

# Unlock education for everyone:

how the UK can ensure  
children affected by crises  
get an education



**SEND My**  
**FRIEND**  
**TO SCHOOL**



# Introduction

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Education is a universal human right. Investing in education is investing in the future leaders of the world. It is truly transformative aid. Which is why the public support investing UK aid into education. In frequent polls education is listed as the second highest priority for the UK public.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the global commitment in the Sustainable Development Goals that all the world's children and youth should access free, quality, safe and inclusive education by 2030, millions of children are locked out of learning because of who they are and where they live.

Civil society welcomed *DFID's Education Policy: Get Children Learning* published in 2018. The Policy recognises that targeted action is required to ensure the most marginalised children can learn. It rightly highlights work for children with disabilities, hard-to-reach girls and children affected by crises.

Between 2011 and 2015, DFID supported the learning of 11 million children, including in some of the toughest places in the world.<sup>2</sup> DFID has been at the forefront of global efforts to scale up investment, expertise and collaboration in education in emergencies and protracted crises.

It was a founding member of Education Cannot Wait, the world's first global fund dedicated to education in emergencies. Its funding to the Global Partnership for Education and the Girls' Education Challenge will transform the learning that some of the most marginalised children receive. We welcome DFID's new six-year initiative on Education Research in Conflict and Protracted Crisis which aims to understand what the most effective approaches to education delivery are in these challenging contexts.

This civil society report demonstrates how DFID can effectively meet its commitment to deliver quality learning opportunities to children affected by crisis.

## The learning needs of children affected by crisis

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More than 75 million children across crisis- and conflict-affected countries require urgent support to receive a quality education.<sup>3</sup>

### Displaced children

More than half of the world's school-aged refugees – four million – are out of school, with refugees five times more likely to be out of school than the global average. Only 61 % of refugee children attend primary school compared with 91 % of children globally. Refugee enrolment at secondary level is even worse.<sup>4</sup>

The majority of those displaced by conflict remain within their own borders as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Sadly, only a minority of countries report IDP education data disaggregated by age and sex. Whilst we know that there are almost twice as many IDPs as refugees, we do not know how many are of school age or how many have access to education.

### Violence against children

Many of these children have lost parents, siblings and friends. They have experienced unspeakable acts of

violence and face an uncertain future. In order for children to learn well they need access to protective learning environments and their teachers need to know how to keep them safe.

During conflict, armed actors frequently attack schools, use them as barracks and stores, or for shelters, interrogations and detentions. The 28 worst affected countries each had at least 20 attacks on education between 2013 and 2017.<sup>5</sup> The immediate effects of these attacks can include the death or injury of children, the destruction of facilities and disrupted access to education. Attacks on education need to be monitored and reported as a way of sharing information, holding perpetrators to account, directing response and action, and building confidence of parents and children to send their children to school.

### The most vulnerable

The challenge of accessing education during crisis disproportionately affects girls and young women. Girls may be out of school as a result of higher rates of child marriage and adolescent

pregnancy, greater levels of domestic labour, lack of mobility due to safety concerns either at school or en route, lack of access to menstrual hygiene supplies and a low value placed on girls' education generally. This is not to undermine the impact of conflict on boys' education - boys may be forced out of school in order to support their family's income or actively recruited to join armed groups.

Children with disabilities are among the most marginalised people in any community affected by crisis. Existing facilities for the education of children and adolescents with disabilities, maybe destroyed during an emergency. They may lose their assistive devices during displacement and disruption in health services may prevent or delay their replacement. This reduces their ability to participate in education activities. Children with disabilities need supportive infrastructure and teachers who have the skills and tools to include all children in their care.

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## The case for education in emergencies

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When children and young people are displaced, the case for education is amplified.

### **Fulfilling children's wishes**

Children affected by crisis around the world tell us that education is the key to their futures, their protection, their happiness and their health, and that it cannot be delayed. In crisis situations, 99% of children see education as a high priority – humanitarian actors and donors have a moral and ethical responsibility to listen to these children so that we can understand their needs and respond with assistance that is accountable and effective.<sup>6</sup>

### **Protection from harm**

Providing educational services to children can help mitigate the impacts

of conflict and displacement, providing a protective platform to help children and their communities secure better futures. It keeps boys and girls safe from risks in their environments and from negative coping strategies when they are at their most vulnerable. School can mean reduced rates of sexual violence, child marriage, harmful work and recruitment into armed forces or armed groups.

