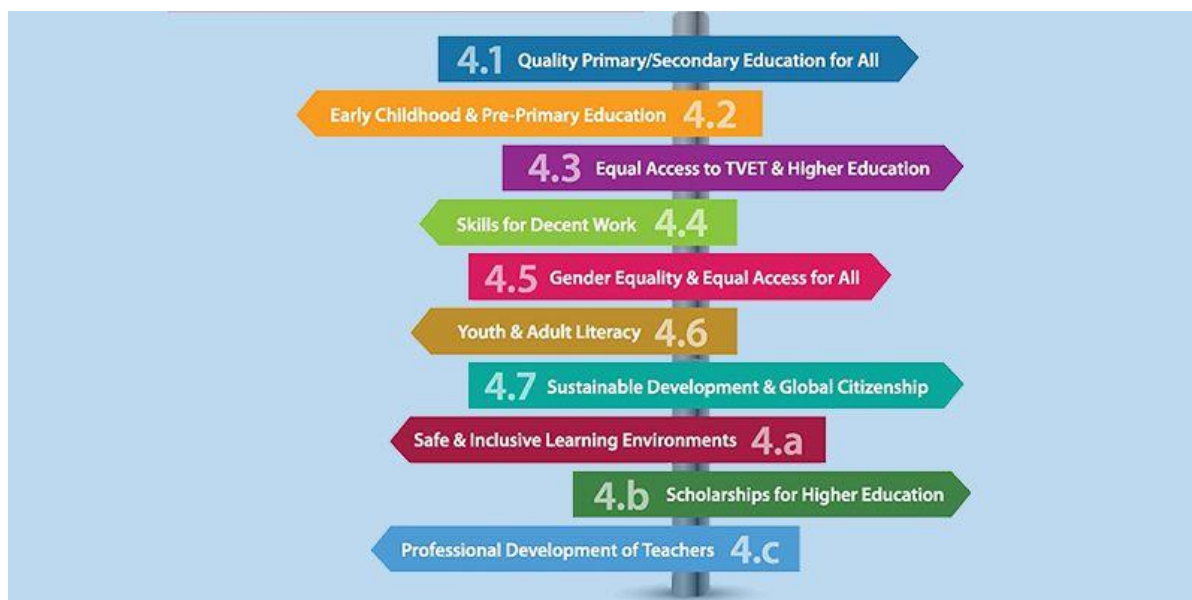# REGIONAL BUREAU FOR **WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA**
EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

Agenda 2030: 10 years to deliver on SDG4

The Sustainable Development Goal 4 - *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all* - is a key goal of the 2030 *Leave No One Behind* agenda, as it is an enabler for the achievement of all the others SDGs.

While 2020 marks the start of the 'Decade of Action', we are yet far behind to meet the SDG4 targets, particularly with regards to equal access to quality education opportunities **for all**, disregarding individuals' age, gender, status or geographical origin.

The challenge of meeting universal primary and secondary education is particularly great for countries in sub-Saharan Africa, where the school-age population is growing faster than elsewhere in the world. The share of the region in the global out-of-school population of primary school age grew from 41% in 2000 to 54% in 2017, while the region has the lowest rate in accessing early childhood education. Of those who are in school, only 1 in 10 reach a minimum level of proficiency in reading and mathematics by the end of primary[1].

In addition to that, the proportion of trained teachers is falling with only 64% of primary and 50% of secondary school teachers having the minimum required training.

In the Sahel region, where 65% of the population is under 25, education is still a privilege. In Mali, 40% of children are out of school; in Chad, less than 30% complete primary; in Burkina Faso, more than 40% of 15-24 are illiterate; in Niger, 56% of girls do not go to school; and in the whole Sahel, less than 10% of children with disabilities attend school (UIS, 2019).

SDG4 policy documents emphasise equity and inclusion, and they explicitly incorporate the global commitment to meeting the education needs of displaced children and youth.

As co-convening agency and active member of the SDG Education 2030 Steering Committee, UNHCR has a critical role to play in advocating for the rights of refugees, forcibly displaced and stateless children and youth to inclusive and equitable education so that States meet their commitments to SDG4 by 2030.

Country teams in the field must thus continuously be engaged to ensure that all persons of concern to UNHCR are visible and accounted for in the next 10 years of education sector planning, development and monitoring at national and sub-national levels.

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[1] UNESCO, 2019. Meeting commitments: are countries on track to achieve SDG4?

EDUCATION IN WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA

Central Sahel Situation: schools continue to close at high speed

The impact of armed conflict and spreading insecurity on education in the Central Sahel region is devastating, with thousands schools destroyed, closed, and used for military purposes; teachers threatened, kidnapped, murdered; and children deprived of their right to education and exposed to increased risks of abuse, violence and exploitation.

