



UNHCR – Educate A Child Programme

2020 Annual Report



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

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Cover Photo:

Fatuma is a primary school student at Dagahaley Refugee Camp in Daadab, Kenya. She dreams of becoming a nurse and says that education gives her hope for a better tomorrow. In Dadaab, schools re-opened in October 2020 for students in examination grades, with COVID-19 prevention measures in place

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UNHCR – Educate A Child Programme

2020 – 2022

COUNTRY OPERATIONS

Cameroon
Chad
Iraq
Kenya–Dadaab
Kenya–Kakuma
Malawi
Malaysia
Mexico
Pakistan
Rwanda
South Sudan
Sudan
Syrian Arab Republic
Uganda
Yemen

“I am happy to be back in school. I like school, and I love my Arabic class.”

In Yemen, Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs) provide certified primary education and hope for a better future for over-aged children, like Shereen. Shereen, a 10-year-old Somali refugee, left school when she was in first grade. In 2020, her mum was able to help her return to school by enrolling her in an AEP supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in Basateen, Yemen.

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ENROLMENT TARGETS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN (OOSC)

Life of Project OOSC Enrolment **Target 364,857**
Current Project Year OOSC **Target 121,386**
New OOSC Enrolment this Reporting Period **Actual 32,865**
Total to Date OOSC Enrolment **Actual 32,865**

ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
Ministries of Education
National and International NGOs
Refugee Communities

AGREEMENT PERIOD

12 June 2020 – 31 December 2022

PERIOD COVERED BY THIS REPORT

12 June 2020 – 31 December 2020

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1 Executive Summary

By the end of 2019, an estimated 79.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations – the highest number on record according to available data. For the first time in history, one per cent of the world’s population – or 1 in 97 people – were forcibly displaced, representing a staggering increase compared to the numbers at the beginning of the decade (1 in 159 people were estimated to be forcibly displaced in 2010). By the end of 2019, 26 million individuals were refugees, 20.4 million of them under UNHCR’s mandate, and over 45.7 million persons were internally displaced. Around 40 per cent of the 79.5 million forcibly displaced individuals were children below the age of 18.

While refugee enrolment in primary school had steadily increased during the previous years, thanks to the impressive efforts of host governments, donors, as well as UNHCR and its partners, the COVID-19 outbreak caused an unprecedented education crisis, exacerbating the risk that inequalities in education will further increase and that hard-won gains will be reversed. The closure of schools and learning institutions all around the world has disproportionately affected displaced children, including refugees, who had already been at a grave disadvantage before the pandemic – being twice as likely to be out of school as their non-refugee peers. Beyond the devastating effect of school closures, the pandemic has also threatened the ability of refugee families to secure stable livelihood opportunities and to be able to afford the costs associated with education, such as school fees, uniforms, textbooks, transportation to school, mobile data and devices.

While most governments and institutions introduced programmes to support the continuity of learning during school closures, many refugee learners lacked the required connectivity or hardware, or lived too far away from radio broadcast signals, preventing them from accessing distance learning opportunities. The specific needs of children with disabilities were often not adequately accommodated in home-based learning options, while girls faced increased protection risks and domestic responsibilities that reduced their access to learning and

hampered their future educational prospects. As a result of the disruption created by the pandemic, the number of out-of-school children (OOSC) may rise in the coming years as many children in forced displacement contexts, especially girls, are likely to drop out of school or to not re-enroll.

UNHCR worked at all stages of the COVID-19 response to address emerging challenges, especially by advocating for the inclusion of refugees in national response plans, by strengthening of distance learning solutions, and by expanding and improving educational infrastructure and WASH facilities in schools in order to reduce class sizes, ensure compliance with physical distancing measures, and enhance hygienic conditions in schools.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the level of uncertainty it introduced at all levels brought significant challenges to the implementation of the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020. Country implementation plans, which had to be readapted due to the short 2020 implementation period (12 June – 31 December 2020), also had to be modified in light of the constantly evolving COVID-19 situation on the ground. While some activities had to be cancelled or postponed to 2021, others were prioritised or saw their implementation modality adapted in order to better address evolving needs and account for COVID-19 prevention measures. Despite the very complex implementation context, the UNHCR-EAC Programme has proven instrumental in strengthening the COVID-19 education response across locations in 2020.

Due to the extenuating circumstances mentioned above, only 32,865 OOSC, over 51 per cent of whom were girls, could be newly enrolled in targeted primary schools, representing just 27 per cent of the 2020 annual enrolment target of 121,386 OOSC. No new enrolments of OOSC could be reported in Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. Despite this, in locations in which schools stayed closed throughout the 2020 implementation period, activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme supported the continuity of learning and teaching during the pandemic and prepared for the safe reopening of schools in 2021.

Activities such as the construction and rehabilitation of WASH facilities in schools, the provision of school equipment (including IT and cleaning equipment), the organisation of support classes to help children catch up on missed schooling, the provision of financial support to teachers to ensure the continuity of teaching during the pandemic, as well as the distribution of teaching and learning materials were prioritised and in many cases overachieved their annual targets. While many items such as school uniforms, scholastic materials, textbooks and assistive devices for children with disabilities were procured in 2020, their actual distribution could not always take place due to school closures and thus had to be postponed to 2021. A number of activities had to be adapted to better address the educational needs brought by the pandemic. For example, some teacher trainings were undertaken online; materials provided to students included self-study packs and solar radios; and some awareness-raising activities were carried out through radio broadcasting. Activities such as Cash-Based Interventions (CBIs), support to over-aged learners through Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs), trainings for partner personnel, and sensitisation sessions to engage the community often had to be cancelled due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context. In Chad, Kenya-Kakuma, Rwanda, and Uganda, COVID-19 restrictions affected the UNHCR-EAC Sport for Protection (S4P) Initiative by delaying the start of the Youth Sports Facilitator (YSF) training course and the roll-out of S4P activities in targeted primary schools until 2021.

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, other major challenges were faced during the 2020 implementation period. A number of country operations had to cope with new refugee influxes and changing operational contexts that resulted in additional educational needs. Violence and armed conflict continued to take a toll on education systems, especially in Syria and Yemen, while hyperinflation and a currency depreciation affected the implementation of activities in Syria and Sudan. Additional factors that impacted the operational environment included lengthy administrative processes, changes in policies, and limited access to data collected by partners. Major difficulties to reach OOSC during school closures, especially girls, children with disabilities, and over-aged learners, were faced across locations.

“The coronavirus could destroy the dreams and ambitions of these young refugees. It threatens to cause a ‘pandemic of poverty’ in the world’s most vulnerable communities, and the steady and hard-won increases in school, university, technical and vocational education enrolment could be reversed—in some cases permanently.”

—Filippo Grandi,
UN High Commissioner for Refugees

2 Project Narrative Report

Project Description

The overall goal of the UNHCR-EAC Programme is to provide equitable quality primary education for out-of-school refugee and internally displaced children, and to support their retention once enrolled.

In 2020, the UNHCR-EAC Programme was implemented in a total of 15 implementation locations in 14 countries across the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: Cameroon, Chad, Iraq, Kenya-Dadaab, Kenya-Kakuma, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda, and Yemen.

Supported activities were organised under different outcomes and outputs:

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

- Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed
- Output 1.2: Education infrastructure refurbished or renovated
- Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools
- Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN TARGET SCHOOLS

- Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn
- Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

- Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced
- Output 3.2: Local and national partnerships on education strengthened

OUTCOME 4: IMPROVED CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SPORT (ONLY IN CHAD, KENYA-KAKUMA, RWANDA, UGANDA)

- Output 4.1: Children participating in a sport for protection programme
- Output 4.2: Youth facilitators trained to implement a sport for protection programme

Project Implementation Overview

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Classroom construction was undertaken under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 in Cameroon, Chad, Kenya-Kakuma, Malawi, and Yemen. A total of 91 new classrooms were constructed, with the annual target being underachieved (by 30 per cent) due to the reduced 2020 implementation period and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the availability of materials and the mobilisation of human resources across locations. Construction activities, although initially planned, had to be cancelled in South Sudan due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context. Where undertaken, classroom construction contributed to reducing classroom congestion, improving compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures, and enhancing the safety of learners and teachers in school. Thanks to the construction of new classrooms, the average classroom-student ratio in targeted primary schools improved from 1:50 to 1:35 in Cameroon, and from 1:125 to 1:99 in Kenya-Kakuma. In Chad, instead of constructing classrooms in existing schools, it was decided to construct two new primary schools equipped with a total of 14 classrooms in the new Kouchaguine Moura camp to address the additional educational needs brought about by a new refugee influx from Sudan. In Malawi, the construction of a new primary school in Dzaleka camp was cancelled due to the shortened implementation period and 10 new class-

rooms were constructed in the existing primary school instead. In Yemen, construction activities, which had been newly added to the implementation plan in light of the pandemic and the need to decongest classrooms in Basateen-Aden, were affected by delays that hindered their full completion in 2020

As the COVID-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated the urgent need to improve water, sanitation and hygiene in schools, the **construction of WASH facilities** was a key activity that strengthened the COVID-19 education response across locations in 2020, with annual targets being over-achieved. A total of 377 new latrines (75 per cent above the annual target) and 76 water points (55 per cent above the annual target) were constructed across seven locations, improving the hygienic conditions in primary schools and reducing the risks of COVID-19 transmission. The expansion of WASH facilities took place alongside other COVID-19 prevention activities such as the distribution of facemasks, soap, hand-washing solutions, and thermometers. The construction of WASH facilities was added to 2020 implementation plans in Rwanda, where 8 new water points were constructed in primary schools. Although the construction of 24 latrines in Basateen-Aden was started in Yemen, it was affected by delays and was ongoing by the end of

2020. In Kenya-Kakuma, where WASH facilities in schools benefited from an additional budget reallocated from Headquarters funds under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, the completed construction of 92 latrines (over nine times the annual target) and the ongoing construction of an additional 120 latrines will improve the average latrine-student ratio from 1:82 to 1:64. Annual targets for the construction of WASH facilities were also over-achieved in Cameroon, Chad, and Kenya-Dadaab, while a slight underachievement was observed in Malawi due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context.

The **provision of school furniture and equipment** was strengthened in most locations in 2020 to address the additional educational needs brought by the pandemic. Support was provided to a total of 320 schools (over three times the annual target). Of these, 92 schools benefited from the provision of desks and 163 from the provision of IT equipment, the latter being often prioritised to enhance access to online learning opportunities. In

In the small village of Nabemo in Cameroon, children practice physical distancing and wear masks in the classroom to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

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Chad, 62 primary schools targeted under the UNHCR-EAC Programme were provided with IT equipment, including USB keys and memory cards pre-loaded with audio learning materials. In Malaysia, the provision of tablets, laptops, and data plans benefited a total of 1,307 students and 147 teachers in 60 learning centres. In Mexico, 26 schools were provided with IT equipment to improve the students' digital literacy skills and to support distance learning. In Yemen, 15 primary schools also benefited from IT equipment, including printers and projectors. In other locations, targeted support also included the provision of kitchen equipment in Kenya-Dadaab and Chad, energy saving lamps in South Sudan, and recreational equipment in Kenya-Kakuma and Yemen.

Output 1.2: Education infrastructure refurbished or renovated

The **rehabilitation of schools and learning sites** helped create safer learning and teaching environments. A total of 534 classrooms were rehabilitated in 79 schools in 2020. Similar to construction activities, annual targets were underachieved (by around 30 per cent) due to the reduced 2020 implementation period and the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. In Syria, the rehabilitation of 400 conflict-damaged classrooms benefited over 28,000 students in seven governorates. In other locations, rehabilitation activities were key to preparations for the safe reopening of schools. In Mexico, the rehabilitation work undertaken included the upgrading of 26 IT classrooms and one classroom in targeted primary schools. In Pakistan, a total of 64 classrooms were renovated in 18 schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, which will facilitate enrolment once schools reopen in 2021. An additional 43 classrooms were also rehabilitated in Chad, Kenya-Kakuma and Sudan. In South Sudan, rehabilitation activities had to be cancelled due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context, while in Yemen, classroom rehabilitation was deprioritised in order to prioritise the rehabilitation of WASH facilities.

The **rehabilitation of WASH facilities** was strengthened to improve hygienic conditions in schools and to enhance the safety of refugee learners in the COVID-19 context. A total of 202 latrines (68 per cent above the annual target) and 44 water points (over 80 per cent of the annual target) were rehabilitated. The rehabilitation of a further 208 latrines in Kenya-Kakuma using funds reallocated from Headquarters under the UNHCR-EAC Programme was ongoing in December 2020. In Yemen, where the rehabilitation of WASH facilities had not initially been included in the 2020 implementation plan, a total

of 37 latrines and 18 handwashing facilities were rehabilitated in Aden and Sana'a following a needs assessment that highlighted the urgent requirement to improve WASH facilities in primary schools. In Kenya-Dadaab, a total of 140 latrines (twice the annual target) were rehabilitated because latrine rehabilitation was prioritised as part of the preparations for the safe reopening of schools in 2021.

Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

The **provision of material assistance to students** was strongly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to school closures, school feeding programmes had to be cancelled, while the distribution of school uniforms, school bags and other school supplies to learners was frequently postponed to 2021. A total of 29,752 students (29 per cent of the annual target) across locations benefited from the actual distribution of school supplies during the 2020 implementation period. In Rwanda and Sudan, school uniforms and other supplies were procured in 2020 but will be distributed to children once schools reopen in 2021. In many locations, students benefited from the distribution of facemasks and other protective equipment under prioritised COVID-19 responses. In Malawi and South Sudan, the material assistance provided to students also included radios to support home-based learning through radio lesson broadcasts. A specific situation was observed in Cameroon where the provision of material assistance to students was cancelled because advocacy carried out with schools and Ministry of Education officials in the Eastern part of the country resulted in refugee children being allowed to attend school without having to wear school uniforms.

The **provision of financial assistance to students and households**, including activities such as the allocation of individual grants, the implementation of CBIs, and the provision of transportation services, was also significantly impacted and could often not be carried out as planned. A total of 7,853 children (24 per cent of the annual target) across locations benefited from financial assistance in 2020. In Mexico, 1,277 children (57 per cent of the annual target) were supported through CBIs that helped families cover connectivity costs related to distance learning. In Kenya-Dadaab, 492 children with disabilities benefited from CBIs that helped parents cover the costs of assistive devices and adequate learning materials. While the provision of CBIs often proved key to helping families afford the cost of education, especially given the increased socio-economic vulnerabilities brought about by the pandemic, CBIs could not always

be implemented due to social distancing requirements and longer processing times. Transportation services often had to be cancelled due to school closures; however, in Malaysia, 2,175 students were provided with transportation services when learning centres resumed activities between July and September 2020.

While **financial interventions targeting schools** were cancelled due to extended school closures in Kenya and Rwanda, the activity was strengthened in Malaysia to help learning centres stay afloat. With school closures affecting the ability of learning centres to collect school fees to fund their activities, and many parents being affected by income loss during the pandemic, the assistance provided helped 55 learning centres purchase PPE, thermometers, and other items that contributed to ensure better compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures. In addition, a total of 120 learning centres (over twice the annual target) benefited from financial assistance that covered the production and dissemination of online learning materials.

Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Targeted support to **over-aged learners** was strongly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. While Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs) and other programmes for over-aged learners are supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, South Sudan, Sudan, and Yemen, only 1,079 over-aged learners (nine per cent of the annual target) benefited from targeted support in AEPs and other specialised programmes in 2020 due to extended school closures. Despite of the challenging 2020 implementation context, significant achievements were observed in Pakistan and Yemen. In Pakistan, 473 out-of-school refugee girls were enrolled in 18 newly created AEP centres, allowing these over-aged girls to complete their primary education within a shortened time frame. In Yemen, increased numbers of over-aged learners were identified thanks to an OOSC survey conducted in 2020, which led to the enrolment of 138 OOSC in a new AEP launched in Basateen-Aden, in addition to the enrolment of 26 OOSC in literacy classes for over-aged learners in Sana'a. Across locations, targeted support to over-aged learners will be key to helping many children and youth catch up on missed schooling in 2021.

At an international level, UNHCR continued to lead the Accelerated Education Working Group¹ (AEWG) that has thrived as a leader in the broader provision of education for out-of-school children and youth. The COVID-19 pandemic meant that the world needed to rapidly scale up flexible education options to reach all learners. This global need spurred the AEWG to leverage expertise in accelerating learning to provide guidance for donors, implementers, and education systems to help all learners catch up when schools reopen. The AEWG continued its engagement in several EAC countries, working with Ministries of Education and other key stakeholders in Cameroon, Kenya, and Uganda. The AEWG also completed a global mapping of alternative education in 55 countries in 2020.

Targeted support was also provided to **refugee girls**, who had already been less likely to be enrolled in schools than boys before the COVID-19 outbreak and who became even more disadvantaged during the pandemic due to increased domestic responsibilities and protection risks. Rising incidents of teenage pregnancy, child marriage, and sexual abuse were reported in various locations. While some activities had to be cancelled in the COVID-19 context, targeted support provided to a total of 11,124 refugee girls (80 per cent of the annual target) increased their access to educational opportunities and enhanced their safety and protection. The distribution of health and hygiene kits was prioritised in Cameroon and extended to a total of 6,084 beneficiaries (twice the annual target), including host community girls, to support their enrolment and retention in school. In Malaysia, 40 refugee girls were supported through a programme providing girls at risk of dropping out with food package assistance, internet connectivity and a monthly support pack containing learning materials and hygiene items. In many locations, UNHCR has been working with partners to provide counselling support and to improve referral mechanisms, while increasing efforts to ensure schools are safe spaces for girls.

Similarly, activities facilitating access to primary education for **refugee children with special needs**, who have been at increased disadvantage during the COVID-19 pandemic, were also implemented in several locations. A total of 6,138 children with special needs (slightly above the annual target) were supported through the organisation of home visits to identify their specific

¹ The AEWG is currently led by UNHCR with representation from UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID, Norwegian Refugee Council, Plan, International Rescue Committee, Save the Children, Education Development Center, ECHO, and War Child Holland.



12 Madina, 14, sits at her desk in an empty classroom at Kings of Nuba Primary School, located in Pamir refugee camp in South Sudan, where schools remained closed amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

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needs, the distribution of scholastic materials, and the provision of assistive devices. In Chad, 4,454 children with special needs (nine per cent over the annual target) benefited from targeted advocacy and individualised follow-up during home visits that involved members of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). In Kenya-Dadaab, 927 children with special needs (nine times the annual target) benefited from pre-recorded radio lessons, digital classes, and the provision of learning materials. In South Sudan, 235 children with special needs were supported through needs assessments, counselling, and remedial learning support. Furthermore, children with visual impairment benefited from home study packages that included materials in braille script and materials recorded on a voice recorder. Due to the short 2020 implementation period, school closures, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the availability of some assistive devices, support to children with special needs had to be reduced or cancelled in Cameroon, Malawi, Malaysia, Rwanda, and Uganda.

At UNHCR's Headquarters, written guidance (in English, Spanish, and French) on the use of appropriate terminology when talking about refugee children with disabilities was disseminated in early 2020 as a follow up to four inclusive education webinars that took place at the end of 2019. The Education Section also strengthened its inter-sectorial collaboration and linkages with different teams/units within UNHCR, namely Child Protection, Gender Based Violence, and Community Based Protection to ensure an integrated approach to safe and inclusive learning environments.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN TARGET SCHOOLS

Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Ensuring continuous support to teachers so they could fulfil their vital role in the continuity of learning during school closures was one of the main priorities across locations in 2020. **Financial support to teachers** was thus strengthened, with a total of 5,447 teachers (37 per cent over the annual target) receiving incentives or salaries under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020. The support provided was instrumental in retaining teachers who would otherwise have been at high risk of leaving

the profession to pursue other activities to sustain their livelihoods. Supported teachers were involved in distance learning programmes as well as in efforts to reach OOSC and sensitise the community about the importance of continued learning. In Uganda, 1,446 teachers (over twice the annual target) were paid and retained during school closures, playing a key role in ensuring the continuity of learning through community learning circles and in raising awareness within the community about the importance of supporting home-based learning. In Kenya, 729 teachers (70 per cent above the annual target) were financially supported in Dadaab and Kakuma, and were involved in distance learning programmes through the preparation of revision materials and lesson notes shared with learners through WhatsApp groups and community learning pods, as well as the delivery of lessons and sensitisation messages through radio broadcasts. Teachers were also financially supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in Cameroon, Chad, Iraq, Malawi, Malaysia, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sudan, and Yemen.

Capacity-building activities for teachers were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In locations in which teacher training could be undertaken, trainings had to be readapted to ensure compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures and that the content was relevant to the 2020 teaching context. A total of 3,318 teachers (83 per cent of the annual target) were trained during the 2020 implementation period. In Chad, 1,134 primary school teachers benefited from formal training provided through the state-led "Pedagogical Days" (*Journées pédagogiques*) organised in cooperation with local education authorities as well as from non-formal training on the school Code of Conduct and COVID-19 prevention measures. In Syria, 790 teachers and educational personnel benefited from training on life-skills and psychosocial support that was organised in cooperation with the MoE. In Iraq, 203 Syrian refugee teachers and 19 host community school management staff in Erbil were trained on the new e-learning platform Ewane. In locations in which access to IT equipment and connectivity was widespread among teachers, the switch to online trainings frequently allowed annual targets to be over-achieved. In Mexico, for example, 219 teachers (over twice the annual target) were trained online on ways to enhance access to education and ensure psychosocial support during school closures. In Malaysia, 250 teachers (67 per cent over the annual target) participated in online trainings on virtual teaching practices. Teacher trainings had to be cancelled in Cameroon, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Uganda due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context and the unfeasibility of organising remote trainings given teachers' limited

access to IT equipment and connectivity. In Yemen, the training planned in Sana'a had to be cancelled because UNHCR was not able to obtain the required permit from relevant authorities in 2020.

The **provision of teaching and learning materials** was strengthened in the COVID-19 context. A total of 263 schools (45 per cent over the annual target) were provided with materials during the 2020 implementation period, which contributed to ensuring the continuity of teaching and learning. Due to school closures, the distribution of materials sometimes had to be postponed to 2021, for example, in Sudan, where the 48,515 textbooks procured in 2020 will be distributed once schools reopen in 2021. In many cases, the materials distributed were readapted to better meet the additional educational needs brought by the pandemic. In Uganda, for example, textbooks were replaced by Home Learning Packs (HLPs) developed by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and the National Council for Curriculum Development (NCCD) to support home-based learning during school closures. A total of 177,078 packs were printed, out of which 55,544 were distributed in 2020 to learners living in and around refugee settlements. Due to lower unit costs of HLPs as compared to textbooks, the annual target was significantly overachieved, and a higher number of beneficiaries could be reached. In addition, 7,500 solar radios with lamps were procured to further support remote learning in Uganda. In Kenya-Kakuma, learners were provided with a total of 15,500 textbooks and 14,550 school kits, resulting in annual targets being overachieved thanks to the Government's tax relief policy in the COVID-19 context.

The **organisation of support classes** was a key area of focus in 2020, as increased numbers of learners needed additional support to continue learning and catch up on missed schooling. A total of 1,545 support classes (31 per cent over the annual target) were organised, which included 882 catch-up, 600 homework support, 42 orientation and 21 language support classes. The number of support classes was often increased as classes took place in smaller groups to respect physical distancing measures. In Malaysia, 210 support classes (over twice the annual target) were run online or in community cluster classrooms, with teachers traveling to the community to conduct sessions in small groups. In Iraq, 439 newly enrolled students benefited from catch-up and language support classes before the start of the new academic year; in line with health guidelines, classes were limited to five students per classroom, and face-masks were distributed to all students. In Syria, a total of 16,000 children benefited from support classes and

homework café activities in targeted community centres. In other locations, support classes were added to implementation plans to strengthen the COVID-19 education response. In Chad, for example, 958 refugee children in Dar es Salam and Kouchaguine Moura camps benefited from support classes that helped them catch up on lost schooling. In Mexico, support classes could not take place as planned due to COVID-19 restrictions and were replaced by individual counselling sessions and homework support provided to a total of 244 children through phone calls and WhatsApp messages.

Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Data collection and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) were particularly challenging in the COVID-19 context due to extended school closures, restrictions on movement, and major difficulties in the monitoring of students' participation and engagement in home-based learning. While most existing **data collection systems** benefited from financial support to maintain and/or adapt them to the COVID-19 context in 2020, a major new development should be highlighted in Yemen. In the Southern part of the country, UNHCR established a new education data collection system in the five targeted primary schools in Aden and Kharaz camp. Thanks to the new system, schools were able to collect enrolment data disaggregated by gender and grade level, track movements between camp and urban schools, and monitor dropouts. This represents a significant achievement. Data management rooms in targeted schools in Aden and Kharaz camp were also provided with adequate equipment during the 2020 implementation period.