### **Securing longer term stability & prosperity**

A safe and high-quality education is a key contributor to any society's potential for long-term stability and prosperity – securing economic recovery, social stability and peace in the most fragile of contexts. Each additional year of education can

enable a 10% increase in income.<sup>7</sup> Higher levels of education in a country lead to more peace and lower chances of conflict. Some studies have shown that where education inequality doubled, so too did the chance of conflict.<sup>8</sup>

### **Meeting Sustainable Development Goal 4**

It will not be possible to reach SDG4 and all the other SDGs by 2030 without increased attention to safe, inclusive, quality and relevant education for children and youth affected by conflict and emergencies.

## The vital role of the UK

**With DFID's Education Policy: Get Children Learning, including a strong focus on children affected by crisis, the UK now has an unparalleled opportunity to take a global lead in this area. It can advance this agenda by acting on our four-point plan.**

## Close the financing gap

### 1. More and better funding

#### DFID's education funding

We urgently need more financing for education generally as well as more and better investment into education in emergencies and protracted crises. The UK can continue to shape the finance agenda for education for all, given its standing as one of the biggest donors to global education and its strong relationship with multilateral funds. DFID should allocate 15% of its annual budget to education with at least 6% from its humanitarian budget dedicated to education in emergencies and protracted crises.

DFID has diversified the mechanisms it uses to support education which allows it to choose the right way to respond to the need identified, while delivering both the highest impact on the ground and best value for money. DFID should continue to support and implement a mix of mechanisms for spending Overseas Development Assistance on education, including for education in emergencies and protracted crisis.

It is right that multilateral organisations are subject to scrutiny however agencies such as Education Cannot Wait and the Global Partnership for Education, might be

better placed to achieve objectives – because of pooled expertise, cost-effective approaches in regard to coordinating responses, ability to target countries DFID does not have a large presence in and ability to operate at a large scale.

#### Replenishment of Education Cannot Wait's Global Trust Fund

Education Cannot Wait (ECW) is both the first and only global fund for education in crises and was founded with support from the UK at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit. It works across the humanitarian-development divide, to deliver quick, agile and well-coordinated education programmes to children left furthest behind in the hardest to reach contexts.

UK civil society strongly supports the need for, and work of ECW. We welcomed the UK's initial £30 million contribution to ECW for the three-year period of 2016-18. We were also proud that the UK, for some time, remained the largest donor to ECW.

The total funding need for the ECW Global Trust Fund until 2021 is USD \$673 million. This will support the delivery of quality education to 9 million children and youth – aged 3 to 18 years – in areas that are most affected by conflict and disaster.

**UK civil society is therefore calling for a renewed commitment to ECW from the UK of £75 million over the period 2019-21.**

We believe this increase is necessary and justified. It will help meet the considerable learning needs of the most marginalised children in the world and it therefore meets objectives in *Get Children Learning*.

#### Education Cannot Wait delivers results

ECW has in many cases exceeded its results targets. ECW's investments have reached more than one million children and youth – half of whom are girls – in 19 crisis-affected countries since the Fund became operational in early 2017.

To date it has raised a total of \$221.5 million with additional funding committed in the pipeline. Funding is disbursed to meet both the immediate needs when a crisis suddenly occurs and longer-term quality and financing challenges through Multi-Year Resilience Responses.

This innovative and successful multi-year funding approach is ECW's value-add. It provides certainty which allows crisis-affected governments, implementing partners and donors to work together to mobilise resources

in country in the longer-term. This convening role of multi-year programmes has the potential to strengthen existing coordination mechanisms and sector-wide systems, information management, planning and costing – all of which is a specific value-add of ECW and a role which DFID should continue to support.

