



Plan International UK

# LEFT OUT, LEFT BEHIND

Adolescent girls' secondary education in crises

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Cover photo: Susan in her classroom at her school in Juba. © *Plan International*

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# FOREWORD

When conflict or disaster strikes, everyone caught up has their life torn apart. However, due to their age and gender adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable. They are more likely to be married before the age of 18 than to finish school. They're at risk of exploitation, gender-based violence and early pregnancy. And there's a two in three chance they won't even start secondary school.

Education can reverse that narrative. Critically, this mustn't be just primary but a full 12 years of education. Education offers adolescent girls a safe space to learn and develop the skills to thrive and contribute towards the peaceful recovery of their communities. Secondary education also provides an entry point for girls to access health services including mental health support, and information about staying safe during natural disasters.

In 2015, world leaders launched the Sustainable Development Goals. They promised to make sure every young person completed a good quality education by 2030. But the world is way off track to achieve this goal.

In times of crisis girls and boys want to be able to go to school, but too often their dream remains just that. As this report shows, 13 million girls are currently out of school as a direct result of humanitarian crises. That's the equivalent of three girls for every girl in school here in the UK. While the exact nature and causes of crises vary, the report's conclusion remains the same: for adolescent girls affected by humanitarian crisis, secondary education isn't a 'nice to have'; it is a lifeline.

While the situation for adolescent girls in crises is still critical there are signs of progress. The SDGs are an important framework that has galvanised action. In 2016 the Education Cannot Wait fund, which delivers life-changing education for girls and boys living in humanitarian crises, was established and continues to receive strong support including from the UK Government.

But, as the findings of this report show, it's time for governments and the international community to take much bolder action to deliver on their SDG commitments.

Right now, millions of girls are being left behind. Without committed political leadership, increased resourcing and targeted action, adolescent girls' chances of achieving 12 years of education will be lost forever. We all can and must do more to deliver for the world's most vulnerable girls. Their right is our obligation.

**Yasmine Sherif**  
Director of Education  
Cannot Wait (ECW)

**Stephen Twigg**  
Member of UK Parliament  
and Chair of the International  
Development Committee

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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<b>CAR</b>	Central African Republic
<b>CSSF</b>	Comprehensive School Safety Framework
<b>DHS</b>	Demographic and Health Surveys
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo
<b>DPRK</b>	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
<b>EMIS</b>	Education Management Information Systems
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GPE</b>	Global Partnership for Education
<b>HAC</b>	Humanitarian Action for Children
<b>IDP</b>	Internally displaced person
<b>LCB</b>	Lake Chad Basin
<b>MICS</b>	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
<b>ODA</b>	Official development assistance
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SRGBV</b>	School-related gender-based violence
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UN OCHA</b>	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
<b>WASH</b>	Water, sanitation and hygiene

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16-year-old Zbiba,  
wants to be an  
engineer in the future



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 – Quality Education aims to: ‘ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’ by 2030.<sup>1</sup> This goal has been bolstered by additional political commitments, including by Commonwealth and G7 leaders who have pledged to ‘Leave No Girl Behind’ in this effort.

Receiving 12 years of quality education is critical for adolescent girls and boys. However, humanitarian crises are placing this in jeopardy and adolescent girls are being left out, and left behind – particularly at upper secondary level.<sup>2</sup>

## **At current rates of progress, SDG 4 will be spectacularly missed.**

This report aims to understand more about the intersection between humanitarian crises, gender, age and education, paying close attention to gaps in secondary education. Where data permits, we explore the impact that humanitarian crises have on adolescent girls’ educational attainment, how this contrasts to that of adolescent boys, and how results differ between geographies.

Adolescence – which runs from age 10 to age 19 – is a critical time in a girl’s development. It is a time when different expectations about appropriate behaviour often intensify and gender identities become stronger. During this time – the period when a girl would be transitioning to lower secondary and then on to upper secondary education – domestic and reproductive roles too often begin to dominate their lives at the expense of learning.

Adolescent girls face challenges unique to their age and gender that are different to those faced by adult women and adolescent boys. Harmful social norms that devalue their education, school-related gender-based violence (GBV) and other forms of GBV in the home or the community, early marriage and pregnancy are all major obstacles to learning that are amplified in times of humanitarian crisis. Heightened insecurity, the breakdown of social support networks and cultural structures can exacerbate gender inequality, compounding the challenges faced by boys and girls.

In this context, the ability of girls and boys to continue their education – particularly at secondary level – often comes under strain. This is despite the fact that, when asked, girls and boys consistently prioritise education during and after a humanitarian crisis. Education provides them with a sense of normality, safety and protection, and hope for the future.

However, the number of humanitarian crises continues to grow, and in increasingly protracted ways. The number of forcibly displaced people – 73.5 million<sup>3</sup> – is the highest since the end of the Second World War. Climate change – a growing driver of fragility – is expected to force the internal displacement of 140 million people by 2050.<sup>4</sup> Governments and the humanitarian system are struggling to respond to this demand. **This report shows that in 2018:**<sup>5</sup>

- 14 million children were out of secondary school directly because of humanitarian crises: 7.7 million – or 54 per cent – were girls
- 44 million girls (52 per cent of the total) were out of secondary school in crisis-affected countries – two-thirds of the population of the UK.

Climate change is set to intensify this challenge.<sup>6</sup>

While some progress has been made to improve girls' and boys' access to education during humanitarian crises, staggering gaps remain. This is particularly true at secondary level, for adolescent girls and for refugees:

This report reveals alarming new data on adolescent girls' education in crisis-affected countries, for secondary education in particular. Put simply, adolescent girls are being left behind.

## IF CURRENT TRENDS CONTINUE, BY 2030:<sup>9</sup>

# ONLY 1 IN 4

adolescent refugees makes it to secondary school and for every 10 refugee boys in secondary education, there are fewer than seven girls<sup>7</sup>



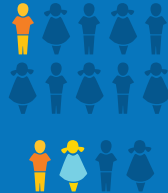
# ONLY 1 IN 3 GIRLS

in crisis-affected countries will have completed secondary school



# 1 IN 10

refugee adolescents in low-income countries enrol in secondary school, compared to one in two at primary level<sup>8</sup>



# 1 IN 5 GIRLS

in crisis-affected countries will still not be able to read a simple sentence



# 8.5 YEARS

Girls in crisis-affected countries will receive on average just 8.5 years of education in their lifetime





**The report also uncovers significant inequalities between crises around the world, between regions within countries, and between boys and girls:**

- Girls in crisis-affected countries lag behind boys across all indicators studied in the report.
- Children in crisis-affected regions consistently perform worse than children in regions of the same countries not affected by humanitarian crises. Of the nine countries we analysed at a sub-national level, the net secondary school enrolment rate for girls in crisis-affected regions was 16 per cent compared with 29 per cent in non-crisis-affected regions.
- In crisis-affected countries, girls are half as likely to enrol in secondary school compared to the global average.
- Refugee girls are half as likely to enrol at secondary level when compared with their male peers.
- As children move through education in crisis-affected countries, the gap between boys and girls in access to education widens: there are 9.4 per cent more girls than boys not in upper secondary school, compared with only 1.8 per cent more at primary level.

**The report also shows that national governments and international donors are not spending enough, or in the right places, to turn the tide on these trends:**

- Only 13 per cent of crisis-affected countries are reaching the target of spending 20 per cent of government expenditure on education.
- At just 2.1 per cent in 2017, the share of total humanitarian aid spent on education has not changed for 15 years in spite of significantly increased need.<sup>10</sup>
- Less than half (43 per cent) of the US\$875 million requested for education in humanitarian appeals was funded in 2018.<sup>11</sup>
- Humanitarian financing gaps remain widest for ‘forgotten crises’ that fail to capture media and political attention in donor countries. The humanitarian financing gaps for the Lake Chad Basin and Sahel crises are 20 per cent higher than the global average.

Children in ‘forgotten crises’ are at risk of being left behind. For example, girls living in the Lake Chad Basin receive, on average, about two years of schooling in their lifetime, just over three times less than the average across Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria



We propose a five-part plan to ensure no girl is left behind, underpinned by a call to involve adolescent girls, listen to their concerns and ideas, and amplify their voices at all stages of programme, policy and political decision making.

### 1 Bold political leadership



The pledge to Leave No Girl Behind cannot be delivered without bold political leadership at the international level and in countries affected by humanitarian crises.

### 2 Fairer financing



National governments should adopt the principle of 'progressive universalism' in their budgetary allocations.

### 3 Gender-responsive national and global systems



National education systems to be gender-responsive and address the complex and distinct challenges faced by different genders.

### 4 Targeted interventions to Leave No Girl Behind in crises



Address the barriers to education faced by adolescent girls in humanitarian crises.

### 5 Listen to and involve adolescent girls



Provide safe spaces for adolescent girls to participate in decisions about their education, to exercise their agency, and make their voices heard.

**Bold political leadership.** At a time when countries are closing their doors to refugees, schools are indiscriminately bombed in conflict, and girls are denied education because they are too scared to return to school due to insecurity and exposure to attacks, the pledge to Leave No Girl Behind cannot be delivered without bold political leadership. The year ahead presents several opportune moments for world leaders to act on their promise to ensure 12 years of quality education for all girls. The UN High-Level Political Forum, the Global Refugee Forum and the French G7 Presidency all provide platforms for governments, donors and other stakeholders to make ambitious commitments to Leave No Girl Behind.

**Fairer financing.** National governments should adopt the principle of ‘progressive universalism’ in their budgetary allocations – increasing overall spending for education but targeting the increase towards the most marginalised learners, such as adolescent girls in regions affected by humanitarian crises. International actors should increase funding and ensure a more equitable, needs-based distribution of development and humanitarian aid. This should include gradually increasing the financing available for secondary education in humanitarian crises but also prioritising ‘forgotten crises’ across sub-Saharan Africa, where needs are greatest.

**Gender-responsive national and global systems.** The only sustainable way to ensure all children receive quality education is to build resilient national and global systems capable of ensuring that girls and boys, women and men, not only gain access to and complete a quality education but are empowered equally in and through education. Principally this will require national education systems to be gender-responsive and to address the complex challenges faced by different genders, but also to be resilient, prepared for, and able to respond to, humanitarian crises. It also means a more coordinated international aid architecture that can better respond to the increasingly complex and protracted nature of humanitarian crises in the 21st century, as well as address the differing impacts that crises have on boys, girls, women, and men, particularly those living with a disability or from ethnic or other minority groups.

**Targeted interventions to Leave No Girl Behind in crises.** Sustainable systems take time to build. For the 13 million girls out of school because of humanitarian crises, this will likely be too late. Humanitarian actors should act immediately to improve the way we collectively address the barriers to education faced by adolescent girls in humanitarian crises. Efforts must be stepped up to support adolescent girls caught in crises to transition from primary to secondary school and to complete 12 years of quality education.

**Listen to and involve adolescent girls.** Take steps to responsibly and meaningfully consult with children and youth throughout the policy and programme cycle. This could be most effectively achieved by providing safe spaces for adolescent girls to participate in decisions about their education, to exercise their agency, and make their voices heard.

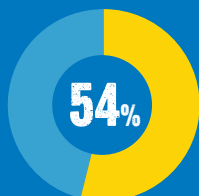
Girl learning at a  
school supported by  
Plan International in  
Yaoundé, Cameroon



# THE STORY IN NUMBERS

## 24 MILLION

children are out of school because of humanitarian crises: 54% – or 13 million – are girls



## ONLY 1 IN 3 GIRLS

in crisis-affected countries enrol in secondary school



## FEWER THAN 1 IN 10

girls in the Lake Chad Basin complete secondary school



## ONLY 1 IN 4 GIRLS

in crisis-affected countries complete secondary school



## ONLY 1 IN 8

crisis-affected countries are spending the required amount on education



## BY 2030



Only 1 in 3 girls in crisis-affected countries will have completed upper secondary school

1 in 5 girls in crisis-affected countries will still not be able to read a simple sentence



Girls in the Sahel region will still only complete **4 years of education** in their lifetime

Girl reading book at temporary camp for people displaced by violence in Niger's Diffa region



# SECTION 1

## INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report aims to understand more about the intersection between humanitarian crises, gender and education, paying close attention to gaps in secondary education.

Using several SDG 4 indicators relevant to adolescence and youth,<sup>12</sup> we look at progress towards SDG 4 for adolescent girls in countries affected by humanitarian crises. Where data permits, we explore the impact that crises have on adolescent girls' educational attainment, how this contrasts to adolescent boys, and how results differ between geographies.

- **Section 1** provides context and rationale for the report before outlining the methodology.
- **Section 2** explores global, regional, national and sub-national data to understand how adolescent girls affected by humanitarian crises are performing against SDG 4 indicators.
- **Section 3** looks at some of the most promising policies and programmatic solutions to get adolescent girls in crisis contexts in school and learning.
- **Section 4** outlines an ambitious five-part plan for governments, donors, multilaterals, NGOs, the private sector and others. We call for:
  - Bold political leadership
  - Fairer financing
  - Gender-responsive national and global systems
  - Targeted interventions to Leave No Girl Behind in crises
  - Listen to and involve adolescent girls.

# HUMANITARIAN CRISES, GIRLS' EDUCATION AND AGENDA 2030

## Humanitarian crises are changing the world we live in.

According to the United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres, “We live in dangerous times, in an unpredictable world.”<sup>13</sup> An unprecedented 131.7 million people need humanitarian assistance.<sup>14</sup>

The number of forcibly displaced people is the highest since the end of the Second World War. In 2018, 73.5 million people<sup>15</sup> – including 25.6 million refugees and 41.3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) – were forcibly displaced by conflict and violence, up from 59.5 million in 2014.<sup>16</sup>

In 2017, disasters caused by environmental hazards affected over 95 million people, killing an additional 10,000<sup>17</sup> and in 2018 over 17 million were displaced by natural disasters.<sup>18</sup> Food insecurity is rising<sup>19</sup> and climate change is expected to drive the internal displacement of 140 million people by 2050.<sup>20</sup>

Humanitarian crises are increasingly protracted. The average humanitarian crisis

now lasts more than nine years, an increase from 5.2 years in 2014.<sup>21</sup> The average length of humanitarian appeals increased from four years in 2005 to seven years in 2017.<sup>22</sup>

The nature and extent of humanitarian crises are, currently, creating a vicious cycle that is jeopardising the success of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>23</sup> The impacts of crises are having devastating and immediate bearing on the rights of those affected. Simultaneously, by not delivering the Sustainable Development Goals,<sup>24</sup> the root causes of crises fail to be addressed, perpetuating cycles of underdevelopment and instability in the world's most fragile contexts.

Achieving SDG 4 – Quality Education – is critical in and of itself, but also for the enabling effect that education can play in contributing towards the success of the SDGs and tackling the root causes of crises (see infographic p20). Reaching SDG 4 will strengthen countries' resilience and ability to respond to crises, as well as equip populations with the skills needed to build inclusive, peaceful societies.

## THE CASE FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION IN CRISES

Adolescence is a critical time in a girl's development – a time when different expectations about appropriate behaviour often intensify and gender identities become stronger. During this time – the period when a girl would be transitioning to lower secondary and then on to upper secondary education – domestic and reproductive roles too often begin to dominate their lives at the expense of learning. These norms and expectations are amplified in times of crisis.

Denying a girl an education limits her life choices and her ability to make informed and positive choices about her health and wellbeing. This includes her ability to have more autonomy in choosing a partner and to make free and informed decisions about marriage and sexual and reproductive health. It affects her status, her earning power and her relationships, and makes the world a poorer place economically.

As they reach adolescence in particular, girls and young women need to be empowered to achieve their potential, and quality learning for life is at the heart of this. Education is a fundamental human right enshrined in international law, an enabler of other rights. It should not be denied because of a crisis.



## **Humanitarian crises exacerbate gender inequality and impact adolescent girls in unique ways.**

Humanitarian crises affect women, men, girls and boys in radically different ways. Heightened insecurity, the breakdown of social support networks and cultural structures can exacerbate gender inequality. Crises can pose a fundamental threat to the ability of girls and women to fulfil their rights.

Adolescent girls face challenges unique to their age and gender that are different to those faced by adult women and adolescent boys. They are often counted among children, youth or women. Their specific needs are overlooked and the complex and interrelated challenges they face are neglected.

Furthermore, the crisis-related barriers faced by girls can deny them the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills and competencies for civic and political engagement to enable an active contribution to peacebuilding. They are therefore not equipped to harness a unique window of social upheaval and transition to set new precedents for gender equality.

## **Humanitarian crises are placing huge strain on the ability of governments and the multilateral system to provide quality education to children and young people.**

The increased complexity and intensity of crises is placing huge strain on the ability of governments and the multilateral system to provide quality education to children and young people affected by crises. In 2017, low- and middle-income countries hosted 89 per cent of the world's school-aged refugees.<sup>25</sup> In 2016, of the world's top 10 largest IDP hosting states, eight were defined as fragile by the OECD.<sup>26</sup>

Most countries affected by conflict, disaster or an influx of refugees already have significant challenges with their education system before a crisis strikes. Hundreds of millions of young people in low- and lower-middle income countries leave school unable to read, write or do basic mathematics. Across the world's least developed countries, only 21 per cent of young people complete secondary school.<sup>27</sup>

Compounding these challenges is a humanitarian system that has long been ill-equipped to provide quality education. For decades, education has been overlooked and underfunded within the humanitarian system. While this is beginning to change, enormous gaps remain.

