



**STRENGTHENING COUNTRY,
REGIONAL, AND GLOBAL
SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE OFFICIAL
EDUCATION STATISTICS AND
SDG 4 REPORTING FOR CRISIS-
AFFECTED POPULATIONS**

6 FEBRUARY 2024

14:00-15:30

ROOM VI, UNESCO HEADQUARTERS
PARIS, FRANCE

2024 CONFERENCE ON
**EDUCATION DATA
AND STATISTICS**

BACKGROUND

A recent report found that an estimated 224 million crisis-affected school-age children were in urgent need of education support, with 72 million, or 32% of them, being out of school and 127 million, or 57% of them, in school but not achieving minimum proficiency in reading or mathematics ([ECW, 2023](#)). Providing quality education for all crisis-affected children requires rigorous data and evidence to understand the needs of crisis-affected communities and how education systems should prepare for and respond to crises.

Timely, reliable, and disaggregated education statistics are key to inform policies and programmes tailored to the specific needs of crisis-affected population groups. This means that data:

1. reflect the impact of crises in a timely manner
2. capture the situation of all children and adolescents, including those affected by conflict, natural hazards, and forced displacement.
3. are disaggregated, including by protection status.

At country level

It is challenging for governments to reflect the impact of crises on education participation and learning outcomes of affected populations. Routine administrative or survey mechanisms often fail to continue functioning during humanitarian crises and yet governments differ in the extent to which they recognize that some regions or populations may be excluded from official statistics.

In large *internal displacement* contexts, education management information systems often fail to adequately capture student level data and thus transfers across schools are not recorded. Refugee contexts create additional challenges with respect to whether they are captured at all in a government data system, and if so, how. Non-formal education or distance learning modalities often bridge disruptions in education access following shocks, but regular data tools may not take those services into account.

Various needs assessments are often introduced but it is hard to combine and integrate their findings in official statistical reports. Some progress has been made towards interoperability of data initiatives in crisis-affected countries, facilitated by strong partnerships between governments and international humanitarian and development agencies. In countries affected by natural hazards and conflicts, education clusters are platforms comprising of national and international organizations and ministries of education that provide humanitarian support to internally displaced and host populations. Education clusters, both at country and global level, are mandated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to coordinate this humanitarian response in areas where the state may be absent, party to the conflict or not have the resources to identify needs and provide education services. One of the key areas that education clusters lead on a yearly basis, reported globally through [Humanitarian Needs Overviews](#) and the monitoring of Humanitarian Response Plans, is the estimation of the number of People in Need (PiN) of education and the number of people reached by education services. The PiN estimation methodology relies on education management information systems, multi-sectoral and sectoral assessments for education, and analysis gaps on access to education (enrolment and attendance), learning conditions, protective environments and individually aggravating circumstances. This calculation reflects numbers of children in need of education support in countries affected by humanitarian crisis and are endorsed by national authorities in almost all contexts.

In contexts where refugees are being hosted, the UNHCR [2030 education strategy](#) advocates for the inclusion of learners in national education systems. Yet, the average length of forced displacement is estimated at between 10 and 26 years ([Ferris, 2018](#)). Refugee data therefore sit at the intersection of the humanitarian and development response:

- Where refugees are accessing government schools, or schools attended by refugees are recognized by national Ministries of Education, national education management information systems capture refugee students but cannot track their education outcomes without effective disaggregation by protection status and/or useful proxy (e.g., nationality).
- Where refugees are not accessing government schools, UNHCR and/or implementing partners are administering the education response but approaches to education data collection are not harmonized. In addition, dimensions of education other than access to

school, such as quality, school environments and learning outcomes are often ignored ([UNESCO and UNHCR, 2023](#)).

At global level

These challenges at country level affect estimates at global level. Global [SDG 4 databases](#), for instance on indicators such as [out-of-school rates and numbers](#), may not reflect the full impact of crises on affected populations, in the absence of a standardized approach and a more coherent data reporting across humanitarian and development institutions.

An initiative to strengthen the education data ecosystem in crisis contexts is led by the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) together with key partners including ECW, IRC, FCDO, NORRAG, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO, Global Affairs Canada, and the Geneva Global Hub for EiE. In June 2023, representatives from around 200 organizations gathered at a Summit in Geneva to discuss and agree on ways to strengthen the data and evidence ecosystem. As part of its Action Agenda, emerging priority areas include leadership, coordination, standardized methodologies and core indicators, and equity and inclusion. It is envisaged that this collective work, supported by the INEE Working Group on EiE Data (which includes workstreams on global estimates; data sharing, analysis, and use; joint monitoring and evaluation; and data standards), will inform the work of the [Technical Cooperation Group on SDG 4 Indicators](#).

Objective

This session, part of the Engagement Day of the Conference on Education Data and Statistics, will bring together key stakeholders of the Education in Emergencies data ecosystem to discuss progress, challenges, and lessons learned from UNESCO Member States' efforts to collect education data and statistics for crisis-affected populations. The aim is to provide recommendations to the [Conference on Education Data and Statistics](#) on the following two questions:

1. What **standards, protocols and support mechanisms** are required to guide governments to improve the collection of education data and statistics for crisis-affected populations? Issues could include the metadata on the comprehensiveness of education data collection,

interoperability of data systems within government as well as with humanitarian partners (e.g., use of data produced by humanitarian actors in government systems); and the use of education management information system data in humanitarian needs assessments.

2. How can **global SDG 4 data collection and reporting** more effectively capture the impact of conflict, crises, and displacement on high-level estimates of flagship indicators such as out-of-school rates and numbers? Issues could include an assessment of the severity of crises and the use of information that can help adjust global estimates that do not explicitly take emergencies into account.

The session will feature three country-level perspectives from Members States and/or their humanitarian and development partners capturing three different cases of emergencies. These presentations will be followed by joint reflections on key ideas to improve a minimum set of conditions for comparable education data and statistics on crisis-affected populations. Action points will be agreed in order to be communicated with the Conference, including a potential way to address them through the Technical Cooperation Group on SDG 4 Indicators.

Agenda

14.00-14.10 Introduction to session objectives and links to the conference and the SDG 4 data architecture.

14.10-14.40 Presentation of three country experiences:

- A case of internal displacement due to conflict
- A case of internal displacement due to natural disaster
- A case of a refugee crisis.

14.40-15.05 Discussion on lessons learned and needs for improvement.

15.05-15.30 Discussion on key recommendations to be made to the Conference.