

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

### **EDUCATION NEWSLETTER**



## **Refugee Education in West & Central Africa: 2020 Achievements**

2020 has ended amidst multiple crises across the region, exacerbated by the **COVID-19 global pandemic**. It's time for a quick look back to take stock of the efforts made to **continue delivering education** to those left furthest behind.

UNHCR has delivered crucial support to Ministries of Education to achieve measurable results and sustainable impact for **forcibly displaced children and youth** access to education. Thanks to our donors and partners, many specific programmes have been quickly developed and implemented to continue delivering quality education during the pandemic and **build back better** upon the reopening of schools – efforts that will have to continue in 2021.

The **UNHCR COVID-19 response** in the region reached over **100,000 girls and boys**, including refugee, internally displaced and host community children. Aligned with national COVID-19 strategies, UNHCR and its partners implemented a broad range of interventions including communication and prevention campaigns, remote learning and distance education, enhanced water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, teacher support and assistance to get children back into school.

As we enter 2021, there is a dire need for **enhanced cooperation and coordination** between States, humanitarian and development actors if we are to deliver on **Sustainable Development Goal 4** for all crisis- and displacement-affected children.

## UNHCR'S EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS

### 2020 Key Facts and Figures

This year, it took to be creative to continue guaranteeing [access to quality education](#) for refugee, internally displaced and host community children. Here are some of the 2020 highlights of UNHCR's education programs and activities across the WCA region:

#### Radio Education Program:

UNHCR distributed over **11,000 solar-powered radio sets**, along with school kits, to displaced children in **Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Mali** to enable them access distance education programs broadcast through national and community radios.



#### Home Tutoring & Remedial Classes:

In **Chad**, UNHCR's supported camp teachers to provide **homework and tutoring** to **25,000** students in examination classes.

In **Niger**, UNHCR funded a **remedial program**, developed by NRC, for **2,641** refugee and host children to support them prepare for the next school year.

In **Liberia**, through a partnership with Rising On Air, UNHCR provided **'take home' learning packages** to all refugee children in grades 1 to 5.



#### Distance Learning & Connectivity:

In **Senegal**, thanks to the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund, UNHCR provided **700 digital school kits** to refugee students to support continued access to education.



Watch [UNHCR Chad's video](#) on the return to school in the refugee camps.

#### Support to School Reopening:

UNHCR built and/or rehabilitated over **100 additional classrooms** in **Burkina Faso, CAR, Chad, Mali and Niger**, allowing the safe resumption of classes for thousands of refugee and host community children.

In addition, more than **500** schools across the region were equipped with **WASH installations** (construction of latrines and boreholes, installation of water pumps and handwashing stations) to strengthen preventive measures against the spread of the Covid-19.



#### Teacher Support & Training:

UNHCR ensured **continuous payment of teacher incentives** in refugee settings in **Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea and Liberia** during the closure of schools, in order to retain teachers and ensure the continuity of their income.

In the **Sahel region**, over **2,000 teachers** were trained in EIE, Covid prevention, Child Protection, and PSS/SEL.

#### DAFI Program:

**732 refugee students** received **higher education scholarships** in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo.

– Read the annual [Factsheet](#).



Thanks to all donors supporting UNHCR's Education Programmes in West & Central Africa:



## EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES



### COVID-19: its Lasting Consequences on Education Financing

**In December, following a significant increase in recorded Covid-19 cases, Chad, Mali and Niger have announced new prevention measures, including the re-closing of schools.**



While governments worldwide are continuing to struggle to implement forms of remote learning with equal access for all, the education crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic is still being exacerbated globally. Indeed, children who were already below the line of being able to read are likely to sink even deeper into [learning deficits](#). In addition, the pandemic long-term impact on education will be exacerbated by the ensuing [financial crisis](#).

A recent [White Paper](#) jointly issued by the world's largest education organizations paints a bleak picture of rising costs for education systems, at a time when both domestic finance for education and international aid are at high risk of being cut. The paper sets out the urgent need to [close the financing gap for education](#) globally, and to ensure that governments [target budgets to those who are left furthest behind](#), including refugees and forcibly displaced children and youth.

Access the full paper and the background documents [here](#).

Read also: ['Decades of neglect: Donor financing for education in emergencies'](#).