## **During and after humanitarian crises, adolescent girls face barriers to education unique to their age and gender.**

In situations of conflict, disaster and displacement, boys and girls face numerous barriers to education. These can be a direct result of the crisis, the impact the crisis has on existing inequalities, or, in many contexts, simply that the quality of education is already so poor, and often inaccessible.

Adolescent boys are often forced out of school to work, fight or assume family roles beyond their age. For adolescent girls, security concerns – including targeted attacks and exposure to gender-based violence, early marriage and pregnancy<sup>28</sup> – menstruation-related challenges, reduced availability of sexual and reproductive health and rights services, and harmful social norms that devalue girls' education all prevent girls from getting to school and learning.

# BARRIERS TO EDUCATION FACED BY BOYS AND GIRLS DURING AND AFTER HUMANITARIAN CRISES

## Girls

**Crises increase the prevalence of early marriage and early pregnancy** (and associated discriminatory re-entry policies for young mothers<sup>29</sup>), **which keep girls out of school.** During protracted conflicts, the heightened risk of sexual violence and destruction of livelihoods often forces parents to view marriage as the most secure and stable future for their daughters and therefore girls are taken out of school.<sup>30</sup>

**Crises increase the opportunity cost of educating girls, with scarce resources often allocated to boys' education.** In the aftermath of a disaster, families often depend on children, particularly adolescent girls, for household income and to do chores.<sup>31</sup>

Menstruation challenges such as lack of safe materials and stigma prevent girls from attending and feeling safe in school. Humanitarian crises can also lead to the **destruction of sanitation facilities, resulting in low attendance and high drop-out rates for adolescent girls who are menstruating.**

## Girls and boys

**Reduced availability of qualified teachers:** Lack of female teachers may make girls reluctant or unwilling to attend school, or their families to send them, while fewer male teachers means a lack of role models for boys and they may be less motivated to attend.

**Conflicts result in targeted attacks on girls and boys in and around school.** Attacks on schools increased 17-fold between 2000 and 2014, and girls' schools were targeted three times more than boys' schools.<sup>33,34</sup>

In protracted conflicts, **displacement** (and related distance to school and specific security concerns for girls), **reduced availability of qualified teachers and female teachers, destruction of school infrastructure, the use of schools for military purposes, or the deliberate targeting of schools,** all have the potential to deny girls and boys an education for several years. Protracted conflicts can also affect long-term ability to access education because of age, psychosocial well-being, and reintegration challenges.

## Boys

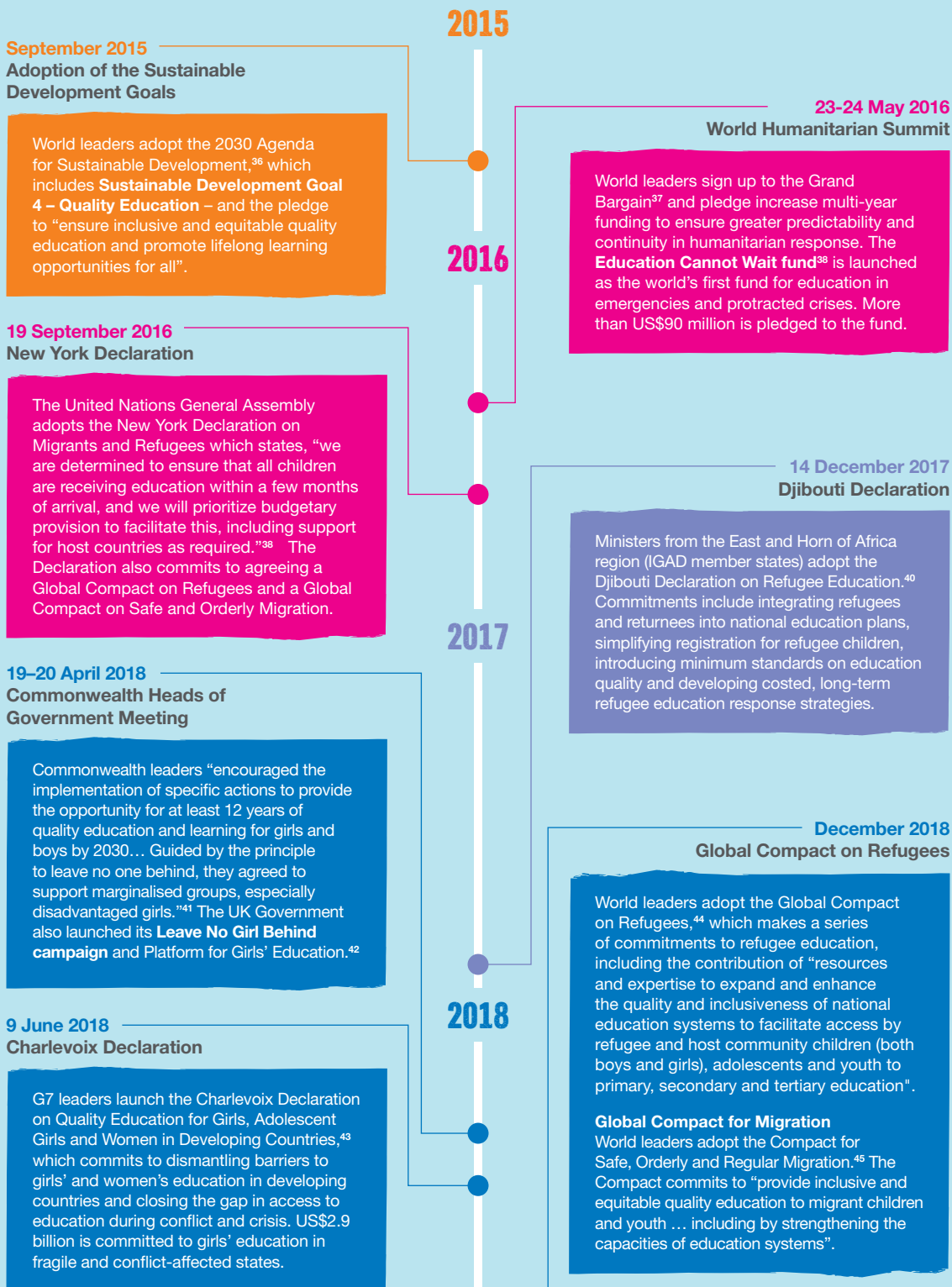
Boys can also be constrained by social norms such as traditional notions of masculinity including serving as provider and protector for the household. These types of expectations often become unattainable in crisis situations and can lead men and boys to adopt alternate coping strategies. Challenges that boys face when education options are low quality or not relevant to their lives can make them more vulnerable to negative socioeconomic coping strategies including crime and violence and can contribute to undermining peace and stability.<sup>32</sup>

Increased poverty, food insecurity and loss of income force boys to take on 'breadwinner' roles, causing them to be at higher risk of dropping out of school and into certain forms of child labour than boys in non-crisis situations.

Crises place girls and boys at greater risk of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) – both in and en route to and from school. Parents often keep girls out of school in crisis because of heightened security risks.

**Conflicts can lead to girls and boys being recruited into armed groups and exploited.** Around the world, thousands of boys and girls are recruited into government armed forces and rebel groups to serve as combatants, cooks, porters, or messengers, among other roles. Three-quarters of all child suicide bombers in the Lake Chad Basin crisis are girls.<sup>35</sup> Girls and boys also face a heightened risk of sexual violence in these situations.

In recent years, important steps have been taken to respond to the challenges outlined in this section. The humanitarian system is slowly beginning to recognise education as a life-saving, life-sustaining service. National governments, donors and the multilateral system are paying more attention to gender equality in education and what works for marginalised adolescent girls. This timeline outlines key moments that have helped shape this agenda and provides context for the rest of the report.



# 13 CLIMATE ACTION



## EDUCATION INCREASES CONCERN ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

A study of 29 countries found the percentage of people concerned about the environment increases with education;<sup>49</sup> 25% with less than secondary education, 37% with secondary education, 46% with tertiary education.

# 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



## EDUCATION DECREASES THE RISK OF WAR

If the secondary school enrolment rate is 10% higher than the average, the risk of war drops by 3%.<sup>48</sup>

# 14 LIFE BELOW WATER



# 15 LIFE ON LAND



# 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



# 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



# 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



# 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



# 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



# 4 QUALITY EDUCATION



# 1 NO POVERTY



# 2 ZERO HUNGER



# 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



# 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



## EDUCATION BOOSTS ECONOMIES

Women and girls could add up to \$30 trillion to the global economy if all girls completed secondary school.<sup>47</sup>

# 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



# 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



# 5 GENDER EQUALITY



## EDUCATION TACKLES VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Evidence from a WHO study in Bangladesh shows that a reduction of violence is possible when women receive education beyond secondary level.<sup>46</sup>



## Consulting with adolescent girls in emergencies

According to a review carried out by Save the Children across 17 different crises, which listened to the concerns of over 8,000 children, 99 per cent of children see education as a high priority.<sup>50</sup> This is certainly the case for girls and boys who participated in research conducted by Plan International and other child rights agencies in Sierra Leone (the Ebola crisis<sup>51</sup>), the Philippines (Typhoon Haiyan<sup>52</sup>), Nepal (three months<sup>53</sup> and one year<sup>54</sup> after the earthquake), and Bangladesh (the Rohingya crisis<sup>55</sup>).

The views of these children were sought in order for us to understand the immediate needs and priorities of children following an emergency. This is in line with the Core Humanitarian Standards,<sup>56</sup> which commit humanitarian actors to ensuring that people affected by a crisis receive assistance which is appropriate and relevant to their needs, and that they are able to participate in decisions that affect them. The voices of vulnerable and excluded girls and women should be heard not only because it is their right, but also to ensure that humanitarian interventions are able to be effectively tailored to meet their rights and needs.

However, research conducted by Plan International in South Sudan, Bangladesh, and the Lake Chad Basin found that, in general, adolescent girls are not consulted by the humanitarian community. They are not engaged in the design of and decision making regarding interventions in their communities. This was largely true even for interventions aimed at either women and girls or adolescent girls specifically.

Where girls are consulted, for example Rohingya girls in Bangladesh, this is often limited to their immediate needs. Rarely are their views sought on the design of programmes and on how best interventions could be tailored to meet their needs and those of their communities.

Adolescent girls everywhere express a passion for study and a disappointment that their current situation prevents them from attending school or gaining access to vocational training. In South Sudan, access to education (and specifically the payment of school fees), was prioritised by adolescent girls as second only to livelihoods and food security interventions. Rohingya girls overwhelmingly prioritised the ability to obtain an education, or livelihood and life skills classes, as their main focus.

Finally, adolescent girls in the Lake Chad Basin highlighted that they would like greater support from humanitarian actors in access to education, and the payment of school fees, as well as support for uniforms, books, and school materials. Some girls also highlighted the challenge of distance in attending school and spoke of the need for support for schools closer to them or for transport.

**Photo:** Young women learn how to use a digital camera during life skills training



## THE IMPACT OF GIRLS' EDUCATION IN CRISES

**Education is an entry point for critical child protection, health and psychosocial services in times of crisis.** For girls and boys who have been exposed to sexual exploitation, violence and other traumatic experiences, a safe school environment with strong social support from peers and trained teachers, can bring back a sense of normality and act as an important platform for psychosocial support, sexual and reproductive health services, and child protection.

**Education in a crisis promotes social cohesion and gives girls and boys the tools they need to solve problems without the use of violence, contributing to peacebuilding and stability.** Education can improve social cohesion and reduce stigma and intra-community tensions between refugees, IDPs and host communities.<sup>57</sup> Equal access to education for both male and female students will decrease the likelihood of violent conflict by as much as 37 per cent.<sup>58</sup>

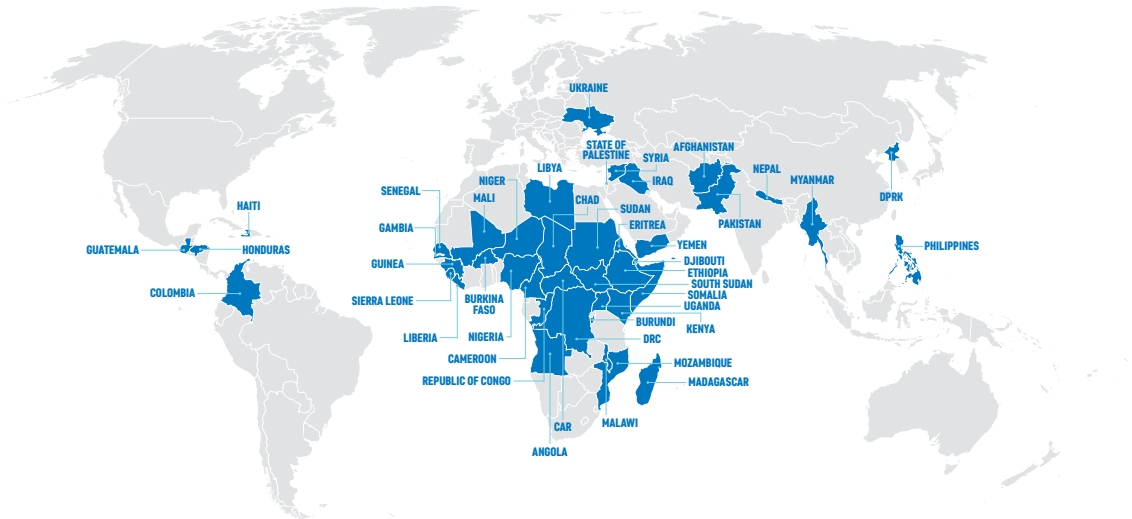
**Increasing adolescent girls' access to secondary school leads to more sustainable, prosperous and healthy societies.** If all women completed secondary education, 26 per cent, or 11.9 million, fewer children would suffer from stunting.<sup>59</sup> Women with secondary education who do not marry as children are more likely to use modern contraceptive methods and have agency over their sexual and reproductive health.<sup>60</sup> If every girl worldwide received 12 years of free, safe, quality education, women's lifetime productivity and earnings could increase by between US\$15 and US\$30 trillion globally, benefitting both them and their families, and wider society.<sup>61</sup>

**After a crisis, education can be a transformative tool for tackling gender inequality.** The upheaval experienced during violent conflict presents opportunities for the recovery to redress gender inequalities and set new precedents during post-conflict transition, especially as social structures are in flux. Gender-transformative interventions are a crucial prerequisite for building sustainable peace<sup>62</sup> and education offers an important entry point for this approach.

# METHODOLOGY

## Definitions used in the report

**Crisis-affected countries** Crisis-affected countries are defined as countries that have had Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeals<sup>63</sup> or UN-coordinated humanitarian appeals<sup>64</sup> in at least two of the last four years (2014-2018).



**Refugees** According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),<sup>65</sup> a “refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so.”

**Internally displaced person** According to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, IDPs are “persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.”<sup>66</sup>

**Asylum seeker** A person who has left their country of origin and formally applied for asylum in another country but whose application has not yet been concluded.

**Forcibly displaced** For the purposes of this report, we refer to ‘forcibly displaced’ as someone who is either a refugee, an IDP or an asylum seeker as defined above.

## Defining crisis-affected countries

To define crisis-affected countries, we developed a list of all countries that had UNICEF HAC appeals or UN-coordinated humanitarian appeals in at least two of the last

four years (2014-2018). For a sense check, these were compared with their positions in both the 2018 Fragile States Index and the 2018 United Nations Human Development Index (HDI).<sup>67</sup> This identified 44 crisis-affected countries as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1** Crisis-affected countries

	Last five years with humanitarian appeals	Fragile States Index position, countries in top 50 in pink (of 178 countries)	HDI position, countries in lowest 50 in pink (of 189 countries)
Afghanistan	5	9	168
Angola	4	33	147
Burkina Faso	5	45	183
Burundi	4	18	185
Cameroon	5	23	151
Central African Republic (CAR)	5	5	188
Chad	5	8	186
Colombia	2	71	90
Djibouti	5	42	172
Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)	5	28	N/A
Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	5	6	176
Eritrea	5	19	179
Ethiopia	5	15	173
The Gambia	3	43	174
Guatemala	2	59	127
Guinea	2	13	175
Haiti	5	12	168
Honduras	2	68	133
Iraq	5	11	120
Kenya	5	17	142
Liberia	2	30	181
Libya	4	25	108
Madagascar	3	54	161
Malawi	2	48	171
Mali	5	27	182
Mauritania	5	31	159
Mozambique	2	37	180
Myanmar	5	22	148
Nepal	2	39	149
Niger	5	21	189
Nigeria	5	14	157
Pakistan	2	20	150
Philippines	4	47	113
Republic of Congo	3	29	137
Senegal	5	62	164
Sierra Leone	2	35	184
Somalia	5	2	NA
South Sudan	5	1	187
State of Palestine	5	67*	119
Sudan	5	7	167
Syrian Arab Republic	5	4	155
Uganda	5	24	162
Ukraine	5	87	88
Yemen	5	3	178

\* This index covers Israel and the West Bank



## Sub-national analysis

Crises do not always affect a whole country and in many cases a crisis will be geographically concentrated. For some countries, household data permitted sub-national analysis, allowing our research to explore differences in education outcomes between crisis-affected and non-crisis-affected regions. Data availability differed depending on the education indicator. These countries are highlighted in blue in Table 1.

## Notable countries not included

Countries of note not included in the list of crisis-affected countries were those hosting large numbers of refugees such as Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iran. The main reasons for this choice were:

- the national education data and household survey data used to analyse education outcomes in crisis-affected countries rarely includes displaced people
- data on education outcomes for refugee populations used in this report is obtained from UNHCR – not including them in this list avoided double counting.

Other countries not included are those that only recently experienced severe crises, such as Venezuela. The reason for their exclusion was that the education data available for analysis will precede the relevant crisis period.

