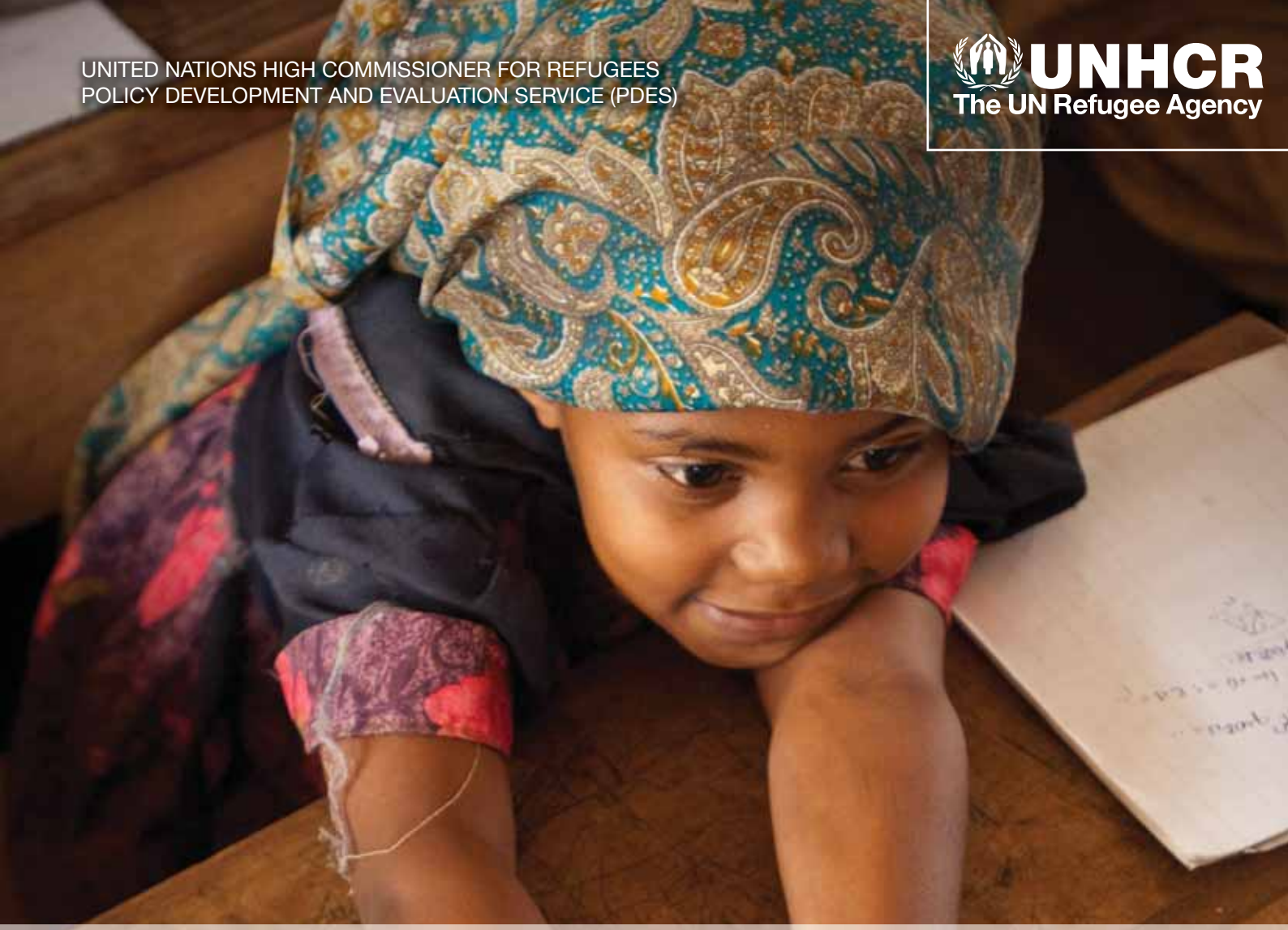
UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES
POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION SERVICE (PDES)

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



Refugee Education

A Global Review

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November 2011

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Acknowledgements

The field of education in emergencies is led with vision by numerous people, many of whom contributed their ideas to the conceptualisation, design, analysis, and assessment of this review of refugee education: Pilar Aguilar, Allison Anderson, Neil Boothby, Alexandra Kaun, Zachary Lomo, Eldrid Midttun, Susan Nicolai, Gonzalo Retamal, Jenny Perlman Robinson, Nicolas Servas, James Simeon, Margaret Sinclair, Christopher Talbot, Nemia Temporal, Carl Triplehorn, James Williams; and two external peer reviewers, Dana Burde and Mario Novelli. Masters students from the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland wrote detailed and thought-provoking case studies that informed this review with critical field-based experience: Joanna Rahman, Laura Rezzonico, and Manon Wettstein.

I would like to thank all those at UNHCR who assisted with the study: Eva Ahlen, Susanne Kindler-Adam, Nathalie Meynet, Audrey Nirrengarten, Annika Sjoberg, the staff in UNHCR field offices in Malaysia, Mauritania, and Uganda; and especially Ita Sheehy for her thoughtful suggestions on all stages of the review; Jeff Crisp for his commitment to this topic; and Esther Kiragu for her skilled oversight of the review from start to finish. A particular thank you to Marion Fresia who worked closely with me on the methodology of the field-based case studies and supervision of the Masters students and whose experience and knowledge provided key analytic insights. Any errors or omissions are my own.

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Acronyms

AAH-I	Action Africa Help-International
ANC	African National Congress
CAR	Central African Republic
CARA	Control of Alien Refugees Act (Uganda)
CNA	Comprehensive Needs Assessment
COPE	Complementary Opportunities for Primary Education
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CREPS	Complementary Rapid Education Programme for Schools
DAFI	German-language acronym for Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative
DIP	Division of International Protection
DOS	Department of Operational Support
DPSM	Division of Programme Support and Management
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EFA	Education for All
EGMA	Early Grade Math Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IBT	Initial Budget Target
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IP	Implementing Partner
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JPO	Junior Professional Officer
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding

NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NWFP	Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDES	Policy Development and Evaluation Service
PEP	Peace Education Programme
PSLE	Primary School Leaving Exams
RET	Refugee Education Trust
SADR	Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SMC	School Management Committee
TDA	Targeted Development Assistance
TVSD	Technical and Vocational Skills Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UPE	Universal Primary Education
YEP	Youth Education Pack
WUSC	World University Service of Canada

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Access to education is limited and uneven, particularly for girls, at secondary levels, and in Eastern and the Horn of Africa

Executive Summary

Education is one of the highest priorities of refugee communities. Yet there is little evidence of tangible organisational commitment by UNHCR to guaranteeing the right to education for refugee children and young people. The lack of high quality and protective education for refugees stands in the way of meeting Education for All goals, of achieving durable solutions, and of sustainable development and reconstruction of home and host countries.

The Current State of the Field

- *Access to education for refugees is limited and uneven across regions and settings of displacement, particularly for girls and at secondary levels.* Enrolment in primary school is only 76% globally and drops dramatically to 36% at secondary levels. Girls are at a particular disadvantage; in Eastern and the Horn of Africa, only 5 girls are enrolled for every 10 boys.

- *Refugee education is generally of a very low quality,* with ineffective indicators that measure inputs rather than outcomes. Teacher-pupil ratios average as high as 1:70 and, in many situations, teachers do not have even the ten days of training that would categorise them as "trained." Available data indicate that many refugee children are learning very little in schools; among Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia, less then 6% of refugee children had reached benchmark reading fluency by grade 4.

- *Refugee education is not serving its protective function due to a lack of focus on learning.* Current indicators are based on the assumption that schools are useful only as "spaces" to identify protection issues.

- *UNHCR cannot meet its mandate to provide high quality and protective refugee education with the current level of human and financial resources.* Globally, there are only two education officer positions (2011), and Implementing Partners often do not have technical capacity in education. Education received only 4% of UNHCR's total comprehensive budget in 2010.

An Agenda for Change

Based on extensive analysis, this review sets out an agenda for change, aimed at promoting high quality and protective education for refugees, in keeping with education as a durable solution and as a core element of UNHCR's mandate:

- *Integration of refugees into national education systems,* particularly in urban areas where half of refugees now live, working closely with Ministries of Education and UNICEF to strengthen national systems for the benefit not only of refugees but also host communities;

- *Provision of post-primary education for all refugees* up to the end of secondary school, with emphasis on access for girls and other marginalised groups, and provision of additional opportunities for higher education, both scholarships and site-based programmes that use open and distance learning;

- *Investment in teacher training* that cultivates high quality skills related to both pedagogy and content and that is sequential, leading towards a basic qualification that is recognised in home and/or host countries;

- *Development of new standards and indicators for education* that measure learning outcomes, including formative in-class assessments and summative independent sample testing, drawing on the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and on partnerships with UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), national Ministries of Education, and other bilateral partners supporting education;

- *Recognition of the connections between education and conflict in all education policy and planning,* emphasising the use of conflict-sensitive analyses to assess the content and structures of education, including curriculum, language, and relationships between actors; the importance of education for political stability and leadership in host countries and upon repatriation; and the reinstitution of peace education as a core component of refugee education;

- *Support for increased and predictable human and financial resources in education,* including hiring of Regional Education Advisors, Education Officers in country offices, and Community Services and Protection Officers with educational expertise; the selection of Implementing Partners (IPs) with proven technical capacities in education; and formalised operational and field-level partnerships between UNHCR and national Ministries of Education, UNICEF, and the Education Cluster.



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The quality of education refugee children receive in exile determines their ability to contribute to their home and host societies

Introduction

The provision of educational opportunities is one of the highest priorities of refugee communities. Refugee mothers, fathers, and children the world over emphasise that education is "the key to the future," that it will help bring peace to their countries, that despite not knowing "what will happen tomorrow," education brings stability and hope.

Access to education is a basic human right and is linked to poverty reduction, holding promises of stability, economic growth, and better lives for children, families, and communities. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognised compulsory primary education as a universal entitlement. The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (United Nations, 1979) called for no discrimination in educational provision for men and women, and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) affirmed the right of all children, regardless of status, to free and compulsory primary education, to available and accessible secondary education, and to higher education on the basis of capacity (United Nations, 1989, Article 28). The right to education for *refugees* is articulated in Article 22 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, resolution 64/290 (July 2010) of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations General Assembly on the right to education in emergencies (United Nations, 2010a), and in the draft resolution to the Human Rights Council on the right to education for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers (June 2011) (United Nations, 2010b).

Education is a rising concern for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The importance of education is articulated in documents emanating from throughout the agency, as "a

basic right" (Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, 2006, p. 6) and as an "enabling right," a right through which other rights are realised (UNHCR, 2011e, p. 18). Since 2010, education has taken on new prominence within the agency. It has a new institutional place as part of the agency's core mandate to protect, having moved from Operations to the Division of International Protection, and it is one of the Global Strategic Priorities (2010-2011 and 2012-2013) (UNHCR, 2011e).

Yet despite the binding language and institutional reorganisation, there is little evidence of tangible organisational commitment by UNHCR to guaranteeing the right to quality education for refugee children and young people. Access to education for refugees is limited and uneven across regions and settings of displacement, and particularly at secondary levels and for girls.

Further, refugee education has been described by top UNHCR staff members and refugees alike as "education for ultimate disappointment." The UNHCR Education Strategy 2010-2012 goes so far as to presuppose that "[t]he need for quality services is beyond UNHCR's existing capacity" (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 28). Educational capacity within UNHCR is shockingly limited, both in terms of human and financial resources. Within the entire organisation there are only two education officer positions in 2011, one at Headquarters in Geneva and one in the field, created just this year; designated education "focal points" are drawn from Community Services Officers, Protection Officers, and Programme Assistants. Education receives only 2% of humanitarian aid, the lowest of all sectors, and just 38% of requests for education funding are met, which is approximately half the average for all sectors (UNESCO, 2011, p. 3). UNHCR is not currently recognised as an actor in education by other actors in the field, including Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), scholars, and other UN agencies (P. W. Jones, 1999; P. W. Jones & Coleman, 2005; Klees, 2002; Mundy, 1999, 2002; UNESCO, 2011, pp. 4-23).

What accounts for the discrepancy in how refugees view education and how UNHCR as an institution views education? The discrepancy is one of priority but also one of approach. There are generally three conceptual approaches that guide the field of refugee education and education in emergencies more broadly (Burde, 2005, pp. 10-11).

First is the *humanitarian approach,* which describes UNHCR's general institutional approach to refugee education at present. This approach views education as one component of a rapid response, providing immediate protection to children and preventing human rights violations. It does not frequently involve collaboration with governments or institution-building.

Second is the *human rights approach,* which emphasises education as a human right to be realised and cultivated through education in any situation, including crises; furthermore, it defines education as an "enabling right," providing "skills that people need to reach their full potential and to exercise their other rights, such as the right to life and health" (INEE, 2010b, p. 7). Education can only fulfil this promise if it is of high quality, meaning that it is available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable (Tomaševski, 2001). This approach to education is consistent with the fundamental mandate of UNHCR but does not align with current practice, particularly in relation to quality.

Third is the *developmental approach,* which recognises education as a long-term investment for society and the lack of quality education in a crisis as holding back development potential, even allowing "backward development." This approach, most commonly expressed by refugee parents and children, takes a long-term view of education, with priority on current access to quality education but always with a sense of future relevance toward individual livelihoods and societal advancement.

Support for high quality education based on the human rights approach and the developmental approach to education is especially critical given several new realities in refugee work. First is recognition of the protracted nature of contemporary conflicts. The education that most refugee children receive in exile is not a stop-gap measure but their main shot at education. Second, the increasing number of urban refugees, and policy that attends to this reality, means a transformation of the way that assistance is delivered. For education, it means high-level advocacy to facilitate integration of refugee children into national schools and on-going support to the building of national education systems in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Third is the acceptance

that education can both mitigate and exacerbate conflict. Establishing conditions for peace requires intense analysis of the sources of conflict and active engagement with the content and pedagogy of refugee education as a positive force. Reconceptualising refugee education to account for these realities and to align with the human rights approach and the developmental approach will be critical to meeting UNHCR's Global Priorities and to achieving sustainable durable solutions.

This study was commissioned by UNHCR's Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) in an attempt to chart a way forward for policy and programming in refugee education. It is not an evaluation of UNHCR's education programmes but instead a general, global review that identifies common patterns and categories within the field of refugee education. It examines the central role of UNHCR in the provision of refugee education but situates refugee education historically, from World War II to the present, and within the global Education for All (EFA) movement and the burgeoning literature on education in conflict more broadly.

Data sources include a review of the literature; analysis of internal UNHCR data and documents; an online survey (79 respondants); and telephone interviews with UNHCR staff, Implementing Partners (IPs), and other refugee education organisations in priority field sites (42 respondants). The review is also based on three in-depth field-based case studies including a camp (Uganda), an urban setting (Malaysia), and a repatriation context (Mauritania), for which Master's students from the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland conducted three months of anthropological fieldwork in each country under the supervision of Marion Fresia and myself (more information on the case study methodology can be found in each of these three reports: Rahman, 2011; Rezzonico, 2011; Wettstein, 2011).

This study is global in scope. The three case studies represent important settings in which refugee education occurs – in a camp, in a city, and upon repatriation. Case study methodology does not capture the wide range of context-specific realities of refugee education, yet it provides in-depth understandings of particular contexts that allow for the testing of theories. Despite the wide array of sources mobilised, there are important limitations of the study. The availability of financial and human resources has meant that the study is not exhaustive. In particular, the search for global comparisons to inform and contextualise the case studies has been challenging, given the decentralisation of the most relevant information on refugee education that could help to unpack the stories behind the limited global numbers that are available. While many IPs continuously evaluate their work, there is no system of knowledge management in place, such that documentation is inaccessible outside of UNHCR field offices, often residing only with individual staff members who rotate frequently. Further, the numbers that are available are often incomplete, non-comparable, and not up-to-date. Finally, archives are slim and comparisons over time thus limited. The study does not analyse early childhood education or adult education, and it is limited to refugees and does not include Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

The rest of the report is organised as follows. Section 2 traces the history of refugee education. Section 3 presents the current "state of the field" of refugee education in terms of what is known about access, quality, and protection, and relevant institutional, resource, and coordination constraints. Out of this "state of the field" emerge seven challenges to refugee education, which I explore in detail in Section 4. Each of these challenges leads to a specific recommendation. Section 5 concludes with overarching commitments that UNHCR should make to refugee education, framed around the central idea of education as a durable solution.



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Refugee education has a long history. In 1956, Hungarian refugee children were given German language courses to prepare them for the Austrian school system

The Development of Refugee Education

"Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed" Preamble to the 1945 Constitution of UNESCO *(UNESCO, 2004a).*

Schools for children were set up in emergencies prior to World War II, by organisations such as Save the Children, but the provision of education became more common during and in the aftermath of the Second World War. It is at this time that a coherent field of refugee education has its origins. The political dynamics of the Cold War led to burgeoning refugee populations the world over, and the horrors of World War I and World War II ignited a belief in the power and necessity of education, as expressed in this preamble to the 1945 Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The development of refugee education since this time is connected integrally to international instruments, institutional relationships, and shifting understandings of the purposes of education. A timeline of these major developments is summarised in Box 2.1 (page 14-15).

The mandate for refugee education

The underpinnings of the provision of refugee education are articulated in Article 22 of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which states that signatory states "shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education…. [and] treatment as favourable as possible… with respect to education other than elementary education" (UNHCR, 2010c). Even among signatories to the Convention, realisation of the right to education has depended on the laws, policies, and practices in place at different historical times and in each national context (see Box 2.2).

Box 2.2. Refugee governance and education

Access to education depends on the refugee governance structures and asylum policies in different locations and at different historical times. For example, as early as 1975, refugee children from Burundi, Rwanda, and Zaire in Tanzania were integrated into the national education system (Dodds & Inquai, 1983, p. 11), although they were later relocated into refugee camps (Obura, 2003). In Iran, Afghan refugees were able to exercise the right to education before voluntary repatriation to Afghanistan began in 2002; however Afghans remaining in Iran are systematically denied access to education through discrimination and the levy of additional tuition fees (Ebadi, 2008; UNHCR, 2010d).

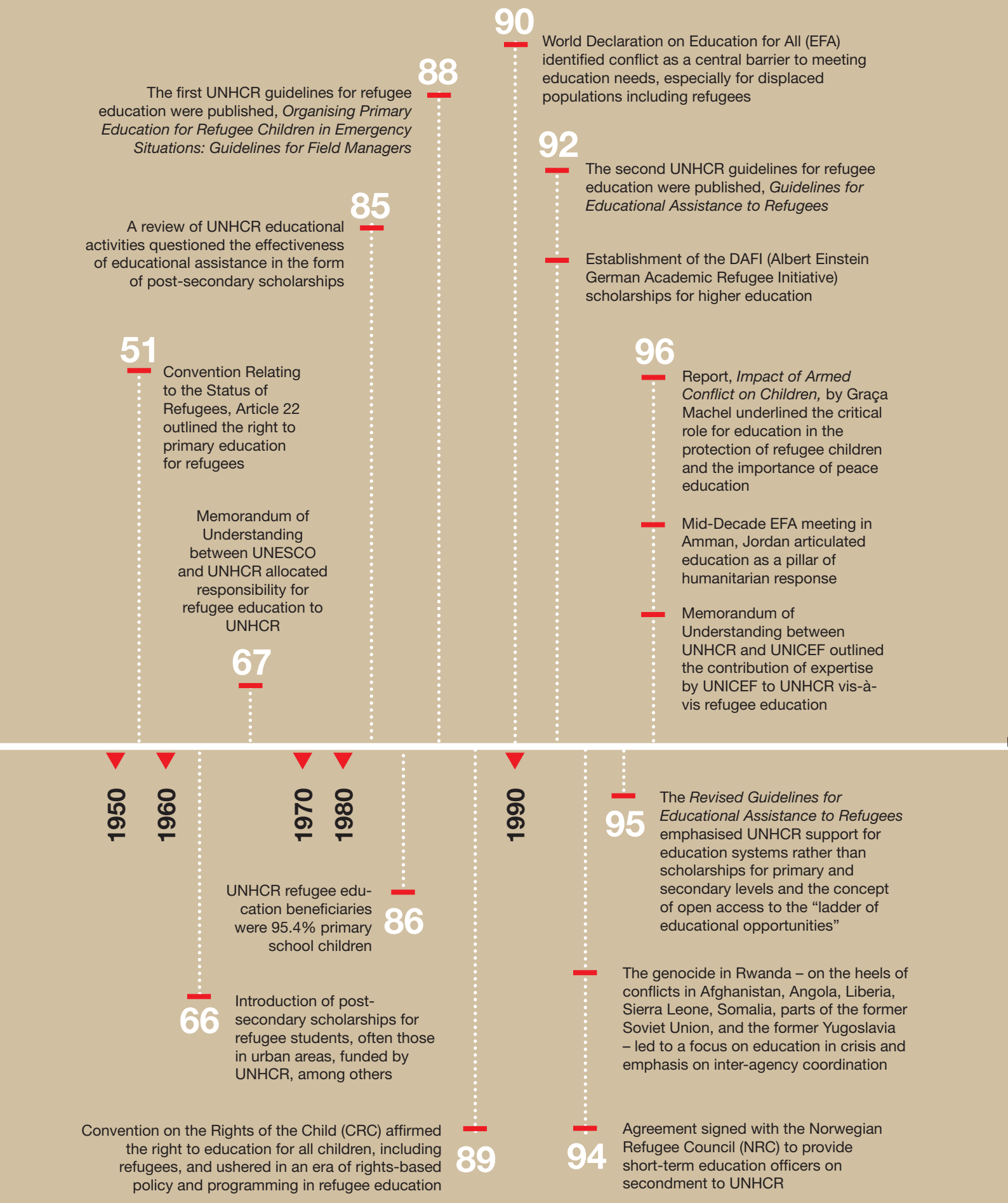
The decentralised and field-oriented operations of UNHCR have positioned the organisation to be central in the realisation of the right to education for refugees. From its origins in 1945, UNESCO carried the global mandate for education, including for refugees and other displaced populations. However, by the mid-1960s, it was clear that with UNESCO's focus on national-level policy, there was little capacity to act on this field-level responsibility. UNHCR began to create capacity for refugee education, while relying on some expertise and technical support from UNESCO, as outlined in a July 1967 *Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and UNHCR* (Retamal, Forthcoming, p. 9; UNESCO & UNHCR, 1984). From that time, UNHCR had education officer posts at the field level and carried the mantle for refugee education among UN agencies.

Self-help initiatives and scholarships

Until the 1980s, few resources were allocated to education within UNHCR. UNHCR thus typically relied on refugees to create their own primary school opportunities. A number of empirical case studies dating back to the early 1970s have documented that when education is not available, either in the acute phase of an emergency or due to lack of resources, refugees often do develop their own schools and other informal learning programmes (Dodds & Inquai, 1983; Sinclair, 2001; UNICEF, 2010, pp. 36-39). In the 1960s and 1970s, as today, these initiatives were often overtly political, with refugees' struggles for self-determination closely linked to the development of refugee educational organisations (see Box 2.3).

While devolving responsibility for primary education to refugee communities, UNHCR at this time focused most of its financial resources and staff on post-primary education. Beginning in 1966, post-secondary scholarships for refugees were introduced and from that time became a central part of UNHCR's education programme. This focus emphasised "the integration of individual refugees, often in urban areas" (Dodds & Inquai, 1983, p. 10). The number of scholarships increased from about 1,000 in 1966 to over 1,200 in 1982, and to 3,950 by 1987 (Retamal, Forthcoming, p. 13), with direct funding from UNHCR and from other organisations such as the World University Service, World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Federation, and the Commonwealth Secretariat (UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Service, 1997, p. 5).

Box. 2.1. Timeline of major developments in refugee education



97 Review of UNHCR's refugee education activities concluded that refugee education programmes are "plagued by inconsistencies" and that existing guidelines are inadequate

98 UNHCR eliminated the position of Senior Education Officer, leaving the organisation without any dedicated education staff

2000

01 Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) was formed and took on a central role in inter-agency advocacy and information-sharing in emergency education

02 The 2002 UNHCR Agenda for Protection and subsequent Action Plan approved by the Executive Committee emphasised the importance of "education as a tool for protection"

04 INEE issued the *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction,* the fundamental tool for quality and accountability in the field of education in emergencies

06 Formation of the Global Education Cluster with the mandate to coordinate humanitarian responses in education, co-led by UNICEF and Save the Children and with an advisory role by UNHCR

2K UNHCR recreated the position of Senior Education Officer in the lead-up to the World Education Forum in Dakar

Thematic assessment of education in emergencies and strategy session of the World Education Forum recognised the role of education in national development and the promotion of peace, especially for refugees in all stages of displacement

Dakar Framework for Action re-emphasised the barrier that conflict poses to reaching EFA goals and Education in Emergencies becomes an EFA flagship programme

07 UNHCR Education Unit issued the first triennial *UNHCR Education Strategy,* focused on issues of access, quality, and protection

2010

10 INEE issued the revised version of the *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery,* which remains the fundamental tool for quality and accountability in the field of education in emergencies

UNHCR Education Unit moved from Operations, first within the Department of Operational Support (DOS) and then within the Division of Programme Support and Management (DPSM), to the Division of International Protection (DIP)

UNHCR Education Unit issued the second triennial *UNHCR Education Strategy,* which continues to focus on issues of access, quality, and protection but which asserts that "[t]he need for quality services is beyond UNHCR's existing capacity"

Education was one of the Global Strategic Priorities (2010-2011) for UNHCR

12 Education remains one of the Global Strategic Priorities (2012-2013) for UNHCR

Box 2.3. Refugee-initiated schools supported by UNHCR

Refugee-initiated schools were often connected to the process of decolonisation and liberation movements. Such was the case, for example, with schools started by Eritreans and Tigreans in the 1970s in Sudan (Dodds & Inquai, 1983, p. 11); with Nicaraguans in Honduras in the 1980s (Retamal, 2011, pp. 29, 32); and with the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College started as by the African National Congress (ANC) in Tanzania to "prepare cadres to serve the national struggle of the people of South Africa in the phase of the struggle for seizure of political power and the post liberation phase" and to "produce such cadres as will be able to serve the society in all fields i.e. political, economic, socio-cultural, educational and scientific" (Serote, 1992, p. 49). UNHCR contributed to this school and similar educational initiatives connected to liberation movements by FREMILO in Tanzania, the African Party for the Liberation of Guinea and Cape Verde in Senegal, the Zimbabwean African National Union in Zambia and, more recently, Sahrawi schools led by the Polisario in the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) nation-state-in-exile in Algeria (Farah, 2011; Morrow, Maaba, & Pulumani, 2004; Retamal, Forthcoming, pp. 14-15).

A 1985 review of UNHCR's education programmes concluded that post-primary scholarship "assistance requires a disproportionate share of resources for a small amount of refugees both in terms of staff time and project funds…. In a way, scholarships have a tremendous potential for creating an elite group, long accustomed to privileged treatment" (UNHCR, 1985, p.1-2, as quoted in Retamal, Forthcoming). The 1986-1987 school year saw 95.4% of education programme beneficiaries as primary school children. Nevertheless, 58.8% of the education budget provided direct support for secondary schools and scholarships for higher education (Retamal, Forthcoming, pp. 12-13).

From scholarships to education systems

By the end of the 1980s, there was a transformation of focus within UNHCR away from individual scholarships and towards education systems at the primary level, a focus that was solidified in the *Revised (1995) Guidelines for Educational Assistance to Refugees* (UNHCR, 1995). This shift had its origins in four developments.

First was UNHCR's shifting approach to intervention given the vast refugee flows of the 1980s. Large camps such as those for Cambodian refugees on the Thai border and other forms of organised settlements such as the "agricultural settlements" of Uganda or the "refugee villages" of Pakistan took the place of settlement of refugees among local populations. Encampment policies were the preference of host governments, but also of UNHCR, in order to contain perceived security risks, to simplify the provision of humanitarian assistance, to have the kind of visibility that attracts international attention and assistance, and to effectively organise eventual repatriation (UNHCR, 2000, p. 108; Verdirame & Harrell-Bond, 2005, pp. 287-288). The institutionalisation of the refugee camp as the primary mode of assistance often led to the structural necessity of refugee children attending separate schools under the funding and direction of UNHCR rather than through scholarships to local schools.