Not all planned **trainings on data collection and M&E** could take place due to COVID-19 restrictions. Nevertheless, a total of 360 individuals were trained (almost 90 per cent of the annual target) to ensure that the tools and systems in place were properly managed. In Malaysia, 180 teachers were trained on data collection, management, and reporting through an online training that allowed the participation of a higher number of participants (80 per cent more) than was initially planned for the face-to-face training. In Malawi, 98 teachers participated in training that included an important data management component. In Yemen, training was conducted on the newly introduced data collection system for data staff in Aden and camp schools. Trainings on data collection and M&E had to be cancelled in Cameroon, Kenya, Rwanda, and South Sudan due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context.

Close monitoring of schools was crucial in 2020 to assess the implementation of activities, to ensure compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures, and to prepare for the safe reopening of schools. A total of 345 primary schools (100 per cent of the annual target) received support through monitoring visits during the 2020 implementation period. In Cameroon, for example, all 14 targeted primary schools were monitored for compliance with the education standards of the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB) through joint missions and

Mayoika, a host community teacher, visits South Sudanese primary school children in Omugo, Rhino camp extension, to teach English lessons. Since schools closed in Uganda in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers have worked tirelessly to find ways to keep children learning.

© UNHCR/ Esther Ruth Mbabazi



provided with instructional support. In South Sudan, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) inspected all 33 targeted primary schools for compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures and schools' readiness for safe reopening. In Malaysia, monitoring visits were conducted by UNHCR to a total of 84 learning centres during which meetings were organised with teachers and school management staff to discuss educational needs and challenges in the COVID-19 context.

The **conduct of surveys and assessments** was negatively affected by the pandemic and often had to be deprioritised. Despite the challenging implementation context, an OOSC survey was undertaken in the Northern part of Yemen and enabled the identification of a total of 1,013 OOSC children aged 6-18 years in Sana'a. The main reasons identified for non-enrolment and school dropout were the lack of awareness of the importance

of education, the inability to cover associated costs, the lack of required documentation, perceptions of teaching competency, and inadequate educational programmes for children with disabilities. As a result of the survey, the 2020 annual enrolment target was overachieved in Yemen. Identifying OOSC was particularly challenging in locations in which schools remained closed until the end of 2020. In some cases, OOSC were identified during the distribution of materials to learners. In South Sudan, for example, data collection during the door-to-door distribution of home study packs enabled the identification of a total of 7,793 OOSC who benefited from the distribution of learning materials. While it was hard to estimate how many OOSC engaged in home-based learning, it is expected that the efforts undertaken to reach OOSC during school closures will boost enrolment once primary schools reopen in 2021.

At UNHCR Headquarters' level, three webinars on data were delivered by the Education Section in 2020 in collaboration with the Global Data Service (GDS). The webinars, which were attended by over 190 people, provided foundational information about data collection, analysis, sharing, and sensitivities and enhanced collaboration between Education and Information Management staff. Participants included UNHCR staff working across all regions and a range of functional areas, including Education, Protection, Information Management/Data, and others. The Education Section also supported preparations for the roll out of the Refugee Management Information System (REMIS) in Chad. Other data-related activities in the second half of 2020 included the development of guidance for core and good practice indicators for UNHCR's new results-based management system called COMPASS. Guidance was also provided through the development of three education indicators for the reporting on the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP).

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced

The organisation of **sensitisation and awareness-raising sessions** to engage the community were negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with only 62 per cent of the initially planned sessions being undertaken across locations. In Malaysia, awareness-raising sessions and outreach efforts targeting community members had to be cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. An increase in anti-refugee sentiments was also associated with the pandemic in Malaysia and negatively affected UNHCR's efforts to reach OOSC. In locations in which schools reopened before the end of 2020, annual targets were sometimes overachieved because more sessions were carried out but in smaller groupings, in order to respect physical distancing measures. In Chad, for example, a total of 176 sessions (over seven times the annual target) were organised in 88 schools. In Yemen, a total of 31 sessions (over twice the annual target) took place, of which 26 sessions focusing on COVID-19 prevention measures were carried out in targeted schools in Sana'a. In many locations, teachers and community-based groups were engaged in sensitisation activities within their communities. For instance, teachers participated in the spread of key messages through radio broadcasts in Kenya and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Mothers'

Associations spread COVID-19 awareness messages in Chad.

While not all sensitisation activities could take place as planned, community participation was encouraged in all locations, as involving parents and other community members was key to ensuring the continuity of learning and preparing for the safe reopening of schools. While **training activities targeting community-based groups** such as PTAs, parents' groups, students' groups, School Management Committees (SMCs), and volunteer groups were cancelled in many locations, some capacity-building initiatives were significantly strengthened. This led to a total of 3,363 community group members (over twice the annual target) being trained in 2020. In Chad, a total of 1,738 parents, including 837 mothers, received training at the beginning of the 2020/2021 school year. A total of 732 students also participated in a "cleanest school contest" undertaken in each camp/site/village to promote hygiene and sanitation measures in schools. In Uganda, 165 community members, student leaders, and PTA members attended one-day training sessions on a wide range of educational topics, such as home-based learning, back to school campaigns, capacity-building on child protection issues, and COVID-19 prevention measures.

Output 3.2: Local and national partnerships on education strengthened

Local and national partnerships were strengthened in 2020, as multi-stakeholder coordination was essential to responding to the unprecedented educational disruption and the exacerbated needs brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Enhanced collaboration with Ministries of Education (MoEs) and other local and national educational stakeholders were key to pursuing the inclusion of refugee children in national COVID-19 education responses and remote learning programmes. Regular multi-stakeholder meetings, which were often held online, were crucial to synergising efforts, establishing coordination mechanisms, and ensuring efficient implementation. In Kenya, for example, the development of an inter-agency COVID-19 education response plan for coordinating education responses facilitated the rapid transition to out-of-classroom learning and the roll-out of various learning continuity interventions in close coordination with national and local authorities. In Uganda, strengthened coordination between educational stakeholders in line with the Education Response Plan and in cooperation with the District Local Governments meant that key initiatives led by the MoEs to support the continuity of learning, such as the printing and distribution of



Madina, 14, sits at her desk in an empty classroom at Kings of Nuba Primary School, located in Pamir refugee camp in South Sudan, where schools remained closed amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

© UNHCR/Assim Said Ali Juma

Home Learning Packs, were well implemented and that gaps could be quickly identified and filled.

While partnerships at local and national levels were strengthened across locations, all **capacity-building activities targeting partner personnel** were deprioritised in the COVID-19 context and postponed to 2021. In Malaysia, training activities engaging MoE representatives, were postponed due to the need to strengthen UNHCR's relationship with the MoE after the reopening of schools in 2021 and an identified need to further refine our joint cooperation. In South Sudan, training activities for partner personnel were cancelled because the switch to online trainings was not feasible due to limited access to IT equipment and connectivity. In the Southern part of Yemen, the signature of a new education agreement with the MoE of the internationally recognised Government of Yemen was affected by COVID-19 related delays, which led to all training activities for MoE personnel to be postponed to 2021.

In some locations, **material support** was provided to strengthen the capacity of MoEs. In Cameroon, three Regional Delegations and seven Departmental Delegations of the MINEDUB were supported with the provision of furniture and equipment, which promoted

the provision of documentation to refugee children and improved the quality of planning and monitoring. In Yemen, furniture and equipment were provided to the Office of Education in the Da'ar Sa'ad district in Aden and to two government education offices in the Northern part of the country, which were also supported with the establishment of a central computer network connecting all education offices in the provinces, which will facilitate registration and enrolment.

At a global level, a cornerstone of UNHCR's education response has been its advocacy to include refugees within national policy, planning, and implementation and related engagement with other actors to ensure harmonised, equitable, and inclusive responses. In this regard, and in line with the Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR initiated a Primary Education Task Team to coordinate and help track pledges related to primary education made during the Global Refugee Forum. UNHCR also engaged in coordination mechanisms and structures

managing COVID-19 education responses and producing global guidance, such as the [framework for the reopening of schools](#) issued jointly with UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Food Programme, and the World Bank as well as the “[Safe Back to School Guide](#)” endorsed by the Global Education Cluster and Child Protection Area of Responsibility. Additionally, UNHCR issued “[COVID-19 Refugees’ Return to Schooling Guidance](#)” and mobilised emergency resources to regions and countries in support of educational recovery.

OUTCOME 4: IMPROVED CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SPORT

The UNHCR-EAC Sport for Protection (S4P) Initiative is being implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in four pilot locations: Chad, Kenya-Kakuma, Rwanda and Uganda. Framed around [UNHCR’s S4P approach](#), it builds on past programmes focusing on the ability of sports to enhance the protection and well-being of children and youth.

During the first phase of the UNHCR-EAC S4P Initiative, selected youth and primary school teachers are enrolled in a six-month certified blended learning course called the Youth Sports Facilitator (YSF) training course that was jointly devised by UNHCR and Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL). During the second phase, the trained youth and primary school teachers roll out contextualised S4P programmes for children in targeted primary schools. It is anticipated that through engaging children in fun S4P activities, the programme will encourage children’s increased access to primary education and retention once enrolled.

The language of instruction of the YSF course is English for participants in Kenya-Kakuma, Rwanda, and Uganda and Arabic in Chad. Before the launch of the S4P Initiative in the four pilot locations, UNHCR and JWL worked together at Headquarters to develop an Arabic version of the course, translate the content and make multilingual and multimedia updates to the accompanying e-learning platform, which is now able to support multiple languages and therefore usable in a wider number of contexts.

Output 4.1: Children participating in a sport for protection programme

Due to the reduced 2020 implementation period of the UNHCR-EAC Programme and the impact of COVID-19 containment measures and restrictions, the first phase of the UNHCR-EAC S4P Initiative started much later than initially

planned. Consequently, the roll out of S4P programmes in targeted primary schools was postponed to 2021. Although no S4P activities were implemented in 2020, sport facilities were upgraded or newly constructed, and sports equipment was procured in preparation of the roll out of S4P programmes in primary schools in 2021 and 2022.

Output 4.2: Youth facilitators trained to implement a sport for protection programme

As part of the first phase of the S4P Initiative, a total of 233 youth and primary school teachers (over twice the annual target) from refugee and host communities were enrolled in the YSF training course after the easing of COVID-19 restrictions in Chad, Kenya-Kakuma, and Uganda. In Rwanda, COVID-19 restrictions halted the recruitment of onsite facilitators and the selection of course participants, which resulted in the start date of the YSF training course being further delayed to 2021. In Kenya-Kakuma and Uganda, the number of targeted youth and primary school teachers was increased following a joint JWL-UNHCR assessment undertaken in 2020 that highlighted that the cost-effective technology solutions put in place could allow for a higher number of course participants. While more than half of the current course participants in Chad are female, gender parity was not achieved among course participants in Kenya-Kakuma and Uganda, where outreach activities to encourage girls to apply were severely affected by COVID-19 restrictions and led to a very limited number of female applicants.

During the 2020 implementation period, course participants were provided with tablet devices to access course materials and study both online and offline. To address connectivity gaps, server laptops, preloaded with YSF course materials accessible in locations with intermittent Internet connectivity, were set up in the various camps across implementation locations. By connecting the tablets to the server laptops (known as “computers in the corner”), course participants in Chad, Kenya-Kakuma, and Uganda could download course units, access an offline library with additional reading resources, and submit their weekly assignments to the offsite university faculty for evaluation. In addition to the guidance provided by the experienced online facilitators affiliated with the accrediting higher education institutions, onsite facilitators were also recruited locally to provide further support, to facilitate in-class, physically-distanced activities for small groups of trainees, and to act as intermediaries between the offsite education institutions and the trainees. Onsite facilitators participated in online orientation programmes facilitated by JWL.

3 Key Achievements

- 91 classrooms constructed and 534 classrooms rehabilitated
- 377 latrines and 76 water points constructed
- 202 latrines and 44 water points rehabilitated
- 320 schools provided with furniture/equipment
- 29,752 students supported through material assistance
- 7,853 students supported through financial assistance
- 11,084 girls provided with health and hygiene kits
- 1,079 over-aged learners supported through AEPs and other programmes
- 6,138 children with special needs benefiting from targeted support
- 3,318 teachers and educational personnel trained
- 1,545 support classes provided
- 5,447 teachers financially supported
- 173,071 textbooks and school kits distributed
- 263 schools provided with teaching and learning materials
- 360 individuals trained on data collection and M&E
- 345 schools monitored and/or provided with instructional support
- 3,363 community members trained
- 233 youth and teachers trained in Sport for Protection

4 Main Challenges

The late signature of the UNHCR-EAC Partnership Agreement on 12 June 2020 significantly impacted country implementation plans, as activities supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme could only start on 12 June 2020. Due to the reduced 2020 implementation period, some activities had to be reduced in scope or only partially completed in 2020, while others had to be cancelled or postponed to 2021. In some locations, many activities that were meant to be implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme had already been undertaken outside of the Programme during the first half of the year because it was not possible to wait until the signature of the Partnership Agreement for activities to be implemented¹.

In addition to the difficulties that were faced due to the reduced 2020 implementation period of the UNHCR-EAC Programme, the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting educational disruption posed an unprecedented challenge to the implementation of activities across locations in 2020. The pandemic not only disrupted schooling, but also interrupted displaced children's access to school meals, psychosocial support, transportation services, as well as the safety, routine and protection aspects that being enrolled in school provides students. Many refugee families saw their precarious livelihoods threatened and were no longer able to afford the costs associated with education. Curfews and restrictions on movement affected interventions and caused delays. Activities had to be constantly readapted in the evolving COVID-19 context and related prevention measures.

While many activities supported the continuity of learning and teaching amidst the pandemic, inequities in access to digital devices and connectivity remained key barriers for refugee families and often prevented refugee children from accessing distance learning programmes. Refugee girls were particularly disadvantaged, as they were often involved in domestic chores and sometimes

¹ While these activities are mentioned in country chapters, they were not counted towards EAC targets or accompanying budgets.

less encouraged than their male peers to engage in home-based learning. Limited access to IT equipment and connectivity also made the switch from face-to-face trainings to online trainings unfeasible in a number of locations, which led to the cancellation of various capacity-building initiatives targeting teachers, educational personnel, community members, and partner personnel.

While all displaced children were severely affected by school closures, the most vulnerable groups of refugee children were particularly disadvantaged and often saw their educational needs inadequately met. Refugee girls faced increased protection risks, with incidents of teenage pregnancy, child marriage and sexual abuse being reported on the rise in many locations during school closures. Children with special needs often found their specific educational needs poorly addressed and had limited access to adequate materials and remote learning opportunities. Over-aged learners often did not have access to AEPs or other programmes taking into account their specific educational needs.

The identification and the enrolment of OOSC were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in locations in which schools remained closed throughout the 2020 implementation period of the UNHCR-EAC Programme. No new enrolments of OOSC could be reported in 2020 in Chad, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. Despite measures put in place across locations to reach OOSC during school closures (e.g., the diffusion of sensitisation messages via radio broadcasts and the distribution of self-study packs), OOSC often remained very hard to reach, especially out-of-school refugee girls.

Data collection and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) were particularly challenging in the COVID-19 context due to school closures, restrictions on movement, and difficulties monitoring students' participation and engagement in home-based learning. The absence of solid data collection tools to capture school enrolment, retention, and dropouts also remained a challenge in some locations, for example, in the Northern part of Yemen. Specific challenges were faced in some cases due to

A student at Arid Zone Primary School in Kenya-Kakuma has her temperature taken at the school's entrance. Temperature checks in schools are part of the measures implemented to tackle the spread of COVID-19.

© UNHCR/Samuel Otieno



partners' limited data collection capacity, for example, in Sudan, it was not possible to have access to disaggregated data related to the teachers financially supported and trained under the UNHCR-EAC Programme.

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, other major challenges affecting the operational environment were faced in some locations. These included:

New refugee influxes, which created additional educational needs and put a strain on already stretched resources and infrastructure. In Sudan, the new influx of Ethiopian refugees from the Tigray region created additional educational needs in the Eastern part of the country. In Chad, the influx of Sudanese refugees from Darfur led to the creation of the Kouchaguine-Moura refugee camp, where the construction of two primary schools was supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme. Armed conflict took a heavy toll on education systems, especially in Yemen and Syria, as the two countries continued to witness two of the worst humanitarian crises in the world, with the deterioration of infrastructure and living conditions being further exacerbated by the negative socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While inflation and currency volatility were witnessed in several locations, they strongly impacted educational interventions in Sudan, where activities such as the provision of textbooks and scholastic materials saw their targets underachieved due to higher unit prices.

Lengthy administrative procedures also impacted the implementation of activities in some operations. In Malawi, the construction of a new primary school in Dzaleka camp could not take place as planned due to the lengthy administrative procedures related to school construction. In Yemen, lengthy procedures for obtaining mandatory approvals from the authorities in order to organise and provide teacher training led to the cancellation of the teacher training planned in Sana'a in 2020. Changes in policies also affected the UNHCR-EAC Programme. For instance, in Cameroon, advocacy carried out with schools and Ministry officials in the Eastern part of the country resulted in refugee children being allowed to attend school without having to wear school uniforms and, thus, lead to the cancellation of the provision of material assistance to students.

Looking ahead, and with COVID-19 amplifying pre-existing inequalities, predictions related to return to learning appear chilling for displaced children who were among the most at risk of being excluded from educational activities even before the COVID-19 pandemic forced the closure of schools. Despite efforts to provide continued

support during school closures, many displaced children missed out on learning and assistance offered through school and may not return to classrooms when schools reopen. As a result of rising poverty due to COVID-19, some children were at greater risk of being pushed into child labour, additional household chores, and harmful practices, and may face greater pressure to drop out and not to return to school. The global recession that is projected to accompany the pandemic may also push more displaced children, especially girls, out of primary school. As displaced children often struggled to access distance learning programmes and to remain engaged in learning, they might find it difficult to catch up on the schooling that they missed. Additionally, classroom overcrowding and difficulties in managing physical distancing may deter parents or caregivers from sending their children back to school.

5 Lessons Learned and Innovations

The COVID-19 pandemic and its negative impact on educational activities highlighted the importance of flexible educational programming and innovative solutions to ensure the continuity of learning and teaching during school closures. The ability to strengthen, readapt, or deprioritise activities supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme to better address the educational gaps brought on by the pandemic and to ensure compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures, was essential to strengthening COVID-19 education responses across locations. Enhanced support to teachers as well as the distribution of home-study packs and solar radios increased access to remote learning opportunities in a number of locations. The expansion of WASH facilities in schools, the provision of facemasks, soap, handwashing solutions, and thermometers, as well as training and awareness-raising activities focusing on hygiene and COVID-19 prevention measures were all crucial in preparations for the safe reopening of schools.

In locations such as Kenya, Malawi, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda, radio lesson broadcasting proved key to ensuring continuity of learning because few learners could benefit from online classes. In Dadaab, Kenya, for example, it is estimated that approximately 60 per cent of enrolled learners could be reached with educational programmes monthly thanks to national radio programmes from the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), which were expanded to include refugee and host communities through the use of local and community radio stations. Teachers were supported in facilitating remote learning, using radio broadcasts for social advocacy purposes, as well as offering mental health and psychosocial support to the children. In Malawi, radio sets were procured for final-year primary students preparing for the Primary School National Examination at home and, thanks to the broadcasting of lessons on the local radio by a group of teachers trained in radio-based teaching, the examination pass rate improved from 64.5 per cent in 2019 to 76 per cent in 2020.

To help primary school-aged children learn during school closures, home-learning packages were developed and distributed in a number of locations. In Uganda,

the printing and distribution of MoES-approved Home Learning Packs (HLPs) was a key component of UNHCR's response to keep children learning and increase their likelihood of returning to school. A total of 177,078 HLPs were procured in 2020 for learners living in and around refugee settlements. To minimise learning loss among children with disabilities, who often struggled to access home-learning solutions, special home learning packages in braille-script were developed and distributed in South Sudan for children with visual impairments.

Increased community participation and involvement of community-based groups, such as PTAs, parents' groups, students' groups, and volunteer groups, were pivotal in raising awareness about the importance of education, ensuring that children were engaged in home-based learning, and enhancing the protection of children during school closures and lockdowns. Community engagement was crucial in receiving feedback about the activities implemented and identifying the most urgent gaps and needs. Community members were also involved in the dissemination of messages on COVID-19 prevention measures. Refugee and host community teachers played a vital role not only by adapting their ways of teaching, but also by monitoring children's participation in home-based learning through door-to-door visits, by offering targeted support to learners (e.g., counselling or homework support sessions via WhatsApp groups), and by being involved in awareness-raising activities within their communities.

Strengthened partnerships at local and national levels were key in the planning and implementation of strong COVID-19 education responses across operations. Efficient coordination mechanisms between all educational stakeholders was instrumental in the transition to out-of-classroom learning and teaching during school closures and preparations for the safe reopening of schools. In a number of locations, strengthened cooperation with MoEs and local education authorities helped ensure the inclusion of refugees in national COVID-19 response plans and remote learning programmes, the distribution of MoE-approved teaching and learning materials, and

the timely dissemination of national COVID-19 protocols and guidelines on the reopening of schools.

Across locations, the COVID-19 pandemic presented an opportunity to re-think educational interventions in displacement contexts, reflect on ways to enhance educational programming for OOSC, and to "build back better". By drawing on the measures introduced to minimise the educational disruption and facilitate the continuity of learning during school closures, the responsiveness and the reach of education services could be enhanced to engage more OOSC in educational activities at all phases of displacement. By integrating greater flexibility and experimenting with different delivery channels, innovative teaching and learning solutions may change the ways displaced children receive equitable quality education, build and develop skills, and prepare for lifelong learning and future opportunities. In various locations, the introduction of distance learning opportunities through mobile devices or radios showed that the deployment of technology could play a key role in enhancing access to education, meeting curriculum requirements, and developing of digital literacy and other important soft skills. With the COVID-19 pandemic highlighting the centrality of solidarity, partnership, and cooperation in making sure that no one is left behind, there is momentum for further uniting to implement the Global Compact on Refugees, to include refugees in national education systems and COVID-19 responses, and to progress towards and ultimately achieve educational parity between refugees and nationals at the primary school level and beyond.

6 Country Reports

COUNTRY OPERATIONS

- Cameroon
- Chad
- Iraq
- Kenya–Dadaab
- Kenya–Kakuma
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Mexico
- Pakistan
- Rwanda
- South Sudan
- Sudan
- Syrian Arab Republic
- Uganda
- Yemen



Cameroon

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

14



PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS



- East region: municipalities of Batouri, Betare-Oya, Bombé, Girigombo and Ketté
- Adamaoua region: municipalities of Dir, Djohong Meiganga and Ngaoui
- North region: municipality of Touboro

EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



Implementing partners

- Lutheran World Federation (LWF)
- Agence de Développement Economique et Social (ADES)

Operational partner

- Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB)

As of 31 December 2020, 293,352 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) were registered in the East, Adamaoua, and North regions, 55 per cent out of whom were children. The escalating violence surrounding the presidential election held in the CAR in December 2020 triggered a growing refugee influx into neighbouring countries, including Cameroon. Despite on-going insecurity along the border with the CAR, the Government of Cameroon has continued to implement its open-door policy and allow access to its territory to persons in need of international protection in accordance with the international, regional, and national legal frameworks.

Refugee children have continued to access Cameroonian public schools. As a result, 33,480 students (14,193 girls and 19,287 boys) were enrolled in primary education during the 2019/2020 academic year. In March 2020, the Government announced several measures to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the closure of all schools across the country. The academic year was adjusted, and children in intermediary classes were evaluated based on the learning that they had completed at the time of the closures. Schools started to progressively re-open in June. In September/October, the Government eased measures taken in March and the new academic year started in October, which was one month later than usual.

The most significant change in the overall education programme was the introduction of a rotation planning in schools which consisted of having two shifts (morning and afternoon), and required more resources. The national Education and Vocational Training Sector Strategy (ETSS) 2030 is currently under development and will, for the first time, include refugee children.

Implementation Progress and Impact

A total of 3,248 refugee children were newly enrolled in 14 primary schools during the 2020 implementation period. Thanks to the UNHCR-EAC programme, refugee children's enrolment rate in primary education has risen from 46 per cent during the 2019/2020 academic year to 52 per cent during the 2020/2021 academic year.

