REGIONAL BUREAU FOR WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

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The Future of Millions of Children Threatened by Attacks on Education in West and Central Africa

In Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, the Central African Republic, Cameroon, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, **insecurity** and **forced displacement** are on the rise and the figures are frightening: nearly **13 million** internally displaced persons and **1.5 million** refugees are registered, more than 55% of whom are children. In addition, at the beginning of 2022, nearly **12,000 schools** were closed due to insecurity in these countries, forcing more than **one million children** to interrupt their education.

In this context, thousands of children, especially vulnerable ones such as refugees and IDPs, are exposed to multiple protection risks and may **never return to school**.

The GCPEA's report Education under Attack 2022 covers attacks on schools, universities, students, and educators from January 2020 to December 2021. It profiles 28 conflict-affected countries (almost 1/3 in WCA) with a systematic pattern of **attacks on education** and **military use of educational facilities** and identifies trends in attacks on education.

In the WCA countries, nearly **2,000 attacks** on schools and students, teachers or other education personnel have been reported over the period 2020-2021. GCPEA also identified reported incidents of the military use of schools, as well as incidents of **sexual violence** and **child recruitment** at, or on the way to or from, school.

UNHCR'S EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS

[CENTRAL SAHEL] Joining Forces to Support Education in Emergencies

In the framework of the ECW-funded Regional Multi Year Resilience Programme (MYRP) for the Central Sahel, UNHCR, UNICEF and NRC, in collaboration with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), organised a **regional education donor meeting** in Dakar, Senegal.

With the participation of ECHO, the EU, JICA, USAID, the World Bank, the Luxembourg cooperation and the French and Canadian embassies, the workshop aimed to improve understanding of **existing donor investments** and **funding plans and priorities** for education in the Central Sahel, to identify synergies and opportunities to strengthen and leverage support for implementation of country MYRPs.

*Learn more about the Central Sahel MYRP **here**.*

[CHAD] A Comic Book to Encourage Young Refugees to Access Higher Education

Education, in addition to being a basic right, enables refugee children and youth to acquire the knowledge and resources necessary for personal and professional empowerment. Since the inclusion of refugee education in the national curriculum in 2015, **3,142 refugee youth** have graduated from the Chadian Baccalaureate, enabling them to access higher education.

Despite this, **less than 2%** of refugee youth in Chad are enrolled in universities, compared to 5% globally. As UNHCR's implementing partner, JRS works to provide quality formal and non-formal education in 13 refugee camps in the east of the country and in the capital, N'Djamena.

In order to encourage refugees' access to post-secondary education, JRS and UNHCR created the comic book 'Refugee Camp Graduates'. By reading about the experiences of Youssouf, Vincent, Sadié (a young mother) and her friend, refugee youth can learn about the different opportunities and scholarship options available in Chad.

The artist behind the illustrations and story is Chadian cartoonist **Mahamat Djamadjibeye**, alias **Djams**. This graphic artist is nationally recognised and has been publishing in the Chadian press for almost 20 years.

*Read the Comics **here**.*

[NIGER] Nigerian Refugees Sit their Secondary School Exams in Diffa

Refugee students taking the BECE exam in Diffa ©UNHCR Niger

When they arrived in the Diffa region of Niger in 2014, Nigerian refugee secondary school students were enrolled in **Distance Education Centres** (CEDs) set up by UNHCR Niger to allow students already enrolled in Nigeria to continue following the Nigerian English-language curriculum, before a full inclusion approach in the national curriculum was adopted in Niger.

Therefore, until 2020, Nigerian refugee youths enrolled in these CEDs (419 in total for the 2021-22 school year) were taken to Nigeria each year by UNHCR and its education partner to take part in **end-of-year exams**. However, the growing insecurity in northern Nigeria last year prevented students from travelling to their home state to sit their exams.

In 2022, after a long process led by UNHCR Niger in collaboration with the Nigerian Embassy in Niger and Niger's Ministry of Education, the **Nigeria National Examinations Council (NECO)** was able to make an examination centre operational in Niger, named **"Diffa Nigerian Refugee Study Center"**.

For this session, a total of **186 candidates** including 48 girls sat the **Basic Education Certification Examination** (BECE).

The NECO delegate and the Governor of Diffa during their joint mission to inaugurate the examination centre ©UNHCR Niger
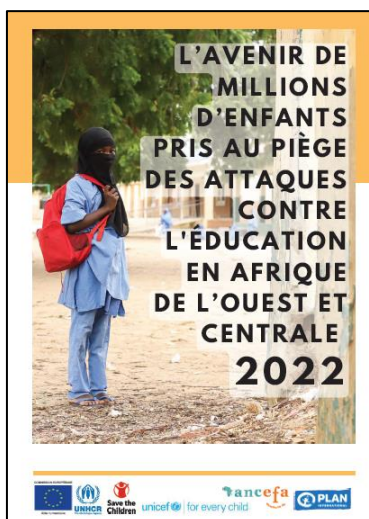

Refugee students in one of the distance learning centres set up by UNHCR in Diffa ©UNHCR Niger

EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES

Increased Attacks on Education in West & Central Africa

In parallel of the launch of the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) new Education under Attack report (2022), a regional advocacy brief was jointly launched by several education actors in the WCA region.