Second was the institutionalisation of a rights-based framework with the ratification by all but two countries of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC affirms that children have the right to education, with primary education compulsory and available free to all; secondary education, including general and vocational education, available and accessible to all; and higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity (United Nations, 1989, Article 28). The CRC further specifies that this education be directed toward the full development of the child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities and toward respect for human rights, peace, and tolerance (United Nations, 1989, Article 29).

Third were widespread changing expectations for education, not only among refugees but among the larger populations in countries of origin and of asylum. Previously, education in any form had not been a mass experience. Yet at this time, more people globally wanted and expected education. Desire for education grew out of the structural adjustment policies of the 1980s, which drastically reduced

opportunities for education, and the consequences of which led to shifts in national and international policy away from a sole focus on economic development toward more integrated social development. This broadening of the base in demand for education was manifest in the burgeoning EFA movement and the 1990 Jomtien World Declaration on EFA. At this time, "war, occupation, [and] civil strife" were identified as some of the "daunting problems" that "constrain efforts to meet basic learning needs" (World Conference on Education for All, 1990).

Fourth in shaping a new systems-based approach to education was the experience of UNHCR in post-Cold War conflicts. These conflicts increasingly played out between groups within national borders and centred on conflicts at the intersections of issues of land, ethnicity, religion, and resources. Out of conflicts in Afghanistan, Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, parts of the former Soviet Union, Sudan, the former Yugoslavia and, in particular, the 1994 genocide in Rwanda came new understandings of the role of education in both exacerbating and mitigating conflict in crisis situations. There was growing realisation in the scientific literature and education development field of practice that a systematic approach to education was required, necessitating serving populations rather than select individuals (Bush & Salterelli, 2000; Davies, 2005, 2011). In 1992, UNHCR's Executive Committee emphasised the need for prompt attention to educational needs, even in the early stages of an emergency (UNHCR Executive Committee, 1992).

Graça Machel's 1996 report, *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children,* increased the urgency of this growing awareness of the need for widespread refugee education. Commissioned by the UN General Assembly (Machel, 1996; see also, United Nations, 1993), this report outlined the role for education in the "psychosocial recovery" of war-affected children and the reconstruction of societies. By the Mid-Decade EFA meeting in Amman, Jordan in 1996, education was presented as critical to humanitarian response:

> Given escalating violence caused by growing ethnic tensions and other sources of conflict, we must respond by ensuring that education reinforces mutual respect, social cohesion and democratic governance; We must learn how to use education to prevent conflict and, where crises do occur, ensure that education is among the first responses, thereby contributing to hope, stability and the healing of the wounds of conflict (UNESCO, 1996b).

A field of practice to a field of policy

Through the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, refugee education was a field of practice, deeply embedded in the experiences of locally-based UNHCR education officers. The articulation of a universal rights-based framework for education, including refugee education, in the form of the 1989 CRC led to the development of refugee education also as a field of policy. In this environment, UNHCR Headquarters-level policy proliferated, with four sets of guidelines over seven years, between 1988 and 1995 (see Box 2.4). These guidelines provided detailed guidance for field-level educational operations.

This transformation of refugee education from field-based practice to Headquarters-based policy was accompanied by the abolition of field-based education posts within UNHCR. There were few posts between 1997 and 2005, and none between 2005 and 2011. During this period, there was what one former Senior Education Officer described as a "total lack of expertise" in education within UNHCR. Importantly, this abolition also meant that there was no dedicated spokesperson for education within UNHCR at the field level, with responsibilities usually divided between generalist Programme Officers, Community Services Officers, and Protection Officers.

This environment gave rise to several critical inter-agency partnerships in order to improve UNHCR capacity in refugee education. In 1994, UNHCR entered into an agreement with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) through which the NRC would provide short-term education officers on secondment to UNHCR, initially for 3 to 6 months and later at times for 12-month periods. At the time of an evaluation in February 2006, there had been 28 deployments worldwide to Albania, Angola, Chad, DRC, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Kosovo, Liberia, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and two to UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva (Bethke & de Goys, 2006).

Box 2.4. Refugee education guidelines

- **1988:** Organising primary education for refugee children in emergency situations: guidelines for field managers (UNHCR, 1988)
- **1992:** Guidelines for educational assistance to refugees (UNHCR, 1992)
- **1994:** Refugee children: guidelines on protection and care (UNHCR, 1994)
- **1995:** Revised guidelines for assistance to refugees (UNHCR, 1995)
- **2003:** UNHCR Education Field Guidelines (UNHCR, 2003b)
- **2007:** UNHCR Safe School and Learning Environment Guide (UNHCR, 2007c)
- **2011:** Ensuring Access to Quality Education: Operational Guidance on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas (UNHCR, 2011d)
- **2011 (forthcoming):** UNHCR Education Policy and Guidelines (UNHCR, 2011, forthcoming)

Further, in 1996, UNHCR and UNICEF developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). While UNICEF has its origins in serving "children in emergency," refugee children have been outside of its education mandate. The MoU, however, outlined the contribution of expertise by UNICEF to UNHCR in assessing and analysing the needs of refugee, returnee, IDP, and local host children, emphasising the shared mandate to assist national governments vis-à-vis the well-being of children (UNHCR & UNICEF, 1996). In the 1990s, UNICEF and UNESCO contributed to refugee education through the design and distribution of educational kits, including the UNESCO "Teacher Emergency Package" and the UNICEF "School-in-a-Box" (Sinclair, 1998, pp. 57-66). UNHCR also collaborated with UNICEF and UNESCO on a comprehensive discussion document, *Rapid Educational Response in Complex Emergencies,* published in 1997 (Aguilar & Retamal, 1997).

Refugee education as part of the EFA movement

In 1993, UNHCR began to collect data systematically on its educational programmes (UNHCR Education Unit, 2002, p. 1), and in 1997 evaluated these education activities. This evaluation concluded that refugee education programmes were "plagued by inconsistencies," having been "seriously affected by the financial constraints of the past few years" (UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Service, 1997, p. 1). Available data from 2000, for example, show that while the estimated Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for primary education for refugees globally was 50%, country-level ratios varied from 25% in Sudan to 98% in Uganda (UNHCR Education Unit, 2002, p. 6).

The 1997 evaluation also concluded that the existing education guidelines give "limited guidance to managers, and allow for differences in interpretation of policies, determination of methods, and implementation" (UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Service, 1997, p. 1). Without field-level technical capacity, UNHCR's refugee education activities were driven by global policy. Yet there was "an absence of simple, universal standards" (UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Service, 1997, p. 3) and the "quality of refugee primary education remained somehow 'invisible'", as it had for decades (Retamal, Forthcoming, p. 19). Interviews for this study suggest the guidelines were drafted this way quite on purpose, with the goal of creating enough latitude to allow for the continued existence of education programmes in the existing environment of limited technical capacity and political support. This approach, however, was proving ineffective at meeting the educational rights of refugee children.

The explicit and disappointing findings of the 1997 evaluation did little immediately to counteract the lack of capacity UNHCR had in education. In fact, in 1998 as part of an economy measure to reduce total staffing, the position of Senior Education Officer at UNHCR Headquarters was eliminated, leaving no dedicated education staff in the entire organisation.

The lead-up to the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, however, gave renewed legitimacy to education within UNHCR at a time when it had been particularly sidelined. The position of Senior Education Officer was recreated in 2000, a few months before the meetings in Dakar. The 2000 World Education Forum included a background thematic study, *Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis;* a special strategy session on education in emergencies; and the outcome document, the Dakar Framework for Action, which highlighted the ways in which conflict acts as a barrier to education and outlined a commitment to "meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, national calamities and instability and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and help to prevent violence and conflict" (UNESCO, 2000, Article 8v). Education in emergency situations became one of nine EFA flagship programmes.

The UNHCR Senior Education Officer played a critical role in establishing education in emergencies on the world education agenda following Dakar, including in the development of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), the establishment of working relationships with UNESCO and UNICEF, and publication of the first book on refugee education (Crisp, Talbot, & Cipollone, 2003). The global developments also drew heavily on UNHCR's historical approach to refugee education, which grew out of UNHCR's involvement in liberation movements and centred on a humanist approach to education: developing the full potential of each child's skills and knowledge and preparation for a satisfying and responsible life in society, including attention to the psychosocial well-being of children (Retamal, Forthcoming) and the intensive peace education programme pioneered by UNHCR (Sinclair, 2004; Sommers, 2003). Along these lines, the 2000 World Education Conference background thematic study described the need not only for "basic education in the classical sense of traditional schooling" but also for "education for human rights, education for peace, democracy and tolerance" as well as pedagogical methods that promote participation and conflict resolution (Bensalah, Sinclair, Nacer, Commisso, & Bokhari, 2001, pp. 34-35).

Refugee education in the context of education in emergencies

Since 2000, the field of refugee education has been subsumed into the broader field of education in emergencies (EiE), which includes not only education of refugees but also of IDPs, non-displaced children living in conflict and/or fragile settings, and children affected by natural disasters. This larger field of education in emergencies developed first, out of experiences in post-Cold War conflicts in the 1990s in which cross-border displacement was no longer the norm and refugee populations accounted for a declining share of those displaced; second, from the emphasis on the needs of conflict-affected children writ large within the EFA movement; and, third, with the realisation that inter-agency coordination would be critical to meeting the similar, yet context-specific, educational needs of the large group of conflict-affected children, which included refugees (Kagawa, 2005; Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008; Pigozzi, 1996). Before EFA, education in general was primarily coordinated at state and national levels; yet it has since, little by little, become a 'global good,' coordinated by an increasing number of actors at local, national, and international levels (Chelpi-den Hamer, Fresia, & Lanoue, 2010). Refugee education is part of this global trend.

The burgeoning field of education in emergencies has centred on the INEE, conceived at the November 2000 workshop hosted at UNCHR, as follow-up to the World Education Forum in 2000. The *INEE Minimum Standards,* which are the normative framework for practice in the field and a companion to the Sphere Project Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards were first published in 2004 (INEE, 2004) and revised and updated in 2010 (INEE, 2010b). Since its inception in 2006, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Global Education Cluster has also played a critical role in the field, bringing legitimacy to the role of education in humanitarian response as well as increasing inter-agency coordination and accountability. In the absence of educational capacity within UNHCR, Senior Education Officers who served in the 2000s described looking externally, specifically to INEE and to the Cluster, for communities of education colleagues who could assist in providing expertise and capacity vis-à-vis refugee education both at global and country-levels (Personal interviews, 2011). Successive UNHCR Senior Education Officers have served on the steering group of INEE since the group's inception in 2001; have been integral to various INEE working groups; and have served on the inter-agency advisory group that has assisted with the development of the Cluster.

With this historical view in mind, what is the current state of the field?



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In 2004, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies first defined minimum standards





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UNHCR views education as a basic right and a tool of refugee protection

The Current "State of the Field": Access, Quality, and Protection

The EFA movement focuses both on rights and the development of human capital. The UNHCR Education Strategy, 2010-2012 and the long-standing UNHCR Education Policy Commitments, first published in 2003 (UNHCR, 2003b, p. v) (see Box 3.1), are similarly rights-based: they focus on the right to education for every child, youth, and adult of concern to UNHCR (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 4). The UNHCR Education Strategy, 2010-2012 is also similarly preoccupied with the development of human capital through universal primary education.

As with the EFA movement, UNHCR has focused on access to education and quality of education as the central elements of ensuring the basic right to education. Given UNHCR's central mandate for refugee protection, a third element frames the Education Strategy: protection.

This report argues that access, quality, and protection must be conceptualised as integrally connected in effective policy and programmatic approaches to refugee education. However, this section presents each of the three elements separately in order to align with the way in which access, quality, and protection are currently defined and measured by UNHCR. The next section turns to an examination of seven challenges to refugee education that highlight the analytic links between access, quality, and protection.

Box 3.1. UNHCR Education Policy Commitments (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 36)

UNHCR advocates for *education as a basic* right in the context of the 1951 Refugee Convention and other international declarations and instruments.

The Agenda for Protection, and the subsequent Action Plan approved by the Executive Committee in October 2002, specifically underline the importance of *"education as a tool of protection"*.

UNHCR is committed to the key principles of refugee participation, local capacity building, gender equality and addressing the specific needs of groups at risk.

In implementing education programmes, UNHCR will:

1. Safeguard the right of refugees to education and implement the six goals of Education for All (EFA) which include free access to primary education, equitable access to appropriate learning for youth and adults, adult literacy, gender equity and quality education.
2. Ensure the provision of basic education for refugees and other persons of concern, to ensure their protection and security and to enhance the possibility of durable solutions.
3. Guarantee the availability of primary education (standardised as the first eight grades of schooling) as a first priority including community-based initiatives providing early childhood and pre-school education, where these are prerequisites for formal education.
4. Support the provision of lower secondary education (standardised as grades 9 and 10). In addition, UNHCR will support the enrolment and retention of achieving students in higher secondary (grades 11 and 12) as a prerequisite to post-secondary education. Moreover, UNHCR will advocate for tertiary education and will support the effective use of resources donated for this purpose.
5. Provide low-cost adolescent and adult non-formal education linked to the psychosocial development and specific education needs of the groups. Where appropriate, this will include technical and vocational education.
6. Promote quality of education as a high priority commitment through teacher training and the development of quality teaching and learning materials.
7. Support innovative enrichment programmes in life skills and values education that improves the quality of education.
8. Ensure early intervention and development of education programmes in the earliest stages of an emergency and access to education programmes by children and adolescents upon arrival.
9. Coordinate local, national, regional and global inter-agency mechanisms and partnerships regarding refugee and returnee education issues including educational materials, certification of studies, teacher training and support for education. In addition, there will be intersectoral collaboration to ensure a cohesive and integrated approach.
10. Monitor and evaluate all refugee education programmes in line with the established standards and indicators, ensuring that these programmes receive the necessary human resources and appropriate funding at all levels and phases of UNHCR's operations.

Access is limited and uneven

Access to education involves the ability to enrol in school and to continue one's studies through to the end of a given level. The vision of UNHCR is to "[e]nsure the right to education for all people of concern to UNHCR by achieving universal primary education and creating increased opportunities for post-primary education (secondary, vocational training, non-formal and adult education) with special focus on girls, urban, and protracted situations" (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 4).

In 2009, the average primary school Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 6 to 11 year-olds was 76%, across 92 camps and 47 urban settings reporting from 73 countries (see Box 3.2). The average secondary school GER of 12 to 17 year-olds was much lower at 36%, across 92 camps and 48 urban settings from 75 countries (UNHCR, 2010e, p. 3). As a point of comparison, in 2008, the global primary school GER was 90% (UNESCO, 2011, p. 40), and the global secondary school GER was 67% (UNESCO, 2011, p. 54) (see Figure 3.1). GER varies greatly by country; on average, refugee GERs are lower than national GERs, but there are exceptions (see Figures 3.2a and 3.2b).

Box 3.2. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)

Gross Enrolment Ratio is the total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to that level of education. GERs can exceed 100% due to early or late entry into school or to repetition. It is not to be confused with the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), which expresses the enrolment of the official age group for a given level of education, expressed as a percentage of the population in that age group.

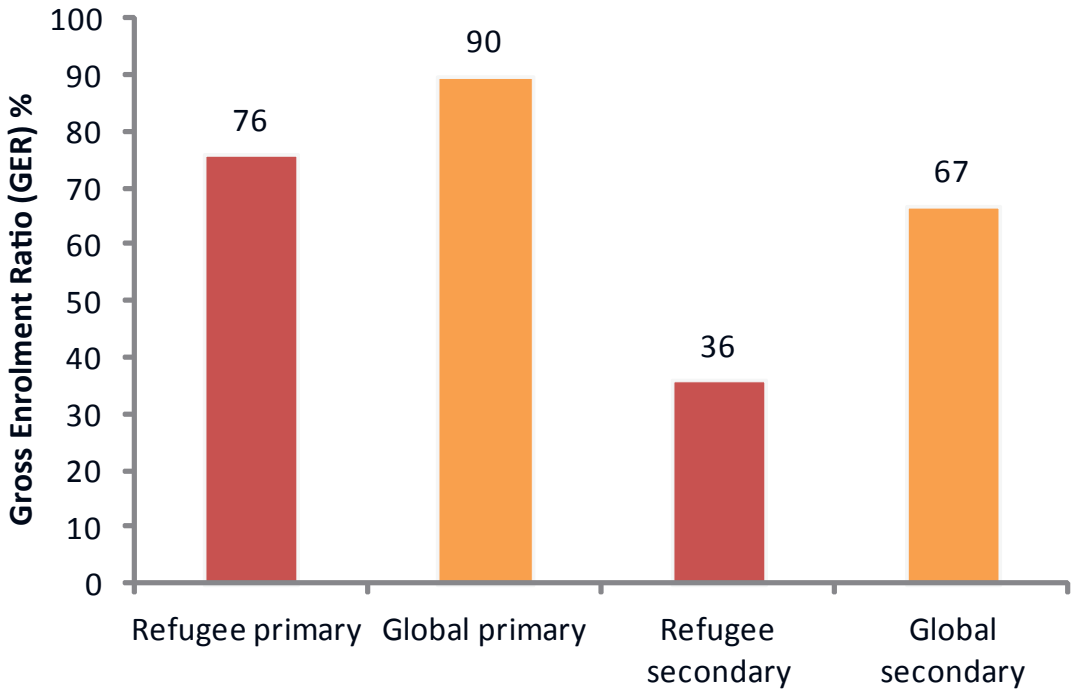


Figure 3.1. Refugee participation in primary and secondary school (2009) as compared to global participation (2008) expressed in Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER). Sources: (UNESCO, 2011; UNHCR, 2010e).

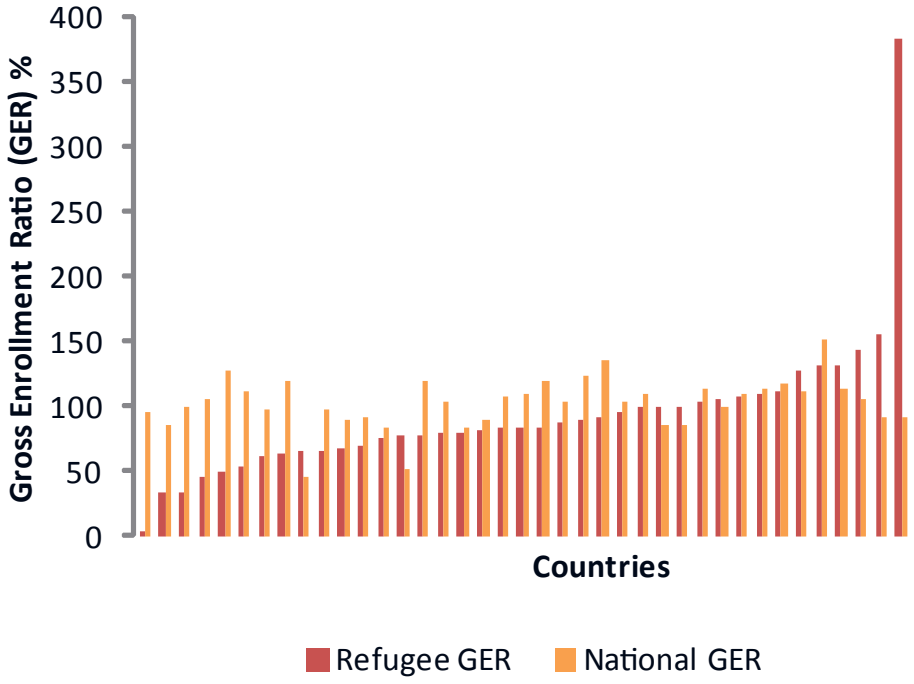


Figure 3.2a. 2008 Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) for refugees and nationals in 39 refugee-hosting countries. Source: (UNESCO, 2011; UNHCR, 2008c).

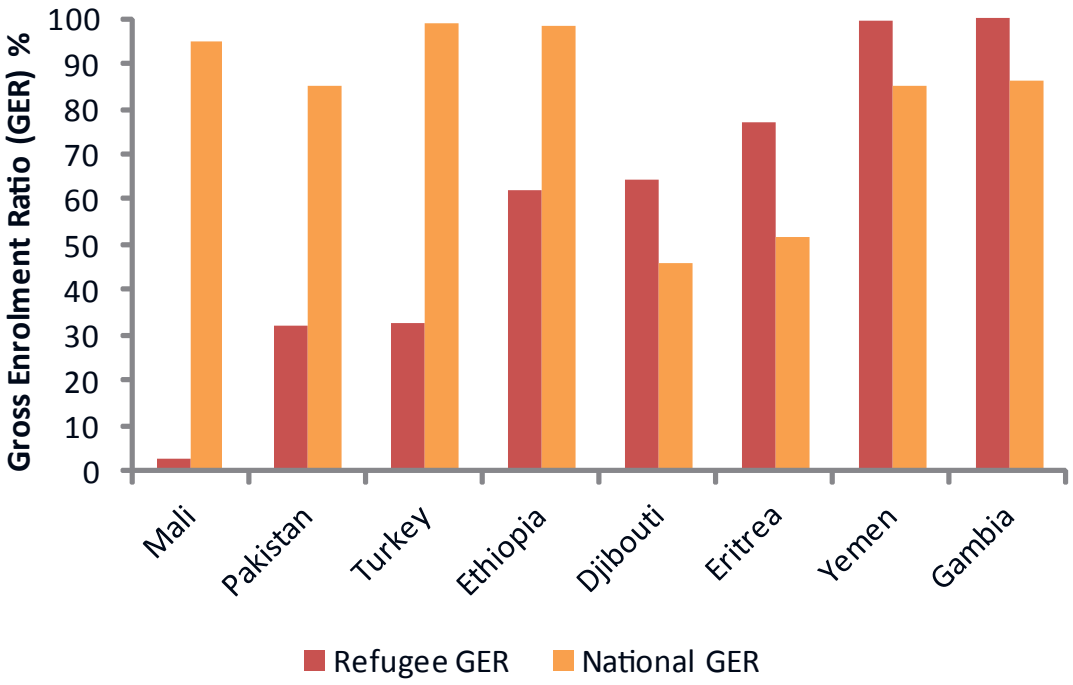


Figure 3.2b. 2008 Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) for refugees and nationals in select refugee-hosting countries. Source: (UNESCO, 2011; UNHCR, 2008c).

Access to primary and secondary education is determined by many factors[1]:

- *supply,* such as the nature and diversity of accessible schools, the location of formal schools, and the availability of sufficient classrooms and teachers;
- *demand,* such as social perceptions of schools, decision-making and strategies for school enrolment and attendance based on the direct and indirect cost of schools, and the role of children in households and family livelihoods;
- *exclusion along individual characteristics,* such as gender, age, social and economic position of the family, urban/rural residence, displacement, ethnicity/race, language, disability, and documentation/legal status;
- *discrimination in policies and practices,* such as certification and recognition of studies;
- *refugee governance,* such as asylum and settlement policies, and how the right to education is protected by law and in policy and practice;
- *security situation,* such as the physical destruction of educational infrastructure and the pervasive nature of violence and insecurity for children both inside and outside of schools.

These factors related to school access play out differently in different contexts, such that the global averages for refugee school participation mask large differences between camp and urban settings, across regions, between operations in the same national context, and by gender. Collecting reliable data on refugee enrolment rates is a difficult endeavour. Available data provide a general picture of these disaggregated school participation rates; however, numerous methodological problems in data collection mean that they must be interpreted with caution (see Box 3.3).

Nevertheless, several factors affecting access can be identified. Access to education is generally more difficult in urban areas. Globally, the primary school GER in camp settings is 78%, whereas it is 70% in urban areas. At the secondary level, the GER in camps is 37% and in urban areas it is 31% (see Figure 3.3). In countries where there are both urban and camp-based operations, the discrepancies between settings are often greater than these global averages suggest. In Central African Republic (CAR), for example, primary school enrolment is 96% in camps but 65% in urban settings, and in Uganda primary school enrolment is 73% in camps and 23% in the urban area. In Yemen, however, enrolment rates in the urban area are greater (93%) than in the camps (72%) (see Figure 3.4). In countries with both urban and camp-based operations, secondary school participation, on the other hand, can be higher in urban areas. While data are limited, secondary school enrolment in Kenya is 52% in urban areas but only 20% in camps (UNHCR, 2009d, 2009e, 2009f).

Access to education depends on regional differences. Striking is the variation between regions, especially in urban areas, where primary school GERs range from 46% across much of Africa to 90% in the Middle East and Northern Africa. At the secondary level, regional variation in camp settings is stark, with school participation at only 20% in Eastern and the Horn of Africa and at 86% in Western Africa. Urban secondary school GERs vary widely as well, with only 2% in Eastern and the Horn of Africa, 10% in Asia and the Pacific, and up to 47% in the Middle East and Northern Africa (see Figure 3.3).

1 There is a wide body of literature on the factors associated with access to primary and secondary school, including on-going work by the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (http://www.create-rpc.org/). The cutting edge of literature on access barriers is synthesised each year in the EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2011, pp. 40-64). For a review of the barriers to access in conflict-affected and displacement settings, see Dryden-Peterson, 2010.

Box 3.3. Limited data result in guessing games for policy and programmes

Collecting school enrolment data for refugees is difficult, and there is lack of capacity within UNHCR in the management of education data. This lack of reliable data can reduce forming policy and developing programmes for refugee education to a guessing game.

For example, primary school GERs in camps in Western Africa are reported at 120%. The cause of anomalies such as this one is unknown but is likely due to some combination of factors, including the following (see also, UNHCR, 2010e, p. 43):

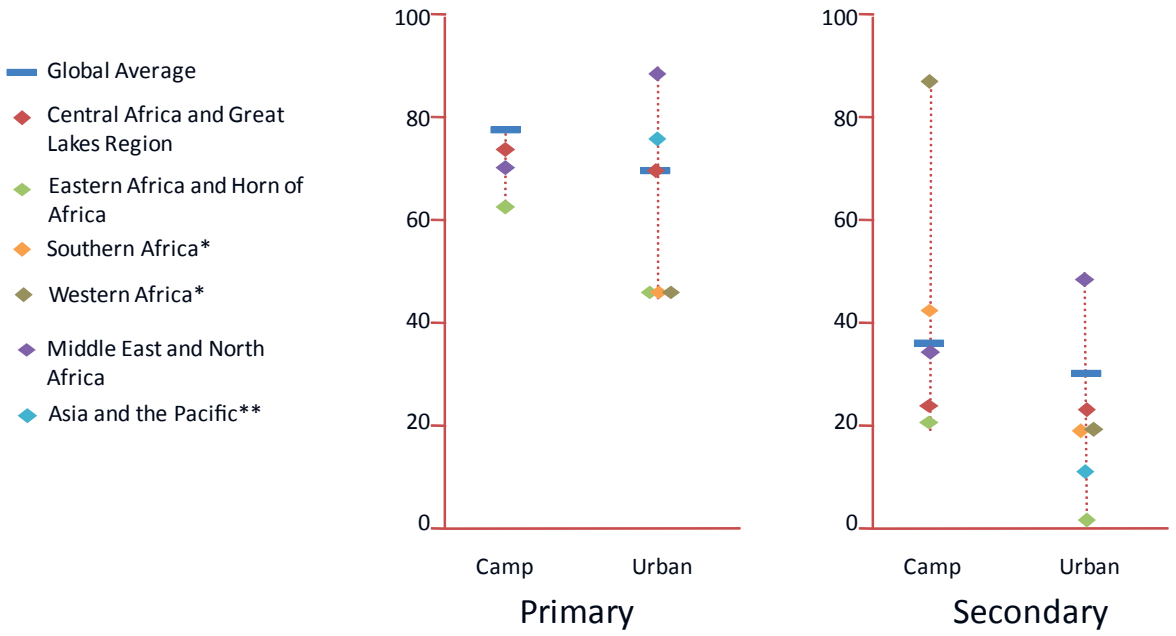
- refugee and national children often attend school together, and national children may be included in the number of children attending classes but not in the refugee population size
- there are over-aged children captured in the school attendance numbers due to high rates of repetition as well as interrupted education or new educational opportunities, but not included in the population of interest
- there are situations in which the calendar year does not mirror the academic year
- many children do not have birth certificates and their age is not known precisely
- teachers may distort school records to get more resources
- population data may be inaccurate
- on-going mobility of refugee families makes it difficult to count children in school accurately with static census-taking.

Despite the general picture of educational access that available data provide, these types of information gaps can lead to unreliable data. Interpretations must be formed with caution.

Further, the lack of institutional memory and inaccessibility of archives at both UNHCR Headquarters and country offices necessitate long learning processes that are counterproductive to continuous improvement of refugee education, especially for a field in which staff turnover is frequent.