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Activities implemented under output 1.1 (Educational infrastructure newly constructed) were key in improving access to primary education in 2020. Although construction activities could only start in October 2020 due to restrictions of movements and COVID-19 prevention measures, a total of 34 new classrooms (76 per cent of the 2020 target) were constructed. This helped improve

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT
TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL
12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 85%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	13.333	Male 1.670	Female 1.578	Total 3.248
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Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator 1.1.c: Number of classrooms newly constructed in existing schools/learning sites	100			34
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Indicator 1.1.d: Number of latrines newly constructed	100			102
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Indicator 1.1.e: Number of water points newly constructed	9			14
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Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture	11	Newly built schools 0	Existing schools 14	Total 14
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Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.a: Number of students supported by material assistance	23.643	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 1.3.b: Number of students supported by financial assistance	22.333	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.b: Number of girls supported through gender specific activities	9.000			6.084
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Indicator 1.4.c: Number of children with special needs supported	1.000	Male 74	Female 58	Total 132
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OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	100%	Male 100%	Female 100%	Total 100%
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Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	3.066	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	100	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	11.550	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 2.1.c: Number of support classes provided	33			0
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Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	100	Male 89	Female 61	Total 150
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Indicator 2.1.f: Number of schools provided with teaching and learning materials	11			44
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Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Indicator 2.2.a: Number of individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	22	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 2.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	4.158	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 2.2.c: Number of schools monitored and/or provided with instructional support at least once per year	11			14
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Indicator 2.2.d: Number of schools supported by the project with a data collection system in place	0			0
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OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 3.a: Number of sensitisation and awareness raising sessions/meetings organised to engage the community	66			4
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Output 3.2: Local and national partnerships on education strengthened

Indicator 3.2.a: Number of partner personnel (including MoE and local/national partners) successfully trained	100	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 3.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals (MoE personnel and local/national partners) successfully trained	4.200	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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the classroom-student ratio from 1:50 in 2019/2020 to 1:35 in 2020/2021, ensured compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures and contributed to safer learning environments. Thanks to the provision of 1,500 desks to a total of 14 schools, the desk-student ratio also improved from 1:5 in 2019/2020 to 1:3 in 2020/2021.

The expansion of WASH facilities, which was also undertaken under output 1.1, was prioritised due to exacerbated needs in the COVID-19 context. A total of 102 latrines (over twice the 2020 target) and 14 water points (over three times the 2020 target) were constructed, thus significantly over-achieving annual targets. The increased number of latrines and water points in schools helped improve hygienic conditions, prevent the spread of COVID-19, and enhance the safety and protection of both refugee and host community students. The free distribution of facemasks and the installation of hand-washing equipment, which were undertaken outside of the UNHCR-EAC Programme, also facilitated children's enrolment in school.

Activities planned under output 1.3 (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools) could not be implemented in 2020. The provision of material assistance to students was cancelled because advocacy carried out with schools and Ministry officials in the Eastern part of Cameroon has resulted in refugee children being allowed to attend school without having to wear school uniforms. In working towards the full inclusion of refugee children in the national education system, the distribution of other school supplies has also been cancelled and will be covered under the financial assistance provided to vulnerable families. The financial support to students, which was planned in the form of cash-based interventions (CBIs), could not be carried out during the short 2020 implementation period because CBI implementation is a lengthy process that requires solid preparation and sufficient time to be effective.

Targeted support was provided to girls and children with disabilities under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students). With the provision of hygiene kits being prioritised in the COVID-19 context, a total of 6,084 refugee girls (twice the 2020 target) received soap and underwear, which encouraged their enrolment and retention in school. The targeted support to children with disabilities had to be slightly reduced. Due to the short implementation period, only home-visits were undertaken, thanks to which 132 children with disabilities were identified in 2020 and will be supported with appropriate equipment and devices in 2021.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Two key activities were prioritised under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn) to ensure the continuity of teaching and learning during the pandemic: the provision of financial support to teachers and the distribution of teaching and learning materials. A total of 150 teachers (close to three times the 2020 target) benefited from incentives and materials in 44 primary schools. This crucial support contributed to the retention of teachers in schools in refugee-hosting areas and the delivery of quality education, which had been major issues in the past. While support to teachers was key during the 2020 implementation period, teacher training and support classes could not be undertaken due to COVID-19 prevention measures.

Training activities that had been planned under output 2.2 (Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools) had to be cancelled due to the lack of available trainers during the period of school reopening. Despite the challenging 2020 implementation context, a total of 14 schools were monitored for compliance with the education standards of the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB) through joint missions and received instructional support.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

With COVID-19 prevention measures in place, only four back-to-school campaigns involving door-to-door visits could be organised in September 2020. The MINEDUB and school officials were informed about the different activities undertaken under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, and, more generally, sensitised on the need to encourage refugee children to go to school. Regular communication with refugee and host communities on the importance of education and related issues was also put in place through the broadcasting of key messages through local radios. It was noted that the major factors that encouraged parents to send and keep their children in school were the availability of educational infrastructure and WASH facilities in schools, as well as the support provided to teachers and the MINEDUB.

While training activities for partner personnel planned under output 3.2. (Local and national partnerships on education strengthened) could not take place during the 2020 implementation period due to a lack of avail-

able trainers and challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, three Regional Delegations and seven Departmental Delegations of the MINEDUB were supported through the provision of furniture and equipment (computers, printers, ink). This also promoted the provision of documentation to refugee children and improved the quality of planning and monitoring in areas in which the UNHCR-EAC Programme was implemented.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

As in many other locations, the COVID-19 pandemic created a very challenging implementation context in 2020. Many activities, such as construction activities, trainings, and advocacy meetings were heavily impacted by prevention measures and restrictions on movement. While online gatherings were introduced as a measure to hold meetings, many stakeholders encountered logistical issues due to poor internet access and/or lack of IT equipment. Mitigation measures were put in place in order to address these challenges.

The main effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector were the closure of schools, readjustments to school calendars, and the introduction of distance learning through TV and online platforms. This negatively impacted refugee children, as over 90 per cent of them were living in remote rural areas with limited or no access to electricity, connectivity, and devices. The UNHCR-EAC Programme significantly strengthened the COVID-19 education response and preparation for the safe reopening of primary schools through key activities such as the expansion of educational infrastructure and WASH facilities, the provision of teaching and learning materials, continuous support to teachers, and the distribution of hygiene kits for girls.

In some refugee-hosting areas not covered by the UNHCR-EAC programme, the lack of infrastructure, school materials, and teachers hindered refugee children's access to education, especially girls. With the educational disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, parents were concerned that their children would drop out of school and, without any appropriate protection measure, adopt negative behaviors. Some cases of forced and early marriage were identified, but these families continue to be very hard to reach. Additional infrastructure, material support, and awareness-raising will enhance advocacy at the level of the MINEDUB to retain teachers, strengthen educational programming, and encourage parents to send their children to school.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

The involvement of the MINEDUB should be highlighted as one of the main lessons learned, as it helped create a climate of trust and ensured effective collaboration despite the challenging 2020 context. After the UNHCR-EAC Programme was officially launched in the town of Ngaoundéré in the Adamaoua region in presence of Ministry officials and education partners, a working group was set up in order to define the strategic axes of intervention in terms of infrastructure, equipments, community sensitisation, capacity building, and joint supervision. Throughout the implementation of construction activities, the MINEDUB provided technical guidance to UNHCR and its partners to ensure conformity with governmental standards. Information on implementation progress was regularly shared by UNHCR with all education stakeholders to ensure complementarity and avoid any duplication or overlap. Moving forward, collaboration with the Government will continue to be strengthened through joint monitoring missions and through the provision of ICT materials to the MINEDUB to reinforce data collection and analysis. The planned training on monitoring and evaluation will ensure refugees' inclusion in the education data collection and analysis undertaken by the Government.

With the UNHCR-EAC Programme being implemented for the first time in Cameroon, it should also be noted that the approach of simultaneously implementing activities enhancing access to primary education, improving teaching and learning resources, and increasing the engagement of educational stakeholders, was new for most of the supported schools in the East, Adamaoua and North regions. Through this approach, the UNHCR-EAC Programme has sparked strong motivation and renewed interest in education among teachers, parents, and children themselves.

From the playground to the classroom, together as one

“What would be nice would be to have a stadium!” says Asmaou, whose shy smile reveals gap teeth. But she admits just getting a ball for school would be okay as well.

In the small village of Nabemo, located along Cameroon’s border with the Central African Republic, there are few extracurricular activities. But like children the world over, girls and boys who attend primary school here know how to have fun. Skipping rope does the trick at recess. This is how Asmaou spends her time, when she is not in class - information and communication technologies is her favourite subject - or helping her mother in her sewing workshop.

In recent weeks, however, something else has elicited excitement from children and teachers alike. Alongside the laughter and racket of the schoolyard, hammers hit away and wheelbarrows squeak up and down, as new classrooms are added on both sides of the old school building. Nearby, new desks are ready and waiting to be used. It is a breath of fresh air for the school, whose 700 students - including 278 Central African refugees - are currently forced to study in cramped spaces.

At the back of the courtyard, overlooking a village of traditional houses, there is a brand new water fountain. Behind the buildings, latrines are under construction.

In the North, East and Adamawa regions in Cameroon, which are home to nearly 300,000 Central African refugees, 3,248 refugee children were newly enrolled in 14 primary schools supported by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and the Education Above All Foundation (EAA), through the UNHCR-Educate A Child (EAC) Programme.

The school is expanding and offering improved hygiene conditions for girls and boys. It has become the pride of a community where refugees and Cameroonians live together.

“At school, there is no difference between refugees and Cameroonians,” explains Mr. Hamadidja, president of the Parent Teacher Association. That’s what makes me feel good about this school. Its teachers are engaged, and its children are engaged.”



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Chad

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED



88 (16 of them in host villages)

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS



Refugee camps and host villages in nine Provinces (Ennedi Est, Wadi Fira, Ouaddai, Sila, Logone Oriental, Madoul, Salamat, Moyen Chari, Lac)

EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



Lake Chad region

- Chadian Red Cross (CRC)

Eastern Chad and Urban Areas

- Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)

Southern Chad

- Associazione di Cooperazione Rurale in Africa e America Latina (ACRA)

In 2020, Chad hosted over 477,000 refugees, most of whom were from Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR), and close to 340,000 internally displaced Chadians. Those numbers have kept increasing over the past few years due to insecurity in the region: in January 2020, close to 9,000 refugees arrived in Eastern Chad from Sudan, leading to the creation of the new Kouchaguine Moura camp, and at the end of December 2020, new refugees began to arrive in Southern Chad following violence surrounding the presidential election in the CAR. Regular new influxes have put further strain on Chad's resources and infrastructure. Internally, the situation in Lake Chad remained extremely tense, with regular attacks on villages and rising displacement of civilians.

The COVID-19 pandemic strongly impacted the education sector in Chad in 2020. The closure of schools in March 2020 interrupted learning for 100,000 refugees attending schools in camps, villages and cities across the country. The Ministry of Education (MoE) set up a contingency plan to ensure that children would keep learning through distance learning programmes, and refugees were included in the plan. However, the plan focused mainly on TV and online classes, which were inaccessible for a large portion of the refugee population. Face-to-face classes resumed at the end of June for students taking national examinations during the

summer. For the rest of the student population, classes did not resume until October for a month of "catch-up", and the new academic year began in November.

On a positive note, the end of the year saw a significant achievement in the area of refugee education: the 2030 Refugee Education Strategy for Chad was endorsed by the MoE in November 2020. For the implementation of educational activities supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020, UNHCR partnered with the Chadian Red Cross, the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), and the *Associazione di Cooperazione Rurale in Africa e America Latina (ACRA)*.

Implementation Progress and Impact

A total of 15,703 new enrolments of out-of-school children (OOSC) were recorded in targeted primary schools during the 2020 implementation period. A total of 62,226 refugees were registered in primary schools as of 30 November 2020, representing a drop of 3,5 per cent in comparison with the previous academic school year. This decrease in enrolment numbers (mainly in Southern Chad), can be explained by various factors: the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on refugee families and their resources; the limited number of catch-up classes organised prior to school reopen-

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT
TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL
12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 84%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	37.500	Male 8.108	Female 7.595	Total 15.703
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Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator 1.1.a: Number of schools/ learning sites newly constructed	0			2
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Indicator 1.1.b: Number of classrooms constructed within the new schools/learning sites (1.1.a)	0			14
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Indicator 1.1.c: Number of classrooms newly constructed in existing schools/learning sites	120			0
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Indicator 1.1.d: Number of latrines newly constructed	360			112
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Indicator 1.1.e: Number of water points newly constructed	10			20
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Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture	14	Newly built schools 2	Existing schools 86	Total 88
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Output 1.2: Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated

Indicator 1.2.a: Number of schools/learning sites refurbished or renovated	19			7
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Indicator 1.2.b: Number of classrooms refurbished or renovated within the existing schools/learning sites (1.2.a)	55			20
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Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.b: Number of students supported by financial assistance	19.900	Male 708	Female 668	Total 1.376
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Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.c: Number of children with special needs supported	12.300	Male 2.164	Female 2.290	Total 4.454
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OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	52%	Male 43%	Female 43%	Total 43%
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Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	35.000	Male 6.267	Female 6.381	Total 12.648
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Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	1.480	Male 752	Female 382	Total 1.134
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Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	239.400	Male 56.296	Female 21.158	Total 77.454
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Indicator 2.1.c: Number of support classes provided	0			250
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Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	1.057	Male 595	Female 345	Total 940
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Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed	172.000			4.883
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Indicator 2.1.f: Number of schools provided with teaching and learning materials	79			88
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Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Indicator 2.2.a: Number of individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	70	Male 58	Female 12	Total 70
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Indicator 2.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	1.470	Male 301	Female 63	Total 364
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INDICATOR	LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)	ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020		
Indicator 2.2.c: Number of schools monitored and/or provided with instructional support at least once per year	79			88
Indicator 2.2.d: Number of schools supported by the project with a data collection system in place	79			88
OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION				
Indicator 3.a: Number of sensitisation and awareness raising sessions/meetings organised to engage the community	72			176
Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced				
Indicator 3.1.a: Number of individuals (community group members/parents, school management committee members, and student leaders) successfully trained	0	Male 1.310	Female 1.160	Total 2.470
Indicator 3.1.b: Number of person-hours individuals (community members, school management committee members, student leaders) successfully trained	0	Male 6.058	Female 5.286	Total 11.344
Output 3.2: Local and national partnerships on education strengthened				
Indicator 3.2.a: Number of partner personnel (including MoE and local/national partners) successfully trained	60	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
Indicator 3.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals (MoE personnel and local/national partners) successfully trained	1.260	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
OUTCOME 4: IMPROVED CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SPORT				
Indicator 4.a: Number of schools with a sport for protection programme in place	12			0
Output 4.1: Children participating in a sport for protection programme				
Indicator 4.1.a: Number of primary school children involved in a sport for protection programme	2.500	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
Output 4.2: Youth facilitators trained to implement a sport for protection programme				
Indicator 4.2.a: Number of youth (trainers) successfully trained in sport for protection	25	Male 8	Female 16	Total 24
Indicator 4.2.b: Number of person-hours of training for youth (trainers) successfully trained	15.000	Male 256	Female 512	Total 768

ing; and the particularly long 2020 rainy season that led to a long agricultural season, mobilising teachers and learners in the fields. Activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 supported continuity of teaching and learning during school closures, facilitated new enrolments, and ensured a safe back-to-school transition. Most planned activities could be implemented, and most annual targets were met.

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Construction activities planned under output 1.1 (Educational infrastructure newly constructed) were adapted in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the changing operational environment. While it had been planned to construct 40 new classrooms in existing schools, it was instead decided to support the construction of educational infrastructure in Kouchaguine Moura camp to address the new educational needs brought on by the influx of Sudanese refugees. Two primary schools with 14 classrooms and two administration blocks were con-

structed, which directly facilitated new enrolments. WASH facilities were also expanded as part of preparations for the safe reopening of schools. A total of 112 latrines (93 per cent of the annual target) were constructed in primary schools, which led to an improvement in the average latrine-student ratio from 1:99 to 1:97, and 20 water points (four times the annual target) were established, resulting in 80 per cent of primary schools having access to water, against 57 per cent in 2019. Additional activities included the construction of two teacher housing units in Dar Es Salam camp to improve teacher retention in the particularly challenging 2020 context.

The provision of school furniture and equipment, which had initially been planned for a very limited number of schools, was expanded to all primary schools supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme. As part of the strengthened COVID-19 education response, all 88 targeted primary schools benefited from a wide range of COVID-19 prevention items including handwashing stations, facemasks and thermometers, while 62 schools in Eastern Chad were also provided with USB keys and

memory cards pre-loaded with audio learning materials. In addition, two schools in Lake Chad benefited from kitchen equipment, and ten schools in Eastern Chad from the provision of 530 school desks.

While rehabilitation activities took place as planned under output 1.2 (Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated), with a total of 20 classrooms rehabilitated thanks to the involvement of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) in seven schools (target met), the provision of financial assistance to students, planned under output 1.3 (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools), was reduced due to the shortened 2020 implementation period and school closures. After schools reopened, a total of 1,376 primary school refugee children (18 per cent of the annual target) received cash-based assistance to enrol in the school of their choice in the urban areas of N'Djamena and Mayo Kebbi East. Additional cash or voucher-based assistance will be implemented in 2021 to support families that have been especially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of the activities facilitating access to education for children with special needs under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students), targeted support was provided to a total of 4,454 children with special needs (nine per cent over the annual target) through advocacy, home visits and individualised follow-up during school closures.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Activities undertaken under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn) supported teaching and learning during school closures, and upon school reopening. A total of 940 teachers (47 per cent over the annual target) benefited from incentives under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020. Support to teachers was strengthened in order to support their retention and involvement during school closures, facilitate the back-to-school transition, and include additional incentives for teachers working double shifts (to reduce class sizes in the COVID-19 context). As teacher training activities resumed, a total of 1,134 primary school teachers across the country benefited from formal training provided through the state-led "Pedagogical Days" (*Journées pédagogiques*) organised in cooperation with local education authorities, and through official teacher training, as well as from non-formal training on the school Code of Conduct, COVID-19 prevention measures and WASH management in schools.

Among other activities implemented under output 2.1, the provision of teaching materials (curriculum guidelines, reference books, teaching kits, stationery, etc.) was expanded to all 88 targeted primary schools. The provision of textbooks and school kits to students was reduced due to the shortened 2020 implementation period and the fact that a wide range of materials had already been provided by Education Cannot Wait (ECW) and UNICEF. Under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, 3,160 textbooks were distributed, benefiting 9,480 children (as textbooks are shared between three students), and 1,723 school kits were provided to newly arrived refugee children in Kouchaguine Moura camp. While not initially planned, support classes were of key importance in the back-to-school transition in 2020. Under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, 428 children in Kouchaguine Moura camp and 530 children in Dar Es Salam camp benefited from support classes to help them catch up with missed schooling.

Data collection, monitoring and evaluation were particularly challenging in the 2020 context. As part of the activities implemented under output 2.2 (Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools), 14 data staff from the Sudanese camps, 47 UNHCR and partner staff and 9 representatives from local education authorities were trained on data collection in 2020. The workshops planned on the new Refugee Education Management Information System (REMIS) were postponed to 2021, which led to an underachievement in the number of training hours received (annual target underachieved by 75 per cent). During the 2020 implementation period, all 88 targeted primary schools benefited from monitoring visits and had functioning data collection systems in place.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Strengthened community engagement was of key importance in the COVID-19 context. Sensitisation sessions focusing on COVID-19 prevention measures were organised in all 88 targeted primary schools. While no capacity-building activities for community members had been planned for 2020 under output 3.1 (Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced), trainings were added to the implementation plan given the strong need to train PTAs, Educating Mothers' Associations (EMAs), and School Management Committees (SMCs) on COVID-19 prevention measures. A total of 1,738 parents including 837 mothers received training at the beginning of the 2020/2021 school year and special sessions

were organised for school hygiene committees. 732 students participated in a “cleanest school contest” that was undertaken in each camp/site/village to promote hygiene and sanitation measures in schools. Community mobilisation also remained a cornerstone of UNHCR’s strategy to reach, enrol and retain OOSC. Ongoing efforts focused on engaging PTAs and EMAs in school management issues, and on equipping them to distribute enrolment vouchers, conduct home visits, and lead sensitisation campaigns within their communities.

OUTCOME 4: IMPROVED CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SPORT

The UNHCR-EAC Sport for Protection (S4P) Initiative is being piloted in Mile and Kounoungou refugee camps in Eastern Chad. In preparation of the roll-out of S4P activities in targeted primary schools, activities

in 2020 focused on the recruitment of on-site facilitators, the selection and training of young refugee leaders to become Youth Sports Facilitators (YSFs), and the procurement of sports equipment and materials. After delays linked to COVID-19 restrictions, a total of 24 refugee youth and primary school teachers (of whom 16 are female) were enrolled in a six-month YSF training course in early December 2020 and benefited from a total of 32 hours of training in 2020, with the training course ongoing in 2021. Power banks, tablets with sim cards, as well as modems and solar charging kits were distributed to the course participants to ensure they had access to the necessary technology to follow the training course despite the poor connectivity in the camps. Two server laptops were also procured and will be dispatched to the camps to provide additional connectivity and make the course content available offline. Over 4,500 pieces of sports equipment were purchased including balls, nets,

cones, goalkeeper gloves, sports pinnies, jump ropes, weights, whistles and stopwatches, and will be used in the various S4P activities rolled out in targeted primary schools in the coming implementation period.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic, school closures and restrictions strongly impacted the implementation of educational

13-year-old Sadié was born in Djabal refugee camp, Chad. She suffers from paralysis in her legs. Sadié was supported through activities under the UNHCR-EAC Programme aiming at improving the inclusion of children with disabilities in the classroom.

© UNHCR / Jesuit Refugee Service / Irene Galera de la Llana

activities in 2020. Uncertainty around the reopening of schools, due to the absence of official guidelines from the MoE, also affected planning and implementation. Nevertheless, UNHCR ensured close follow up of the situation through regular communication with the MoE and continuous participation in the Education Cluster and Local Education Group Meetings. Teachers continued to receive their incentives during school closures and were supported with additional incentives once schools reopened to extend teaching time and reduce class sizes in compliance with the Government’s COVID-19 prevention measures. WASH facilities were expanded, and handwashing stations, facemasks and cleaning products were distributed to schools. By the end of 2020, not a single COVID-19 case had been reported in the schools supported by UNHCR.

Despite significant achievements over the past few years in integrating refugee schools into the Chadian education system, significant barriers to refugee education remain. Limited school infrastructure and WASH facilities, a lack of uniforms, school supplies and learning materials, the prevalence of social and cultural barriers affecting girls’ education, the reduction in school feeding programmes and the growth of Koranic schools continue to be major obstacles. With the COVID-19 pandemic, many refugee families saw their precarious livelihoods further threatened, and increased numbers of households now struggle to afford the costs associated with education. Limited access to higher education and the labour market also continues to discourage families to send their children to school.

Poor teacher qualifications also remain an ongoing challenge. In 2020, 43 per cent of primary school teachers were qualified across schools supported by UNHCR. National teachers, who make up 22 per cent of the workforce, were on average more qualified (52 per cent) than refugee teachers. In Lake Chad, only 20 per cent of teachers are qualified, despite nationals representing 73 per cent of the workforce. This area, due to its remote location and harsh environment, attracts less qualified national teachers. To improve refugee teacher qualification, UNHCR has partnered with national institutions such as the *Ecole Normale des Instituteurs Bilingues d’Abéché* (ENIBA) so that refugee community teachers can attend training side-by-side with Chadians and attain official Chadian teacher accreditation. In 2020, 137 Sudanese refugee teachers finalised their two-year training and are currently awaiting their exam results.

To facilitate access to education and support students’ retention in school, the education programme in Chad



focuses on strengthening community involvement in the implementation of activities. Initiatives such as nurseries for female students and teachers have proven to have a positive impact on school retention and have so far supported 315 student mothers and 26 teachers in 12 refugee camps in the East. The education strategy also puts emphasis on access to higher education to encourage retention at primary and secondary school levels. Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) have been reached with 12 Chadian universities to lower tuition costs for refugees, and scholarship opportunities have been expanded. Children living outside of refugee camps remain hard to reach. Increased out-of-camp monitoring and data collection will thus be major areas of focus in Eastern Chad in 2021.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

2020 has shown the importance of being flexible and ensuring effective collaboration between all stakeholders. All countries have not been on an equal footing in their response to school closures and the provision of alternative learning solutions. Chad, due to its lower development and limited access to technology, suspended the academic year and distance learning was very limited. UNHCR and its partners implemented activities that supported continuity of teaching and learning during school closures, while preparing for the safe reopening of schools. Increased community involvement in education and continuous financial support to teachers were among the most crucial activities supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme. Engaging community groups such as PTAs and EMAs to spread COVID-19 awareness messages enabled sensibilisation to continue throughout the pandemic. In locations in which visits to the refugee camps were suspended for UNHCR and partner staff due to active COVID-19 cases, community members were mobilised to provide support.