Nyaluak, 14, visits the child friendly space run by Plan International in the camp



## Analysing girls' education outcomes

Figure 1 outlines which data sources were used to analyse education outcomes for each population. For refugee populations, we obtained global data from UNHCR. Data was extremely limited at the global level. Data was available for net enrolment but not disaggregated by gender. The data was for primary (5-11 years) and secondary level (12-17 years). At the national level, data availability was stronger. We came across examples of national governments collecting gender and age-disaggregated data across a range of indicators and have used this data where available.

For the crisis-affected countries we used several data sources including the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) household survey data. Not all countries possessed relevant household survey data but for those that did, we were able to analyse education outcomes in more detail. The exact indicators analysed are listed in Figure 1.

To complement the quantitative data analysis, we utilised a range of different academic studies, reports, programmatic evaluations and other secondary data sources. This mixed methods approach allowed the report to go beyond trends in the data to understand more about the contextual challenges in different crises and therefore make more evidence-based recommendations.

**Figure 1** Data sources used to analyse education outcomes

### Data sources

- The UNESCO Institute for Statistics
- UNHCR refugee education data
- DHS and MICS household survey data
- UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) needs assessment data
- Literature review

### SDG4 indicators

- Out-of-school rates
- Out-of-school numbers
- Net enrolment rates
- Primary completion
- Transition from primary to secondary
- Lower secondary completion
- Upper secondary completion
- Mean years of schooling
- Never been to school
- Youth literacy
- Literacy
- Numeracy

## LIMITATIONS OF THIS REPORT AND AVAILABLE DATA

- Education data on IDPs does not exist at the global level and for this reason we were unable to include specific figures on the education of IDPs. While this was available at the national level for some crises, the research carried out for this report highlights the need to improve what we know about IDP education.
- Although we were able to obtain sub-national analysis for certain countries, the scope of this research did not permit that level of detail for all countries. Undertaking this research would allow for a more accurate understanding of educational attainment for children and young people living in crisis-affected areas.
- Data on learning outcomes is scarce, making it difficult to outline trends and analyse data in the ways we were able to for other indicators.
- There is a significant lack of humanitarian education programmes that specifically target adolescent girls, particularly at secondary level.
- Longitudinal data that tracks education outcomes before, during, and after crises is lacking. The household survey data used in this report is only collected every few years for each country.

Girl at school in Bidi Bidi settlement, Yumbe district, Uganda



Girls at school  
supported by Plan  
International in  
Sulawesi, Indonesia



## SECTION 2

# LEFT OUT, LEFT BEHIND: THE STATE OF GIRLS' EDUCATION IN CRISES

### THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE

**The world is dangerously off track in terms of ensuring all girls access secondary school and complete 12 years of quality education by 2030.**

**Data collected for this report shows that at current rates of progress, girls in crisis-affected countries would not routinely be getting the opportunity to complete secondary school until 2179, almost 150 years past the Agenda 2030 deadline.<sup>68</sup>**

- By 2030, only one in three girls in crisis-affected countries will have completed upper secondary school.<sup>69</sup>
- By 2030, one in five girls in crisis-affected countries will still not be able to read a simple sentence.<sup>70</sup>
- By 2030, girls in crisis-affected countries will receive on average just 8.5 years of education.<sup>71</sup>

On average, girls receive just 7.3 years of education in crisis-affected countries, compared with 13.5 years in North America and Europe.<sup>72</sup>

In regions affected by the ongoing crisis in the Lake Chad Basin, girls receive less than two years of education in their lifetime.<sup>73</sup>

**At a minimum, 13 million girls are out of school directly because of humanitarian crises – 7.7 million at secondary level.**

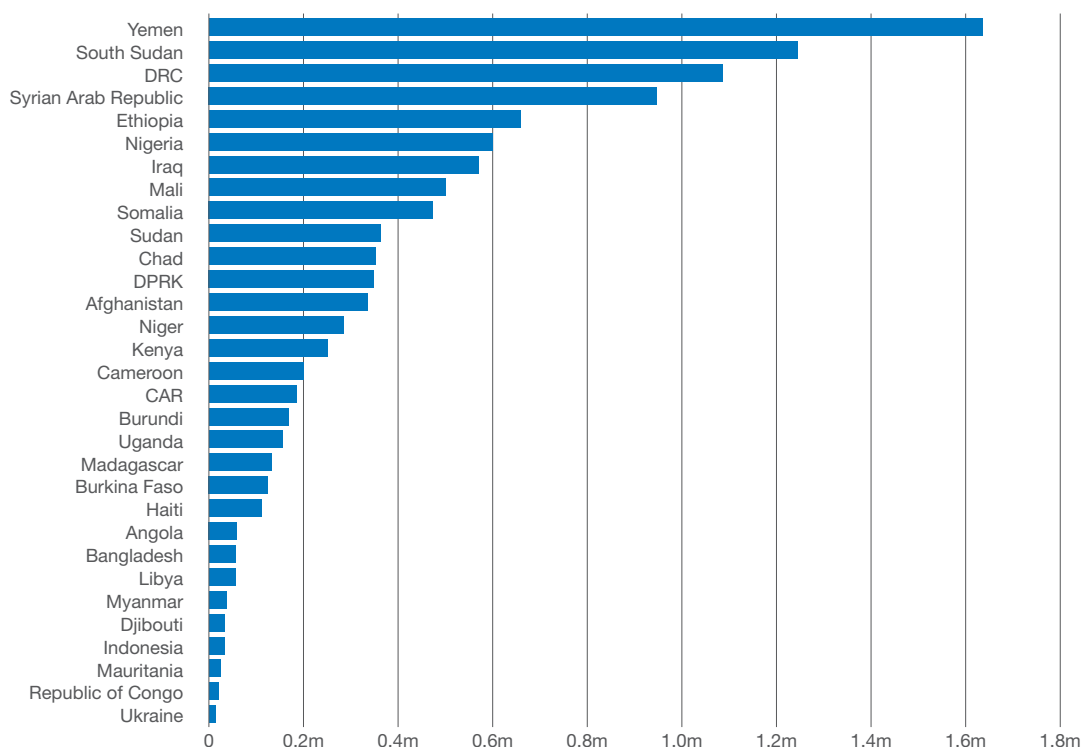
This means that, since April 2018, when the UK Government launched its Leave No Girl Behind campaign to ensure all girls receive a quality education by 2030, girls caught up in humanitarian crises have collectively missed out on 2.8 billion days of school.<sup>74</sup>

This report estimates that in 2018 there were 24 million children out of school because of humanitarian crises – 13 million girls and 11 million boys. At secondary education level, 14 million were out of school in total – 7.7 million (54 per cent) of them were adolescent girls.

## Calculating the number of girls that are out of school because of humanitarian crises

It is extremely difficult to calculate the number of girls and boys that are out of school directly or indirectly because of humanitarian crises. These figures in this report – which estimates that 24 million children are out of school due to crises – are likely to be a very conservative estimate. They were calculated by identifying how many school-aged children were in need of humanitarian assistance in 2018 – 50 million – and then applying an out-of-school rate in each country (or an average for crisis-affected countries if national data is not available) and adding to this population an extra percentage to reflect the increased out-of-school rates in crisis-affected regions of countries. We also included the estimated number of out-of-school refugees as noted by UNHCR in their 2018 Turn the Tide report.<sup>75</sup> A full methodology can be found in Annex 1.

**Figure 2** Girls out of school due to humanitarian crises, by country, 2018



### 44 million girls are out of secondary school in crisis-affected countries

128 million children and young people living in crisis-affected countries are out of school globally. This includes 67 million girls – 52 per cent of the total. At secondary level, there are 82 million adolescents and youth out of school in crisis-affected countries.<sup>76</sup>

The crisis-affected regions<sup>77</sup> in Nigeria and Pakistan alone are home to over 7 million out-of-school girls, just short of the total number of school-aged children – 8 million – enrolled in the UK state education system.<sup>78,79</sup>

# INEQUALITIES WITHIN EDUCATION

## Between countries

Girls living in crisis-affected countries are half as likely to enrol in secondary school as the global average.

Across the 44 crisis-affected countries identified for this report, the average net enrolment rate for girls in secondary school was 32.9 per cent.<sup>80</sup> Comparing this to the global average of 65 per cent,<sup>81</sup> we can see that girls living in crisis-affected countries are half as likely to enrol in secondary school as the global average. The gap is most notable at upper secondary level where only one in four girls enrol in education.<sup>82</sup>

Refugees are more than 3.5 times less likely to be enrolled in secondary school than the global average.

In 2017, 61 per cent of refugee children were enrolled in primary school, compared to 92 per cent globally. At secondary level the figure was 23 per cent, compared with a global rate of 84 per cent.<sup>83</sup>

**1 IN 10** refugee adolescents in low-income countries enrol in secondary school, compared to one in two at primary level<sup>84</sup>


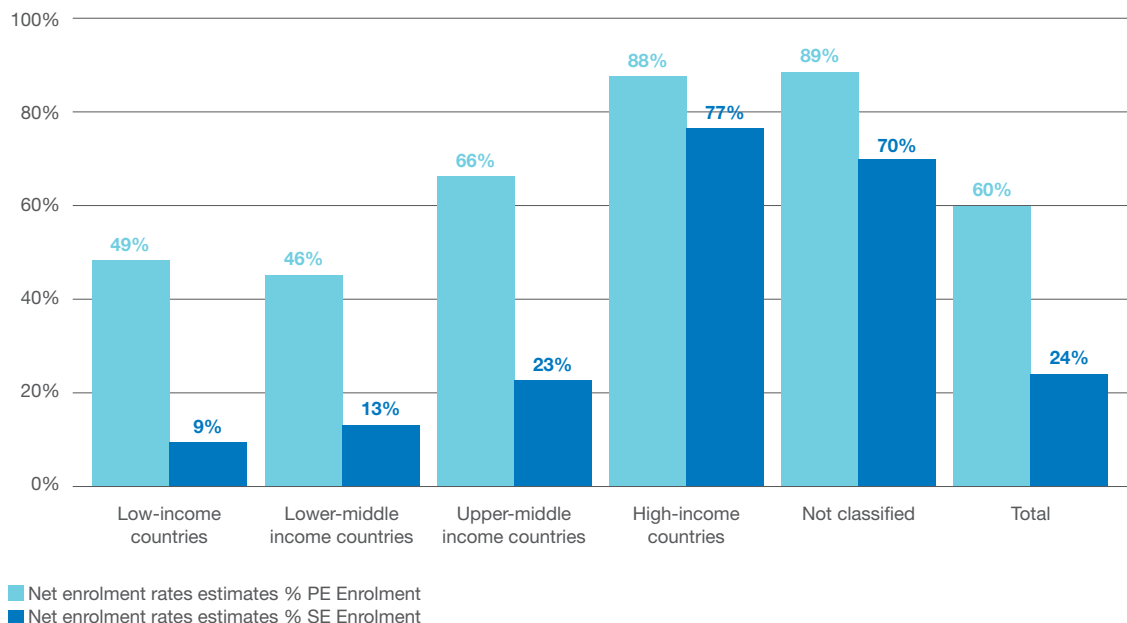


Figure 3 Refugee net enrolment rates, 2016

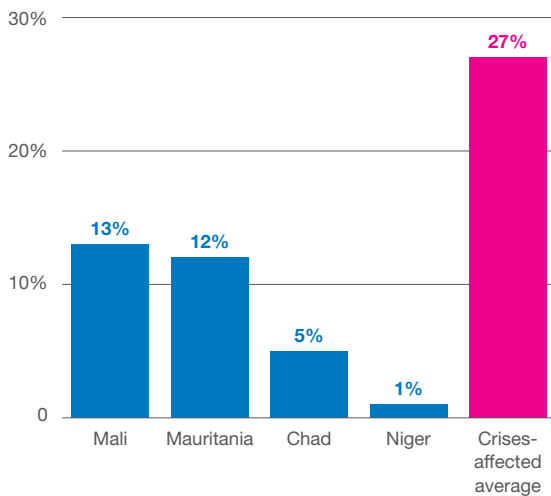


## The Sahel is the worst region on earth to be an adolescent girl seeking 12 years of quality education

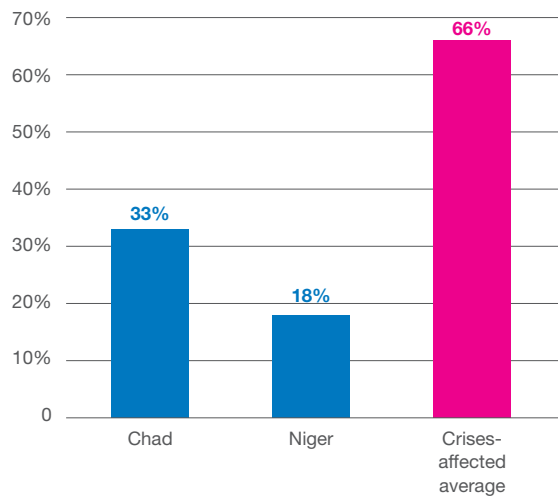
Across almost all the education indicators studied, the Sahel countries of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger consistently ranked among the worst where data was available. The figures below show how countries in the Sahel compared to the average across the 44 countries being studied.

**A girl in Niger is 20 times more likely to become a teenage mother than she is to complete secondary school<sup>85</sup>**

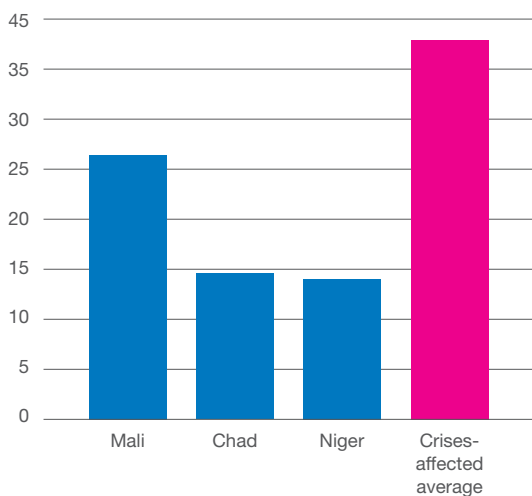
**Figure 4** Upper secondary completion rate in the Sahel



**Figure 5** Youth literacy rate in the Sahel



**Figure 6** Net\* secondary attendance in the Sahel



Projections developed for this report show that, at current rates of progress, girls across the Sahel countries will, on average, only receive 4.2 years of education<sup>86</sup> by 2030. With new violence breaking out across the region (see Sahel case study, p44), progress is likely to slow or reverse in many regions, perpetuating cycles of poverty and instability, as well as creating further inequalities between regions.

\*'Net' means the share of children of official secondary age that are enrolled in secondary school.



## Between boys and girls

**In crisis-affected countries, the gap between the male and female out-of-school rate widens as children move through education .**

Many of the barriers to education that girls face either begin or intensify as girls move into and develop through adolescence. Out-of-school data from the crisis-affected countries shows that gender inequality in access widens as children progress through levels of education. At primary level, the female out-of-school rate is 1.8 percentage points higher than the rate for boys. At lower secondary level this climbs to 4.6, before reaching 9.4 at upper secondary level.<sup>87</sup>

**On average, girls' outcomes are worse than boys' across all indicators that were analysed through the household survey data.**

Figure 7 shows the percentage point differences between girls and boys for several of the indicators we analysed. For 'mean years of education', girls in crisis-affected countries complete roughly one year less education than boys in their lifetime.<sup>88</sup>

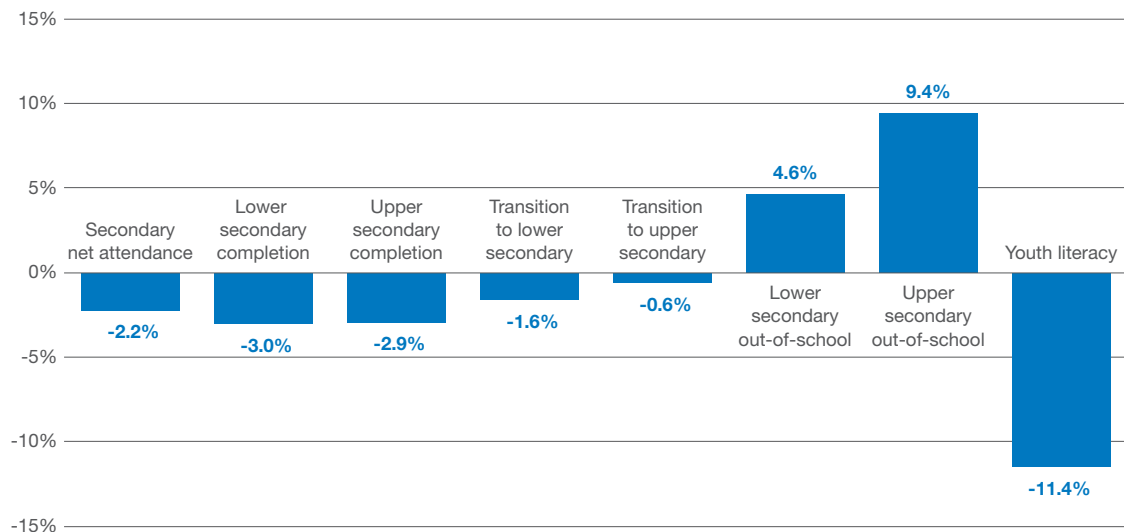
**Refugee girls at secondary level are only half as likely to enrol as their male peers**

In the three largest refugee-hosting countries in Africa – Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya – refugee girls are half as likely to enrol in secondary school as boys.<sup>89</sup> In Kenya and Ethiopia, there are four girls for every 10 boys enrolled in secondary education.<sup>90</sup> The latest global estimates suggest that for every 10 refugee boys in secondary school, there are fewer than seven refugee girls.<sup>91</sup>

**Girls and boys living with disabilities are at an even greater disadvantage.**

Worldwide, one in every 10 children has a disability.<sup>92</sup> The proportion of girls and boys living with a disability is even higher in areas with armed conflict or disasters. As a result, while on average more than half of all school-aged children with disabilities do not go to school,<sup>93</sup> this figure is likely to be even higher in crisis-affected areas.