In February 2020, 2,506 schools were closed in Burkina Faso, 1,151 in Mali and 300 in Niger, affecting more than 700,000 children and 20,000 teachers.

Selection of articles on the situation:

- *Burkina Faso: à Kaya, le traumatisme des enfants déplacés* (RFI)
- *Burkina Faso: à Kaya, les écoles s'adaptent à la crise des déplacés* (RFI)
- *Plus de 2.300 écoles fermées au Burkina Faso à cause des attaques des djihadistes* (VOA)
- *Risque de crise humanitaire au Sahel : les femmes et les enfants d'abord* (TV5 Monde)

Stop the War on Children: WCA Brief

Save The Children | February 2020

Across Africa, 170 million children live in conflict zones - which is equivalent to 1 every 4 children. DRC, Mali and Nigeria are among the top ten worst conflict-affected countries to be a child. Further, four million children across West and Central Africa are displaced by conflict.

Save The Children third annual *Stop the War on Children* report highlights the different ways in which conflict affects boys and girls.

Download the PDF version.
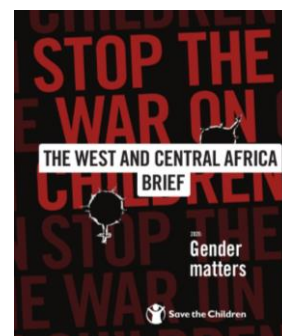
Education in Danger: Monthly News Brief

GCPEA | January 2020

Several schools burnt and two teachers abducted in Burkina Faso, while attacks on schools are reported in Cameroon, Mali and Niger.

Download the PDF version.

Education in the News

Cote d'Ivoire: Encore loin du « zéro grossesse » à l'école
Since 2013, national education has made the fight against early pregnancies one of its priorities, but there are still around 3,700 cases each year.
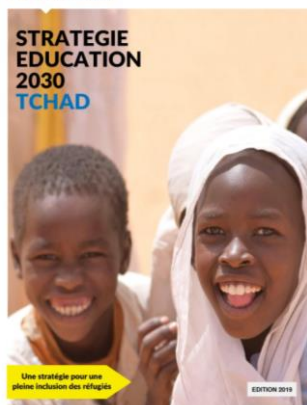
Read the full article here.

Guinea: L'orpaillage, un danger pour la santé et la scolarisation
In Guinea, some children are forced to drop out of school to work in the gold mines.

Read the full article here.

REFUGEE EDUCATION

Chad: Education Strategy 2030

In line with the Refugee Education 2030: A Strategy for Refugee Inclusion, Chad will soon launch their new national strategy for refugee education, developed in close collaboration with the key stakeholders: Ministries of Education, technical and financial partners, civil society, refugees and host communities.

This new strategy aims at the full inclusion of all refugees in the Chadian national education system, in both emergency and protracted situations, by strenghtening the partnerships with humanitarian and development actors.

Promising Practice from the Region
ECW Multi Year Resilience Programme in CAR & Chad

The Government of the Central African Republic and *Education Cannot Wait* (ECW) launched in 2019 a three-year education programme targeting an estimated 900,000 children – half of whom are girls – and address the violence and displacement that have left nearly half a million children out of school in the country.

With a funding of US$19,5 million over 3 years (2019-2021), the programme targets displaced children and host communities with comprehensive efforts to increase access to education, improve retention and ensure education continuity, improve the quality of learning and teaching, and establish safe, protective and inclusive learning environments. As a grantee, UNHCR will implement a range of activities to improve the refugee children access to a safe education in the region of Obo.

Read the MYRP press release here.

In Chad, ECW plans to allocate a total US$21 million over three years in seed funding grants to catalyse the additional US$30 million required to fully fund the three-year programme and reach 230,000 crisis-affected girls and boys. The protracted crisis in Chad has pushed 1.2 million children (aged 6 to 11) out of school. Only 19% of girls and 40% of boys access lower-secondary-school education, and only one out of every ten girls complete middle school.

Developed under the auspices of Chad's Ministry of National Education and Civic Promotion (MENPC) with the support of ECW and a range of UN agencies and international and national civil society partners, the new MYRP focuses on refugee, displaced and host community children and youth and those affected by food insecurity and malnutrition.

Read the MYRP press release here.

Tertiary Education: Achievements & Highlights

The MHESR in Benin organized a round table on higher education & vocational training on 27th February with financial & technical partners. New orientations & decisions were taken towards successful professional integration of learners.

UNHCR Nigeria initiated discussions with the Nigerian Bottling Company and Cadbury PLC to request for a 6-month internship for a DAFI student studying Microbiology. The student was supported to draft the letters and CVs.