Strengthened partnership and collaboration with education stakeholders in 2020 has effectively led to the inclusion of refugees in the national COVID-19 response plan, the attribution of specific funding to refugees, as well as the endorsement of the 2030 Refugee Education Strategy for Chad. The strategy aims at strengthening the inclusion of refugees and populations under UNHCR's mandate in the national education system, promoting safe and protective learning environments, consolidating existing coordination mechanisms, and developing partnerships for a sustainable intervention strategy.

Iraq

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

31



PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS



Refugee camps and urban locations in Erbil and Sulaimaniyah Governorates in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI)

EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



- INTERSOS

As of December 2020, Iraq was hosting over 277,000 refugees, including over 240,000 from Syria. 97 per cent of the Syrian refugees in Iraq live in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) in Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaymaniyah Governorates. Around 60 per cent of the refugees reside in urban areas, while the rest live in nine camps in KRI. Access to formal education for the nearly 69,000 school-age Syrian refugee children in KRI has remained a major challenge and a parallel refugee education system has prevailed. Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, enrolment among refugee children was already low: primary school enrolment reached just 51 per cent in the camps, and only 29 per cent in the urban areas, with rates decreasing further at secondary levels. While families predominantly cited costs of transportation and socioeconomic pressures as the main barriers to accessing education, concerns about the quality of education also continued to play a decisive role.

In late February 2020, learning institutions across Iraq were closed as part of the efforts to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, an e-learning platform called Ewane was launched and rolled out by the KRI Ministry of Education (MoE), lessons were broadcast through educational TV programmes, and self-learning materials were distributed to students. However, distance learning placed new pressures on refugee families, and access to remote learning options for refugee children often remained limited throughout school closures. After a

partial reopening in September, schools reopened in November, with students continuing using a blended learning approach.

UNHCR, in coordination with the MoE and the Education Sector, drafted a formal policy for the inclusion of refugee children into the existing KRI school system, aimed at minimising the disruptive, costly and temporary measures needed to sustain parallel schooling, fostering social cohesion between refugee and host communities, supporting streamlined capacity-building for teachers, and facilitating school rehabilitation to reduce overcrowding. However, the MoE's request to the Council of Ministers of the Kurdistan Regional Government to support the inclusion process beginning October 2020 was denied, resulting in the continuation of the existing system.

Implementation Progress and Impact

During the 2020 implementation period of the UNHCR-EAC Programme, a total of 439 refugee children were newly enrolled in catch-up and language support classes and went on to newly enrol in the 31 targeted primary schools in Erbil and Sulaimaniyah Governorates. The annual enrolment target was under-achieved by 50 per cent due to the reduced 2020 implementation period. Activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 85%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	2.640	Male 232	Female 207	Total 439
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OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	80%	Male Data N/A	Female Data N/A	Total 69%
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Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	2.640	Male 439	Female 400	Total 839
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Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	400	Male 95	Female 127	Total 222
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Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	8.000	Male 1.140	Female 1.524	Total 2.664
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Indicator 2.1.c: Number of support classes provided	17			18
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Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	450	Male 48	Female 44	Total 92
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Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed	0			1.000
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Indicator 2.1.f: Number of schools provided with teaching and learning materials	0			31
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Programme focused on supporting teaching and learning in primary schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Catch-up classes implemented under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn) played an important role in preparing children for the start of the new 2020/2021 academic year, in helping them catch up on missed schooling, and in mitigating the risk of school dropout. A total of 18 catch-up and language support classes were organised in the 31 targeted primary schools, benefiting a total of 439 newly enrolled students between July and September 2020. The annual target for the number of classes was slightly overachieved as class sizes were reduced to comply with COVID-19 prevention measures. In line with health guidelines, classes were limited to five students per classroom, and facemasks were distributed to all students. Topics covered during the classes included Kurdish, English and Arabic and Mathematics. Continuous financial support to teachers was key in ensuring classes could be carried out. A total of 92 refugee teachers (61 per cent of the annual target) were provided with incentives under the

UNHCR-EAC Programme. The annual target was under-achieved due to the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures, which hampered the recruitment of new teachers in 2020.

Capacity-building for teachers remained a major area of focus during the 2020 implementation period. UNHCR and INTERSOS, in cooperation with the MoE, conducted 17 training sessions for 203 Syrian refugee teachers and 19 host community school management staff in Erbil. The main purpose of the sessions was to introduce the new e-learning platform Ewane, and to train participants on how to support learners in accessing and using the platform during school closures. In addition to presenting the practical features, tools and resources of the platform, the sessions also focused on online classroom management, and on ways to enhance communication with learners during remote classes.

While not originally planned under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, the provision of teaching and learning materials was added to the 2020 implementation plan following a needs assessment carried out in KRI schools, which highlighted that the shortage of materials was one of the main factors negatively affecting students' retention and academic performance. During the 2020 implementa-

Ten-year-old Syrian refugee Seelen reads a leaflet about COVID-19 prevention measures.

© UNHCR/Rasheed Hussein Rasheed



tion period, various materials and school supplies were provided to the 31 targeted primary schools to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and support the back-to-school transition. A total of 1,000 learning kits were distributed to 839 primary school children.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

During school closures, refugee children often had limited access to distance learning options. Monitoring and Multi-Sector Needs Assessments undertaken by UNHCR in 2020 showed that, while over 90 per cent of refugee households reported owning at least one smart device, only around 25 per cent of the children had access to that device for learning purposes. Many parents felt unable to support their children, struggled with access to internet or electricity, were unaware of alternative learning modalities, and/or faced competing socioeconomic pressures during the pandemic. Teachers also often struggled to adapt to new teaching and learning modalities, and faced difficulties in accessing the e-learning platform. As a result, it is estimated that less than half of the school-aged children who were enrolled in formal schooling prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, were able to learn from home during school closures. UNHCR and its partners engaged with school management and Parent Teacher Associations in order to provide training on the use of the e-learning platform, sensitise parents about the importance of supporting distance learning, identify out-of-school children, and advocate for sustainable educational interventions. UNHCR and INTERSOS also continued working with Clusters to ensure remote access and participation in education, as well as continuous and strengthened support to teachers.

Lessons learned, good practices & innovations

A key aspect of the COVID-19 education response in KRI has been the ability of the refugee community to mobilise, both in-person and via remote mechanisms. Strengthened community engagement played a major role in supporting the roll out of the e-learning platform Ewane, and in promoting its use among refugee households. While e-learning platforms have their disadvantages, the MoE's rapid roll out of a platform for all students enrolled in formal schools, including refugee children, should be celebrated as a positive achievement. Awareness-raising, sensitisation and training activities, which were undertaken by refugee outreach volunteers, parents, teachers, school administrators, the Ministry

and Departments of Education, humanitarian actors, and the students themselves, all contributed to continuity of learning and teaching during school closures, and to preparations for a safe return to school.

The rapid establishment of direct communication channels with children, parents, school management, and community members helped to mitigate the risk of a complete education blackout during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the support of refugee Education Outreach Volunteers (EOVs), communication channels were established via social media platforms (e.g., WhatsApp/Viber groups and Facebook pages) to address challenges arising from distance learning, and to facilitate the sharing of key information, updates and guidance. This included, for example, the dissemination of UNHCR's *Guidance for Parents and Communities on Supporting e-learning*, as well as various brochures on mental health and psychosocial support.

Kenya–Dadaab

NUMBER OF
PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED



22

PROGRAMME
IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS



Dadaab refugee complex (Ifo, Dagahley, and Hagadera refugee camps)

EDUCATION PARTNERS
IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



- Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

46

As of December 2020, the Dadaab refugee complex, located in the north-eastern part of Kenya near the Somali border, was hosting a population of 222,989 refugees, of whom 96 per cent were from Somalia. The prospect of the closure of Dadaab's refugee camps by the Government of Kenya was intensified by the Note Verbale issued by the Government's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in February 2019, requesting UNHCR to undertake measures to depopulate Dadaab. Given this backdrop, the search for durable and sustainable solutions for refugees is more than ever imperative, in line with the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, the Djibouti Declaration on Refugee Education and the Global Compact on Refugees. As of February 2020, a total of 34,888 learners were enrolled in 22 primary schools in Dadaab.

In March 2020, the global COVID-19 pandemic outbreak caused all learning institutions in Kenya to close. 64,139 refugee learners in Dadaab were affected across 60 pre-primary, primary, secondary, non-formal and community schools, with in-classroom learning and teaching being suspended indefinitely. Learning institutions re-opened in October 2020 for Grades 4, 8 and Form 4 learners, and for all grades in January 2021. The Ministry of Education (MoE) developed a National Education Response Plan that focused on the provision of digital learning opportunities, radio and TV edu-

cation programmes, as well as the distribution of textbooks and home-learning materials. While refugees and asylum-seekers were included in the MoE's national response plan, they did not benefit from Government funding during this period.

Along with the implementation of inclusive, integrated, and sustainable solutions in the Dadaab refugee complex, UNHCR will continue to strengthen the effectiveness of its protection, assistance and durable solutions programme to support the remaining refugees and to maintain a conducive asylum and protection space in the area. For the implementation of primary education activities, UNHCR partnered with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in 2020.

Implementation Progress and Impact

No out-of-school children (OOSC) were enrolled in primary school during the 2020 implementation period due to the extended closure of learning institutions. Activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 supported UNHCR's efforts to ensure continuity of learning during school closures and preparations for the safe reopening of schools. While some activities were strengthened, most planned activities had to be cancelled or reduced in light of the COVID-19 context.

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT
TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL
12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes

85%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education

23.000

Male

Female

Total

0

0

0

Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator 1.1.d: Number of latrines newly constructed

60

55

Indicator 1.1.e: Number of water points newly constructed

44

22

Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture

22

Newly built schools

Existing schools

Total

0

22

22

Output 1.2: Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated

Indicator 1.2.a: Number of schools/learning sites refurbished or renovated

22

0

Indicator 1.2.b: Number of classrooms refurbished or renovated within the existing schools/learning sites (1.2.a)

210

0

Indicator 1.2.c: Number of latrines refurbished or renovated

140

140

Indicator 1.2.d: Number of water points refurbished or renovated

66

0

Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.a: Number of students supported by material assistance

23.000

Male

Female

Total

0

0

0

Indicator 1.3.b: Number of students supported by financial assistance

560

Male

Female

Total

327

168

495

Indicator 1.3.c: Number of schools supported by financial interventions

22

0

Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.b: Number of girls supported through gender specific activities

4.627

0

Indicator 1.4.c: Number of children with special needs supported

289

Male

Female

Total

511

416

927

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools

45%

Male

Female

Total

80%

22%

52%

Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes

20.490

Male

Female

Total

0

0

0

Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained

30

Male

Female

Total

0

0

0

Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained

1.200

Male

Female

Total

0

0

0

Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary

230

Male

Female

Total

146

24

170

Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed

91.180

0

Indicator 2.1.f: Number of schools provided with teaching and learning materials

22

0

Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Indicator 2.2.a: Number of individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation

57

Male

Female

Total

0

0

0

Indicator 2.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation

4.560

Male

Female

Total

0

0

0

Indicator 2.2.c: Number of schools monitored and/or provided with instructional support at least once per year

22

22

INDICATOR	LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)	ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020		
Indicator 2.2.d: Number of schools supported by the project with a data collection system in place	22	22		
OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION				
Indicator 3.a: Number of sensitisation and awareness raising sessions/meetings organised to engage the community	9	3		
Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced				
Indicator 3.1.a: Number of individuals (community group members/parents, school management committee members, and student leaders) successfully trained	330	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0
Indicator 3.1.b: Number of person-hours individuals (community members, school management committee members, student leaders) successfully trained	13.200	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0
Output 3.2: Local and national partnerships on education strengthened				
Indicator 3.2.a: Number of partner personnel (including MoE and local/national partners) successfully trained	24	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0
Indicator 3.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals (MoE personnel and local/national partners) successfully trained	768	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Activities implemented under output 1.1 (Educational infrastructure newly constructed) included the construction of a total of 55 latrines (close to three times the annual target) and 22 handwashing stations (annual target met) to expand WASH facilities and improve hygienic conditions in Dadaab's primary schools. In addition, the 22 targeted schools were also provided with kitchen furniture and equipment, with the aim of boosting school attendance and reduce absenteeism arising from food insecurity and malnutrition. Classroom construction was undertaken outside of the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020, with the construction of eight new classrooms in Wadajir Primary School in Dagahaley Camp contributing to the improvement of the average classroom-student ratio from 1:157 to 1:108.

Among rehabilitation activities planned under output 1.2 (Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated), the rehabilitation of latrines was prioritised as part of the efforts to enhance WASH facilities in primary schools. As a result, 140 latrines (twice the annual target) were rehabilitated in 2020. All other rehabilitation activities targeting classrooms, water points, school libraries and Instant Network School (INS) centres were postponed to 2021 due to the short 2020 implementation period and challenges linked to the COVID-19 context.

Due to school closures and COVID-19 restrictions, the distribution of material assistance to students and the provision of financial grants to schools, which had been

planned under output 1.3 (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools), were cancelled in 2020. Financial support to learners with special needs could be strengthened and benefited a total of 495 children (close to 2,5 times the annual target) at primary school level. Cash-Based Interventions (CBIs) were piloted, enabling parents to cover the costs associated with assistive devices, adequate learning materials and transportation to school.

Activities aiming at increasing access to learning opportunities for children with special needs were also strengthened under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students). A total of 927 learners with special needs (nine times the annual target) were supported in accessing pre-recorded radio lessons, digital classes, WhatsApp group discussions and learning materials that included Braille machines and transcribed Braille textbooks. The significant over-achievement can be attributed to the engagement of teachers in community-based learning, which allowed a higher number of children to be reached and supported through multiple learning pods. While targeted support to children with special needs was enhanced, targeted support to refugee girls was deprioritised due to the short 2020 implementation period and challenges linked to the COVID-19 context.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

As part of the activities undertaken under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn), 170 refugee and host community teachers were financially supported as planned under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, out of a total of 436 teachers supported by UNHCR and retained during school closures in 2020. Continuous financial support to teachers was key to ensuring continuity of learning during the pandemic, and prevented teachers from leaving the profession to pursue other activities to sustain their livelihoods. Teachers supported remote learning interventions, including the broadcasting of national radio education programmes from the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) through local and community radio stations, by developing supplementary lesson content, audio and video materials, and lesson notes that were shared with learners through WhatsApp groups and community learning pods. Thanks to teachers' continuous support to learners, it is estimated that about 60 per cent of enrolled learners could be reached monthly through national radio programmes. Teachers also used radio broadcasts for social advocacy purposes and offered mental health and psychosocial

support to the children. Home visits were carried out by teachers to ensure children's participation in remote learning and sensitise families about the importance of keeping children learning. While support to teachers was key during school closures, teacher training could not be undertaken during the 2020 implementation period, and the provision of teaching and learning materials was postponed to 2021.

Activities planned under output 2.2 (Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target school) were affected by the COVID-19 context. Despite various logistical challenges linked to COVID-19 restrictions and prevention measures, as well as security threats in Dadaab, all 22 primary schools supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme were monitored between September and November 2020 by multi-functional teams comprising of UNHCR, the MoE, UNICEF and education partners. Monitoring focused on assessing compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures and hygiene standards

Primary school students wash their hands before entering their classroom to sit final exams in Dadaab, Kenya.

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in schools. Schools were supported adequately and were able to re-open partially in October 2020. While no training on data collection could be undertaken during the 2020 implementation period, regular virtual meetings with teachers and educational staff were organised to coordinate implementation, information sharing, and data collection, and promote community-based learning strategies as part of the COVID-19 education response.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Although training activities planned under output 3.1 (Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced) and output 3.2 (Local and national partnerships on education strengthened) could not be implemented in the COVID-19 context, community engagement and strengthened partnerships with educational stakeholders were of key importance in 2020. Virtual platforms were used to engage the MoE, education partners, schools' Boards of Managers (BOMs) and Parents' Associations to ensure efficient multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms. Discussions focused on remote teaching and learning activities, as well as preparations for the safe reopening of primary schools.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic and the extended closure of learning institutions have hindered curriculum delivery and syllabus coverage, leading to learning losses, the postponement of national examinations and the non-enrolment of OOSC during the 2020 implementation period. UNHCR and its education partners faced challenges in adapting service delivery, as schools remained closed and restrictions on movement limited access to the refugee population. Reduced staff movement, national travel restrictions and economic lockdown negatively impacted the implementation of educational activities supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, including rehabilitation activities, the provision of school supplies and the organisation of trainings, which were postponed to 2021 and 2022.

The roll-out of the new Kenyan Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) was affected by the closure of schools across the country, with the roll-out for Grade 5, initially planned in January 2021, being postponed to July 2021. With major learning gaps recorded in a recent assessment, addressing the learning losses resulting from the COVID-19 educational disruption will be a critical over-

arching challenge. UNHCR will focus on increasing the number of qualified teachers through the recruitment of additional trained national teachers and professional development of the existing refugee teachers to better deliver the CBC in line with the revised school calendar.

The situation of refugee girls worsened during school closures, with socio-cultural and economic barriers limiting both refugee and host community girls' access to radio lessons and engagement in home-based learning. While this was addressed through constant sensitisation on radio programmes for parents to give equal opportunities to their children, early enrolment data from January 2021 indicates that 1,613 girls did not return to school out of a total of 17,672 enrolled girls. Early marriage, teenage pregnancies and sexual exploitation were reportedly widespread during school closures. Increased awareness-raising and community engagement on specific protection issues, as well as the importance of girls' education will be major areas of focus.

Following the phased re-opening of schools in October 2020, ensuring compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures was challenging in overcrowded classrooms, school kitchens and other learning and recreational areas. School-level COVID-19 response committees were formed in each location to address identified challenges and ensure compliance with existing protocols.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

Enhanced multi-stakeholder coordination, joint monitoring, as well as the involvement of refugee teachers and community-level structures such as schools' BOMs, were key to ensuring continued delivery of educational services during the prolonged closure of schools in 2020. Increased community participation and responsibility sharing was also adopted to reach out to refugee communities and sensitise them on COVID-19 prevention measures. Strengthened partnerships with local and national stakeholders, including the MoE and the Ministry of Health, ensured the inclusion of refugees into country/county response plans, access to training modules and timely dissemination of health guidelines and protocols, schools re-opening guidelines and Government communications.

Increased use of radio lesson broadcasts, digital learning programmes and social media platforms, including WhatsApp chat forums, provided an alternative avenue

for remote teaching and learning opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Social advocacy was also done through radio broadcasts, with teachers offering psychosocial support to learners during the pandemic. In addition, teachers and learners were engaged in sensitisation activities that focused on child protection issues and countering negative coping mechanisms, such as increased drug and substance abuse, which were reported during school closures.

Kenya-Kakuma

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

27



PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS

Kakuma refugee camp and Kalobeyei settlement



EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



- Lutheran World Federation (LWF)
- Finn Church Aid (FCA)
- Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL)

By the end of 2020, Kakuma refugee camp and the nearby Kalobeyei settlement, located in Kenya's north-western Turkana County, were hosting a total of 200,536 refugees and asylum seekers from over 14 different nationalities. While South Sudanese make up the majority (58 per cent) of the refugee population, the camp also hosts refugees from Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. School-aged children (3-17 years) represent nearly half (49 per cent) of the overall population.

In line with the 1951 Refugee Convention, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), and the educational objective under the Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plan (KISEDIP) initiative, the provision of accessible and inclusive quality education for refugees has remained a priority for UNHCR and its partners. A total of 19 pre-schools, 27 primary schools, and 7 secondary schools hosting 87,408 learners were supported in 2020. Collaboration was fostered with the Ministry of Education (MoE) in areas such as the implementation of the new Competency Based Curriculum (CBC), the extension of quality assurance support, the registration of schools, as well as the inclusion of refugee children in Government scholarship programmes and extra-curricular activities. These are positive steps towards the inclusion of refugee children in the national education system.

Schools in Kenya were closed from mid-March 2020 through to the end of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A limited re-opening took place for only three grades in October 2020. All other grades completed the year without the opportunity for in-person school attendance. The closure of schools for a period of nearly 10 months has resulted in disruption of the 2020 academic calendar, the non-enrolment of out-of-school children (OOSC), and the postponement of national examinations.

Implementation Progress and Impact

No OOSC could be enrolled in primary school during the 2020 implementation period due to the extended closure of learning institutions. Activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 supported UNHCR's efforts to ensure continuity of learning during school closures and to support the safe reopening of schools. While most planned activities could be implemented (with some annual targets being significantly overachieved), construction and rehabilitation activities were affected by delays¹ and certain other activities had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 context.

¹ Construction and rehabilitation activities were ongoing as of 31 December 2020 and were finalised as of 31 March 2021.

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL
12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 86%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	16.000	0	0	0

Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator 1.1.c: Number of classrooms newly constructed in existing schools/learning sites	40			33
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Indicator 1.1.d: Number of latrines newly constructed	25			92
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Indicator 1.1.e: Number of water points newly constructed	23			10
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Indicator	Target	Newly built schools	Existing schools	Total
Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture	17	0	26	26

Output 1.2: Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated

Indicator 1.2.a: Number of schools/learning sites refurbished or renovated	0			3
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Indicator 1.2.b: Number of classrooms refurbished or renovated within the existing schools/learning sites (1.2.a)	30			13
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Indicator 1.2.d: Number of water points refurbished or renovated	78			26
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Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.3.a: Number of students supported by material assistance	4.500	5.803	7.325	13.128

Indicator 1.3.c: Number of schools supported by financial interventions	26			0
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Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.b: Number of girls supported through gender specific activities	7.800			5.000
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Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.4.c: Number of children with special needs supported	750	154	96	250

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	45%	34%	34%	34%

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	30.860	15.025	15.025	30.050

Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	120	0	0	0

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	3.060	0	0	0

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	361	460	99	559

Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed	49.860			30.050
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Indicator 2.1.f: Number of schools provided with teaching and learning materials	26			26
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Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.2.a: Number of individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	90	0	0	0

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	2.160	0	0	0

Indicator 2.2.c: Number of schools monitored and/or provided with instructional support at least once per year	26			0
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Indicator 2.2.d: Number of schools supported by the project with a data collection system in place	26			0
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INDICATOR	LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)	ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020		
OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION				
Indicator 3.a: Number of sensitisation and awareness raising sessions/meetings organised to engage the community	3			0
Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced				
Indicator 3.1.a: Number of individuals (community group members/parents, school management committee members, and student leaders) successfully trained	666	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0
Indicator 3.1.b: Number of person-hours individuals (community members, school management committee members, student leaders) successfully trained	19.392	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0
OUTCOME 4: IMPROVED CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SPORT				
Indicator 4.a: Number of schools with a sport for protection programme in place	12			0
Output 4.1: Children participating in a sport for protection programme				
Indicator 4.1.a: Number of primary school children involved in a sport for protection programme	2.500	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0
Output 4.2: Youth facilitators trained to implement a sport for protection programme				
Indicator 4.2.a: Number of youth (trainers) successfully trained in sport for protection	25	Male	Female	Total
		115	5	120
Indicator 4.2.b: Number of person-hours of training for youth (trainers) successfully trained	15.000	Male	Female	Total
		18.400	800	19.200

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Activities planned under output 1.1 (Educational infrastructure newly constructed) were prioritised in order to expand capacity for the enrolment of OOSC and to adhere to COVID-19 safety protocols by decongesting classrooms. Thanks to the construction of 33 classrooms (over twice the 2020 target), the average classroom-student ratio will improve from 1:125 to 1:99. The newly constructed classrooms benefited from the provision of 1,600 desks, which will help improve the student-desk ratio from 1:5 to 1:4. In addition, 26 schools were provided with a wide range of sports equipment, as well as with cleaning equipment (soap, buckets, etc.) as part of the COVID-19 education response.

