

# 20 YEARS OF INEE:

Achievements and Challenges  
in Education in Emergencies



Inter-agency  
Network for Education  
in Emergencies

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# ACRONYMS

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<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus Disease
<b>ECW</b>	Education Cannot Wait
<b>EFA</b>	Education for All
<b>EiE</b>	Education in Emergencies
<b>FTS</b>	Financial Tracking Services
<b>GEC</b>	Global Education Cluster
<b>GEMR</b>	Global Education Monitoring Report
<b>GPE</b>	Global Partnership for Education
<b>IIEP</b>	International Institute for Educational Planning
<b>INEE</b>	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organization
<b>OCHA</b>	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>SDG 4</b>	Sustainable Development Goal 4
<b>TiCC</b>	Teachers in Crisis Collaborative
<b>UIS</b>	Institute for Statistics
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNGA</b>	United Nations General Assembly
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>WEF</b>	World Education Forum
<b>WHS</b>	World Humanitarian Summit

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Prioritizing education in emergencies (EiE) is more critical in 2020 than ever before as the COVID-19 pandemic has placed additional burdens on education systems around the globe. Nowhere is this more acute than in crisis-affected countries, and in countries hosting refugees and other displaced populations, where education systems are often overextended and under-resourced.

**New data shows that even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 127 million primary and secondary school-age children and young people living in crisis-affected countries were out of school in 2019, or almost one-half the global out-of-school population. Girls are more likely than boys to be out of school in crisis contexts (based on analysis of new data provided by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics for this report). In 2019, the out-of-school rate for children and young people of primary and secondary school age living in countries affected by crisis was 31 percent for girls and 27 percent for boys.**

While the challenges of delivering quality education to children and young people in crisis contexts are complex—from external threats to system failures—political will, inclusive policies, greater capacity, and predictable financing can make a difference. However, as this report highlights, financing for EiE, while increasing, is skewed toward a few high-profile emergencies leaving many children and young people living in ‘forgotten crises’, with little hope of quality education.

Since its founding 20 years ago, the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) has grown significantly. What started during a consultation meeting in Geneva on EiE (INEE, 2000) is now a global network of nearly 18,000 members working in dozens of network spaces and activities in more than 190 countries. This report, which marks the 20th anniversary of INEE, offers new data on the number of crisis-affected children and young people around the globe who are currently denied the right to education. The report acknowledges the key role INEE has played in the development of EiE as a recognized field, by mapping key milestones, noting in particular the progress in coordination of education responses. It offers new analysis of trends in education financing for EiE over the last 20 years. It traces the changes that have enabled EiE to become a recognized part of global education policy agenda since world leaders came together in 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, which led to their commitment to provide education for all children and young people around the globe. ([see INEE EiE Timeline](#))

As INEE celebrates its 20th year, the imperative of ensuring that all individuals affected by crisis have the right to a quality, safe, relevant, and equitable education remains as critical as it was when the network was established. Without a sustained focus on providing education in crisis-affected countries, the world will not meet the goal which was adopted by all UN member states in 2015 to provide inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030 (UN, 2015).

This report highlights that, although notable global progress has been made in education in emergency situations over the last 20 years, significant challenges remain.

## KEY MILESTONES AND CHALLENGES

**The INEE Minimum Standards in Education: Preparedness, Response and Recovery, launched in 2004 set new global standards to enhance quality and ensure access to, safe and relevant education.** Updated in 2010, they have become a key reference in the field of EiE.

**The Global Education Cluster (GEC) was established in 2006 as part of humanitarian architecture to promote coordination** of education in humanitarian responses, signaling a key turning point for the provision of education during crisis.

**EiE is now a recognized and established field and is part of humanitarian responses** as set out in the 2010 the [UN resolution on education in emergencies](#).

**EiE is part of global policy commitments**, identified in the World Education Forum [Incheon Declaration](#), and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, 2015.

**The establishment of the multilateral Education Cannot Wait Fund launched in 2016**, identified education as a key sector of humanitarian responses and has led to important changes in the funding of EiE.

**Despite progress in some areas, 127 million primary and secondary school aged children and young people in crisis-affected contexts remain out of school**, and are denied their right to quality education.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the combined primary and secondary aged children and youth out-of-school in Education Cannot Wait Fund Crisis-affected countries (see appendix A).

**Conflicts and disasters continue to forcibly displace millions of people every year, reaching a total of 79.5 million forcibly displaced in 2019.** Internally displaced and refugee children and young people continue to face significant barriers to accessing and completing safe quality education.

**The education sector continues to receive far less than the 2012 UN target of 4 percent of global humanitarian aid.**<sup>2</sup> While the amount of humanitarian aid for education has increased significantly since 2012, less than half of the requests for the sector actually get funded. In 2019, just 43 percent of aid requests for the education sector were funded, compared to 63 percent of humanitarian aid requests overall.

**Humanitarian financing for education is asymmetrical resulting in many ‘forgotten’ crises:** Of the 423 humanitarian aid requests for the education sector that received some funding, half went to just 29 appeals. Those receiving the most funding are often those with the greatest media visibility and those seen as having geopolitical importance, such as Syria. Sub-Saharan African nations affected by crises are most likely to be left out.

**The global community is facing ongoing and new challenges.** Climate change is exacerbating the number and intensity of natural disasters, and COVID-19 is adversely affecting children’s and young people’s access to education around the world.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Education must receive its fair share of humanitarian funding, including an increase in the current target of 4 percent of humanitarian aid going to education.**

In 2019, education received just 2.6 percent of total humanitarian funding. The donor community must take stock of this situation and, if possible, match the European Union’s commitment to direct 10 percent of its humanitarian aid to education.

**The international education aid architecture (humanitarian and development) must work in a consistent and predictable way to ensure that education needs in forgotten crises are met.**

While the amount of humanitarian aid disbursed to education has increased in the 20 years since INEE was founded, it has been skewed toward “high-profile” crises that either have received extensive media coverage or are geopolitically important. In order to ensure that education funding is not diverted from protracted crises, the international community and donors must provide additional funds for sudden-onset crises. Increased cooperation between humanitarian-development financing and for protracted crises situations is needed to enhance education systems resilience.

**Quality education can be provided in crisis situations by expanding existing initiatives that are based on evidence and by investing in teachers.**

Important improvements have been made in the quality of education provided in crisis situations, including addressing the psychosocial and social and emotional learning needs of children and young people. However, sustaining these improvements means building teachers’ capacity with long-term approaches, which require both planning and funding. Moreover, providing quality education requires that teachers are compensated appropriately and have safe, well-resourced working conditions.

**More research, data, and evidence are needed.**

Research, data, and evidence on particular areas of EiE must be expanded in order to strengthen evidence-based initiatives and to ensure that international education goals are met. Areas (among others) that need more research include the effects of climate change on education, pre-primary education, inclusive education for children and young people with disabilities, gender responsive education linking education and child protection, and education for young people, including those who have dropped out of school. A particularly critical area for research includes how best to sustainably strengthen the crisis-resilience of national education systems through greater collaboration between development and humanitarian actors.

**EiE actors must prepare to respond rapidly to crises and to draw from local knowledge and expertise.**

Enhanced capacity-building and crisis planning are needed at all levels—from the global to the national to the local. Local voices, including those of ministries of education, are essential to provide effective and balanced emergency response, and to strengthen the partnerships needed to face the inevitable challenges.

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<sup>2</sup> This 4 percent level was recommended as part of the [UN Global Education First Initiative](#)



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# INTRODUCTION

Few education systems have escaped the global education emergency brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. With 1.6 billion students out of school because of COVID-19 (UNESCO, 2020a), overextended and under-resourced education systems in countries already affected by crisis and/or hosting displaced communities are facing additional burdens.

Even before the current pandemic, with 257 million children and young people out of school globally in 2019, children and young people around the world had vastly different educational opportunities and experiences (UNESCO, 2019). Of those denied this basic human right, millions have never even set foot in a classroom, and hundreds of millions – both in and out of school – are at risk of not learning (UNESCO, 2020b). Conflict, environmental disasters, health emergencies, and forced displacement are among the most significant barriers to access to and completion of a quality education.

New data shows that even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, **127 million** primary and secondary school-age children and young people living in crisis-affected countries were **out of school in 2019**



equivalent to  
**~50%**  
of the global out-of-school population

**Girls are more likely than boys to be out of school in crisis contexts (based on analysis of new data provided by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics for this report). In 2019, the out-of-school rate for children and young people of primary and secondary school age living in countries affected by crisis was 31 percent for girls and 27 percent for boys.**

Millions of crisis-affected children and young people, are being denied their right to education and with it their opportunity to reach their full potential. Prioritizing EiE is vital, if the 2030 sustainable development agenda pledge to leave no one behind is to be fulfilled (UN, 2015).

Despite the significant challenges still faced in ensuring that children and young people affected by crises enjoy their right to quality education, there are hopeful signs. Notable global progress has been made in education over the last 20 years, as a result of advocacy, collaboration and the monitoring of education data that began during the period of Education For All (UNESCO, 2000). This progress is also seen for education in emergency contexts. In these two decades, the field of EiE has become firmly established as a core part of the global education agenda and of humanitarian response. EiE's life-saving and life-sustaining role is now more widely accepted, due to the notable efforts of those working in the field, including those collaborating with INEE. The human right to quality education for all people affected by crises is now reflected in global policy commitments and national practice.

These changes date back to the 2000 World Education Forum (WEF) in Dakar, where INEE was conceptualized. At that time, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were charged with convening a process for strengthened cooperation in EiE contexts between UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) (INEE, 2000).



### INEE EIE Definition

*“Education in emergencies refers to the quality, inclusive learning opportunities for all ages in situations of crisis, including early childhood development, primary, secondary, non-formal, technical, vocational, higher and adult education. Education in emergencies provides physical, psychosocial, and cognitive protection that saves and sustains lives. Common situations of crisis in which education in emergencies is essential include conflicts, protracted crises, situations of violence, forced displacement, disasters, and public health emergencies. Education in emergencies is a wider concept than ‘emergency education response’ which is an essential part of it.” (INEE, 2018a)*

This report, marking the 20th anniversary of INEE, highlights achievements in the field of EiE over the past two decades and identifies continuing challenges. It traces the changes that have brought EiE into global planning and action agendas and notes key milestones in the development of EiE as a recognized field. This report also looks to the future by recommending immediate and sustained actions to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all—including children and young people in crisis-affected contexts (UN, 2015).

By tracing key moments in INEE’s development, beginning with a shared idea at the 2000 WEF and drawing from the voices of INEE members, this report celebrates the power of collective action that INEE’s inter-agency approach provides. Since its founding, INEE has been a key actor in EiE and has supported some of the field’s most transformative commitments and developments. In its 20 years, INEE has evolved from a single working group focused on developing standards for EiE in 2003-2004, into a unique inter-agency network that numbers nearly 18,000 members, including students, researchers, teachers, governments, INGOs, UN agencies, and donors from 190 countries. INEE’s work today is carried out by various working groups, collaboratives, reference groups, task teams, language communities, and more (see INEE).

### EiE as part of a humanitarian response

According to input from INEE members, INEE’s reach and influence have expanded over the years and have contributed to global progress and a firm commitment to EiE. This has brought greater recognition of children’s right to education during emergencies, and the development of concrete mechanisms to coordinate and fund EiE.

*“The development of the [INEE] network allowed education in emergencies to become a discrete sector of humanitarian response and a specific ‘field’ (for practice, policy, and research) that people could connect with. This created opportunities for the development of a professional identity, the further professionalization of staff, and a platform for stronger advocacy and partnerships.” (INEE Member, 2020)*

With its extensive expertise, tools, and resources, INEE continues to advance its work promoting access to quality, safe, and relevant education for all children and young people affected by crisis, including conflicts, environmental disasters, and pandemics. INEE offers a rich database of resources on emerging issues in EiE, making it a one-stop shop for what any ministry of education official, teacher, researcher, practitioner, or student would be looking to learn.

INEE’s expanded reach and influence has grown significantly over the last 20 years. As the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated, INEE today is more relevant and essential than ever. Since the onset of the pandemic, INEE has curated a COVID-19 resource collection that it shares through its COVID-19 blog series, which provides critical technical guidance and global advocacy materials. It also has held a series of webinars to share knowledge and build capacity (see INEE COVID-19).

Throughout this global crisis, the foundational principles of the INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery (INEE, 2010a), have provided the guidance needed to ensure that children and young people’s right to education is fulfilled. INEE’s ability to respond in such a way is the result of its two decades of work to garner essential expertise, data, and resources.

“

*INEE has been instrumental in leading discussions within the community in the current COVID pandemic and bringing together years of disparate experience and expertise to address a truly global emergency in education. This, I think, is likely to be a watershed moment for INEE, and the question is what the network does with its new visibility; specifically whose visibility will be raised—that of certain partners or the community as a whole.*

”

(INEE Member, 2020)

Much has changed in the 20 years since INEE was founded. EiE is now an established field and part of the UN humanitarian response system. However, for too many children, young people, and adults living in countries affected by crisis, especially the most marginalized—girls and women, forcibly displaced communities, people with disabilities, the poorest—fulfilling the promise made in SDG 4 to provide inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all remains a distant dream.