**Figure 7** Percentage point difference between girls and boys across a range of education indicators in 44 crisis-affected countries



## Within countries

### Girls in crisis-affected regions of countries lag behind their counterparts living in regions that are not affected by crises.

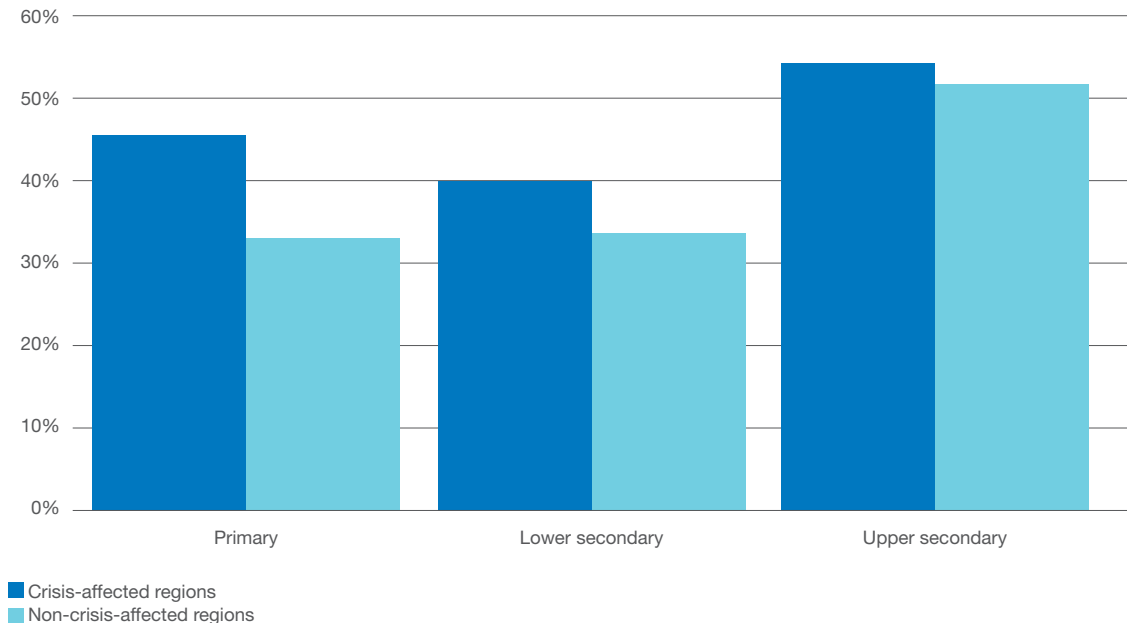
Data collected for this report shows that in countries affected by crisis, girls in the crisis-affected regions are, on average, more likely to be out of school than their peers in other regions of the same country (see Figure 8). In Nigeria, for example, a girl living in the South East region was three times more likely to be in upper secondary school than a girl in the crisis-affected North East.<sup>94</sup>

Even when girls are enrolled in secondary school, their attendance is likely to be limited. The net secondary school attendance rate for girls in crisis-affected regions of seven countries (Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Pakistan) was 16 per cent compared with 29 per cent in non-crisis-affected regions of those countries.<sup>95,96</sup>

Girls in crisis-affected regions only complete 3.7 years of education, compared with 5.6 years in regions of the same countries which are not affected by crisis.<sup>97</sup> Similar gaps can also be seen in youth literacy rates, with averages of 27 per cent in crisis-affected regions versus 37 per cent in non-crisis-affected regions of the same countries.<sup>98</sup>

Refugee girls are also often less likely to enrol than their host community peers. According to UNESCO, the out-of-school rate for both girls and boys for upper secondary school in Lebanon is 33 per cent.<sup>99</sup> Yet it is estimated that 90 per cent of Syrian refugees do not access secondary school.<sup>100</sup> No Lost Generation note that it is at secondary level that a comparison between Syrian refugees and host community peers reveals the greatest gap.<sup>101</sup>

**Figure 8** Girls' out-of-school rates in crisis-affected versus non-crisis-affected regions of nine countries



## Data on learning outcomes for adolescents in crises is scarce and inconclusive.

Analysis by the OECD indicates that when provided with quality education, girls tend to outperform boys in literacy.<sup>102</sup> However, only four of the 44 crisis-affected countries identified had recent internationally comparable learning outcome data available for children in school. Only 16 countries had youth literacy rates for girls and boys in recent household surveys, highlighting a real lack of disaggregated data on learning for children in crisis-affected countries.

In every crisis-affected country with available household survey data on youth literacy rates, however, boys had higher youth literacy rates than girls. The average female literacy rate was 66 per cent across the crisis-affected countries, compared to 75 per cent for males. The inequality was starkest in Afghanistan, where the female youth literacy rate was 29 per cent, compared to the male youth literacy rate of 80 per cent.<sup>103</sup>

Household survey data from Pakistan showed that, despite girls outperforming boys in both literacy and numeracy at a national level, in the crisis-affected regions of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, boys performed better on both indicators.<sup>104</sup> These regions are not only blighted by insurgencies and conflict but are also highly patriarchal.<sup>105</sup>

However, in a study on the impact of war on Syrian children's learning outcomes, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) found that: "Girls frequently outperformed boys, and the differences are most striking in higher grades. A much larger percentage of 7th and 8th grade girls could read at grade 2 level than 7th and 8th grade boys."<sup>106</sup>

Very little data on learning outcomes for refugees was found, even less that could be disaggregated by gender. One good example was found in Uganda, however, thanks to a citizen-led learning assessment carried out by Uwezo in 2017.<sup>107</sup> Of students in grades 2 to 7 in host communities, 32.2 per cent of girls had reached full literacy and numeracy compared to 25.4 per cent of boys. The gap was narrower for refugees, although at lower overall levels, with 21.8 per cent of refugee girls and 20.3 per cent of refugee boys reaching full literacy and numeracy.<sup>108</sup>

This data shows that, consistent with the overall OECD findings on literacy, where girls have made it into school in humanitarian contexts – which is the big challenge – they have outperformed boys.

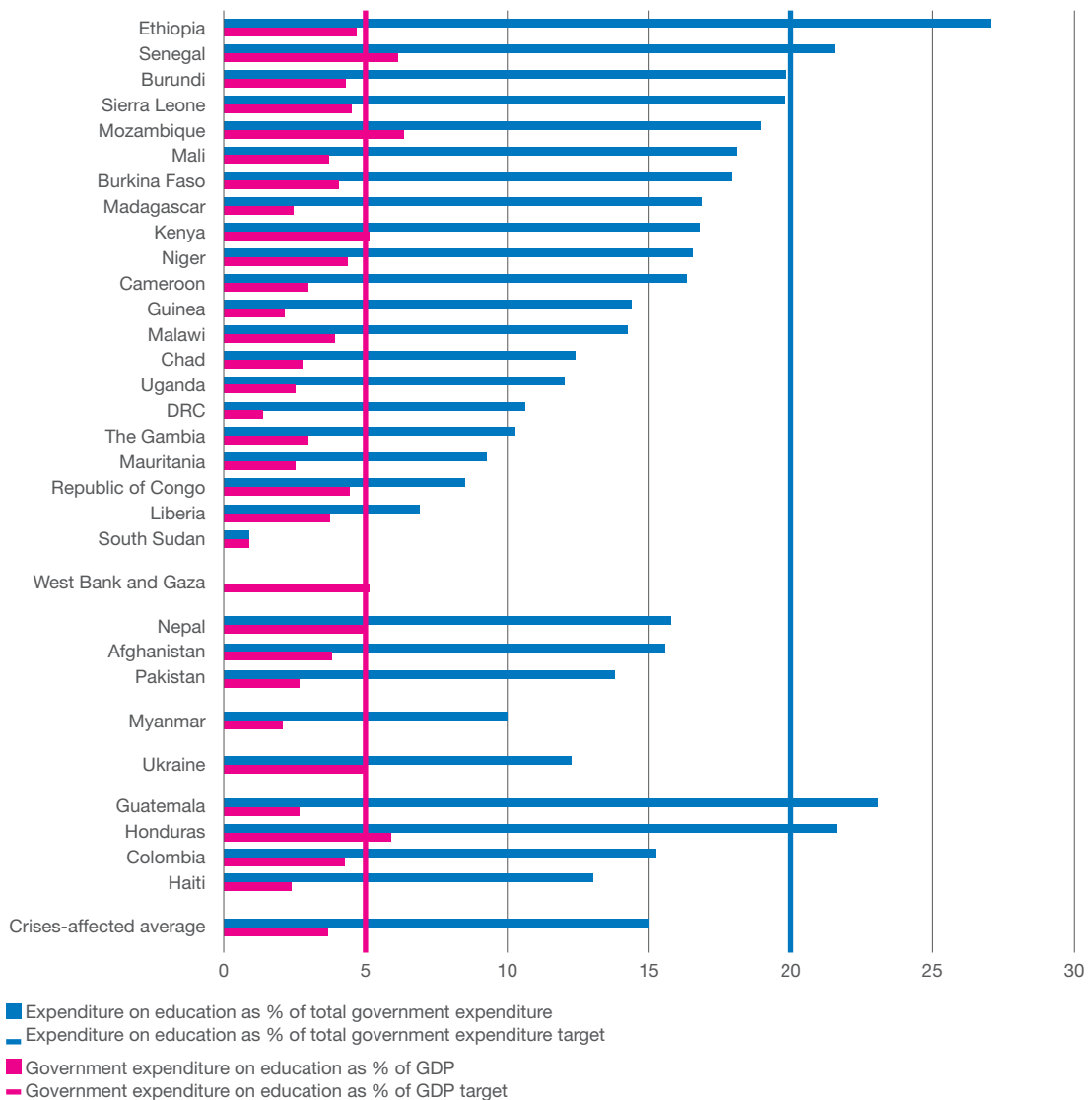
## FUNDING FOR EDUCATION IN CRISES

**National governments are not spending enough money to reach those furthest behind in crises.**

Of the 44 crisis-affected countries identified, 31 had internationally comparable data on education expenditure available. Of these, only 13 per cent – or four countries – are reaching the target set in the Incheon Declaration<sup>109</sup> to

spend 20 per cent of government expenditure on education. Only seven countries – or 23 per cent – are reaching the target to spend at least 5 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education.<sup>110</sup> Further analysis is needed to understand how education budgets are allocated between crisis and non-crisis-affected regions of countries as well as between levels of education.

**Figure 9** Government education expenditure in crisis-affected countries versus Incheon Declaration targets



### **Development aid for education is rising but not targeting those furthest behind.**

Development aid to education has increased in recent years. In 2016, the share of education in total official development assistance (ODA) increased for the first time since 2009, rising from 6.9 per cent in 2015 to 7.6 per cent in 2016. However, the share of aid to education going to the poorest countries is trending downward, which is cause for concern if we consider that the majority of the 44 crisis-affected countries identified fall within this category. Between 2002 and 2016, the share of basic education aid to low-income countries fell from 36 per cent to 22 per cent.<sup>111</sup> Sub-Saharan Africa, the region with by far the greatest need, has seen its share of global aid to basic education halved since 2002.<sup>112</sup>

### **Humanitarian aid to education is also rising, but not fast enough to meet growing needs.**

Humanitarian aid to education has also increased rapidly in recent years, from US\$135 million in 2012 to US\$451 million in 2017.<sup>113</sup> However, despite the tripling of humanitarian assistance, the share for education in total humanitarian aid has remained constant since the early 2000s, at just 2.1 per cent in 2017, far below requirements and the 10 per cent target that European Union has set itself.<sup>114</sup>

In 2018, Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) commissioned by the United Nations were 60 per cent funded. Of the US\$875 million requested for education, only 43 per cent was funded.<sup>115</sup> As humanitarian crises become increasingly protracted, more children and young people will continue to be denied their right to an education and progress towards SDG 4 will remain off track.

To meet the growing humanitarian need, increases in funding needed to be matched with improved coordination. This needs to happen both at the country and regional level (for example the Sahel), as well as throughout the international architecture for education where there are risks of overlapping roles with both multilaterals and global funds. This will take on an even greater urgency as the 'New Way of Working'<sup>116</sup> beds in.

### **Humanitarian aid to education is unequal across regions and levels of education.**

Within overall humanitarian aid there are financing inequities between crises. Gaps remain far wider for 'forgotten crises' that fail to capture media and political attention in donor countries. For example, the funding gaps for the Lake Chad Basin and Sahel crises for 2018 are 20 per cent higher than the global average.<sup>117</sup>

### **Secondary education is especially underfunded during humanitarian crises.**

Only 4.5 per cent of UNHCR's 2019 global programmes budget is allocated to education.<sup>118</sup> Within this, UNHCR has three times as much to spend on primary education as on secondary, despite the urgent needs highlighted in this report, as well as the higher costs involved. Ensuring continuous primary and secondary education for refugees means having a reliable and sustainable source of funding as soon as refugees begin to arrive in search of sanctuary.

Sabuka, 12 living  
in a refugee camp,  
Bangladesh



## COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

This section looks in more detail at the impact of humanitarian crises on education in some of the world's most complex crisis contexts. It seeks to cover a range of crisis types, from protracted conflicts, displacement crises,

disasters caused by environmental hazards, and food security crises. It explores the barriers to education faced by adolescent boys and girls in each context and discusses how they impact educational attainment.

### Bangladesh

#### **Disaster-prone Bangladesh is hosting the largest refugee settlement in the world and adolescent girls are being left behind.**

Bangladesh is a stable, growing economy that has made significant development progress since the 1990s. However, Bangladesh is disaster-prone, experiencing several types of environmental hazard each year. Cyclones and floods are the major risks, although droughts, storms, landslides and other hazards do occur. Bangladesh also has the largest refugee settlement in the world, in Cox's Bazar, which currently hosts almost one million Rohingya refugees. Faced with decades of systematic discrimination, statelessness and targeted violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar, the Rohingya have been forced into Cox's Bazar for many years, with the largest influx happening following an eruption of violence in 2017.

#### **Environmental hazards**

The education sector in Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to disasters caused by environmental hazards. Flooding is an annual occurrence in Bangladesh and has a destructive impact on the education sector. The country is also susceptible to some of the world's worst cyclones.

Environmental hazards such as these cause substantial damage to infrastructure, schools and learning materials, creating a challenging environment for children, teachers and wider communities. In 2017, for example, heavy monsoon rains caused intense flooding across one-third of Bangladesh. The disaster had a huge impact on access to education. In the most affected areas, over 4,000 education institutions were affected, and three million children needed education in emergencies assistance.<sup>119</sup>

Disasters can also result in displacement, increased drop out, rises in child labour and marriage, and heightened trauma and distress, all of which impact children's learning opportunities. Primary research conducted in 2010 by Plan International UK with adolescent girls in flood and cyclone-prone areas of Bangladesh found that natural disasters have clear impacts on girls' education. Girls told us that following floods, storms or cyclones, their household and care responsibilities increase, and they have to take time off school.<sup>120</sup> Following serious cyclones, such as Cyclone Sidr in 2007, a significant proportion of girls are also forced to migrate to the towns to work as domestic workers and in the garment industry. Most never return to school.<sup>121</sup>

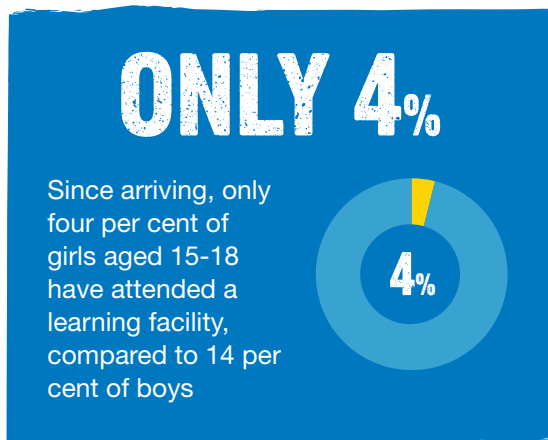
## Refugee crisis

Around 700,000 children and young people, including the host community, are not accessing education in Cox's Bazar.<sup>122</sup> In 2018, only US\$23 million – or 49 per cent – of the US\$47 million required was mobilised to support the education response.

Since arriving, only four per cent of girls aged 15-18 have attended a learning facility, compared to 14 per cent of boys.<sup>123</sup> A lack of space and low prioritisation has meant that insufficient land has been allocated to education in the refugee camps. Among children aged 6-14, 32 per cent of girls and 25 per cent of boys perceive safety threats in learning facilities.<sup>124</sup>

*“My parents used to tell me they did not allow me to study due to the fear of Rakhine people. The Rakhine people do not like the girls to study. The militaries used to torture the girls. That is why we were not allowed to study.”*

**Adolescent girl, 18 years old**



There is an urgent need for targeted interventions to eliminate barriers faced by adolescent girls. Patriarchal cultural norms and safety and security concerns at camps drive families to place tighter restrictions on girls, confining them to their tents.<sup>125</sup> This denies girls the opportunity to develop support networks and undermines their basic human rights, including the right to education.