The brief highlights that nearly **2,000 attacks** on schools and students, teachers or other education personnel have been reported over the period 2020-2021 in **seven countries** of the region (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, the Central African Republic, Cameroon, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo). The report also shows an increase in the **military use of schools**, as well as incidents of **sexual violence** and **child recruitment** at, or on the way to or from, school, and presents a set of recommendations for local and international actors to better ensure the protection of children and their right to learn.

*Read the report **here** and the blog **here**.*

Implementing the Safe Schools Declaration in West & Central Africa

As part of the follow-up to the commitments made at the Fourth International Conference on the Safe Schools Declaration held in Abuja last October, the Regional Working Groups on Education in Emergencies, Protection and Child Protection in Emergencies have initiated a collaboration to support and operationalize the implementation of the Resolution 2601 (2021), adopted by the United Nations Security Council on October 29, 2021, and aimed at ensuring the **protection of children affected by armed conflict** and facilitating the **continuity and protection of education** in times of armed conflict.

As a first step, the three **Regional Working Groups** convened a meeting with **Cluster Coordinators** from the three sectors across the region and the **GCPEA** secretariat to define a joint action plan to improve advocacy, capacity building and data collection and sharing mechanisms related to attacks on education in the region.

Global EiE Hub 2022-2025 Strategy

On 12 May, the Geneva Global Hub for EiE officially launched its 2022-2025 Strategy to collaboratively **advance education in emergencies** for children and youth.

Tackling the increasingly complex and connected obstacles to education facing children and young people in crisis calls for **broader coalitions, joined-up thinking and cross-sector solutions**. Therefore, the EiE Hub launched its 2022-2025 strategy, which sets out strategic objectives as the EiE Hub moves into its next phase of activities, following an initial year as a start-up initiative.

*Access the Strategy **here**.*

EDUCATION RESOURCES

[UNHCR-IIEP] Refugees' Access to Higher Education: Overcoming the "Super-disadvantage"

With a view to identifying inclusive policies and good practices to respond to the many challenges that **refugee students** face to access **higher education** in their host country, this Policy Paper has conducted a review of available statistical data and literature.

In addition, six selected countries with considerable refugee populations have been analysed more in-depth: France, Ethiopia, Egypt, Germany, Norway, and Turkey. From this analysis, the paper presents **inclusive policies** and **good practices** from these countries and their higher education institutions by type of obstacle to accessing higher education. It concludes by presenting **15 recommendations** on how host countries can support the access of refugees to their national systems, arguing strongly for an **'equality opportunity approach'** in terms of national policies, and caring measures, at the level of higher education institutions.

*Access the document **here**.*

[UNICEF] Increasing Women's Representation in School Leadership

This Brief presents emerging insights on the association between **women school leaders** and **education outcomes** and draws attention to women's underrepresentation in school leadership roles. It highlights the need for further research on **gender and school leadership** to identify policies and practices that can be implemented to increase women's representation and scale high-quality management practices adopted by women leaders to more schools to improve education outcomes for all children.

*Read the brief **here**.*

[SAVE THE CHILDREN] Unleash the Power: Why Teachers Hold the Key to Stronger Education Systems
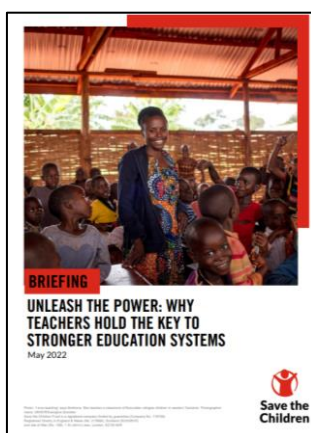
Inside and outside classrooms, in formal and informal education settings, **teachers** are the bedrock of our national education systems. As part of a commitment to push decision-makers to **Build Forward Better** following the release of Save the Children's global education report, the report highlights the unique role that teachers play in children's learning, and in maintaining and improving national education systems. The recommendations focus upon investing in evidence-based education system strengthening; supporting teachers to be the best professionals they can be; and engaging teachers in policy making.

*Read the report **here**.*

CAPACITY BUILDING & EVENTS

[WEBINAR] Developing Measurement Tools for the EiE Sector

INEE and the UNHCR Humanitarian Education Accelerator (HEA) are organizing a webinar on **developing and using measurement tools** in EiE.

The webinar will highlight the importance of measurement tools to inform programming as well as provide a space for researchers and practitioners to reflect on the measurement tool development process. Presentations will include:

- The process of developing a measurement tool for School Climate - **Noora El Wer**, M&E Specialist, Madrasati Initiative;
- An overview of the Emergency Developmental Assets Profile (EmDAP) tool - **Justin Roskopf**, Manager of Survey Services & Measurement Strategy, Search Institute;
- The role of measurement within the UNHCR Humanitarian Education Accelerator - **Fareeda Miah**, Project Coordinator, UNHCR Humanitarian Education Accelerator.

[Webinar] Measurement for what?

Developing measurement tools for the EiE sector

9 June 2022, 1-2pm UTC

To register, click the link below:

https://rescue.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_S03De-SeSF2sZynNK6hOOg

N.B. This web event will be conducted in English with closed captioning in English

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