# SECTION ONE: THE CHANGING EIE LANDSCAPE, 2000-2020

This section of the report highlights how EiE has changed over the past 20 years, from a time when education was not prioritized during emergencies to the situation today, when education is recognized as a critical sector in humanitarian response. However, despite the progress made, this section identifies some significant challenges that remain in providing access to education for children and young living in crisis-affected contexts.

## THE EVOLVING FIELD OF EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES

At the WEF held in April 2000, governments, UN agencies, civil society organizations, academics, and activists came together to craft a series of global policy commitments to education. These included the Millennium Development Goals, which committed to providing universal primary education ([UN, 2000](#)) and gender parity in education, and the six EFA goals for providing quality education for all ([UNESCO, 2000](#)). The Dakar Framework for Action specifically called for addressing the “education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability” ([UNESCO, 2000, p.9](#)).

During the 2000 WEF, education ministers from several conflict-affected states charged UNESCO, UNICEF, and UNHCR with creating a process to strengthen cooperation between UN agencies and INGOs in EiE contexts. In response to this call the first [Inter-Agency Global Consultation on Education in Emergencies in Geneva, was held November 8-10, 2000](#), which brought together many UN agencies, the World Bank, bilateral donors, and more than 20 INGOs. Katarina Tomasevski, the first UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, also attended. This meeting led to the founding of INEE and the first Steering Group was established with representatives from the three founding UN agencies and three NGOs (CARE, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), a decision which reflected the inclusive, collaborative culture embedded in the very foundations of the network ([Mendizabal and Hearn, 2011](#)). By 2003, INEE was considered one of the six EFA flagship initiatives “intended to assist countries to achieve the EFA goals; provide special focus on a related aspect of EFA that poses particular problems; and strengthen partnerships among stakeholders” ([Little, 2011, p. 3](#)).

Since its establishment, INEE has been a leader in EiE advocacy, policy, and standards. Built on a premise of collective impact, the network brought together key actors from policy and practice to advance quality education for all people—children, young people, and adults—living in crisis-affected contexts ([Mendizabal and Hearn, 2011](#)). INEE’s action has propelled the development of many resources and key tools in use today. Moreover, [INEE network spaces – working groups, collaboratives, task teams](#) - are an integral and institutionalized part of the network of practitioners, policymakers, advocacy specialists, and researchers who are advancing the EiE sector. One critical milestone in supporting the right to quality education in crises-affected contexts was the launch of the INEE Minimum Standards in 2004. This was a seminal moment for INEE, which stated its aim as “to positively contribute to coordinated action to enhance the quality of educational preparedness and response, increase access to safe and relevant learning opportunities, and promote humanitarian accountability in providing these services” ([Mendizabal and Hearn, 2011, p. 28](#)). Updated in 2010, these standards remain as vital and influential today as when they were first developed.

## INEE Minimum Standards

The INEE Minimum Standards are based on the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the 2000 EFA goals, and the Sphere Project's Humanitarian Charter. There are 19 INEE standards across five domains: (1) the foundational standards of community participation, coordination, and analysis; (2) access and learning environments; (3) teaching and learning; (4) teachers and educational personnel; and (5) education policy.



*The standards articulate the minimum level of educational quality and access in emergencies through to recovery . . . They help to enhance accountability and predictability among humanitarian actors and improve coordination among partners, including education authorities.*



(INEE Member, 2020)

Since 2000, the creation of global structures to ensure coordinated emergency response and new multilateral financing mechanisms have led to fundamental shifts for education in emergency contexts. Among the key developments (discussed further in section 2) are the establishment of the Global Education Cluster (GEC) in 2006; the 2010 Resolution on the Right to Education in Emergencies, which “urges Member States to implement strategies and policies to ensure and support the realization of the right to education as an integral element of humanitarian assistance and humanitarian response, to the maximum of their available resources, with the support of the international community” (UN, 2010); and setting up the ECW fund in 2016. These developments have led to real change for crisis-affected communities by bringing more effectively coordinated responses and creating an enabling EiE environment.

In 2015, SDG 4 stated its commitment to provide inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all (UN, 2015), including those in vulnerable contexts (SDG 4.5). The SDG 4-2030 Education Framework for Action reaffirms education as a fundamental human right and a public good, one essential to human fulfilment, peace, and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2015). It also references the INEE Minimum Standards as a core component of implementing this right. Importantly, 15 years after the EFA Framework for Action first called for taking specific action on education in emergencies, the 2015 Education 2030 Framework for Action continued the commitment by calling for quality education “from emergency response through to recovery and rebuilding; better coordinated national, regional and global responses; and capacity development for comprehensive risk reduction and mitigation to ensure that education is maintained during situations of conflict, emergency, post-conflict and early recovery” (UNESCO, 2015).

While there is much to celebrate in the field of EiE, there is no time for complacency. With less than a decade to go to meet the SDG 4 deadline and with COVID-19 creating an acute global education emergency, sustained action is needed to overcome the ongoing challenges faced by children and young people in crisis-affected countries, including fulfilling their right to a safe, equitable, and quality education.

## CONTINUING CHALLENGES

There has been a sharp rise in the number of conflicts around the globe since the turn of the millennium, particularly since 2010. As conflicts become more severe and more complex, with many leading to protracted and cyclical crises (Gates et al., 2016), civilians are increasingly affected (Marc, 2016). This is resulting in a generation of children and young people who have no access to education. For the most marginalized and vulnerable children and young people—those with disabilities, girls, and those from low-income households, among others—the impact is much greater.

The Syria crisis alone has disrupted and denied the right to education for millions of children and young people. In June 2020, two million children and young people within Syria were not attending school, and another three-quarters of a million displaced to neighboring countries were also out of school (Theirworld, 2020). The impact of the crisis has led to a generation of Syria's young people missing out on their education—despite education financing in Syria and across the region being some of the highest for any crisis (see section 3).

The picture is even more dire for other emergencies and protracted crises, where education is often completely overlooked by the international community, including donors (see section 3). In fact, despite repeated calls for spending 4 percent of humanitarian aid on education, it continues to be the most underfunded sector in humanitarian appeals. This report reveals that the allocation continues to be far lower than requested, just 2.4 percent on average over the past 20 years; in 2019, it was still only 2.6 percent. Within this grossly inadequate overall financial envelope, some conflict and crisis situations are overlooked and neglected. Since 2000, 79 humanitarian appeals for education aid have received no funding. Of these appeals, 51 were in countries in sub-Saharan Africa that were dealing with prolonged conflicts and/or that have hosted refugees for more than a generation.

Appeals for Syria and neighboring countries in North Africa and the Middle East have fared far better, with an average of 41 percent of their requests being met. EiE financing should not be a zero-sum game. To achieve SDG 4 and protect the right to quality education, all emergencies require predictable, multi-year education financing.

Environmental emergencies are another cause of widespread disruption of education. Hurricanes, tsunamis, droughts, and the like often destroy schools, which shuts children and young people out of the classroom and leaves them at greater risk of exploitation and abuse. In 2019, for example, Cyclone Idai, described as the Southern Hemisphere's worst ever weather-related disaster ([UN, 2019](#)), caused widespread devastation and flooding in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Malawi. The cyclone destroyed or damaged thousands of classrooms and disrupted the education of half a million children and young people ([Watt, 2019](#)). Extreme weather events account for 91 percent of all major disasters and are predicted to worsen over the coming years. Predictions are that 140 million people across South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America will be displaced by 2050 due to climate change, which will disrupt children's access to safe schools and learning opportunities (ECW, 2020).

Conflict and environmental emergencies cause mass displacement within countries and across borders. In 2019, more than 79.5 million individuals were displaced. The highest level ever recorded. More than half of these were children and young people ([UNHCR, 2020a](#)). This increasing displacement poses huge challenges: in 2019 alone, 33.4 million people were internally displaced by crises, 8.5 million by conflicts and 24.9 by environmental disasters ([Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2020](#)). Climate change is expected to further increase displacement, which could disrupt children's and young people's access to safe schools and learning opportunities for months or years at a time.

The number of refugees worldwide is also increasing, numbered at 26 million in 2019, half of them children and young people (UNHCR, 2019b). Despite refugees' right to education being protected under international law, 48 percent of all refugee children still have no access to education (UNHCR 2020a). Progress on refugee education has largely stood still over the last decade; secondary enrolment rates are lower today than in 2010. In 2009, the gross enrolment rate for primary school was only 76 percent globally and just 36 percent at the secondary level ([Sarah Dryden-Peterson, 2011](#)). By 2019, primary school enrolment was only 77 percent and the gross enrolment rate for secondary had fallen to 31 percent (UNHCR, 2020a). Refugee girls are most at risk of missing out on education.

Building resilient education systems in crisis-affected countries is critical for all emergencies. Even before the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic, education systems in contexts impacted by emergencies were under immense strain. Gains in quality education access and completion globally, which were already limited for refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants, and all children and young people affected by crises, have been further compromised by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Much has changed for the EiE field since INEE's founding 20 years ago. Once chronically underfunded and not considered a priority for humanitarian response, EiE is now an established field and part of the UN humanitarian response system. It also has dedicated funding mechanisms, thanks to the advocacy of INEE's members and partners. However, ensuring that EiE remains high on the political agenda and overcoming the longstanding challenges the field is facing must be a priority now and throughout the decade to ensure that SDG 4 is achieved by 2030.

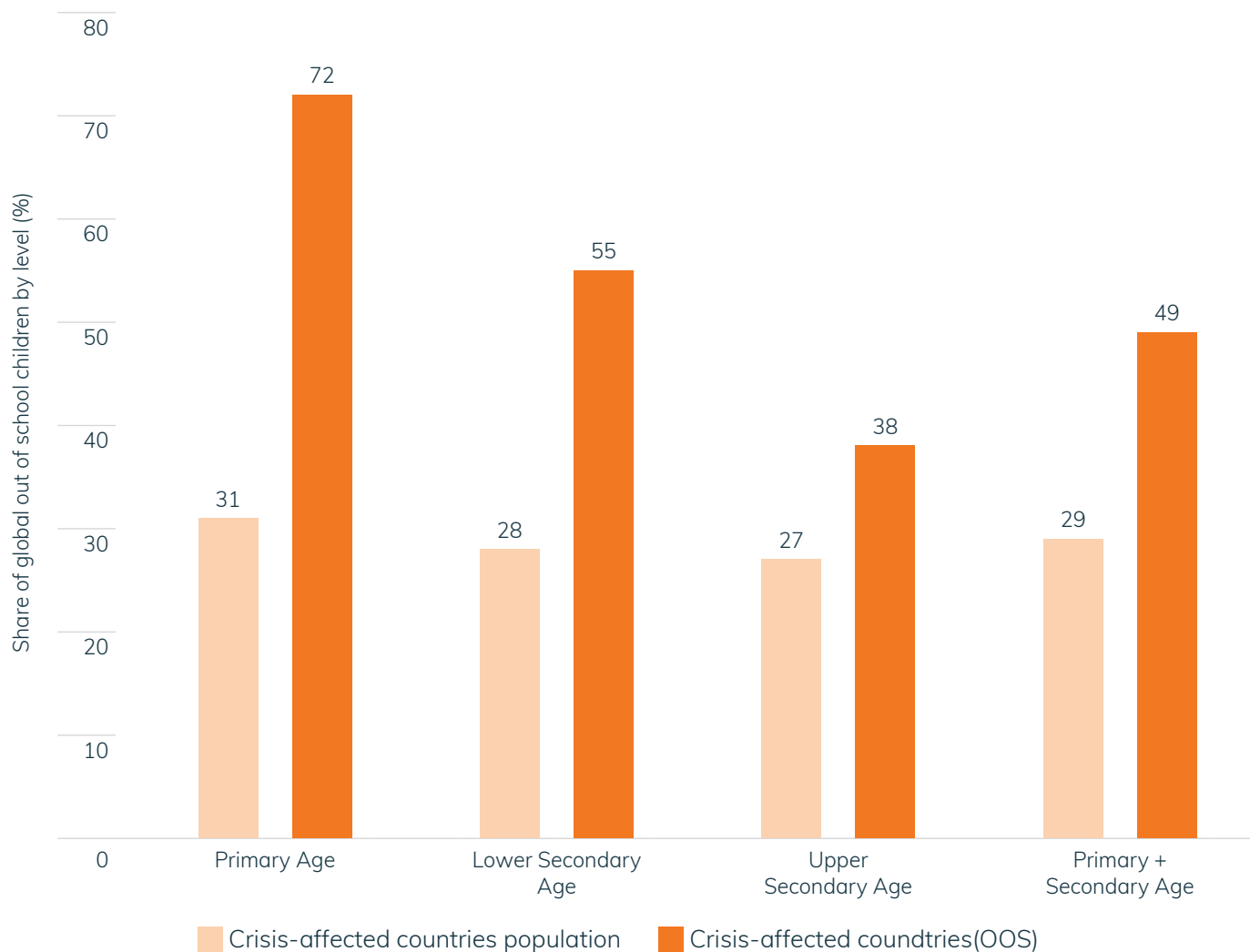
## ACCESS TO EDUCATION REMAINS ACUTELY CHALLENGING IN CRISIS CONTEXTS

The significant progress made over the past 20 years in raising the EiE profile has not yet translated into sufficient access to quality education for millions of children and young people living in crisis-affected contexts. According to new data provided for this report by the UIS, in 2019, although just 29 percent of the world's primary and secondary school-age population lived in crisis-affected countries, these countries were home to 49 percent of the world's out-of-school primary and secondary school-age children and young people. This pattern is particularly pronounced **for primary school aged children**: while less than one-third of the global primary school-age population resided in crisis-affected countries in 2019, almost three-quarters of those who were out of school resided in these countries (see Figure 1).