The expansion of WASH facilities under output 1.1 was highly prioritised in the COVID-19 context and benefited from additional funding under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, which allowed for annual targets to be significantly over-achieved. The construction of a total of 92 latrines (over 9 times the 2020 target) in 17 schools in 2020, as well as the ongoing construction of an additional 120 latrines, will improve the average latrine-student ratio from 1:82 to 1:64. The construction of 10 water points and the ongoing construction of 15 handwashing stations will also expand WASH facilities.

Rehabilitation activities planned under output 1.2 (Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated) were key in the preparations for the safe reopening of schools. A total of 13 classrooms (30 per cent over the 2020 target) were rehabilitated in three schools. Water points across 26 schools were also refurbished as planned. In addition, the ongoing rehabilitation of a total of 208 latrines, which benefited from additional funding under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, began in 2020 and will contribute to improve hygienic conditions in primary schools.

Material assistance to students was strengthened under output 1.3 (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools) through the provision of 3,278 school uniforms and the distribution of 9,850 facemasks to a total of 13,128 learners (close to 9 times the 2020 annual target). Due to schools remaining closed throughout the 2020 implementation period, the provision of financial grants to schools had to be cancelled.

Activities supporting girls and children with disabilities were undertaken under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students) as planned. A total of 5,000 girls benefited from the provision of sanitary materials (sanitary pads, underpants, and soap). 250 children with disabilities were supported through the provision of assistive devices, including wheelchairs, white canes, tricycles, hearing aids, and braille machines,

which will facilitate their access to primary education in 2021.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Activities implemented under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn) directly supported the continuity of teaching and learning during school closures. A total of 559 teachers (over twice the 2020 target) were provided with incentives in order to respond to the increased educational needs brought by the pandemic. Teachers were involved in distance learning programmes through the preparation of lesson notes, revision materials, holiday assignments, and radio lesson broadcasts. They were also involved in the efforts to reach OOSC and to sensitise the community about the importance of keeping children learning. All teachers were provided with teaching materials and learners were provided with a total of 15,500 textbooks and 14,550 school kits, resulting in 2020 annual targets being overachieved thanks to the Government's tax relief policy in the COVID-19 context. While support to teachers was key during school closures, teacher training could not be undertaken due to COVID-19 restrictions.

All the activities planned under output 2.2 (training on data collection, instructional support to schools, support to data collection systems) were deprioritised during the 2020 implementation period due to school closures and restrictions on in-person gatherings.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

All the activities planned under outcome 3 (sensitisation sessions, trainings for community group/committee members) were deprioritised during the 2020 implementation period due to school closures and restrictions on in-person gatherings.

In Kenya-Kakuma, the UNHCR-EAC Programme supported the expansion of WASH facilities in primary schools to enhance hygienic conditions and ensure that students could safely return to school.

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OUTCOME 4: IMPROVED CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SPORT

The roll-out of the UNHCR-EAC Sport for Protection (S4P) initiative started in Kakuma in 2020. A total of 120 primary school teachers and youth were enrolled in the Youth Sports Facilitator (YSF) training course, jointly devised by UNHCR and Jesuiste Worldwide Learning (JWL). With sports being an integral component of the new CBC in Kenya, the provision of this certified training to primary school teachers is expected to contribute not only to meeting curriculum requirements, but also to promoting teacher professional development. As part of the S4P initiative, sports facilities were upgraded, and sports equipment procured in preparation of the roll-out of S4P activities in the 26 targeted primary schools in 2021. S4P activities in schools are intended to improve student engagement in extra-curricular activities, build their confidence and well-being, and contribute to the enrolment and retention of OOSC.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic had a strong impact on the implementation of educational activities in 2020, with nationwide curfew and restrictions on movement affecting interventions and causing delays. No new enrolments of OOSC took place due to extended school closures. The pandemic not only disrupted learning, but also denied children's vital access to school meals, psychosocial support, as well as the safety, routine, and protection provided in school. Increased incidents of teenage pregnancy, child marriage, sexual and drug abuse, particularly affecting girls, were reported. While many interventions supported the continuity of learning, inequities in access to connectivity, digital devices, and the electricity needed to power them have remained key barriers for refugee children. Girls and children with disabilities have had very limited access, which reinforced existing disparities for these groups of children.

While significant investment has been made to improve educational infrastructure and the availability of teaching and learning materials, average classroom-student (1:99), textbook-student (1:3), desk-student (1:4) and latrine-student (1:64) ratios are still far below the required standards and continue to impede access to quality education. Addressing the educational needs of the high number of over-aged learners has remained a key challenge. The insufficient number of teachers and training opportunities remain an ongoing concern, as 80 per cent of the teaching workforce are refugee teachers, many of

whom are high school graduates with no teacher training background. The COVID-19 situation has also slowed down ongoing advocacy with the MoE on the inclusion of refugee children in the national education system.

The UNHCR-EAC Programme has continued to support the expansion and improvement of educational infrastructure, contributing to safer and more conducive learning environments for the enrolment and retention of OOSC. Activities such as the provision of textbooks, teaching aids, school kits, and learning materials, as well as the enhancement of support to teachers, contributed to the improvement of education quality. Targeted support to girls, through the provision of sanitary supplies and community engagement, and to children with disabilities, through the provision of assistive devices and the promotion of inclusive classrooms, remains vital.

The S4P initiative will help support teachers' and student's well-being and resilience. Despite attempts to achieve gender balance in student selection, only five out of the 120 current S4P course participants are female. School closures and COVID-19 restrictions hampered outreach activities meant to encourage young women to apply. Greater outreach efforts and targeted community mobilisation activities to increase female participation will be undertaken during the application and selection phases of another 120 student-cohort in 2021.

Adolescent girls, especially those affected by teenage pregnancies, are hard to reach and less likely to re-enrol in school as most fear stigmatisation and victimisation. UNHCR is working with partners to identify and to provide counselling support to adolescent girls in need while ensuring schools are safe spaces. Inter-agency referral mechanisms to specialised services will be leveraged in the future.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovation

The development of an inter-agency COVID-19 education response plan for coordinating education responses has been instrumental in the rapid transition to out-of-classroom learning for children following school closures. This has allowed education stakeholders to synergise their efforts, pull resources together, and avoid duplication of activities. The plan has facilitated the roll-out of various learning continuity interventions in close coordination with national and local authorities, including 5-hour daily radio lesson broadcasting, the provision of internet data bundles to teachers, as well as the distribution of radios

and textbooks to support home-based learning. EAC project interventions helped to build on these initiatives. A WhatsApp-based communications tree was used to share information about learning opportunities, educational resources, and COVID-19 prevention messages with teachers and learners. Thanks to the WhatsApp communications tree, key information was cascaded from UNHCR, the MoE, and NGO partners to teachers, who in turn, shared information with learners and their community networks. Teachers were mobilised to develop short lesson notes and audio recordings to be shared with students. Support circles for children in the same neighborhood were also established and peer-to-peer support encouraged.

Given the constraints around connectivity and access to personal devices, the use of radio lesson broadcasts as a low technology option was extremely helpful to support the continuity of learning for primary school children. It is estimated that around 64 per cent of the children enrolled prior to the onset of the pandemic could be reached through radio lesson broadcasts. In addition to using pre-recorded radio lesson content, national and refugee teachers supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme delivered live radio lessons daily, shared COVID-19 safety messages, and promoted awareness of the protection risks facing children.

Malawi

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

1



PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS

- Dzaleka refugee camp



EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES

- Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)



As of December 2020, Dzaleka refugee camp was hosting over 45,000 refugees and asylum seekers, of whom 62 per cent were from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the rest from Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, and Zambia. Children represented 51 per cent of the camp's population. Umodzi Katubza Primary School, which follows the Malawi school curriculum regulated by the Ministry of Education (MoE), was the only primary school providing access to basic education in the camp. Due to the encampment policy that continues to be enforced by the Government of Malawi, refugee children currently do not have other options in terms of primary education. Of the 10,296 primary school aged children in the camp, only 4,631 accessed primary education services in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic gravely affected the education sector in Malawi in 2020. As a mitigation measure against further spread, the Government of Malawi ordered the closure of schools and learning facilities in March 2020. After a staggered reopening in September, Umodzi Katubza Primary School fully reopened in October and then closed again in December at the end of both the third term and the academic year. The start of the new academic year was shifted to January 2021.

Throughout 2020, UNHCR partnered with Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) and the District Education Management Office under the MoE for the implementation of primary education activities in Dzaleka refugee camp. JRS worked in close cooperation with a wide range of part-

ners, including Plan International Malawi, Mary's Meals and SCOPE Malawi, to ensure a safe and conducive learning environment for students at Umodzi Katubza Primary School.

Implementation Progress and Impact

Almost no new enrolments took place in Umodzi Katubza Primary School during the 2020 implementation period due to school closure and the start of the new academic year being shifted to January 2021. A total of 53 students (three per cent of the annual enrolment target) were newly enrolled. Activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme supported continuity of learning and teaching during the pandemic, and preparations for the school's safe reopening. Some activities had to be reduced or cancelled due to the COVID-19 context.

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Construction activities were implemented under output 1.1 (Educational infrastructure newly constructed). As the initially planned construction of a new primary school with 10 classrooms could not take place as planned due to the reduced 2020 implementation period and the lengthy administrative procedures related to school construction, it was decided to construct 10 new classrooms in the existing primary school instead. Thanks to these 10

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 86%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	4.680	Male	Female	Total
		27	26	53

Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator 1.1.a: Number of schools/ learning sites newly constructed	3			0
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Indicator 1.1.b: Number of classrooms constructed within the new schools/learning sites (1.1.a)	26			0
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Indicator 1.1.c: Number of classrooms newly constructed in existing schools/learning sites	0			10
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Indicator 1.1.d: Number of latrines newly constructed	52			16
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Indicator 1.1.e: Number of water points newly constructed	20			2
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Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture	3	Newly built schools	Existing schools	Total
		0	1	1

Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.a: Number of students supported by material assistance	4.680	Male	Female	Total
		2,402	2,229	4,631

Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.a: Number of over-aged students (under the age of 18 years) supported	1.080	Male	Female	Total
		40	50	90

Indicator 1.4.b: Number of girls supported through gender specific activities	184			0
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Indicator 1.4.c: Number of children with special needs supported	180	Male	Female	Total
		20	12	32

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	4.680	Male	Female	Total
		2,402	2,229	4,631

Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	272	Male	Female	Total
		64	32	96

Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed	23,400			8,108
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Indicator 2.1.f: Number of schools provided with teaching and learning materials	3			1
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Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Indicator 2.2.a: Number of individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	1	Male	Female	Total
		66	32	98

Indicator 2.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	120	Male	Female	Total
		792	384	1,176

Indicator 2.2.c: Number of schools monitored and/or provided with instructional support at least once per year	3			1
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classrooms, as well as an additional 6 classrooms that had been constructed during the first half of 2020 before the start of the UNHCR-EAC Programme, learning spaces for primary school children were significantly expanded, and a shift system could be introduced, allowing class sizes to be reduced in the COVID-19 context. A total of 300 desks were also provided to furnish the newly constructed classrooms. In addition, WASH facilities were expanded through the construction of 16 latrines and two water points in Umodzi Katubza Primary School. Annual targets for WASH facilities were underachieved due to the scarcity of materials and restrictions on movement that affected construction activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the prioritisation of classroom construction over other construction activities.

Material assistance was provided to primary school students under output 1.3 (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools). Due to the shortened academic calendar, the budget allocated to this activity, which initially aimed at supporting newly enrolled children, was used to support all 4,631 children (over 2.5 times the annual target) enrolled in primary school through the provision of scholastic materials and stationery, as well as the distribution of radio sets, which played a key role in ensuring continuity of learning through radio lesson broadcasts during school closures. Activities targeting the most vulnerable groups of children under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students) saw their annual targets underachieved. While the Accelerated Education Programme (AEP)/ Complementary Basic Education (CBE) could not benefit newly enrolled children in 2020 due to the delayed academic year resulting from COVID-19 related school closures, 90 over-aged learners (25 per cent of the annual target) at high risk of dropping out benefited from a remedial programme designed to address their specific learning needs and enable them to catch up with the rest of the class. Learning was customised and a class consisted of a maximum number of 10 students to allow for individual differences to be considered. 90 per cent of the learners were promoted to the next class after displaying significant improvement. A total of 32 children with special needs (53 per cent of the annual target) also benefited from targeted support through counselling and the distribution of learning materials. The provision of assistive devices such as Braille machines, which have to be supplied by companies outside Malawi, was affected by lengthy international procurement processes, which led to the actual distribution being postponed to 2021. Targeted support to refugee girls through the provision of dignity kits had to be cancelled due to the long identification

process it requires and the lack of adequate personnel to undertake the activity, with teachers being involved in many extra tasks due to multiple shifts and remediation classes.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Financial support to teachers and the provision of teaching and learning materials, carried out under output 2.1. (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn), were key in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning during the pandemic. A total of 96 primary school teachers were financially supported as planned under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020. This included 74 previously recruited teachers, 12 newly recruited teachers, as well as one Complementary Basic Education (CBE) officer and nine CBE facilitators who were newly recruited to improve access to quality education. Thanks to the recruitment of new teaching personnel, the average teacher-student ratio improved from 1:54 in 2019 to 1:48 in 2020, which made it easier to operate the shift system implemented in the school as part of COVID-19 prevention measures. In addition, Umodzi Katubza Primary School benefited from a wide range of teaching and learning materials. A total of 3,477 textbooks were distributed, allowing the school to reach a textbook-student ratio of 1:1. All 4,631 primary school students were also provided with exercise books and stationery in 2020.

As part of the activities implemented under output 2.2. (Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools), a training for all supported teachers took place at Umodzi Katubza Primary School, with the participation of the headteacher and the data clerk. The training included an important data management component that aimed at sensitising teachers on the importance of data collection and at discussing ways to support the efforts of the data clerk in ensuring accurate and timely data collection. In addition, monitoring visits to the school were undertaken in 2020 by UNHCR, JRS and the MoE to assess the quality of lesson delivery and ensure compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Regular meetings with educational stakeholders, carried out under output 3.2 (Local and national partnerships on education strengthened), were key in ensuring efficient coordination of a strong COVID-19 education

response throughout 2020. During the 2020 implementation period, two meetings were held with District Education team and three meetings with Parents Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs).

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

There were significant challenges in the procurement of teaching and learning materials during the 2020 implementation period. Given that Malawi imports a large portion of its teaching and learning materials and that borders were closed due to COVID-19, the delivery of ordered materials was delayed and the price of materials increased in response to the high demand and limited availability of products. Notably, the delivery of teaching and learning materials for students with special learning needs (e.g., Braille machines and paper for those with visual impairments), which were primarily imported, was delayed until December. In the interim, teachers and school management did their best to retain students, including those with disabilities, and to foster their learning using available materials.

The disruption of the Malawian school feeding programme, which was planned outside of the UNHCR-EAC Programme, also represented a main challenge in 2020. To mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission through the preparation and distribution of food at schools, students were provided with Take-Home Rations of porridge flour. However, as some families sold the flour, certain students were trying to learn on an empty stomach. PTAs and community leaders engaged with families to sensitise them to the purposes of the Take-Home Rations and to ensure that children benefited from the adapted school feeding programme.

High teacher turnover remained a key challenge before, during, and after school closures. Despite difficulties recruiting and retaining teachers due to lower remuneration, the overall increase in the size of the teaching workforce has decreased class sizes, which may facilitate teacher retention in the future.

Irregular student attendance was also a significant challenge in Dzaleka refugee camp in 2020. Domestic responsibilities caused some girls to be persistently late while low parental interest in education contributed to some young children being late or absent. In response, UNHCR and its partners, through different initiatives outside of the UNHCR-EAC Programme, provided training for mothers' groups and PTAs on sustaining community

engagement. Teachers and school-based social workers also undertook home visits for students who were chronically absent, which resulted in most resuming their studies.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

In the dynamic and challenging implementation context of 2020, partners involved in activities supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme demonstrated adaptability and innovation to ensure continuity of learning in Malawi. Teachers and educational professionals at Umodzi Katubza Primary School explored alternatives to traditional in-person lesson delivery. Students benefited from lessons broadcasted over the radio, as evidenced by the success of this year's cohort of Grade 8 students. In Malawi, Grade 8 students sit the Primary School National Examination, the results of which determine students' secondary school placements. With the support of UNHCR, radios were procured for students in examination classes. The success of this initiative in ensuring continuity of learning is evidenced by the significant improvement in exam results from 64.5% in 2019 to 76.0% in 2020.

Additionally, during its reopening in October, Umodzi Katubza Primary School strictly adhered to all the MoE Standard Operating Procedures for preventing the transmission of COVID-19 in schools. Notably, classes were split into shifts, learners' temperatures were checked before entering the school, and all individuals in the school wore masks and washed their hands regularly. At the end of the term in December, no cases of COVID-19 had been identified in the school. UNHCR and its partners documented, and analysed measures taken in 2020 to prepare for evidence-based responses in 2021.

11-year old Zacharia has experienced some challenges keeping up with the learning pace of his peers at school. "I always wanted to pass but didn't know why I couldn't. Sometimes people would laugh when you fail so I stopped trying," he says.

After Zacharia joined Umodzi Katubza Primary School in Standard 1, he started falling a little behind with his schoolwork compared with his classmates and struggling with some school subjects like English, Maths and Chichewa. He became quiet and timid at school and avoided any interaction during lessons so that others would not notice his learning challenges.

To support refugee students like Zacharia, UNHCR, in partnership with the Education Above All Foundation, supported Complementary Basic Education (CBE), at Umodzi Katubza Primary School, in Dzaleka Camp. CBE comprises intensive and remedial programmes that run in a compressed timeframe and are aimed at over-aged students who are experiencing learning challenges to help them catch up with knowledge and skills and missed schoolwork.

In 2020, 90 over-aged students were enrolled in CBE programmes, one CBE Officer and nine CBE facilitators were recruited and trained. Within the space of just a few months, 90% of the students enrolled in CBE managed to catch up with their peers. Zacharia was one of them.

When Zacharia was advised to attend CBE, he was not happy at first. This would take him away from his friends and teachers. But when he got there, he found that the classes were far smaller, the teachers were more focused on his learning challenges and he was encouraged to be more expressive during lessons.

"Zacharia was one of the shy ones. At first, he would limit interactions with his classmates and the teacher, lacked confidence and had challenges asking questions or standing up to respond to question," says Zacharia's CBE teacher Imanishimwe. "But when his academic performance began to improve, he gained confidence and morale."

"Most of the learners who fail and repeat a class, who are over-aged and struggle to catch up, just need a little push in the right direction. Once they overcome their stumbling block, they are all stars," says CBE Officer, Blackie Khonje.

The CBE class of 10 students helped Zacharia to catch up fast. After only two months, his reading and comprehension had improved significantly and the difference between his entry score and exit score was huge. He was among the top five students at the CBE centre and the confidence he gained there will help him progress in his education journey.

Furaha, Zacharia's mother, a refugee from the Democratic Republic of The Congo, has noticed a big difference in her son: "My child has changed, he even walks more proudly now (laughs). These teachers have done something to make him happy."

Now in Grade 6, and enjoying school like never before, Zacharia feels confident that his dream of becoming a musician will be realised. "After attending classes at the CBE centre, where I was number three out of 90 students, I now know that I can make it," he says.



One step back, two steps closer to his dream

Malaysia

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED



125 learning centres

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS



Peninsular Malaysia

EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



Five main partners

- Dignity for Children Foundation
- Jaringan Rohingya Education Centre (JREC)
- Malaysian Social Research Institute (MSRI)
- Pertubuhan Kebajikan Cahaya Surya Bakti (CSB)
- Taiwan Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

25 operational partners

64

Malaysia remains a non-signatory of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. While advocacy was intensified, with UNHCR pursuing multiple pathways to enhance cooperation with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and other relevant ministries such as the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) and the National Security Council (NSC), the sudden change in government in February 2020 and the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic impeded progress. By the end of 2020, there were 178,613 refugees and asylum seekers under the protection of UNHCR, of whom 35,999 were children of school-going age.

To mitigate the negative impact of the continuous exclusion of refugee children from the national education system and COVID-19 education responses, UNHCR continued to work closely with five main partner NGOs, 25 operational partners, and refugee communities to enhance access to education through the informal community-based education system comprising 134 learning centres located across Peninsular Malaysia. Despite concerted efforts, only 42 per cent of refugee children are enrolled in primary education, compared to 98 per cent of their Malaysian peers. With the COVID-19 pandemic, it is feared that refugee children will be left even further behind.

Schools were closed in March 2020 and were briefly allowed to reopen in July before being closed again in October due to rising COVID-19 cases. Data collected at the end of July showed that less than 80 per cent of the learning centres were able to reopen, as many of them were unable to comply with the requirements outlined in the COVID-19 standard operating guidelines issued by the MoE due to space constraints. The learning centres that reopened resumed operations in various capacities and adopted blended education modalities that included home-based learning, online learning, class rotation, dual school sessions, and community cluster classrooms. UNHCR distributed hygiene items, such as soap, hand sanitisers, handwashing solutions, and face masks to all learning centres.

Implementation Progress and Impact

A total of 2,398 new enrolments in primary education were recorded in 2020. Only 63 per cent of the annual enrolment target could be reached due to the short 2020 implementation period and extended school closures. Activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme directly supported continuity of learning and teaching during the pandemic and helped prepare

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 91%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	11,400	1,231	1,167	2,398

Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator	Target	Newly built schools	Existing schools	Total
Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture	30	2	58	60

Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.3.b: Number of students supported by financial assistance	2,200	1,139	1,036	2,175

Indicator 1.3.c: Number of schools supported by financial interventions	65			120
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Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.4.a: Number of over-aged students (under the age of 18 years) supported	450	158	107	265

Indicator 1.4.b: Number of girls supported through gender specific activities	120			40
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Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.4.c: Number of children with special needs supported	30	0	0	0

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	50%	65%	62%	63%

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	14,900	1,955	1,705	3,660

Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	450	71	179	250

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	18,000	1,990	5,022	7,012

Indicator 2.1.c: Number of support classes provided	240			210
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Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	250	128	260	388

Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed	49,922			10,980
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Indicator 2.1.f: Number of schools provided with teaching and learning materials	85			14
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Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.2.a: Number of individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	300	56	124	180

Indicator	Target	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	600	112	248	360

Indicator 2.2.c: Number of schools monitored and/or provided with instructional support at least once per year	135			84
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Indicator 2.2.d: Number of schools supported by the project with a data collection system in place	135			125
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OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 3.a: Number of sensitisation and awareness raising sessions/meetings organised to engage the community	820			0
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Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced

65

INDICATOR	LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)	ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020		
		Male	Female	Total
Indicator 3.1.a: Number of individuals (community group members/parents, school management committee members, and student leaders) successfully trained	1.725	128	156	284
Indicator 3.1.b: Number of person-hours individuals (community members, school management committee members, student leaders) successfully trained	34.500	1.077	1.386	2.463
Output 3.2: Local and national partnerships on education strengthened				
Indicator 3.2.a: Number of partner personnel (including MoE and local/national partners) successfully trained	75	0	0	0
Indicator 3.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals (MoE personnel and local/national partners) successfully trained	900	0	0	0

for the safe reopening of schools in 2021. Most planned activities could be implemented and annual targets met.

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Activities implemented under output 1.1 (Educational infrastructure newly constructed) directly enhanced access to online learning opportunities through the provision of IT equipment (tablets, laptops, and data plan) that benefited a total of 1,307 students and 147 teachers in 60 learning centres. Priority was given to the students enrolled in upper primary levels in order to mitigate dropout and ensure completion of primary education. An additional in-kind donation of 1,500 tablets for students and 200 tablets for teachers were received from the State of Qatar and supported the continuity of learning and teaching.

As part of the assistance provided under output 1.3 (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools), 2,175 students benefited from transportation services to and from school between July and September 2020. After learning centres closed again in October, the budget for transportation was reallocated to strengthen other activities under the UNHCR-EAC Programme. With school closures affecting the ability of learning centres to collect school fees to fund their activities and with many parents being impacted by income loss during the pandemic, the provision of financial assistance to schools was instrumental in keeping learning centres afloat during the pandemic. Thanks to the assistance provided, 55 learning centres purchased PPE, thermometers, and other items enhancing compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures. Furthermore, a total of 120 learning centres benefited from financial assistance that covered the production of online learning videos in both English and Bahasa Malaysia, which were used during distance learning sessions.

