

REGIONAL BUREAU FOR WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA

EDUCATION NEWSLETTER



Salma, 10, is a primary school student enrolled in the 'Can't Wait to Learn' programme in Djabal refugee camp, Chad. @JRS/Irene Galera

COVID-19 Pandemic worsening Gender Inequalities in Education

This year, [International Women's Day](#) coincided with the anniversary of schools closing in almost all countries, due to COVID-19: a time of [unprecedented challenge for many refugee girls and young women](#), disproportionately impacted by the consequences of the pandemic.

Even before the pandemic, refugee girls were already only half as likely as boys to be enrolled in secondary school, due in part to [early pregnancies](#), [gender-based violence](#) and [sexual and physical exploitation](#). While countries in the region have some of the highest rates of early marriage in the world, providing girls and adolescent girls in crisis with access to an [inclusive quality education](#) is absolutely essential in order to [protect](#) and [empower](#) them.

In order to encourage girls to return to school post Covid closures, UNHCR has launched a massive [multi-media communication campaign](#) in [Niger](#) and [Mali](#) on the [prevention of GBV in schools](#): for two months, radio messages, social media, SMS and



automated calls have reached more than [2,000](#) refugee families and members of child protection networks. This will be continued and expanded through the wide [distribution of comics](#) addressing this specific issue.

UNHCR'S EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS

[CHAD] Improved quality education through innovative learning tools



@JRS/Irene Galera

In Chad, over 910 primary students participate in the *Can't Wait To Learn* elearning program in Djabal and Goz-Beida refugee camps. Thanks to the digital devices (tablets) used in classrooms, students acquire mathematical skills through games, in Arabic and French, which replicate their environment.

Can't Wait to Learn is a fast, effective and low-cost approach that utilises custom gaming technology to deliver quality education. The evidence-based programme was developed by War Child and partners through years of testing and research.

Read more about the 'Can't Wait to Learn' programme [here](#).



@JRS/Irene Galera

[GHANA] New partnership with Mastercard Foundation pave way for more refugees to have access to higher education



Some of the refugee students at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology @UNHCR/Patience Folley

"This is the best thing that ever happened to me. I can't describe how happy and grateful I am for this opportunity" were the words of Grace, a 22 year old Ivorian refugee in Ghana who has gained admission to study Sociology at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, made possible through a [scholarship](#) by the Mastercard Foundation.

Five refugee students in Ghana have been awarded the same scholarship for the coming academic year.

The [Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program](#) has been developed to allows students

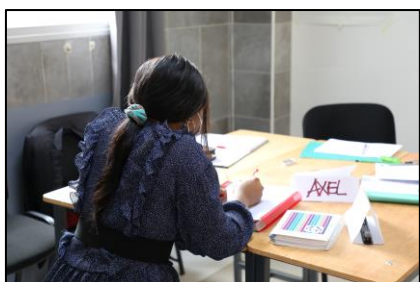


whose talent and promise exceed their financial resources to complete their education. With a vision that education is a catalyst for social and economic change, the program provides financial, social, and academic support to scholars, with the aim to develop [leaders who are active contributors in their communities](#). The program provides financial, social, and academic support to scholars. Financial support includes, but is not limited to, tuition fees, accommodation, books, and other scholastic materials. Mastercard Foundation has committed to ensure [25% of refugee enrollment](#) within this scholarship scheme.

Currently, only 3% of refugees have access to higher education globally, and even less in the West and Central Africa region, reducing their opportunities to find a decent job and to be fully self reliant in their country of asylum or in their county of origin. UNHCR and partners have committed to ensuring that 15% of young refugees can access higher education by 2030: the [15by30 target](#).

Read the full article on UNHCR's website [here](#).

[SENEGAL] Refugee women access certified vocational training



Believing that education can open many doors to employment, Gloria and Amandla, two refugee women in Senegal, have recently successfully finalized several training modules at [Bioforce Africa Training Center](#) in Dakar.

Gloria and Amandla have many things in common. Although they have never met before, both women originate from the Central African Republic, are 26 and full of motivation to succeed in their professional life. Both have also been granted

a scholarship from Bioforce to follow two training modules in [humanitarian project management](#), which they have recently successfully completed. *“At Bioforce, I learnt how to kickstart a project. I know how to identify the problem and set an objective”*, said Gloria at the end of her class.