*“If they allow, we will study. If they make school for us, then we can study. If the teachers are male, we will not study.”*

**Adolescent girl, 16 years old**

The continued delay in the distribution of approved learning materials is another obstacle to learning for refugees. The Rohingya are not permitted to use the Bangladeshi curriculum, nor learn in the Bangla language. There is also a need to develop and implement an effective refugee teacher professional development strategy that provides standardised training for new Rohingya teachers.

*“Here, they don't teach in our language. So, I can't go. There is school for little kids, not for older girls.”*

**Adolescent girl, 16 years old**

The host region, Cox's Bazar, is already one of the lowest performing districts for education in Bangladesh. Whereas the national average for net intake in the first grade of primary is 98 per cent, in Cox's Bazar the rates are 72.6 per cent for boys and 69.1 per cent for girls. Teachers in host communities have left to work in camps, with the incentive of better pay, creating tensions between refugees and host communities.<sup>126</sup>



## NOOR\*, 11 YEARS OLD, BANGLADESH

Noor is 11 and lives in a camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, with her parents and older brother and sister.

*"When I come back home I try to sleep but it is too hot here. I can't sleep in the heat, that's why I don't like staying here. In the evening I cook and fetch water for my family.*

*"I eat rice with dry fish for breakfast, dry fish and dahl for lunch and then rice again for dinner. There's no money so I can't eat any more."*

In her home country of Myanmar, Noor says she used to attend school, but where she lives now there isn't a school she can go to so her education has been put on hold.

*"In Myanmar I had friends and went to school. I was really interested to learn English and tailoring. But there's no school here. Education is something that is great, I want to attend school."*

*\*Girls' names have been changed for child protection reasons*



## Lake Chad Basin

### **Protracted conflict and food insecurity risk devastating the futures of young people in the Lake Chad Basin.**

The ongoing conflict in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) region is one of the most pressing humanitarian crises in the world. The crisis affects Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, with the most recent HAC appeal targeting the regions of the Far North (Cameroon), Lac (Chad), Diffa (Niger) and Borno (Nigeria). A total of 10.7 million people need humanitarian assistance across the four regions. In 2018, under 20 per cent of the funding required for education in the Nigerian humanitarian response plan was met.<sup>127</sup>

With some of the highest population growth rates and lowest human development indicators in the world, countries in the LCB region are at the intersection of growing environmental and human pressures. The ten-year-long violent insurgency led by Boko Haram has had a devastating impact on the region. The protracted conflict has uprooted around 2.5 million people,<sup>128</sup> stoked high levels of hunger and malnutrition, hampered the resumption of normal life and left many conflict-affected families dependent on humanitarian assistance for survival. Many children are separated from their families, exposed to different forms of exploitation, and recruited by armed groups. Young women and girls have been abducted, and subjected to forced marriage, physical and psychological abuse.

The kidnap of 276 girls from a school in the town of Chibok in 2014 shook the world and revealed the gendered nature of Boko Haram's attacks on education in the region.

A key component of Boko Haram’s ideology is hostility towards secular education, and it has gained notoriety for its repeated attacks on schools and universities, teachers and students. Boko Haram has specifically targeted female students.<sup>129</sup> Education systems across the LCB have been severely damaged: Boko Haram has destroyed nearly 1,000 schools and displaced 19,000 teachers.<sup>130</sup> The United Nations report that the group had killed almost 2,300 teachers by 2017.<sup>131</sup> The group’s assault on education has had a long-lasting impact on the education systems of the four countries affected.

*“I was registered for school before the crisis; what changed is that I’m scared all the time.”*

**Adolescent girl, 16 years old**

Sub-national analysis of household survey data produced for this report demonstrates the stark inequalities between education outcomes in the LCB and the wider countries that the region is part of.<sup>132</sup> The data also highlights significant gaps in attainment between boys and girls within the Lake Chad Basin.

**Table 2** Education outcomes in the Lake Chad Basin and neighbouring countries

		Lower secondary out-of-school rate	Upper secondary out-of-school rate	Mean years of education	Youth literacy
Average of all four countries (Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria)	<b>National</b>	40.4%	57.6%	5.8	47.5%
	<b>Boys</b>	35.9%	49.2%	6.8	65.6%
	<b>Girls</b>	45.0%	65.2%	5.0	40.6%
	<b>Poorest boys</b>	54.9%	67.4%	3.9	
	<b>Poorest girls</b>	69.3%	85.9%	1.9	8.5%
Average for Lake Chad Basin region (Far North in Cameroon, Lac in Chad, Diffa in Niger, North East in Nigeria)	<b>Region</b>	62.5%	76.6%	3.4	25.8%
	<b>Boys</b>	58.1%	67.2%	4.0	
	<b>Girls</b>	66.6%	84.8%	2.7	18.7%
	<b>Poorest boys</b>	62.8%			
	<b>Poorest girls</b>	75.2%			

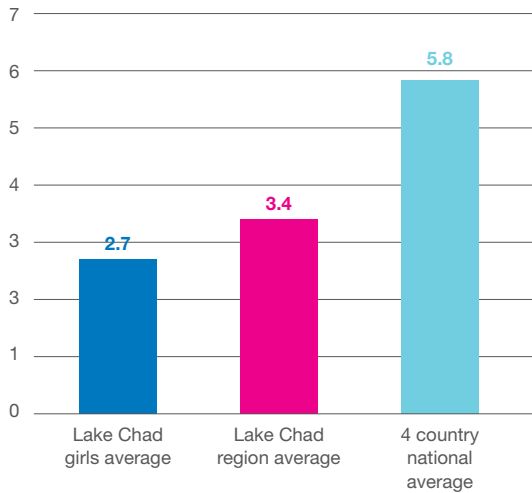
Children in ‘forgotten crises’ are at risk of being left behind. For example, girls living in the Lake Chad Basin receive, on average, about two years of schooling in their lifetime, just over three times less than the average across Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria



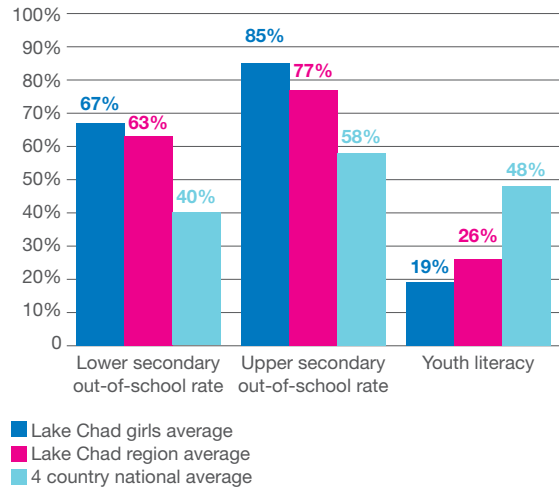
Although worryingly low at a rate of 20 per cent, boys in the LCB are twice as likely to complete secondary school than their female peers. They are also almost twice as likely to be able to read a simple sentence.

In Chad, a boy in the best performing region of N’Djamena completes almost nine years of education in their lifetime, almost 30 times as much as a girl living in the crisis-affected region of Lac. In Cameroon, the average student is over four times more likely to complete upper secondary school than a student in the Far North region that is part of the LCB.


**Figure 10** Mean years of education in the Lake Chad Basin and neighbouring countries



**Figure 11** Secondary education in the Lake Chad Basin and neighbouring countries



In north-eastern Nigeria, girls in the lowest income quintile receive four times less education over their lifetime than the average girl in the region. They are also 37 per cent more likely to be out of school at secondary level



Poverty is the foremost barrier to education in the LCB. According to the most recent needs assessment carried out by UN OCHA in Borno State, Nigeria, a lack of resources to pay fees is the biggest barrier to education.<sup>133</sup>

*“Not all girls finish their education. Girls stop to get married, because of pregnancy or because of rape.”*  
**Adolescent girl, 18 years old, Mora, Cameroon**

Recent data collected by Plan International in the LCB supported this assessment of poverty as the foremost barrier, but also noted security conditions, distance to school and child marriage as other significant barriers.<sup>134</sup> The research also noted that IDPs can face additional problems accessing school. IDP girls in Niger described how missing and lost identity papers prevented them from attending school after fleeing their home villages.

According to the study, which spoke with adolescent girls and their communities in multiple sites across Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon in March – May 2018, adolescent girls in the Lake Chad region value education and, despite significant access challenges, largely want to continue attending school, either through secondary education or vocational education programmes. The transition from primary school – which is often more accessible and more likely to be government-subsidised – to secondary education is a potential risk factor for adolescent girls. Adolescent girls are far less likely to attend secondary school in almost all locations.

## The Sahel

**In the Sahel, renewed violence threatens a lost generation of learners in the world's most underdeveloped region.**

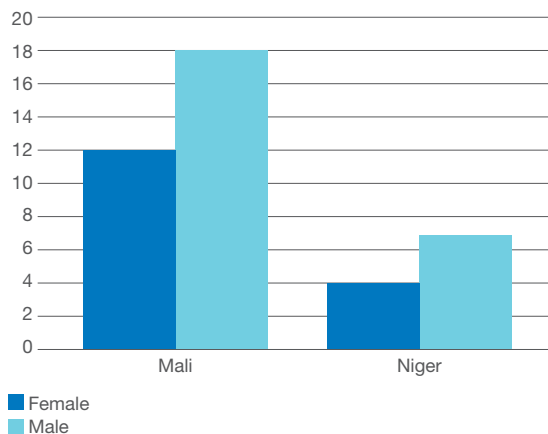
The border areas between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger have been hit by a rising spate of armed attacks throughout 2018 and early 2019, creating a new conflict hotspot in West Africa's Sahel region. Attacks and insecurity have severely disrupted learning, uprooted families and put great pressure on the education systems of one of the world's most underdeveloped regions.

In 2018, Mali ranked 182nd in the United Nations Human Development Index, Burkina Faso 183rd, and Niger last at 189th. All three countries spend below the Incheon Declaration target of 20 per cent of government expenditure on education. In 2018, Niger received only five per cent of the funding required for education in its humanitarian response plan.<sup>135</sup>

Violence across the region has led to the displacement of at least 235,000 people.<sup>136</sup> Insecurity, targeted killings, threats against teachers and population displacement have impacted access to education. In Burkina Faso, the recent conflict has led to the closure of over 1,000 schools as well as violent, sometimes deadly, attacks on teachers. The crisis has affected approximately 150,000 children, roughly three per cent of the whole school-aged population<sup>137</sup>

Adolescent girls in the Sahel already face severe barriers to education. Distance to school, poor quality teaching, a lack of female teachers, school-related gender-based violence, early marriage and pregnancy are all common. Girls Not Brides reports that in Burkina Faso, 52 per cent of girls are married before their 18th birthday and 10 per cent are married before the age of 15.<sup>138</sup>

**Figure 12** Upper secondary net enrolment rate in Mali and Niger

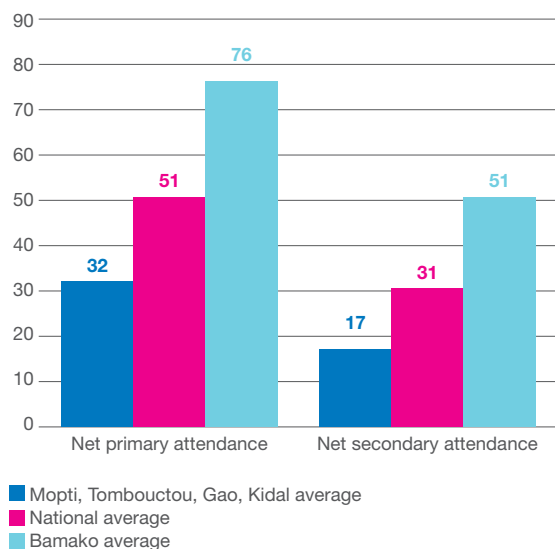


In Niger, only 18 per cent of female youth can read a simple sentence, compared with 45 per cent of male youth.<sup>139</sup> In Burkina Faso, between 2008-12, only 21 per cent of adolescent boys and 17 per cent of adolescent girls attended secondary school.<sup>140</sup> In the Mopti region of Mali, the area most affected by the current spate of violence, 81 per cent of girls are out of school at upper secondary level.<sup>141</sup>

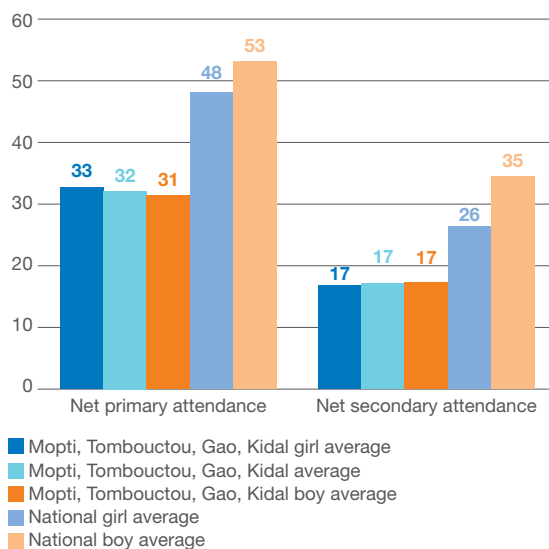
Due to the recent surge in violence, an additional around 1.1 million children are considered in need of education assistance across Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso.<sup>142</sup> More than 400,000 children do not have access to education in 2019 because of the violence – double the number recorded in 2017 – while more than 10,000 teachers have been displaced or are unable to work.<sup>143</sup> The ongoing violence, compounded by existing barriers to education – poverty, poor quality education and gender inequality – risk creating a lost generation of girls and boys in the Sahel.

*“My school got closed after terrorist attacks in January 2019. At least 47 people were killed according to governmental sources. My heartfelt wish right now is to resume school.”*  
**Girl, 17 years old, Burkina Faso**

**Figure 13** Sub-national net attendance rates in Mali



**Figure 14** Sub-national net attendance rates in Mali for girls and boys



To date, education activities in Mali been suspended in over 807 schools, affecting some 242,000 children as of the end of 2018. In Mopti – the region most severely impacted – around 513 schools remained closed as of early 2019, affecting some 154,000 children.<sup>144,145</sup> According to a recent needs assessment, 88 per cent of the host and displaced households have declared that none of their children are attending school, mainly because of the insecurity, but also because of financial constraints.<sup>146</sup>

According to the most recent sub-national data available for Mali, enrolment rates are much lower in the conflict-affected regions of Gao, Kidal, Tombouctou, and Mopti compared to the national average, and far worse than in the highest performing region of Bamako. The disparities are most pronounced at secondary level.

Gender inequities, however, are less pronounced in the conflict-affected regions of Mali. Gaps between girls’ and boys’ attendance are far wider across the country as a whole and even more acute in the best performing region of Bamako. More research is needed to understand how the conflict in Mali impacts girls’ and boys’ education differently.

In Niger, attacks on schools and the military occupation of schools are also leading to school closures and restricted access to education. In 2018, 18 schools were permanently closed and 33 had activities temporarily suspended because of threats by armed groups, mainly in conflict-affected areas that border Mali and Burkina Faso. According to the UN Protection Cluster, another 262 schools remain hard to reach because of insecurity.<sup>147</sup>

## South Sudanese refugees

**Displaced South Sudanese children face a long struggle to access quality education, despite promising refugee education policies in neighbouring countries.**

The number of people displaced since the beginning of the conflict in South Sudan has increased to almost 4.2 million people, of whom two million are IDPs and more than 2.2 million refugees. South Sudan is the largest source of displaced people in Africa, with the majority residing in Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia. Of the 1.9 million IDPs, up to 85 per cent are estimated to be women and children – 54 per cent are women and girls.<sup>148</sup>

Conflict, poverty and underdevelopment have had a devastating impact on access to quality learning opportunities for young people in South Sudan, and for adolescent girls in particular. Just one per cent of girls enrol in upper secondary school.

Early marriage and pregnancy, long distances to school, insecurity and forced displacement are all major barriers to education. The hidden costs of uniforms and learning materials, unaffordable menstrual hygiene products, and the reliance of families on girls' contribution to household and care labour are also major obstacles. Socio-cultural norms also mean that education for girls is often undervalued by communities.

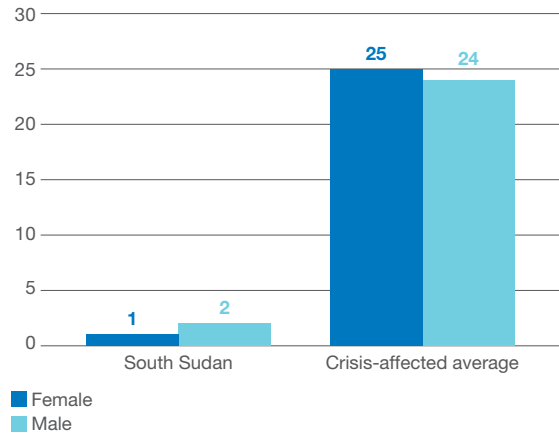
*“A girl who didn't have school fees was advised by friends to have relationships with men in order to get school fees.”*

**Adolescent girl, Juba**

*“My friends do not attend school because they are given too much work at home.”*

**Adolescent girl, Yei**

**Figure 15** Upper secondary net enrolment in South Sudan versus crisis-affected average



*“[I] worry the most about not having enough time to revise because [I] have to do a lot of house chores [and] may end up failing [my] exams because [I] am overworked.”*

**Adolescent girl, 17 years old, Baratuku**

Recent Plan International research<sup>149</sup> found that the cost of education was the biggest barrier faced by adolescent girls. Conflict-related school closures, distance to school and being too old to enrol were some of the other key reasons for girls not participating. South Sudan has one of the lowest percentages of female teachers in East and Central Africa. Although evidence strongly suggests that female teachers improve education access and outcomes for girls, only nine per cent of secondary school teachers in South Sudan are female.

