

›› JANUARY 2024

# EDUCATION FOR REFUGEES



Adolescent students during their lunch break in Public Primary School Bindia, Cameroon. A GPE-funded program is helping improve the quality of education in 300 host-community schools with refugees and 200 host-community schools with internally displaced persons.

World Bank/O. Hebga

**The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) works with governments to include children and youth living as refugees in national education systems, strengthening capacity and resources to meet their learning needs.**

## THE CHALLENGE

- › At the end of 2022, **108 million people** were displaced, whether internally or across international borders, due to conflict, persecution or natural disasters. Children account for 30% of the world's population and are 40% of the world's displaced people.
- › GPE partner countries are home to almost **4 million children living as refugees**—nearly half of all children living as refugees across the world.
- › Almost half of all children living as refugees are **out of school**, and only a third of youth living as refugees have access to secondary school. Refugee inclusion at the policy level is just the first step to integrating their learning within national host country education systems.
- › Displacement worsens children's access to education, **especially for girls**. For example, school enrollment rates for girls living in displacement are far below national rates.

## REFUGEE-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

Providing learning opportunities for refugees is crucial to **ensuring peace, prosperity, wellbeing and equitable access to education** within host countries, leading to greater social cohesion and stability.

Being educated in national systems allows refugees to contribute to host country economies by creating pathways for recognized qualifications, employment and self-reliance. Including children living as refugees in national education systems is a sustainable way to ensure their continuity of learning.

Investments to include refugees in national education systems also benefit host communities, **bringing in new resources** such as additional classrooms, teaching materials and teacher development. Instead of humanitarian assistance solely targeting refugees and unintentionally provoking resentment from host communities that feel left out, investing in refugee-inclusive education can generate positive feelings and a welcoming attitude from local communities, ultimately **benefiting all children** in schools.

## GPE APPROACH

In line with the [Global Compact on Refugees](#), GPE works with partner countries and international organizations to **include refugees in national education systems** and to **strengthen capacity to meet their education needs**, building on the efforts of humanitarian partners and supporting the **exchange of best practices**.

GPE focuses resources on learning, equity and inclusion for the most marginalized children and youth, including those **affected by fragility and conflict**. GPE further emphasizes **gender-responsive education planning** as girls are more likely to be left behind.

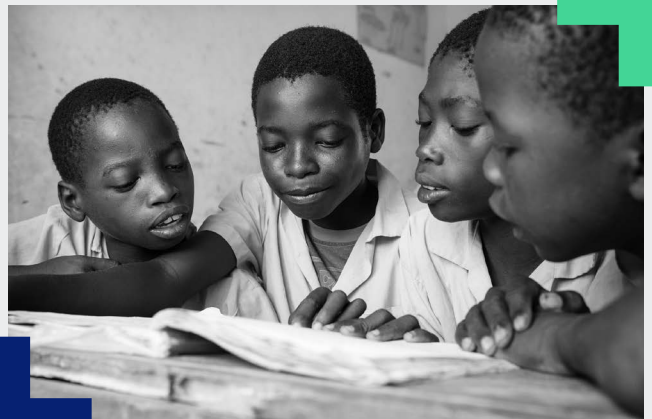
GPE also provides **accelerated funding** to countries in crisis situations to meet urgent education needs. At the end of 2022, an estimated 23.3 million refugees (67%) were living in host countries for at least five consecutive years, making continued access to learning a key issue. GPE grants are designed so that they can support long-term inclusion of children living as refugees in national systems.

## GPE RESULTS

- ▶ As of August 2023, GPE is investing **\$1.1 billion** to strengthen education systems in 17 countries that have policies to protect refugees' access to school, including Djibouti, Chad and Ethiopia.
- ▶ **62% of GPE implementation grants** were allocated to partner countries affected by fragility and conflict in 2021.
- ▶ **\$79 million** in accelerated funding supports the education needs of children living as refugees and impacted by crisis in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan.
- ▶ For the December 2023 **Global Refugee Forum**, GPE, the Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office, the World Bank, Education Cannot Wait, UNICEF and the governments of Germany and Canada led the development of a **multistakeholder pledge** to ensure all children living as refugees realize their right to quality education and are included in national education systems.

## KENYA

In Kenya, GPE and the World Bank are working closely through the Primary Education Equity in Learning (PEEL) Program to support refugee-inclusive education with results-based school grants in Dadaab, Kakuma and Kalobeyei, national sample-based learning assessments, student scholarships and school meals. Program elements have been developed through a collaborative process between humanitarian and development partners. PEEL is funded through a US\$140 million International Development Association (IDA) credit, an IDA grant of US\$60 million from the Window for Host Communities and Refugees and a GPE grant of US\$117.1 million that also includes a contribution of US\$10 million from the LEGO Foundation.



Students share a textbook in class at the Nyamachaki Primary School, Kenya.

GPE/Kelley Lynch

- ▶ Since 2016, GPE and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have collaborated for refugee-inclusive education by promoting **UNHCR's participation in local education groups** in partner countries hosting refugees.
- ▶ Since 2019, GPE and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) have provided **technical advice** to IGAD member countries and supported best practices for including refugees and displaced populations in national education systems.