In Chad, a partnership agreement with King Faycal University for a 50% reduction of medical expenses for 140 DAFI scholars & another with French Language Centre (CALF) for training of 101 Arabic Speaking DAFI Scholars.

Signing of a Partnership agreement with Roy Faycal University on 2/2/2020, in N'Djamena - @Yanik Yankeu/UNHCR Chad.

The UNESCO-Shenzhen workshop on Strengthening Networking in Quality Assurance in Africa and Development of Continental Tools for Mutual Recognition of Qualifications was held in Dakar, Senegal, from 18th to 20th February 2020. It led to the Constitution of the French-speaking African Network of National Quality Assurance Agencies (RAFANAQ).

Read more about the UNESCO-Shenzhen project.

UNHCR country offices in Nigeria, Mali, Niger, Central African Republic, Liberia & Senegal participated in the WebEx session on "TA (Temporary Appointments) opportunities for refugees" organized by the Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa. The WebEx enlightened participants on their roles in identifying and assisting refugees who have minimum requirements to apply to posts in the talent pool profiles. Information shared by the Bureau was communicated to refugees through notice boards, emails, partners and social media. Refugees from these country offices attended the WebEx session. There was a total of 36 applications with majority opting for program profile, followed by Admin/Finance and then ICT and HR.

RESOURCES & NEWS FROM PARTNERS

[BLOG] Gender responsive education systems are key to Africa's development agenda

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP for EDUCATION

Despite efforts made to advance girls' rights to access education in Africa, the school life expectancy in sub-Saharan Africa is 9 years. The Gender Equality Strategy for the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 16-25 could play a key role in assisting countries to reorient their education systems and ensure that girls and women acquire the necessary tools to foster Africa's development.

Read the blog here.

[REPORT] Secondary Education in Africa: Preparing youth for the future of work

mastercard foundation

This report examines progress in secondary education in Africa to propose forward-looking recommendations, with emphasis on ensuring youth acquire the skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary to succeed in a dynamic and globalized labour market.

Download the report here.

[INTERVIEW] ECW Interview with Gordon Brown

EDUCATION CANNOT WAIT
The global fund for education in emergencies

In his role as UN Special Envoy for Global Education and as Chair of the ECW High-Level Steering Group, Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown has successfully galvanized financial and political support globally with the hope and opportunity of quality education for every child in this world.

Read the interview here.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP for EDUCATION   [BLOG] Niger: Responding to education needs in a difficult context

In the midst of difficult conditions, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Niger launched its education program in coordination with the Ministry of Education. Read about suggested good practices for working in similar contexts, based on the experience from this program.

Read the blog here.

[ARTICLE] Rebuilding peace in divided education systems

Key to promoting peacebuilding among a post-conflict generation is understanding how children's awareness, attitudes, and behaviours toward conflict-related groups are framed by the lasting legacy of violence. How and when do children learn about and identify with the symbols, markers, and names associated with the warring sides?

COMITE INTERNATIONAL GENEVE
ICRC

Read the article here.

TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

Refugee Educator Academy's Webinar Series

CENTER FOR LEARNING IN PRACTICE

Connect with refugee educators around the world. Get a view inside their teaching and learning contexts and engage with them around critical issues in the field of refugee education.

Check the program and register here.

Transforming Education in Challenging Environments

Discover practical ways teachers can transform the education of children and young people living in conflict-affected contexts.

Future Learn

Check the program and register here.

REGIONAL & GLOBAL EVENTS

"Peace & Security" at the YALI Regional Center for Leadership: the challenges linked to the question of refugees and displaced persons in Africa on the table

YALI REGIONAL LEADERSHIP CENTER WEST AFRICA • DAKAR

YALI Regional Center for Leadership | 12 February 2020

The YALI West Africa Regional Leadership Center based in Dakar trains citizens from 16 countries in the region to encourage transformational learning and improvement of leadership skills.

As part of its 17th hybrid training session in leadership, and its Youth, Peace & Security program, YALI Dakar organized in its premises a morning of reflection around the challenges related to refugees and displaced people in Africa. This session was organized as part of the pledge YALI made during the Global Refugee Forum.

Read about the event here and learn more about YALI here.

UNESCO Mobile Learning Week 2020: Artificial Intelligence & Inclusion

Paris, France | 2-6 March 2020

The Mobile Learning Week (MLW) is the United Nations' flagship event on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education. The 2020 edition of MLW will be held under the theme Artificial Intelligence and Inclusion and it is designed to steer the use of AI towards the direction of inclusion and equity in education – core values underpinning the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and digital opportunities for all.

Read about the event here.