Targeted support was provided to over-aged learners and girls under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students). A total of 265 over-aged learners were provided with intensive classes that were run online for some and in-person using small groups in community cluster classroom settings for others during school closures. These classes focused on mathematics and strengthening proficiency in English and Bahasa Malaysia. Through a programme targeting girls at risk of dropping out (e.g., girls from single-parent households, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence), 40 refugee girls were provided with food package assistance, internet connectivity, and a monthly support pack containing learning materials and hygiene items. Targeted support to children with disabilities had to be cancelled because teachers were not able to travel to the children's homes due to restrictions on movement.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Support to teachers was strengthened under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn). A total of 388 teachers were provided with compensation and monetary support during the 2020 implementation period. The annual target was overachieved (by 55 per cent), as it was decided to extend the support to teachers who had not previously been on the compensation list but were at risk of exiting the education sector due to the inability of learning centres to provide some form of minimum pay during school closures. Teacher training was readapted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and was carried out through online sessions, which allowed for the participation of a higher number of teachers. A total of 250 teachers (67 per cent over the annual target) were trained on virtual teaching practices.

The organisation of support classes and the provision of teaching and learning materials were also key activi-

ties implemented under output 2.1. Annual targets were overachieved due to the increased needs brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through a total of 210 support classes (over twice the annual target), additional support was provided to children to ensure that they keep learning. Classes were run online or in community cluster classrooms, with teachers traveling to the community to conduct sessions in small groups. Special sessions were also conducted to familiarise children with the tablets used for online learning. A total of 10,980 textbooks (55 per cent above the annual target) were distributed to 3,660 students, and 14 learning centres (40 per cent above the annual target) directly benefited from the distribution of a wide range of teaching and learning materials.

Data collection was particularly challenging in the COVID-19 context. As part of the activities implemented under output 2.2. (Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools), a total of 180 teachers were trained on data collection, management, and reporting through an online training that allowed the participation of a higher number of participants (80 per cent more) than was initially planned for the face-to-face training. UNHCR conducted monitoring visits to a total of 84 learning centres between July and October 2020, during which meetings were organised with teachers and school management staff to discuss various educational needs and challenges. During the 2020 imple-

mentation period, all 125 learning centres had a working data collection system in place. UNHCR provided 71 learning centres with laptops to enhance the quality of data collection and reporting.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Although UNHCR intensified its cooperation with many educational stakeholders in the COVID-19 context, awareness-raising sessions and outreach efforts targeting community members had to be cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions and rising anti-refugee sentiments. This negatively affected UNHCR's efforts to reach OOSC. Training activities for community members, implemented under output 3.1 (Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced) were limited to parents, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), and actively involved community members. While the switch to online trainings often allowed for a larger number of participants, online trainings for community members saw only 49 per cent of their annual target reached (284 individuals trained), mainly due to a lack of access to equipment and connectivity.

Students are back in school in Malaysia and continue learning by using tablet devices while observing COVID-19 prevention measures.

© UNHCR/Mimi Zarina Azmin



Training activities engaging MoE representatives, which had been planned under output 3.2 (Local and national partnerships on education strengthened), had to be postponed to 2021 due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context and the need to strengthen UNHCR's relationship with the MoE after the reopening of schools in 2021.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Limitations in terms of both resources and connectivity meant that the majority of learning centres were not able to switch to online learning for their students at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The switch to connected education required resources that learning centres largely lacked. Most learning centres struggled to stay in operation during school closures. Many families also saw their livelihoods affected during the COVID-19 pandemic and thus could no longer afford paying school fees. Limited access to devices and connectivity, the lack of digital literacy skills among teachers, and the low levels of literacy skills among parents to support children at home, were also main challenges that needed to be addressed.

No uniformity was observed in what was offered by the learning centres in terms of connected education. Some offered online learning options only for older children, while others distributed learning materials and homework alongside food assistance and essential items. Some used Zoom and Google Classroom, while others used YouTube videos. Generally, student participation was low. Discussions with learning centres revealed that they were expecting to see only 75 per cent of their students return back to school, with the secondary education level being most at risk of having a high number of dropouts.

It remains challenging for learning centres to track, enrol, and retain children who are members of widely dispersed and highly mobile populations, such as the Rohingya. Indeed, the Rohingya population is spread across Peninsular Malaysia, and Rohingya families tend to migrate continuously based on job availability. A large percentage of Rohingya children still do not have access to education and remain among the most difficult OOSC to reach. Some of those who do have access to a learning centre are not enrolled for a variety of other reasons.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

A successful COVID-19 response requires that all stakeholders collaborate to ensure that learning continues for all and that the informal education system in place, which was already fragile due to the lack of legal framework, comes out of the crisis stronger, more resilient, innovative, and responsive. With limited resources to expand spaces at existing learning centres or to establish new learning centres to address the needs of the many underserved pockets of communities spread across the country, online learning as part of a blended education model could effectively, build on the current momentum to enhance refugee children's access to quality primary education.

UNHCR's planning for the reopening of learning centres must consider the differential impacts that the educational disruption brought by the pandemic will have on refugee children and youth, especially girls and children with disabilities. Many will face significant challenges, including increased socio-economic vulnerabilities, and risk not returning to education at all. Preparations for the safe reopening of schools will focus on enhanced collaboration with health and other relevant sectors to ensure the safety and well-being of all learners and put particular emphasis on the protection of girls' right to education, given their heightened risk of sexual abuse, early marriage, and pregnancy during school closures. Improving the identification of girls at risk of dropping out, sensitising teachers to girls' education, strengthening the monitoring of girls' school attendance, and increasing financial assistance to single mothers will be some of the concrete measures taken. Community sensitisation on COVID-19 prevention measures and increased support to WASH facilities will also be key areas of focus.

Connected and blended education models should remain available where possible, offering flexibility to learners while also mitigating dropout and low school return rates. Emerging innovative practices, such as the establishment of community cluster classrooms through which community members and parents facilitated online lessons within community living spaces and teachers met students in small groups within their communities, should continue to be supported. Community outreach activities promoting awareness of blended education model and facilitating the meaningful engagement of parents and community members in education will support the continuity of education for those children already in school and the expansion of access to those who have yet to be enrolled.

Mexico

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

33



PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS



- Southern Mexico: Chiapas, Tabasco, Veracruz, Oaxaca and Quintana Roo States
- Northern Mexico: Baja California, Coahuila and Nuevo Leon States
- Western Mexico: Jalisco State
- Central Mexico: Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosi, Puebla and Mexico States; Mexico City

EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



- RET International
- Programa Casa Refugiados

70

By the end of 2019, 70,609 persons had applied for refugee status in Mexico, 43 per cent of whom were children. Following a significant drop in applications due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, a total of 41,303 asylum requests were registered by the Mexican authorities in 2020, with 38 per cent of them being for children. Facilitating access to education for asylum-seeking and refugee children upon their arrival in Mexico is a priority for UNHCR. Information about their right to education is provided, and parents or caregivers are encouraged to enrol their children at the closest public school.

Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Public Education (MoPE) suspended all face-to-face activities in schools in March 2020. A distance learning programme called "Learn at home" ("*Aprende en casa*") was launched by the MoPE for the rest of the school year (April-June). Materials were made available online; in some municipalities, printed materials were also distributed to parents, and/or shared via WhatsApp groups by teachers. With the start of the new 2020/2021 school year in August 2020, the MoPE launched the "Learn at home II" programme, enabling students from pre-primary to secondary school levels to follow daily

video lessons broadcast via public television channels, and uploaded on the MoPE's website. Schools in Mexico remained closed throughout 2020.

In 2020, UNHCR continued to work with RET International, the main education partner in the southern States of Mexico. By the end of 2020, collaboration with this partner ended, and a new partner will be implementing education activities in 2021.

Implementation Progress and Impact

During the 2020 implementation period, a total of 1,277 children were newly enrolled in primary education, and supported to participate in the MoPE's distance learning programmes during school closures. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected the implementation of activities supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020. While some activities were strengthened, many activities had to be readapted, reduced or cancelled.

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes

74%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education

	7,000	Male	Female	Total
		643	634	1,277

Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture

	20	Newly built schools	Existing schools	Total
		0	33	33

Output 1.2: Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated

Indicator 1.2.a: Number of schools/learning sites refurbished or renovated

	20			28
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Indicator 1.2.b: Number of classrooms refurbished or renovated within the existing schools/learning sites (1.2.a)

	120			27
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Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.b: Number of students supported by financial assistance

	6,620	Male	Female	Total
		643	634	1,277

Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.a: Number of over-aged students (under the age of 18 years) supported

	380	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes

	900	Male	Female	Total
		86	94	180

Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained

	200	Male	Female	Total
		160	59	219

Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained

	4,000	Male	Female	Total
		240	88	328

Indicator 2.1.c: Number of support classes provided

	20			0
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Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed

	0			180
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OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 3.a: Number of sensitisation and awareness raising sessions/meetings organised to engage the community

	18			0
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Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced

Indicator 3.1.a: Number of individuals (community group members/parents, school management committee members, and student leaders) successfully trained

	120	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

Indicator 3.1.b: Number of person-hours individuals (community members, school management committee members, student leaders) successfully trained

	120	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

The provision of furniture and equipment to primary schools, planned under output 1.1 (Educational infrastructure newly constructed), was strengthened following consultations with schools that highlighted the need to better equip IT rooms to enhance learners' digital literacy skills, support participation in distance learning programmes during school closures, and prepare

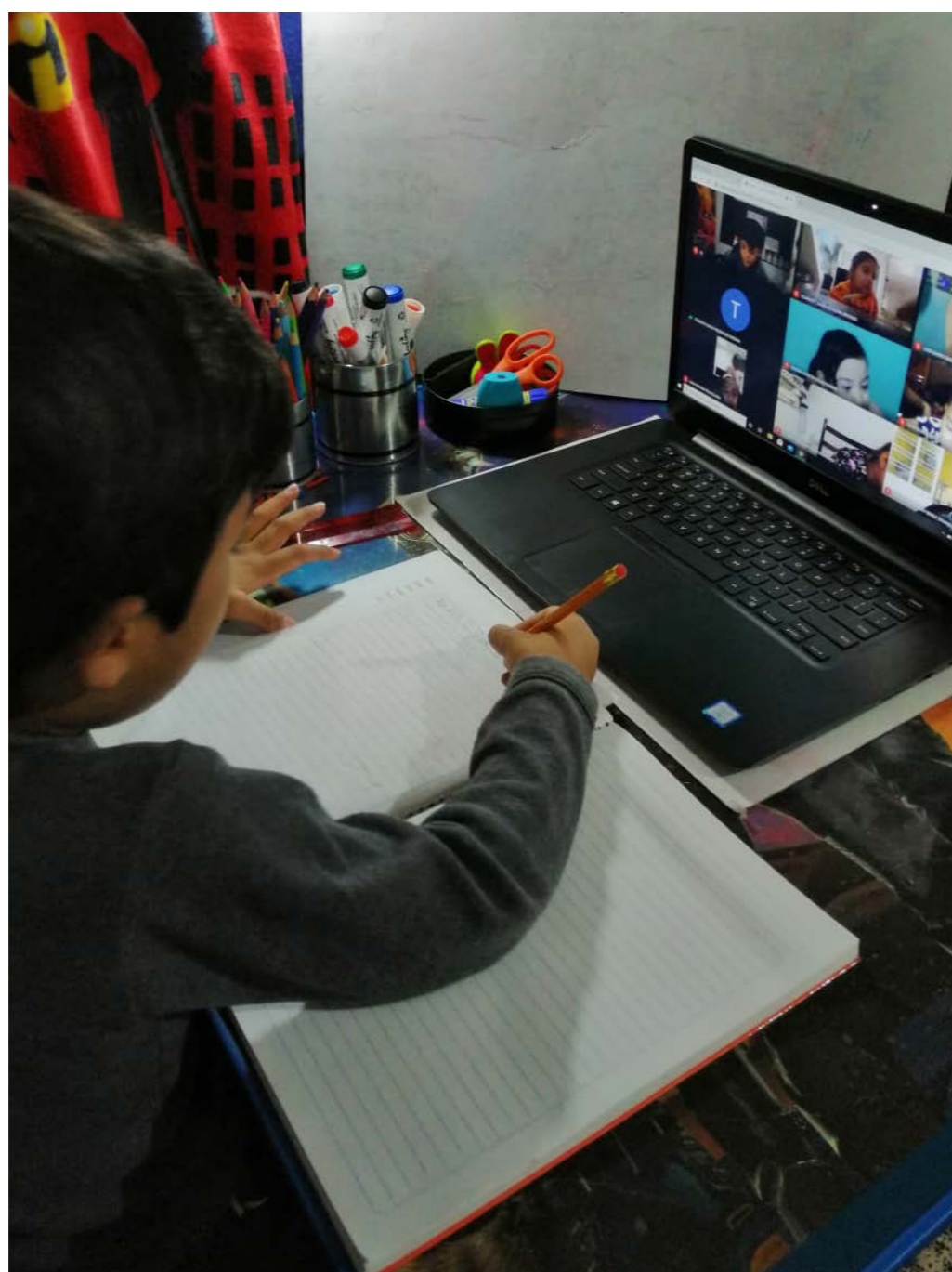
for the planned alternating shift systems (alternating in-classroom learning and home-based learning) upon school reopening. A total of 33 primary schools (over three times the annual target) benefited from furniture and equipment in 2020. Of these, 26 schools in Chiapas, Veracruz, Oaxaca and Baja California benefited from the provision of IT equipment and furniture. In addition, three schools in Tabasco received a wide range of school furniture, one school in Chiapas benefited from electricity installation, and one school in Coahuila was

MEXICO

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A young refugee boy participates in distance learning classes supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme. These classes helped refugee children continue learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

© UNHCR/Angelica Montes Santamaria



provided with a ramp to facilitate access for persons with disabilities.

Rehabilitation activities, planned under output 1.2 (Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated), were adapted in order to prioritise the setting up of IT rooms, and extend support to a higher number of schools than what had been initially planned. A total of 28 primary schools (close to three times the annual target) benefited from rehabilitation activities during the 2020 implementation period. IT rooms were set up (electrical power surge protectors, wiring, etc.) in the 26 schools that were provided with IT equipment and furniture under output 1.1. General repair work was carried out in the common areas of two additional schools in Chiapas and Coahuila.

One of the key activities of the UNHCR-EAC Programme in Mexico was implemented under output 1.3: material/financial assistance provided to students and schools). The provision of cash grants to asylum-seeking and refugee households facilitated the enrolment into primary education, and supported the participation in distance learning programmes, of a total of 1,277 children (57 per cent of the annual target) in 14 locations in southern, central, northern, and western Mexico. The annual target for this activity was underachieved due to the reduced 2020 implementation period. However, the value of the cash transfer per student was not reduced in order to help families cover the costs of data connectivity associated with distance learning programmes.

Targeted support to over-aged learners through the Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs) of the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA), which help both adults and children obtain their primary education certificates, was cancelled during the 2020 implementation period due to the closure of all learning institutions, and the suspension of procedures for new admissions.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Activities undertaken under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn) had to be adapted in order to take into account COVID-19 prevention measures, and better support the continuity of teaching and learning during school closures. Training sessions for teachers were carried out online via Zoom and other platforms, which allowed for a higher number of participants than what had been initially planned. A total of 219 teachers (over twice the annual target) were trained in four munic-

ipalities in southern Mexico, with training sessions focusing on topics such as international protection, access to education for children, and psychosocial support tools during lockdown. Teachers played a key role in supporting the learning process during school closures. Many of them conducted online classes, developed revision materials, and followed up with their students via WhatsApp groups. Face-to-face support classes, which had to be cancelled in the COVID-19 context, were replaced by individual counselling and homework support carried out by teachers through phone calls and WhatsApp messages, which benefited a total of 244 children under the UNHCR-EAC Programme. In addition, in order to support children's participation in distance learning programmes, UNHCR's partner in the southern states of Mexico facilitated the printing of textbooks containing activities developed by the MoPE, which were distributed to 180 asylum-seeking and refugee children.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Although the sensitisation and training activities planned under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions, strengthened community engagement remained key to ensuring continuity of learning during school closures. Outside of the UNHCR-EAC Programme, UNHCR also undertook outreach activities targeting the host community as part of its strategy to promote a favourable environment for the inclusion of refugee children and their families.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic brought significant challenges to the education sector in Mexico in 2020. Limited access to equipment, devices and connectivity prevented many refugee and host community children from accessing the "Learn at home I" and "Learn at home II" distance learning programmes from the MoPE. Because most asylum-seeking and refugee households do not have a television, families had to resort to smartphones for their children to take school lessons through distant learning programmes, or to remain in contact with teachers and submit their homework. Most asylum-seekers and refugees obtain internet services through mobile data plans, which are usually significantly more expensive than Wi-Fi home internet services. The cash grants originally planned to cover the costs of school fees, school supplies, and uniforms, were allocated to families to help them cover connectivity costs.

Federal regulations in Mexico allow the enrolment of foreign children in public schools at any time of the year. Nevertheless, during the COVID-19 pandemic, formal enrolment procedures were often only available during certain months of the year. This meant that some asylum-seeking and refugee families were not able to enrol their children in school in 2020, as school administrations were often closed, and formal enrolment procedures were not always available. Due to restrictions on movement and gatherings, the provision of targeted support to asylum-seeking and refugee families by UNHCR and its partners was challenging during lockdown and school closures.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

UNHCR and its partners carried out surveys through phone calls to find out whether refugee children across different states in southern, northern and central Mexico were able to attend distance learning classes, and identify the difficulties they were facing. The surveys also served as a tool to find out how refugee children and their families were coping with the lockdown and school closures. The provision of individualised counselling, guidance and homework support through phone calls and WhatsApp messages was often highlighted as a good practice. Not only did it help children and their parents get better acquainted with the Mexican curriculum, but it also contributed to provide important psychosocial support to isolated refugee families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to be able to receive education cash grants, parents or caregivers usually have to provide an official document serving as proof that their children are enrolled in the Mexican education system. In the COVID-19 context, more flexible enrolment verification mechanisms were put in place to continue supporting families, while at the same time ensuring children were attending classes. Instead of the usually requested official document, families were allowed to provide documents such as grade report cards, communication exchanges with teachers, examples of homework exercises submitted by their children, etc. In some cases, UNHCR and its partners liaised with school directors and teachers to verify the registration and attendance of asylum-seeking and refugee children.

Pakistan

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

145



PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS



- Districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi, Charsadda, Kohat, Lakki Marwat, Bannu, D.I.Khan, Hangu, Mansehra, Haripur, Timergara, and Buner.
- 10 Refugee Villages (RVs) in Balochistan: Surkhab, Saranan, Malgagai, Zar Karaez, Katwai, Ghazgi Minara, Muhammad Khel, Posti, Lejey Karez, and Chaghi.
- One RV in Punjab: Kot Chandna, Mianwali.

EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



- International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)
- Initiative for Development and Empowerment Axis (IDEA)
- Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees KP (CAR)

By the end of 2019, Pakistan was hosting over 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees, out of whom 500,000 were school-aged children. Some 69 per cent of registered Afghan refugees were living in urban and rural areas alongside their Pakistani host communities, with the Government of Pakistan allowing access to local services including health and education despite the significant strain on available resources and infrastructure. Although registered refugee children have access to public schools, financial pressures and prevailing cultural norms often prevent them from attending school. Close to 80 per cent of the school-aged Afghan population was out of school in 2020, and enrolment rates were particularly low among refugee girls.

In 2020, UNHCR and its partners supported a total of 54,111 Afghan children enrolled in 145 primary schools in Refugee Villages (RVs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Balochistan, and Punjab. The shift from the Afghan to the Pakistani curriculum, which began in 2018, continued in 2020, with most pre-primary and primary grades completing the transition and primary grade 5 expected to

complete it in 2021. The full transition will enable UNHCR and its partners to optimise the use of resources towards improved educational opportunities and services for both refugee and host community children.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools were closed from mid-March 2020 through to mid-September and were shut down again in November 2020 because of a surge in COVID-19 cases. Due to the extended school closures, a very limited number of new enrolments of OOSC could take place during the 2020 implementation period. When schools reopened, an alternate day policy was adopted to avoid congestion. Additionally, facemasks and hand sanitisers were distributed to students and teachers, and multifunctional teams regularly visited schools to monitor compliance with COVID-19 prevention measures.

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL
12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 86%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	19.400	Male 0	Female 473	Total 473
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Output 1.2: Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated

Indicator 1.2.a: Number of schools/learning sites refurbished or renovated	70			18
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Indicator 1.2.b: Number of classrooms refurbished or renovated within the existing schools/learning sites (1.2.a)	280			64
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Indicator 1.2.c: Number of latrines refurbished or renovated	140			25
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Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.a: Number of students supported by material assistance	17.570	Male 200	Female 200	Total 400
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Indicator 1.3.b: Number of students supported by financial assistance	7.900	Male 0	Female 330	Total 330
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Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.a: Number of over-aged students (under the age of 18 years) supported	1.700	Male 0	Female 473	Total 473
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OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	12%	Male 88%	Female 91%	Total 89%
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Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	17.370	Male 763	Female 763	Total 1.526
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Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	400	Male 405	Female 143	Total 548
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Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	187.200	Male 10.125	Female 3.575	Total 13.700
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Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	585	Male 232	Female 171	Total 403
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Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed	35.650			1.526
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Implementation progress & impact

During the 2020 implementation period, 473 out-of-school refugee girls were newly enrolled in Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs). No other new enrolments of OOSC could take place due to school closures. Many activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 saw their annual targets significantly underachieved because many activities had already been undertaken outside of the UNHCR-EAC Programme during the first half of 2020.

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

While no construction activities were supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020, major rehabilitation work took place under output 1.2 (Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated). 18 schools were renovated in KP and Balochistan, with rehabilitation work consisting of mud plastering school boundary walls, painting, and fixing flooring, roofing, gates, doors, windows, and solar fans. A total of 64 classrooms were renovated in the 18 targeted schools. In addition, WASH facilities were improved through the rehabilitation of 25 latrines. COVID-19 restrictions affected the availability of construction material and caused some delays in the implementation of rehabilitation activities, which

led to minor under-achievements of annual targets. Infrastructural improvements will facilitate enrolment in 2021 and create more conducive learning environments.

The assistance provided to students under the UNHCR-EAC Programme was significantly reduced under output 1.3 (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools). Only 800 uniforms were procured and distributed to 400 children (three per cent of the annual target) because uniform distribution had already taken place during the first half of 2020 outside of the UNHCR-EAC Programme. In total, UNHCR, thanks to various donor contributions, supported the provision of 72,550 school uniforms to 36,275 primary school children in KP and Punjab in 2020. Due to school closures, the financial support provided to students to cover the costs of transportation services to school was significantly decreased. During the 2020 implementation, 330 girls (13 per cent

of the annual target), who were selected based on the distance between their home and their school as well as their performance in school, were provided with financial support for transportation services.

Refugee girls, who are often now allowed to attend nearby public or RV schools for cultural reasons, were also supported under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students). Of the 33 Home Based Girls Schools (HBGSs) in Kohat and Peshawar, 18 were converted into Accelerated Education Programme (AEP) centres following an assessment that took into account factors such as the existence of suitable spaces and the availability of qualified female teachers in the area. The newly created AEP centres offer a condensed curriculum that covers primary education up to grade 5 and allows over-aged refugee girls to complete their primary education within 32 months. A total

of 473 out-of-school refugee girls were enrolled in AEPs during the 2020 implementation period. Teachers in all 18 AEP centres benefited from technical support provided by UNICEF and the Provincial Institute of Teacher Education (PITE).

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS.

The quality of teaching and learning was enhanced through activities implemented under output 2.1

Yasir and his family fled Afghanistan and found refuge in Pakistan, where Yasir now attends primary education with the support of the UNHCR-EAC Programme.