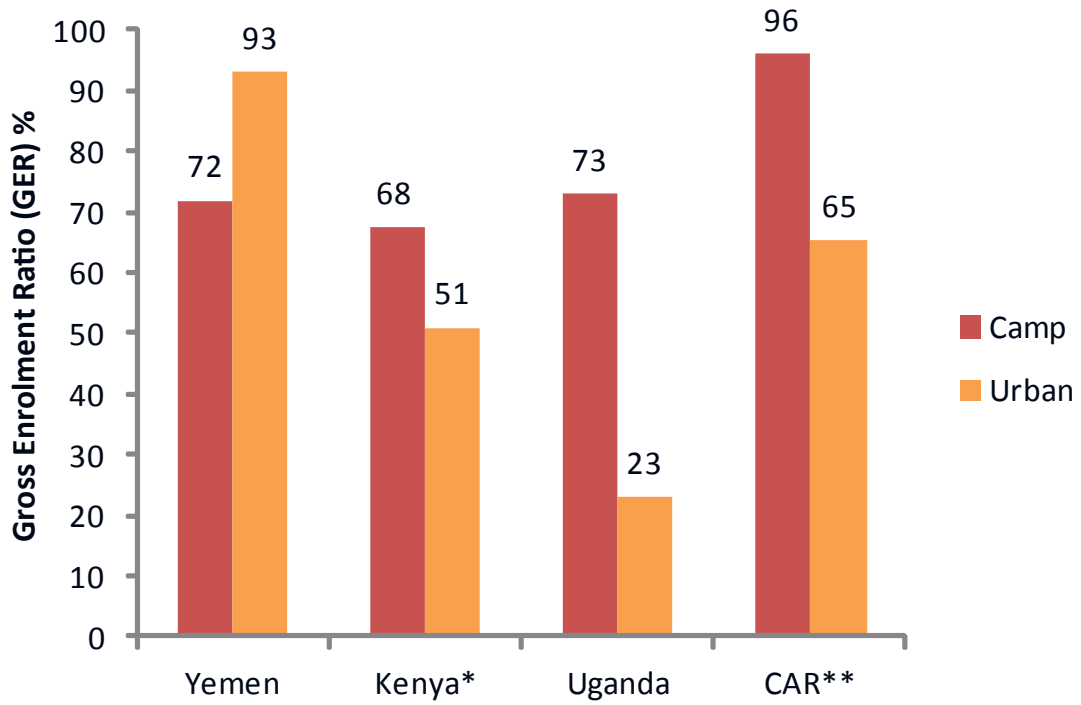
Access to education varies by the local context of the operation, even within the same country. In Kenya, for example, in 2009, primary school GERs were 51% in Nairobi, 56% in Dadaab camps, and 79% in Kakuma camp. At secondary level, GERs in Nairobi were 52%, in Dadaab camps 21% and Kakuma camp 19% (UNHCR, 2009d, 2009e, 2009f). National averages obscure even wider discrepancies in Pakistan, where some camps have gross enrolment ratios of 0% and others have GERs over 80%.[2] Similarly, in Chad, several camps have GERs of just under 40% and others over 100% (UNESCO, 2011, p. 155).

2 These statistics may be obscured by the number of children enrolled in informal schools and madrasas.



* Primary camp enrolment rates in Southern and Western Africa are greater than 100% (see Box 3.3).
** Camp data for Asia and the Pacific are excluded due to lack of data for Pakistan.

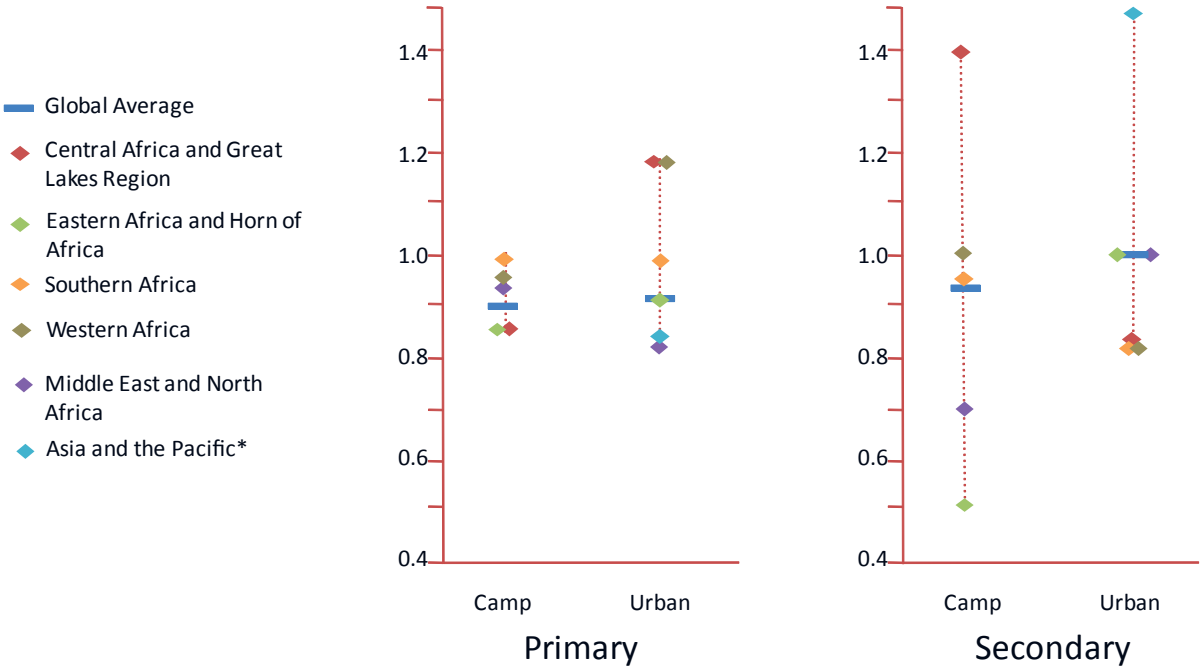
Figure 3.3. Primary and secondary school Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) vary across regions and by camp vs. urban setting. Source for data: (UNHCR, 2010e).



* Camp participation rate is an average of Kakuma and Dadaab camps.
** Data from 2008

Figure 3.4. Primary school GERs (2009) in camp and urban settings within the same country operation. Sources: (UNHCR, 2008c, 2009j).

Access to education is more difficult for girls than for boys in most settings globally, with nine girls enrolled for every ten boys at primary levels in both camp and urban settings (see Figure 3.5). Gender gaps vary between regions, particularly in urban areas. Girls have less access to school in urban areas of Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa. In Southern and Western Africa, girls have greater access than boys. At secondary levels, the global average suggests near gender parity in access to school. However, this average masks massive disparities between regions. In camp settings in Eastern and the Horn of Africa, only five girls are enrolled for every 10 boys. On the other hand, in camps in Central Africa and the Great Lakes Region, 14 girls are enrolled for every 10 boys. There are similar regional differences for urban populations.



* Camp data for Asia and the Pacific are excluded due to lack of data for Pakistan.

Figure 3.5. Gender Parity Index (GPI) varies across regions and by camp vs. urban setting. Source for data: (UNHCR, 2010e).

There are two particularly urgent challenges in need of attention in order to address educational access for refugees in camps and urban areas, across regions, between operations in the same national context, and by gender. They will be explored in Section Four:

- Challenge #1: Urban refugee education requires an approach different from strategies used in camp-based settings.
- Challenge #2: Limited access to post-primary education for refugees in both camp and urban settings has immense economic and social consequences, for both individuals and societies.

Quality is defined and measured by ineffective standards

The quality of education involves the teaching and learning that takes place once children are enrolled in and in attendance at school. The Education Strategy 2010-2012 identifies quality as being "at the heart of education" and defines a quality education as one that "satisfies basic learning needs and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experience of living" (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 22).

The Education Strategy outlines three standards by which to measure the quality of refugee education. First is the number of students per teacher. The goal is 40:1 (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 22), however, 14 of the 26 reporting camp operations have average ratios above this level. The global range was wide in 2009, from a low of 18 students per teacher in Ghana to a high of 70 in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP). Reported data also mask common situations in which class sizes in lower primary school are very high and class sizes in upper primary are much lower. This standard is not measured in urban settings. Among the priority countries,[3] the range was also wide in 2009, from 19 in Algeria to 68 in Bangladesh (see Figure 3.6).

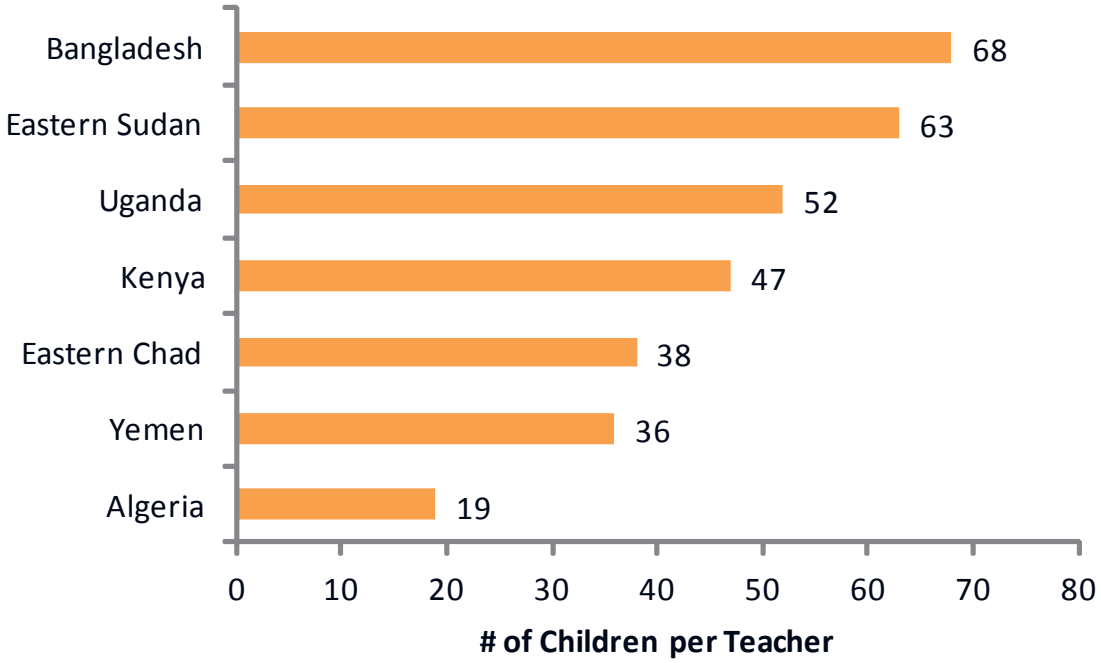
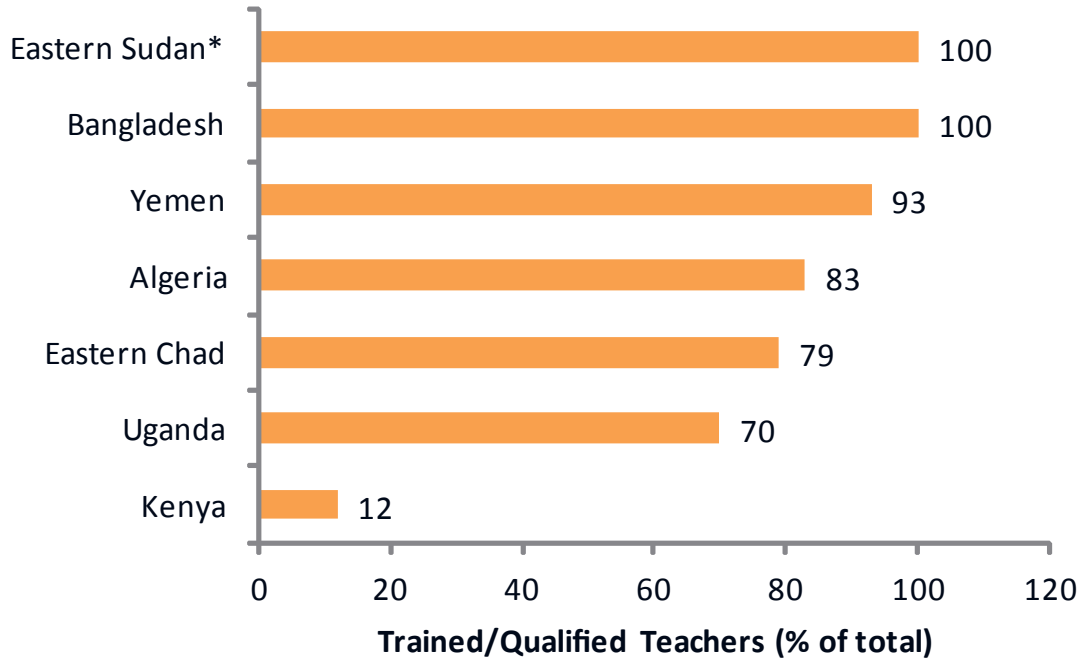


Figure 3.6. Number of students per teacher in camps in priority countries, 2009. Source: (UNHCR, 2009j).

The second standard is the percentage of qualified or trained teachers, with a goal of more than 80% of the total qualified or trained. To be counted as trained, the minimum requirement is (only) 10 days of training (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 23), far below what would be reasonable for prolonged refugee situations or what is needed to prepare teachers to inculcate sustainable literacy and numeracy in rural students

3 The UNHCR Education Unit has piloted a strategy of identifying priority countries in order to target limited available resources, both financial and human, with the aim of demonstrating 'what it takes' to increase enrolment rates. The priority countries were selected in a consultative process with the Bureaux and Country Offices based on certain criteria: performance of the UNHCR standards and indicators; size and phase of the operations; office capacity and resources; accessibility and humanitarian space (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 37). For further discussion of priority countries, see the section of this review on Challenge #6: Lack of financial resources, and their inconsistency, as well as shortage of educational expertise may limit progress in refugee education.

from poor and often illiterate homes. The global range on this standard was again wide in 2009, from a low of zero qualified or trained in Djibouti to 100% in several countries, including Bangladesh, Eastern Sudan, Benin, Congo (data from 2007), Eritrea, Mozambique, and Pakistan's NWFP. This standard is not measured in urban settings. Among the priority countries, the range was also wide in 2009, from 12% of the total number of teachers qualified or trained in Kenya to 100% in Eastern Sudan and Bangladesh (see Figure 3.7). Given the very limited provision or near total absence of textbooks and other teaching resources in many refugee schools, these figures are especially troubling.



* Given that teachers often go for extended periods of time without being paid by the government, UNHCR and Implementing Partners (IPs) organise additional trainings through which teachers can be paid and encouraged to remain in their posts.

Figure 3.7. Number of qualified or trained teachers as a percentage of the total, in camps in priority countries, 2009. Source: (UNHCR, 2009j).

The third standard is the extent to which refugee/returnee qualifications are recognised. In 2010, school diplomas and certificates from the country of origin were not recognised in 17 host countries (UNHCR, 2011b). Data on the recognition of diplomas and certificates obtained in exile upon return are not available. However, an extensive study of certification issues for refugees and IDPs by UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) provides a broad view of the ways in which education pursued by refugees can be recognised, as well as the major challenges to recognition in most situations (see, Kirk, 2009). The main forms include cross-border examinations through which Southern Sudanese students living in Uganda, for example, have access to examinations from their home country; host country examinations through which refugees from Somalia, for example, access the national examinations in Kenya, their country of exile; and local certification boards such as the Inter-Regional Examinations Board initiated by Burundian and Congolese refugee educators in Tanzania in 2000 (Kirk, 2009, p. 46).

The main targets for quality in refugee education, as indicated in these three standards, are expressed in terms of service delivery and not in terms of outcomes, primarily student achievement. This is not incongruent with realities in the broader field of education, where the Millennium Development Goals for education are also expressed in terms of service delivery, stating "achieve universal primary education," instead of in terms of outcome, stating rather something like, "reduce by two-thirds the number of children who cannot read fluently at age 12" (Chabbott, 2007, p. 72).

In recent years, the inadequacy of the service delivery model in terms of learning outcomes has become apparent in developing country settings generally. Major donor agencies have participated in the development and implementation of independent early grades testing of reading and arithmetic learning outcomes, notably the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and the Early Grade Math Assessment (EGMA). The results are bleak and clear: even in non-emergency situations, many children fail to learn basic reading or arithmetic, or to show comprehension of written texts, despite regular school attendance. For example, among national, non-refugee students in Mali, 94% of children attending schools where French was the language of instruction were unable to read even a single word of French text, and 83% of children receiving instruction in Bamanankan could not read a single word in that language (Gove & Cvelich, 2011, p. 12).

These results have created nothing short of a revolution in thinking about the way in which educational assistance is delivered, particularly vis-à-vis the need for independent testing that focuses not on inputs but on learning outcomes. They present a critical challenge for UNHCR. Indeed, while data on learning outcomes for refugees are limited, the results are similarly low. One study, undertaken by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in 2010, used the EGRA in two Eritrean refugee camps in Ethiopia. The study found that in both Kunama and Tigrigna the proportion of children with zero reading fluency in grade 2 was high, 38% among Tigrigna-speakers and 25% among Kunama-speakers; further, the number of children with benchmark scores was zero in both languages. By grade 4, only 5% of Kunama-speakers and 2% of Tigrigna-speakers had reached benchmark fluency (Anastacio, 2011; IRC, 2011).

By most metrics, low quality in refugee education is not a new phenomenon. Angolan refugees in Zaire in the mid-1980s did not find what they were learning in school sufficiently motivating and showed high absenteeism and drop-out rates; Guatemalan refugees in Mexico did not develop the necessary skills to compete for jobs or to facilitate self-employment and self-support (Kassay, 1987, as cited in Retamal, Forthcoming, p.18-19). The retention rate of Afghan refugees in Pakistan after five years of schooling was 18-26% between 1985 and 1989, despite a large education budget of US$6,250,000, or US$56 per student per year (Retamal, Forthcoming, p. 40).

In 1999, two Guinean teenagers were found dead in the landing gear of an airplane that had flown from Conakry to Brussels. With them, they had a letter that they had addressed to the 'Excellencies and officials of Europe." In this letter, they wrote: "[w]e have schools, but we lack education." This is a clear articulation of the necessity of not only the "hardware" of schools but the "software" of a high quality education. And yet the UNHCR Education Strategy 2010-2012 states that "[t]he need for quality services is beyond UNHCR's existing capacity" (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 28).

In what ways can UNHCR address the need for quality in refugee education? There are two particularly urgent challenges that will be explored in this regard in Section Four:

- Challenge #3: There is a shortage of quality teachers and lack of structures, including remuneration and training, to retain them.

- Challenge #4: The quality of refugee education, and how it is recognised, does not help children to make connections between schooling and their future livelihoods.

Education is protective but only if it is of high quality

The protection role of education involves the ability of schools to provide a safe and secure space that promotes the well-being of learners, teachers, and other education personnel. The Education Strategy points out that, "[c]ontrary to expectation, schools are not always safe places for children" (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 24). Schools can be spaces of bullying; racial, ethnic, linguistic, and gender discrimination; sexual exploitation; natural and environmental hazards; corporal punishment; and attacks, including abduction and recruitment into armed forces. The UNHCR Executive Committee identified that "[c]ore protective factors in schools include adequate teacher/student ratios; elimination of humiliation, bullying and corporal punishment; and safeguards against sexual abuse and exploitation" (Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, 2006, p. 6).

UNHCR uses four standards to measure the protective environment of schools: the percentage of students with specific needs attending Grades 1-6; the number of female teachers as a percentage of all teachers; the number of refugee teachers as a percentage of all teachers; and the presence of a School Management Committee (SMC). These standards are systematically reported on only in camps and not in urban settings.

These currently used measures of protection capture service delivery and not the protection outcomes of education. For example, in places where there are female teachers or classroom assistants, there is evidence that they can play a significant role in preventing violence against girls (Kirk, 2003; Kirk & Winthrop, 2006). However, their presence is usually not enough to be protective, especially in situations where they too face marginalisation or oppression based on gender dynamics (Kirk, 2005, p. 77). At issue is the quality of the teachers and their abilities to shape the contexts in which they work, which are not captured in UNHCR data. Notes such as "[s]tudents going to school face violence or bullying" are included in reports on education operations (e.g., UNHCR, 2009i), but these data are not systematically collected nor shared. Without measuring the extent of violence in schools, the impact of female teachers, refugee teachers, or SMCs on protection for refugee children cannot be gauged.

Data that are available on these problematic measures show uneven performance across operations. First, the percentage of students with specific needs attending Grades 1-6 measures the extent to which children with specific needs, including those with disabilities and those who are heads of household (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 27), have education available to them as a tool for protection. UNHCR reports that the inclusion of children with specific needs ranges from 3% in Burundi to 100% in several operations, including camps in Ghana, Liberia, Malawi, and Zimbabwe and in urban settings in Uganda, Senegal, India, and Costa Rica. However, as many children with disabilities are kept hidden and out of sight, reliable data are difficult to obtain (Bines, 2007, p. 12; Fast Track Initiative Secretariat, 2009, p. 5).

Second, the presence of female teachers can play a role in creating a secure environment for girls (Kirk, 2003; Kirk & Winthrop, 2006). The proportion of female teachers as a percentage of all teachers ranges from a low of 8% in Ethiopia to a high of 88% in Algeria. Data are only available for camps. Among priority countries, the range is also wide, with Eastern Chad, Kenya, and Yemen at or below 20% and only Eastern Sudan and Algeria above 50% (see Figure 3.8). The data do not differentiate between primary and secondary school and therefore obscure the frequent high proportion of female teachers in early primary school and the dearth of female teachers in secondary school, and the protection concerns related to this situation. Further, there are no UNHCR data available on the effectiveness of higher proportions of female teachers in protecting children.

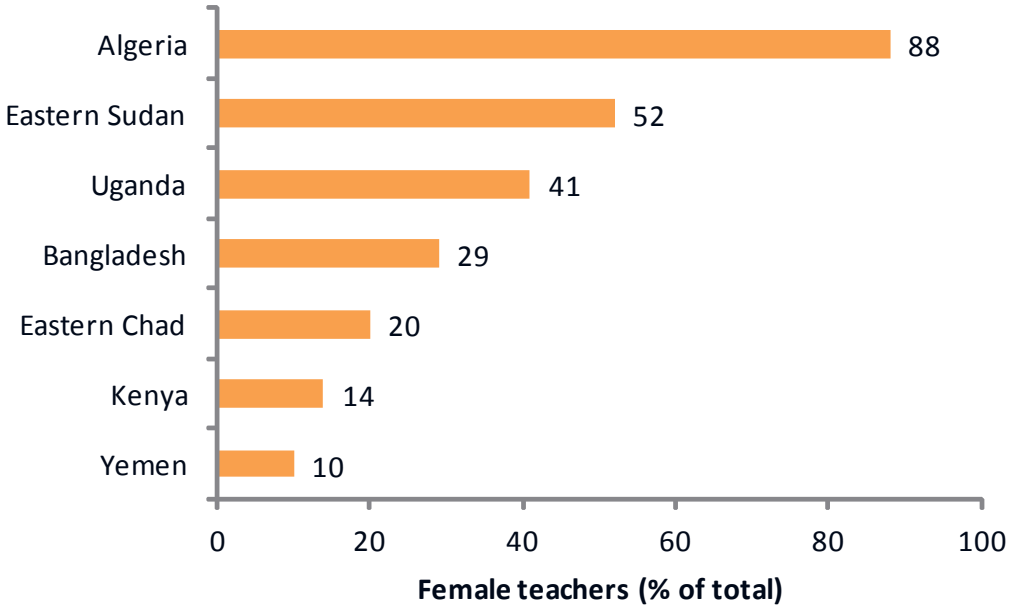


Figure 3.8. Female teachers as a percentage of the total number of teachers in camps in priority countries, 2009. Source: (UNHCR, 2009j).

The third standard to measure protection is based on an unproven assumption that the number of refugee teachers as a percentage of all teachers can play a role in protecting refugee children who may face discrimination on the basis of language, ethnicity, age, and other factors. The proportion ranges from a low of 8% in Zimbabwe to a high of 100% in several operations, including Thailand, Tanzania, Nepal, Namibia, Eritrea, and Algeria. The range is similarly wide in priority countries. Refugee teachers make up one quarter of the teaching force in Uganda and Eastern Sudan, where refugee children attend national schools; they make up over 87% of the teaching force in Kenya, Eastern Chad, and Algeria, some of the most protracted refugee situations globally (see Figure 3.9).

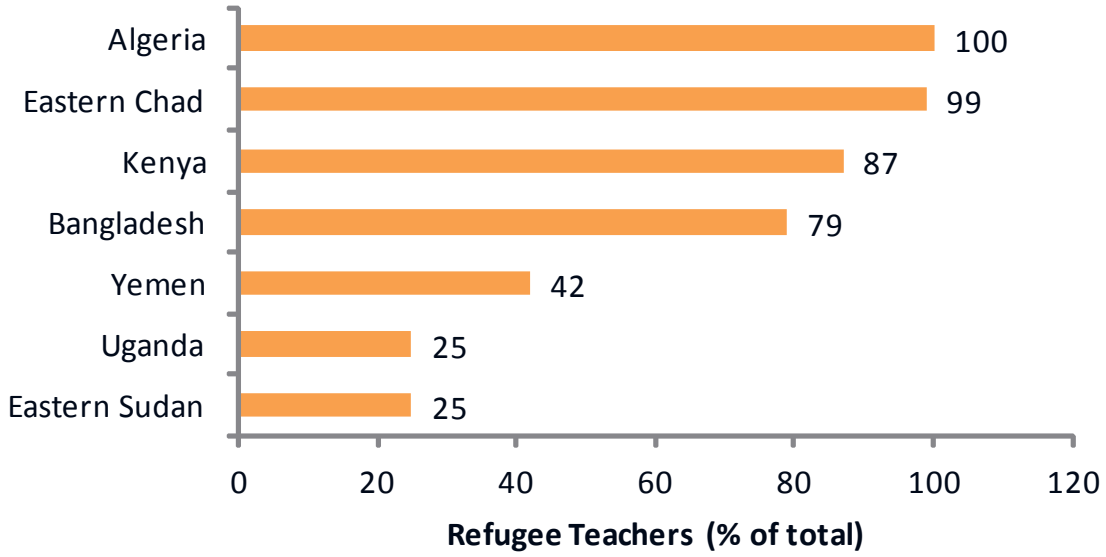


Figure 3.9. Refugee teachers as a percentage of the total number of teachers in camps in priority countries, 2009. Source: (UNHCR, 2009j).

Fourth, the presence of a SMC may have protective effects for refugee children through participatory and community-based supervision and monitoring of school staff, the drafting and enforcing of Codes of Conduct, and oversight of the budget and operating procedures; these effects, however, are unproven. In most operations for which there are data, there is a high if not universal reported presence of SMC. There are, however, no data systematically collected on what these SMCs do and what the specific protection dividends are.

The UNHCR Education Strategy, 2010-2012 as well as numerous protection documents such as the 2002 *Agenda for Protection* and the 2005 *Measuring Protection by Numbers,* conceptualise education as a space to achieve protection objectives that are not linked to the core mission of schools: teaching and learning (UNHCR, 2003a, 2006, p. 23). The 2010-2011 Global Appeal references education vis-à-vis protection only in relation to gender equality, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and the security of older, at-risk learners (UNHCR, 2011e, pp. 31, 32, 33).

Education can be a tool related to these elements of UNHCR's broad protection mandate for physical security. Unmeasured, however, are the ways in which education can provide other forms of protection, related to psychological and emotional well-being, sometimes called "psychosocial protection," and to learning, sometimes called "cognitive protection" (Nicolai & Triplehorn, 2003).

Education can provide protection, but only when schools are physically safe, psychologically and emotionally healing, and cognitively transformative (see Boothby, 2008; Nicolai & Triplehorn, 2003). Protection is related to access, in that children will choose not to attend school or will drop out if they experience or perceive a lack of safety and security on any or all of these dimensions. It is also related to quality for only high quality education that physically, psychologically, and cognitively heals can be considered a tool of protection.

How can education for refugee children be protective, physically, psychosocially, and cognitively? This question is closely linked to Challenges #1 through #4, above, related to access and quality. There is one additional relevant and urgent protection challenge, relating to the inherently political nature of education, that will be explored in Section Four:

- Challenge #5: The inherently political nature of the content and structures of refugee education can exacerbate societal conflict, alienate individual children, and lead to education that is neither of high quality nor protective.

