthermore, offering more education opportunities to protect children is highly necessary to step-up the support provided to the approx.20% of affected communities that continue to host unaccompanied and/or separated children throughout the region.

Region

West and Central Africa - Education in Emergencies (EiE) Q4-2023 Regional situation Dashboard

The region continues to face several significant challenges. By the end of 2023, insufficient funding remains a prominent issue, affecting both Cluster countries and other states benefiting from UNICEF's Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal, with only 22% and 12.7% of funding reached, respectively, according to FTS data. Consequently, this has had a direct impact on achieving results, with only 42% coverage for access to education and 30% for the provision of learning materials. Additionally, there has been a slight increase in the number of school closures (3% compared to the previous quarter), reversing a decline observed between the second and third quarters. Moreover, there has been an upward trend in the number of people on the move, with a 3% increase for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and a 2% increase for refugees between the third and fourth quarters. These challenges underscore the pressing need for sustained efforts and resources to address the educational needs of the region effectively.



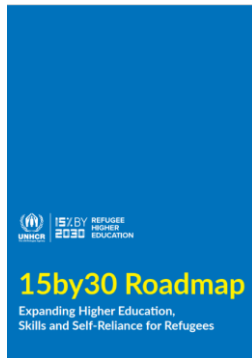
EDUCATION RESSOURCES

UNHCR EDUCATION

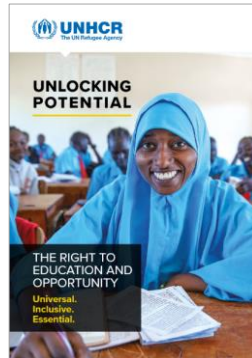
2030 Strategy



15by30 Roadmap



2023 Report



Education Pledges

- Securing Sustainable Futures: Towards a Shared Responsibility to Uphold the Right to Education and Include Refugee Children in National Education Systems
- 15% by 2030: Global Pledge on Refugee Higher Education and Self-Reliance
- Expanding Connected Education for Refugees through the Refugee Connected Education Challenge

RECENT RELEASES



African Union

Concept Note on Education as the AU Theme of the Year for 2024

Theme: Educate an African fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa. The concept note provides an overview of the rationale behind proposing Education as the AU's theme of the year for 2024. It offers a snapshot of the education sector in Africa, explains the theme for the year and outlines the roadmap ahead.



The World Bank - UNHCR

Blog: Making promises a reality: Including refugees in national education systems

This blog emphasizes the pressing issue of nearly 15.5 million refugee children worldwide, over half of whom are deprived of education, prompting collaborative efforts from key organisations such as the World Bank, UNHCR, and the UK. It stresses the significance of inclusive national education systems and transition programs, with 143 countries and organizations committing to this cause.

WORLD BANK BLOGS



INEE Webinar

Towards education for all: Strengthening data systems in conflict and crisis settings

During this event, specialists convened to discuss the essential role of data in shaping evidence-based educational strategies and policy frameworks tailored to the requirements of children in conflict and crisis environments, underscoring the significance of addressing data-related challenges in these contexts.





NORCAP

Lost Opportunity - Education for out-of-school youth in emergency and protracted crisis settings

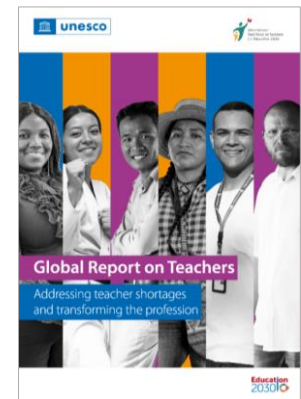
This NORCAP study focuses on the lack of educational opportunities for youth in emergency and protracted crisis settings. Research revealed primary education as the predominant Education in Emergencies (EiE) priority, as well as an absence of clarity on who qualifies as a 'youth.' Girls' education efforts often overlook pressing female youth challenges while support for boys' and male youth education is largely absent. The report details the limited investment and expertise on youth, and suggests that strategic targeting, designing relevant, youth-centred initiatives and empowering vulnerable youth are essential to improve effective EiE interventions for out-of-school youth.



UNESCO - Teacher Task Force

Global Report on Teachers: Addressing teacher shortages and transforming the profession

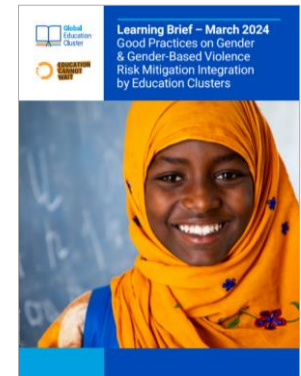
This inaugural Teacher Task Force and UNESCO Global Report on Teachers highlights a critical global teacher shortage hindering SDG4 and the Education 2030 agenda. With a projected deficit of 44 million teachers by 2030, urgent action is needed. The report addresses various aspects of the crisis, from the need for 15 million more teachers in sub-Saharan Africa to retention challenges in higher-income countries. It calls for international cooperation and increased education investment to empower teachers and ensure every learner is taught by a qualified and supported educator.



Global Education Cluster – Education Cannot Wait

Good Practices on Gender & Gender-Based Violence Risk Mitigation Integration by Education Clusters

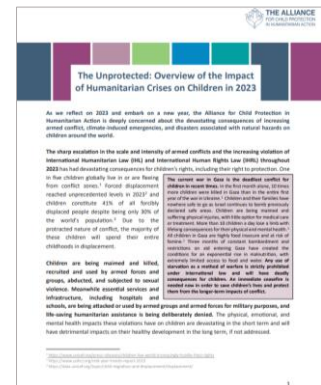
The Learning Brief highlights 20 practices for integrating Gender and Gender-Based Violence Risk Mitigation (GBV RM) into Education Clusters' activities throughout the Humanitarian Programme Cycle. It features country examples (Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Nigeria) and offers practical tips for leveraging enabling factors, addressing challenges, and adapting successful approaches to different contexts through collaboration with Gender and GBV experts.



