



European
Commission



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European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

Education in emergencies

What is it?

Children living in humanitarian crises have the right to quality education and training. With its policy on education in emergencies and protracted crises, the EU aims at minimising the impact of crises on children's learning.

The EU helps children caught in crises go back and stay in education through various formal and non-formal education pathways. We support teachers with training, coaching and protection actions.

The EU is also increasingly focusing on protecting education from attack and the rollout of the Safe Schools Declaration.

Over 65% of EU-funded actions on education in emergencies have integrated protection elements. This ensures safe learning spaces and links, where needed, to specialised child protection services.

Why is this important?

Education is a fundamental right and a basic need for children caught in humanitarian crises. It is crucial to give them a better future, develop their full potential, and equip them with skills and protection to restore their sense of normality and safety.

Children become more self-sufficient and have a stronger voice on issues affecting them.

Education is also one of the best tools for investing in peace, stability, and economic growth. Yet it is also one of the most underfunded areas of humanitarian aid: only around 3% of global humanitarian funding is allocated to education.

Despite the sustainable development goal of ensuring quality education for every child, there are still 260 million children who do not go to primary or secondary school. Among refugee children, only 77% have been enrolled in primary and 31% in secondary school.

Each year, around 12 million girls are married before the age of 18 - including 38% of girls in sub-Saharan Africa. More than 150 million children aged five to 17 are victims of forced labour.

During armed conflict or insecurity, education comes under attack. In over 11,000 attacks during the past 5 years, more than 22,000 students, teachers, and academics have been injured, killed, or harmed (data from the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack).

COVID-19 has exacerbated the negative trends and provoked a worldwide education crisis. The most vulnerable are facing the dire consequences of the pandemic:

- 10 million more girls are at risk of early marriage and dropping out, according to UNICEF
- 463 million children globally (at least a third of the world's schoolchildren) were unable to access remote learning during school closures.

How are we helping?

Policy

The EU is one of the top donors and policy shapers in education globally. By making education in emergencies a part of its humanitarian response and linked closely with development cooperation, the EU makes full use of its humanitarian and development funding instruments to support children affected by crises.

The following priorities help the EU support the continuity of quality and safe education during crises:

1. partnerships for a rapid, efficient, effective, and innovative education response
2. promoting access, inclusion, and equity
3. championing education for peace and protection
4. supporting quality education for better learning outcomes.

They are set out in the European Commission's Communication on Education in Emergencies in Protracted Crises of May 2018, endorsed by EU countries in Council Conclusions in November 2018.

In March 2019, the Commission published its guidance document on Education in Emergencies in EU-funded Humanitarian Aid Operations.

Funding

The EU has spent over €750 million on education in emergencies between 2015 and 2021.

The share of education in emergencies in our humanitarian budget has substantially increased in the last years (starting from 1% in 2015). It is maintained at 10% of the humanitarian budget as of 2019.

Nearly 12 million girls and boys have benefited from EU-funded educational projects between 2015 and 2021.

EU humanitarian funding is delivered through its humanitarian partners, notably NGOs, United Nations agencies, and international organisations.

Actions

The EU supports a variety of actions under the education in emergencies policy, with over half of them promoting education for girls.

EU humanitarian aid supports children and teachers in both formal and non-formal education. This includes accelerated education programmes that condense several years of curriculum to help children reach faster the grade corresponding to their age.

Our projects focus on children living in host communities (65%), internally displaced children (55%) and refugee children (50%).

Examples of EU-supported actions are:

- formal and non-formal learning activities
- providing teaching and learning materials
- training and mentoring teachers and other education workers
- psychosocial support and life skills training (including health and hygiene awareness, mine risk education, conflict and disaster risk reduction activities, and personal resilience and recreation sessions)
- community sensitisation and awareness-raising
- school infrastructure rehabilitation and improvement
- promoting protection of schools

EU-funded actions also support parent-teacher associations, community-based school management, student/children clubs, as well as peer-to-peer training and activities. About one-fifth of all actions include innovative solutions for students and teachers.

Facts & figures

Crises and humanitarian emergencies affect children's access to quality education.

COVID-19 exacerbated inequalities in education with **463 million** children globally unable to access remote learning during school closures.

The EU allocated **€750 million** for education in emergencies in 2015-2021 period. The funding target for 2022 is **€158 million**.

Nearly **12 million** children benefited from EU-funded projects for education in emergencies.