Refugee education faces large institutional, resource, and coordination constraints

UNHCR priorities for refugee education are to increase access, improve quality, and enhance protection. The challenges to these endeavours, outlined above, are situated within certain constraints, particularly related to institutional support and availability of resources.

The Education Unit at UNHCR Headquarters is shockingly small. It includes one Senior Education Officer (P4) for overall coordination, policy advice, and technical support to Field Offices; one DAFI Education Officer (P3), now called a Tertiary Education Officer, for management of UNHCR's main higher education scholarship scheme; and one DAFI Education Assistant (G6), the latter two supported by external ear-marked funding (see Figure 3.10). There is frequently, although not always, an Associate Education Officer (P2) position, occupied by a Junior Professional Officer (JPO). Until 2010, the Senior Education Officer was a rotated position within UNHCR; it is now held by an education specialist.

At the regional and country level, there have been no Education Officer posts since 2005, until one Associate Education Officer post (P2) was created in Chad in 2011. The education "focal points" in each regional or country office are usually Community Services Officers, Protection Officers, or Programme Assistants. At times, United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) take on responsibility for the education programmes. Under the 1994 agreement, the NRC provides Education Officers on short-term deployments of between three and 12 months; in 2010, there were nine such deployments. As of 2011, agreements have been made for similar deployments through Irish Aid and Save the Children.

Over 200 national and international IPs, under contract with UNHCR, deliver education programmes at the field level. Responses to the survey for this review indicate that there is wide discrepancy in the quality of services provided by these IPs, some bringing proven field experience and others not. Particularly problematic is the lack of consistent assessment to identify good partners in education. Even when genuine attempts are made to identify partners with the capacity to implement an education programme, UNHCR staff members often do not know what criteria on which to evaluate potential partners given their own lack of knowledge and experience in education. The monitoring of results by most IPs is focused on enrolment rates, without appropriate attention even to the inadequate metrics of quality currently in place.

There are dramatic consequences of UNHCR not having, or immediately deploying, dedicated education staff when an emergency strikes and of the lack of systematic incorporation of education into UNHCR's emergency response. For example, in Ethiopia, many months after the 2011 Horn of Africa crisis became evident, there was still not one Education Officer, even temporary, to coordinate the education response; and, although inter-agency plans existed, there was no school in the Dollo Ado region, where there were approximately 121,000 refugee children living in four camps (UNHCR, 2011a). In this situation, existing Community Services and Protection staff held responsibility for a large number of areas and could not be expected to focus on coordination and planning for education. Likewise, in Dadaab camp, there were two short-term secondments covering the education programme during this crisis, and no Education Officer. Education was not included in the July 2011 UNHCR appeal for the Horn of Africa.

Headquarters	Regional/country level	Secondments
• 1 Senior Education Officer (P4) • 1 DAFI Education Officer (P3) • 1 DAFI Education Assistant (G6)	• 1 Associate Education Officer (P2), Chad (created 2011) • Education "focal points" are usually Community Services Officers, Protection Officers, and Programme Officers	• 9 NRC secondments (2010), on average 6 per year

Figure 3.10. Education Staffing at UNHCR

The UNHCR education budget has increased over the period 2004 to 2012, with a peak of funding at US$80 million in 2008 (see Figure 3.11). The rise in funding for education closely correlates with the 2003 Iraqi invasion, and particular countries account for much of this increase, notably those hosting Iraqi refugees. In 2008, for example, Jordan accounted for 29% of the total US$80 million UNHCR education budget, and Syria accounted for 8% (Bulbul, 2008).

Since the introduction of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)[4] in 2010, it is possible to identify the funding gaps in education. In 2010, available funding (US$75 million) covered 60% of the CNA (US$126 million); in 2011, available funding (US$58 million) covered only 39% of the CNA (US$147 million) and, in 2012, available funding (US$71 million) is again expected to cover 39% of the CNA (US$180 million) (UNHCR, 2009c, 2010g, 2011c).

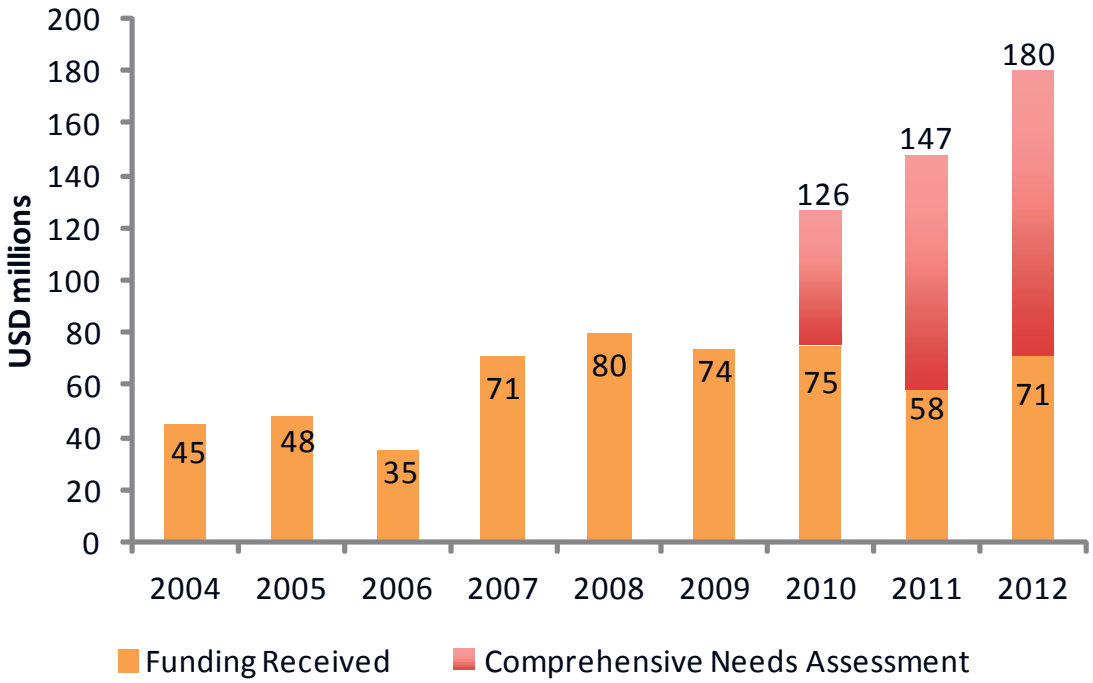


Figure 3.11. UNHCR education budget 2004-2012. Figures for 2010-2012 indicate funding received in relation to needs. Source: (UNHCR, 2009c, 2010g, 2011c).

4 The Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) is a country-level process of assessing the needs of persons of concern to UNHCR in an inclusive way in order to design and implement more appropriate responses to those needs. More specifically, it is "a comprehensive analysis of gaps in protection, including assistance, a concise presentation of these unmet needs, agreement among all stakeholders on how to remedy the gaps and the development of proposed programmatic interventions with clear cost implications" (Allen & Rosi, 2010, p. 7).

The global education budget in 2010 represented 4% of the total comprehensive UNHCR budget (UNHCR, 2010g, p. 14), down from 8% in 2008 (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 16). Encouragingly, the 2012 budget anticipates that education will be more of a priority within UNHCR operations, with 13% of the CNA identified in education and the sector funded with an Initial Budget Target (IBT) of 14% (UNHCR, 2011c). As a point of comparison, in low-income Countries, education represents 18% of government expenditure, on average, and in conflict-affected settings, 13% (Save the Children, 2009). While UNHCR is clearly not a national government, the priority placed on education amid other competing sectors is a useful point of reference. A more comparable situation to UNHCR is the United Nations Relief Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), for which education comprised 59% of the total budget in 2008 (UNRWA, 2011, p. 44)(see Figure 3.12).

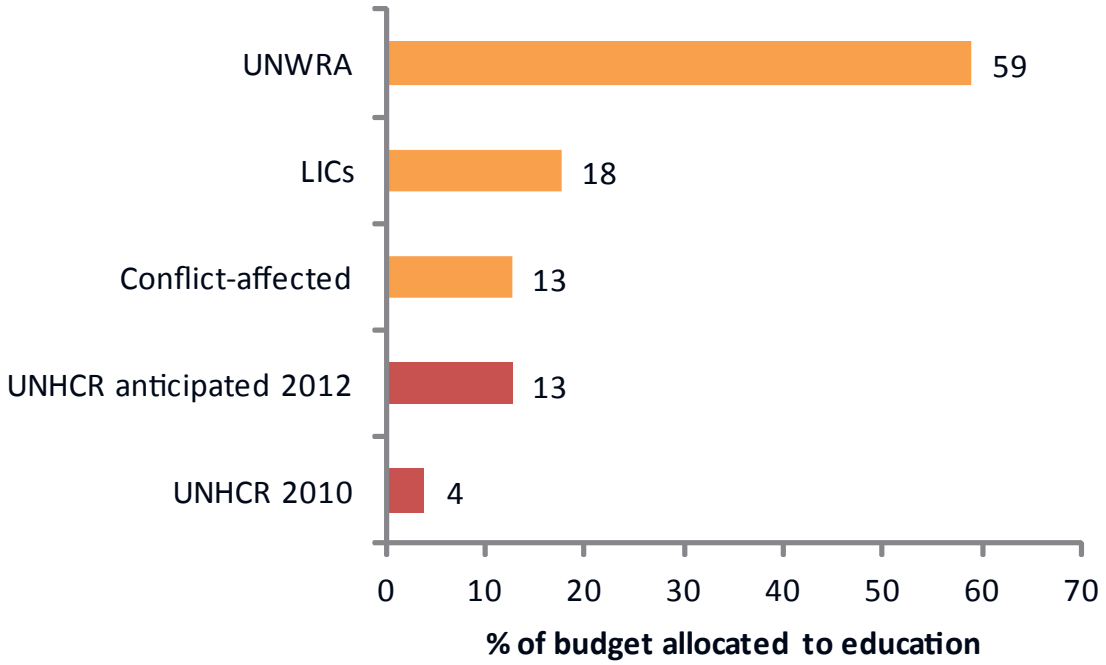


Figure 3.12. 2010 UNHCR budget allocation to education, as a percentage of total budget, in comparison with national budget allocations to education. Source: (Brannelly & Ndaruhutse, 2008, p. 6; Save the Children, 2009; UNHCR, 2010g).

Allocation of the education budget among outputs over time indicates the shifting of priorities in the education sector. Figure 3.13 depicts the 2012 education budget per prioritised output, data to which previous budgets are compared. Several important shifts have occurred between 2010 and 2012 (see Figure 3.14). First, significant resources have been allocated away from primary education and to post-primary activities. In 2010, primary education made up 27% of the comprehensive education budget; it makes up 17% of the budget for 2012. Post-primary activities include tertiary scholarships, vocational scholarships, secondary education, and vocational training, but these data do not include the centrally-managed DAFI higher education programme. These activities made up 20% of the education budget in 2010 and make up 29% of the budget for 2012. Importantly, resources allocated to secondary education in particular have increased from 7% of the budget to 14%, from US$8.8 million in 2010 to US$21.1 million in 2012. There are indications from UNHCR staff at Headquarters that this recent change in allocation of funds does indicate a global policy change; however, data over more years would be necessary to observe a true trend.

Second, there appears to be a noted decrease in priority on infrastructure, including the construction of educational facilities and the procurement of school furniture and materials (see Figure 3.14). While 26% of the education budget in 2010 and 27% of the budget in 2011 were allocated to this work, only 16% of the budget is thus allocated for 2012. Again, data over a longer period of time would be necessary to observe a trend in this regard. Finally, there are two areas of focus in the 2012 budget that represent a shift from recent years. Funding to promote girls' education increased 620% between 2011 and 2012, funding to provide early childhood education increased 414%, and funding to establish an education monitoring system increased 150% (UNHCR, 2009l, 2010f, 2011c).

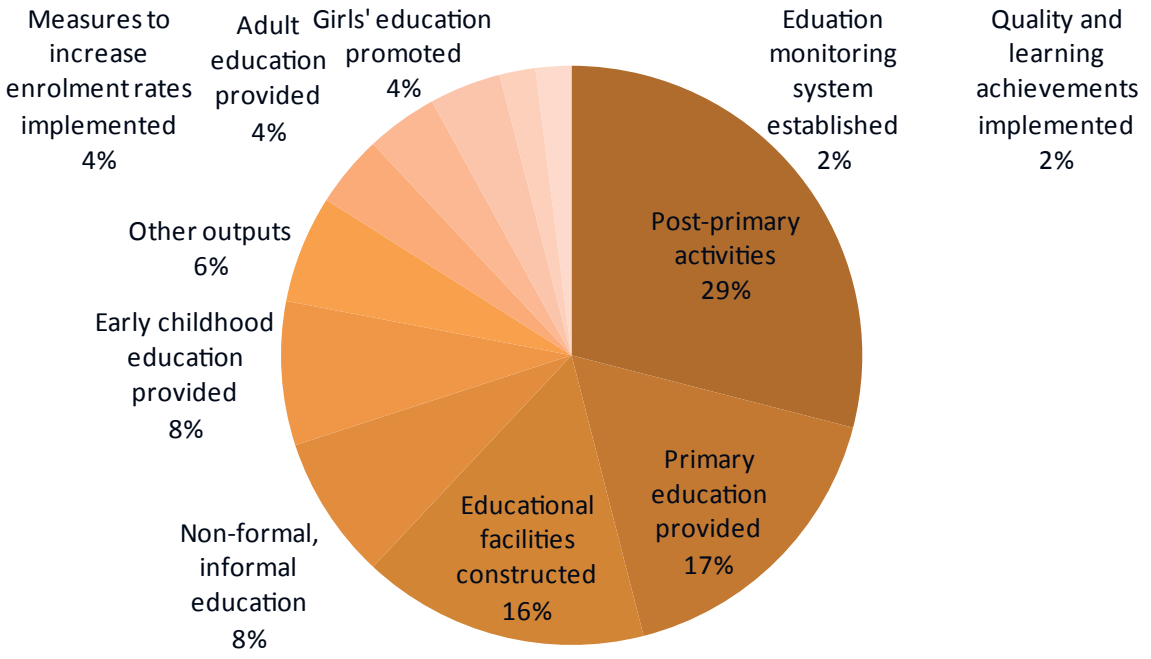
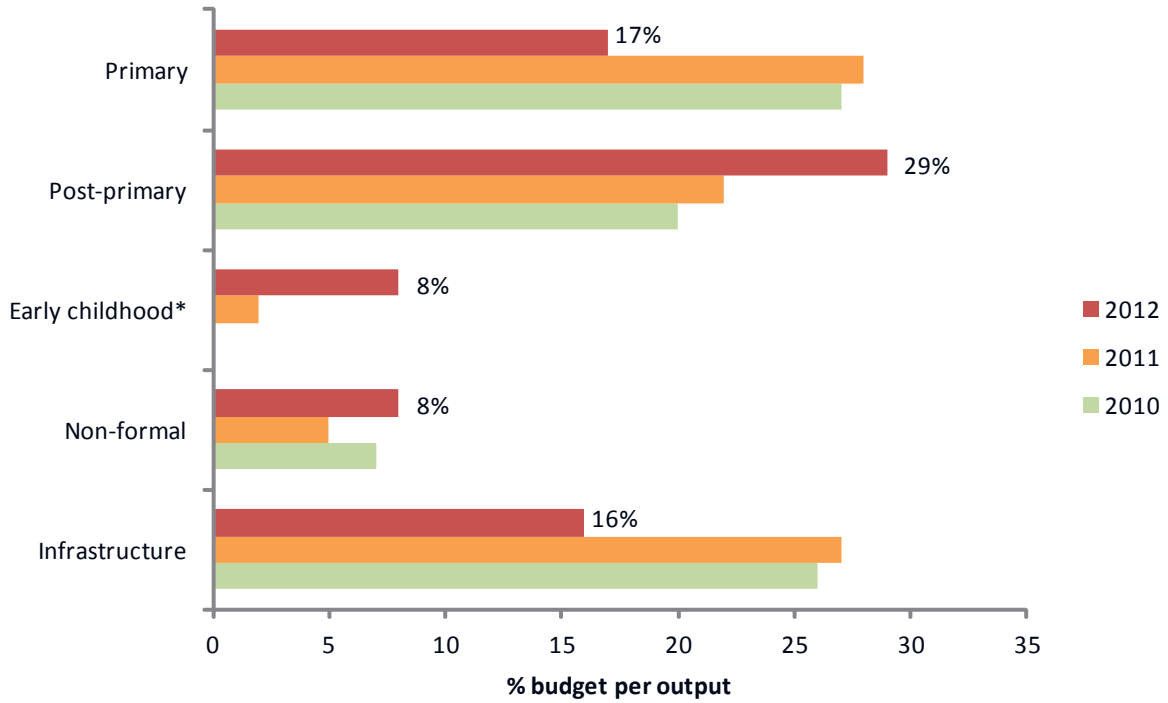


Figure 3.13. UNHCR Education budget as allocated per output, 2012 (UNHCR, 2011c).



*Data for early childhood not available for 2010.

Figure 3.14. UNHCR education budget as allocated per output, 2010-2012, with % indicated for 2012. Source: (UNHCR, 2009l, 2010f, 2011c).

Only 3% of UNHCR's education budget funds activities in Europe and the Americas (see Figure 3.15). In these regions, access to free education is usually the norm for refugees, and UNHCR staff members generally assume that refugee children and young people are therefore going to school. However, these data are not available: refugee children's school attendance is not monitored, and neither is their persistence in primary or secondary school. UNHCR offices in Central Europe have recently focused on education as a key element of integration and have identified key barriers to refugees accessing quality education, including lack of opportunity for language learning, uninformed grade placement, and inadequate supports in schools (UNHCR Regional Representation for Central Europe, 2011). Further analysis of these issues is needed in Europe and particularly in Latin America.

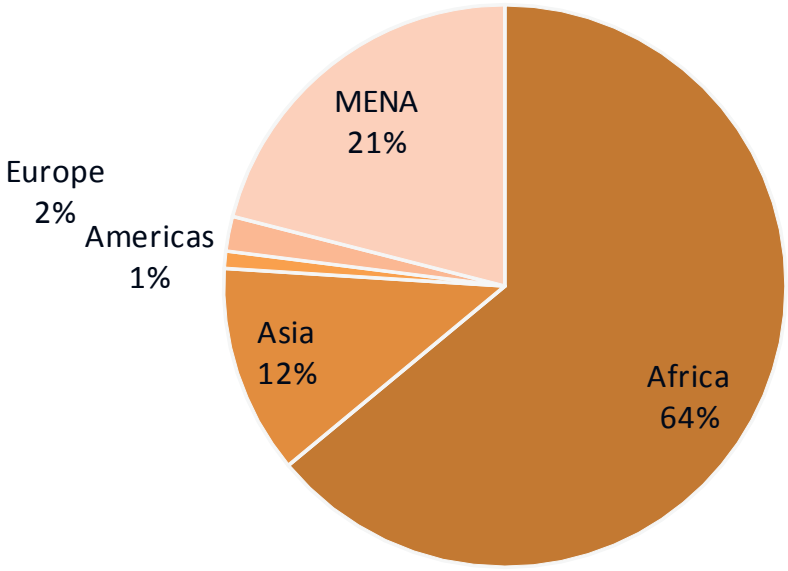


Figure 3.15. UNHCR education budget as allocated per region, 2012. Source: (UNHCR, 2011c).

Given the resource constraints on refugee education, both in terms of staffing and funding, coordination plays a central role for UNHCR's Education Unit in delivering quality education to refugee children. This coordination is both internal to UNHCR and external.

Internally, the Education Unit has had several institutional homes over the past decade. Until 2010, it was within Operations, first within the Department of Operational Support (DOS) and then within the Division of Programme Support and Management (DPSM). The Unit was then moved to the Division of International Protection (DIP) on January 1, 2010. This move had its origins in the *2002 Agenda for Protection* and subsequent Action Plan approved by the Executive Committee, which emphasised the importance of "education as a tool for protection" (UNHCR, 2002). The documented protective role of education for children in conflict settings has been an effective tool for internal advocacy for the place of education within UNHCR's core protection mandate, even if the protective outcomes of refugee education are not adequately measured, as described above.

Externally, UNHCR's mandate for refugee education, as it developed historically, is clear. The ability of UNHCR to deliver on this mandate, however, has increasingly come into question. In 2001, Margaret Sinclair wrote:

> UNHCR's responsibilities for education cannot be abdicated, as they relate to its field presence. The international community expects UNHCR to be present in almost every location where refugees need protection and assistance, and equips the agency with field offices, field staff, vehicles and communications equipment accordingly. In most of these locations, therefore, it is cost-effective for UNHCR to be the lead agency for emergency educational response (Sinclair, 2001, p. 69).

In the past decade, much has changed in the field of emergency education, with the establishment of the INEE; the development of the *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies* (INEE, 2004, 2010b); the inclusion of education as a life-saving response within the IASC and the formation of the Education Cluster (2006); and the increasing rhetorical commitment of donors to education as part of humanitarian responses, even if not actual funding allocations. There has also been the emergence of professional leaders in this field and consolidation of expertise within NGOs such as the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Save the Children, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), NRC, and CARE, and within some UN agencies, especially UNICEF. While UNHCR does have a field presence in almost all situations where refugees are in need of education, UNHCR often does not have the educational expertise to mount an appropriate response. Further, UNHCR does not have the capacity to select qualified education Implementing Partners (IPs) nor to develop productive working relationships with national Ministries of Education (MoEs).

The common understanding within UNHCR, at Headquarters and in the field, is that UNHCR has the mandate for refugee education. The 2007 Third Edition to the UNHCR *Handbook for Emergencies* states that "UNHCR does not have the lead role in providing education in the new humanitarian reform" (UNHCR, 2007b, p. 414), meaning for IDPs. Many situations in which UNHCR is involved with education include both refugees and IDPs together. In these situations, there is a great deal of confusion over how to coordinate education responses that meet the needs of both target groups. UNHCR has been a member of the Education Cluster Working Group since its inception, and the Cluster strategic plan (2011-2013) includes joint activities for IDPs and refugees to be undertaken by the Cluster and UNHCR. At the field level, however, the appropriate role for UNHCR within the constellation of actors in refugee education is undefined and often contentious. The visibility, logistical capacity, and field presence of UNHCR writ large raise expectations for the organisation that are often disproportionate to its educational resources and expertise.

What are the impacts on refugee education of these institutional, resource, and coordination constraints and uncertainties? These are two particularly urgent challenges in this regard that will be explored in Section 4:

- Challenge #6: Lack of financial resources, and their inconsistency, as well as a shortage of educational expertise both within UNHCR and among Implementing Partners (IPs), limits progress in refugee education.

- Challenge #7: There are challenges to coordination in refugee education, including complex power dynamics, which limit the productivity of partnerships.



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Refugee education in urban settings requires different strategies than in camps

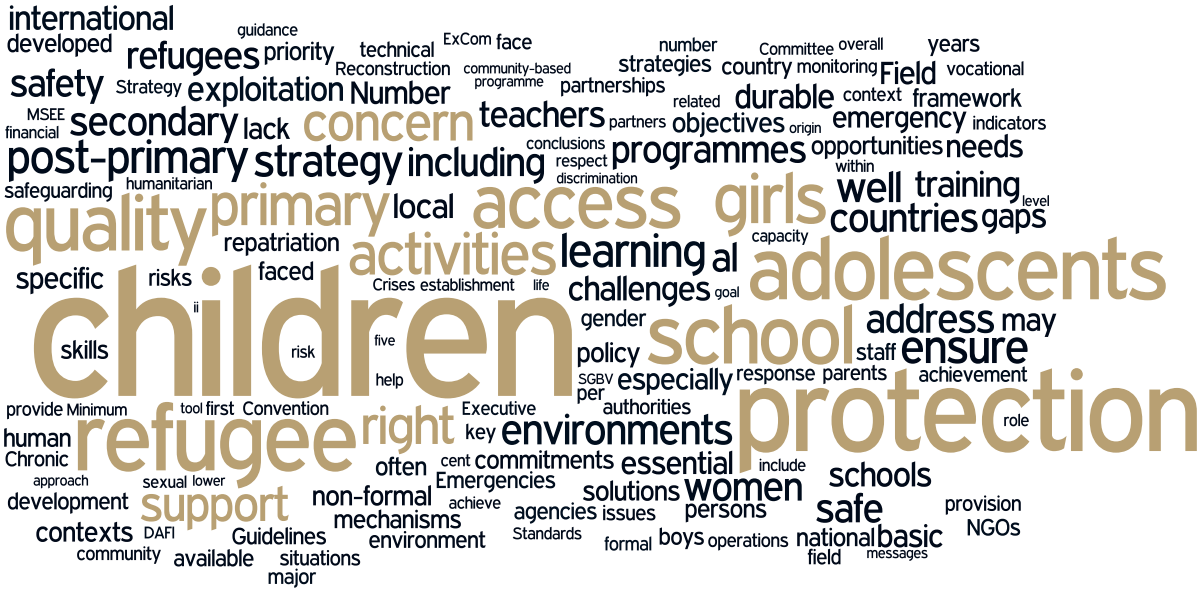
Urgent Challenges to Refugee Education

Challenge #1: Urban refugee education requires an approach different from strategies used in camp settings.

That almost half of refugees live and seek to access education in urban areas is not a new phenomenon. What is new is the September 2009 UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas. This policy recognises that education is a basic service to which refugees, no matter where they reside, have a right (UNHCR, 2009m, p. 18).

The 2010-2012 Education Strategy reflects this institutional policy change, away from a sole focus on the educational needs of camp-based refugees. The word 'urban' appears only twice in the 2007-2009 Strategy; in the 2010-2012 Strategy, it appears 51 times (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. The policy focus on education in urban areas is evident in this visual representation, where the size of the text indicates the number of times a word or concept appears in the 2007-2009 and 2010-2012 Education Strategies; the word urban does not appear in Word Cloud 1, whereas it is one of the dominant words in Word Cloud 2.



Word Cloud 1: UNHCR Education Strategy 2007-2009 (with “UNHCR” and “education” removed).



Word Cloud 2: UNHCR Education Strategy 2010-2012 (with “UNHCR” and “education” removed).

The new urban policy states that UNHCR will prioritise "ensuring that children receive primary school education" in urban areas (UNHCR, 2009m, p. 19). What does it mean to provide educational services for refugees in urban areas? There are some ways in which educational access, quality, and protection are particularly challenging for refugees in urban areas; and there are some ways in which education for urban refugees is a fundamentally different endeavour than education for camp-based refugees.

The Urban Policy outlines several reasons why the right to education is difficult to realise in urban settings: the cost of schools and already over-stretched education systems serving local populations (UNHCR, 2009m, p. 18). Recent research on refugee education in Nairobi, Kampala, Amman, and Damascus (Dryden-Peterson, 2006a; UNHCR, 2009k) as well as the case study of Kuala Lumpur produced for this review identify further challenges.

Often there are legal and policy barriers for refugees in urban areas, which make access to education more difficult. In some cases, refugees do not have the legal right to live outside of refugee camps or settlements. In other cases, refugees are living in states that have not signed the 1951 Convention and face daily threats of arrest or detention. The case of Kampala demonstrates that removal of these barriers can have great effects on educational access in urban areas (see Box 4.1).

Many of the barriers to accessing education faced by refugee children in camps are exacerbated in urban areas. Financial constraints on refugee families due to legal and policy restrictions combined with high costs of living in cities mean that the direct and indirect costs of schools are even more prohibitive. Further, entering into a national system, refugee children often have less support than in a camp-based school in adjusting to a new curriculum, learning in a new language, accessing psychosocial support, and addressing discrimination, harassment, and bullying from teachers and peers. They may also encounter a lack of familiarity by local school authorities for the processes of admitting refugee children and recognising prior learning.

While some of the challenges of education for urban refugee are different in scope than those faced by camp-based refugees, education for urban refugees is also fundamentally different in critical ways from camp-based approaches. While camp-based approaches sometimes accord with national education policies, the UNHCR *Education Field Guidelines* and the original version of the *INEE Minimum Standards* recommend that education be as closely aligned as possible with the country of origin (INEE, 2004, p. 57; UNHCR, 2003b, p. 11). In urban areas, it is a necessity that refugee education is planned and implemented in collaboration with national and local level education authorities.