The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action

The Unprotected: Overview of the Impact of Humanitarian Crises on Children in 2023

This overview highlights the profound impact of armed conflict, climate-induced emergencies, and natural disasters on children globally in 2023. With a significant rise in armed conflicts breaching International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law, one in five children either reside in or flee from conflict areas, facing severe violations such as recruitment by armed forces, sexual violence, and attacks on vital services. Urgent action and investment are crucial in three key areas for 2024: Investing in the child protection workforce, prioritizing prevention of harm alongside responding to urgent needs, and ensuring every actor in the humanitarian system takes steps to protect children.

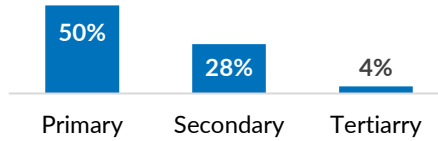


UNHCR REGIONAL BUREAU FOR WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

7.3 million
Estimated forcibly displaced children in the region

486,000
refugee children (67%) are estimated to be out of school (2023)

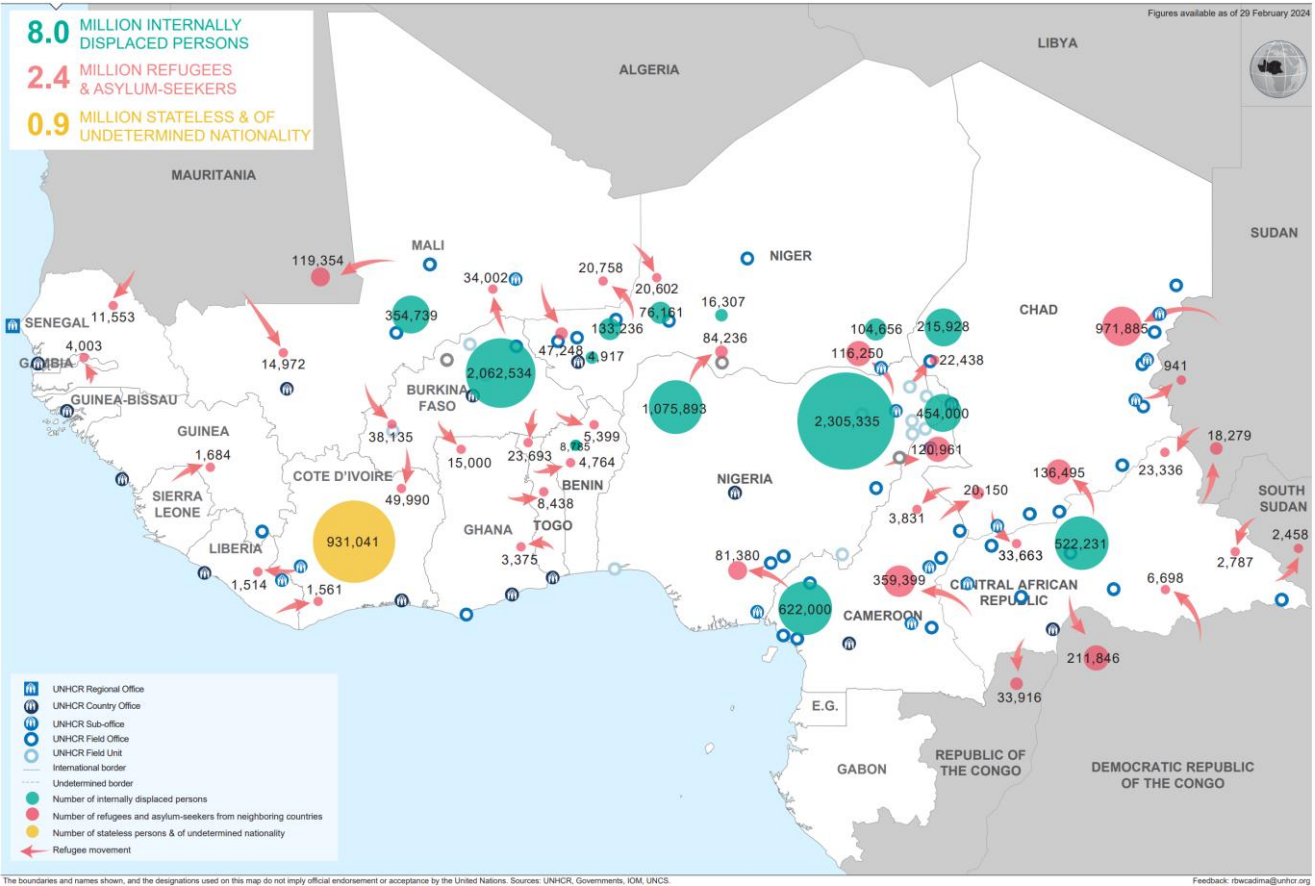
Refugee enrolment rates in WCA (2022-2023)



More statistics on UNHCR's Regional Education Dashboard



Forcibly displaced & stateless persons as of 29 February 2024



[More statistics](#)

UNHCR West and Central Africa is grateful for education funding from:



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UNHCR Regional Bureau for West & Central Africa
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