

## REGIONAL BUREAU FOR **WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA**

### **EDUCATION NEWSLETTER**



### **Increasingly Limited Access to Education for Vulnerable Children due to Insecurity**

January 24 marked the fourth [International Day of Education](#), a day when all world leaders and education advocates claim the value of education in breaking the cycle of poverty, improving health, and bringing about social stability.

Education is one of the most important investments a country can make in its future and is essential to every one of the 17 sustainable development goals.

However, education systems in fragile and crisis-affected contexts continue to feel the strain of trying to provide **quality education to all** children, including the most vulnerable such as refugees and forcibly displaced.

In West & Central Africa, more than **300,000 refugee children** still do not have the chance to go to school or access any kind of education.

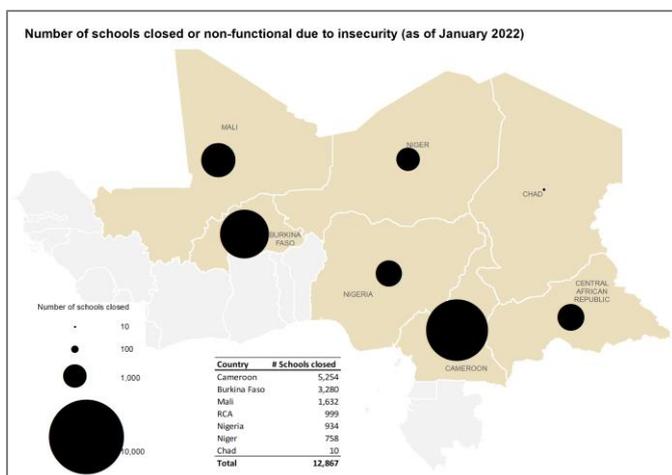
With more than **12,000 schools closed** due to insecurity across the region, the capacity of countries of asylum to include young refugees in their education systems is shrinking rapidly. The commitment of governments and all stakeholders is urgently needed to increase emergency and sustainable funding to ensure equitable access to quality education for all.

Education transforms lives, but it has yet to fulfil the dreams of hundreds of thousands of refugee and displaced children and youth in the region.

## EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES



### [REGION] Insecurity and Attacks Continue to Close Schools



Disruption of school activities by ongoing violence continues to dramatically affect boys and girls in the region. Deliberate attacks on education are on the rise, impacting schools, students, and teachers. According to the [Regional Education in Emergencies Working Group](#), over **12,800 schools were closed at the beginning of 2022** in seven countries of the region.

In the **English-speaking regions of Cameroon**, more than 5,000 schools were kept closed at the end of 2021 by

armed separatists, while direct attacks on teachers and students continued to increase, as documented in a recent [Human Rights Watch Report](#).

Children and youth, especially **refugees and internally displaced**, are therefore at **increased risk of exploitation and abuse**, and there is a rise in reported cases of child recruitment, child marriages and early pregnancies of school-age girls in areas where the schools are closed.

### [CHAD] Thousands of Refugee Children Waiting to Return to School

On 5 December 2021, clashes over diminishing water resources broke out between herders, farmers and fishermen in Cameroon's Far North region, the second major outbreak of violence within four months. The situation rapidly deteriorated: 112 villages were burned, over 100 people were wounded, and 44 died. This wave of violence forced **tens of thousands to flee into neighbouring Chad** within two weeks (more than 60% of them being children), while around 40,000 people were displaced within Cameroon.



At Guilmei refugee camp in Chad, school has started thanks to the support of volunteer Chadian teachers. @UNHCR

**UNHCR's education response** aims at alleviating the psychological impact of conflict and forced displacement on child refugees by offering routine, stability and psychosocial support, while supporting conflict prevention and peaceful coexistence. Supported by national directors and teachers, refugee teachers will be trained on the Chadian curriculum and on pedagogical approaches and psychosocial support. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, new schools constructed in refugee camps will be integrated into the national

education system and existing schools in refugee hosting areas will be strengthened to improve access to and quality of education for both refugee and host community children.

Check [UNHCR Supplementary Appeal for the Cameroon and Chad Emergency](#) [here](#).