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(Enhanced capacity to teach and learn). Given the increased training needs linked to the ongoing transition from the Afghan to the Pakistani curriculum, a total of 548 teachers (close to three times the annual target) were provided with a refresher training facilitated by the PITE to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills required for the transition to the Pakistani curriculum in grades 1 to 3. In addition, 222 Afghan and 181 Pakistani teachers benefited from financial support under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, out of a total number of 1,081 teachers supported through incentives by UNHCR in 2020. Only 1,526 textbooks (13 per cent of the annual target) were procured and distributed to learners because textbook distribution had already taken place during the first half of 2020 outside of the UNHCR-EAC Programme. In total, UNHCR, thanks to various donor contributions, supported the distribution of 19,555 textbooks to learners in RV schools in 2020.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Although no specific activities were supported under outcome 3 of the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020, UNHCR continued to foster partnerships at the federal and provincial levels in Pakistan. The Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) and the Commissionerate for *Afghan Refugees* (CAR) remained the main government counterparts. Coordination meetings were held with key education stakeholders, including at the school level through regular meetings and sensitisation sessions with Parent Teacher Councils (PTCs) and community members. Local and national partnerships on education were strengthened as UNHCR regularly participated in planning meetings for the development of education sector plans and in local education groups to discuss measures to prevent COVID-19 and to prepare for the safe reopening of schools. Partnerships were enhanced with UNICEF on the mainstreaming of AEP programmes and with UNDP on joint initiatives and potential areas of collaboration such as teacher training, girls' education, AEPs, and Non-Formal Education (NFE) centres.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic and the extended closure of primary schools in RVs created an unprecedented disruption to learning. While school-based learning was interrupted for all children across the country, many refugee children, due to limited access to television, could not benefit from the official education programmes aired on



the new TV channel Teleschool by the provincial government to support the continuity of learning. Final examinations were initially postponed, but the Government of Pakistan then decided that all enrolled in RV schools would be promoted to the next grade without having to pass formal examinations. Teachers in RV schools were supported with official guidance on preparing lesson plans that accommodate the missed months of schooling.

Increasing girls' participation in education remains an ongoing challenge in Pakistan. In the COVID-19 context, it was particularly difficult to reach refugee girls who live in remote areas and who are often not allowed to attend school. UNHCR's partners organised meetings with mothers conducted in the presence of the female AEP teachers. Mothers were sensitised to the importance of education and the opportunity to enrol their daughters in the newly created AEP centres. Looking ahead, UNHCR, through various initiatives outside of the UNHCR-EAC Programme, will strengthen its support to girls' education by providing incentives to girls transiting from primary to secondary education, by involving Afghan refugee youth acting as role models to encourage the participation of girls in school, and by training of teachers and School Management Committees (SMCs) to report cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and to provide appropriate support to children.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

With community partnership being a key aspect of the Enhancing Access to Education (EAE) project, UNHCR and its partners continued to encourage the active participation of PTCs and community stakeholders (shura members, refugee elders/leaders) in increasing enrolment and reducing absenteeism in school. UNHCR and its partners met with community stakeholders on a monthly basis to monitor progress and identify challenges. Continuous engagement of PTCs within the targeted schools was instrumental to receiving feedback about the activities implemented, identifying the most urgent needs, and following up on school dropouts. Regular meetings with PTCs and shura members increased transparency and trust in the transition to the Afghan curriculum. Community members were also involved in the dissemination of awareness messages on the importance of education and COVID-19 prevention measures.

Rwanda

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

13



PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS



- East Province: Mahama and Nyabiheke camps
- South Province: Kigeme and Mugombwa camps
- Northern Province: Gihembe camp
- Western Province: Kiziba camp

EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



- Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)
- Word Vision
- Save the Children
- Plan International

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Rwanda is home to 143,853 refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The Government of Rwanda (GoR) has maintained open borders, and refugees have been allowed to also settle in urban areas such as Kigali and Huye. A total of 132,532 refugees are living in six refugee camps located across the country. Five camps (Gihembe, Kigeme, Kiziba, Mugombwa and Nyabiheke) accommodate refugees from the DRC. Mahama, the biggest camp, accommodates refugees from Burundi. Children represent 51 per cent of the refugee population. At the beginning of 2020, a total of 30,070 refugee children were enrolled in primary school, with a net enrolment rate of 89 per cent and a gross enrolment rate of 135 per cent.

The education sector in Rwanda has been strongly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a measure to limit the spread of COVID-19, schools and learning institutions across the country were closed in March 2020 and remained closed throughout 2020. School closures disrupted the learning of over 55,000 refugee students who were enrolled in school prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. The GoR, in collaboration with partners, launched remote learning programmes to support continuity of learning during school closures. Lessons were

aired on television and radio stations, and learning materials were uploaded on online platforms.

In 2020, UNHCR continued to work in close cooperation with the Rwandan Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Rwanda Education Board (REB) to facilitate access to quality education for refugee children and ensure the inclusion of refugee children in the national education system in line with the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and pledges made by the GoR at the Global Refugee Forum in 2019. For the implementation of primary education activities in 2020, UNHCR partnered with Word Vision and Plan International in the five camps accommodating refugees from the DRC, and with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and Save the Children in Mahama camp.

Implementation Progress and Impact

During the 2020 implementation period, no new enrolments of out-of-school children (OOSC) could take place due to the extended closure of primary schools in the six refugee camps. Activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 supported continuity of

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL
12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 85%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	11.000	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator 1.1.c: Number of classrooms newly constructed in existing schools/learning sites	36			0
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Indicator 1.1.d: Number of latrines newly constructed	24			0
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Indicator 1.1.e: Number of water points newly constructed	0			8
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Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture	3	Newly built schools 0	Existing schools 13	Total 13
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Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.a: Number of students supported by material assistance	11.000	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 1.3.c: Number of schools supported by financial interventions	9			0
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Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.c: Number of children with special needs supported	180	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	92%	Male 91%	Female 91%	Total 91%
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Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	90	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	50.400	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	177	Male 168	Female 70	Total 238
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Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Indicator 2.2.a: Number of individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	18	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 2.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	648	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 3.a: Number of sensitisation and awareness raising sessions/meetings organised to engage the community	36			6
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OUTCOME 4: IMPROVED CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SPORT

Indicator 4.a: Number of schools with a sport for protection programme in place	12			0
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Output 4.1: Children participating in a sport for protection programme

Indicator 4.1.a: Number of primary school children involved in a sport for protection programme	2.500	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Output 4.2: Youth facilitators trained to implement a sport for protection programme

Indicator 4.2.a: Number of youth (trainers) successfully trained in sport for protection	25	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 4.2.b: Number of person-hours of training for youth (trainers) successfully trained	15.000	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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learning and teaching during the pandemic and preparations for the safe reopening of schools. Many activities had to be readapted, cancelled, or postponed to 2021 in light of the COVID-19 context.

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Activities under output 1.1. (Educational infrastructure newly constructed) were added to 2020 implementation plans in order to strengthen the COVID-19 education response and preparations for the safe reopening of primary schools. Eight handwashing stations were constructed in targeted schools during the 2020 implementation period. In addition, 1,200 litres of hand sanitiser, 30,000 litres of soap, and 465 contactless thermometers were delivered to the 13 targeted primary schools in the six refugee camps to improve hygienic conditions and to enhance the safety of learners and teachers upon school reopening.

The provision of material assistance to primary school children, planned under output 1.3 (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools), was affected by the COVID-19 context. While school uniforms, scholastic materials, and facemasks were procured for a total of 5,284 primary school students in 2020, their distribution to students had to be postponed to 2021 due to school closures. Financial interventions targeting schools had to be cancelled in the COVID-19 context.

Activities facilitating access to education for children with special needs and disabilities, planned under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students), were postponed to 2021. Due to the reduced 2020 implementation period and school closures, the 104 children with disabilities newly identified in 2020 will benefit from targeted support in 2021, including the provision of assistive devices, accessible learning materials, and scholarships to attend specialised learning institutions.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

The financial support provided to teachers under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn) was instrumental in ensuring continuity of learning during the pandemic. A total of 238 refugee and host community teachers (86 per cent over the annual target) were paid salaries and incentives under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020. The number of teachers supported by UNHCR

was increased to improve the learning environment in refugee hosting schools and complement the GoR's efforts to integrate refugees into the national education system. During school closures, teachers visited children at home, monitored home-based learning, helped learners get acquainted with learning materials and radio lessons, provided counselling and guidance, and encouraged peer-to-peer support in small learning groups. Teachers also assisted children with disabilities by providing specialised support, translating lessons into sign language, and sharing adapted guidance on following COVID-19 prevention measures. Additionally, the teaching workforce played key roles in the preparations for the safe reopening of schools, in the organisation of back-to-school campaigns, and in the identification of children at risk of dropping out of school, including children with special needs and unaccompanied children. While teachers benefited from financial support during the pandemic, COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings and movement led to the cancellation of all training activities planned under outputs 2.1 and 2.2 (Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools) in 2020.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Sensitisation activities had to be readapted in 2020 in response to COVID-19 restrictions. During school closures, community mobilisers walked throughout the camps to share sensitisation messages via megaphones about the importance of children engaging in remote learning and of parents encouraging their children to continue learning. Additional sensitisation activities, organised in close collaboration with education authorities, School Management Committees, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), students, and community members, also focused on the importance of COVID-19 prevention measures and of re-enrolling in school upon reopening.

OUTCOME 4: IMPROVED CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SPORT

The Youth Sports Facilitator (YSF) training course planned under the Sport for Protection (S4P) Initiative could not kick off in the six refugee camps in 2020 because COVID-19 prevention measures, including restrictions on gathering and movement, limited the access of UNHCR and partners to the camps. The recruitment of onsite facilitators and the selection of course participants also had to be postponed to early 2021 as these processes required careful on-site supervision and monitoring, as

well as access to ICT infrastructure provided by partner staff. Nevertheless, various preparatory activities were undertaken during the 2020 implementation period. These included the procurement of tablets and server laptops preloaded with YSF course materials, the advertising of the onsite facilitator positions and the course application, the procurement of uniforms and sports equipment (shoes, jerseys, caps, agility ladders, stop-watches, etc.), and the construction or rehabilitation of football fields and multipurpose sports grounds in six schools and two nearby sites.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

The implementation of activities under the UNHCR-EAC Programme was significantly hampered in the COVID-19 context as schools were closed and measures were put in place to prevent the spread of the virus. All training activities had to be cancelled given the COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings and movement. While many items, such as uniforms, school supplies, facemasks, and assistive devices for children with disabilities, were procured in 2020, their distribution to students had to be postponed to 2021 due to school closures. Under the S4P Initiative, only preparatory activities (i.e., the pro-

urement of sports equipment and learning materials, the construction and rehabilitation of sports facilities in primary schools), could be implemented. The start of the YSF training course was postponed to early 2021.

Limited access to mobile phones, tablets, laptops, radio sets, and internet connectivity hindered the participation of many refugee children in remote learning programmes. The interruption of school-based feeding programmes negatively impacted children's health as well as their retention and participation in education. Furthermore, refugee children with severe disabilities were often inadequately supported in alternative learning processes.

Primary school students in Mugombwa refugee camp, return to the classroom after extensive school closures in Rwanda*.

© UNHCR/Eugene Sibomana

*Photograph taken in 2021 when schools reopened in Rwanda. Communications material gathering missions could not take place during the 2020 implementation of the UNHCR-EAC Programme due to COVID-19 restrictions.



Major gaps continue to impact the quality of learning environments and the ability of schools to comply with COVID-19 prevention measures. Limited educational infrastructure and overcrowded classrooms will make it challenging to observe physical distancing measures upon school reopening. In addition, some students, including those who were in grade 1 in 2020, will be obliged to repeat their grade in 2021 due to the school closures of 2020. This means that two cohorts of students will be enrolled in grade 1 in 2021: the cohort of newly enrolled children and the cohort of previously enrolled children who will be repeating grade 1. More classrooms and teachers will thus be needed. A double shift system will be put in place in order to accommodate all children, reduce class sizes, and enhance the safety and protection of learners and teachers.

It is likely that many refugee children will drop out or not re-enrol in school, including unaccompanied children, who have been the most vulnerable to exploitation and negative coping mechanisms during school closures, and children with special learning needs and disabilities, who have had very limited access to remote learning opportunities. Through the support of teachers and community mobilisers, UNHCR and its partners ensured that back-to-school campaigns focused on these groups of children. Strengthened monitoring and the provision of targeted support, including psychosocial support, will be major areas of focus once schools reopen.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

The educational disruption brought by the pandemic presented an opportunity to re-think educational interventions in refugee settings in Rwanda. Despite limited access to devices and internet connectivity, it is estimated that around 40 per cent of the children in the six refugee camps were participating in the distance learning programmes aired on national television and radio channels during school closures. The introduction of alternative learning modalities showed that technology could play a key role in the future in facilitating access to education for refugee children. Looking ahead, measures will be put in place to improve access to internet connectivity and to support teachers and learners in their development of digital literacy skills.

Strengthened community participation was key to ensuring continuity of learning and enhancing child protection and safety during school closures. Refugee teachers were mobilised and encouraged children to participate

in remote learning programmes via mobile phones and televisions. PTA members, community leaders, and mobilisers undertook sensitisation activities to help protect children from different forms of child abuse and exploitation, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and unwanted pregnancies. Community engagement also played a key role in supporting children with special needs and unaccompanied children throughout school closures, with teachers and community members helping them to engage in remote learning, access various services, and observe COVID-19 prevention measures.

South Sudan

NUMBER OF
PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

33



PROGRAMME
IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS

- Maban and Jamjang



EDUCATION PARTNERS
IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES

- Lutheran World Federation (LWF)



In 2020, the operational environment in South Sudan remained complex and pre-existing humanitarian needs were further compounded by localised violence, floods, and the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although important steps forwards have been made in the formation of a unity government and the appointment of state governors, the implementation of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) signed by the parties to the conflict in 2018 has been slow. The security situation remained fragile with instances of sub-national violence occurring in 2020 in several states, including Central Equatoria, Warrap, and Jonglei, and resulting in further displacement of civilians. Relative security in other parts of the country has enabled UNHCR to operate with minimal interruptions and offers a cautiously optimistic outlook in terms of durable solutions to displacement.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further made fragile an already struggling education system and has exacerbated the educational needs in South Sudan. All schools and learning institutions across the country were closed by the Government in late March 2020 and remained closed throughout 2020. The extended closure of schools has exposed learners from both host and refugee communities to the risk of school dropout. Access to the remote learning platforms provided by the Government was constrained by limited access to electricity, internet, and IT equipment across the country.

As part of the COVID-19 education response, UNHCR and its education partner LWF, in collaboration with the Government of South Sudan, adopted new education implementation modalities, which included the production and distribution of home study packages for learners enrolled in upper primary levels, Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs), and multi-grade Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) in collaboration with local radio stations in Maban and Jamjang.

Implementation Progress and Impact

No out-of-school children (OOSC) could be enrolled in primary school during the 2020 implementation period due to the closure of all learning institutions. While significant efforts were made to reach OOSC during school closures, many activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 supported UNHCR's efforts to ensure continuity of home-based learning and to prepare for the safe reopening of schools. Most planned activities had to be reduced or cancelled due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context.

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT
TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL
12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 93%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	45,400	0	0	0

Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator 1.1.a: Number of schools/ learning sites newly constructed	4			0
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Indicator 1.1.b: Number of classrooms constructed within the new schools/learning sites (1.1.a)	31			0
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Indicator 1.1.c: Number of classrooms newly constructed in existing schools/learning sites	26			0
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Indicator 1.1.d: Number of latrines newly constructed	200			0
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Indicator	Value	Newly built schools	Existing schools	Total
Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture	30	0	24	24

Output 1.2: Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated

Indicator 1.2.a: Number of schools/learning sites refurbished or renovated	33			0
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Indicator 1.2.b: Number of classrooms refurbished or renovated within the existing schools/learning sites (1.2.a)	320			0
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Indicator 1.2.c: Number of latrines refurbished or renovated	30			0
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Indicator 1.2.d: Number of water points refurbished or renovated	13			0
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Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.3.a: Number of students supported by material assistance	86,902	4,490	3,303	7,793

Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.3.b: Number of students supported by financial assistance	6,450	0	0	0

Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.4.a: Number of over-aged students (under the age of 18 years) supported	24,500	0	0	0

Indicator 1.4.b: Number of girls supported through gender specific activities	12,000			0
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Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 1.4.c: Number of children with special needs supported	1,950	131	104	235

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	50%	22%	8%	20%

Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	83,000	4,490	3,303	7,793

Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	740	0	0	0

Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	1,034,880	0	0	0

Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	30	0	0	0

Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed	153,500			57,000
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Indicator 2.1.f: Number of schools provided with teaching and learning materials	30			30
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Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Indicator	Value	Male	Female	Total
Indicator 2.2.a: Number of individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	87	0	0	0

INDICATOR	LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)	ACTUAL		
		12 JUNE	-31 DEC 2020	TOTAL
Indicator 2.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	12.528	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
Indicator 2.2.c: Number of schools monitored and/or provided with instructional support at least once per year	33			33
Indicator 2.2.d: Number of schools supported by the project with a data collection system in place	33			33
OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION				
Indicator 3.a: Number of sensitisation and awareness raising sessions/meetings organised to engage the community	36			12
Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced				
Indicator 3.1.a: Number of individuals (community group members/parents, school management committee members, and student leaders) successfully trained	1.498	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
Indicator 3.1.b: Number of person-hours individuals (community members, school management committee members, student leaders) successfully trained	35.952	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
Output 3.2: Local and national partnerships on education strengthened				
Indicator 3.2.a: Number of partner personnel (including MoE and local/national partners) successfully trained	60	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
Indicator 3.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals (MoE personnel and local/national partners) successfully trained	960	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

All construction and rehabilitation activities planned under output 1.1 (Educational infrastructure newly constructed) and 1.2 (Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated) had to be cancelled due to the reduced 2020 implementation period and the COVID-19 pandemic constraining the mobilisation of materials and human resources. Consequently, the average classroom-student ratio remained the same as in 2019 (1:120). Activities that enhanced learning environments included the provision of 330 desks to 10 primary schools and the provision of energy saving lamps to 24 primary schools.

As part of the activities implemented under output 1.3 (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools), material assistance was provided to 7,793 children who were identified as OOSC during the door-to-door distribution of home-study packages. The annual target for this activity was significantly underachieved (by 73 per cent) due to challenges in reaching OOSC during school closures, as well as various logistical challenges linked to COVID-19 restrictions and the severe flooding that affected South Sudan in 2020. Nevertheless, the provision of material assistance to OOSC within this context should be highlighted as a significant accomplishment. Materials provided to the targeted children included facemasks, learning materials, and solar-powered radios to support home-based learning through radio lesson broadcasting. While it is hard to estimate

the percentage of newly identified OOSC who engaged in home-based learning, it is expected that the measures put in place will help boost enrolment once primary schools reopen in 2021.

Activities targeting the most vulnerable groups of learners, which had been planned under output 1.4 (Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students), had to be cancelled or reduced. Over-aged learners could not access Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs) due to school closures. Support to refugee girls through the distribution of hygiene items was cancelled because the 4,100 targeted girls benefited from a general distribution of hygiene items within their community that was funded by another donor. Due to COVID-19 restrictions that limited home visits, logistical challenges, and procurement delays, only 235 children with special needs (36 per cent of the annual target) benefited from targeted support through the provision of assistive devices, remedial learning support, recordings of lessons and Braille-script home learning packages, and home visits that included counselling and specific needs assessment.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

The provision of learning and teaching materials under output 2.1 (Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn) directly supported the continuity of learning and

teaching during school closures and prepared for the safe reopening of schools. A total of 18,035 school kits and 38,965 new curriculum textbooks were distributed to children. As a result, the average textbook-student ratio in primary schools improved from 1:5 to 1:3. In addition, teaching guides and reference books were provided to 30 primary schools supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme. The financial support that was planned for 10 new teachers was cancelled because no teachers were newly recruited in targeted primary schools during the 2020 implementation period. Teacher training could not be undertaken as a result of the closure of all teacher training institutions across the country in 2020.

Activities planned under output 2.2 (Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools) had to be readapted or cancelled in light of the COVID-19 context. Training on data collection, monitoring, and evaluation were deprioritised during school closures because no registration activities were taking place in schools. All 33 primary schools supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme were inspected by officials from the national Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) to assess the implementation of COVID-19 prevention measures and the readiness of the schools to reopen safely. Existing data collection systems in the 33 targeted pri-

mary schools were used in 2020 to collect data on the number of children accessing remote learning options.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Despite the challenging 2020 implementation context, significant efforts were made to keep the community engaged in educational activities throughout school closures. Sensitisation and awareness-raising sessions targeting Parent Teacher Associations, School Management Committees, student leaders, and community members were organised through interactive radio programmes. Partnerships with key educational stakeholders at local and national levels were strengthened through regular virtual meetings to discuss the implementation of educational activities during school closures, the inclusion of refugees in national programmes, and the implementation of the Djibouti Declaration on Refugee Education. All training activities targeting community members under

Madina interacts with her friend near Kings of Nuba Primary School in Pamir refugee camp, South Sudan.

© UNHCR/Assim Said Ali Juma



output 3.1 (Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced) and partner personnel under output 3.2 (Output 3.2: Local and national partnerships on education strengthened) had to be cancelled due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context and the unfeasibility of organising remote trainings given the limited access to IT equipment and connectivity in South Sudan.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

The education sector in South Sudan encountered numerous challenges in 2020. The MoGEI introduced a new competency-based curriculum that specifies the instruction timetable. Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the increased number of instruction hours required by the curriculum constrained the use of a double shift system and caused schools to revert to a single shift system despite the restrictions that this placed on the enrolment of OOSC and the overcrowding it entailed. The overcrowding of schools and the heightened awareness of the importance of hygiene and sanitation associated with the pandemic also highlighted the inadequacy of WASH facilities in schools. Had primary schools operated fully in 2020, the average latrine-student ratio would have been 1:229. This ratio does not take into account the destruction of WASH facilities during the floods of 2020.

There are also challenges around teaching capacity in South Sudan. The introduction of the new curriculum in 2020 was accompanied by a shift in the medium of instruction from Arabic to English; however, most incentive teachers of refugee students are not proficient in English. Efforts to support teachers in learning English themselves and teaching students in the English medium were constrained by COVID-19 prevention measures and the unfeasibility of online teacher trainings in South Sudan. These compounded pre-existing challenges around teaching capacity: Most incentive teachers of refugee students have not completed secondary school.

Despite encouraging improvements in school enrolment in recent years, many children continue to be out of school in South Sudan. School closures were associated with a surge in child labour among out-of-school refugee children. Indeed, many refugee children engaged in labour in the oil industry in 2020. UNHCR's efforts to mitigate the risk of child labour was constrained by the lack of law and policy on child labour in South Sudan. It is recommended that a monthly joint mission to oil fields be undertaken with partners involved in the protection of children and youth, including government counterparts, to address this issue in 2021.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

Good practices in South Sudan in 2020 centred around supporting all children to receive an equitable and quality education regardless of gender and ability. Gender mentorship sessions were aired over local radio stations in Maban and Jamjang, reaching over 7,227 children. The sessions addressed protection concerns that boys and girls face in South Sudan and that were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, including association with armed groups; early and/or forced marriage; early pregnancies; balancing schoolwork and domestic and/or economic responsibilities; and navigating societal pressures. All of the sessions encouraged boys and girls to continue with their studies during the pandemic, to use their home-based learning packages, and to persevere through the challenges affecting their lives. Radio broadcasts were also used to disseminate information about COVID-19 prevention measures.

Targeted support was also provided under the UNHCR-EAC Programme to refugee children with disabilities, who had limited access to remote learning opportunities. Recordings of lessons and Braille-script home learning packages were provided to 108 children with visual impairments. Looking ahead, disability sensitisation messaging will be incorporated into community outreach activities and radio-broadcast education programming to address stigma around various disabilities, to foster community acceptance of persons with disabilities, and to promote the inclusion of children with disabilities in education.

Sudan

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

58



PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS

- North Darfur
- South Darfur
- East Darfur
- White Nile State



EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



- Ministry of Education
- Global Aid Hand
- Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)

Sudan is currently hosting over a million refugees, mostly from South Sudan, Eritrea, the Central African Republic (CAR), and Ethiopia. Sudan faced multiple challenges in 2020: Issues associated with an annual inflation of over 200 per cent, a currency depreciation, and fuel shortages were further compounded by the COVID-19 outbreak and related restrictions. Heavy rainfall from July 2020 onwards led to devastating floods that caused severe damage in almost all Sudanese states. In early November 2020, military confrontations between federal and regional forces in Ethiopia's Tigray region, which borders both Sudan and Eritrea, led the Government of Sudan (GoS) to declare a state of emergency. Within the span of two weeks, between 9 November and 22 November 2020, over 40,000 refugees from the Tigray region arrived in Sudan.

2020 was an extremely difficult year for the education sector in Sudan. Learning institutions closed across the country in March 2020 and largely remained closed throughout the year. Schools briefly reopened between July and August for students to sit for their end of academic year examinations and again in November for examination classes, but were closed again by the Ministry of Health (MoH) in light of the deteriorating COVID-19 situation.

While the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) had been UNHCR's main implementing partner for many years, the state-level Ministry of Education (MoE) became UNHCR's main implementing partner in the East of Sudan following the GoS's commitment to mainstream refugees into the national education system. The shift in implementing partner was concluded at the end of 2020. In other parts of the country, UNHCR partnered with Global Aid Hand and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) for the implementation of educational activities in 2020. In 2021, UNHCR intends to strengthen its partnership with state-level MoEs and to work in close cooperation with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), which resumed activities in Sudan after several years of absence.