**This translates into 127 million children and young people of primary and secondary school age living in crisis-affected contexts who are out of school; almost half of the global total which is 257 million.<sup>3</sup> Girls are particularly affected: even though girls in crisis-affected countries make up just 14 percent of the world's primary and secondary school-age population, girls living in these contexts make up more than 25 percent of children and young people out of school globally (equivalent to 67 million girls; see Figure 2).**

<sup>3</sup> These do not include pre-primary or tertiary aged students.

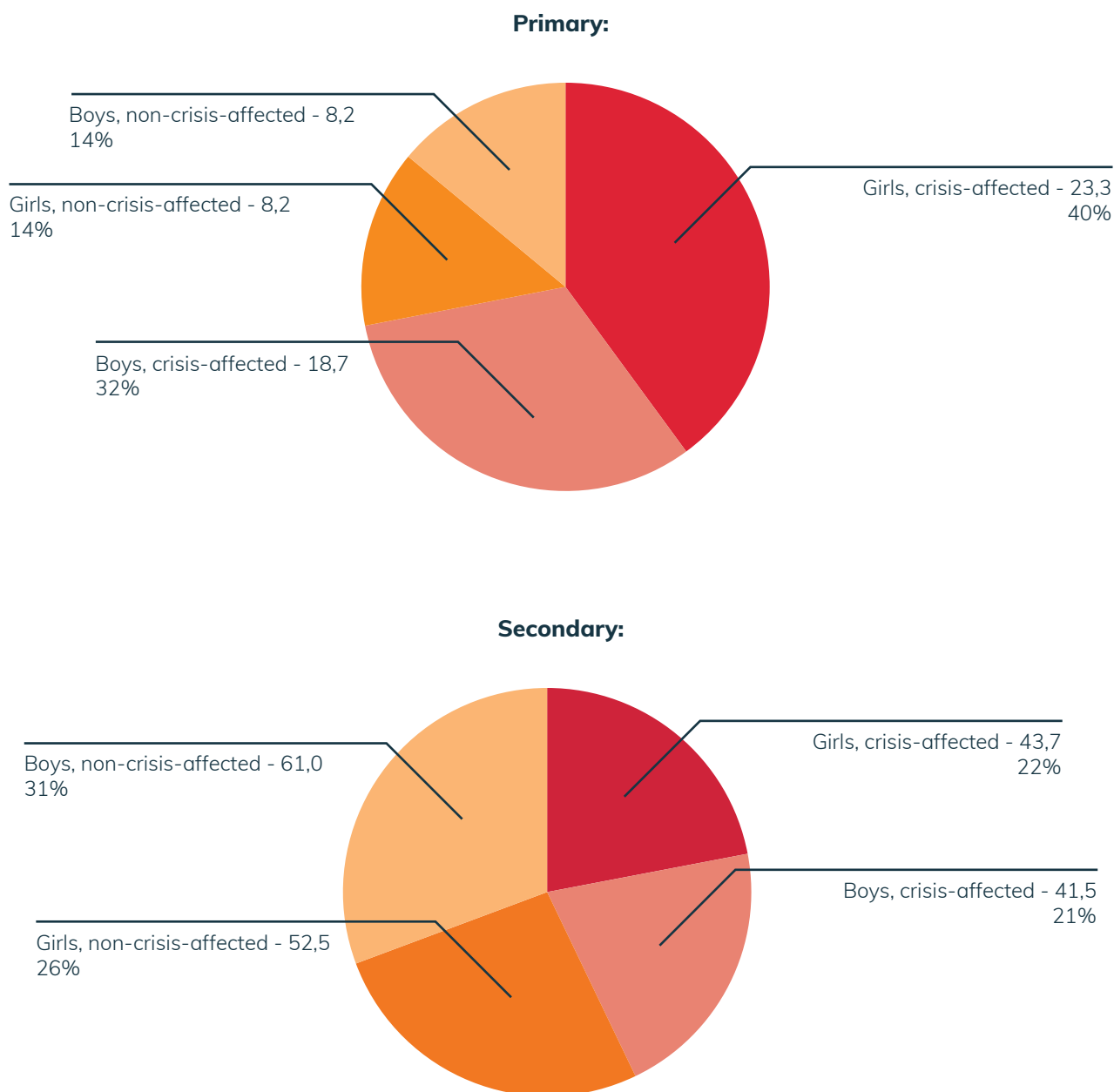
**Figure 1: Share of global out-of-school children and adolescents by context and school level, 2019**



Source: Data provided by UIS



**Figure 2: Share of out-of-school population by context and gender**

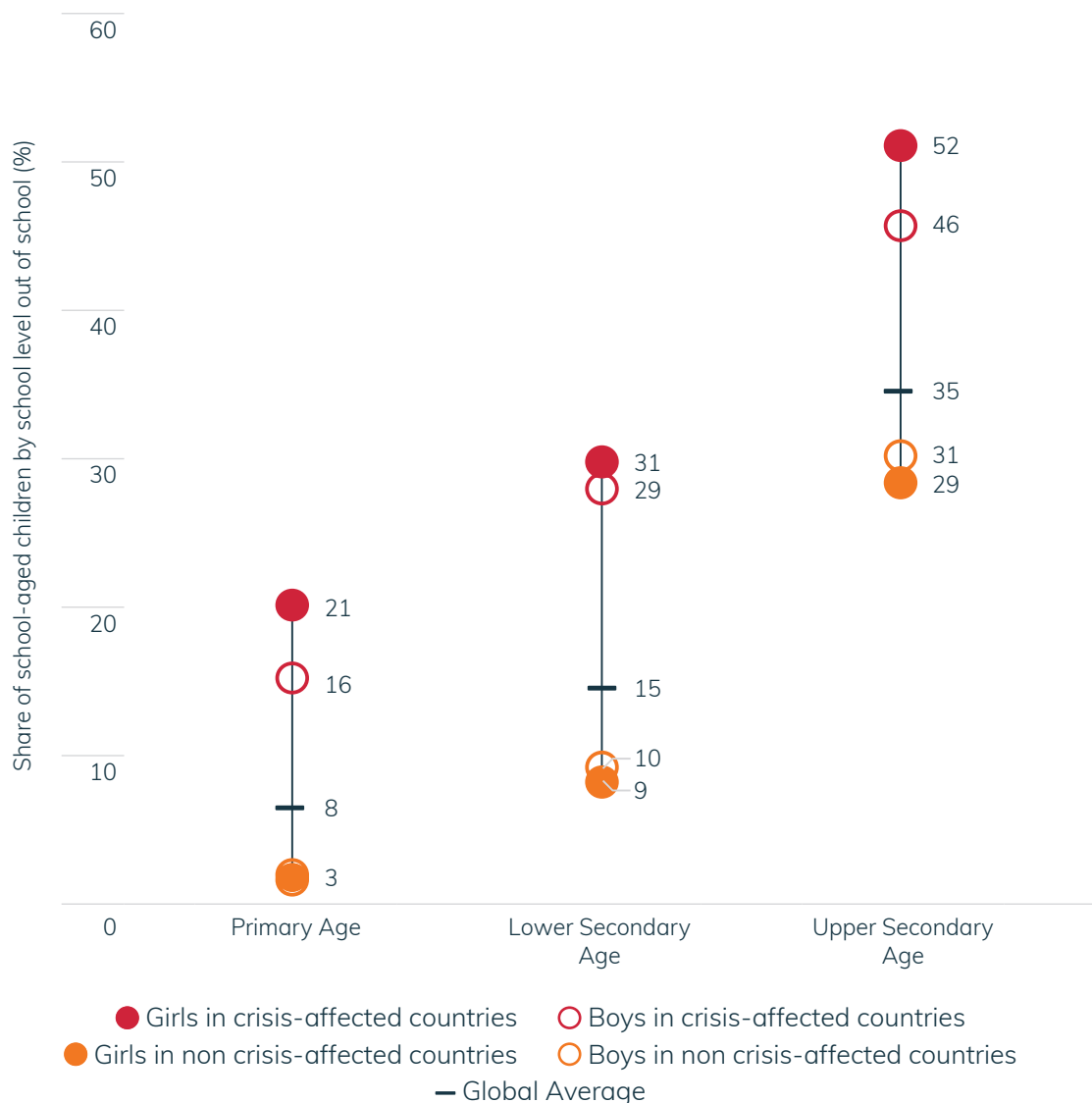


Note: The data points before the percentages are presented in millions(1=1,000,000)

Source: Data provided by UIS

Girls in crisis-affected contexts are more likely than boys to face the burden of being out of school. In 2019, around 20 percent of primary school-age girls living in crisis-affected countries were out of school, which compares to 3 percent living in non-crisis countries. Around 16 percent of primary school-age boys living in crisis-affected contexts were out of school, compared with 3 percent of their counterparts in non-crisis countries. Similarly, while a significant percentage of upper secondary school-age adolescents remain out of school overall, girls living in crisis-affected countries fare particularly badly: in 2019, 52 percent of adolescent girls of upper secondary school age residing in crisis-affected countries were out of school, compared with 29 percent of their peers in other contexts (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Share of children/adolescents out of school by context, gender, and school level, 2019**



Source: Data provided by UIS

These figures highlight the need for continued advocacy to ensure that education is prioritized during humanitarian response. Both the humanitarian and development communities need to make a concerted effort to ensure that no child is left behind educationally because of where they live.

This section has highlighted that even before the COVID-19 crisis caused a global education emergency, even more children and young people affected by crises were out of school than previously thought. It has also illustrated that while progress has been made during these years in providing EiE, we cannot become complacent.



## SECTION TWO: GLOBAL PROGRESS IN EIE AND ONGOING CHALLENGES

EiE is now firmly established as a core part of the global humanitarian agenda. The need to address the complex challenges that interrupt and deny the education of children, young people, and adults affected by crisis and their right to education, is as urgent as ever. This section identifies key achievements in the recognition of EiE's importance in humanitarian response, as well as some of the many challenges that remain to ensure that inclusive and equitable learning opportunities are available to all by 2030.

### PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF EIE

Since the EFA agenda put in motion a global movement to ensure that the learning needs of all children are met, considerable progress has been made in bringing education to the forefront of humanitarian response. Large-scale disasters early in the new millennium, such as the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 and the Haiti earthquake in 2010, along with ongoing conflicts in Africa and the Middle East, highlighted the lack of coordination among the humanitarian agencies engaged in response. Research also shed light on the devastating effects emergencies have on children's education and on achieving the EFA goals ([Bensalah et al., 2000](#)). It also has brought greater recognition that the educational needs of children and young people affected by emergencies are as important to their parents and communities as lifesaving interventions, such as clean water, health care, and sanitation ([Nicolai, 2003](#); [Anderson and Hodgkin, 2010](#); [Nicolai and Hine, 2015](#); [Save the Children, 2015](#)).

Through sustained advocacy, INEE and its members, including donors, UN agencies, and INGOs, have advanced the importance of education in humanitarian response and the prioritization of EiE as a distinct professional field ([Mendizabal and Hearn, 2011, p. 12](#)). This advocacy has ensured the "firm establishment of EiE as a distinct field of activity within education, humanitarian relief and development work" (INEE Member, 2020) and, despite initial resistance to forming an education cluster ([UNESCO, 2011, pp. 4-5](#)), it was key to establishing the GEC in 2006 (see Box on Key Moments in EiE). INEE's advocacy also contributed to the decision to establish the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution on the Right to Education in Emergencies in 2010, which guarantees that education is one of the pillars of humanitarian response. UNGA also reaffirmed the right to education for displaced communities that was established in previous conventions and urged taking immediate international action to provide education for these communities ([UNGA, 2010](#)).

In 2011, UNESCO's flagship EFA report, *Hidden Crisis: Armed Conflict and Education*, provided data indicating that children (and young people) affected by conflict were among those farthest from reaching the EFA goals. The report noted the urgent need to increase financing, strengthen policy, and ensure the provision of safe and protective quality education that promotes tolerance and equality.