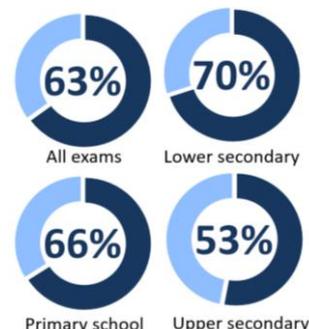
## UNHCR'S EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS



### [REGION] Refugees' End-of-Year Exam Results

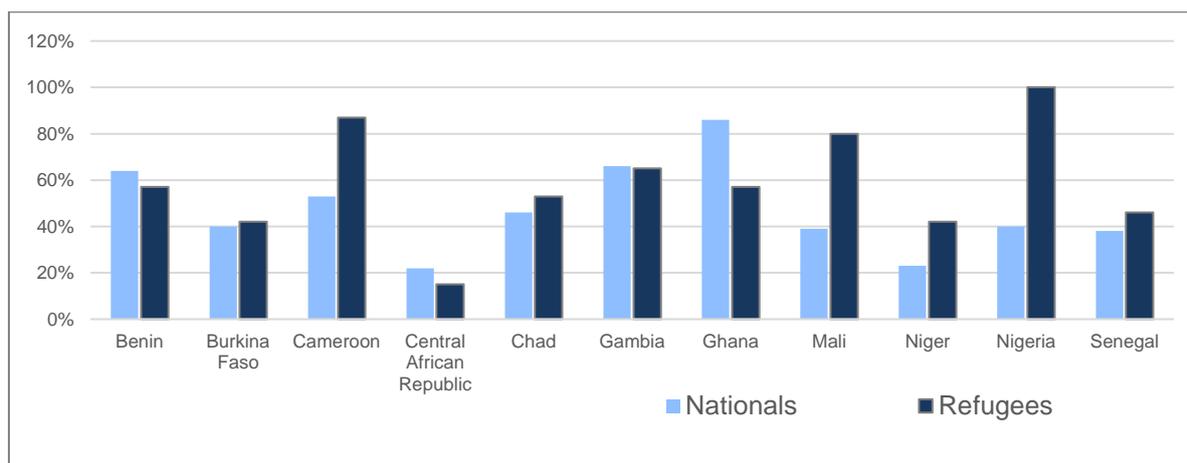
In the West & Central Africa region, **63% of the refugee students who took end-of-year exams** (primary, lower secondary and higher secondary) for the 2020-21 school year **have successfully passed** their exams (regional average).

The regional average success rates by level are 66% for the end of primary school exam, 70% for the lower secondary school exam and 53% for the upper secondary school exam.

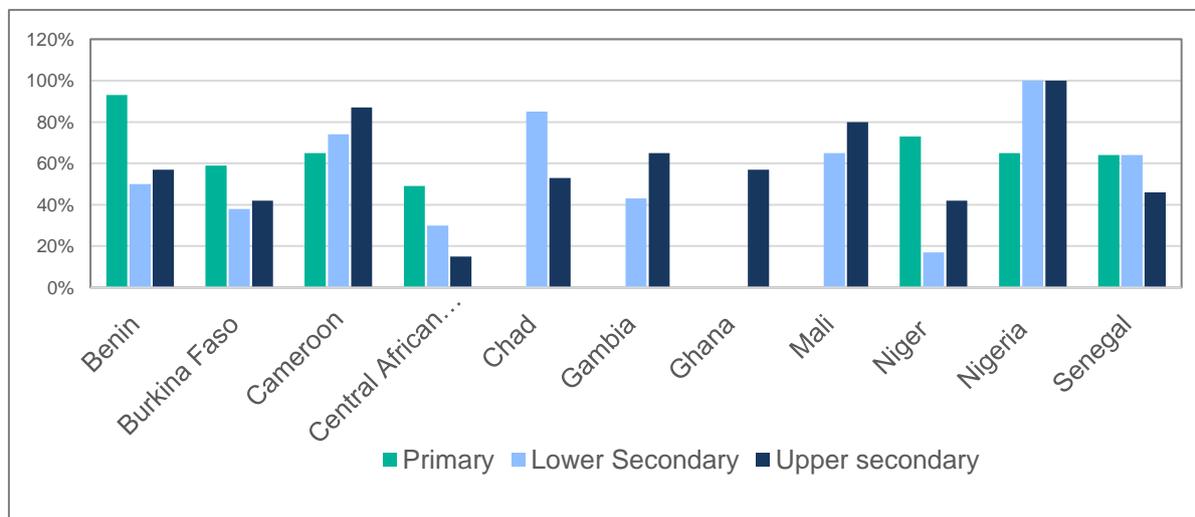


In several countries in the region, success rates in the upper secondary school exams are significantly higher among refugee students than among national students.

