



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Executive Board

Two hundredth session

200 EX/28 Rev.

PARIS, 11 October 2016
Original: English

Item 28 of the agenda

EDUCATION FOR REFUGEES

SUMMARY

This item has been included in the provisional agenda of the 200th session of the Executive Board at the request of France, Greece, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden and the United States of America.

The corresponding explanatory note is included in the document.

Action expected of the Executive Board: Proposed decision in paragraph 9.



EXPLANATORY NOTE

Background

1. Violent conflict and persecution have uprooted men, women and children in 2015 with displacement reaching historic levels all around the world. Half of them are under 18 years. Refugees are spending longer and longer in displacement and exile, compromising prospects of durable solutions and reinforcing the urgency of a sustainable, comprehensive response by governments and the international community.
2. According to the report presented in September 2016 to the United Nations General Assembly by the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity, the education of 65 million children aged 3-15 years in crisis-affected countries is currently severely affected. Approximately 37 million of these children are out of school. This is a full 30 percent of those out of school globally across these age groups. There are at least 14 million children aged 3-15 in affected countries who are refugees and internally displaced. Very few of these children go to pre-primary, 1 in 2 to primary and 1 in 4 to lower secondary school.
3. Education is a priority for refugees and internally displaced persons. All children and young people should have access to inclusive and equitable quality education as called for in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action adopted by UNESCO Member States. For children and youth who have been forcibly displaced, education is especially important: by simply being in school they are better protected from trafficking, illegal adoption, child, early and forced marriage, early pregnancies, sexual exploitation and forced labour. Education also builds knowledge and skills for self-reliance and resilience and can contribute to peace and security as well as mitigate factors that cause forced displacement.
4. The education needs of people forced to flee their homes, are not met in most places, compromising the future of entire generations. Psycho-social support is also needed to address specific educational needs of these children and to help mitigate the trauma they have likely faced.
5. The lack of educational opportunities for refugees that live in or outside of camps is particularly alarming. More than half of the world's refugees reside in urban areas and there are typically high concentrations of refugees in informal settlements characterized by high levels of deprivation.
6. Women and girls are often among the most affected in refugee and IDP situations, leading to losses in opportunities for education and reinforcing their marginalization and resulting in high dropout rates, child labour, gender-based violence and child, early and forced marriage. Girls are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than their male peers in crisis-affected contexts.
7. Throughout 2016, a number of events and initiatives highlight the problems facing large-scale movements of refugees and other displaced persons, including the World Humanitarian Summit; events organized on the protection of children on the move in the margins of the Human Rights Council, the United Nations General Assembly Summit on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants in September 2016, the High Commissioner for Refugees Dialogue on Protection Challenges in December 2016 which will focus on "Children on the Move" as well as in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by the General Assembly in September 2015 and the Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action adopted by UNESCO Member States.
8. Many international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) work on refugees and IDP issues and their coordination is crucial for an effective humanitarian response.

Proposed decision

9. In the light of the above, the Executive Board may wish to take the following decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined 200 EX/28 Rev.,
2. Taking note of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 and stressing the importance of education in mitigating disaster and conflict, and promoting peace as well as in protecting people in vulnerable situations; The SDG4 calling to “*ensure inclusive and equitable education*”. The Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 and its corresponding Framework for Action in which countries commit to developing “*more inclusive, responsive and resilient education systems to meet the needs of children, youth and adults in crisis contexts, including internally displaced persons and refugees.*” The World Humanitarian Summit Chair’s Summary document which calls for “*creating education opportunities for displaced persons and refugees*”;
3. Taking note that the education of 65 million children aged 3-15 years in crisis-affected countries is currently severely affected and that 37 million of these children are out of school,
4. Acknowledging the work by host communities, international organizations and NGO’s to assist and protect refugees and IDP’s, in particular UNHCR, UNICEF and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies,
5. Expresses its appreciation to the Director-General for having launched and implemented the UNESCO Regional Education Response Strategy for the Syria Crisis, “Bridging Learning Gaps for Youth”; as well as UNESCO becoming a partner to the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies;
6. Takes note with appreciation of the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, Policy paper 26 “No more excuses: Providing education to all forcibly displaced people”;
7. Invites Member States to support, through extrabudgetary resources, UNESCO activities to provide lifelong learning opportunities for forcibly displaced people;
8. Invites Member States to coalesce around existing platforms, such as the Education Cannot Wait fund launched at the World Humanitarian Summit 2016, to ensure joint responses that make the humanitarian system work more efficiently to provide better education for more children in protracted emergencies;
9. Recommends Member States to integrate refugee and Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs) in their education data systems;
10. Urges Member States to include learning needs among refugees and IDPs in Education Policy Plans and in Humanitarian Response Plans;
11. Encourages the Director-General to ensure that UNESCO mobilizes and provides technical expert support, when required, to Member States for the integration of refugees and IDPs education data in the national EMIS and the inclusion of learning needs among refugees and IDPs in Education Policy Plans;
12. Encourages the Director-General to further enhance UNESCO activities to provide lifelong learning opportunities for refugees and IDPs, including scaling up and

expanding the UNESCO education response to people affected by humanitarian emergencies, taking also into account the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage;

13. Encourages the Director-General to closely coordinate UNESCO activities for refugees and IDPs with the activities of other international organizations, in particular UNHCR, UNICEF, the Global Partnership for Education and NGOs.
14. Encourages UNESCO to support sharing knowledge and best practices of Member States to promote evidence-based approaches and activities both in host countries and in conflict-torn countries.
15. Requests the Director-General to report at the 202nd session of the Executive Board on UNESCO's activities to enhance learning opportunities for refugees and IDPs.