Continued advocacy and strong evidence of the importance of EiE have led to notable changes over the past two decades, beyond the establishment of INEE, as detailed below.

## KEY MOMENTS IN EIE:

**Global Education Cluster (GEC) was established in 2006 as part of humanitarian architecture to promote coordination of education in humanitarian responses.**

Soon after the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, to encourage better coordination across actors responding to emergencies, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee introduced the concept of clusters, which refers to the coordination mechanisms for humanitarian response in nine priority areas. However, “the Humanitarian Response Review and subsequent establishment of clusters did not include education. There were several reasons for this. A central reason given was that UNICEF was already the de facto lead and therefore, “there was no gap to fill” (Anderson and Hodgkin, 2010, p. 2). Throughout 2006, INEE took a leading role in advocating for the formation of an education cluster (UNESCO, 2011, pp. 6-7). Another powerful voice in these advocacy efforts, the Save the Children Alliance Rewrite the Future Campaign, called for access to quality education for children and young people living in fragile, conflict-affected states (p. 8). As a result of these collective efforts, the GEC was officially established in 2006. This was an important achievement for EiE, as it formally recognized the urgent need to explicitly include education in humanitarian response.

The GEC, which is uniquely positioned as the only cluster jointly led by a UN agency (UNICEF) and an INGO (Save the Children), affirms education as a core element of humanitarian response. The combined energy and strength of the two organizations have been instrumental in giving education visibility in humanitarian settings. Their oversight of a cluster of education agencies has improved coordination of interventions in settings affected by emergencies and is replicated at a country level (Nicolai and Hine, 2015).

**In 2011, the Global Partnership for Education extended its focus to include conflict-affected and fragile states**

Improved coordination through country-level partnerships was the cornerstone of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) after its transition from the Fast Track Initiative in 2011. Its revised mandate included a new agenda to support crisis-affected countries (Winthrop and Matsui, 2013), a significant shift in approach. The current mandate of the GPE addresses the needs of national governments affected by ongoing crisis through a needs-based approach (Menashy and Dryden-Peterson, 2015). By December 2019, 76 percent of all GPE grants were allocated to countries affected by fragility and conflict (GPE, 2019).

While GPE's change in mandate inspired a shift in funding allocation, complex decision-making processes and a fragmentation of structure and identity within GPE's multi-stake partnership made it difficult to respond rapidly to the countries most in need (UNESCO, 2014; Menashy, 2017). This factor resulted in the ECW campaign to form a dedicated multilateral fund for education in emergencies.

**Education Cannot Wait was established in 2016 as a new fund for education in emergencies**

While education's visibility in humanitarian responses began to grow between 2001-2010, it was not matched by funding. The UN Secretary General's Global Education First Initiative, which first coined the phrase Education Cannot Wait was supportive (with the name and logo) of the formation of an INEE Education Cannot Wait Advocacy Group to enable widespread advocacy for the establishment of an EiE fund. The same call was made by high-profile advocates, including UN Special Envoy for Education Gordon Brown and Antonio Guterres, now the UN Secretary General. A global consultation hosted by INEE in February 2016 facilitated dialogue and gathered input on plans for this new global initiative. More than 500 people worldwide participated in the consultation process, which fed into the report, “Education Cannot Wait: Proposing a fund for education in emergencies” (Overseas Development Institute, 2016). ECW was launched in 2016, a direct outcome of the WHS. As the first global fund dedicated to EiE, ECW seeks to ensure committed and flexible financing and to enhance coordination between humanitarian and development actors (UNESCO, 2018).

**Grand Bargain and New Way of Working were established in 2016 at the World Humanitarian Summit**

Ongoing challenges highlighted during the WHS were the need for greater coordination between development and humanitarian actors and the need for them to work together more closely. Numerous efforts to achieve this have been launched over the decades, but the Grand Bargain, launched at the WHS, was “a unique agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organizations who have committed to get more means into the hands of people in need and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action.” Proposed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian aid (UNESCO, 2018), the Grand Bargain was signed by 18 donors and 16 aid organizations. They agreed to work together to achieve ten goals, including increased transparency, support for local actors, and collaborative multi-year funding, among others.

To fulfil the principles of the Grand Bargain, signatories agreed to commit to the New Way of Working, a flexible and adaptable framework for a series of collective actions (OCHA, 2017). The aim was to support multi-year funding frameworks and work based on “comparative advantage” of different actors to ensure collective stakeholder outcomes, reduce fragmentation, and enhance collaboration between humanitarian and development actors (Nicolai et al., 2019).



However, translating the Grand Bargain and New Ways of Working into practical local efforts to support EiE has been problematic. Questions about what, who, and how local education responses are supported continue to be at the heart of these processes (Nicolai et al., 2019). For example, research shows that, as they are pushed to integrate education initiatives into national systems rather than running parallel systems, international organizations may face numerous challenges, such as a lack of appropriate personnel, structural challenges, and dissonance between the international vision and local practice (Mendenhall, 2014).

In response to these issues at the field level, INEE recently established the Humanitarian-Development Coherence Task Force to develop materials that support INEE members who are taking collective action, and advocate for improved coherence in education across the spectrum of humanitarian and development policy and programming.

Following years of advocacy and collaboration, as described in the box above, discussion of what new goals should follow the EFA framework and Millennium Development Goals highlighted critical gaps and shortfalls in the provision of education for children affected by crises. While SDG 4 does not specifically mention conflict, crisis, or displacement in its overarching goal or any of its ten targets, the Incheon Declaration highlights that a large portion of those missing out on education in countries affected by conflict and crisis and EiE is a core component of the strategic approaches that guide the Education Strategy 2030 (UNESCO, 2015). This Framework for Action—like that of the Dakar Framework for EFA provides a roadmap for governments and their partners can use as a guide to achieving SDG 4. The framework suggests that “the principles of prevention, preparedness and response, and established international guidelines such as the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards, should guide planning and response” (Incheon Declaration and SDG 4-Education 2030 Framework for Action, 2018, p. 32). The fact that the INEE Minimum Standards are specifically mentioned in this framework is testament to its consistent advocacy efforts and the widespread recognition of INEE.

Two other significant milestones for EiE, which are discussed in section 3, were the 2016 WHS and the Agenda for Humanity. The WHS was a pivotal moment for change in the humanitarian sector, which included identifying EiE as one of its core responsibilities. Strong coordination in humanitarian-development action for education is essential to ensure that international and local actors work together to determine the current and future prospects of children and young people, and to plan accordingly. Recent political commitments, such as the Djibouti Declaration on Regional Refugee and Action Plan 2017, have promising outcomes. The declaration was developed and implemented by eight countries in East Africa to enhance the accreditation, alignment, and equivalency of education programs for refugees across the region, for both teachers and students, and across formal and informal education sectors. Another initiative, the Charter for Change (2015), was implemented to inspire a transformation in the humanitarian system and its structures, and to ensure that local actors play key roles in responding to crises (Shah, 2019).

Despite the progress highlighted above, and in addition to the disproportionately high number of children and young people affected by crises who are still out of school (see section 1), fundamental issues related to the equity and quality of EiE remain. These include the challenges teachers face in providing a quality education that is inclusive, protective, and provides appropriate psychosocial support during times of crisis.

## CHALLENGES OF ACHIEVING EQUITY IN EIE

Closing the gender gap in education has been the motivation behind numerous commitments and initiatives, including establishment of the UN Girls Education Initiative in 2000. Other important initiatives and approaches such as the Charlevoix Declaration (G7, 2018), have been adopted throughout the last two decades to ensure that girls affected by crises are enrolled in and complete education. These efforts have shown promise in gender parity in education globally, yet the data presented above reveal that significant gender disparities remain in crisis situations. Girls affected by crises are likely to face numerous pressures (Salem, 2018). Adolescent girls in particular are at risk of early marriage due to violence, conflict, and financial hardship (Arab and Sagbakken, 2019). For example, child marriage may be as much as four times higher among Syrian refugees in Lebanon than before the conflict (UNFPA, 2016). Such issues highlight the importance of providing protective access to learning for girls. For example, mitigating their exposure to violence and harassment by reducing the distance they travel to school has a positive impact on enrolment and learning outcomes for girls living in crisis-affected contexts (Burde and Linden, 2013). Transforming parental attitudes and developing community-based approaches to education have also been effective, along with cash transfers to families to help alleviate financial hardship (Burde et al., 2017).

The challenges of addressing gender inequalities in EiE situations has long been a focus of INEE. For example, INEE's Pocket Guide to Gender (INEE, 2010b) has been a key tool in ensuring that the needs of girls and boys are addressed in the design and delivery of education in conflict and crisis contexts. As political landscapes

change and crises become more protracted, the updated [INEE Guidance Note on Gender \(INEE, 2019\)](#) addresses common misconceptions and arguments against gender-responsive education. It outlines key principles for a gender-responsive approach to education programming in emergencies and sets out “concrete strategies and actions for putting gender equality into practice in the major domains of education in emergencies, framed by the INEE Minimum Standards”(INEE, 2019).

“ Due to tradition and custom in the community, most families don't allow their girls to [attend] schools in communities. My biggest concern is that, after finishing accelerated learning program classes, my girl students will not have the opportunity to continue their education. Another major challenge I am facing is that sometimes I am not able to respond to questions from the students' books, because I, myself, have only studied up to grade 9 and my knowledge does not go beyond that level. ”

Children and young people with disabilities are often among the most marginalized in any society. Recent reports have highlighted the need for the increased inclusion of learners with disabilities in education in humanitarian settings. This includes the most recent [UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report \(UNESCO, 2020c\)](#), which emphasizes the importance of inclusion for children with special needs. At the UK Global Disability Summit in 2018, Governments, the international community, civil society, among others, committed to address the educational exclusion of children with special educational needs. However, the needs of displaced learners with disabilities continue to be overlooked, due to a lack of knowledge, data, and rigorous research on the experiences and needs of these learners in crisis contexts (Burde et al., 2019). There appears to be limited capacity in the INGO sector to support displaced learners with disabilities, due to lack of funding and appropriate timelines (Buscher 2018). This points to the need for greater support and capacity development for teachers so they can address their students' diverse needs, and for involving families to ensure that parents and communities encourage children with disabilities to learn and thrive. The [INEE Pocket Guide to Supporting Learners with Disabilities](#) highlights the challenges and the opportunities emergencies can create for those with disabilities, and the support needed for teachers and learners alike (INEE, 2010c).

Children who are forcibly displaced, whether within their own countries or across international borders, are also among those most likely to face education challenges. In 2020, only 52 percent of refugee children and young people are in school, with sharp differences in the level of access to education. Around 77 percent of refugee children have access to primary education, but only 31 percent reach secondary school (UNHCR, 2020b). Refugee girls in particular are being left behind, and they are now at greater risk than ever of never returning to school, due to the COVID-19 school closures (UNHCR, 2020; Malala Fund, 2020). Estimates are that as many as 50 percent of refugee girls who were attending secondary school may never return once schools reopen (UNHCR, 2020). Therefore, being a girl and a refugee creates a situation that “is particularly stark. Almost all the gains made at secondary level in 2019 were in favour of boys: while 36 percent of refugee boys were enrolled in secondary education, only 27 percent of girls were” (UNHCR, 2020b, p. 9). Moreover, while there has been an increase in recent years in access to education for young refugees at the tertiary level, the number who enter higher education is still a mere 3 percent, compared to 37 percent globally (UNHCR, 2020b).

Recent developments such as the Global Compact on Refugees offer hope for the inclusion of refugees in national education systems. The Refugee Education Strategy 2030, published in 2019, recognizes the importance of adapting global goals to support refugee children and young people, and of providing access to equitable and quality learning opportunities by advocating for the integration of refugees into national education systems. The need to advocate for refugees' ability to continue their education is critical, as reaffirmed by the [2019 Global Refugee Forum](#), which reinforced the importance of addressing the needs of refugees and ensuring their right to quality and equitable education. Education was the sector for which the highest number of pledges were submitted.

Inequities in education affect not only refugee children and young people; conflicts, violence, and disasters have resulted in “more than 9.7 million youth, including 3.1 million minors, . . . living in internal displacement because of disasters, conflict or violence at the end of 2019. This includes nearly 4.8 million women and girls and 4.9 million men and boys” ([Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2020, p. 7](#)). Access to education for displaced young people is vital for their “integration, protection and for ensuring better conditions for their lives.” However, displaced young people face many challenges in accessing quality education, often due to

4 The INEE Teachers in Crisis Contexts Collaborative has collected [stories from teachers](#) around the world which highlight some of the challenges faced by teachers outlined above.

a lack of resources in the host communities or in the displaced young peoples' own families. The long-term consequences for displaced young people of missing out on education can be severe. For example, "the lost potential in earnings of displaced Syrian young people who are unable to go to secondary school because of the conflict is estimated in the tens of millions of dollars" (p. 14).