*“[I] feel like [I] should leave school in order to make money to take care of [my] family.”*

**Adolescent girl, Bidi Bidi**

Around 4.4 million<sup>150</sup> children are in need of some form of protection in South Sudan and are at heightened risk of recruitment into armed groups, abuse, abduction, exploitation, and violence. Current estimates show that the number of children associated with armed and force groups is 19,000.<sup>151</sup> Around 117,000 children have been directly affected, with over 3,700 incidents of grave child rights violations since 2013; more than 19,000 children are connected with armed groups, and 12,000 children are unaccompanied.<sup>152</sup> Many children enrolling in the education system require support through integrated child protection and education services.

For South Sudanese refugees who flee the country in search of refuge, opportunities to access quality education are similarly limited. Most arrive in Sudan, Uganda and Ethiopia, all of which face severe challenges with their own education systems, particularly in secondary education and for girls. In Uganda, home to over 1.2 million refugees, over two-thirds of whom are from South Sudan, there are only five refugee girls for every 10 refugee boys enrolled in secondary education.<sup>153</sup>

### **In Uganda**

The Government of Uganda has one of the most progressive refugee policies in the world and refugees are permitted to enrol in the national education system. Despite the promising political context for refugees, South Sudanese refugee children still face significant barriers to education. Fifty-seven per cent of refugee children hosted in Uganda are out-of-school, compared with 34 per cent of children from host communities.<sup>154</sup> The vast majority of the South Sudanese refugees are hosted in the West Nile region of Uganda, a region which already struggles to provide education to its own population, especially at higher levels. Secondary net enrolment rates in West Nile are 8.8 per cent overall, and only 7.5 per cent for girls.

In Uganda, while access to education is more limited for both refugee girls and girls from host communities than it is for boys, when it comes to learning outcomes, the scant evidence suggests girls tend to perform better. Of students in grades 2 to 7 in host communities, 32.2 per cent of girls had reached full literacy and numeracy compared to 25.4 per cent of boys. The gap was narrower for refugees, although at lower overall levels, with 21.8 per cent of refugee girls and 20.3 per cent of refugee boys reaching full literacy and numeracy.<sup>155</sup> There are also differences in performance between nationalities of refugees: 26.8 per cent of Ugandan children have full literacy and numeracy, compared to 65 per cent for Somali refugees, but only 20 per cent for South Sudanese.

### **In Sudan**

In Sudan, over 850,000 South Sudanese refugees live in overstretched camps or underdeveloped regions lacking access to basic services such as education. Just 41 per cent of school-aged children are enrolled in school, and retention rates are low, with schools often lacking classrooms, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities, trained teachers, textbooks, school supplies and seating.<sup>156</sup> In West Kordofan state, at the end of the 2017/2018 school year, over 70 per cent of basic-school-aged refugee children were out of school. Data for secondary level was unavailable.<sup>157</sup>

Kwanye, 16, is about to resume her education with our support

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## In Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, South Sudanese refugees are the largest refugee population in the country, totalling 422,240 as of 31 August 2018. Ethiopia has a long history as both a source and host of refugees and maintains an open-door policy for refugees. Among the South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia, almost 91 per cent live in refugee camps in the Gambella region. Some 23 per cent of new arrivals are youth that have specific needs.<sup>158</sup>

South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia face challenges including overcrowded classrooms, high pupil-to-teacher ratios (1:80), poorly qualified teachers (44 per cent have limited qualifications), unsafe learning environments and linguistic barriers.<sup>159</sup> In 2016/2017, only nine per cent of secondary school-aged refugee children in Ethiopia had a place in a classroom,<sup>160</sup> significantly below the 23 per cent rate for refugees globally and well below the 84 per cent figure for their non-refugee peers.<sup>161</sup> Recent figures show that the refugee secondary education enrolment rate increased to 12 per cent in 2017/2018, although for girls it was less than half of that at five per cent.<sup>162</sup>



## Syria

**As the Syrian crisis reaches its ninth year, millions of Syrian adolescents remain locked out of education.**

The Syrian crisis is now entering its ninth year. The ongoing violence has uprooted more than 11.6 million Syrians, 5.6 million of whom are being hosted as refugees by the neighbouring countries of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.<sup>163</sup> The ongoing conflict and subsequent displacement have impacted the education of millions of children across Syria and the wider region, affecting girls and boys in different ways.

### Syrian refugees

Between 2017 and 2018, the number of Syrian school-aged refugee children enrolled in school increased. However, as the total number of school-aged Syrian refugee children also increased, the total number of refugees out of school climbed by 100,000 between 2017 and 2018.

Due to funding shortages, the number of children enrolled in non-formal education fell by 25 per cent between 2017 and 2018.<sup>164</sup> Ninety per cent of the Syrian refugee children who attend school, however, are enrolled in the formal education system.<sup>165</sup> Governments in the region have played a critical role by keeping public education systems open to Syrian refugee children, and donor-funded double-shift systems,<sup>166</sup> such as in Jordan, have eased pressure on classrooms, allaying concerns about diminishing public education quality. As the crisis moves into its ninth year, public education systems in the region are struggling to absorb their growing school-aged refugee populations. In Iraq, for example, the number of Syrian refugees out of school increased from four per cent to 31 per cent between 2017 and 2018.<sup>167</sup>

*“There aren’t any schools in the camp and the public schools don’t have any space for us. Private schools are expensive.”*

**Adolescent Syrian girl, 18 years old, Bourj Al Barajneh, Beirut**

*“Whenever we go [to enrol at school], they tell us there is no vacancy.”*

**Adolescent Syrian girl, 11 years old, Bourj Al Barajneh, Beirut**

Syrian refugee children and young people face several context-specific barriers to enrolling in school, particularly at secondary level. In Lebanon, to enter the public education system at the secondary level, Syrians need to prove refugee status and provide primary school completion certificates.<sup>168</sup> Registration can be a challenge for young Syrians in Lebanon and many were unable to complete primary school due to the conflict and ensuing disruption, making it difficult to access secondary education.

*“Mama went to the school... registered her name and gave them all the necessary papers. They told her to let me enrol on Wednesday; I enrolled on Wednesday and then they told her ‘Your daughter isn’t registered; her name isn’t on our file’... My mother looked for a school. But none of them want me.”*

**Adolescent Syrian girl, 17 years old, Bourj Hammoud, Beirut**

A recent survey of Syrian refugees in Lebanon found fees/cost to be the main barrier to accessing education, with 43 per cent of respondents citing this as an obstacle. Twenty-one per cent noted access/ transportation and 19 per cent simply stated they had been denied education.<sup>169</sup> Girls face a heightened risk of child marriage and are often required to work in the house. A study conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Lebanon discovered that 24 per cent of Syrian refugee girls between the ages of 15 and 17 were married.<sup>170</sup>

As in many other refugee contexts, gaps between host communities and refugees widen at secondary levels. In all host countries except Egypt, the enrolment rate for upper secondary school is less than 25 per cent; in Lebanon, it is below 10 per cent.<sup>171</sup>

Surprisingly, in all the countries across the region in which there are refugees, Syrian refugee boys are out of school at higher rates, across all levels of education, than their female peers. A Syrian refugee girl is five per cent more likely to be enrolled in school than a Syrian refugee boy. The exact reasons for this trend are unclear, but across the region, particularly in Lebanon, it has been widely reported that, from a young age, many boys are engaged in dangerous forms of work, including construction and manual labour, metal work and agricultural labour.<sup>172</sup> Evidence from a study on Syrian refugee education in Iraq also showed that boys were at particular risk of drop out.<sup>173</sup>

## FATIMA\*, 14 YEARS OLD, SYRIA

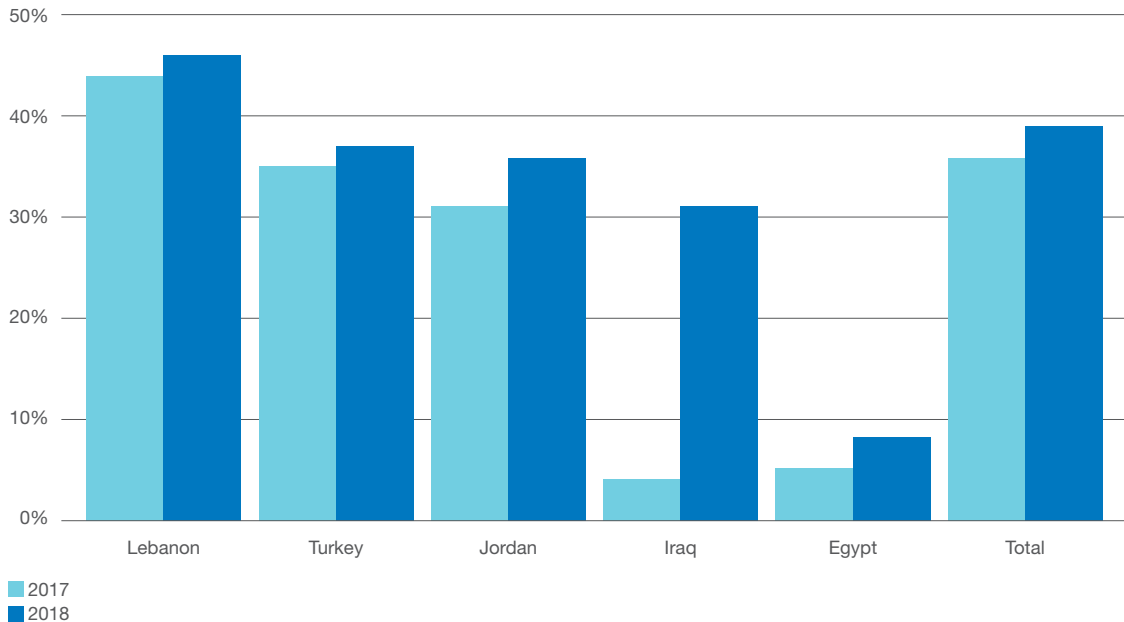
*"I only went to school for two years in Syria, and I hadn't learnt to read or write yet. In the Azraq refugee camp, I went to school again. I used a computer properly for the first time and fell in love with computers. One can learn anything with a computer! I dream of becoming a computer expert who teaches others how to use a computer. I also dream of returning to Syria and being surrounded by woods and greenness. It's difficult for me to live in the middle of a desert."*

Fatima's case study was taken from interviews in the refugee camp of Azraq, in Jordan, where Plan International is supporting girls and their families who have been affected by the Syrian war.

*\*Girls' names have been changed for child protection reasons*



**Figure 16** Syrian refugee out-of-school rates



Evidence on learning outcomes for Syrian students is limited. Data from the government-led RACE 2 programme in Lebanon shows that the percentage of refugee children passing the grade 9 examination increased from 66 per cent to 72.6 per cent between 2017-18. In terms of gender differences, on average, 52 per cent of girls passed each year, whereas for boys it was just over 48 per cent.<sup>174</sup> Data from Jordan highlights how Syrian children are performing less well than their Jordanian counterparts in reading, particularly in the area of oral reading and fluency.

### In Syria

Within Syria, access to quality data on education access and outcomes is scarce. Mercy Corps recently published a report<sup>175</sup> that collected data through focus groups and includes the following useful insights:

- Over two-thirds of both adolescent boys and girls – 78 per cent and 69 per cent respectively – are not participating in education.
- School enrolment trends between the two sexes were also complex. Girls who had dropped out had done so on average two to three years earlier than boys; on the other hand, girls were 10 per cent more likely than boys to be in school across most research locations.
- Barriers to education differed between girls and boys. For girls, security concerns, child marriage/family obligations and the lack of priority placed on girls' education were the main reasons. For boys, the need to work and provide financially for families was the most common reason.

Girl in school in Lira district, Uganda



# SECTION 3

## PROMISING POLICIES AND PROGRAMMATIC INTERVENTIONS

This section explores promising approaches that have shown potential in improving girls' education in countries affected by conflict, disaster and other forms of crisis, including large-scale displacement. Examples for secondary education were extremely limited, partly because many crisis-affected children do not make it past primary school, but also because the responses to the gaps in secondary education have thus far been inadequate.

### Including refugees in national education systems

The responsibility for refugee education provision lies with host governments. The most effective way of providing this education is through the inclusion of refugees in the national education system. At the international level this has been reiterated by the 2017 New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants,<sup>176</sup> which included the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, and led to the agreement of the Global Compact on Refugees in December 2018.

The Compact calls for boys and girls to not be out of education for more than three months after arrival and for national education sector plans to include refugees, and provide for their education at secondary and tertiary levels.<sup>177</sup> Only through full inclusion in national education systems can all refugee girls access the secondary education that they have been promised.

This shift away from parallel systems in camps or elsewhere is being increasingly recognised by countries hosting large numbers of refugees. Turkey is an example of a country that is making significant progress in including refugee children and young people in its national education system. As of mid-2018, Turkey hosted 3.6 million refugees.<sup>178</sup> Syrians began arriving in 2013 and initially attended government-regulated, non-formal schools, until 2016 when the government announced that all Syrian refugees would be included in the national education system with a target of transferring all students to public schools by 2020.<sup>179</sup>

As the Global Compact moves into its implementation phase, there is a need for other governments to follow suit. The Global Refugee Forum in December 2019 offers an ideal moment to make ambitious commitments, not just to include refugees in national education systems, but also to do more to address the complex barriers to secondary education faced by adolescent girls.

### Global Partnership for Education – supporting refugees in Chad

The Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) Accelerated Fund for Emergency and Early Recovery Situations seeks to ensure that ministries of education have the flexibility and resources to address crisis situations while ensuring that responses are reflective of longer-term national education sector plans and commitments to gender equality in education.

Chad is hosting up to 400,000 refugees due to conflict in the Lake Chad Basin. The GPE, which allocates about half of its grant funding to fragile and conflict-affected countries, is supporting Chad's efforts to create a stronger and more sustainable education system for local and refugee girls and boys.

The Government of Chad – drawing on accelerated funding support from GPE – has included refugees in its transitional education planning. Chad has addressed the language of instruction, recognition of diplomas and the threat of lost culture and national identity. It has also launched an emergency programme to support school lunches, built new schools, distributed more and better pedagogical materials and, in 2018, converted 108 schools in 19 camps and refugee sites into regular public schools.

### **Improving education in complex displacement crises through bold leadership and regional cooperation**

Displacement crises can often be complex, protracted and involve flows of people across numerous borders. Meeting the needs of displaced populations therefore requires coordination among host governments as well as support from international partners. A key example of this is the 2017 Djibouti Declaration, in which the ministers of education of seven East African countries – Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda – all of whom already face significant challenges providing quality education to their own populations, agreed to prioritise the integration of refugees into their national education systems.<sup>180</sup>

The annex to the declaration recognises the need to respond to the distinct learning needs of girls and boys and the need to support secondary education as a path to higher education. It also recognises the need for greater gender parity among teaching staff and the need for schools to be safe places of learning that protect children from sexual and gender-based violence. Donor partners such as the EU and the German Government have supported the implementation of the declaration so far.

### **Funding multi-year plans that bridge the gap between emergency response and long-term education sector plans**

In September 2018, the Government of Uganda, with support from Education Cannot Wait, released the Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities (ERP), a first-of-its-kind multi-year education programme.<sup>181</sup> It sets out a roadmap for reaching all refugees and host community children in Uganda with improved education, costing US\$389 million over three and a half years. The plan recognises the protracted nature of displacement and requires financial support from the international community.

The ERP highlights the particularly high drop-out rates at upper primary levels and the low transition rate of girls from primary to secondary education (only 33 per cent of enrolled refugees are girls), citing key barriers such as early marriage, teenage pregnancy, the distance to schools and the prevalence and fear of sexual and gender-based violence, and menstrual hygiene management. It includes approaches for addressing the gendered barriers, such as training on hygiene and sanitation practices, the provision of sanitary kits, recruitment and training of female teachers, and promoting increased awareness of safeguarding issues in schools.

A similar approach has been taken through the recently-launched programme Delivering Collective Education Outcomes in Afghanistan: Education Cannot Wait Facilitated Multi-Year Programme 2018-21. While retaining a strong focus on system strengthening and building links with government schools, the plan also makes provisions for alternative education pathways for vulnerable and marginalised groups such as out-of-school girls. The programme will also respond to the specific needs of girls and boys in Afghanistan through the integration of psychosocial support activities and life skills, as well as undertaking activities to combat harmful practices such as child or early marriage.

### **Mainstreaming gender into programmes targeting crisis-affected populations – the case of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)**


UNRWA operates 700 elementary and preparatory schools in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Gaza, and the West Bank. Secondary education is provided directly by UNRWA in Lebanon because of restricted access to national schools, while in other countries Palestinians are able to attend public secondary schools.<sup>182</sup> This provides education to over half a million Palestinian refugees, 50.2 per cent of whom are girls, with 58.1 per cent of teaching staff being women as well.<sup>183</sup>

### **Education Cannot Wait – Afghanistan Multi-Year Resilience Programme**

The Government of Afghanistan, Education Cannot Wait, UN agencies and NGOs launched a multi-year education response programme in February 2019. The new programme supports the government's policy on community-based education and gender policy for girls' access to education, improving access to safe and reliable education for 500,000 of the most vulnerable children, including 325,000 girls, annually.

Education Cannot Wait allocated US\$15 million in seed funding for the first year to support the start of activities. The Government of Sweden also contributed US\$10 million to launch the programme. Over US\$150 million is required over the next three years to cover the full cost of the programme.