Box 4.1. Refugee governance in urban areas impacts school enrolment

Prior to 2006, refugees in Uganda were governed by the 1964 Control of Alien Refugees Act (CARA), under which freedom of movement for refugees was restricted and aid was contingent upon a refugee living in a designated rural settlement. In 2006, primary school enrolment rates were 77% in refugee settlements (UNHCR, 2009g) but very few refugees were able to access schools in Kampala. In 2006, the Ugandan Parliament passed the Refugee Bill, which protected refugees' right to settle in urban areas. Compounding legal barriers to accessing education in Kampala was UNHCR's opposition to the provision of services in urban areas on the grounds that these services would act as a pull factor away from the camps and to the city. In 2009, however, UNHCR made a major policy shift in adopting the Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas. This new policy paved the way for more widespread provision of assistance in urban areas and included a commitment by UNHCR to ensuring that refugees in urban areas have access to education. School participation rates in Kampala in 2008 were 9% and then jumped to 23% in 2009 (UNHCR, 2008b, 2009h). This evidence does not permit causal claims, and it is possible that what appears to be a change in enrolment rates is in fact simply due to better reporting. However, it is likely that the combination of new legal provisions and policy commitments have impacted refugee children's access to education in Kampala.

This necessity is articulated in the recently released *Ensuring Access to Quality Education: Operational Guidance on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas,* which takes as a main principle that "every effort should be made for urban refugees to participate in mainstream education along with local children and young people, with national authorities managing and coordinating the education response, supported by UNHCR and partners where needed" (UNHCR, 2011d, p. 4). The updated *INEE Minimum Standards* and the *INEE Guidance Notes on Teaching and Learning* reflect the more ambiguous and context-specific needs of urban areas, recommending that it is the *relevance* of curricula, for example, that is primary (INEE, 2010a, p. 1, 2010b, p. 78).

Historically, UNHCR provided scholarships for refugee students to study in government or private schools in urban areas. Yet the number of urban refugees and the demand for education today far outpace this individualised approach to education in urban areas. There are two options in urban areas: the creation of formal/non-formal/informal schools specifically for refugees or, preferably, local integration into public school systems.

Where legal and policy barriers exist to formal schooling for refugees in urban areas, non-formal/informal schools for refugees may be the only option. Such is the case in Malaysia, where there are approximately 90,000 refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR, primarily from Myanmar but also from Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Sri Lanka. They are considered by the Malaysian government to be "undocumented migrants." The 13,865 refugee children and young people (ages 5-17) living in Malaysia are unable to access public or private schools. Only 5,134, or about 37%, were attending any form of school at the end of 2010 (Kaun, 2011; Rahman, 2011, p. 36); as a point of comparison, national GER in Malaysia in 2007 was 97% (UNESCO, 2011, p. 305).

Refugee children in Malaysia attend seven NGO-run schools and 53 community-based schools, founded and managed by refugee groups and located mostly in apartments. While most of these schools use the Malaysian national syllabus, there is no formal certification of learning and no recognition of studies by any authority (Nirrengarten, 2010; Rahman, 2011).

Negotiation of access to the national system has been complicated in Malaysia, as in other countries that are not signatories to the 1951 Convention. In some individual cases, informal agreements between families and head teachers allow refugee children to attend public schools in Malaysia (see Box 4.2). In collaboration with UNICEF and its "Reaching the Unreached" campaign, and with the aim of fulfilling Malaysia's commitment to EFA, UNHCR is working with a research team from the Malaysian Ministry of Education (MoE) to promote the inclusion of refugees in national schools. The 2010 UNHCR Malaysia education budget included US$9,772 for "advocacy for admission to national education system," however, this work comprised less than 1% of the total education CNA (UNHCR, 2010b). The high-level advocacy, which forms part of a broader advocacy for other refugee rights including the right to work and freedom of movement, has yet to produce results.

The situation in Amman, Jordan provides an example of how advocacy for access to national education systems can succeed, even in a non-signatory state, where the language of instruction is not a barrier. In the 2006-2007 academic year, approximately 14,000 of the 64,000 displaced Iraqi children in Jordan had access to school (Bulbul, 2008, p. 4). A royal decree in 2007, brought about in part through substantial advocacy by UNHCR and pressure to uphold the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, opened Jordanian schools to Iraqi refugees. As a result, an additional 24,650 Iraqi children seized the opportunity to access school in academic year 2007-2008 (Bulbul, 2008, p. 4; UNHCR, 2009k, p. 37). However, existing school fees as well as fear and mistrust of public institutions continued to make it difficult for many Iraqi children to access education (Bulbul, 2008, p. 11). In 2009 when the European Union funded school fees for all Iraqis in Jordan, some additional 26,890 Iraqi children enrolled in public schools (Bulbul, 2008, p. 12; UNHCR, 2009k).

UNHCR made a commitment to supporting the Jordanian MoE in coping with this influx of students. In 2007-2008, UNHCR collaborated with the MoE to hire and pay salaries for 2,000 additional teachers and rehabilitated 30 classrooms with furniture and equipment (Bulbul, 2008, p. 4). This strategy of engagement with the Jordanian MoE was complemented by continuing support for informal/non-formal education to reach Iraqi children and young people who were unable to access the local system. This was an operation that had sufficient education staff, with a specific education team supervised by a Senior Programme Officer and included education experts from national staff and IPs as well as

Box 4.2. "I was attending a government school until last January… For right now… I'm not able to continue my studies": The case of a 13-year old Rohingya boy in Malaysia (Rahman, 2011)

Abdul*, age 13 and a member of the Rohingya group, was born in Malaysia. Unlike most refugee children, he had the possibility of attending a governmental school. According to him, this was because he has a Malaysian birth certificate.

However, when he reached Form 1, the first year of secondary school, he was no longer allowed to attend school. His mother explains:

> *At the time when the former Prime Minister Mahathir was working, our children could study until Standard 6 in government school. We only needed a Malaysian birth certificate. It was possible only for those who were born in Malaysia. Then a new Prime Minister came, they stopped new registration in the school and the ones who were registered could study until the UPSR (Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah) exam at the end of Standard 6. So my second son went until UPSR in a government school, then he couldn't go anymore.*

Abdul lives close to a refugee school. And yet when he could no longer attend the government school, he decided that he would not go to the refugee school either. He explains that his school level was too high:

> *After that I cannot study there. I come to this school, the UN school, but the teacher says 'this doesn't have what we teach at your school. This is only for small children'. So my mother says 'don't go'.*

Abdul believed that the only possibility for him to continue his studies would be to be resettled to a third country:

> *I know I'm not allowed to study in Malaysia. So I think it's better for me if I resettle in another country, then I can continue my studies there, in that country. So this is better for me. For right now, the situation in Malaysia, I'm not able to continue my studies.*

* All names have been changed.

a NRC secondment. The operation was also well-funded; at the height of operations in 2007, it had a budget of over US$12 million.

Funding rapidly decreased for education of Iraqis in Jordan from 2007 to 2010 (see Figure 4.2). However, the numbers of refugee children and young people aged 5-17 remained almost constant: 115,000 in 2007; 120,000 in 2008; 108,000 in 2009; and 120,000 in 2010 (UNHCR, 2008a, 2009a, 2010a).[5] This lack of resources has left little role for UNHCR vis-à-vis the education of Iraqis in Jordan. As of 2010, all education activities for Iraqis in Jordan have been subsumed under regular UNICEF operations in the country and part of their overall goal of sustainably strengthening the national education system for all children.

5 All populations are estimates by the Government of Jordan. Estimate of the 2010 population aged 5-17 is based on the proportion of the total population in previous years.

Recommendation:

In its new work in urban settings, UNHCR should prioritise working with national governments for the integration of refugees into national school systems, building in the new operational guidelines (UNHCR, 2011d). Critical is to conceptualise education work as the strengthening of education systems and not only the achievements of individual refugee children. In this endeavour, both national Ministries of Education and UNICEF are central partners. It will require UNHCR staff with knowledge and experience of national education systems; moreover, time and resources should be dedicated to cultivating institutional and interpersonal relationships to facilitate this work and to ensure that national Ministries of Education take seriously the particular educational needs of refugee children and young people.

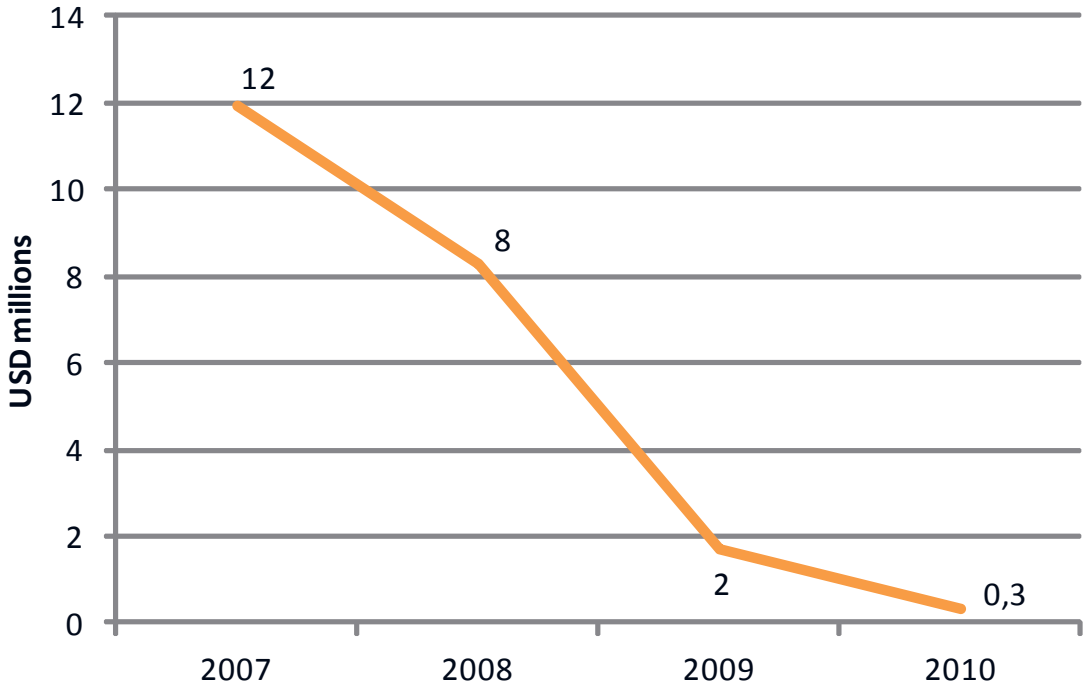


Figure 4.2. Funding to education activities in Jordan, 2007-2010. Source: (Bulbul, 2008; UNHCR, 2008a, 2009a, 2010a, 2010e, p. 29).



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Economic and social returns to secondary education are high, particularly for girls

Challenge #2: Limited access to post-primary education for refugees in both camp and urban settings has immense economic and social consequences, for both individuals and societies.

Access to post-primary education is a priority for refugee education at present. This priority is not new in terms of strategy within the UNHCR Education Unit. It has been emphasised as an overall goal, part of the long-term vision, and a component of immediate, reportable targets in both the 2007-2009 and the 2010-2012 Education Strategies (UNHCR, 2007a, 2009c). Further, the 2007 Executive Committee Conclusion on Children at Risk recognised the need to "promote access to post-primary education wherever possible and appropriate" (UNHCR Executive Committee, 2007).

Post-primary opportunities are also central to the EFA goals, specifically Goal 3: "Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs." Nevertheless, the commonly held perception among some staff at Headquarters and predominantly in the field is that "we work on primary education." There is great scepticism about investments in post-primary education when primary enrolment is not universal, specifically as post-primary opportunities are more expensive and difficult to coordinate.

Staff at UNHCR, other UN-agencies, and IPs describe how they "play with the words," advocating for "early secondary" and "basic education and life skills" in lieu of post-primary opportunities. Often advocacy strategies for refugee youth sensationalise the need for education, adopting an overly negative tone and playing on fears that idle and frustrated young people pose security risks and terrorism threats, that they are "homogeneous blocks of potential menace" (Talbot, 2011), and that "[b]eing young, being uneducated, and being without dependents" may make one more likely to engage in political violence (Collier, 2007). Refugee youth must receive post-primary education; but

those advocating for it must avoid demonising those whom they seek to support. UNHCR has largely avoided negative rhetoric and should continue to advocate for refugee youth to receive post-primary education as a core component of UNHCR's responsibilities in fulfilling a right, rather than as a strategy to prevent disaffected youth from engaging in violence.

It remains difficult to secure funding for post-primary education for refugees, yet the tide is turning within UNHCR in terms of action on the challenge. The rhetorical commitment of the Education Strategies (2007-2009 and 2010-2012) is now being reinforced by the allocation of funds to post-primary refugee education, up from 20% of the education budget in 2010 to 29% of the budget in 2012 (see Figure 3.13). Resources allocated to secondary education in particular have doubled, from 7% in 2010 to 14% in 2012.

While encouragingly on the rise, these resources remain limited given that the rationales for post-primary investment are overwhelming. The most recent EFA Global Monitoring Report argues that secondary school is the "cornerstone of education for youth" and that "formal education is the most effective base for developing learning and life skills" (UNESCO, 2011, p. 54). Why is formal secondary school so critical? First, the existence of secondary school opportunities acts as a motivation to enrol in and complete primary school (Chaffin, 2010; Robinson, 2011). Without the possibility to pursue education beyond the primary level, many families and children decide that the investment of family resources in primary education is not justified.

Second, individual economic returns to secondary education are large. Each additional year of formal education on average adds about 10% to an individual's earnings, and secondary education adds 20% for low-income individuals. The rates of return for secondary education are particularly high in sub-Saharan Africa, at 25%, and in non-OECD Asia, at 16% (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2002, pp. 2, 12).

Third, the economic returns to secondary education for societies are critical for the economic reconstruction and development of countries of origin and host countries. While private returns are often inequitably distributed, the economic growth generated by the skills cultivated through secondary education can also have widespread societal benefits. The social returns to secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa, for example, are 18% and to non-OECD Asia are 11% (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2002, p. 12).

Fourth, secondary education affords greater opportunities for civic participation and quality of life and, in these ways, it is protective both for individuals and for societies (IIEP, 2011; INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility, n.d.). These opportunities provide refugees with the ability to think about the future (Winthrop & Kirk, 2008) and to imagine what is possible (Martone & Neighbor, 2006, p. 3; Waters & Leblanc, 2005) (see Box 4.3). Particularly in situations where entry into the labour market is limited for young people, "they need the stimulus and challenge of education to absorb their energies and lessen their frustrations and anxiety about the future" (IIEP, 2006, p. 2). A 17-year old Congolese boy who arrived in 2008 in Kyangwali refugee settlement in Uganda expressed the situation this way:

> *When we reached here in Kyangwali, life became really hard. Because there is nothing to do: in the morning you wake up, you are moving up and down, like someone who is looking to go somewhere but actually you are not going anywhere (Wettstein, 2011).*

Finally, without continued investment in secondary education, the cadres of high quality future teachers for both primary and secondary education are limited, which poses a major challenge to post-conflict reconstruction (Buckland, 2005; Shriberg, 2007). In Southern Sudan, for example, a 2006 survey found that 19% of teachers had not completed primary school and 29% had no education beyond primary. The majority of teachers who had post-primary education were former refugees in neighbouring Uganda and Kenya (Government of Southern Sudan, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology/UNICEF, 2006 in Save the Children, 2008, p. 1). In NGO-run and community-based schools for Chin and Afghan refugees in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, one of the key barriers to establishing secondary education for refugees is the poor quality of education received by refugee teachers in their countries of origin and their resulting lack of capacity to teach the Malaysian curriculum (Rahman, 2011).

Box 4.3. Post-primary education gives young people "voice"

Hibist Kassa an Ethiopian refugee living in Ghana and recipient of a DAFI scholarship explains: "What does post-primary education offer a young person? This question means a lot in my life because I know the difference it can make. In most countries in the 'developing world', a life is more than a life. It is linked to an extended family and, ultimately, a community of people. Where states fail, these are the support networks people rely on. So why does a young person need to know more than how to read or write? A basic understanding of algebra should be enough, right? To the contrary, this only offers a person with what they need to interact in a very limited way in the social, political and economic life of their respective countries. How does a young person acquire the skills to develop informed opinions or views on the hardship that refugees and IDPs face daily? How does the community find its voice? Education gives a person a voice. Young people want education so that their voices can be heard. Education lays the basis for social and economic freedom to be achieved. As a young person this only means, we want to be free!" (INEE, 2010c, p. 9).

Post-primary education is a cornerstone of the global EFA movement in the lead up to 2015, has been identified as one of the three central strategies in addressing the global crisis of learning that afflicts developing countries (Robinson, 2011), and it is highlighted in the new USAID Education Strategy (USAID, 2011). Yet, for three central reasons, it remains difficult for refugees to access secondary education.

First, acceptable secondary school options are limited in many refugee settings. In some cases, the distances that refugees must travel to national secondary schools are prohibitive. This issue of supply is evident in returnee villages in Mauritania where one secondary school serves young people from approximately 20 surrounding villages as far away as seven kilometres, with few opportunities for boarding closer to the school. In these same settings in Mauritania, the quality of secondary education is also questionable, creating a demand-side barrier to secondary school access. Returned refugees generally felt that the quality of education, particularly secondary education, was higher in Senegal than in Mauritania. Some families therefore chose to pursue cross-border educational strategies, with parents returning to Mauritania and children staying in Senegal to continue their studies (Rezzonico, 2011).

In refugee camps in Chad, there were supply- and demand-side barriers to secondary education. Of particular concern to Darfurian refugees was the lack of opportunities to pursue secondary education that would lead to a recognised diploma. Although UNICEF and the Chadian regional authorities signed primary school certificates, those certificates provided no access to secondary schools in Sudan. A NRC secondment noted that this lack of recognition was discouraging and resulted in learners dropping out prior to the end of primary school, so much so that the last year of primary school ceased to be taught in some camps (Voll, 2009). To address this situation, the Refugee Education Trust (RET), implementing for UNHCR, negotiated with the University of Khartoum in 2006 to allow refugee young people in the camps to pursue a formally recognised secondary education course by distance; in 2009, a Memorandum of Understanding between RET and the Sudanese MoE agreed to official Sudanese recognition of both the primary schools and the first formal secondary schools in the Chadian camps (Mauoubila, Matabaro, & Servas, 2011). This programme serves only a limited number of students, and others return to Sudan seeking further educational opportunities, despite the protection risks posed.

Second, secondary school opportunities can be prohibitively expensive for refugees, both in terms of direct fees and opportunity costs such as the loss of household labour, especially for girls. In Uganda's Kyangwali refugee settlement, the extent of this barrier of cost is evident in the practice of secondary school students from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) returning to primary school in order to sit Primary School Leaving Exams (PLE) that would allow them to qualify for free Universal Secondary Education (Wettstein, 2011).

Third, secondary education is, of course, only accessible to those refugee young people who complete primary school. Girls are at particular disadvantage here, with nine girls enrolled in primary school for every ten boys (see Figure 3.5). For those who do not complete primary school, other options for further education and training are needed.

The *Minimum Standards* advocate attention to the education that each individual learner needs (INEE, 2010b). These needs are defined by the abilities and desires of refugees as well as by available livelihood opportunities. According to Chernor Bah, a former refugee from Sierra Leone and a Women's Refugee Commission youth advisor, "[e]specially in crisis-affected situations, people are looking for skills to survive and while young people value learning and want a good education, we are not excited by education that does not prepare us for the job market" (INEE, 2010c, p. 2).

Alternative schooling mechanisms, such as accelerated learning, are effective though usually expensive policy options for refugee young people who have not had the opportunity to pursue formal education (Charlick, 2005, p. 41; INEE, 2009a, p. 19). For example, the Complementary Rapid Education Programme for Schools (CREPS) in Sierra Leone condensed six primary grades into three years, and the Complementary Opportunities for Primary Education (COPE) Programme in Uganda condensed seven grades into three years (Nicholson, 2006, p. 8). The most effective of these programs use brain-based research on how learning happens and how it can be accelerated. Despite some success, there remain several key challenges to these programmes. The efficacy of these programmes is generally unknown, as the literacy and numeracy skills the graduates are rarely measured. There are also difficulties in providing accreditation, certification, or recognition, and lack of links to formal education (Echessa, n.d.), resulting at times, as in the case of Sierra Leone, in a parallel system that parents perceive as an alternative to primary school.

For some refugees, the relevant post-primary opportunity is secondary school, gaining a recognised educational qualification. Refugees also participate in other forms of education, most notably technical and vocational skills development (TVSD). These opportunities can be post-primary in nature or can target young people who did not have the chance to complete primary school and who are either unable or unwilling to re-enter the formal education system.

Vocational training makes up just over 20% of the 2012 budget for post-primary education (US$10 million), and there is an additional US$7 million allocated for vocational scholarships (UNHCR, 2011c); there is slightly less emphasis on this sub-sector than in previous years. Vocational training can be even more expensive per refugee than secondary education, given the extensive infrastructure often required.

TVSD should include both "hard" and "soft" skills, "developed within a 'joined-up,' integrated development and delivery framework that seeks to improve livelihoods, promote inclusion into the world of work and that supports community and individual agency" (Conflict and Education Research Group, 2007, p. 2; see also, Lyby, 2003). This kind of training is varied: in the city of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia it includes baking and computer classes; in the settlement of Kyangwali, Uganda, there is a tailoring centre; and in the returnee context of Mauritania, there are short (three-week) baking, tailoring, hairdressing, and mechanics trainings (Rahman, 2011; Rezzonico, 2011; Wettstein, 2011).

An important partnership for UNHCR in vocational training is the Youth Education Pack (YEP) programme of the NRC, a one-year full time programme focused on literacy/numeracy, life skills, and basic vocational skills (NRC, n.d.). The YEP was launched in Dadaab camps and Dadaab town (host community) in October 2007; enrolment rates have been high, with 570 students as of August 2010 and less than a 10% drop-out rate in three of the four sites (Umbima, Koelbel, & Hassan, 2010, pp. 29-30). Importantly, the programme includes a follow-up of students six months after they graduate to assess how the young people are functioning in their work and to offer advice (NRC, n.d.). The most comprehensive evaluation of the success of graduates of the YEP programme in Liberia found that few of the youth trained with YEP could sustain themselves on the income from the new skills they learned in this programme. Part of the problem was that although the skills were relevant to the local economy, the market was over-saturated with YEP graduates and diversification of training was needed (Moberg & Johnson-Demen, 2009). Market constraints are the limiting factor on how many young people can and should be absorbed in TVSD.

As the YEP evaluation underscores, critical to any successful TVSD is market analysis, which is often difficult and time-consuming to complete (Chaffin, 2010). The Women's Refugee Commission has developed a useful toolkit for market assessment (Women's Refugee Commission, 2009a, pp. 304-308), however, in many cases, this kind of analysis is not done in refugee settings, given logistical constraints and the time and budget involved. Moreover, a market analysis cannot create opportunities which simply do not exist on a large scale in low purchasing power communities. "Skill mismatch" results from the tendency to train more students year after year in the same skills, as in the case where plumbers were trained in Liberia. A former child soldier trained as a plumber reflected: "it's not easy to find work in plumbing, you know?..., because most of Liberia doesn't have plumbing" (Conflict and Education Research Group, 2007, p. 13). This mismatch between skills, job opportunities, and expectations can lead to false hope, breeding immense frustration among refugee young people, and to recruitment into armies and armed militias when that is seen as the more secure livelihood options (G. K. Brown, 2010; Sommers, 2006).

Refugees who have completed secondary school almost universally voice the desire to attend university (Women's Refugee Commission, 2009b). Opportunities for higher education for refugees, however, are severely limited. UNHCR supports higher education for refugees predominantly through the DAFI Programme (the German acronym for the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative), which provides scholarships for study at colleges and universities in host countries. Created in 1992, the DAFI programme has funded approximately 5,000 students from 70 countries of origin in 71 host countries (Morlang & Watson, 2007, p. 18). Demand for these scholarships far outstrips the number of scholarships available: UNHCR generally receives between 10 and 30 applications for each available scholarship. In some countries, acceptance rates for DAFI scholarships are 2% (Morlang & Watson, 2007, p. 17; Women's Refugee Commission, 2009b, p. 6).

The UNHCR Education Strategy, 2010-2012 states that "there is a need to expand the scope of scholarships and the number of beneficiaries through the future establishment of similar programmes" (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 21). Several higher education programmes for refugees have developed outside of UNHCR, including through the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) and the Windle Trust. More recently has been growth in higher education opportunities that combine scholarships and distance education, including by the JRS in East Africa and the Australian Catholic University on the Thai-Burma border. Despite the new initiatives, higher education remains low on the agenda for most donors, perceived as a "luxury" for an elite few, especially in contexts where access to primary and secondary education is not universal.

Higher education for refugees is not a luxury. It is important both for individuals and for society in terms of rebuilding lives and fostering leadership in both protracted settings and post-conflict reconstruction (see, Dryden-Peterson, 2011b). A study of the DAFI programme for Afghan refugees demonstrates "a direct link between a refugee programme focused on tertiary education and national reconstruction." The study shows that refugees who had access to higher education moved back earlier in the repatriation process, with 70% taking up work as civil servants or as NGO managers, filling much needed roles in a society in the process of rebuilding (Morlang & Stolte, 2008, p. 63).[6] Importantly, in 2008 approximately 6% of DAFI students were engaged in teacher training activities, assisting in the creation of a cadre of teachers to assist in rebuilding the education system (UNHCR, 2009b, p. 20).

6 It is important to note that the results of this study are affected by selectivity bias, with refugees who have experienced successful employment post-graduation more likely to be contactable and more likely to respond to the survey.



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Vocational training should provide refugees with skills that match the needs of the local market

Recommendation:

Given the individual and societal benefits that accrue to secondary education, and within the framework of EFA, UNHCR needs to support education up to the end of secondary school. UNHCR's new budgetary emphasis on post-primary education, particularly secondary education, is to be commended. In order to overcome the challenges to secondary school access, especially for girls, UNHCR needs to actively pursue strategies that augment the supply of formal and accredited secondary school programmes, enhance the quality of available secondary schooling, and combat school drop-outs at the primary level. Simultaneous strategies of non-formal programmes for overage learners and technical and vocational training, linked to real market needs in the countries of asylum and of eventual return and to post-graduation seed grants, will help to meet the needs of refugee young people for whom secondary school is not an option, based on ability, desire, or previous opportunities. Higher education plays a critical role for individual refugees and for societies in terms of leadership in protracted settings and in post-conflict reconstruction, and UNHCR should explore partnerships that augment these opportunities.



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The qualification of teachers matters more for the quality of refugee education than class size

Challenge #3: There is a shortage of quality teachers and lack of structures, including remuneration and training, to retain them.

Teachers matter more than any other single factor for the quality of learning in schools (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004; Reimers, 2006). Teachers are the central aspect of refugee education. Sometimes there is no building, no administration, but there is a teacher. It is these teachers who determine the effectiveness of refugee education: "[w]hile schools can provide safe environments where structure, stimulation and opportunities for learning healthy socialisation with peers and adults can help mitigate the trauma of war, it is teachers who determine the availability and quality of these programs daily" (Shriberg, 2007, p. 8). Poor quality education reduces demand and thus enrolment and persistence (Winthrop & Kirk, 2008); investment in the supply of quality teachers is therefore critical to achieving the goals of access and quality outlined in the UNHCR Education Strategy.

Currently, the first UNHCR indicator of quality for refugee education is the number of teachers per student (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 22). While class size matters, a large class of up to 60 children, for example, can also be an effective learning environment with a skilled teacher (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991; Nakabugo, 2008). Indeed, it is not so much the number of teachers that matter, but their quality. The second indicator of quality in refugee education is the percentage of qualified or trained teachers (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 22), which is a better, though not perfect, proxy for quality. This indicator is especially problematic given the range of experiences that "trained" may represent, from a low of 10 days of low-quality training to more advanced and intense training that may span years.

In Kyangwali refugee settlement, the variability of teacher quality across trained teachers was evident in classroom observations: while some trained teachers used examples, charts, drawings, and songs in their teaching, other trained teachers simply wrote the lessons on the blackboard without giving any further explanation (Wettstein, 2011). Investment in teacher training is critical to any reforms designed to improve quality (UNESCO, 2004b, p. 161). However, the level of training and qualifications is just one way to measure teacher quality, and an input measure at that.