## THE CHALLENGE OF PROVIDING QUALITY EIE

In any education system, the quality of education cannot exceed the quality of its teachers ([Barber and Mourshed, 2007](#)). In crisis contexts, teachers are at the forefront of the education response. They are responsible for restoring normalcy, protecting students' well-being, enriching their cognitive development, and providing security within the schools ([Kirk and Winthrop, 2007](#)). Teachers in crisis situations have long faced complex conditions, often in precarious and/or under-resourced classrooms, with limited professional development or support. These challenges are now compounded by the additional burden of COVID-19.



Jennifer Cynthia Akonga, 24, a teacher at Ogili Hill Primary School in the Palabek Refugee Settlement, Uganda, where she is part of the Education for Life Program by Oxfam and its partners.  
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Structural issues, inadequate training, poor compensation, and harsh school environments all hinder teachers' capacity to deliver quality education during a crisis. For example, recent reviews find that teachers of refugees often receive poor compensation, despite working in overcrowded, unstable, and challenging contexts ([Richardson and Naylor, 2018](#); [Van Esveld and Martínez, 2016](#)). Furthermore, teachers in settings affected by crisis are largely underprepared to deal with trauma and to support students' mental health ([Brocque et al., 2017](#)). The [2019 Global Education Monitoring Report](#) states that teachers affected by crises are inadequately supported and receive little or no training, noting further that appropriate policies and recruitment processes are adopted too slowly in spite of the urgent need ([UNESCO, 2018a](#)).

In crisis contexts, teachers face multiple challenges in complex classroom settings, with little support and a lack of resources. These teachers are on the frontlines of supporting children and young people, not only for their learning but for their protection and well-being. The world was facing a global teacher shortage even before COVID-19, with 69 million new teachers needed to reach SDG 4. The current COVID-19 crisis could further exacerbate this shortage.

The role of teachers is central to EiE initiatives and to achieving quality education, a fact that INEE has consistently recognized since its founding. For example, recognizing the role and importance of teachers is central to the INEE Minimum Standards and forms the basis of Domain 3: Teaching and Learning, and Domain 4: Teachers and Other Education Personnel.



The [INEE Teachers in Crisis Contexts](#) (TiCC) Collaborative was founded in April 2014 as an inter-agency effort to provide more and better support to teachers in crisis settings. Members of the group work together to identify problem areas in teacher management, development, and support in crisis contexts and propose and provide inter-agency, open-source solutions. TiCC has helped elevate the important role teachers play in crisis settings, and its training and coaching packs have been used and adapted in more than 18 different country contexts. As the demand for such support for teachers continues to grow, TiCC will respond through practice, policy, and research-based approaches to improving support, equity, and justice for all teachers working in crisis contexts over the coming years.

The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the critical role of teachers, not only in imparting learning but in providing critical support for their pupils' psychosocial needs. However, teachers' own needs in these crisis contexts are frequently ignored or inadequately addressed. As identified in a joint paper by INEE and the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (2020, p. 6), "school closures have negatively impacted teachers' mental health and access to income/basic needs (UN). It has also placed extra demands on them to shift to new ways of teaching (i.e. distance education)." The partnership between INEE and the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action highlights the importance of child protection and EiE actors working together during crisis situations. This recognition is further highlighted by the work taking place between Area of Responsibility within the Global Protection Cluster (CP AoR), and the Education Cluster.

## COVID-19: A GLOBAL EDUCATION EMERGENCY

In 2019 an estimated 168 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance ([OCHA, 2019](#)). For the children and young people in these crisis-affected contexts, the impact on their access to education has been enormous. As this report has noted, these children and young people accounted for almost half of all out-of-school children globally. As the result of the COVID-19 pandemic the world now faces a global education emergency. Providing access to quality education for the children and young people affected by crises before COVID-19 must not be forgotten.

Previous crises have demonstrated that the effects of instability, poverty, and crises have a severe impact on children's learning. Evidence shows that the most marginalized children and young people—those affected by poverty and displacement, refugee girls, the youngest children, those of secondary age, and those with disabilities—continue to be most at risk with the outbreak of a new crisis. Furthermore, fear, poverty, and cultural norms may drive children out of school permanently during crises (Risso-Gill and Finnegan, 2015). For example, during the 2014 Ebola outbreak, school closures in Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia lasted six to eight months, with devastating long-term consequences on children's well-being, safety, and learning. Studies show that, due to poverty, fear, and parent mortality, girls in highly affected communities were more at risk of sexual exploitation, were forced into transactional sex, were twice as likely to become pregnant, and were at higher risk of child marriage (Risso-Gill and Finnegan, 2015).

Lessons learned from the Ebola crisis and others have informed the many innovative solutions countries have tried to support children's learning throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the pandemic has also exacerbated existing inequalities and exposed vulnerabilities, particularly those in the poorest, most crisis-affected communities. For example, on average, access to mobile internet is 26 percent lower for girls and women than for boys and men globally (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2018; UN Women, 2019). Therefore, it is essential that, in contexts where digital solutions are either inaccessible or inequitable, measures need to be taken to reduce the risk of unequal access and to ensure that distance learning curricula, activities, and resources are low tech and gender-responsive (see [INEE COVID Advocacy Messages](#)).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, INEE has played an important role in supporting the EiE community of practitioners with resources, tools, and spaces for communication and support.

### **INEE's COVID RESPONSE**

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, as in other critical emergencies, INEE has taken care to support its members, partners, and communities by ensuring that they are equipped to help governments, schools, teachers, parents/caregivers, and students mitigate the effects of the crisis and support the continuity of education for children and young people. For example, the INEE Technical Note provides guidance based on the INEE Minimum Standards framework on how to respond rapidly to support well-being and learning opportunities during the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a portal to the INEE COVID-19 resource collection, which includes extensive resources to support teachers during this crisis.



One major negative impact of COVID-19 on children and young people, which has been seen in other protracted crises, is the psychological damage that results from being out of a protective and safe school setting. INEE, together with the [Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action \(2020\)](#), has urged governments, policymakers, and practitioners to take a holistic perspective when making decisions about whether to open or close schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. This requires considering the educational and child protection/psychosocial impact of schools opening and/or closing, as well as the health risks.

INEE has a long history of supporting psychosocial well-being as part of the INEE Minimum Standards, and a range of other tools and resources. The [INEE Guidance Note on Psychosocial Support](#) clarifies the importance of supporting the psychosocial well-being of children and young people and offers specific strategies for how to incorporate psychosocial support and social and emotional learning approaches into education responses (INEE, 2018b). More recently, INEE, along with the International Rescue Committee and New York University, launched the [Measurement Library](#), which provides stakeholders with ways to collect data that will help them strengthen education and the protection of children and young people in crisis-affected contexts.

## ENSURING THAT EIE POLICY AND PRACTICE IS BASED IN RIGOROUS EVIDENCE

Each of these challenges, achieving equity in EiE, providing quality education, and meeting the COVID-19 Global Education Emergency, require rigorous research and evidence to inform policy and practice. Despite the recognition of EiE as a core part of the global humanitarian agenda, the field of Education in Emergencies continues to be faced with the challenge of limited research on the impact of education in the prevention of, response to, and recovery from disaster risks and complex emergencies' (INEE, 2018). Burde et al (2017) highlight this reality as well in a review of EiE literature, stating that 'robust evidence on which to act is limited.' In light of this challenge, education policy makers, donors, academics, and practitioners are increasingly calling for and committing to evidence-based EiE through new research funds, learning agendas, academic learning communities etc.

According to a review of the [INEE 2015-2017 Strategic Plan \(INEE, 2015\)](#), and aligned to INEE's current [Strategic Priority 3](#), INEE is increasingly perceived as central to the collection, curation, and dissemination of knowledge and [evidence](#) for EiE. Over the past two decades, INEE has become a "go-to" site for EiE practitioners to find tools, resources, and guidance on carrying out and improving the quality of EiE programming. Key examples of how INEE is supporting and leading on the creation, curation, and dissemination of evidence for EiE are the [Evidence for Education in Emergencies \(E-Cubed\) Research Fund](#), the [INEE Learning Agenda](#) and forthcoming Evidence Platform, the [Journal on Education in Emergencies](#), and the [INEE Data & Evidence Collaborative](#).

In 2016, at the World Humanitarian Summit, Dubai Cares committed at least 10 percent of all its funding to EiE research. In 2017, Dubai Cares partnered with INEE to design and manage the E-Cubed Research Fund. INEE's role in this partnership is to coordinate the proposal submission process and proposal review while Dubai Cares makes final funding decisions. Now, in its fourth year, E-Cubed has funded 12 research projects with investments totaling 7.1 Million USD. Meanwhile, additional funding for evidence in EiE has increased through donor support and research funds.

The INEE Learning Agenda recognizes the need for a strategic approach to the production of knowledge and research as well as the curation and dissemination of evidence. Throughout 2018-2020 INEE convened a series of workshops with key partners including UKRI Global Challenges Research Fund, NORRAG, the USAID MEERS Program, the Journal on Education in Emergencies, New York University, and the Swiss Development Cooperation to facilitate discussion between academics and practitioners on key evidence needs as well as emerging research in New York, Amman, Geneva, Bogota, and Dhaka. The input collected in these consultations will inform the creation and content of an INEE Evidence Platform through which the INEE Network can access and disseminate current and emerging evidence as well as highlight continuing gaps.

Finally, the Journal on Education in Emergencies (JEiE), founded in 2014 by INEE and housed at New York University's (NYU) International Education (IE) program and Center for Practice and Research at the Intersection of Information, Society, and Methodology (PRIISM), is a key EiE Global Good, publishing peer-reviewed, ground-breaking scholarly and practitioner work. The JEiE sets itself apart in its commitment to open-access, fee-free publications. With 6 current publications, the JEiE has established itself as a critical source of EiE evidence for academics, policymakers, and practitioners.

This report does not provide a comprehensive overview of initiatives to strengthen the EiE evidence base,

but rather highlights key aspects of INEE's contribution. The report acknowledges the efforts of sector-wide work to strengthen the EiE evidence base. The E-Cubed Research Fund, INEE Learning Agenda, Journal on Education in Emergencies, and INEE Data & Evidence Collaborative move forward in the context of increased global commitment to and funding for research on EiE. While the EiE evidence base is improving, more research, data, and evidence are still needed.

This section identified some of the key moments in INEE's 20 years of existence, during which progress has been made in EiE. This includes, for example, establishing education as part of the humanitarian response, as well as the new dedicated ECW fund for education in emergencies, to which INEE contributed in collaboration with many organizations. This section also highlighted some of the remaining challenges EiE is facing, particularly in providing equitable and quality education in crisis contexts and ensuring that all EiE policy and programming is based in rigorous evidence. These challenges have been further exacerbated by the current COVID-19 pandemic.



## SECTION THREE: HUMANITARIAN FINANCING FOR EDUCATION—TRENDS OVER TWO DECADES.

Over the past two decades, establishment of INEE, the GEC, and other initiatives has highlighted the chronic funding gap for education in emergency situations. Having been neglected for many years, education is now formally recognized as part of humanitarian response. However, formal recognition has not yet translated into sufficient financing, which means that millions of children in crisis contexts continue to be denied their right to quality education.

This section assesses trends in humanitarian funding over the last 20 years, including identifying the effects the ECW fund and other global initiatives have had on prioritizing education in the humanitarian aid sector in recent years. It also considers the urgent funding needs education systems have experienced since the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic and the extent to which the humanitarian aid architecture has delivered on these requests.

### EDUCATION HAS ACHIEVED GREATER VISIBILITY

Humanitarian response plans, regional response plans, and flash appeals offer a shared vision of how to respond to the needs of populations caught up in humanitarian emergencies. These plans help humanitarian country teams—typically made up of UN agencies, INGOs, and other actors on the ground—respond to the strategic objectives, which are detailed by sector and the level of funding required. The planning process for humanitarian and regional response plans typically takes place each year between September and December. The Financial Tracking System (FTS) of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) tracks commitments made to each appeal and by sector, or what OCHA refers to as a cluster.<sup>5</sup> The following section uses FTS data to evaluate how humanitarian aid has served the education needs of affected populations most effectively over the last 20 years.

Between 2000 and 2020, OCHA launched a total of 598 appeals to assist populations affected by conflict, disaster, or a protracted crisis.<sup>6</sup> Of these appeals, 502 were specifically for the education cluster. Humanitarian aid to education totaled US\$3.7 billion during this period, which represents just 2.4 percent of total humanitarian aid disbursed to all countries. However, this sums masks the volatility in spending: between 2000 and 2012, the share of humanitarian aid spent on education fluctuated from just 0.9 percent in 2000 to as high as 5 percent in 2005.