The investment recruits, trains and provides financial support for teachers, over 60 per cent of whom are women. It establishes gender-sensitive water and sanitation facilities and builds an awareness campaign to reach over 150,000 people in vulnerable communities, especially in rural and remote areas. Through this joint work, the programme aims to improve school attendance, numeracy, literacy and educational resilience. The investment also provides learning materials, such as textbooks and notebooks, to all children in the programme.



Yekaba, 13, is able to continue with her education

### **Providing Emergency Education to Refugee and Host Community Girls and Boys in Adjumani and Yumbe – Uganda**

This Dubai Cares-funded project implemented by Plan International Canada and Plan International Uganda provided gender-responsive education services to refugees and host communities in the West Nile region of Uganda. The project addressed specific demand and supply side barriers to education faced by adolescent girls.

Interventions included the construction of sex-segregated latrines, the provision of teaching and learning materials and gender-responsive teacher training. There was also a strong focus on engaging school management committees, parent teacher associations and students to raise awareness in communities on the importance of girls' education and meaningful participation by girls and women.

Teacher training was critical to the project. It proved integral to influencing the attitudes and practices of children around gender equality and inclusion, breaking harmful social norms and behaviours and developing the longer-term skills and abilities of girls. Gender-responsive teacher training – which could be something as simple as encouraging teachers to involve both boys and girls in their lessons, even if that means switching the seating plan to ensure girls are at the front of class – was shown to deliver encouraging results.

The project also went beyond school-level support. It aimed to raise awareness and agency in individuals and communities to tackle the root causes of why girls' education is perceived to be of low value and importance. This was done through the establishment of Girls' Education Movement (GEM) clubs. The GEMs were set up to empower girls to articulate issues that affect them in education and to remove barriers within the school and in the wider community. Following interest from boys wanting to join, the clubs eventually included both girls and boys and leadership roles were held by both girls and boys.

The project met and/or exceeded all its targets and it was noted that the GEM clubs were identified as the major success. The endline survey highlighted that all clubs were gender-responsive and that club activities such as sensitisation on gender-based violence and menstrual hygiene management were effective at tackling issues that lead to the exclusion of girls from accessing education opportunities. The impact of such activities was supported by the involvement of boys so that alongside girls themselves speaking out for their rights, boys also acted as girls' rights champions and advocated for the rights of their female peers.



Analysis shows that across the region UNRWA's schools consistently outperform government schools by the equivalent of one additional year of learning. UNRWA's successful use of host country curricula allows for the fluid transition from UNRWA schools to host country secondary schools and beyond.<sup>184</sup>

UNRWA recognises the disproportionate effect on girls of the ongoing blockade in Gaza and increased violence in the West Bank due to the personal safety risks caused by these factors, and the rise in rates of child marriage that accompanies the increased insecurity. Their education system commits to an inclusive approach and has achieved gender parity since 1960. In the 2017/2018 academic year, UNRWA rolled out the Gender Guide for Teachers that addresses protection risks such as gender-based violence. UNRWA also has an ambitious five-year gender strategy that seeks to mainstream gender considerations throughout all of its services, including education.<sup>185</sup>

UNRWA's education in emergencies programme ensures continued education for boys and girls in times of acute conflict and prioritises the provision of safe learning environments with psychosocial support, alternative learning modalities and increased community engagement. UNRWA's field operations follow up closely on school drop out and this comprehensive approach to gender-sensitive programming means that last year 84.7 per cent of girls at UNRWA schools inside Syria passed the grade 9 exam.

## **Implementing the Comprehensive School Safety Framework to build resilience against the impact of environmental hazards**

In countries that are affected by regular environmental hazards, disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction are critical to minimising the impact that disasters have on children's learning. In 2017, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) launched an updated Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF) to guide policy makers in this effort. Its three pillars are safe learning facilities, school disaster management, and risk reduction and resilience education. At the intersection of the three are multi-hazard risk assessment, education sector analysis, and child-centred assessment and planning.

## **Building resilience to flooding in Bangladesh**

In Lalmonirhat District, Bangladesh, a region that would typically see schools closed for a month at a time due to flooding, a Plan International safe schools project, through implementation of the CSSF, is building the community's resilience, preventing displacement and seeing interruptions to children's learning minimised. It does this through teaching children, teachers and the wider community what to do before, during and after disasters, and actively involving them in decision making.

Setting up school disaster management committees, providing boats to ensure safe journeys to school, and conducting inclusive, comprehensive risk assessments and school safety plans has delivered impressive results. The programme has led to a significant drop in the length of interruption to education – from around 30 days to just one week each year.<sup>186</sup>

## **Government-led implementation of the CSSF in the Philippines**

Since 2007, the Philippines Department of Education has started to mainstream disaster risk reduction into the education sector. In 2010, the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act was passed, and government created the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office as the focal point in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in education. A handbook has been developed on how to design and construct disaster-resilient learning facilities.

Plan International and others have been strengthening school disaster management through the training of government officials, school administrators, teachers, students and communities in risk assessment and planning. Disaster risk reduction is now integrated in the curriculum in a more comprehensive manner.

The Education Cluster has been instrumental in carrying out policy advocacy with the Department of Education on disaster management and preparedness, including the mainstreaming of risk reduction measures into development policy, planning and programme implementation. The Education Cluster is one among the few national clusters that is actively engaged with partners even during non-disaster periods.<sup>187</sup>

## **Collecting and analysing gender and age-disaggregated data on crisis-affected populations**

The Government of Ethiopia is one of the few governments globally that collates statistical data on refugee education and includes it in its annual reporting. The data is disaggregated by gender and education level and spans a range of indicators such as gross enrolment, net enrolment, completion, pupil-teacher ratios and teacher qualifications, across all levels of education.

The Government of the Philippines has taken important steps to collect data on the impact of disasters on the education system. This data has been used to formulate policies and plans and has been given to other government partners and researchers to develop recommendations on disaster risk reduction and management in the education system.<sup>188</sup>

## **Providing alternative forms of non-formal education**

Alternative forms of education offer boys and girls who are unable to access formal schooling the opportunity to continue learning through a crisis. Such options are particularly useful for girls and young mothers who have been prevented from attending formal schooling due to insecurity or other protection risks. Accelerated education, temporary schools, mobile learning, and distance learning programmes are all examples of non-formal education. Evidence on alternative education modalities in conflict-affected settings shows positive results in improving access for children who are excluded from traditional schools, especially adolescent girls and young mothers.<sup>189</sup> Such alternative forms of education can increase the likelihood of future integration back into the public education system.

Children take part in accelerated education programme in Diffa, Niger



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### Accelerated learning

Plan International's<sup>190</sup> Primary School Access through Speed Schools (PASS) project, which targets adolescent boys and girls in the crisis-affected border areas of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, supports girls and boys to catch up on years of missed education through an accelerated nine-month programme (Speed Schools) before integrating back into the formal school system. Sensitisation campaigns, scholarships, school construction and rehabilitation, teacher training and strengthening community involvement in education have all been critical to the success of the programme.

The project is addressing barriers to girls' education by addressing the root causes of educational inequality, informed by a comprehensive gender analysis. Engaging community leaders in discussions around gender equality, radio campaigns, sensitisation caravans and the distribution of school kits have all been noted as impactful interventions.

### Mobile services

Plan International's Mobile Education Units (MEUs) are an emergency response using non-fixed spaces to provide education to children, mainly IDPs, who would otherwise not have access. The approach is mainly used in hard-to-reach areas or areas where there are no formal schools. Many of the children attending the learning centres have never been to school but because of these classes, they can now write their names, read letters and understand basic mathematics. The children attend regularly and are keen to learn. This space also offers protection to the children during the day.

## Mainstreaming protection in education to keep girls safe in and outside of school

Creating safe and inclusive learning environments, as well as protecting girls on the way to and from school, improves education for girls in crises. One of the most promising interventions appears to be building walls and fences around school premises.<sup>191</sup> Research from South Sudan revealed that a lack of fencing resulted in community members walking through school grounds, some of them young men carrying guns.<sup>192</sup>

In Pakistan, as part of an initiative to bring female teachers back to school, the state has provided travel allowances to enable teachers to pay for safe public transportation.<sup>193</sup> Increasing the number of female teachers increases girls' participation in education.

Research carried out in Côte d'Ivoire indicated that sexual abuse of adolescent girls on the way to school could be tackled through closer collaboration between UN and INGO protection teams, education teams and communities. It noted that keeping girls and boys safe on their way to secondary school would indirectly improve secondary education, even without funding to implement secondary programmes.<sup>194</sup>

A programme delivered by UNICEF in South Sudan and Somalia has had positive results in tackling the root causes of GBV – gender inequality and harmful social norms related to gender, violence, and sex – in the school environment.<sup>195</sup>

## Community-based schools and community engagement

According to a comprehensive literature review of what works to improve girls' education in conflict and displacement contexts, community participation and engagement is critical in the delivery of gender-sensitive and contextually relevant education.<sup>196</sup>

Working with parents, teachers, traditional and religious leaders, and girls and boys, to change perceptions about girls' education is crucial to ensure interventions are sustained in the long term. Through local advocacy, relationship building and community engagement, interventions can change attitudes towards girls' education in communities where harmful social norms limit girls' learning. Community-based schools can also reduce distance to school, improve learning outcomes,<sup>197</sup> and make it safer for girls to access education.

In Cox's Bazar, Plan International is supporting adolescent girls to receive an education through a community-based programme model. The project responds to the education needs of Rohingya children through community-based modalities including shared spaces, outreach tutoring and big brother/sister mentoring. The delivery mechanisms were designed to overcome the lack of space for construction of new learning centres. The alternative learning model situates education within the community and brings small groups together to study in nearby homes and other shared spaces identified by the community. This helps to reduce mobility barriers for adolescent girls and children with disabilities.

## Training and supporting more female teachers

There is a growing evidence base indicating that girls' education in crisis contexts can be improved with an increased presence of female teachers. This is more notable in places with a high prevalence of GBV. Interventions that put female teachers or classroom assistants in place have seen positive results in terms of increased enrolment and retention of female students.<sup>198</sup>

Plan International UK's Girls' Education Challenge programme in Sierra Leone, which trains adolescent girls to be student teachers, has successfully disrupted gender norms and power dynamics in the classroom, and had a transformative effect both on how the women see themselves and how they are perceived by others. "We look important in the community," one student teacher said. Referring to men in the community, another student teacher explained that: "Before, they did not want to look at us but now they involve us, and we can challenge them in speaking English!"<sup>199</sup>

## Delivering integrated interventions that meet adolescent girls' unique needs

Integrated WASH and protections interventions are important for helping adolescent girls feel comfortable attending school, particularly during their periods. According to studies carried out in Somalia and South Sudan, distributing sanitary kits as part of an education programme delivers positive results. In South Sudan, the enrolment rate for girls increased from 30-35 per cent to 42 per cent over the school year following the distribution of these kits.

In Northern Tanzania, Plan International is working to provide quality secondary education for adolescent girls through a holistic, integrated programme. The intervention supports the provision of textbooks and other learning materials, the construction of menstrual hygiene management facilities, and the provision of dignity kits for adolescent girls, and conducts awareness campaigns on the importance of girls' education.

## Supporting girls and families with cash or in-kind support

Evidence suggests that demand for education can be increased among conflict-affected communities through economic support interventions such as cash transfers, vouchers and in-kind support.<sup>200</sup> The Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) programme, funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), provided cash transfers directly to upper primary and secondary schoolgirls conditional on school attendance. It also supported schools with capitation grants to meet essential running costs. The project was able to increase enrolment despite the outbreak of conflict. A review carried out by DAI showed that capitation grants provided a lifeline to schools at a time when government financing dried up and teachers' salaries, already massively devalued by inflation, were paid intermittently.

The Norwegian Refugee Council's Teacher Emergency Package (TEP) programme in Burundi provided education without fees or indirect costs such as books, materials and uniforms. An evaluation found that the programme had a strong impact on the enrolment of children, particularly girls, who had previously not attended school. Parents, community leaders and school inspectors widely agreed that the project being free of cost was the most significant factor in attracting girls to enter the education system.<sup>201</sup>

Girl speaks out during girls' activity run by Plan International in a refugee camp in Gambella, Ethiopia



# SECTION 4

## HOW TO PROVIDE GIRLS IN CRISES THE EDUCATION THEY WERE PROMISED

### BOLD POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

At a time when countries are closing their doors to refugees, schools are indiscriminately bombed in conflict, and girls are denied education for becoming pregnant, the promise to Leave No Girl Behind cannot be delivered without bold political leadership. The year ahead presents several opportune moments for world leaders to turn words into action and ensure 12 years of quality education for all girls.

- Governments should utilise the opportunity presented by the review of SDG4 during the 2019 UN High-Level Political Forum to convene a global summit on education in emergencies and protracted crises. Participants at the summit should make concrete policy and financial commitments to improve education for girls and boys across the continuum of immediate humanitarian relief and long-term development.
- UN Member States should make education and gender equality a core priority of the implementation of the Global Compact for Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. At the Global Refugee Forum in December 2019, refugee-hosting countries, with the support of international partners where necessary, should ensure the inclusion of all refugee girls and boys into national education systems and work to remove the legal, policy and financial barriers that limit girls' access to education, particularly for secondary education.
- At the G7 leaders' Summit in August 2019, G7 leaders, in partnership with leaders across the Sahel region, should commit to meeting the immediate educational needs of those affected by the ongoing crises and support long-term, gender-responsive education system strengthening in the region.
- Governments should use every available opportunity, including the forthcoming Human Rights Council sessions and the UN General Assembly, to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration<sup>202</sup> and encourage others to do so. They should take concrete steps to protect schools, students and staff from attack and military use through full implementation of the Safe Schools Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use During Armed Conflict.<sup>203</sup>



## FAIRER FINANCING

To ensure that all girls and boys affected by crises can access a quality education, national governments, donors, multilaterals and the private sector must urgently increase funding for education and target the uplift towards the most left behind – especially at lower secondary and secondary levels.

### National governments should:

- Allocate at least six per cent of GDP and at least 20 per cent of government spending towards education and adopt the principle of ‘progressive universalism’ in their budgetary allocations – increasing overall spending and targeting that spending towards the most marginalised learners such as adolescent girls in crisis-affected regions.
- Put in place proactive measures to identify the poorest, most marginalised and excluded girls and boys and implement targeted measures to remove all barriers to education and reduce inequalities in access, transition and completion of a quality education – including in crisis-affected regions.

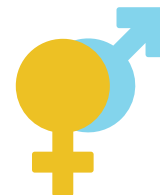
### Donor governments should:

- Allocate 15 per cent of their development ODA and, in line with the leadership being shown by the EU, work towards spending 10 per cent of their humanitarian ODA budgets on education through equitable and needs-based distributions. This should include prioritising funding for education in ‘forgotten crises’ in sub-Saharan Africa, and ensuring that ODA to secondary education is gradually increased in line with need.
- Support the Education Cannot Wait Fund to meet its 2018-2021 replenishment target of US\$1.8 billion and continue to invest in the Global Partnership for Education, where over 60 per cent of GPE Developing Country Partners are fragile or conflict-affected.
- Work in partnership with governments, other donors, multilaterals, NGOs and others to identify opportunities for increasing investments in gender-responsive secondary education for girls and boys affected by humanitarian crises.





## GENDER-RESPONSIVE NATIONAL AND GLOBAL SYSTEMS



The only sustainable way to ensure all children receive quality education is to build resilient, gender-responsive systems capable of meeting the needs of adolescent girls and boys before, during and after a humanitarian crisis. Principally this includes building gender-responsive national education systems<sup>204</sup> that are prepared for, and can respond to, humanitarian crises. It also means a more coordinated international aid architecture that can meet the increasingly complex and protracted nature of humanitarian crises in the 21st century.

To do this, national governments, with the support of international partners where necessary, should design and deliver gender-responsive, crisis-sensitive, multi-year education plans that adequately respond to the needs of crisis-affected girls and boys. This might include undertaking gender-based analysis across all stages of the planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring of multi-year education plans and ensuring sufficient budget is allocated to act on their recommendations. Actions might include:

- Removing discriminatory policies that prevent refugees, IDPs, pregnant women, young mothers, married women, or girls marginalised by their caste, religion or ethnic status, from enrolling or remaining in school.
- Investing in safe school infrastructure and violence-free learning environments that meet comprehensive school safety standards. This includes safety audits for travel to and from school, secure transportation, and gender-segregated and well-lit latrines, as well as working with key stakeholders at all levels to strengthen community-based child-protection systems to support the reduction of school-related gender-based violence.

- Working with partners at all levels, including teachers, to develop and deliver a gender-responsive curriculum that addresses the root cause of gender inequality and addresses the differential learning needs of boys and girls. Comprehensive sexuality education should be included in formal and non-formal education curricula that is age-appropriate for both boys and girls.<sup>205</sup>

### International partners should:

- Accelerate efforts towards the ‘New Way of Working’ by incentivising greater collaboration between humanitarian and development actors through initiatives such as the Education Cannot Wait fund.
- Commit predictable, flexible and multi-year funding for education in emergencies, ensuring a focus on full-spectrum gender-responsive interventions that bridge the gap between long-term education programmes and plans and emergency response, particularly in crises that are likely to become protracted. Such interventions should be aligned with national education sector plans as well as humanitarian and/or refugee response plans.
- Integrate multi-sectoral interventions into education programmes to provide access to holistic, gender-responsive services for girls and boys, including child protection, psychosocial support, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and water, sanitation and hygiene. This centres services around girls and boys by addressing their diverse and complex needs in humanitarian and development responses.