### **ECW meets the needs in forgotten crises**

ECW has been able to operate in some of the most challenging conflict affected fragile states globally, extending the impact of UK aid to places like Chad and the Central

African Republic (CAR) and over the next few years to Niger, Mali and other crises forgotten by the rest of the world.

The CAR is one of the world's most unstable countries, with over two-thirds of the population in need of humanitarian assistance. The recent multi-year investment in the CAR will get over 360,000 out of school children back in protective and safe learning environments, with the goal of reintegrating 90% of the country's out of school children into the formal education system.

### **Repositioning DFID as the leading donor**

The UK was a powerful force in recognising that a greater effort was required to meet the education needs of girls and boys in crisis. A significant increase in its investment in to ECW would reposition the UK as the leading donor, affording the UK more influence over the strategic direction of the Fund.

A large increase on DFID's last investment would set the tone for more and better funding for ECW from other major donors.

### **DFID's role in incentivising ECW progress**

A significant increase in UK funding for ECW will give the UK greater influence to incentivise operational and strategic reforms that align with *Get Children Learning*. This could include:

- **Ensuring that ECW funded programmes build and maintain stronger public educational systems.** ECW should continue to support the Global Education Cluster, UNHCR and country coordination structures to organise responses and develop education in emergencies strategies. For multi-year programmes to be effective, there is a need to strengthen and link education plans and costs. Specifically, supporting local partners is a fundamental part of preparedness and the development of strong multi-year plans and requires urgent investment.
- **Improving education quality and driving improvements in learning outcomes.** ECW should incorporate a holistic approach to supporting teachers – this includes improving teacher incentives and

wellbeing as well as the continuous professional development within its programmes, working closely with education unions wherever possible. The Fund should facilitate the measuring of learning outcomes within its programmes. DFID could encourage ECW to launch a learning initiative focused on supporting teachers and understanding, testing, monitoring and recommending approaches to securing learning outcomes in emergencies.

- **Ensuring ECW delivers on its commitment to meaningfully integrate child protection and safeguarding into the programmes that it funds.** DFID should encourage ECW to ensure that all implementing partners know how to safeguard children and how to support community and school safeguarding policies.
- **Incentivising gender responsive and transformative programming in line with the UK's Leave No Girl Behind campaign.** DFID should encourage ECW to be more prescriptive on

gender equality issues in their multi-year funding investments, earmarking funding for gender-responsive and transformative activities.

- ECW is working to include Early Childhood Development (ECD) components within its programmes to ensure all children in crisis benefit from a good start. **DFID can incentivise ECW to ensure its ECD programmes align with the Nurturing Care Framework.** An April 2018 review of 26 active Refugee and Humanitarian Response Plans showed large gaps in support for ECD.<sup>9</sup> In order to ensure that education partners are prepared to address ECD needs in emergencies, we encourage DFID to target funding to ECD provision, including in protracted settings.
- Encouraging ECW to work with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to harmonise approaches, increase collaboration and learn lessons. For example, it would be useful for GPE staff to be engaged in ECW multi-year programme planning, where possible.

### Support for in-country multi-year plans

Beyond investment into the ECW Global Trust Fund, we also call upon DFID to align its in-country investments in support of the ECW facilitated multi-year resilience response plans. Five of these plans have now been launched – in Uganda, Bangladesh, the Central African Republic, Afghanistan and Palestine – many of which with strong support from DFID’s education cadre.

The ECW Global Trust Fund provides seed funding in support of these plans usually in ranges between 15- 25% of the total needs – additional bilateral funding is required to fill the gap. During 2019-2021, ECW and its

partners will launch multi-year educational responses in a further 20 countries. There is potential for these multi-year programmes to strengthen sector-wide responses if adequately financed.

### Supporting IDA replenishment

The International Development Association (IDA) is the part of the World Bank that helps the world’s poorest countries. It does this by providing loans and grants for programmes that boost economic growth, reduce inequalities, and improve people’s living conditions.

IDA18 established a \$2 billion regional sub-window designed to provide much needed support to governments

hosting large refugee populations. This fund can be used to fund multi-year refugee and host community education plans.

Of the \$2 billion available, \$400 million has been provided in support of education for refugee and host communities.