What does quality teaching in refugee education look like, and how is it best fostered? The *Joint Education Needs Assessment Toolkit* produced by the Global Education Cluster provides a helpful starting point to examine quality in any refugee context. Many of the indicators in the core education domains in the categories of teaching and learning and teachers and other personnel are focused on inputs, which may be easy to count but have not been documented to correlate with quality teaching. The Toolkit is most useful in terms of the quality of teacher pedagogy. The classroom observation form outlines five spheres of pedagogy that are evident in high-quality classrooms (Global Education Cluster, 2010, pp. 106-107):

- participatory teaching methods
- the use of a variety of methods
- the use of teaching materials
- non-violent discipline
- inclusion of all children

Observing these methods in classroom settings is more reliable than self-reported data from teachers on the use of these methods. The *IRC's Guide to Design, Monitoring and Evaluation* suggests that an effective indicator in measuring actual teacher performance in the classroom would be "90% of teachers observed in the classroom satisfactorily demonstrate use of appropriate child-centred methodologies" (IRC, 2005, p. 47). Any observations, however, are snapshots, capturing one moment in time, with an observer present, whereas teaching is an on-going process.

An important way to corroborate classroom observations is through the perspectives of children and their parents who experience teaching over long periods of time. Focus group discussions with children and parents, instruments for which are included as part of the Education Cluster's *Joint Education Needs Assessment Toolkit,* could cover questions that ask about the use of these methods, probing for specific examples. In Uganda, for example, a refugee girl in Primary 5 commented on the absence of participatory methods in her classroom, through the example of lack of feedback. She said: "The teachers, after just writing an exercise on the blackboard, they just tell you if you want to write down, just do it, but they don't give you explanations." Parents also question the interactive nature of teaching that happens at their children's schools. One father commented that he did not understand how the teachers were teaching. "For example," he said, "even when children have failed, they write 'good' in their exercise books" (Wettstein, 2011). While pedagogy is essential, it can only be effective when paired with high-quality and on-going training on the content of the curriculum.

The use of non-violent discipline also can be assessed through conversations with refugee children. In Uganda, a refugee girl in Primary 3 described her experiences:

> *Sometimes, they cane too much and then I feel unhappy. For example, after canning you, you are crying but at the same time you have to laugh and play with others when you are still crying. Yesterday, they were teaching us how to write, I was very much happy but then the teacher caned and I forgot about this happiness. When you fail again, they add more (Wettstein, 2011).*

At times, corporal punishment and verbal abuse also can be measured through time-limited observations in classrooms. In Mauritania, for example, a researcher was witness to teachers using a strap on children's bodies and faces in punishment for chatting, making mistakes, being disrespectful, and falling asleep in class. Teachers were also observed calling children "ânes" (donkeys), telling them that they cannot think, or that they would be more useful if they remained at home to help their mothers (Rezzonico, 2011).

Three strategies can be effective in augmenting the supply of quality teachers and retaining them: training, on-going supervision, and compensation and certification. First, while training is not by itself a good measure of quality teachers, in the right form teacher training can be a productive mechanism to improve the quality of teaching. The teacher training most commonly used in refugee situations is in-service training organised by NGO IPs: short courses of three months or less often conducted during school holidays and long courses also often conducted during school holidays but over multiple years. At present, the minimum recommended length of training is 10 days (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 23), but this limited training can be for an initial start up period only. Given the new research that shows widespread failure to learn in primary schools, a more adequate standard is needed.

A Save the Children evaluation in conflict settings, but not with refugees, found that short courses can be effective in transforming teacher pedagogy toward a child-centred approach. Teachers trained during three month courses in the "basic skills and knowledge needed to teach," including child-centred pedagogy, subsequently had better relationships with their learners, as measured by listening to learners, helping learners to solve problems, addressing individual learners by name, and giving praise (Save the Children, 2008, pp. 11-13). This training, however, had no noticeable effects on learning outcomes (Save the Children, 2008, pp. 14-15). On the other hand, the experience of IRC in Guinea showed that cumulative teacher training can help build teachers' knowledge and teaching skills, and Save the Children's Literacy Boost programme had similar results in a pilot study in Pakistan (Dowd, Ochoa, Alam, Pari, & Afsar Babar, 2010; D. Jones, 2009).

UNRWA has sought to address the issue of learning outcomes by developing a longer-term strategy for teacher training, specifically focused on partnerships with local universities in Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza, Syria, and Lebanon. Similar to UNHCR, UNRWA faces the challenge of short-term funding cycles in a protracted situation but, as staff describe, it has prioritised long-term planning, developing an education strategy that covers six years, even though the mandate of the organisation must be renewed every three years.

Second, and related, on-going teacher training in the form of supervision and on-going observations of teaching can play an important role in improving teacher quality. The *INEE Minimum Standards* recommend performance appraisals, including "developing criteria to support classroom observations and evaluations; providing feedback; and setting goals and targets to measure growth and progress" (INEE, 2010b, p. 102). To ensure sustainability, head teachers need to be the first line of support in this work; however, they often have little more training than the teachers they oversee and are usually not in the practice of classroom observation. In situations where refugees are integrated into national systems, both refugee and national teachers may benefit from National Inspectors. However, Inspectors are over-worked and often lack funds for transportation to school sites, especially those that are remote (Moloi, Morobe, & Urwick, 2008, p. 613); further, they often focus on administrative rather than pedagogic matters. The innovative 'Be a better teacher/ Le bon enseignant' programme used with Sudanese refugee teachers in Chad uses video assessment as a form of in-service supervision to allow teachers to teach more confidently and competently (INEE, 2010a, p. 22). Funding for mobile or multi-school trainers, the deployment of "resources teachers," and the use of new technologies can facilitate this kind of support for teachers in cost-effective and sustainable ways (T. Brown, 2003).

Third, in order to improve the supply of quality teachers, incentives to retain teachers are needed. Without compensation and certification structures in place, "[t]raining more teachers is like pouring water into a bucket with holes in it"(Shepler, 2011). In Dadaab camp in Kenya, there is a total of 870 teachers, but an average of 30 leave the sector each month (UNHCR & CARE, 2009, p. 6), with feelings of frustration at not being paid a salary commensurate with their experience and with prospects of finding a better-paying job in another sector or a less demanding job with similar pay. Teachers' salaries represent by far the largest expenditure within education budgets in low-income countries. On average, they make up two-thirds of education budgets, and in some cases the figure is over 90% (Brannelly & Ndaruhutse, 2008, p. 6). In some refugee situations, teachers are underpaid, not paid on time, or not paid at all, although in some situations they are paid more regularly than local teachers. This is no simple challenge; Sommers notes that "[a]mong the most vexing and widespread operational challenges in field co-ordination for education during emergencies is devising an appropriate and affordable payment structure for teachers" (Sommers, 2004, p. 74); this challenge continues well after the emergency phase.

The *INEE Guidance Notes on Teacher Compensation in Fragile States, Situations of Displacement and Post-Crisis Recovery* highlight several issues particularly relevant to retaining high quality teachers in refugee education. Teacher compensation involves multiple actors, including government, community, NGOs/UN agencies, donors, and teacher unions, the constellation of which is context-specific (INEE, 2009b, p. 5). These multiple sources of authority result in particular challenges in a country like Uganda, where refugee education depends on teachers being paid by national governments, and there is little recourse by UNHCR or IPs to ensure timely delivery of salaries (Wettstein, 2011). Even careful, phased-in approaches to integrating refugee schools with national systems can suffer from similar issues of late payment (see Box 4.4), requiring intense commitment on the part of UNHCR to coordination and high-level advocacy.

Box 4.4 Sustainable teacher compensation in Ethiopia: A phased approach

USAID in Ethiopia built the capacity of district education offices by encouraging a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between IRC and the district education office that agreed on a phased approach to outside funding. It was agreed that after the first year, the district regional education office would cover 25% of the teachers' compensation, 50% after year 2, 75% after year 3 and 100% after year 4. It has not been easy to achieve, as the contribution of many education offices is still not at the agreed level. The main challenge faced is that when the local education office takes over the payment of teachers' salaries, payments are often irregular and unpredictable. Maintaining a regular policy dialogue and follow-up to secure the timely payment has been one way that IRC has tried to overcome this challenge (INEE, 2009b, p. 11).

The absence of adequate teacher compensation results in lowered teacher morale, teacher absenteeism, and a lack of interest in the profession (INEE, 2009b, p. 1). Indeed, in the varied cases of Uganda, Mauritania, and Malaysia, teachers report the lack of sufficient income to sustain their families. While education authorities, in the form of national governments or NGOs, often blame teacher absenteeism on lack of supervision, teachers point to meagre compensation to explain their absences. One teacher in Kyangwali refugee settlement in Uganda said, "[y]ou know when you get very little money and you do so much, you may not be able to get motivated so much." Another teacher explained the necessity of a strategy of absenteeism in order to secure his family's livelihood: "[i]f you are wise enough, you come one day to school and the other day you go and dig so you can eat at the end of the month." Teachers may also recover their salaries by pressuring students to provide money or labour, to the detriment of quality education. This is not only a problem for teachers in refugee-hosting areas but for all teachers in Uganda. UNHCR Malaysia drew on the *INEE Minimum Standards* to devise a scheme to pay refugee teachers in community schools in Kuala Lumpur; teachers noted that this compensation has renewed their commitment to teaching, led to an improved quality of instruction, and fostered a more positive reputation of teachers within the community (Kaun, 2011).

Constraints on resources and inefficiencies of host country compensation systems necessitate creative thinking about other forms of compensation that can serve to motivate teachers in their work and retain them. In some cases, relief assistance in the form of food, health care, and shelter can supplement modest financial compensation (INEE, 2009b, p. 13). Certification can be another form of investment in teacher professionalism and well-being. A cornerstone of the IRC's refugee education programme in Guinea from 1990 to 2007 was the training and certification of teachers. Recognition of these credentials in home countries has had a long-term impact on the livelihoods of these teachers in that two thirds of them were employed upon return to Sierra Leone and Liberia as teachers, often at their old schools (Shepler, 2011).

Recommendation:

The *INEE Guidance Notes on Teaching and Learning* describe teachers as "the lynchpin of education," requiring "real investment" (INEE, 2010a, p. 19). For most refugee children, the education received in exile is their one shot at education, and the quality of their teachers is critical. There is an urgent need to think beyond short-term, emergency trainings and toward more extensive investments in teacher quality for refugee education. A new standard is required for UNHCR which incorporates the idea of sequential training that aims, over a period of years, to complete a basic qualification, recognition of which can hopefully be negotiated with home and/or host country governments. Strategies should include the development of indicators that measure teacher quality in terms of pedagogy and students' learning outcomes; investment in more extensive teacher training initiatives, focused on both pedagogy and content, in partnership with local institutions that allow formal recognition of teacher qualifications; and engagement with issues of teacher compensation and certification through coordination and high-level advocacy to promote the retention of quality teachers.



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Education for refugees is a way to lessen their frustrations and anxiety about the future

Challenge #4: The quality of refugee education, and how it is recognised, does not help children to make connections between schooling and their future livelihoods.

Humanitarian aid advocacy and policy documents emphasise the role that education plays in restoring normalcy for refugee children. The implication of this line of thinking "is that it would almost be enough to get the children back into school and that the routines of schooling are as important as its content" (Davies & Talbot, 2008, p. 513). For example, the new USAID Education Strategy of February 2011 separates a goal for access to education in crisis and conflict environments from the other two goals related to the content and relevance of learning (USAID, 2011).

Education for refugees is "something to do" in the present, a way to "absorb their energies." At the same time, it is a way to "lessen their frustrations and anxiety about the future" (IIEP, 2006, p. 2). Indeed, the world over, refugee children are clear that while access is a critical first step, it is the learning that happens in the classroom that matters to them. In particular, they connect learning well with the ability to hope for a better future (Winthrop & Kirk, 2008, p. 646), including the skills they are able to acquire that will allow them to enter into jobs and decision-making within the community (Davies & Talbot, 2008, p. 513).

A 50-year old returnee mother in Boungyel Thily, Mauritania describes the specific connections she sees between education and future livelihoods:

> *I have seen certain people who were studying and who were poor, but after their studies they have had opportunities for good jobs. And, in the end, they have become rich and forgotten all of the suffering that they endured early on, and they have been able to rid their families of poverty. I have also seen that if a person does not study, she can become a hooligan or even a crook or a thief. And a person who has studied is more open-minded than a person who has not studied. This is why I allow myself to bear my thirst and my hunger in order to see that my children get an education (Rezzonico, 2011).*

Many refugee children and parents share this abiding faith in the role that education can play in securing prosperous, happy, and healthy futures.

Yet what do school experiences of refugee children and parents indicate about the accuracy of this faith? There are no global data on the learning outcomes of refugees or of the pathways between primary and secondary school and secure adult livelihoods for refugees. As mentioned earlier, there is clear evidence that most children in low-income countries are learning little in school, and often even less in conflict-affected countries (Das, Pandey, & Zajonc, 2006; Gove & Cvelich, 2011; Save the Children, 2008, pp. 14-15; Young Lives, 2009). And there is no reason to believe that outcomes would be different among refugees, on average.

The perceptions of refugee children and parents support the claim of poor quality education for refugees. Numerous case studies indicate that many refugee children and parents become disillusioned by the quality of the education available to them and begin to question the true links between schooling and future livelihoods (see Box 4.5).

The actions of refugee children and parents also support this claim. For example, in some settings, refugee parents and young people are creating alternatives to the available UNHCR-supported education. In Kyangwali refugee settlement in Uganda, five Congolese refugee youth started a community school called COBURWAS (Congo Burundi Rwanda and Sudan). They began this school in the hopes of providing a higher quality of education that would allow refugee children to progress to and succeed in secondary school, with the aim, as one of the founders stated, "that children in Kyangwali would [no longer] need to suffer in their education as much as [we] did." Refugee parents described taking their children out of the government school in the settlement in order to enrol them in this community school. Parents noted their children learning more, especially in the English language, than at the government school. One parent also commented that "[t]he difference [at COBURWAS is that] the teachers care about our children. And in case there is a problem or a challenge, they invite us to come to discuss, we discuss how to improve" (Wettstein, 2011).

Box 4.5. Learning "very little" will not allow Annette to become a nurse

"When asked to draw her school, Annette looks at me blankly. I had observed her in classes in Kyaka [refugee settlement in Uganda] for two years, and she had told me about the secondary school she used to attend in DRC. I was curious as to what Annette considered her school and how she would describe it. She breaks the silence, but her blank look does not dissipate: 'I study under the trees,' she says in monotone. The emergency situation in the settlement resulted in a tripling of the school population without any new construction. That she was studying under the trees was to Annette a symbol of how unimportant her education was to others, to her teachers and to those in power. Indeed, weeks of observation in her classes convinced me that Annette was not exaggerating to say that she was learning 'very little' at school. At this time, Annette parroted what she heard from her parents in terms of a rationale for continuing her studies: '...studying is important because it will help me find a job and make money.' But she had lost her daily desire to attend school and to learn, and her dream of the fulfilling work she hoped to do as a nurse had disappeared" (Dryden-Peterson, 2011a).

In Dadaab refugee settlement in Kenya, 62% of school-aged children were enrolled in primary school in 2009 (Umbima, et al., 2010, p. 20). An additional 3% of the school-aged population was enrolled in 6 private schools that had opened in the camps over the previous two years (Umbima, et al., 2010; UNHCR & CARE, 2009). By 2010, the number of private schools in the camps had increased to 11 (Umbima, et al., 2010). According to refugee parents, this rapid expansion of private alternatives to the UNHCR-sponsored education in Dadaab is a direct response to the poor quality education previously available in the camps.

There are many examples of low-quality private schools in poor communities around the world; in this instance, however, the development of private education alternatives was a direct response to low-quality within the UNHCR-sponsored schools. Parents cite several reasons for their preference for private schools in this situation, including strong discipline, the integration of religious and secular studies, and quality in terms of smaller classes and trained teachers who are motivated due to on-time payment and opportunities for professional development. In terms of quality pedagogy, one student stated about the private school in Dadaab: "[t]eachers explain more here. In the other school, the teacher just wrote on the board and didn't ask questions." In terms of outcomes, another student explained that "[w]hen I was in that (CARE) school, I couldn't speak English. Now I can." Teachers and school management of the private schools also highlighted the difference in quality:

> Maintaining standards are *(sic)* not just about passing students on from one class to another, but rather about competency of the students. In simple terms, it's not about whether my child passes from one class to another, but rather what he or she actually *learns* along the way. One example of this can be illustrated by a Standard 7 student who came from an agency [CARE and UNHCR] school and transferred to one of the private schools. As with any school, new students from outside are given an assessment for placement. However, the teachers giving the assessment noted that the student was unable to even write his name. The child was subsequently enrolled in Standard 2 and is at the same level as his classmates (UNHCR & CARE, 2009, p. 11).

Further, as in Kyangwali, the importance of home-school connections was highlighted. Parents in Dadaab also noted greater communication with teachers at private schools than at UNHCR-sponsored schools. One parent described how she was only informed that two of her children were not attending school at the end of a term, when it was too late to act on the situation. At the private school, on the other hand, she found teachers collaborating more with parents both on absenteeism and on performance, and she was more satisfied that her children were well-looked after, in terms of protection and learning (UNHCR & CARE, 2009, pp. 10, 17). This collaboration is critical when class size, school hours, and teaching culture prevent individual students from practicing reading, instead chanting together and learning the reader by heart.

UNHCR and Implementing Partners (IPs), in collaboration with host and home country Ministries of Education (MoEs), have taken action on certification in many operations as one critical way of addressing accountability for learning outcomes and the recognition of achievements. The IRC in Pakistan, for example, worked closely with the IRC in Afghanistan, the Afghan Consulate in Peshawar, and the MoE in Kabul to ensure smooth registration and certification of learning for Afghan refugees upon their return to Afghanistan (Kirk, 2009, pp. 133-134). Similarly, RET in Chad worked closely with the Sudanese MoE to ensure recognition of primary and secondary schools in the camps, as described above under Challenge #2 (Mauoubila, et al., 2011).

Certification reflects summative or cumulative assessment, designed to determine whether students have met the learning outcomes for a complete course of study. In the Education Cluster *Joint Education Needs Assessment Toolkit,* the indicators to assess learning are similarly limited to summative/cumulative assessment, measuring the process of how learning is assessed, validated, and locally certified (Global Education Cluster, 2010, pp. 51-52). Absent are indicators that address formative assessment that would capture the on-going learning needs of refugee children.

The *INEE Guidance Notes on Teaching and Learning* do make the link between assessment and learning outcomes, stating that "[q]uality education relies on accurate and timely gathering, sharing, and use of information" (INEE, 2010a, p. 43). The guidance notes encourage support for teachers in three areas: ensure greater understanding of the value of assessment data and analysis; support flexibility

and local adaptation of tools; and ensure information collected informs and influences the teaching and learning process. In refugee settings, these notes should be carefully considered in order to build accountability regarding learning outcomes at the level of students, teachers, parents, communities, and education authorities. Further, the possibility that assessments are based on rote learning of the textbook should also be taken into account. For this reason, independent assessments of learning, such as that promoted by EGRA, are essential, in addition to ways of teaching and learning that foster sustainable literacy, numeracy, comprehension and life skills as well as satisfying national examination requirements.

Education that is not quality education is not meaningful or useful, to individuals or to society; it can be detrimental. If refugee children and young people leave school with few skills, their education will not translate into the future livelihoods they imagine for themselves or into social and economic dividends for their societies. An education strategy that is built on the connections between education and livelihoods – both social and economic – would necessarily prioritise learning outcomes and would provide a much-needed catalyst for addressing gaps of quality in refugee education.

Indeed, policy and programming in refugee education need to be conceptually linked to livelihoods. In order to be a durable solution, education needs to prepare refugee children for futures in which they can be economically productive, physically healthy, and civically and politically engaged. Refugee education that is of high quality and protective is essential to these outcomes. The quality of this education is tightly linked to its relevance, particularly how well it is aligned with the limited opportunities for employment in local labour markets and with its portability, which enables graduates to be flexible given probable high rates of mobility.

Recommendation:

The Education Strategy 2010-2012 states that "[t]he need for quality services is beyond UNHCR's existing capacity" (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 28). This simply cannot be accepted if UNHCR is to uphold its mandate to protect and assist refugees. There is an urgent need to devote resources to ensuring access to high quality and relevant education for refugees. Monitoring and evaluation will be central to this work. The data currently collected for education are not appropriate; it renders progress toward quality education both illusory and disappointing. In order to measure whether education is of high quality and is protective, outcomes need to be measured rather than inputs. It is not enough for refugee children to be in school with an acceptable teacher-pupil ratio. For education to be a durable solution, they must be learning meaningfully. In order to improve the quality of education, we need to know whether children are learning, *what* they are learning, and *why.* Summative learning assessments can provide a basis for understanding whether children are learning and point to areas in which learning is particularly difficult. UNHCR needs to require annually independent sample testing of student learning, beginning with reading abilities. Further, UNHCR needs to ensure that teachers are well-trained in formative assessments of children in order to develop on-going strategies to promote in-class learning.



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What refugee learn in exile shapes how they think and how they imagine the future for themselves and their societies

Challenge #5: The inherently political nature of the content and structures of refugee education can exacerbate societal conflict, alienate individual children, and lead to education that is neither of high quality nor protective.

Deeply-rooted assumptions that children transcend geo-political differences have shaped the ways in which refugee education is conceived. And yet as a system of knowledge production and a tool of socialisation, education must take account of the structural and cultural conflicts, the languages, worldviews, ethnicities, and accompanying power structures, which have caused the persecution and flight of refugees.

The links between education and conflict have been clearly documented theoretically and, increasingly, empirically as well. Education has been described as having "two faces," one that increases the risk of conflict and one that mitigates those risks (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000). Recently, this framework of "two faces" has been problematised toward notions of the multiple and intersecting ways in which education can prevent, assuage, and exacerbate conflict (Davies, 2011; IIEP, 2011; King, 2011).

While education in conflict settings, including refugee education, is understood as increasingly politicised, the education response by UNHCR is often not sensitive to critical political factors that impact the ways in which refugee children can participate in and experience education. UNHCR has typically focused on the "hardware" components of education, including school construction and equipping classrooms with materials (UNHCR, 2009k, p. 47), a focus which may be changing as indicated in the decreased proportion of funds allocated for infrastructure (see Figure 3.12). This approach is a "problem-solving" one, which "is to accept the broader status-quo as given and seek to focus in on a particular 'problem' – abstract it from its broader social relations – and attempt to make this situation run more smoothly" (Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008, p. 481; see also, Pingel, 2010, p. 121).

Yet in order for refugee education to be of high quality and to be a tool of protection, the inherently political nature of the content and structures of education worldwide must be recognised. In so doing, a critical approach is useful to locate 'the problems' of access, quality, and protection within a broader and more complicated context. In conceptualising 'parts' as connected to 'larger wholes', critical theory leads to problematising the roots of the problems. It "has less of a system maintenance bias, and allows for the possibility of imagining alternatives to the status-quo" (Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008, p. 481).

The political nature of the content and structures of refugee education and the need to transcend the status quo is particularly evident in five spheres: curriculum, language, social integration, relationships between schools and families, and repatriation policy.

First, the selection of what will be taught in schools – the curriculum – is often a difficult and contentious undertaking as it is a process of defining and selecting legitimate knowledge (Tawil, Harley, & Braslavsky, 2004, p. 19). However, the basic concern, for students and parents as well as agencies, is that a recognised national curriculum is the basis for what is taught, leading to nationally recognised qualifications. The 2003 *UNHCR Education Field Guidelines* advocate that the curriculum in refugee education programmes should be the curriculum of the country of origin, where the expected durable solution is voluntary repatriation, and where numbers, and/or the language of instruction mean that local schools cannot absorb the refugee students. This approach to curriculum was emphasised due to examples where host governments insisted that refugees study in a language that bore no relation to refugees' futures, either with good intentions or on the basis of national pride. More experiences at country-level indicate acceptance of both political and pragmatic reasons for which other decisions may be made. As stated in the *INEE Guidance Notes on Teaching and Learning,* "[t]eaching and learning in emergencies never takes place in a vacuum," and there are reasons to make context-specific curriculum choices, including following a curriculum from a country of origin, from a host country, and enriching the curriculum with specific priority areas such as lifeskills or peace education (INEE, 2010a, p. 1). Where urban refugees are integrated into national systems, for example, they by necessity follow curricula of host countries, whether or not the most probable durable solution is local integration or repatriation.

The content of what is included in curricula shapes what children know and how they think about themselves and imagine the future both for themselves and their society. It can be difficult for teachers to cope with curriculum topics that are controversial, and recent conflict-related topics are often omitted from curricula, such as in the case of history teaching in Rwanda (Freedman, Weinstein, Murphy, & Longman, 2008; King, 2011). In Mauritania, for example, the omission of study of the 1989 crisis from the curriculum contributes to strained relations between Moors and Black Mauritanians. Rather than a comprehensive understanding of the events leading up to the returnees' exile in Senegal, Black Mauritanian children's only source of information on the ethnic groups and their relations is their parents' discourse and a politicised version of the 1989 crisis learned in refugee schools in Senegal, which were supervised by politically engaged refugee teachers. A negative image based on racial stereotypes, such as that Moors are dirty and stinky, is thus transmitted to children and reproduced by them (Fresia, 2009; Rezzonico, 2011).

Stereotypes run in both directions. A high school student from Houdallaye, Mauritania, says, "[t]he Moor [teachers], if we ask them to translate, they don't do it, because they don't like black heads, they are just looking at their friends, their children, those who have Moorish heads, but black heads, they don't respect them" (Rezzonico, 2011). This perceived exclusion runs counter to an inclusive environment, alienates learners from the content of learning, and acts as a barrier to accessing education of

quality and that is protective. Since many teachers come from one side or the other of a civil conflict or ethnic divide, it is important to improve the duration and content of teacher training and to include tolerance/peace education topics, so that they can avoid stereotyping and bias in the classroom.

Second, the choice of language of instruction impacts the quality of education that refugee children are able to access. Research is clear that children are better able to acquire literacy initially in their first language and then to transfer those skills to the target language of instruction (Abadzi, 2006; August & Hakuta, 1998; Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004; Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass, 2005). The education available to refugees in exile is often neither in their first language nor in the language in which they have previously studied. Children face not understanding what the teacher or their peers are saying. In this situation, children are often demoted to lower classes not as a result of their cognitive development or content knowledge but instead as a result of their lack of proficiency in the language of instruction (Dryden-Peterson, 2006b).

In addition to impacts on quality, these actions have protection implications, impacting negatively on the social development of refugee children, and access and retention implications through lack of interest in enrolment and dropping out. Unfamiliar languages pose such a significant barrier that refugees at times initiate their own informal education in order to offer education in a familiar language. For example, a significant number of refugees in eastern Sudan chose not to attend the schools set up by UNHCR in which teaching was conducted in Arabic but instead elected to attend informal schools under the trees in which teaching was in Tigrinya. On the other hand, there may be quality and protection benefits to the use of new languages in exile. In Malaysia, for example, refugee parents see the utility of learning English in light of their resettlement possibilities, and they see the protection benefits of learning Bahasa Melayu as it promotes integration and might reduce the risk of arrest (Rahman, 2011).

Political in nature, the choice of language of instruction is often contentious, perceived to benefit some while marginalising others (see Box 4.6). Language decisions highlight for refugee children the power dynamics of their situation. Many Congolese refugees in Uganda wish to study in French, but they do not have that option. Refugee parents and children fear that because of lack of skills in French, they will face great difficulties once they repatriate to DRC, worried that they will be “just useless people” or that “children will not be employed because they don’t know the language spoken in DRC” (Wettstein, 2011). Some returnee children in Mauritania conceive of Arabic, which is used in the majority of their classes, as the language of the oppressor, drawing on the rhetoric of their parents. They perceive the language as oppressive because they are unable to understand and succeed in classes, which translates to feelings of marginalisation in their society. Some children chose to rebel against the imposition of the Arabic language; one girl in sixth grade described children in her class who refuse to write in their notebooks when they have classes in Arabic, saying that she cannot do it and thus it is not worth wasting pages (Rezzonico, 2011).

Third, in some situations, the physical integration of children – refugees and nationals, returnees and stayees, and those of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds – takes place without sufficient attention to the social aspects of living together. Policy and programme responses to integration of refugees and national hosts have been limited to the integration of services, including through the zonal development approach of the 1960s, refugee aid and development strategies of the late 1970s and early 1980s and the recent ‘The Targeting of Development Assistance’ (TDA)(Dryden-Peterson & Hovil, 2004; Rowley, Burnham, & Drabe, 2006). Where different groups are living in the same environment, the integration of services in education can create important possibilities for social integration, but only if the content of education is conducive and explicitly addresses issues related to causes of conflict, good citizenship, social cohesion, human rights, etc.

