REGIONAL BUREAU FOR **WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA**

EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

Education Under Attack in the Sahel

As the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, arrived yesterday in Niger, increased attention is being placed on the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the Central Sahel region where each day the lives of hundreds of thousands of civilians are being threatened by insecurity and violence.

While the Sahel has long been one of the most vulnerable region in Africa, increased insecurity and displacement (1.2 million internally displaced persons and refugees in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, including 55% children) is severely disrupting basic social services, leaving people without access to essential assistance and adequate education and health care.

The sharp increase in armed attacks directly targeting schools across Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger is having a devastating impact on children's education, jeopardising their future and depriving communities of critical services.

As of January 2020, 2,341 schools are closed in Burkina Faso and 1,217 in Mali, disrupting education for more than 650,000 children in both countries.

On the 24th of January, the second annual celebration of International Education Day, a column in the French newspaper *Libération* headlined "*Education au Sahel: le chemin est encore long*" (*Education in the Sahel: there is still a long way to go*) highlighted the alarming educational results among the lowest in the world, while a UN Chronicle titled "*In the Darkness of War, Learning Gives Us Light*" outlined how education is the key to peace and prosperity, and the foundation of equality.

Concerted action from Governments and international community is urgently needed to stop attacks and threats against schools, students, and teachers and to support access to quality and safe education for all school-aged children, including refugee and internally displaced girls and boys.

EDUCATION IN WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA

Regional Coordination Group for SDG4-Education 2030 in West and Central Africa (RCG4-WCA)

The RCG4-WCA Acceleration Strategy for SDG4 and CESA has been published online. The RCG4-WCA works together with partners in order to accelerate countries' progress towards SDG4 and CESA implementation in the region. The Acceleration Strategy aims to positively stimulate the pace of progress within the education sectors of 24 West and Central African countries.

Download the PDF version.

West and Central Africa: Education in Emergencies (EiE)
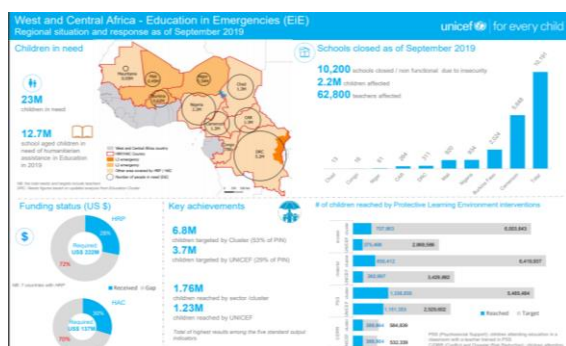
UNICEF published the Education in Emergencies dashboards for the third quarter of 2019 (January-September) on HR.info/WCA Education.

Download the PDF versions:

- Regional situation and response
- Lake Chad Basin crisis situation and response
- Central Sahel crisis (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger) situation and response

Sahel Advocacy Brief

UNICEF | January 2020

Attacks on children and violence across the Central Sahel continue to surge and more than 4.3 million children are now in need of humanitarian assistance. This advocacy brief highlights the impact of the insecurity on children and their families, advocating for attacks and threats to stop, and for critical human and financial resources needed to respond to the massive and acute needs.

Download the PDF version.
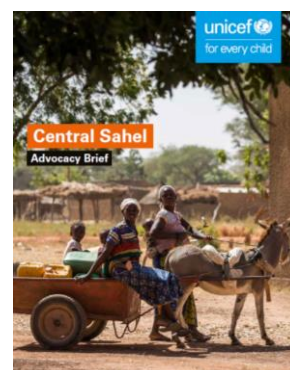
Education in Danger Monthly News Brief
Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) | December 2019

Several attacks on schools reported in Burkina Faso and Mali. In North-West Cameroon, unidentified armed actors abducted around ten students while en route to their campus.

Download the PDF version.

REFUGEE EDUCATION NEWS

Key takeaways from the Global Refugee Forum

Education was at the center of the first GRF, held in Geneva in December. Inclusion of refugees in national programmes and services accounted for nearly a third of the pledges. There were over 130 education-related pledges, including for EiE, early childhood education, access to quality education for refugees and hosts, scholarships, and vocational/skills training.