As replenishment for IDA19 begins this year we encourage the UK to sustain its support for IDA and publicly support the continuation and growth of the refugee sub-window. The UK should also do everything it can to encourage the Bank to stimulate demand for education focused support from IDA19.



Photo above: Ahmed\* in the bamboo and plastic shelter he shares with his grandmother in the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. One-third of school-age Rohingya children do not have access to any education, making them vulnerable to risks of violence, abuse, sickness and trafficking. ©Evan Schuurman / Save the Children



## Ensuring progress for the furthest behind

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### 2. Increase support to teachers in crises

*Get Children Learning* makes a specific commitment to invest in good teaching. Teachers are the most important school-based factor in determining the quality of education, and their role is even more pronounced in crisis-affected contexts. Yet in crisis-affected settings teachers frequently lack the support and training that lead to good learning outcomes for students with complex needs.

We are encouraged that teachers are a focus area of DFID's research agenda and consider it crucial to evidence teacher challenges. We also consider it urgent to immediately address the impossible conditions under which teachers are expected to deliver in crises contexts. We would welcome DFID's investment and leadership in promoting support for the quick-wins which make a significant difference to teacher's wellbeing, motivation and ability in emergency situations. Specifically, these include

- incentivising harmonised approaches to teacher allowances/ payments in emergency situations;
- providing earmarked funding for basic teacher resources, such as boards, chalk, furniture and latrines; and
- scaling-up teacher professional development and wellbeing initiatives in line with the Teachers in Crisis Contexts (TiCC) collaborative.<sup>10</sup>

### 3. Support the Global Compact on Refugees

In December 2018 the Global Compact on Refugees was endorsed by world leaders. It includes strong commitments on education, such as support being provided for the development and implementation of national education sector plans that include refugees.<sup>11</sup>

The first ever Global Refugee Forum has been announced for December 2019 in Geneva where refugee hosting states, donors, agencies and private sector will announce

concrete pledges and contributions towards the objectives outlined in the Compact in line with the principles of responsibility-sharing.

Rather than a series of disparate and insufficiently distinct pledges on education emerging in the lead up to the Forum we encourage the UK to support a global plan of action for refugee education, where real needs are identified in advance and pledges can be aligned behind. Thereby coordinating a global response, that can be adequately monitored and held to account.

At the Forum the UK should make a pledge to support ECW multi-year resilience plans in large refugee hosting countries, including the plans already launched in Uganda and Bangladesh, and forthcoming plans in Ethiopia and Chad. The UK should also push for the Global Partnership for Education to modify its grant guidelines to allow it to compensate partner countries that include refugee boys and girls in their national education sector plan, including by providing top-up funding.



## 4. Reaching the hardest-to-reach adolescent girls

### Implementing G7 commitments

The UK endorsed last year's G7 commitment to girl's education in crisis through the Charlevoix Declaration.<sup>12</sup> To implement this Declaration DFID should ensure that a gender responsive and transformative approach is taken throughout the continuum of immediate humanitarian response to long-term development programming.

### Girls' Education Challenge

The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC), launched in 2012 as a 12-year commitment to improve learning opportunities and outcomes for girls around the world, operates in several

fragile and conflict affected states. Investments so far have reached 2.25 million girls. As the GEC aims to reach the most vulnerable and marginalised, it can do more to address intersecting forces of disadvantage. For example, the GEC has not achieved impact for disabled girls in crisis situations at scale, although this is starting to improve.

Catalytic investment should support adolescent girls in crisis to complete 12 years of quality education by addressing their specific barriers to access to education, and by promoting their successful transition from primary to secondary school. The GEC programme in South Sudan has demonstrated what is possible in complex settings – that the use of

cash transfers is a way of reaching marginalised girls in complex contexts. This should also be done with civil society in partnership with local communities, governments and unions, who can reach marginalised and otherwise difficult to reach populations, to scale-up and deliver gender-responsive education in crises.

### School safety

In line with the Safe to Learn initiative<sup>13</sup>, which the UK supports, DFID should invest in safe school infrastructure and violence-free learning environments that meet comprehensive school safety standards. This includes, safety audits for travel to and from school, secure transportation, and gender-segregated and well-lit latrines.