#### Comparison of success rates for upper secondary school exams between nationals and refugees



#### Comparison of refugee success rates between countries in the region



## [BURKINA FASO] Digital Skills Training for Refugee Students



As part of UNHCR's activities aiming at providing innovative sustainable solutions to **improve refugee students training and employability**, UNHCR, the [Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie \(AUF\)](#) and [Simplon](#) have developed an 8-month pilot training on digital skills tailored for refugee students in Burkina Faso.

Within a new room fully equipped within the AUF Digital Campus in Ouagadougou, **13**

**selected candidates** are trained every day by SIMPLON experts to acquire **specific digital skills** that will allow them to enhance their employability in many professional sectors, thus helping them to obtain financial independence and a durable solution in their country of asylum more quickly.

During this course, students will learn to develop and model a web application, create web user interfaces, create a database, develop data access components, and content management applications.

Thanks to the AUF's support, this pilot project launches **UNHCR's collaboration with Simplon in West and Central Africa**, with the hope to offer similar opportunities to other young refugees in the region.



## [MALI] Improving Refugee and Displaced Children Access to Education



As part of activities carried out with ECW funding for [Mali's Multi-Year Resilience Program](#), UNHCR has established **40 accelerated education centers (SSA/P)** in the regions of Mopti, Timbuktu, and Gao that have provided schooling to nearly **1,500 out-of-school refugee, internally displaced, returnee, and host community children**. In

addition, primary schools in these same areas have been reinforced with new equipped classrooms and latrines to accommodate these children when they return to the national system. School kits have also been distributed to all the children.

More than 300 teachers, school principals and management committee members have been trained in **psychosocial support** and **inclusive education** to improve the quality of education in schools hosting refugee, returnee and internally displaced children. Finally, **community sensitization sessions** were conducted to improve the attendance of children in SSA/P centers and schools.



## EDUCATION RESOURCES



### [UNHCR] Connected Education for Refugees: Addressing the Digital Divide



Educational responses to COVID-19 school closures have demonstrated the need for greater and more thoughtful digital learning approaches. As these investments are made, it is vital that they are developed with a focus on inclusion and designed first and foremost to address the needs of the most marginalized, including refugees and forcibly displaced communities.

In this report, UNHCR calls on governments and partners to make clear commitments to help narrow the growing digital divide faced by displaced learners. The report also gives an overview of different **digital learning modalities for refugee and host community learners.**

Access the Report [here](#).

### [UNHCR] Research Brief: Transition to Secondary Education

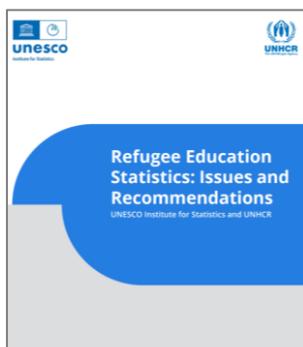
UNHCR's first 2022 [education research brief](#) addresses the issue of transition from primary to secondary education in four case studies.

The transition to secondary school is a significant life stage for young people but also a challenging one for young refugees, who are simultaneously experiencing the challenges of forced displacement, and have very limited opportunities to continue their education. The present study set out to identify, document and promote **innovative ways to boost the transition from primary to secondary education among refugee youth**, with a strong emphasis on adolescent girls of secondary school age, through case studies conducted in four countries: Egypt, Ethiopia, Malaysia and Uganda.

Access the Brief [here](#).