Box 4.6. Language of instruction is political and contentious (Rezzonico, 2011)

Among the returnee population in Mauritania, and particularly among parents, there are three types of discourse about language within the national education system.

First, some returnees believe that French-Arabic bilingualism is well-adapted to the Mauritanian context, even if they are conscious of their children's troubles with Arabic. A village chief points out:

> *These two languages are the languages that have always been taught in this country and if you master only one or the other, you will have problems... If you don't learn Arabic, you will not be able to advance because it is used all over the country, it is a big, widespread language.*

Second, some returnees are resigned to the language of instruction in Mauritania. A returnee father in Houdallaye said:

> *We are governed and the powerful are stronger than the poor, so we have no alternative than to accept the system.*

Third, some returnees believe that rulers have deliberately designed the current language policies in education to disadvantage "negro-Africans" and that "white Moors" want to keep Black Mauritanians ignorant in order to continue dominating them. This view is not exclusive to returnees, but is shared by other Haalpulaaren people including teachers, and should be understood as a continuation of ongoing protests since 1966 that have denounced Arabisation of the country. An old refugee woman in Ndioum, Senegal argued:

> *Education in Senegal and Mauritania. I know something about that. In Mauritania, education is very good, but what makes it different from Senegal is the segregation. Here [in Senegal], is it only maybe the child who does not want to learn, but he is nonetheless on the same equal footing as the others... In Mauritania, because there are two ethnic groups – Moorish and Haalpulaar – and it is the Moors who are in power and they have more power than the others... In the schools, it is the same, just as it is in the hospitals and the clinics.*

Some parents focus their attention on the dysfunction of the language policies in general, with concerns that it disadvantages all children; others argue that the current system disadvantages only Black Mauritanians, and particularly returnees.

Davies argues that most schools in most countries do not uphold the UNESCO four pillars of education for the world in the 21st Century – 'learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together' (Davies, 2005; UNESCO, 1996a). Especially in settings of conflict, including refugee settings, she asserts that many schools instead foster the following:

- *Learning to be different:* through selective and stratified education – reflecting 'ability', social class and language – which produces and reproduces the diverse pathways into further education and jobs;
- *Learning to mistrust:* through ethnically and religiously segregated schools, and through various constructions of 'we' and 'others';
- *Learning to accept aggression:* through militaristic or 'defence' education, through the experience of mental or physical violence from teachers and peers, from punishment regimes which uphold an ethos of revenge rather than reparation, and from a masculine ethos which celebrates toughness;
- *Learning to fear:* through competitive, individualistic and examination-oriented education which feeds a culture of anxiety (Davies, 2005, p. 43).

Peace education programmes were developed and used by UNHCR, particularly in refugee camps in Kenya, in the 1990s and into the early 2000s. These programmes provided sustained focus on the social aspects of living together, yet they were mostly discontinued after 2005 due to administrative difficulties and budget constraints, despite being positively evaluated (Obura, 2002). An extensive review of education and peace/conflict including impact assessments concludes that the question remains open as to whether "the established impact of [peace education] on the micro level is also able to have a sustainable impact on the macro-structural roots of ethnopolitical conflict and violence" (Seitz, 2004, p. 75). Education is of course only one factor that can drive conflict or contribute to peace, with many other factors also having to be in a positive configuration to achieve the desired results. One limitation to peace education is the isolated ways in which it may be taught: in an extra period that is squeezed into the timetable or as an extracurricular activity. While this approach can be effective in initial attempts to bring peace education into schools (Sinclair, 2004), in these forms, 'good practice' in peace education cannot fully address the 'bad practice' of the whole of education experience (Davies, 2005, p. 43) or mitigate negative messages received from the wider society. Nevertheless, initiatives such as the INEE-Peace Education Programme (PEP) introduce the skills and concepts needed to consider peaceful alternatives (UNHCR, UNESCO, & INEE, 2005) and, if embedded in broader structural interventions related to ensuring educational access and quality, may undermine sources of conflict. Protective education identifies features of both micro- and macro-systems that together can form "a protective shield around children, not eliminating risks and vulnerabilities but protecting children from their full impact" (Boothby, 2008, p. 502).

The case of Mauritania demonstrates the need to focus on systemic issues of living together in order to achieve educational goals of access, quality, and protection (see Box 4.7). Some of the difficulties of living together may be traced to lack of a common language. While there is only a small amount of data from the field-based component of this review (Rezzonico, 2011), the Haalpulaaren children who could speak Hassaniya and thus communicate with Moors described having Moor friends; the others who did not share a common language did not have Moor friends. Beyond language, teachers noticed that among returnees and long-time residents, there is not only a general lack of cohesion but outright animosity and a lack of will to develop relationships. One long-time resident girl in 5th grade in Tantane described how the climate at her school fostered these negative relationships:

> *One time I had an argument with a [returnee] girl over our places on the bench.*
> And what happened afterwards?
> *The teacher hit me but she did not hit the other girl.*
> And why did she do that?
> *She said that the ones from Boungyel Thily [returnees] are foreigners and we mustn't fight with them.*

One long-time resident boy in 6th grade described similar situations in which he and returnee children could not understand each other. His solution: "We just told them to come and play football!" (Rezzonico, 2011). These spontaneous interactions are critical and yet not sufficient. Schools must find ways to bridge these divides for refugee children more formally and systematically, specifically through concentrated efforts in assisting children to build relationships with each other (Sinclair, Davies, Obura, & Tibbitts, 2008).

Fourth, unequal power relationships between schools and refugee families foster miscommunication, misunderstandings, and lack of collaboration among these critical stakeholders in refugee education. Community participation in the management of schools is a cornerstone of strategies to improve access, quality, and protection in refugee education (INEE, 2010b; UNHCR, 2009c). Yet just as in the larger humanitarian field, the rhetoric of participation and the practice of genuine participation often diverge.

In Kyangwali refugee settlement in Uganda, policies indicate that UNHCR, implementing partner Action Africa Help-International (AAH-I), national and refugee teaching staff, and refugee families collaborate through Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs) (Wettstein, 2011). Participation by refugee stakeholders, however, is limited. UNHCR and AAH-I attribute the lack of participation of refugee parents who hold positions on the PTA and the SMC to under-developed knowledge and skills about how to participate. Refugee parents have a different interpretation. A refugee chairman on one SMC explained his ideas for how funds should be spent, one

Box 4.7. Words can hurt you, and society (Rezzonico, 2011)

Building positive relationships between the different members of the population in Mauritania is critical to the durable integration of returnees. Reflecting this idea, one of the principles of action shared by all partners in the operation is that the population living in the surrounding areas of returnee villages is included in assistance activities.

The terminology used by humanitarian organisations and authorities to refer to different groups of people, however, runs counter to this integration. The governmental organisation created to address the issue of returnees is called ANAIR in which the "R" in the acronym stands for Réfugiés, rather than the correct Rapatriés (Agence Nationale pour l'Appui et l'Insertion des Réfugiés). Returnee villages are called sites de rapatriement (repatriation sites) and the surrounding communities are known as villages d'accueil (host villages). This terminology is very similar to that used in refugee situations. Villages established for returnees are referred to as "sites," which gives the impression of a place more artificial and less human than "villages," and promotes a conception of "temporary" that is not coherent with the aim of durable integration. Moreover, people living in the area to which returnees are arriving are considered "hosts," underlying a representation of returnees as "guests." Reflecting these understanding, some local authorities continue to refer to returnees using the term "refugees."

of his responsibilities in this position. However, although he signs official documents to approve expenditures, he is not involved in the allocation or management of funds. When asked if he discussed with the Headmaster about the ways in which Universal Primary Education (UPE) funds were spent, he said: "He is a national, I am a refugee [he laughs], and that is why I keep quiet."

Refugee parents in Kyangwali participate in schools in much the same way as this refugee parent participates in the SMC. The locus of power is with national school staff, UNHCR, and AAH-I. Those in power share information with parents and invite them to be present at events, but there is little opportunity for the building of meaningful relationships, trust, and a sharing of decision-making (see Box 4.8). In order for the benefits of parent engagement in schools to be realised in terms of access, quality, and protection, a transformation of these relationships must occur.

Finally, education can serve political goals of influencing human mobility in the context of asylum and refugee assistance, especially repatriation. In many operations, host countries, donors, and UNHCR agree to withdraw from the provision of education once a peace agreement is signed. The rationale is that education in exile will act as a pull factor, dissuading refugees from returning to their countries of origin. For example, schools have been prematurely closed for Sierra Leoneans in Guinea; Mauritanians in Senegal; and Burundians in Tanzania. The consequences are wider that loss of years of schooling for children who do not repatriate immediately; among Burundians in Tanzania, SGBV in the camps increased markedly once the schools had been closed. Education programmes need to be maintained during repatriation, at least until education can be offered in areas of return.

Recommendation:

Understanding of the conflicts out of which refugees come and the political situations in settings of exile must impact the design of appropriate educational interventions in order for education to protect children rather than fuel poor quality learning and on-going intolerance, prejudice, injustice, and conflict. In order to be adequately addressed, these analyses cannot be left to Implementing Partners (IPs) but must be guided by UNHCR education specialists in the field and at Headquarters. Some of the principles that can be put into action include: requiring needs assessments that include situational analyses applying lenses of conflict and power to assess the content and structures of education, including curriculum, language, and relationships between actors; supporting peace education in all operations; and maintaining education programmes during repatriation, at least until education can be offered in areas of return.

Box 4.8. The role of power in community participation (Wettstein, 2011)

UNHCR implementing partner AAH-I organised a "school opening day" in each school in Kyangwali refugee settlement in western Uganda. Parents were invited to visit their children's school to see what they are learning. They visited each classroom where teachers were demonstrating how pupils learn to count or read. After the visits, the headmaster, the AAH-I education adviser, the PTA and SMC chairmen, and the Assistant Settlement officer of the Office of the Prime Minister, one after the other, made speeches to parents to remind them of the importance of education.

In many of these speeches, parents were identified as the root causes of children's late coming or their non-enrolment at school. Parents were asked to better support the education of their children by providing scholastic material and by not giving them work in the morning, so that they might arrive at school on time.

After the speeches, would there be a moment for parents to ask questions or make any comments? "No, it is not in the programme and, anyway, there is the PTA who has spoken on behalf of the parents," said the AAH-I education advisor. The chairman of the PTA had not met with parents ahead of time to solicit ideas.

Because we are refugees, a refugee father commented, "there is nowhere to pass our thoughts, our views, our words. There is nobody to understand us." A refugee teacher explained that parents did not get the opportunity to speak because the school administration did not want them "to throw bad words, because if a parent would have talked, he would have only complained, speak about the negative aspects and it cannot please." One refugee father yearned for more genuine participation; he said, "at least if they may give us the possibility to ask five question or so, so that we are also participating. But they didn't give us a chance. If they don't allow you to speak, then you keep quiet. There is nothing to do since we are considered as inferior people."

Challenge #6: Lack of financial resources, and their inconsistency, as well as a shortage of educational expertise both within UNHCR and among Implementing Partners (IPs), limits progress in refugee education.

[E]ducation is like a lamp – if you don't provide sufficient paraffin, the lamp won't function (UNHCR & CARE, 2009, p. 10).

For refugee education, paraffin is in short supply. This paucity of resources, both human and financial, is outlined in Section 3. What are the effects of these constraints on educational outcomes related to access, quality, and protection? Results-based management aims to provide answers to important operational questions such as this one. However, appropriate data for education are largely unavailable. Further, the lack of meaningful outcome measures for quality and protection, as outlined previously, render this type of analysis moot.

Is access to education for refugees related to adequate financial resources allocated to education in a given operation? Piecing together various sources of data on primary school enrolment ratios and available resources renders a rough picture of the connection between financial resources and refugees' access to education. There is a medium-strength, positive correlation between Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and percent of education needs funded; however, this correlation is not statistically significant (r=0.35, p=0.07). This exploratory analysis indicates that when funding needs are met there is a greater likelihood that GER will be higher (see Figure 4.3).

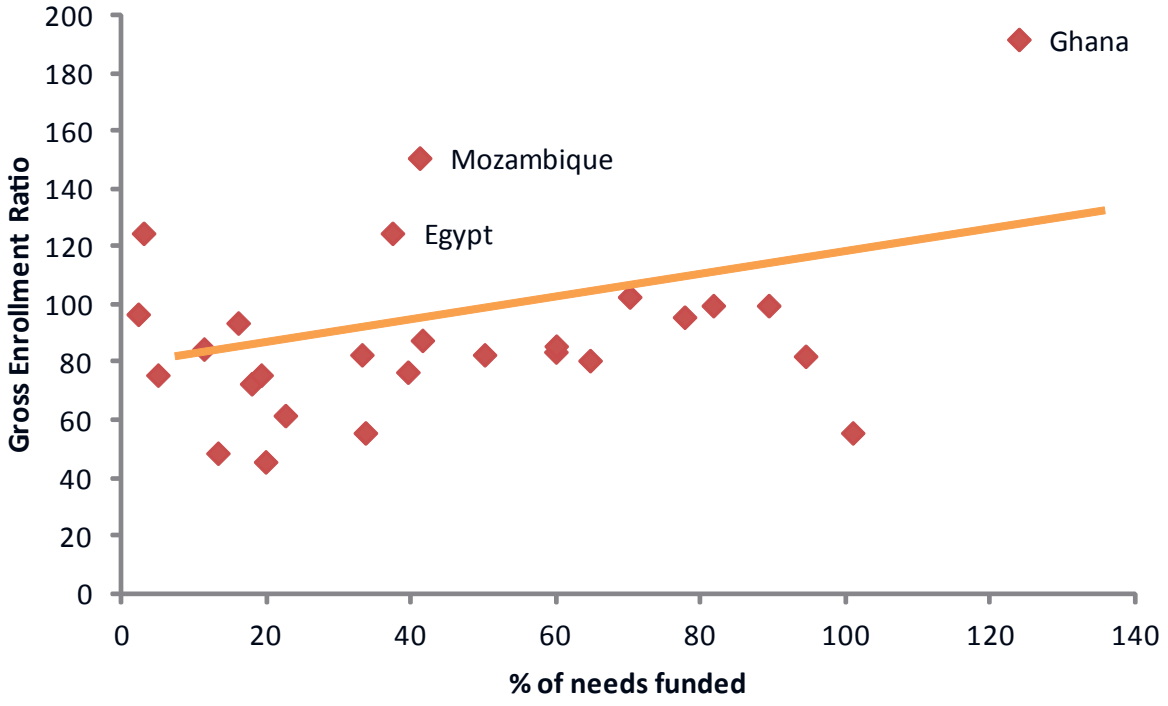


Figure 4.3. Gross Enrolment Ratio (2009) as related to the percentage of education needs funded (2009, 2010). Source: (UNHCR, 2008c, 2009j).

This analysis, however, is limited for a number of reasons. First, the allocation of budgets to education and to various operations not only reflects real needs but depends on multiple factors including the size of the operation, the process by which needs are identified, successful advocacy, and donor earmarking. Using CNA data in combination with actual budget allocations allows for the computation of the degree to which the educational needs in a given operation are met by the allocated budget. CNA data are available only from 2010, so budgets before 2010 provide little by way of data toward


WFP
Asdi
UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency
SECOURS ISLAMIQUE FRANCE
رمضان كريم
ISLAMIC RELIEF
Red Crescent
WAFA RELIEF

understanding whether outcomes of enrolment are related to financial needs being met. Second, since CNA data are available only from 2010 and enrolment data are available only until 2009, there is no way of examining whether needs being met in one year is connected to improved enrolment in that year or the next. Third, given these constraints, a central assumption is necessary in order to attempt initial analyses of the connection between school enrolment and adequate financial resources: that the CNA, had it been done, would have been the same in 2009 as it was in 2010. This is a clear limitation of available data; once 2010 enrolment data become available, this analysis could be repeated for more reliable results. Finally, the correlation between GER and percent of needs funded is likely driven by inflated GERs in operations such as Egypt (125%), Mozambique (151%) and, most importantly, Ghana (192%), as indicated on Figure 4.3. This limitation only emphasises the need for more reliable data (see Box 3.3).

Another financial constraint on refugee education, raised repeatedly by UNHCR staff, is the lack of consistency and predictability of funds. Among 31 operations for which there are data in 2009 and 2010, 48% were funded in 2010 below the rate at which they were funded in 2009; and 52% were funded at a larger amount (see Figure 4.4). What is remarkable is the discrepancy in changes in funding from one operation to the next. For example, Botswana received in 2010 just 1% of the funding received in 2009; whereas Tanzania received in 2010 720% of the funding received in 2009. Despite this massive decrease in funding, the population of children ages 6-17 in Botswana decreased by only one quarter. In Tanzania, where funds increased so massively, the population of children ages 6-17 decreased by over half. Constantly changing and unpredictable funding levels make planning for provision of quality education near to impossible. Particularly problematic is the practice of reducing budgets throughout the year, not only in education but often across all programmes. To some extent these fluctuations from year to year and during a given year reflect the lack of an education professional at country level, with the technical expertise and the institutional standing to advocate for needed funds and their consistency.

To address the lack of financial resources, UNHCR has piloted a strategy of identifying priority countries in order to target available resources toward meaningful impact. These resources have included technical missions, secondment of staff, trainings, fundraising, advocacy, and monitoring. Priority countries between 2008 and 2010 included: Algeria, Bangladesh, Eastern Chad, Eastern Sudan, Jordan, Kenya (camp and urban), Malaysia, Mauritania (urban, 2008 only, and returnee), Sudan (urban, 2008 only), Syria, Turkey, Uganda (not 2008), and Yemen (camp and urban). These countries were selected on the basis of four criteria: performance on the UNHCR standards and indicators; size and phase of the operations; office capacity and resources; accessibility and humanitarian space (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 37). Despite these criteria, UNHCR staff members describe what appears to be an arbitrary nature to country selection: for example, why is Pakistan, with 1.7 million refugees, not on the list? In Kenya, why is only Dadaab a priority and not Kakuma?

This targeting of limited resources to key countries has been common practice by UN agencies and bilateral donors. What effects does this priority status have on educational outcomes? Percentage change in primary GER from 2007 to 2009 for priority countries can provide some sense of these effects. For several countries, there is marked change in GER from 2007 to 2009 (see Figures 4.5 and 4.6). In camp settings, GER increased 36% in Eastern Sudan and 27% in Algeria; there was less progress in Dadaab camp in Kenya at 6% increase and in Bangladesh at 2% increase. In Yemen, Uganda, and Eastern Chad, on the other hand, GERs fell, 9%, 14%, and 22% respectively. In urban settings, positive change in GERs was even larger in Malaysia (67%), Yemen (50%), and Turkey (36%). In cities in Syria and Kenya, on the other hand, there was a decrease in GERs, 3% and 19% respectively.

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For refugee operations to provide quality education, funding needs to be sufficient and predictable

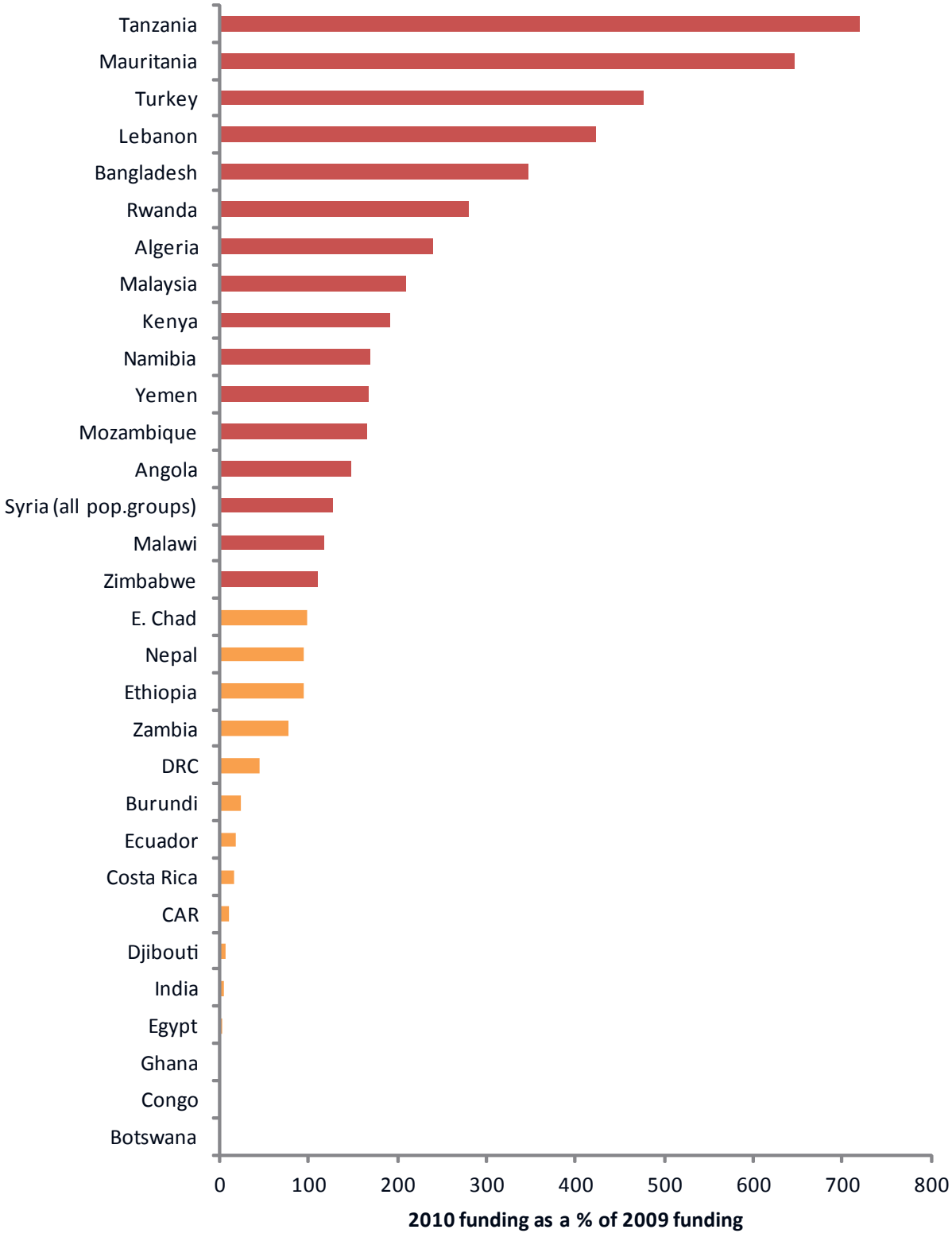


Figure 4.4. Funding in 2010 expressed as a percentage of 2009 funding for 31 operations. Sources: (UNHCR, 2008c, 2009j).

This analysis is exploratory, based on the limited amount of data available; in particular, it does not consider the multiple explanations for any change, nor impact over time. While the changes in GER could be related to the priority status of the country, they could also be related to changes in refugee governance (Syria, for example), population changes (Dadaab, for example), or any other number of factors, including the commitment of field offices to education and staff turnover. Comprehensive evaluation of the effects of the strategy of concentrating resources on priority countries in order to

positively impact enrolment ratios with limited financial resources goes beyond the data currently available. It would require further analysis on financial commitments in each country, focus group discussions with children and parents to understand access barriers, and situational analyses of population characteristics and refugee governance.

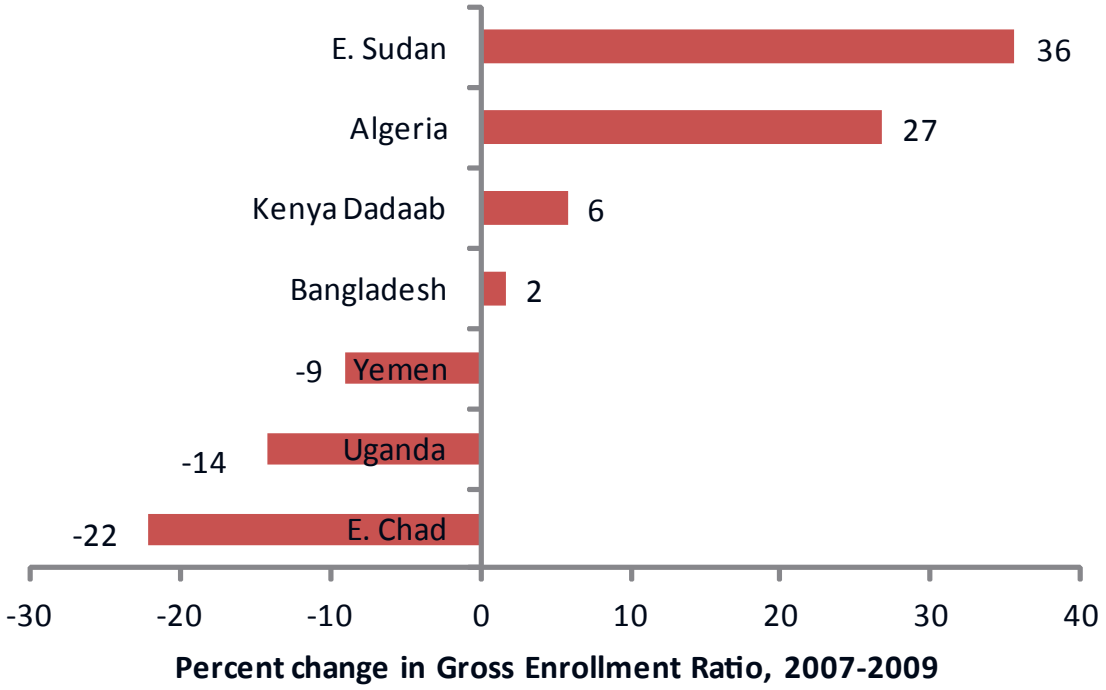


Figure 4.5. Percent change in Gross Enrolment Ratios, 2007-2009, in camp settings in priority countries. Source: (UNHCR, 2008c, 2009j).

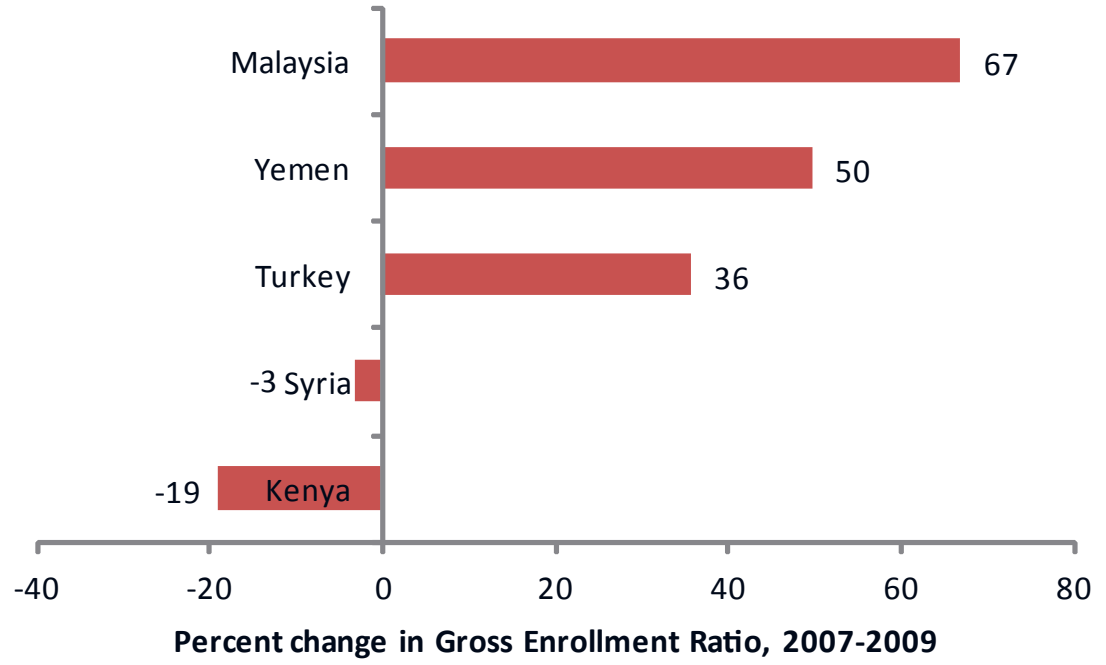


Figure 4.6. Percent change in Gross Enrolment Ratios, 2007-2009, in urban settings in priority countries. Source: (UNHCR, 2008c, 2009j).