# Recommendations

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**We call upon DFID to deliver on its commitment to Get Children Learning, particularly those affected by crisis by acting on our 4-point plan.**

## 1. Funding

- DFID should allocate 15 % of its annual budget to education with at least 6 % from its humanitarian budget dedicated to education in emergencies and protracted crises.
- DFID should make a significant renewed investment into Education Cannot Wait of £75 million over the period 2019–2021.
- DFID should align its in-country investments in support of ECW facilitated response plans such as the five that have been launched in the last year across Uganda, Bangladesh, the Central African Republic, Afghanistan and Palestine.

## 2. Increase support to teachers in crises

- DFID should focus investment and leadership in improving the conditions in which teachers are expected to deliver in crisis contexts, such as improving pay, teacher resources and scaling up teacher professional development. This should be done with engagement of teacher and education unions whenever possible.

## 3. Support the Global Compact on Refugees

- DFID can take a leadership role on education in the Global Compact on Refugees by supporting the development of a global plan of action for refugee education, where real needs are identified in advance and pledges can be aligned behind.

## 4. Reaching the hardest-to-reach adolescent girls

- To implement the G7 Charlevoix Declaration DFID should ensure that a gender responsive and transformative approach is taken throughout the continuum of immediate humanitarian response to long-term development programming.
- The Girls' Education Challenge should do more to address intersecting forces of disadvantage, including scaling up learning opportunities for disabled girls in crisis situations.
- DFID should invest in safe school infrastructure and violence-free learning environments that meet comprehensive school safety standards.

# References

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<sup>2</sup> DFID Education policy: get children learning, 2018. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/685536/DFID-Education-Policy-2018a.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685536/DFID-Education-Policy-2018a.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> ODI, 2016, Education Cannot Wait, Proposing a fund for education in emergencies <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/10497.pdf>

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<sup>7</sup> Montenegro, C. and Patrinos, H. (2014). Comparable Estimates of Returns to Schooling Around the World. Policy Research Working Paper. World Bank. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/830831468147839247/pdf/WPS7020.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Global Education Monitoring Report, 2016. Education for people and planet: creating sustainable futures for all. <http://gem-report-2016.unesco.org/en/home/>

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<sup>10</sup> Teachers in Crisis Contexts Collaborative, <https://www.ineesite.org/en/ticc-collaborative>

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<sup>12</sup> G7 Charlevoix Declaration, 2018. <https://g7.gc.ca/en/official-documents/charlevoix-declaration-quality-education-girls-adolescent-girls-women-developing-countries/>

<sup>13</sup> Safe to Learn, 2019. <http://www.end-violence.org/safetolearn>



This paper has been developed by UK civil society including members of the Send My Friend to School campaign, as well as Bond, Global Citizen, Theirworld and War Child UK. It was written by members of the Send My Friend to School Policy and Parliamentary Working Group.

Send My Friend to School is a UK civil society coalition of international development NGOs, teachers unions and charities. The campaign undertakes a range of activities designed to increase community awareness of the state of education internationally and generate the political will necessary to ensure the UK plays an active and effective part in efforts to secure education for all. Send My Friend to School is the UK coalition of the Global Campaign for Education movement which is present in over 80 countries around the world, and aligns its work with the organisation's mission and aims.

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### The Send My Friend to School Campaign's UK members are:

CAFOD	Plan International UK
Christian Aid	RESULTS UK
Deaf Child Worldwide	Save the Children
Humanity & Inclusion UK	Sense International
Leonard Cheshire	Sightsavers
NASUWT - The Teachers' Union	Steve Sinnott Foundation
National Education Union	University and College Union
Oxfam GB	VSO

#### Front cover photo:

Yacoub\*, 12, from Raqqa, Syria, stands outside the tent in which he and his family now live, in a camp for people displaced by the war against ISIS, in Syria. Yacoub was unable to go to school after ISIS occupied Raqqa as his parents feared the schools might be hit in an airstrike. ©Save the Children

\* All children's names have been changed to protect their identity