In 2021, Bioforce provided [4 scholarships for refugee women](#) in Senegal within a [pilot project with UNHCR](#), financially supported by the Monegasque Cooperation. Amandla and Gloria are now both looking for an internship in the humanitarian sector opportunity to put their training into practice and transition into employment, preferably in the humanitarian sector.



[CAMEROON-NIGER] Refugee education at the center of International Women's Day celebrations



DAFI students with the education team of Plan International, partner of UNHCR Cameroon.

In [Cameroon](#), as part of the activities to commemorate IWD, an [educational talk on early marriage](#) and its consequences on the girl child was held in Douala. The meeting was attended by girls from the [DAFI programme](#) as well as representatives from various ministries and local authorities. In Yaoundé, the DAFI girls organized a discussion with [refugee women entrepreneurs](#), who shared their experiences on the theme of the day: *“Female leadership for an egalitarian future in the world of COVID-19”*.

In [Niger](#), the celebration of IWD was an opportunity to organise a vast [awareness-raising campaign](#) among refugee parents on the importance of [education](#) for children, particularly girls. This campaign was conducted jointly by UNHCR and its partners ADES and APBE at the Ouallam refugee site.



Awareness campaign on education for refugee children in Ouallam, Niger. @UNHCR Niger



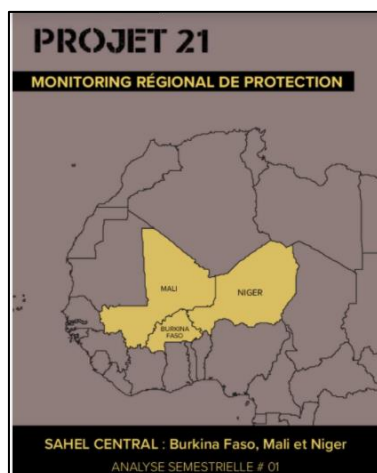
IWD celebrations were also an opportunity for the education authorities to call for the mobilisation of funds to finance [Master's scholarships for refugee students](#) currently receiving UNHCR undergraduate scholarships, so that they can complete their full academic cycle.

Sani Musa Yusuf, a Nigerian refugee student and DAFI scholar, graduated from Maryam Abacha American University in Niger with a Bachelor of Science in Sociology after three years of study. Sani graduated at the top of his class. @UNHCR Niger

EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES



[Central Sahel] Project 21: Regional Protection Monitoring



Launched by UNHCR and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), **Project 21** aims to support **cross-border and inter-agency coordination of protection** for the rights of conflict-affected people through **joint advocacy** and **concerted programming** of the humanitarian response. It presents the **protection situation of refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities**, around the following themes: legal protection and documentation, community engagement, gender-based violence, child protection, education and solutions.

The section on education highlights the difficulties of **access to education** for displaced children (both in terms of formal education and alternative educational opportunities), as well as the associated **protection risks**.

Read the [bi-annual analytical report #1](#) (May-November 2020).



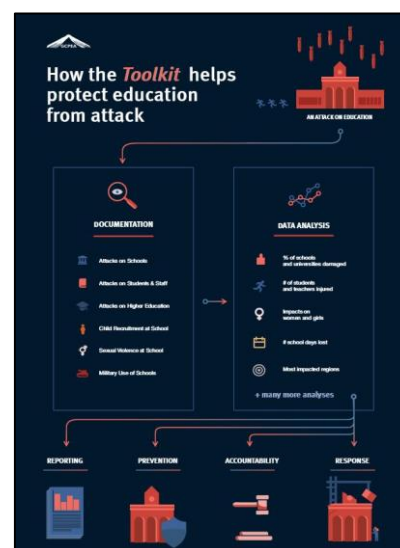
[Protecting Education from Attack] Improved Monitoring and Reporting

The first-ever comprehensive **training on “Implementing the Safe Schools Declaration”**, which brought together over 90 representatives from ministries of defense, education, and foreign affairs from **20 countries**, was co-organized by the **Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID)** and the **Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA)** from February 24th to March 17th 2021. The training aimed at strengthening national capacity to protect education in armed conflict, propelling effective implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration and exchanging good practice in safeguarding education.

Through a series of presentations, practical exercises, and discussions, the training demonstrated how attacks on education can be better prevented and damage mitigated, including by **improving data collection and accountability**, and by examining the different ways that boys and men, and girls and women, are affected by attacks. Group sessions were moderated by a wide range of actors included UNHCR Education Specialists (from the WCA Regional Bureau and the Mauritania Country Office).