In 2011, UNESCO's report on armed conflict and education drew attention to the low priority given the education sector within humanitarian funding, and to the volatility of the share of funding it received (UNESCO, 2011). The following year, the UN Global Education First Initiative was formed to bolster global efforts during the final years of the EFA agenda and called for a doubling of education's share of humanitarian aid from 2 percent to 4 percent. Four years later, at the 2016 WHS, international donors launched the ECW fund as part of an effort to reposition education as a priority sector within the humanitarian aid architecture. The global ECW fund targeted the specific education needs of children and young people in crisis-affected countries. The next section considers whether these high-profile interventions have had any impact on humanitarian education financing.

<sup>5</sup> The term "cluster" in this section of the report draws on the terminology used by OCHA's FTS, elsewhere in the report the global education cluster refers to the wider OCHA coordination mechanism.

<sup>6</sup> This excludes 2020 appeals, which were specifically related to COVID-19.

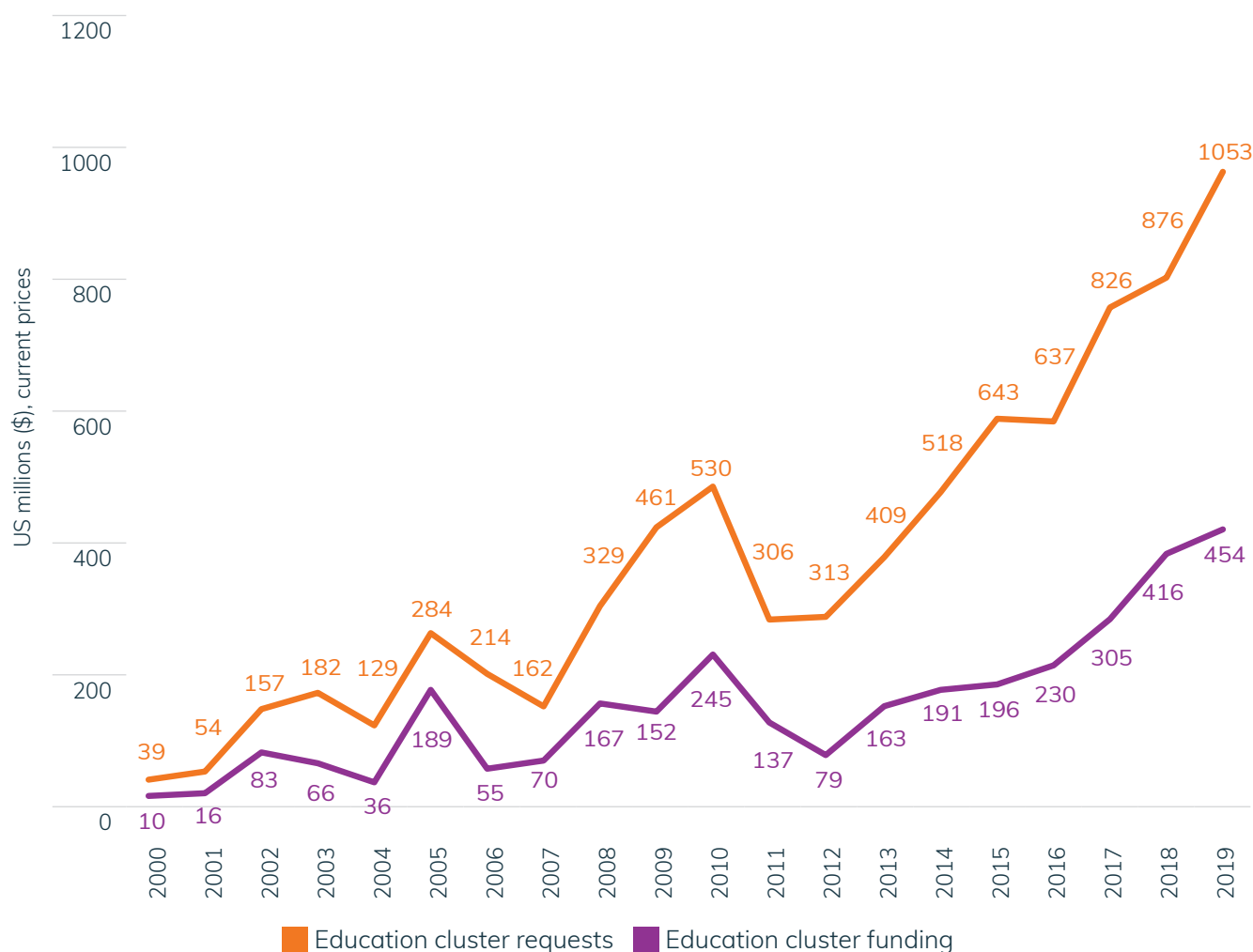
## DESPITE INCREASED EDUCATION FUNDING, A LARGE SHARE OF REQUESTS STILL GO UNFUNDED

It is important to highlight how the protracted nature of crises and the severity and frequency of environmental and other emergencies have steadily increased the need for resources for EiE. As one measure of this, ten or more humanitarian response plans were launched between 2000 and 2020 in 21 of the 38 countries experiencing a crisis. Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, and Sudan each had a new humanitarian response plan either every year or almost every year during this period—which is longer than most children and young people in these countries would spend in school.

Requests for education aid increased 27-fold from 2000 to 2019, from US\$39 million to just over US\$1 billion (see Figure 4). The actual amount of humanitarian aid spent on education in this period increased from US\$10 million to US\$454 million. The increase in funding requests for the education sector appear particularly pronounced over three periods: 2007-2010, 2011-2015, and 2016-2019. The first period corresponds to the global financial crisis and several high-profile environmental emergencies (Haiti's earthquake, Pakistan's floods), while the second two correspond to high-profile global initiatives relating to education in emergencies (Syria and Yemen Conflict).

The amount of humanitarian aid being spent on education has increased steadily since 2012, in particular since 2016, the year ECW was launched. The increase also reflects the impact the Syrian crisis has had on education.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the increased funding since 2012 is still significantly less than half the amount the sector requested, and the gap between the amount requested and what actually gets funded has been widening since 2012. Simply put, as the education sector's needs have grown, the funding has not kept pace. This suggests that, while global initiatives have increased the visibility of education in appeal requests, their success in translating visibility into funding has been limited.

**Figure 4: Requests versus actual funding for the education sector**



Source: Authors' calculations based on the [OCHA FTS database](#). Accessed September 2020

<sup>7</sup> These rising costs need to be considered in the context of the numbers of children and adolescents targeted in humanitarian appeals, together with the equivalent unit costs.

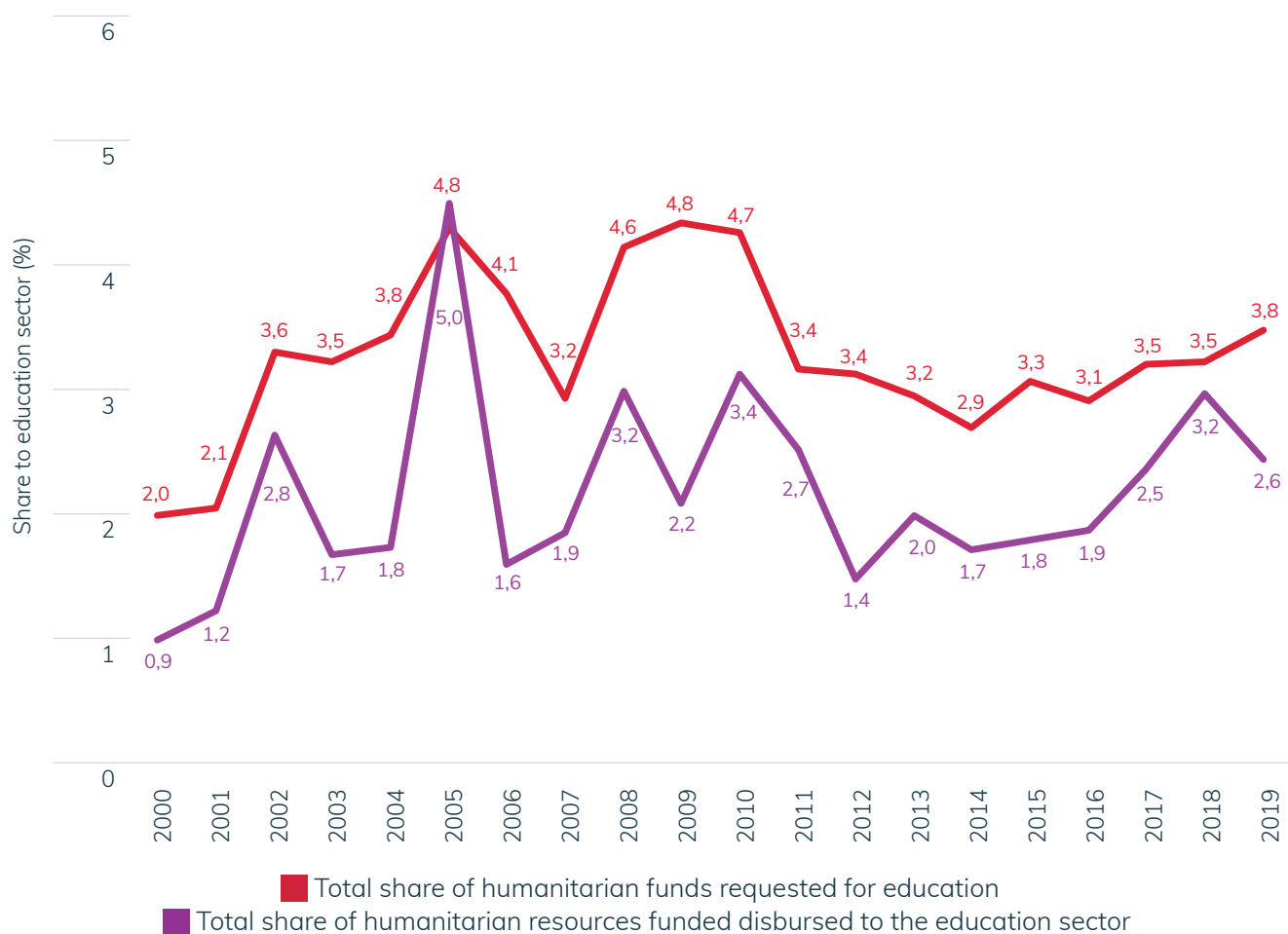


## EDUCATION IS STILL A LOW PRIORITY IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES

Education funding continues to lag behind the 4 percent of humanitarian aid funding proposed by the [Global Education First Initiative](#) in 2012 (UN, 2012) and is woefully lower than the European Union's more recent target of 10 percent (EU, 2019). The share of humanitarian aid requests allocated to education increased from just 2 percent in 2000 to 3.8 percent in 2019; it peaked at 4.8 percent around 2009 (see Figure 5). However, the actual share of humanitarian spending that reached education is far below this; between 2000 and 2020, humanitarian aid to education totaled US\$3.7 billion, which represents just 2.4 percent of total humanitarian aid disbursed to all countries during this period. While the share did increase from a low of just 0.9 percent in 2000, by 2018 education still received just 3.2 percent of total humanitarian spending, falling again to just 2.6 percent in 2019 (see Figure 5).

Between 2000 and 2020, OCHA launched 598 appeals to assist populations affected by conflict, environmental and other disasters, or a protracted crisis.<sup>8</sup> Of these appeals, 502 included funding for the education cluster, but only a quarter allocated more than 4 percent of the funds received to education. Despite the upward trajectory in education funding since 2016, as noted above, it is worth noting three things. First, far more appeals were allocated no more than 2 percent of the total funding to education than those that were allocated 4 percent or more. Second, the share of appeals receiving 4 percent or more for the education sector was far greater in 2008–2011 and in 2015 than in the 2016–2019 period. This links to the third point: funding for the Syrian crisis, which started in 2011, appears to have crowded out education funding for a number of other appeals, including more protracted (and less visible) crises such as those in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Figure 5: Education as a share of total humanitarian aid (%)**