## TARGETED EFFORTS TO LEAVE NO GIRL BEHIND IN CRISES



Building resilient, gender-responsive and protective education systems will take time. For the 13 million girls out of school because of crises, it will almost certainly come too late. The humanitarian system and its partners should act immediately to address the barriers to education faced by adolescent girls in humanitarian crises. They should step up efforts to support adolescent girls caught in crises to transition from primary to secondary school and to complete 12 years of quality education. This should include:

- Addressing the neglect faced by the most marginalised adolescent girls at greatest risk of being left behind – particularly as a result of disability, ethnicity or any other social status – by working following the five steps (on participation, data disaggregation, funding, capacity and coordination) set out in the Inclusion Charter,<sup>206</sup> as well as the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.<sup>207</sup>
- Improving coordination within and between the humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding sectors to identify and address gaps in response capacity and the provision of services to ensure the safety and dignity of the most vulnerable adolescent girls. This might include working with agencies responsible for humanitarian coordination, as well as multilaterals and global funds such as GPE and ECW, to mainstream and monitor inclusion of marginalised groups within coordination systems and operational agencies.
- Supporting adolescent girls who are out of school with flexible, alternative, and accelerated learning opportunities, as well as the use of technology and distance education to eliminate barriers to access.
- Increasing the number of female teachers and positive role models for girls. This includes recruitment drives, supporting women to access teacher training programmes, and working to ensure that female teachers enjoy safe and supportive working environments.
- Supporting programmes that shift harmful social norms by working with parents and caregivers, as well as traditional, religious and other community leaders, to promote girls' rights and gender equality to improve girls' enrolment, retention and completion rates at all levels of education.
- Better integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR) and education crisis preparedness response and management into national education sector policy, planning and budget review processes, including context-specific contingency planning to identify risks and develop mitigation plans.
- Providing 'safe and girl-friendly spaces' where adolescent girls can feel secure and receive necessary services such as psychosocial support, sexual and reproductive health care.
- Supporting programmes that create opportunities for girls in humanitarian crises to develop and exercise voice and leadership and build awareness of their rights.
- Supporting interventions such as conditional cash transfers, school feeding programmes and other in-kind support that minimise the financial barriers to accessing education disproportionately experienced by girls.
- Supporting interventions that can help identify and provide educational opportunities for children with disabilities, including inclusive teacher training and resources, physical aids and equipment.

## LISTEN TO AND INVOLVE ADOLESCENT GIRLS



To ensure education interventions are effectively targeted at, and remain relevant to, the most marginalised girls and boys, it is critical that they are able to meaningfully participate in the design, monitoring and implementation of education policy, programmes, and budgets, including in humanitarian crises. This is crucial to ensuring democratic oversight, enhancing accountability, fulfilling young people's right to participate in decision making, and improving the effectiveness and relevance of education plans, programmes and policies. As part of this, governments, donors and other humanitarian actors should:

- Take steps to responsibly and meaningfully consult with girls and boys, as well as children's and women's rights organisations, throughout the policy and programme cycle. Interventions should be tailored accordingly. This might necessitate providing safe spaces for adolescent girls to participate, to exercise their agency, and make their voices heard.
- Take concrete steps to build the capacity of national and local organisations, including girls' and women's organisations, to engage in decision making processes.

Girls at a Plan supported school



# THE UK GOVERNMENT

## Political leadership

The UK Government should make girls' education in crises a core pillar of its Leave No Girl Behind campaign and exercise its political leadership to mobilise commitments for adolescent girls' and boys' education in crises. To do this, the UK should:

- Co-host a pledging summit on education in emergencies and protracted crises at the UN General Assembly in 2019.
- At the Global Refugee Forum in December 2019, support reform-minded, refugee-hosting states with the technical and financial support needed to improve education access and quality for refugees and host communities.
- Work with a select number of Commonwealth countries ahead of CHOGM 2020 to secure commitments to improve education for adolescent girls and boys affected by crises, as part of wider efforts to address issues related to gender in emergencies.

## Funding

- Increase its support to the Education Cannot Wait fund to £75 million over three years and support the fund to gradually increase the amount of funds it allocates to secondary education.
- Conduct a scoping study with a view to expanding the Girls' Education Challenge programme across the Sahel – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger – as well as the ongoing crisis in the Lake Chad Basin.
- Support UNHCR to develop a new funding envelope for secondary education in refugee settings. This could be piloted in a select number of countries and should have a specific objective within it to increase the number of refugee girls enrolling in and completing secondary education.

## System strengthening



- Align its in-country investments in education in emergencies and protracted crises with Education Cannot Wait facilitated multi-year response plans such as those that have been launched in the last year across Uganda, Bangladesh, the Central African Republic, Afghanistan and Palestine.
- Ensure the cross-government effort between DFID, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Ministry of Defence to implement the Safe Schools Declaration guidelines recognises the unique protection challenges faced by adolescent girls and take steps to address this.

## Data, evidence and research

- Ensure that its Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises Research Programme explores:
  - What works to ensure protection, inclusion and learning for adolescent girls in emergencies and protracted crises.
  - The impact that disasters caused by environmental hazards have on adolescent girls' protection, inclusion and learning.

Headmistress with her pupils at school in Borno state, Nigeria



# ENDNOTES

- 1 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>
- 2 Programmes at ISCED level 2, or 'lower secondary' education, are typically designed to build upon the fundamental teaching and learning processes which begin at ISCED level 1 (primary education). Usually, the educational aim is to lay the foundation for lifelong learning and human development on which education systems may systematically expand further educational opportunities. Programmes at this level are usually organized around a more subject-oriented curriculum, introducing theoretical concepts across a broad range of subjects. UNESCO, ISCED 2011, <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/lower-secondary-education-isced-2>.
- 3 UNHCR mid-2018 data is available in UNHCR (2019) *Mid-Year Trends 2018*, Geneva: UNHCR, p.3. Total displaced based on those figures is 70.4 million people of UNHCR concern, minus 3.9 million stateless people, plus 5.4 million Palestinian refugees under UNRWA: UNRWA (2018) *In Figures*, p.1. [https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/unrwa\\_in\\_figures\\_2018\\_eng\\_v1\\_31\\_1\\_2019\\_final.pdf](https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/unrwa_in_figures_2018_eng_v1_31_1_2019_final.pdf) There are 1.6 million more IDPs from conflict and violence in 2018 than 2017 <http://www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data>
- 4 UN OCHA (2018) *World Humanitarian Trends 2018 Highlights*, p.20.
- 5 These figures were calculated by identifying how many school-aged children were in need of humanitarian assistance in 2018 – 50 million – and then applying an out-of-school rate in each country (or an average for crisis-affected countries if national data is not available) and adding to this population an extra percentage to reflect the increased out-of-school rates in crisis-affected regions of countries to this population. We also included the estimated number of out-of-school refugees as noted by UNHCR in their *Turn the Tide* report of 2018. UNHCR (2018) *Turn the Tide: Refugee Education in Crisis*. Geneva: UNHCR. A full methodology can be found in Annex 2.
- 6 UN OCHA (2018) *World Humanitarian Trends 2018 Highlights*, p.20.
- 7 UNHCR (2017) *Left Behind: Refugee Education in Crisis*. Geneva: UNHCR, p.9.
- 8 UNHCR-provided graph of net enrolment rates for refugees. The percentages are based on the population estimates for 5-11-year-olds (primary) and 12-17-year-olds (secondary) and the estimated or reported net enrolment rates for the year 2016.
- 9 Calculations based on analysis of data from Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) and data from The World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE), <https://www.education-inequalities.org>
- 10 UNESCO (2019) *Global Education Monitoring Report*, p.243.
- 11 Education Cannot Wait (2018) *The Humanitarian-Development Nexus: Modelling Education in Crisis*. Presented to the HLSG Spring Meeting Washington, p.3.
- 12 For a full list of indicators for SDG 4, please see <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>
- 13 António Guterres, speech to UNHCR Executive Committee, 1 October 2012, <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2012/10/506c2a2d6/unhcr-guterres-says-global-humanitarian-crisis-levels-unmatched-recent.html>
- 14 UNOCHA (2019) *Global Humanitarian Overview 2019*, p.4.
- 15 See note 1.
- 16 UNHCR (2018) *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017*, p.6. <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2017/>
- 17 Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) (2017) *Natural Disasters 2017*. Brussels: CRED, p.2.
- 18 Global Internal Displacement Database, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data>
- 19 UN OCHA (2019) *Global Humanitarian Overview 2019*, p.4.
- 20 UN OCHA (2018) *World Humanitarian Data and Trends 2018 Highlights*, p.2. [https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/WHDT\\_2018%20Highlights\\_29%20Nov.pdf](https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/WHDT_2018%20Highlights_29%20Nov.pdf)
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 UN OCHA (2018) *World Humanitarian Data and Trends 2018: Highlights*, p.1. [https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/WHDT\\_2018%20Highlights\\_29%20Nov.pdf](https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/WHDT_2018%20Highlights_29%20Nov.pdf)

- 23 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>
- 24 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>
- 25 Latest calculation was 89 per cent in low- and middle-income countries, UNESCO (2019) *Global Education Monitoring Report, Migration, Displacement and Education: Building Bridges Not Walls*, UNESCO: Paris, p.56. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/265866E.pdf>
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- 27 UNICEF (2018) UNICEF Data, Secondary Education. <https://data.unicef.org/topic/education/secondary-education/>
- 28 See: Justino, P., Leone, M. and Salardi, P. (2011) *Education and Conflict Recovery: The Case of Timor Leste*. HiCN Working Paper 100. <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/10.1596/1813-9450-5774>; Verwimp, P. and Van Bavel, J. (2011) *Schooling, Violent Conflict and Gender in Burundi*. HiCN Working Paper 101. <https://ideas.repec.org/p/hic/wpaper/101.html>
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- 33 Rose, P. (2016) Opinion: Rape, Murder, Forced Marriage: What Girls in Conflict Zones Get Instead of Education. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/rape-murder-forced-marriage-what-girls-in-conflictzones-get-instead-of-education-59689>
- 34 UNESCO (2016) *Global Education Monitoring Report, Gender Review*.
- 35 Salem, H. (2018) *The Transitions Adolescent Girls Face: Education in Conflict-Affected Settings*, p.6.
- 36 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>
- 37 The Grand Bargain, launched during the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016, is an agreement between more than 30 of the largest donors and humanitarian aid agencies which aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action. <https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/3861>
- 38 <http://www.educationcannotwait.org/>
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- 68 Researcher's calculations based on analysis of DHS and MICS household survey data from WIDE, the World Inequality Database on Education.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Based on the out-of-school populations calculated for this report we can estimate the number of school days missed during a period of time. This assumes there are 184 school days per year, based on OECD averages of 185 at primary and 183 at lower secondary. <https://data.oecd.org/eduresource/teaching-hours.htm> The launch of the Leave No Girl Behind campaign was 20 April 2018. This report will be launched on World Refugee Day, 20 June 2019. There are 426 calendar days between these two dates, which corresponds to 214.8 school days.  $(184/365) * 426$ . This figure multiplied by the number of girls in crises who are out of school comes to 2.8 billion.
- 75 UNHCR (2018) *Turn the Tide: Refugee Education in Crisis*. Geneva: UNHCR.
- 76 These figures were calculated using 2018 primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary school populations (2014 for Ukraine), and the latest (2013-2017) out-of-school rates at each level. For countries with no out-of-school rates since 2013, we used averages from available data for all other crisis-affected countries (24 per cent at primary, 38 per cent at lower secondary, and 56 per cent at upper secondary, rising to 26 per cent, 39 per cent, and 57 per cent for girls respectively).
- 77 Borno and Yobe states in Nigeria, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan.



- 78** These figures could also be underestimates as they may exclude IDPs who have migrated away from crisis-affected regions. Data on the number of IDPs who are out of school currently does not exist and therefore has not been included. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre aims to have initial data on education outcomes for IDPs towards the end of 2019.
- 79** Source for number of pupils in UK state secondary schools: UK Government Department for Education (2018) *Schools, Pupils and Their Characteristics*, January 2018, p.3. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/719226/Schools\\_Pupils\\_and\\_their\\_Characteristics\\_2018\\_Main\\_Text.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719226/Schools_Pupils_and_their_Characteristics_2018_Main_Text.pdf)
- 80** Calculations based on analysis of data from DHS, MICS and WIDE.
- 81** UNESCO data set out-of-school children of primary school age, extracted 7 May 2019. [http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=edulit\\_ds](http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=edulit_ds)
- 82** Calculations based on analysis of data from DHS, MICS and WIDE.
- 83** UNHCR (2018) *Turn the Tide: Refugee Education in Crisis*. Geneva: UNHCR, p.13.
- 84** UNHCR-provided graph of net enrolment rates for refugees. The percentages are based on the population estimates for 5-11-year-olds (primary) and 12-17-year-olds (secondary) and the estimated or reported net enrolment rates for the year 2016.
- 85** In Niger, according to analysis of DHS and MICS data by the researcher, only one per cent of girls complete upper secondary school. In Niger an adolescent girl has a roughly one in five chance of giving birth between the age of 15-19 – UNDP (2019) *Human Development Report* data on adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15-19). <http://hdr.undp.org/en/indicators/36806>– This means that an adolescent girl in Niger is 20 times more likely to be a teenage mother than she is to complete secondary school.
- 86** Based on an average of Burkina Faso – 2.5, Chad – 5.5, Mali – 4.2, Mauritania – 6.5, Niger – 2.1.
- 87** Calculations based on analysis of data from DHS, MICS and WIDE.
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- 92** UNICEF (2017) *Guidance: Including Children with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action - Education*. p.13. [http://training.unicef.org/disability/emergencies/downloads/UNICEF\\_Education\\_English.pdf](http://training.unicef.org/disability/emergencies/downloads/UNICEF_Education_English.pdf)
- 93** Ibid. p.13.
- 94** Calculations based on analysis of data from DHS, MICS and WIDE.
- 95** Based on analysis of DHS data from STATcompiler Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Pakistan.
- 96** These statistics were calculated using an analysis of DHS data from STATcompiler for Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Pakistan. The following graph shows the average net secondary school attendance of girls in crisis-affected regions of these countries versus the non-crisis-affected regions.
- 97** Based on analysis of DHS and MICS data from WIDE for Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Sudan.
- 98** Based on analysis of DHS and MICS data from WIDE for Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and Pakistan.
- 99** Data obtained from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics on 29 March 2019. <http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=121>
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- 204** This might include a review of education sector plans, budgets, curricula and textbooks in order to ensure teaching materials, methods, and learning environments are gender-sensitive, and promote equality, non-discrimination and human rights. Efforts should be made to identify how well the government is addressing supply side and demand side factors that create gendered patterns of enrolment, completion, drop out and achievement. The review should analyse and determine how girls and boys across geographic, income and ethnic groups experience education, and help to identify and tackle some of the barriers that keep girls and boys out of school. Ideally, the review should be undertaken by the government, with support from partners.
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## ANNEX 1: CALCULATING OUT-OF-SCHOOL FIGURES

### Method 1 – number of children out of school in crisis-affected countries

The total number of primary- and secondary-aged children out of school in crisis-affected countries is 128 million, and 67 million of them are girls. This is based on 2018 primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary school populations (2014 for Ukraine), and the latest (2013-2017) out-of-school rates at each level. For countries with no out-of-school rates since 2013 we have used averages from available data for all other crisis-affected countries (24 per cent at primary, 38 per cent at lower secondary, and 56 per cent at upper secondary, rising to 26 per cent, 39 per cent, and 57 per cent for girls respectively).

### Method 2 – children out of school because of humanitarian crises

The Humanitarian Action for Children appeals by UNICEF address various crises in countries around the world. These change each year as different crises arise, so the following is a snapshot of the situation in 2018.

In 2018 there were 31 countries with HAC appeals (not including refugee situations). These appeals list the number of people and children (aged under 18) in need due to a particular crisis. In these 31 countries there were 154 million people in need, 75 million of whom were children, and 50 million of whom were school-aged (6-18). This is the lowest figure in some years. For comparison, in 2017 there were 228 million people in need, and between 179 million and 187 million from 2014 to 2016.

Combining these 2018 figures with the latest available (2013-2017) out-of-school rates for each country, or averages where data is unavailable, indicates that 16.8 million of these children are out-of-school, 9.2 million of whom are girls.

However, out-of-school rates are likely to be significantly higher in regions of countries affected by crises. It is not possible to analyse the differing out-of-school rates in each region of the 31 countries in 2018 due to lack of data, so as a proxy this analysis uses the difference in out-of-school rates in crisis-affected regions of nine countries (Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Sudan) between 2012 and 2015, using available household survey data from The World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE). This shows that out-of-school rates are 41 per cent higher at primary, 17 per cent higher at lower secondary, and 2 per cent higher at upper secondary in crisis-affected regions compared to national averages for the same countries. For girls these differences are 38 per cent, 18 per cent, and four per cent respectively.

### Findings

Using this proxy for differences in crisis-affected versus non-crisis-affected regions of the same country and applying this to the out-of-school figures for the 31 countries with HAC appeals in 2018 we find that there are 20 million out-of-school children: 14 million at secondary level – 11 million of whom are girls – and 7.7 million at primary level. We then add the total number of out-of-school refugees – four million – to this total. Due to a lack of disaggregated data we assume that two million were at primary level and two million were at secondary level, both split evenly between boys and girls. However, this is likely to be a significant underestimate given the known gender gap in refugee education. This figure most closely corresponds to children/girls out-of-school because of crises as it represents our best estimate of people directly affected by crises in 2018 who are also out-of-school.

Yana is looking forward to learning Hausa language so she can communicate better





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