

PROTECT EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES NOW!

#PROTECTEINOW!

INCLUSIVE PLANNING, SUSTAINABLE FUNDING, REALIZED RIGHTS

A call to action to ensure transformative, inclusive, equitable and quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all in emergency contexts

The “**Protect education in emergencies now!**” campaign led by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) aims to provide a way to urgently address the need for transformative, inclusive and equitable quality education, and lifelong learning opportunities for all in emergency contexts, especially children and young people.

The COVID-19 pandemic has added to other existing crises, increasingly complex, intertwined and multi-faceted, with many ending up being protracted and cyclical crises. This has a devastating impact on the right to education of millions of people, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized. Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 127 million primary and secondary school-age children and young people living in crisis-affected countries were out of school in 2019 (almost 50 % of the global out of school population).¹ According to UNICEF, more than 24 million children are projected to drop out of school due to COVID-19.² Despite this dire situation, education continues to be one of the most underfunded areas of humanitarian aid, receiving just 2,4 % of global humanitarian funding.

This is particularly alarming if we take into account that the realization of the right to education is linked to better lives for all people, not only in terms of knowledge and skills, but also as a safe space that is protective of individuals, communities, and the society as a whole. Moreover, the longer people live without education and are consistently exposed to socio-economic and political exclusion, the less likely they are to return to school. Therefore, education in emergencies must be a priority in the response to all types of crises.

This must change. This Call to Action provides a set of policy recommendations for Governments to achieve transformative, inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all in emergency contexts.

The **Protect education in emergencies now!** campaign calls on all actors involved in humanitarian responses, particularly States, to:

- 1. Protect and guarantee the fulfillment of the right to public quality education for all in emergency contexts, by providing empowering, safe, respectful, inclusive and accessible learning environments for all learners, regardless of legal status, age, gender, disability, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race or any other form of discrimination and exclusion.**

¹ Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). (2020). 20 Years of INEE: Achievements and Challenges in Education in Emergencies. New York, NY. <https://inee.org/resources/20-years-of-inee>

² UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore's remarks at a press conference on new updated guidance on school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19, UNICEF press release, 15 September 2020, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unicef-executive-director-henrietta-fores-remarks-press-conference-new-updated>

2. **Develop and implement crisis-sensitive national education plans and budgets, integrating emergency preparedness measures into education sector planning to ensure the fulfillment of the right to quality education for all, in all situations.**
3. **Listen to the voices of the people affected and the local actors (including local civil society, teacher organizations, children and youth groups, parents and communities), acknowledge their crucial role in the response and ensure their meaningful participation from the early stages of the design, planning and implementation of the education in emergencies responses, to sustainably strengthen the crisis-resilience of national education systems.**
4. **Ensure sufficient, sustainable and predictable funding for education in emergencies, by allocating at least 10% of humanitarian funding to education, including by meaningfully supporting the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) replenishment process, in order to reach its funding target of at least \$1 billion for the period 2023-2026.**
5. **Promote equitable and sustainable inclusion in national education systems for refugees, asylum seekers, returnees, stateless and internally displaced persons by supporting host countries to strengthen their national education systems and make them more inclusive and transformative.**
6. **Ensure that girls and women have equal opportunities to fulfill their right to education in emergency contexts and apply a gender perspective in the planning, budgeting and implementation of emergency response plans.**
7. **Ensure that learners with disabilities have equal opportunities to fulfill their right to education in emergency contexts and apply an inclusive education perspective in the planning, budgeting, and implementation of emergency response plans; including collecting disaggregated data which will provide a better understanding of the needs of learners with disabilities and help to make future implementation decisions that are inclusive for all.**
8. **Ensure the availability of adequately trained teachers in emergency contexts, by improving their remuneration, incentives and support.**
9. **Endorse and implement the Safe Schools Declaration and ensure that all learners and educators can learn and teach in safety.**
10. **Promote transformative education, ensure that education promotes peace and social cohesion, and incorporate psychosocial support and social and emotional learning approaches into education responses.**

Please see [here](#) an extended version of this document, with a set of more specific recommendations for each point here.