### Attacks on Education and Safe Schools Declaration

**Thousands of schools are still closed due to insecurity in parts of the Central Sahel, while attacks and kidnappings of students and teachers are on the rise in Cameroon and Nigeria.**

At the end of 2020, [2,169 schools](#) were closed in [Burkina Faso](#), affecting [306,946 students](#) and [12,075 teachers](#) in six regions (Sahel, East, Center-North, Boucle du Mouhoun, North, Center-East). There were also [1,074,993 internally displaced persons](#), including 54% of children under 15 years old.

Read Mr. Stanislas Ouaro, Minister of National Education and Literacy, [here](#).

In [Mali](#), [1,344 schools](#) were still closed because of attacks and threats of attack on education perpetrated by armed groups, affecting [403,200 students](#) and [8,064 teachers](#) in six regions (Menaka, Mopti, Kidal, Timbuktu, Gao, Segou).

In [Cameroon](#), attacks and kidnappings of students and teachers have increased in English-speaking regions during the last quarter of 2020, while in [Nigeria](#), education in the northern region is under threat in the wake of rising insecurity, as demonstrated by the recent abduction of hundreds of boys in a secondary school in the town of Kankara, Katsina State.

[Ghana](#) has been the 106<sup>th</sup> State to endorse the [Safe Schools Declaration](#). The Declaration is now supported by 29 African Union members, committing to safeguarding education from attack.

Check the [Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack \(GCPEA\) website](#) and read the [December Newsletter](#).

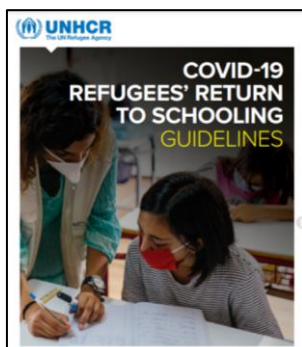




## RESOURCES



### [UNHCR] Guidelines on Refugees' Return to Schooling



UNHCR's [Guidelines on Refugees' Return to Schooling](#) provides advice on specific considerations for refugee students when preparing for and re-opening schools after extended periods of closure due to COVID-19 mitigation measures.

These guidelines are based on the four pillars of the UNICEF, UNESCO, World Bank, World Food Programme and UNHCR [Framework for re-opening schools](#) and its latest [Supplement](#) which were released earlier this year.

Access the guide [here](#).

### [ROUNDTABLE] Meeting our Promises on Refugee Education

In recognition of the significant impact that COVID-19 has had on education for refugees, [Save the Children](#), [Education Cannot Wait](#), [the World Bank](#) and [the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education](#) co-hosted a virtual roundtable to discuss key experiences, learnings and promising practices that have emerged while responding to [refugee education needs during the pandemic](#). This paper synthesises eight key learnings and promising practices shared by participants both during the roundtable and through written contributions submitted prior to the event.

Read the paper [here](#).



### [WEBINAR] Public-Private Partnerships in Education at a time of crisis: Lessons from Liberia and around the globe

The Center for Universal Education (CUE) at Brookings brought together experts in a webinar to discuss the role of non-state actors working in partnership with governments to ensure quality education delivery at times of crises. With the participation of the [Liberian Ministry of Education](#), [Rising Academy](#), [UNHCR](#), [Escuela Nueva Foundation](#), and the [Education Outcomes Fund](#).

Watch the whole conversation and read the highlights [here](#).

### [ONLINE GAME] Corona Quest



The Swiss-developed [Corona Quest computer game](#) is helping pupils protect themselves and face their fears over the coronavirus. The educational game, launched by canton Vaud in May for [pupils aged 4-16](#), exists in [11 languages](#). Its aim is to inform on protective and hygiene measures and actions that can encourage a kindlier attitude among people towards each other.

Access the game [here](#) and read more about it [here](#).

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITY



### [Call for Applications] Humanitarian Education Accelerator (HEA)

The second phase of the **Humanitarian Education Accelerator (HEA)** programme, led by **UNHCR** and funded by **Education Cannot Wait**, has been launched!

The Humanitarian Education Accelerator (HEA) was established in 2016 to generate evidence that supports the design and delivery of **high-quality education innovations** at scale for children affected by humanitarian crises, whilst also building internal capacity of implementers to identify and sustainably scale what works. Now entering its second phase, the HEA is looking for promising humanitarian education innovations in **Chad, Ethiopia, Uganda, Jordan, and Lebanon** to support their transition from successful pilots to programmes that can operate at scale, in order to reach more children with quality education.

Additional information about the lessons coming out of the HEA so far can be found here: [HEA Learning Series](#).

Find out more and apply now <https://unhcr.org/hea>.

Applications will close on **15 January 2021**.

**Humanitarian  
Education  
Accelerator**



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