At the training, GCPEA also presented its **Toolkit for Collecting and Analyzing Data on Attacks on Education**, an innovative new guide for government ministries and NGOs to strengthen monitoring, reporting, and analysis of attacks on schools and universities, students and teachers. The GCPEA’s toolkit can be found [here](#).

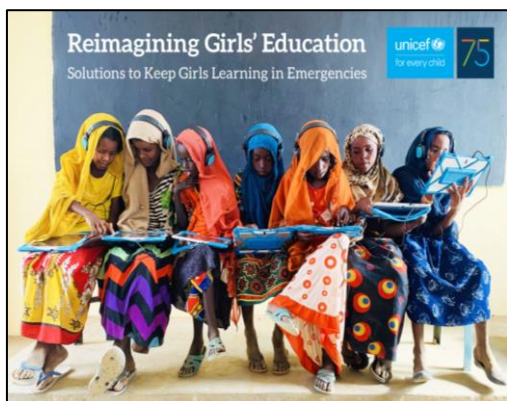
Read more about the training [here](#) and visit the GCPEA website [here](#).



RESOURCES: FOCUS ON GIRLS' EDUCATION



[UNICEF] Reimagining Girls' Education



Reimagining Girls' Education: Solutions to Keep Girls Learning in Emergencies presents an overview of what works to support learning outcomes for girls in emergencies. Research shows that girls in emergencies are disadvantaged at all stages of education and are more likely to be out-of-school than in non-emergency settings. This report highlights promising evidence-based actions in education and practical examples of approaches that have been tested, and from which lessons can be drawn.

Read the report [here](#).

[ECW-UNGEI-INEE] EiE GenKit

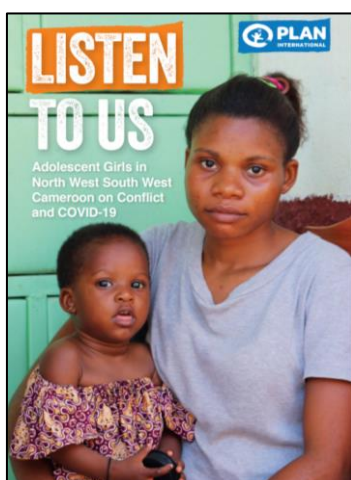
When gender-responsive, quality education is available to all it has the potential to transform societies and build sustainable peace. A joint initiative from the [Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies \(INEE\)](#), [Education Cannot Wait \(ECW\)](#) and the [UN Girls' Education Initiative \(UNGEI\)](#), the **EiE GenKit** is a core resource package for gender in education in emergencies.

The EiE-GenKit is the first resource of its kind, providing education practitioners with practical tools to promote [gender-responsive programming](#) from crisis to peace and sustainable development.

Access the document [here](#).



[PLAN INTERNATIONAL] Listen to Us: Adolescent Girls in North West South West Cameroon on Conflict and Covid-19



This report is the result of a multi-sectoral needs assessment exercise focusing on the [rights and needs of adolescents](#) living in the Anglophone territories of North West South West (NWSW) Cameroon. The assessment captured the [voices of adolescent girls and young women](#), alongside adolescent boys, young men and their parents and caregivers. It spoke directly to adolescent girls themselves, in particular adolescent girls who are mothers, pregnant, or married, whose ideas, and needs, are often ignored.

The report, which gives adolescents the space to voice their concerns and priorities can be used to engage with states, donors and other humanitarian actors and highlight what needs to be done to [address adolescents' needs, rights and aspirations](#).

Read the report [here](#).

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY



[UNESCO] Prize for Girls' and Women's Education

The [UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education](#) honours outstanding and innovative contributions made by individuals, institutions and organizations to [advance girls' and women's education](#). It is the first UNESCO Prize of this nature and is unique in showcasing successful projects that improve and promote the educational prospects of girls and women and in turn, the quality of their lives.

Funded by the Government of the People's Republic of China, the Prize is conferred annually to [two laureates](#) and consists of an award of [US \\$50,000](#) each to help further their work in the area of girls' and women's education.

Learn more about the Prize [here](#).



CONTACT US

Charlotte Berquin, Education Officer
Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa, Protection Service
berquin@unhcr.org

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