### [UNHCR-UNESCO] Refugee Education Statistics: Issues and Recommendations

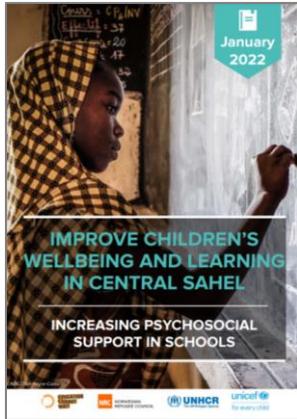


UNHCR and UNESCO-UIS have just published a joint paper titled [Refugee Education Statistics: Issues and Recommendations](#), undertaking a comprehensive review of data sources to uncover the **reasons for the shortage of data on refugee education** and further suggests ways to address that shortage.

You can find a summary of the key takeaways of the paper in a post on [UNHCR Data Blog](#).

Access the Report [here](#) and the Blog [here](#).

## [NRC-UNHCR-UNICEF] Improve Children’s Wellbeing and Learning in Central Sahel: Increasing Psychosocial Support in Schools



Ahead of the 2022 Senior Officials Meeting on the humanitarian situation in the Central Sahel, NRC, UNICEF and UNHCR have shared a joint note on [Improving children's wellbeing and learning in Central Sahel](#) by strengthening psychosocial support in schools.

The note describes the current humanitarian situation in the Sahel with regard to attacks on schools and their consequences. Building on the results of an assessment conducted by NRC aiming to measure promoters and barriers for learning, it emphasizes the main **recommendations to address the psychosocial impact of the crisis on internally displaced and refugee children.**

Access the Note [here](#).

## [JEiE] Psychosocial Support and Social and Emotional Learning in Emergencies

The [Journal on Education in Emergencies Volume 7, Number 2](#) – Special Issue on Psychosocial Support and Social and Emotional Learning in Emergencies, is available on the INEE website.

This special issue highlights the progress being made in creating, validating, and using new, **culturally relevant tools for measuring mental health and wellbeing among students living in situations of crisis and conflict**, and among the teachers, caregivers, and community members on whom these young people rely.

The abstract and title of each article are available in Arabic, French, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Access the full JEiE [here](#).



## [PODCAST] Educate Us! Women and Girls on Learning in Humanitarian Crises



### Bonus Content: Educating a Girl, Educating a Nation

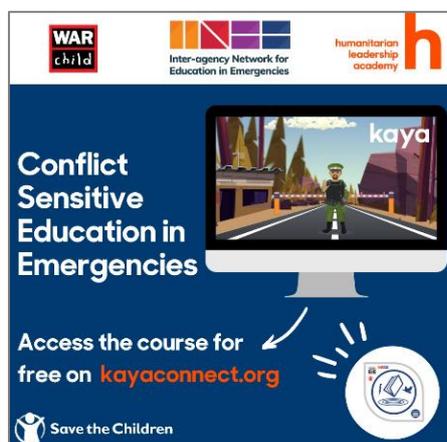
[Educate Us!](#) is an INEE podcast series about women’s and girls’ education in humanitarian crises. The series features a range of stories and perspectives on **women’s and girls’ education in emergencies**, and explores the gains made in girls’ education and the slip backwards caused by the pandemic. In this bonus mini-episode, we hear from a teacher in **Niger** on how she supported her students to continue learning during the long period of school closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Access the Podcast [here](#).

## CAPACITY BUILDING & EVENTS



### [E-COURSE] Conflict Sensitive Education in Emergencies



In partnership with War Child Holland, the [Humanitarian Leadership Academy](#) has developed a course on **Conflict Sensitive Education in Emergencies**, as part of the [EiE Online series endorsed by INEE](#).

This course will look at how education and the way it is implemented by education stakeholders, can either contribute to conflict or reduce tensions and strengthen people's capacities to disengage from conflict.

On completion of this course and the end-of-course assessment, you'll earn your HPass digital badge.

Access the free course [here](#).

### [WEBINAR] Complementary Pathways through Education for Refugees in the West and Central Africa Region

Education Sub Saharan Africa (ESSA), UNHCR and NORRAG are co-organising a webinar on **15 February 2022 (14:00-15:30 CET)** to discuss the report [Complementary Pathways through Education for Refugees in the West and Central Africa Region](#), which mapped out refugee education pathways and access to higher education and training in 21 West and Central African countries.



The webinar will share the report findings and open up the discussion on ways to **bolster educational pathways for refugees** across the WCA region.

The event will have interpretation into English and French.

Register for the webinar [here](#).

## CONTACT US

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