As described in Section 3, human resources allocated to education are minimal. In 2004, 0.1% of UNHCR's total budget was allocated to education staff (Kelley, Sandison, & Lawry-White, 2004, p. 27). At the field level, there is only one education officer post, an Associate Education Officer position created in 2011 in Chad (see Figure 3.10). The general assumption from Headquarters that dominates the discourse on how UNHCR can "do" education without education staff, as stated by one staff member, is that education is "like football: everybody is an expert."

Most field-based staff vehemently disagree. On the survey for this review, field-based staff described education "focal points" as having some education background or having been teachers previously. For the most part, UNHCR staff members who work in 51 operations and who self-identify as being in charge of education within their offices described the expertise and training on education among staff in their country offices as follows: "low," "none that I am aware of," "limited, education has not remained a priority area," "no training," "no specific expertise in education available." A few survey respondents described having some knowledge of refugee education from "access to the *INEE Minimum Standards,*" even if they had had no particular training on them. Some also described comfort in working on education due to their "on the job training" over many years. The rotation of field staff and the fact that education focal points are sometimes Community Services Officers, sometimes Protection Officers, sometimes Programme Assistants makes the targeting of education training difficult. Education is one of the Global Strategic Priorities, however, "it is sheer luck if [a field office has] anyone who has previously worked on education."

To compensate for this shortage, refugee education has been outsourced, a practice not uncommon in humanitarian and development work generally. Most commonly, expertise in education is located within IPs, and UNHCR field staff commonly report that they "depended greatly on IPs' expert staff." Staff in 14 out of 51 responding operations identified IPs as "in charge" of refugee education. Even in operations where UNHCR staff members perceived the responsibility for refugee education to be within UNHCR, design of programmes, decision-making, and daily implementation about education resides with the IP. Only five survey respondents described any kind of education training provided by UNHCR to IPs, while many of the other 74 respondents specifically stated that no training was provided. The relationships between UNHCR and education IPs are typically described as ones in which UNHCR provides "support and advice" and "consultation," and IPs report back through mechanisms defined by UNHCR. Substantial field-level data collection would be necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of IPs as *de facto* UNHCR Education Officers.

In some cases, Community Services Officers or other UNHCR staff members in charge of education do have experience and expertise in the sector. Yet even when this is the case, education is often neglected given that the Community Services portfolio usually includes health services, community development, case management, and outreach activities, in addition to education (UNHCR, 2009k, p. 46). In some cases, there are IPs in the education sector with deep technical expertise. Yet even when this is the case, there remains a gap in overall programme management and monitoring, jeopardising appropriate levels of accountability for quality refugee education. In some countries, there are several IPs, and UNHCR lacks the technical capacity for coordination.

Without a clearly defined locus of oversight for refugee education at the field level, there are also few channels for technical support from Headquarters. Some survey respondents indicated productive partnerships between the Education Unit at Headquarters and field offices, usually as follow-up from field missions and in particular around specific projects such as discreet negotiations to introduce education for Rohingyas in Bangladesh and funding school supplies for refugees in urban Malaysia. Most survey responses, however, illuminate the missing link between useful working relationships between Headquarters and the field: given their position within the office, education focal points usually communicate with Headquarters only through their supervisors.

The need for well-trained staff to fill education posts at the field level is clear, especially to monitor the quality of education activities and to manage, from a technical perspective, partnerships with other UN agencies, NGOs, the donor community and increasingly important relationships with national MoEs.

Recommendation:

The widespread assumption that the lack of positive outcomes in refugee education is caused by lack of adequate financial resources has a strong basis. However, lack of funding is compounded by limited to non-existent expertise in education at the field level. Given the immense challenges to access to a high quality and protective education for refugees, the augmentation of educational expertise at field level is essential to the productive use of existing and additional resources. This should be done in several ways: the creation of Regional Education Advisors who can support several education programmes at country level, develop strategies, and strengthen local capacity; the creation of field-level Education Officer positions in country offices, where possible; institutionalisation of hiring and rotation policies that place staff with education expertise in appropriate Community Services and Protection posts, specifically in regional offices and in operations with large education programmes; and the careful assessment of the capacities of IPs, with assistance from regional offices and/or Headquarters, to ensure that they are technically strong in education.



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Education expertise at the field level is central to the provision of high quality and protection education for refugees

Challenge #7: There are challenges to coordination in refugee education, including complex power dynamics, which limit the productivity of partnerships.

Despite the rhetorical commitment to aligning education with the core protection mandate of UNHCR and despite the external advocacy by UNHCR Senior Education Officers within the broader field of education in emergencies, there is little evidence of tangible organisational commitment by UNHCR to guaranteeing the right to quality education for refugee children.

Yet, what was true a decade ago remains true today: "UNHCR's responsibilities for education cannot be abdicated" (Sinclair, 2001, p. 69). The evidence is abundant, however, that UNHCR alone cannot meet the needs for quality and protective refugee education. Coordination is a critical opportunity for UNHCR in order to meet the challenges to refugee education. What forms of coordination are most effective in meeting these needs?

The decentralisation of decision-making to UNHCR country offices generally has been critical in the ability of individual operations to make decisions that effectively respond to the unique context of the operation. This decentralisation has been particularly problematic, however, for education, given the lack of expertise at the country level. In addition to field-level partnerships with IPs, under contract to UNHCR, there are several coordination relationships that define UNHCR's education work at the field level.



First are relationships with national Ministries of Education (MoEs). In most cases, UNHCR has no ongoing contact with the MoE. UNHCR-government contacts are with Commissioners of Refugees, Offices of the Prime Minister, Ministries of the Interior, or Ministries of Disaster Preparedness, for example. In a few situations, usually in a repatriation context, MoEs are perceived to be "in charge" of refugee education and even serve as IPs. In between are the two most common forms of interaction between UNHCR and MoEs: issue-based advocacy and general advocacy. Issue-based advocacy is often quite specific and time-bound. In Rwanda, for example, UNHCR successfully negotiated with the Rwandese MoE to adapt for refugees their policy of assigning primary school graduates to secondary schools anywhere in the country. Given the challenge posed for UNHCR and IPs to follow the progress of refugee children in schools spread across the country and far from the camps, and the protection risks of this situation especially for refugee girls, the MoE agreed to assign refugee children to schools in the areas surrounding the camps.

UNHCR also advocates with MoEs on broader issues of access to education, curriculum choice, certification, and of including the educational needs of refugees in national sector planning. In Malaysia, for example, UNHCR attempted to build the awareness of MoE staff on the educational needs of refugees through facilitating visits to informal refugee schools, laying the groundwork for higher-level advocacy for refugee access to national schools. The MoE has collaborated with UNHCR in selecting Malaysian textbooks for refugee schools, made opportunities available for some limited training, and participated in UNHCR education planning meetings for 2012-2013. Refugee children nevertheless continue to be barred from accessing national schools.

As there is greater need to integrate refugees into national systems, both in the case of urban refugees and protracted refugee situations, this kind of coordination with MoEs is essential. Even in situations where IPs are the principal actors in refugee education, they are requesting that UNHCR take up the coordination role with MoEs (UNHCR, 2009c, p.13). Key informants both internal and external to UNHCR indicate that national authorities are indeed more responsive to advocacy efforts led by UNHCR than to those initiated by NGOs.

Second is coordination with UNICEF, as the UN Children's *Emergency* Fund, has a long history of work in emergency situations. From its inception as a humanitarian agency, it has transformed into a development agency and, more recently, into a human rights advocate with a focus not narrowly on "children in emergencies" but on "children in need" (P. W. Jones, 2006, p. 600). Education is but one of the many components of UNICEF's work. Vis-à-vis this sector, the mandate of UNICEF is that every child gets an education, including in situations of disaster preparedness, emergency response, and early recovery. The lever for coordination between UNHCR and UNICEF is present, in this shared interest in children in need in crisis situations. The UNICEF 2010 *Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action* expresses UNICEF's commitment to ensuring that "girls and boys access safe and secure education" in crisis settings; however, refugees are not explicitly mentioned, not once in the more than 50 page document (UNICEF, 2010a, pp. 36-39).

The issue of mandate here is central. The language of the 1996 MoU between UNHCR and UNICEF reaffirms that UNHCR has the mandate for refugee education. Yet it also opens space for "jointly determin[ing]" how UNICEF might support UNHCR efforts in the provision of education for refugees (UNHCR & UNICEF, 1996, p. 7). UNICEF has more than 300 education officers in the field and, in each country in which they work, has established relationships with the national MoE. Given the immense unmet needs in refugee education, coordination with UNICEF has become paramount.

In 2010 UNICEF and UNHCR published a note and consolidated work plan, as an addendum to the global MoU of 1996. It aimed at strengthening cooperation between the two agencies at the global level and bolstering support for existing field-based MoUs. It recognises the need for "predictability of partnership and bilateral cooperation for the protection and assistance of children of mutual concern, i.e., refugees, returnees, IDPs, and other affected local host populations" (UNICEF & UNHCR, 2010, p. 2). The three Result Areas for joint activity include joint assessments and information sharing; the provision of pre-primary and primary kits and basic learning materials; and collaboration in advocacy initiatives to address refugee issues within national education systems. These global MoUs are of use only as a catalyst for operational work at the field level. Any field-level outcomes of this addendum to the MoU remain to be seen. A joint needs assessment was conducted in Dadaab, Kenya in 2010, as per Result Area 1; unfortunately, UNHCR developed a follow-up action plan largely in isolation, without direct involvement of the MoE or UNICEF, contradicting the goals of the MoU and the vision of the joint needs assessment. This can largely be attributed to the absence of any dedicated, experienced education personnel in Dadaab, dependency on a non-continuous rotation of short term deployments, and the ensuing lack of continuity and consistency in programme orientation.

Existing relationships between UNHCR and UNICEF are governed by the 1996 global MoU and the 2010 addendum and also by regional and country MoUs as well as local practice. They are vastly different depending on the context. With returnee populations in Mauritania, for example, there are frequent miscommunications between UNHCR and UNICEF, with one cause being the lack of overlap in their day-to-day work, with UNICEF engaged in capacity-building at a central level and UNHCR operating at the field level (Rezzonico, 2011). On the survey for this review, UNHCR staff members in Brazil described close relationships between UNHCR and UNICEF in the capital but note UNICEF's absence from the field. On the other hand, UNICEF has collaborated with UNHCR in Botswana in providing school materials and in Dadaab, Kenya in organising teacher training. In Peninsular Malaysia, UNICEF activities are targeted exclusively toward the local population, although UNICEF does assist in the education of refugees in Sabah and Sarawak (Malaysian Borneo). UNICEF has assisted UNHCR more broadly in Malaysia in an advocacy role, raising the issue of refugee access to school with national authorities (Rahman, 2011).

There is wide consensus both within UNICEF and within UNHCR that inter-agency partnerships are personality-driven and depend largely on the individuals involved. Absent are strong institutional rela-

tionships and structures through which productive and long-term cooperation could take place. At a global level, the INEE has been this space for UNHCR and UNICEF to communicate.

Third is the Global Education Cluster, which holds promise as a site for field-level cooperation between UNHCR and both national MoEs and UNICEF. The Education Cluster is co-chaired by UNICEF and Save the Children. Formally, there are no education clusters in refugee settings, as UNHCR has the clear and sole mandate for refugee education. In practice, given the fluidity of IDP and refugee situations and the unmet needs in refugee education, education clusters do operate in some refugee settings. UNHCR has participated in the Education Cluster at the global level since its inception in 2006.

At the field level, UNHCR's participation in education clusters is uneven, undefined and, at times, contentious. A UNICEF staff member described a situation in Uganda in 2008, in which the Education Cluster mobilised educational materials and tents to create learning spaces in response to a massive influx of refugees from DRC. UNHCR was not involved in this action and criticised the Cluster for acting beyond its mandate. There was a genuine confusion of roles and responsibilities. In Eastern Chad, a MoU between UNHCR and UNICEF established UNICEF as the lead agency for refugee education, although this MoU is currently being revised. UNICEF organises coordination meetings once a month in which UNHCR participates. UNICEF also organises Cluster meetings in which national educational authorities play a central role but in which UNHCR does not participate. Without a presence, UNHCR is not part of essential policy dialogue related to sector plans; one consequence is that UNHCR cannot advocate for the inclusion of refugee children in these national plans. There is an urgent need to clarify and formalise UNHCR's role within field-level education clusters. Supposedly the lead agency in refugee education but without a co-chair role in the cluster, UNHCR staff members in some cases have eschewed participation. Without a *bona fide* seat at this table, UNHCR is unable to play its critical and mandated role in refugee education.

Recommendation:

Field presence in refugee situations remains, as it was historically, the principal value-added that UNHCR brings to refugee education. Given UNHCR's limited capacity and expertise in education, especially at the field level, formal and operational partnerships between UNHCR and national MoEs and UNICEF are essential in all refugee situations; partnerships with the Education Cluster are particularly relevant to emergency situations. The relationships must be strengthened not only by the rhetoric of MoUs but by mutual engagement at the field level and by joint implementation of jointly developed action plans.



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"The only inheritance you can give a child is education" (A refugee from Kenya)

Education as Durable Solution: Conclusions and Recommendations

The current state of the field of refugee education is "education for ultimate disappointment."

This review makes seven recommendations in response to seven urgent challenges to refugee education (see Table 1). These concrete ways forward are necessary to address the immediate and dire state of access to high quality and protective education for most refugees globally.

Table 1.: Urgent Challenges in and Recommendations for Refugee Education

	Challenge	Recommendation
1.	Urban refugee education requires an approach different from strategies used in camp-based settings.	In its new work in urban settings, UNHCR should prioritise working with national governments for the integration of refugees into national school systems, building in the new operational guidelines (UNHCR, 2011d). Critical is to conceptualise education work as the strengthening of education systems and not only the achievements of individual refugee children. In this endeavour, both national Ministries of Education and UNICEF are central partners. It will require UNHCR staff with knowledge and experience of national education systems, and time and resources should be dedicated to cultivating institutional and interpersonal relationships to facilitate this work and to ensure that national Ministries of Education take seriously the particular educational needs of refugee children and young people.
2.	Limited access to post-primary education for refugees in both camp and urban settings has immense economic and social consequences, for both individuals and societies.	Given the individual and societal benefits that accrue to secondary education, and within the framework of Education for All (EFA), UNHCR needs to support education up to the end of secondary school. UNHCR's new budgetary emphasis on post-primary education, particularly secondary education, is to be commended. In order to overcome the challenges to secondary school access, especially for girls, UNHCR needs to actively pursue strategies that augment the supply of formal and accredited secondary school programmes, enhance the quality of available secondary schooling, and combat school drop-outs at the primary level. Simultaneous strategies of non-formal programmes for overage learners and technical and vocational training (linked to real market needs in the countries of asylum and of eventual return) and to post-graduation seed grants, will help to meet the needs of refugee young people for whom secondary school is not an option, based on ability, desire, or previous opportunities. Higher education plays a critical role for individual refugees and for societies in terms of leadership in protracted settings and in post-conflict reconstruction, and UNHCR should explore partnerships that augment these opportunities.
3.	There is a shortage of quality teachers and lack of structures, including renumeration and training, to retain them.	The *INEE Guidance Notes on Teaching and Learning* describe teachers as "the lynchpin of education," requiring "real investment" (INEE, 2010a, p. 19). For most refugee children, the education received in exile is their one shot at education, and the quality of their teachers is critical. There is an urgent need to think beyond short-term, emergency trainings and toward more extensive investments in teacher quality for refugee education. A new standard is required for UNHCR which incorporates the idea of sequential training that aims, over a period of years, to complete a basic qualification, recognition of which can hopefully be negotiated with home and/or host country governments. Strategies should include the development of indicators that measure teacher quality in terms of pedagogy and students' learning outcomes; investment in more extensive teacher training initiatives, focused on both pedagogy and content, in partnership with local institutions that allow formal recognition of teacher qualifications; and engagement with issues of teacher compensation and certification through coordination and high-level advocacy to promote the retention of quality teachers.

4.	The quality of refugee education, and how it is recognised, does not help children to make connections between schooling and their future livelihoods.	The Education Strategy 2010-2012 states that "[t]he need for quality services is beyond UNHCR's existing capacity" (UNHCR, 2009c, p. 28). This simply cannot be accepted if UNHCR is to uphold its mandate to protect and assist refugees. There is an urgent need to devote resources to ensuring access to high quality and relevant education for refugees. Monitoring and evaluation will be central to this work. The data currently collected for education are not appropriate; it renders progress toward quality education both illusory and disappointing. In order to measure whether education is of high quality and is protective, outcomes need to be measured rather than inputs. It is not enough for refugee children to be in school with an acceptable teacher-pupil ratio. For education to be a durable solution, they must be learning meaningfully. In order to improve the quality of education, we need to know whether children are learning, what they are learning, and why. Summative learning assessments can provide a basis for understanding whether children are learning and point to areas in which learning is particularly difficult. UNHCR needs to require annually independent sample testing of student learning, beginning with reading abilities. Further, UNHCR needs to ensure that teachers are well-trained in formative assessments of children in order to develop on-going strategies to promote in-class learning.
5.	The inherently political nature of the content and structures of refugee education can exacerbate societal conflict, alienate individual children, and lead to education that is neither of high quality nor protective.	Understanding of the conflicts out of which refugees come and the political situations in settings of exile must impact the design of appropriate educational interventions in order for education to protect children rather than fuel poor quality learning and on-going intolerance, prejudice, injustice, and conflict. In order to be adequately addressed, these analyses cannot be left to Implementing Partners (IPs) but must be guided by UNHCR education specialists in the field and at Headquarters. Some of the principles that can be put into action include: requiring needs assessments that include situational analyses; applying lenses of conflict and power to assess the content and structures of education, including curriculum, language, and relationships between actors; supporting peace education in all operations; and maintaining education programmes during repatriation, at least until education can be offered in areas of return.
6.	Lack of financial resources, and their inconsistency, as well as a shortage of educational expertise both within UNHCR and among Implementing Partners (IPs), limits progress in refugee education.	The widespread assumption that the lack of positive outcomes in refugee education is caused by lack of adequate financial resources has a strong basis. However, lack of funding is compounded by limited to non-existent expertise in education at the field level. Given the immense challenges to access to a high quality and protective education for refugees, the augmentation of educational expertise at the field level is essential to the productive use of existing and additional resources. This should be done in several ways: the creation of Regional Education Advisors who can support several education programmes at country level, develop strategies, and strengthen local capacity; the creation of field-level Education Officer positions in country offices, where possible; institutionalisation of hiring and rotation policies that place staff with education expertise in appropriate Community Services and Protection posts, specifically in regional offices and in operations with large education programmes; and the careful assessment of the capacities of Implementing Partners (IPs), with assistance from regional offices and/or Headquarters, to ensure that they are technically strong in education.

7. There are challenges to coordination in refugee education, including complex power dynamics, which limit the productivity of partnerships.

Field presence in refugee situations remains, as it was historically, the principal value-added that UNHCR brings to refugee education. Given UNHCR's limited capacity and expertise in education, especially at the field level, formal and operational partnerships between UNHCR and national Ministries of Education and UNICEF are essential in all refugee situations; partnerships with the Education Cluster are particularly relevant to emergency situations. The relationships must be strengthened not only by the rhetoric of MoUs but by mutual engagement at the field level and by joint implementation of jointly developed action plans.

To address the central discrepancy between the priority that refugees place on education and the status of this sector within UNHCR requires much bolder thinking and action. It requires a reconceptualisation of the role of education for refugees within UNHCR's response.

A refugee from Kenya explains that "[i]n Africa, in the olden times, you could give your children land as an inheritance…. Now in Africa… there's no land, people are many. So the only inheritance you can give a child is education" (Dryden-Peterson, 2009). Future security – economic, political, and social – is therefore less connected to where one is geographically and more to skills, capacities, and knowledge that can accompany an individual no matter where that future may be. In other words, future security – the durable solution – is tied to education.

Yet high quality and protective education is not only a durable solution for the future. It is also durable in the present. Unlike other durable solutions of repatriation, local integration, and resettlement that are not immediately realisable for most refugees, the durability of education for refugee children does not depend on resolution of the political and legal uncertainties that drive continued exile. Refugees who are educated are more likely than those who do not have these opportunities to be economically, politically, socially, cognitively, and psychologically resilient in all stages of their refugeehood – in exile, upon repatriation, upon resettlement, *and* in intervening times (Nicolai & Triplehorn, 2003; Tapscott, 1994). They are also more likely to regain legal, physical, and material protection by themselves and through their own means.

This is not a particularly new line of thinking. Indeed, the 1997 evaluation of UNHCR's refugee education activities described education as "the most critical element in bridging the gap between relief assistance and durable solutions. Whether the refugees eventually repatriate voluntarily, settle locally or resettle in a third country, basic education will be essential for their successful integration and future development" (UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Service, 1997, p. 1). While not new, the linking of education to durable solutions is increasingly urgent.

The need for new thinking around durable solutions is evident, especially given that conflicts between 1999 and 2007 lasted, on average, 12 years in low-income countries and 22 years in middle-income countries (UNHCR, 2007b, p. 417). Given the protracted nature of most conflicts, the durability of any solution needs to begin during these long periods of exile. Further, given the uncertainty of the future for refugees, the increasingly globalised realities that most of them face, and the promise of knowledge-based economies, durable solutions need to be flexible and portable. Education can be both.

In order for education to be a durable solution for refugees, UNHCR should:

- Prioritise integrating refugees into national education systems, particularly in urban areas, working closely with Ministries of Education and UNICEF to strengthen national systems for the benefit not only of refugees but also host communities;

- Support education up to the end of secondary school for all refugees, with emphasis on access for girls and other marginalised groups;

- Seek additional opportunities for higher education for refugees, both scholarships and site-based programmes that use open and distance learning;

- Invest in sequential training for teachers that cultivates high quality skills related to both pedagogy and content and that leads towards a basic qualification that is recognised in home and/or host countries;

- Develop new standards and indicators to measure progress towards a quality and protective education, specifically focused on learning outcomes, and that include both formative in-class assessments and summative independent sample testing of student learning, drawing on the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and on partnerships with UNESCO IIEP and national Ministries of Education;

- Institute conflict-sensitive analyses to all education policy and planning through the development of tools to assess the content and structures of education, including curriculum, language, and relationships between actors, and reinstitute peace education as a core component of refugee education;

- Ensure that the funding needs for high quality and protective education are met consistently, in keeping with education as a durable solution and a core element of UNHCR's mandate;

- Augment educational expertise at the field level through the creation of Regional Education Advisors; the creation of Education Officer posts in country offices, and the hiring of Community Services and Protection Officers with training in education; and the selection of Implementing Partners (IPs) with proven technical capacities in education;

- Formalise operational, field-level partnerships that establish clear lines of responsibility between UNHCR and national Ministries of Education and UNICEF in all situations, and with the Education Cluster in the event that both are involved in a refugee response.

Institutional arrangements need to be aligned with UNHCR's mandate for the provision of refugee education, as a basic right and as an enabling right for all refugee children. At present, UNHCR is in essence a funding mechanism for refugee education with little operational and organisational capacity to act on this mandate. At the same time, the visibility, logistical capacity, and field presence of UNHCR as an organisation raise expectations in education that are not aligned with resources and expertise in this sector. A commitment to education as durable solution means mainstreaming education into UNHCR's response, not rhetorically but with the resources – both human and financial – to make this possible in practice. Of course overall UNHCR staff costs have been reduced drastically over the past several years (DFID, 2011, p. 47), and it will remain a priority within UNHCR to improve efficiency. Yet the most important investments in the education sector are in human resources. Investment in partnerships with national Ministries of Education and UNICEF, including through the Education Cluster, and with Implementing Partners (IPs) who are technically skilled in education are critical to the expansion of capacity for refugee education. However, in order for UNHCR to be responsible and accountable for refugee education, these partnerships cannot replace the creation of education expertise within UNHCR at the field level, in Regional and Country Offices.

While education does hold promise as a durable solution, it is not a panacea. In the rhetoric around education as a tool for protection, education is described as a "space" to identify other protection issues (UNHCR, 2003a) and to protect rights related to gender, sexual and gender-based violence, and

older learners (UNHCR, 2011e, pp. 31, 32, 33). Schools do provide important spaces for a myriad of protection issues. Yet neglected in the re-orientation of education within UNHCR toward protection is the core mission of education: learning. Education – not as a "space" but as learning – is itself protective, especially as a mechanism for enabling present and future durable solutions. "If we choose between food and education," said a refuge PTA member in Dadaab camp in Kenya, "we choose education. Ignorance is what destroyed our country" (UNHCR & CARE, 2009, p. 5). For refugee children and parents, it is for this promise of learning that they prioritise education over other critical spheres of UNHCR assistance. A renewed focus on refugee education – not as a stand-alone service, not as a peripheral mandate, but as a durable solution – cannot neglect this core.

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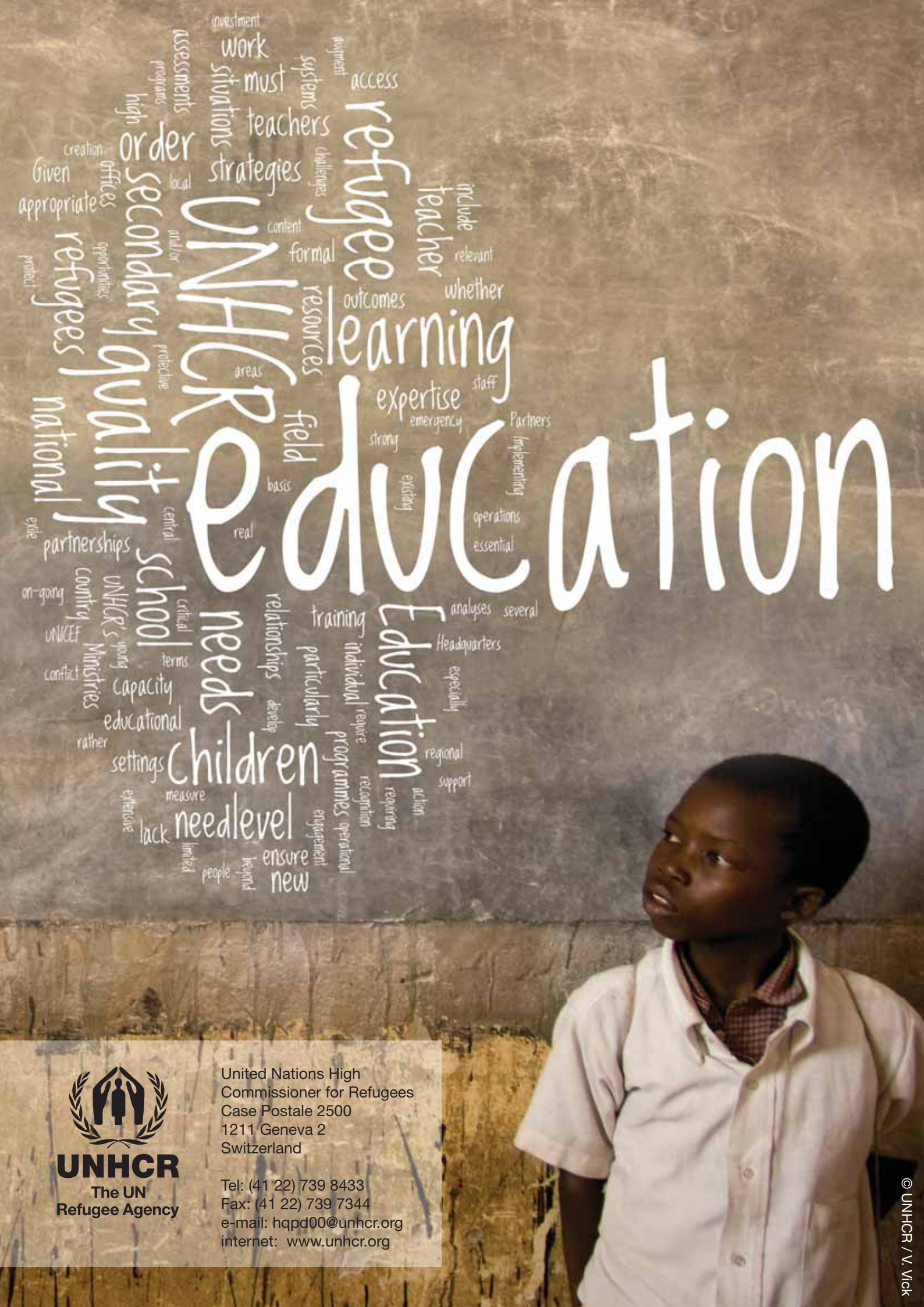
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