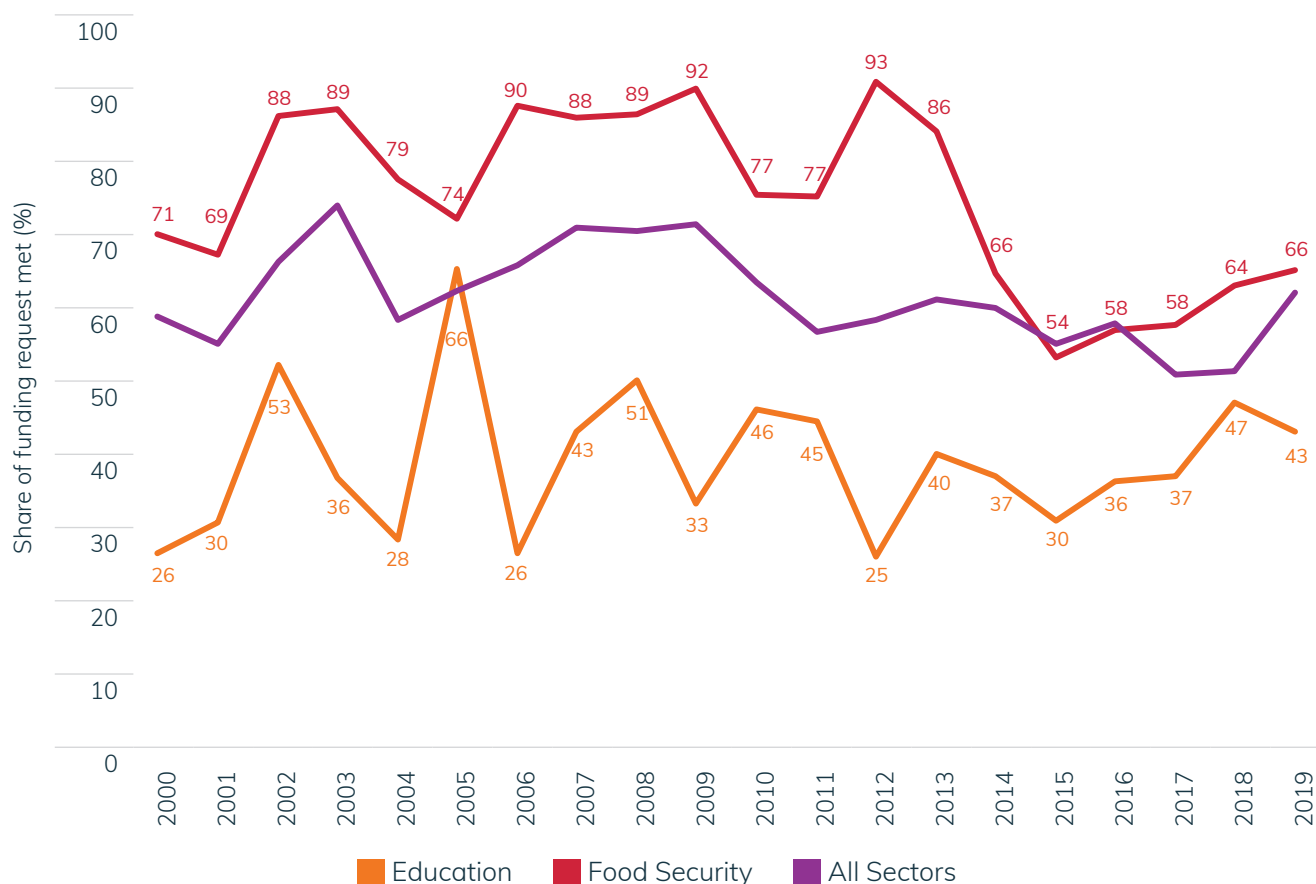
<sup>8</sup> This excludes 2020 appeals, which specifically related to COVID-19.

## EDUCATION FUNDING HAS BEGUN TO CATCH UP WITH OTHER SECTORS

Despite recognition that households and communities in humanitarian settings prioritize education (Nicolai and Hine, 2015), the humanitarian aid architecture has failed to recognize education as meeting the “life-saving” associations of the term “humanitarian.” As a result, it has been left behind the sectors more traditionally associated with humanitarian crises, such as food security, health care, and shelter. However, the growing focus on the humanitarian-development nexus and increased awareness of the long-term nature of many crises may have moved things forward. This movement, together with the cluster approach adopted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to address gaps in the humanitarian response, has helped to integrate education into the humanitarian architecture by making it one of the nine clusters. ECW has also been instrumental in raising education’s visibility within humanitarian response.

Thanks to these changes, education appears to have become more prominent in the humanitarian response in recent years, which is reflected in the OCHA’s commitment to including education in humanitarian responses, and their current role on the ECW High Level Steering Group (Theirworld, 2017). For example, in 2018, almost half of education’s funding requirements had been met (see Figure 6). However, while the share of the education cluster’s requests being met is slowly increasing, this is against a backdrop of the increased sums requested, a large share of which continues to go unfunded.

**Figure 6: Share of education cluster funding requests met, compared with the food security cluster**



Source: Authors’ calculations based on OCHA FTS database. Accessed September 2020

## COUNTRIES MOST IN NEED ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND

In 2016, UNICEF estimated that nearly 75 percent of children living in countries affected by conflict or disaster were in sub-Saharan Africa; 12 percent resided in the Middle East and North Africa region (UNICEF, 2016). Despite these figures, the share of humanitarian aid that has gone to education in sub-Saharan Africa has fallen steeply since 2011, while the share to the Middle East and North Africa region has increased sharply. The increase in the Middle East and North Africa has largely been due to the Syrian civil war, and more recently to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Since 2017, the share of humanitarian aid for education in the South Asia region has increased, due to support for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and increased support for Afghanistan. In 2019, the share of total humanitarian aid spent on education going to sub-Saharan Africa was 36.5 percent, compared to 38.4 percent in the Middle East and North Africa, and 21.4 percent in South Asia.

The high-profile crises in the Middle East and North Africa appear to have crowded out humanitarian aid to countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Between 2010 and 2020, humanitarian aid to the Middle East and North Africa increased by 176 percent in nominal terms. Aid to sub-Saharan Africa decreased by 25 percent in the same period. The data show that, in certain years since 2000, a high number of appeals for education funding received no aid.<sup>9</sup> This appears to coincide with specific high-profile crises that received a high proportion of humanitarian funding for education in those years:

- 2002: Afghanistan appeal following post-9/11 invasion by US-led forces
- 2005: Indian Ocean tsunami, South Asia earthquake
- 2006: Darfur, Sudan, conflict
- 2010: Haiti earthquake, Pakistan floods, Sri Lanka conflict
- 2014-16: Syria conflict

With a humanitarian system that is underfunded, unpredictable, and appears to still focus largely on short-term crises, it is perhaps unsurprising that high-profile crises are prioritized. This has major implications for children and young people in the conflict-affected countries that continue to be overlooked and forgotten.

Among the “forgotten crises” that have gone unfunded are those identified annually by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations.<sup>10</sup> In 2019, it identified 30 countries as being forgotten crises, 11 of which had launched a humanitarian appeal for the education sector. Ten of these countries received less than 50 percent of the funding required; six of the ten were located in sub-Saharan Africa, two in Latin America and the Caribbean, one in the East Asia and Pacific region, and one in the Europe and Central Asia region (see Figure 7).<sup>11</sup>

Many forgotten crises are protracted. The Central African Republic has issued a humanitarian appeal for education every year since 2004, but the share of its funding requests for education that have been met has fluctuated massively. Similarly, in Cameroon, which has issued a humanitarian response appeal every year since 2014, only 40 percent of its education funding needs has been met. Across the ocean in Venezuela, which launched a humanitarian appeal for the education sector in 2019, just 15 percent of its funding request was met.

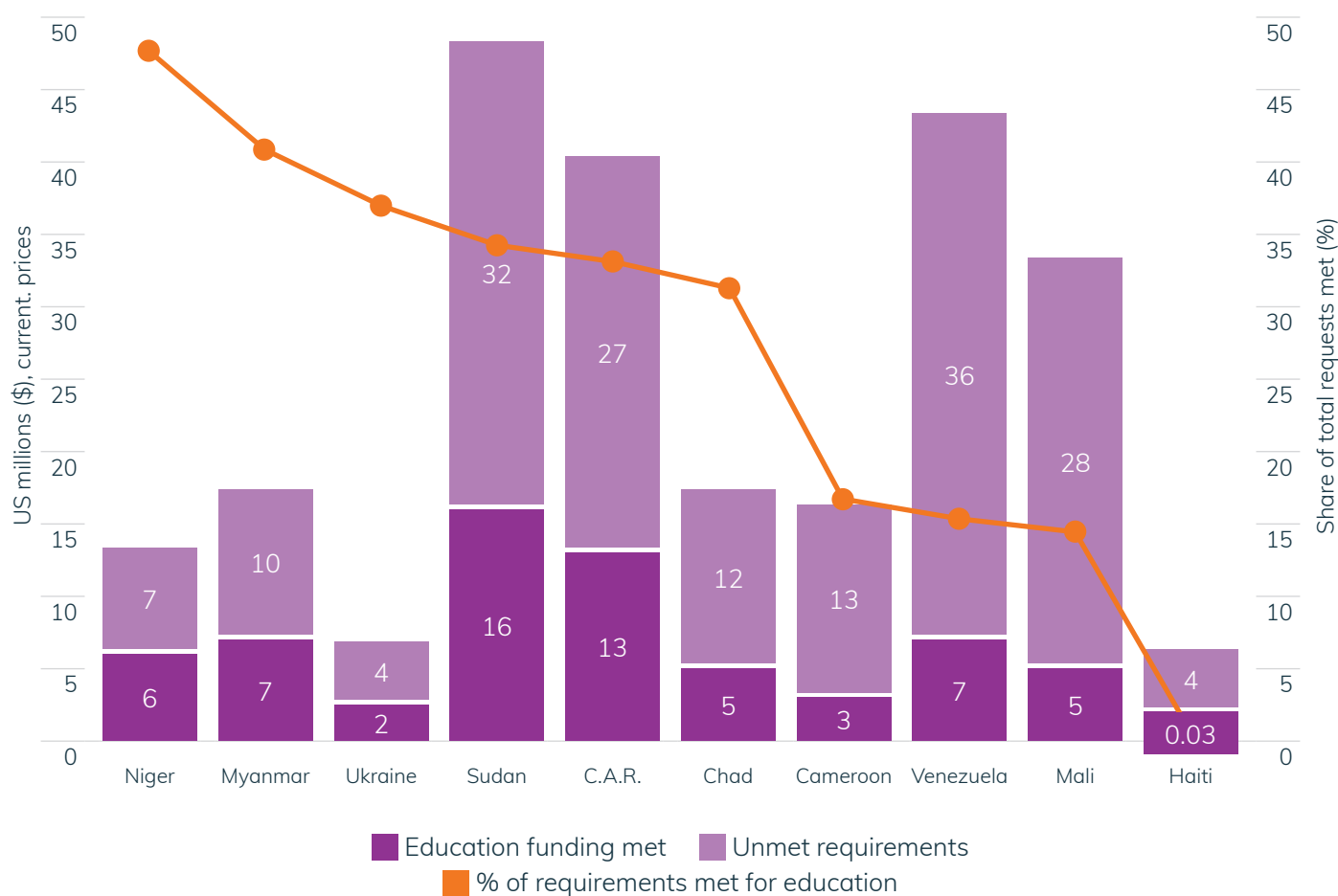
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9 Outside the sub-Saharan African region, D.P.R. Korea and Sri Lanka also had three or more of their appeals for the education sector go unfunded.

10 Forgotten crises are taken from the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations index. This is based on four criteria: 1. vulnerability index, 2. media coverage, 3. public aid per capita, and 4. qualitative assessment based on regional experts.

11 In Burundi, one of the 11, funding received exceeded the amount requested.

**Figure 7: Ten of the eleven “forgotten crises” that issued an education appeal had less than 50 percent of their requests funded in 2019**

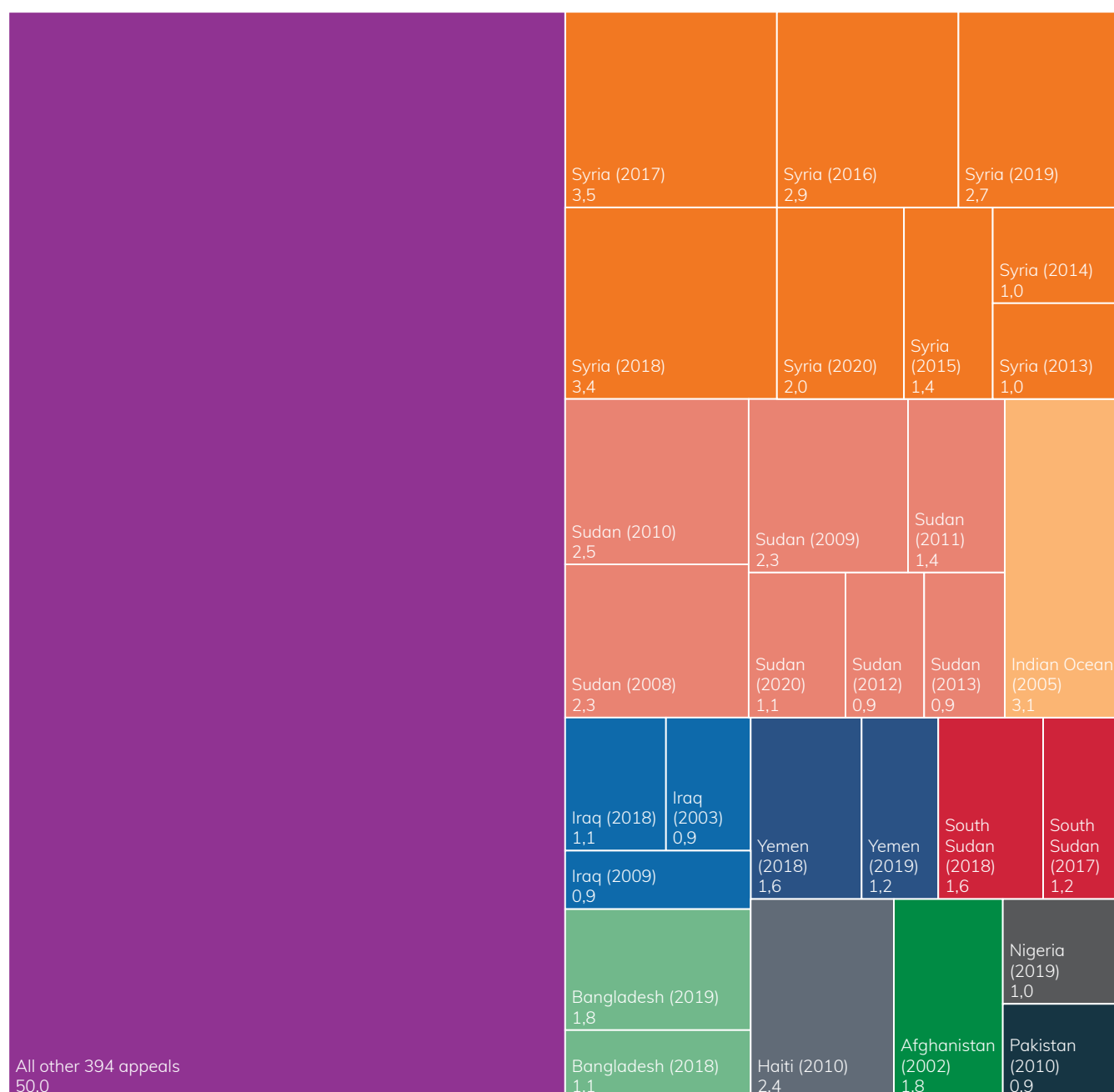


Source: Authors' calculations based on [OCHA FTS database](#). Accessed September 2020