In case you missed the High Level Dialogue on Education you can stream it here. For an overview of pledges and contributions, please consult the pledges and contributions dashboard, and view the good practices platform.

UNHCR Education
@UNHCR_Education

More than 50% of #refugees are children.

At the #RefugeeForum, above 140 pledges focused on quality #education for refugees and their hosts 🌍🙏🏽

Traduire le Tweet

Key takeaways from the Global Refugee Forum
A month after the historic meeting wrapped up, these are the pledges and commitments that will boost opportunities for refugees and their hosts.
🔗 unhcr.org

THE WORLD BANK
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Promising Practice from the Region
UNHCR-WBG Partnership in Niger

In Niger, UNCHR and the World Bank Group (WBG) have set in motion one of the strongest collaborations at the country level, mirroring the commitment towards forced displacement at the global and corporate level and supporting the strategic vision of inclusion of the Government of Niger.

Following the *Projet d'Appui aux Réfugiés et Communautés Hôtes* (PARCA) within the IDA18 Regional Sub-Window for Refugees (RSW), the collaboration between UNHCR and the WBG has reached another important milestone in the education sector with the preparation of the *Learning Improvement for Results in Education* (LIRE), aiming to improve the overall national system, including in those regions where the deterioration of the security situation further complicated the delivery of basic education while access needs increased due to the influx of refugees.

This project (IDA envelope of $100 million + $40 million from the RSW) will strengthen the Government's education policies in refugee-hosting areas and support the education needs of refugees and host communities. UNHCR will be involved in most activities in refugee areas, from support on targeting to design of activities to meet the refugee children specific education needs.

This includes (i) the design and operationalization of a national integrated education policy to support refugees and host communities; (ii) provision of a support package to primary schools in refugee-hosting areas consisting of local language books, trainings, coaching and sensitization; (iii) implementation of performance based management mechanisms to promote improved governance, results, and inclusivity at the school level, and (iv) strengthening of data collection and monitoring processes in refugee-hosting areas.

Journal on Education in Emergencies: Special Issue on Refugees and Education, Part 1

INEE JEiE | December 2019

This special issue of JEiE - the first of two parts - showcases research on important developments in the field of refugee education across several regions. The issue includes four research articles, one interview, two field notes, and three book reviews.

The contributing authors help to untangle key questions about how responsibility for meeting refugees' educational needs and aspiration is taken up and shared. The articles in this issue include immediate and long-term lessons for how refugee education is designed and experienced.

Download the PDF version.

RESOURCES

[DATA] *Education Progress*: the new online interactive tool exploring progress made towards SDG4

Global Education Monitoring Report | January 2020

The GEMR has launched a new online interactive tool, *Education Progress* that brings together data from various producers, notably the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (ISU), to explore the progress made towards SDG4, the global education goal. It shows the progress being made by each country, as well as the bottlenecks and policy priorities from now until 2030 in five key themes: access, equity, learning, quality, finance.

Explore the tool here.

[VIDEO] Refugee Education is crucial for everyone

INEE | January 2020

This animation summarizes in simple terms the extremely complex, difficult, and absolutely CRITICAL activity of ensuring that all refugees and host community members are able to exercise their right to education.

Watch the video here.

[VIDEO] Sarah Dryden-Peterson, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Education in Conflict & Emergencies Seminars

Formal education systems are foundational to the sovereignty of modern-nation states and, both historically and in the present, are strong nationalizing endeavors. Within these formal systems, a hallmark of recent educational history globally is vacillation between standardization across regions and schools and autonomy at local levels, within cities and districts. This tension is heightened for refugees who live and are educated outside of their nation-states of citizenship. This presentation explores the tensions of standardization and autonomy in education of refugees. In a situation of standardization, what entity is the standardizing power: the country of origin, the host country, a global actor? In a situation of autonomy, from what, toward what end, and with what consequences for individuals and nation-states, in terms of recognition, learning, and future opportunities?

Watch the video here.

EVENTS

International Day of Education: 24th January

A selection of tweets published from @UNHCR accounts for the International Day of Education:

Learn more about UN International Day of Education.