High-profile humanitarian appeals, such as those associated with the Syrian civil war, as well as environmental emergencies that receive extensive media coverage, not only crowd out other funding appeals, they also tend to concentrate overall humanitarian aid funding. Of the 423 humanitarian education appeals that received some funding between 2000 and 2020, half went to just 29 appeals. Of these 29 appeals, 8 related to the Syria crisis, which received 17.9 percent of all humanitarian aid to education for all crises between 2000 and 2020 (see Figure 8).



**Figure 8: Humanitarian funding has concentrated on a very small proportion of appeals**



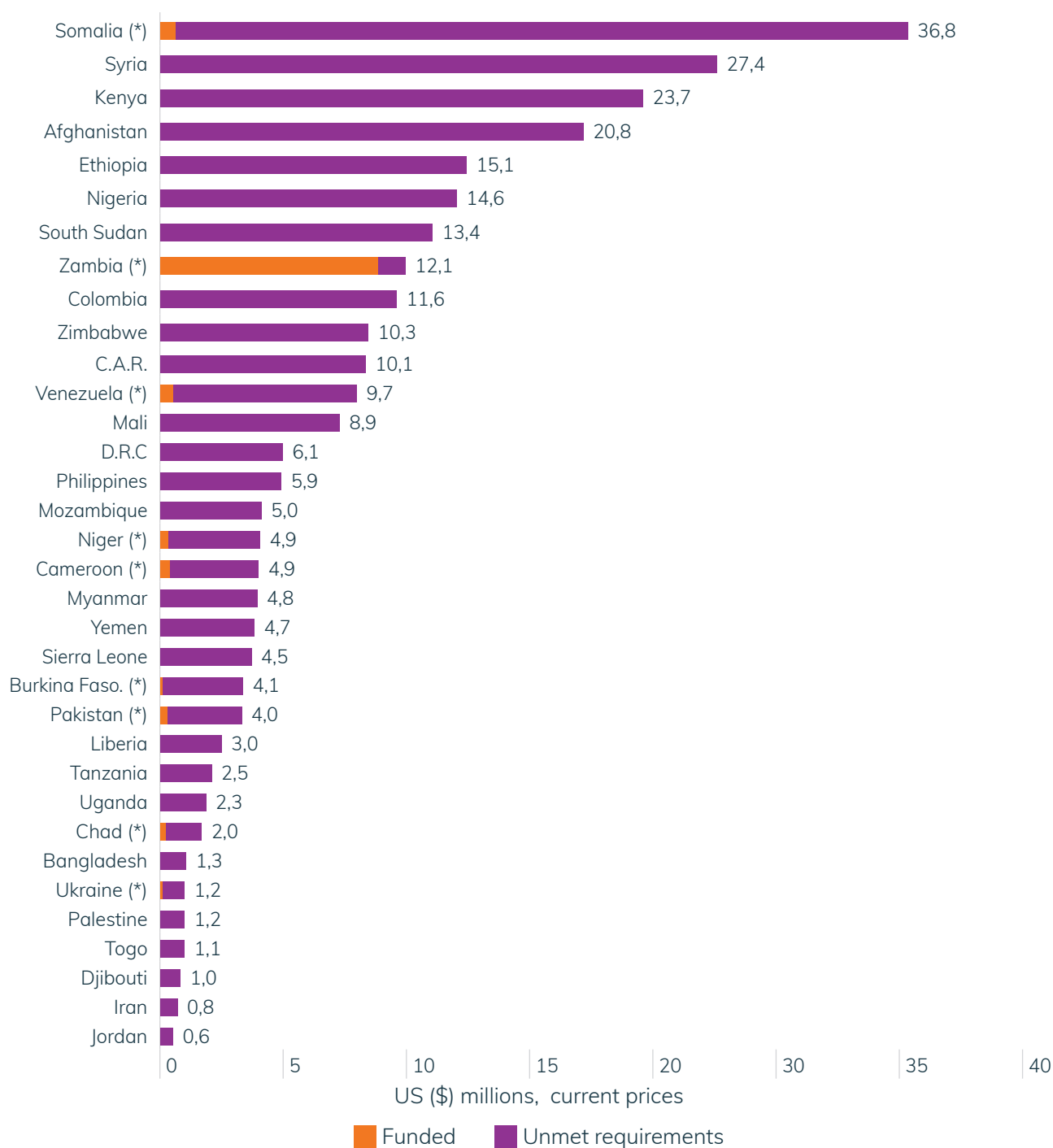
Source: Authors' calculations based on OCHA FTS database. Accessed September 2020

## EDUCATION DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC IS POORLY FUNDED

In August 2020, the United Nations indicated that the pre-COVID 19 education funding gap in low- and lower-middle-income countries could increase by as much as 30 percent from the current US\$148 billion (UN, 2020). With domestic revenues projected to contract due the global economic downturn caused by the pandemic and with development aid under increasing strain, the funding crisis for education is at a critical juncture. Of the 59 countries the United Nations identified as most in need of humanitarian aid due to the pandemic, 55 had already issued humanitarian appeals due to ongoing crises (Development Initiatives, 2020).

The COVID-19 appeals funding from all countries totaled US\$10.3 billion, of which just over one-quarter (US\$2.7 billion) had been funded by September 2020. Requests for education funding were made by 34 countries, but just 5 percent were funded. This percentage is far lower than for appeals overall, which suggests that education is again lagging behind other sectors. In 25 of the 34 countries that appealed for COVID-19 funding for education, no funds have been disbursed as of this writing (see Figure 9). In contrast, 25 of 29 COVID-19 appeals for the food security cluster have already been partially funded. On average, 12.8 percent of the requests for the food security cluster had been funded as of September 2020.

**Figure 9: Funding for COVID-19 aid for education versus requirements in 2020**



Note: Countries with an asterix (\*) have received some of the funds through the COVID-19 appeals for education as of September 2020.

Source: Authors' calculations based on [OCHA FTS database](#). Accessed September 2020

This section has considered the role the humanitarian aid architecture plays in fulfilling the funding requirements for the education sector in crisis-affected countries. A number of key points are apparent. First, while the amount of funds disbursed to education has increased in recent years, it still represents a small share of the total amount disbursed for humanitarian aid. Second, despite the request for education aid being among the smallest of all sectors, the share of its requests that get funded continues to be far below that of humanitarian aid overall. Third, in the context of an under-funded humanitarian system, high-profile crises have crowded out education funding to less-known protracted crises, which tend to be located in sub-Saharan Africa in some of the world's poorest countries. Finally, while many education systems require support due to COVID-19, the sector's funding needs as of September 2020 have largely not been met.



## SECTION FOUR: 20 YEARS ON - RECOMMENDATIONS

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### LOOKING AHEAD TO 2030

In the 20 years since INEE was founded, the field of EiE has seen many positive developments. As this report has shown, there is much to celebrate—improved coordination, more sustained financing, and the recognition that education is a core, life-saving, and life-sustaining part of humanitarian response.

And yet, for the child or young person growing up in a context affected by conflict or crisis, their right to quality education is still highly unpredictable. Their opportunities for education depend on where they live, and/or on whether they live in a crisis context that is of interest to funders. It also depends on whether they are a child or young person with disabilities, or a girl, or from a low-income family. Ultimately, their education and protection, their ability to reach their full potential and have hope for the future, depends on the political will of their own or their host country government, donors, and the international community.

INEE's open global network remains as relevant today as it was in 2000. Today, children and young people in many crisis-affected countries are impacted threefold: by poverty, by existing crises, and now by the global pandemic. The need for sustained action, advocacy, coordination, and financing for EiE remains as important as ever.

As INEE marks its 20th anniversary, it does so with hope and determination to realize the right of all individuals to a quality, safe, relevant, and equitable education. To achieve this goal, we, the international EiE community, must translate the important messages and recommendations offered in this report into effective action.

### RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACHIEVE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AFFECTED BY CRISIS

**Education must receive its fair share of humanitarian funding, including an increase in the current target of 4 percent of humanitarian aid going to education.**

In 2019, education received just 2.6 percent of total humanitarian funding. The donor community must take stock of this situation and, if possible, match the European Union's commitment to direct 10 percent of its humanitarian aid to education.

**The international education aid architecture (humanitarian and development) must work in a consistent and predictable way to ensure that education needs in forgotten crises are met.**

While the amount of humanitarian aid disbursed to education has increased in the 20 years since INEE was founded, it has been skewed toward "high-profile" crises that either have received extensive media coverage or are geopolitically important. In order to ensure that education funding is not diverted from protracted crises, the international community and donors must provide additional funds for sudden-onset crises. Increased cooperation between humanitarian-development financing and for protracted crises situations is needed to enhance education systems resilience.

**Quality education can be provided in crisis situations by expanding existing initiatives that are based on evidence and by investing in teachers.**

Important improvements have been made in the quality of education provided in crisis situations, including addressing the psychosocial and social and emotional learning needs of children and young people. However, sustaining these improvements requires building teachers' capacity with long-term approaches, which require both planning and funding. Moreover, providing quality education requires that teachers are compensated appropriately and have safe, well-resourced working conditions.

**More research, data, and evidence are needed.**

Research, data, and evidence on particular areas of EiE must be expanded in order to strengthen evidence-based initiatives and to ensure that international education goals are met. Areas (among others) that need more research include the effects of climate change on education, pre-primary education, inclusive education for children and young people with disabilities, gender responsive education linking education and child protection, and education for young people, including those who have dropped out of school. A particularly critical area for research includes how best to sustainably strengthen the crisis-resilience of national education systems through greater collaboration between development and humanitarian actors.

**EiE actors must prepare to respond rapidly to crises and to draw from local knowledge and expertise.**

Enhanced capacity-building and crisis planning are needed at all levels—from the global to the national to the local. Local voices, including those of ministries of education, are essential to provide effective and balanced emergency response, and to strengthen the partnerships needed to face the inevitable challenges.





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# APPENDIX A: COUNTRY CATEGORIZATION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL POPULATION

To identify the number of out-of-school children for this report, we drew from a list of countries that ECW shared with us. The list includes countries ECW identifies as eligible for its Multi-Year Resilience Window grants, which means they are either:

- Protracted crises or acute crises in each of the previous three years (based on OCHA appeals data, UNHCR Refugee Response Plan information, and UNICEF Humanitarian Action for Children appeal information); or
- new crises expected to become protracted.

This list of crisis-affected countries includes those affected by conflict, environmental emergency, and/or displacement. Further information can be found [here](#).

The list of countries included in the out-of-school figures include:

Afghanistan	Ethiopia	Palestine
Bangladesh	Haiti	Rwanda
Burkina Faso	Iraq	Senegal
Burundi	Jordan	Sierra Leone
Cameroon	Kenya	South Sudan
Central African Republic	Lebanon	Sudan
Chad	Libya	Syrian Arab Republic
Congo	Mali	Turkey
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Mauritania	Uganda
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Myanmar	Ukraine
Djibouti	Niger	United Republic of Tanzania
Egypt	Nigeria	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
	Pakistan	Yemen

To calculate the out-of-school figures included in the report, this list of conflict-affected countries was shared with the UIS, which provided the overall figures, disaggregated by gender.

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