Implementation Progress and Impact

No new enrolments of out-of-school children (OOSC) could take place during the 2020 implementation period due to the extended closure of primary schools across the country. Activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 supported continuity of learning and teaching during the pandemic and preparations for the safe reopening of schools. Hyperinflation and currency depreciation affected implementation in 2020.

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL
12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 71%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	54,516	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator 1.1.c: Number of classrooms newly constructed in existing schools/learning sites	5			0
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Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture	9	Newly built schools 0	Existing schools 10	Total 10
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Output 1.2: Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated

Indicator 1.2.a: Number of schools/learning sites refurbished or renovated	9			3
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Indicator 1.2.b: Number of classrooms refurbished or renovated within the existing schools/learning sites (1.2.a)	36			10
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Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.a: Number of students supported by material assistance	93,473	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Indicator 1.3.b: Number of students supported by financial assistance	1,640	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.a: Number of over-aged students (under the age of 18 years) supported	1,500	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	100%	Male 100%	Female 100%	Total 100%
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Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	126,596	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
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Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	750	Male Data N/A	Female Data N/A	Total 115
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Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	60,000	Male Data N/A	Female Data N/A	Total 1,380
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Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	1,533	Male Data N/A	Female Data N/A	Total 821
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Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed	203,294			0
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OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 3.a: Number of sensitisation and awareness raising sessions/meetings organised to engage the community	5			0
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Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced

Indicator 3.1.a: Number of individuals (community group members/parents, school management committee members, and student leaders) successfully trained	45	Male 20	Female 2	Total 22
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Indicator 3.1.b: Number of person-hours individuals (community members, school management committee members, student leaders) successfully trained	2,160	Male 200	Female 20	Total 220
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Many activities had to be cancelled or postponed to 2021 in light of the COVID-19 context.

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Activities implemented under output 1.1 (Educational infrastructure newly constructed) and output 1.2 (Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated) directly contributed to improving teaching and learning environments and to preparing for the safe reopening of primary schools. A total of 10 classrooms (63 per cent of the annual target) were rehabilitated in three primary schools in White Nile. The underachievement is due to the reduced 2020 implementation period and the higher costs of rehabilitation activities resulting from the hyperinflation and currency depreciation. The provision of school furniture was strengthened ahead of school

reopening and benefited a total of 10 schools (over three times the annual target). Of these, four schools were provided with 2,614 desks.

The material assistance to students planned under output 1.3 (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools) was affected by the COVID-19 context. While school uniforms, school bags, stationery, and other school supplies were procured for a total of 47,277 students in 2020, their distribution had to be postponed to 2021 due to school closures. In White Nile, a cash for work modality was used for the production of uniforms: Refugees in the camps were supplied with fabric and trained to make uniforms by ADRA and a local partner. The uniforms that the refugees made were then purchased by ADRA. This cash for work modality supported the livelihoods of refugees and ensured the sustainability of the intervention.

Refugee students and host community students heading together to Kalimo Basic School in South Kordofan, Sudan*.

© UNHCR / Deep Raj Uprety

**Photograph taken before the COVID-19 outbreak. Communications material gathering missions could not take place during the 2020 implementation of the UNHCR-EAC Programme due to COVID-19 restrictions.*

As part of the activities planned under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students), Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs), which help over-aged learners catch up on missed schooling through a condensed curriculum, had to be cancelled due to school closures in 2020.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Teacher support and capacity-building, planned under output 2.1 (Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn), were key to ensuring continuity of learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, a total of 821 primary school teachers (74 per cent of the annual target) benefited from monthly incentives in 2020. This included 406 teachers and 15 headmasters in White Nile, 230 teachers and 16 headteachers in East Darfur, as well as 129 teachers and 25 headteachers in North Darfur. The underachievement is due to the high personnel turnover during the pandemic and the impact of hyperinflation and currency depreciation. While a number of trainings had to be cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions, 115 teachers in White Nile and East Darfur benefited from trainings organised in small groups, which focused on COVID-19 prevention measures and safety protocols defined by the Federal MoE. Similar to the provision of material assistance to students, the distribution of learning materials also had to be postponed due to school closures. A total of 48,515 textbooks were procured in 2020 and will be distributed to students once schools reopen in 2021.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Outreach activities targeting community members were strongly affected by the COVID-19 context. Awareness-raising sessions and meetings, which had initially been planned in schools, had to be cancelled due to school closures. Regular meetings and discussions were held throughout 2020 with School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) around safe back-to-school activities and COVID-19 protocols. In some states, including North Darfur, all PTAs were dissolved by the MoE in order to establish new ones. In South Darfur, however, two schools managed to undertake trainings for a total of 22 PTA members (47 per cent over the annual target), mainly focusing on COVID-19 protocols.

Partnerships were strengthened at local and national levels to ensure efficient coordination mechanisms in the roll-out of the COVID-19 education response. UNHCR actively participated in the Safe Back-To-School Working Group chaired by the Federal MoE. Discussions focused mostly on COVID-19 prevention measures in schools,

planning interventions to support the return to school, and mitigating learning losses upon school reopening.

Main challenges and Mitigation Strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic brought significant challenges to Sudan's education sector in 2020. While schools remained almost entirely closed between March and December 2020, revision classes and examinations were held under challenging circumstances. Many refugee children were unable to access the distance learning platforms developed by the Federal MoE because most families do not possess a television, a radio, or a computer. In some parts of the country, such as remote locations in Kordofan, signals were not available. This was coupled with limited access to electricity in most refugee hosting areas. Sudan also suffered lengthy power outages associated with the fuel shortages. It is estimated that over 50 per cent of the targeted refugee students were unable to access any of the available learning platforms during school closures.

Most activities supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, school closures, and restrictions. Training, outreach, and monitoring activities were reduced, while the distribution of uniforms, school supplies, and learning materials to children had to be postponed to 2021. The economic situation in Sudan also affected the implementation of activities: Increased costs of materials led to many annual targets being underachieved.

Refugee families became increasingly vulnerable as a result of the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic and the continuously deteriorating state of Sudan's economy. As the assistance provided was often insufficient to meet all their needs, many refugee families now face the impossible choice of deciding which basic necessities to provide for their children and struggle to cover the costs associated with education. UNHCR, through its participation in the Safe Back-To-School Working Group, advocated for refugee schools to benefit from additional support, which resulted in refugee schools receiving printed versions of the COVID-19 protocols laid out by the Federal MoE and the MoH as well as financial support to purchase school supplies and comply with COVID-19 prevention measures.

Data collection, monitoring, and evaluation were particularly challenging in the COVID-19 context. Specific challenges were faced in accessing data from partners, with UNHCR not being able to access disaggregated data

from the MoE regarding trained and supported teachers. Looking ahead, more capacity-building initiatives on data collection and reporting will be organised for partner personnel.

The refugee population remains scattered across Sudan, with 70 per cent of refugees residing outside of camps. It remains very difficult to assess and meet the educational needs of a widely dispersed population. It is particularly challenging to reach, enrol, and retain out-of-school refugee children. An overall lack of funding also significantly limits the assistance that can be provided. UNHCR continues to work in close collaboration with UNICEF in order to assess and address the educational needs of refugee children across the country.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

One of the good practices from 2020 that will be carried forward is the involvement of community members in information gathering and sharing. With COVID-19 restrictions on movement and curfews in place throughout 2020, monitoring of activities was very challenging. The engagement of volunteers from refugee communities, under the guidance of influential community leaders (Sultans), enabled partners to receive up to date information and feedback about the effectiveness of distance learning initiatives. Of all the distance learning initiatives, it was noted that radio lesson broadcasting was the most effective in reaching refugee children. Looking ahead, it may be worthwhile investing in solar-powered radios to be distributed to refugee families and organising small learning groups to access radio education programmes.

Syrian Arab Republic

NUMBER OF
PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

20

PROGRAMME
IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS

14 governorates



EDUCATION PARTNERS
IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES

- Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC)
- Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East (GOPA)
- Syrian Society for Social Development (SSSD)
- Syria Trust (ST)
- Première Urgence Internationale (PUI)
- Secours Islamique France (SIF)
- Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)



The Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) continues to experience one of the biggest humanitarian crises in the world. In 2020, an estimated 13.4 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance, 2.45 million children were out of school, and 1.6 million children were at risk of dropping out. All population groups across the country have been adversely affected by the protracted displacement crisis, the degradation of services, the deterioration of living conditions, the negative socio-economic impact of COVID-19, and the depreciation of Syrian currency. As the needs grow exponentially, community resources are severely overstretched and resilience capacities are extremely eroded, further undermining the ability of communities to recover from the myriad of complex, interlinked, and dynamic protection issues.

The country's education system faced mounting challenges in 2020. Due to the prolonged crisis, ongoing hostilities, and insecurity in some parts of Syria, access to quality education remained severely limited across the country. Over 5,700 damaged schools were in need of reconstruction, an estimated 180,000 teachers and education personnel had left the education system, and over 120,000 teachers required capacity development. The COVID-19 pandemic further weakened an already struggling education system, leading to the closure of learning facilities and the suspension of non-formal education programmes in March 2020. Following

government instructions, the provision of non-formal education to vulnerable children in UNHCR-supported community centers and other school facilities resumed in September 2020. School closures disproportionately affected displaced children, pushing many of them out of education.

UNHCR's Education Strategy in Syria aims to address the gaps in the delivery of educational programming at all levels and to identify solutions that can facilitate increased, accelerated provision of inclusive quality education for refugee, internally displaced (IDP), and returnee children. The Strategy is aligned with the Transitional Education Plan that is currently being developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Education (MoE), UNICEF and UNESCO, the Education for All (EFA) goals, and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4). In 2020, UNHCR continued to deliver education activities enhancing the access of displaced children to quality primary education in close cooperation with the MoE and the Education Sector and through partnership with international non-governmental organisations across the country.

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT
TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL
12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 67%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	43.000	Male 3.220	Female 3.780	Total 7.000
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Output 1.2: Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated

Indicator 1.2.a: Number of schools/learning sites refurbished or renovated	60	20		
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Indicator 1.2.b: Number of classrooms refurbished or renovated within the existing schools/learning sites (1.2.a)	1.200	400		
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Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.b: Number of students supported by financial assistance	4.400	Male 979	Female 1.221	Total 2.200
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OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	73.750	Male 5.110	Female 10.890	Total 16.000
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Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	2.000	Male 208	Female 582	Total 790
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Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	84.000	Male 8.736	Female 24.444	Total 33.180
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Indicator 2.1.c: Number of support classes provided	2.340	1.067		
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Implementation Progress and Impact

During the 2020 implementation period, a total of 7,000 children (47 per cent of the annual target) were newly enrolled in catch-up classes in UNHCR-supported community centers and public schools in Damascus, Rural Damascus, Quneitra, Sweida, Daraa, Homs, Hama, Aleppo, Lattakia, and Tartous governorates. All activities planned under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 could be implemented, and most annual targets were achieved.

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

As part of the activities implemented under output 1.2 (Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated), 20 damaged schools were rehabilitated as planned in areas where refugees returned, which benefited over 28,000 students in Rural Damascus, Aleppo, Quneitra, Dar'a, Homs, Hama, and Lattakia governorates. The rehabilitation work repaired damaged classrooms and WASH facilities in gender-sensitive and disability-friendly manners to address the protection needs of boys, girls, and children with disabilities and to allow adequate access to school premises.

Financial assistance was provided under output 1.3. (Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools) to help refugee families afford the cost of education. In 2020, it became increasingly difficult for refugee families to secure minimums levels of financial income due to their lack of access to the formal labour market, the socio-economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the market fluctuations. To sensitise the refugee community on the importance of education, promote children's right to education, and mitigate the increasing risk of school dropout, cash assistance for education was provided as planned to 2,200 refugee children at primary school level through a cash over-the-counter modality or ATM cards. Post Distribution Monitoring highlighted the need to increase the assistance in light of the sharp depreciation of the Syrian currency: Approximately 40 per cent of the respondents reported that the grant was insufficient to cover education expenses.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

In 2020, UNHCR continued its efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning through the provision

of teacher training and support classes under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn). A total of 790 teachers and educational personnel (5 per cent over the annual target) from 14 governorates, including Idleb and Ar-Raqqa, received capacity building training on life-skills, applied behaviour analysis, and psychosocial support. Organised in collaboration with the MoE, the training sessions assisted education personnel in developing knowledge and skills to identify children facing psychosocial difficulties, to provide support, and to make referrals to specialised service providers. Trainees were selected based on an assessment carried out by the MoE. The annual target was slightly overachieved due to differences in the cost of training sessions across locations.

Throughout 2020, a total of 7,000 IDP, returnee, refugee and asylum seeker students benefitted from catch-up classes in UNHCR-supported community centers and governmental facilities. An additional 9,000 students benefitted from homework café activities provided in the network of community centers supported by UNHCR across 10 governorates. Catch-up classes and homework café activities helped enhance the students' learning performance and prevent school dropouts. Students in catch-up classes received a kit of stationery, face-masks, and hand sanitiser to support their learning and safety. UNHCR developed several guidance notes on the implementation of protection-related activities in alignment with instructions provided by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the World Health Organisation as well as the 'do no harm' principle.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Significant challenges were faced in the implementation of the UNHCR-EAC Programme in Syria in 2020. In terms of implementation, there were delays in obtaining approvals from the MoE to implement education programmes. There were also delays in the implementation of activities due to the closure of learning institutions and COVID-19 prevention measures. Yet, these activities were in high demand as school closures, socioeconomic repercussions associated with COVID-19, and the depreciation of the Syria currency created additional vulnerabilities among refugee, internally displaced, and returnee children, particularly relative to child labour and school dropouts. Additionally, the procurement of construction materials and teaching and learning resources was affected by both depreciations of local currency and increases in market prices.

In terms of monitoring, it was also difficult to monitor implemented education activities within the context of COVID-19 and associated prevention measures, including movement restrictions, lockdowns, and the closure of some UNHCR offices. For example, it was challenging to verify the school enrolment of refugee children ages six to 17 who had benefited from 2020 education cash grants after the distribution of these grants because children had not been required to present a certification of enrolment to receive the grant during school closures. Monitoring of the implementation of education activities was undertaken in other ways: UNHCR leveraged its network of 2,833 outreach volunteers; followed up with partners through multi-functional team visits and phone calls; verified education tracking tools and cross-checked reports received from partners; and reviewed data management tools used by community centers.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

UNHCR, the MoE, other governmental ministries, education actors, and communities in Syria cooperated in support of children's learning throughout the pandemic. The MoE established education TV channels and encouraged other actors in the education sector to supplement official education programming using alternative modalities, including online learning platforms. To promote coordination, UNHCR developed a guidance note on harmonised approaches to e-learning modalities. UNHCR partners initiated online learning platforms to support students to continue their studies at home and to promote their safety and wellbeing. Furthermore, WhatsApp groups were established for over 6,000 students to enable teachers to provide educational information, facilitate discussions, and share teaching and learning resources, and to enable students to pose questions and discuss education subjects.

UNHCR also monitored the inclusivity of online learning solutions to refugee, returnee, and internally displaced children. A survey was undertaken by UNHCR's field office in Tartous to assess students' access to devices and connectivity. The results indicated that 81 per cent of children had access to a smartphone, 11 per cent had access to a laptop or computer, and 81 per cent had access to internet (of whom 40 per cent had access to high-speed internet).

Following the re-opening of schools in September 2020, UNHCR launched a rapid education survey through its partners to inform the possibility of resumption of in-per-

son non-formal education activities provided by UNHCR. The vast majority (97 per cent) of the 24,416 respondent parents reported viewing the resumption of education classes at the community centers as crucial, and most (89 per cent) agreed that non-formal education classes should resume for all grades. Based on the results of the survey, UNHCR issued a guidance note to its partners on the partial reopening of non-formal education in community centres. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour approved the partial (30 per cent) reopening of community centers for students in grades five to 12 with certain precautionary measures. The MoE and the MoH also disseminated safety protocols and guidance.

Syrian children attend a remedial class at a UNHCR-supported community centre in Aleppo governorate*.

© UNHCR/Hameed Maarouf

*Photograph taken before the COVID-19 outbreak. Communications material gathering missions could not take place during the 2020 implementation of the UNHCR-EAC Programme due to COVID-19 restrictions.



Uganda

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

208



PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS



District	Settlements
• Adjumani	• Adjumani
• Lamwo	• Palabek
• Yumbe	• Bidibidi
• Koboko	• Lobule
• Terego	• Imvepi and Rhino Camp
• Madi Okollo	• Rhino Camp
• Obongi	• Palorinya
• Kiryandongo	• Kiryandongo
• Kikuube	• Kyangwali
• Kyegegwa	• Kyaka II
• Kamwenge	• Rwamwanja
• Isingiro	• Isingiro

EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



- Windle International Uganda (WIU)
- Finn Church Aid (FCA)
- Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS)

As of 31 December 2020, Uganda was the generous host of 1,446,378 registered refugees and asylum-seekers. 59 per cent of Uganda's refugees were children. In April 2020, a 30 per cent cutback was made to the monthly food ration for refugees in Uganda due to resource constraints. This shock to the refugee household economy was exacerbated by government measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, including a curfew, restricted travel, and closed businesses. Restrictions affected livelihoods and school closures impacted child protection, leading to an acute upsurge in protection incidents including an alarming increase in gender-based violence (GBV), teenage pregnancies, and suicides.

Uganda's closure of schools from March 2020 onwards required a shift from classroom learning to home-based

learning. The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) developed a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan that focused on three aspects: continuity of learning, the learning agenda, and the reopening of schools and institutions after the lockdown. Continuity of learning involved printing and distributing MoES-approved Home Learning Packs (HLPs), online learning, and transmitting of lessons via radio. In October 2020, schools reopened for national examination candidate classes only. The 2020 primary grade 7 final examinations, which are usually held in November, were postponed to March 2021.

For the implementation of educational activities supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020, UNHR continued to work in partnership with central and local district governments, the MoES, UN agencies, interna-

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 79%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	70.078	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.b: Number of students supported by financial assistance	13.276	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.c: Number of children with special needs supported	683	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	100%	Male	Female	Total
		100%	100%	100%

Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	126.637	Male	Female	Total
		28.782	26.762	55.544

Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	381	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	18.288	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	681	Male	Female	Total
		619	827	1.446

Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed	30.619			55.544

Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Indicator 2.2.a: Number of individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	12	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

Indicator 2.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	288	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

Indicator 2.2.c: Number of schools monitored and/or provided with instructional support at least once per year	273			100

Indicator 2.2.d: Number of schools supported by the project with a data collection system in place	273			0

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced

Indicator 3.1.a: Number of individuals (community group members/parents, school management committee members, and student leaders) successfully trained	0	Male	Female	Total
		137	28	165

Indicator 3.1.b: Number of person-hours individuals (community members, school management committee members, student leaders) successfully trained	0	Male	Female	Total
		685	140	825

OUTCOME 4: IMPROVED CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SPORT

Indicator 4.a: Number of schools with a sport for protection programme in place	12			0

Output 4.1: Children participating in a sport for protection programme

Indicator 4.1.a: Number of primary school children involved in a sport for protection programme	2.500	Male	Female	Total
		0	0	0

Output 4.2: Youth facilitators trained to implement a sport for protection programme

Indicator 4.2.a: Number of youth (trainers) successfully trained in sport for protection	25	Male	Female	Total
		66	23	89

Indicator 4.2.b: Number of person-hours of training for youth (trainers) successfully trained	15.000	Male	Female	Total
		10.098	3.519	13.617

tional and national NGOs and other educational actors to strengthen equitable access to, and the quality of, primary education for refugee and host community children in a total of 285 primary schools.

Implementation Progress and Impact

No out-of-school children (OOSC) could be newly enrolled in primary school during the 2020 implementation period due to school closures. Activities implemented under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in 2020 supported UNHCR's efforts to ensure continuity of learning and teaching during school closures, and to prepare for the safe reopening of schools. While some activities were strengthened, most planned activities had to be cancelled or readapted in light of the COVID-19 context.

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

The provision of individual grants to students and the implementation of cash-based interventions (CBIs) to help families cover the costs associated with education, which had been planned under output 1.3 (Material assistance provided to students and schools), were cancelled due to school closures and COVID-19 restrictions. The provision of assistive devices and other targeted support to children with special needs, planned under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students), was also cancelled because special needs schools were impacted by the closure of learning institutions across the country.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

With the exception of in-service teacher training, which could not be undertaken in 2020 due to the COVID-19 context, activities planned under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn) directly supported the continuity of teaching and learning during school closures. The provision of financial support to teachers and the distribution of learning materials were strengthened and saw their annual targets significantly overachieved.

14-year-old South Sudanese refugee Sharon smiles while trying to keep up with home-based learning during COVID-19 school closures in Bidibidi Refugee Settlement, Uganda.

© UNHCR/Jjumba Martin

A total of 1,446 teachers (2,6 times the annual target) were supported with salaries and incentives, which was key in ensuring their retention during school closures, as many teachers were at risk of leaving the teaching profession in favour of other economic activities to sustain their livelihoods. Throughout school closures, teachers supported home-based learning through community learning circles and were engaged in sensitisation activities targeting parents, particularly those with low literacy levels. While it had initially been planned to provide textbooks and school kits to students, this was replaced by MoES-approved HLPs and solar-powered radios to better address the educational needs brought by the pandemic. As a result, a total of 177,078 MoES-approved HLPs and 7,500 solar-powered radios were procured in 2020. While 55,544 HLPs (over five times the annual target for learning materials) were distributed as of December 2020, the distribution of solar-powered radios and the distribution of the remaining HLPs was postponed to 2021. HLPs and solar-powered radios have been a key component of UNHCR's response to keep children learning and increase their likelihood of returning to school.

Activities planned under output 2.2 (Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target school) were affected by the COVID-19 context. The monitoring of schools carried out by District Education Offices focused mainly on assessing compliance with official COVID-19 prevention measures. Quarterly Multifunctional Team (MFT) monitoring was conducted to assess the uptake of previous recommendations and the implementation of COVID-19 prevention measures. Monitoring visits led by UNHCR and attended by partner staff were carried out in a total of 100 primary schools (annual target met). The monitoring of radio-based lessons was also carried out jointly with District Education Offices. As schools were closed and social distancing measures were in place, it was not possible to collect school-based data or enhance the data collection processes in schools during the 2020 implementation period.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Despite the challenges brought by the pandemic, engagement with community members, which had not initially been planned under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, was undertaken under output 3.1 (Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced) to encourage children to engage in home-based learning and to return to school upon reopening. A total of 165 individuals, includ-



ing community members, members of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), and student leaders, participated in one-day training sessions that were compliant with social distancing guidelines. A wide range of topics were covered: the importance of education; ways to support home-based learning and return to school; capacity-building of community structures and teachers in child protection issues; COVID-19 prevention measures; roles and responsibilities of Village Education Committees; and challenges, achievements and lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic. These training sessions contributed to the relatively high return rate of primary grade 7 students in October 2020 (around 89 per cent) and the ongoing interest and engagement from the community in supporting home-based learning.

OUTCOME 4: IMPROVED CHILD PROTECTION THROUGH SPORT

As part of the roll-out of the UNHCR-EAC Sport for Protection (S4P) initiative in Uganda, a six-month Youth Sports Facilitator (YSF) training course was launched in November Adjumani District in West Nile after delays associated with COVID-19 restrictions. A total of 89 participants (all primary school teachers) participated in the course, with only one participant dropping out due to illness. The course involved 153 hours of training per person over the six-week 2020 training period and is expected to continue in early 2021. In preparation for the roll-out of S4P activities in primary schools in 2021, UNHCR procured over 5,000 pieces of sports equipment and materials, including uniforms for girls and boys and balls for football, netball and basketball. Sports fields (basketball court, football pitch, and netball court) were constructed in four primary schools. An additional 12 neighbouring schools will also utilise these upgraded facilities thanks to an agreement between the District Education Office and the School Management Committees. Safe and fit-for-purpose sports fields, equipment, and uniforms for boys and girls will ensure that S4P activities can be accessed by all children regardless of their age, gender, athletic or physical abilities. Trained and certified S4P facilitators will further champion child protection in the roll-out of S4P programmes in the participating schools and communities.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about many challenges in the implementation of the UNHCR-EAC Programme in Uganda in 2020. Due to the dynamic nature of the

pandemic, plans for the reopening of schools continuously changed and were not always shared in a timely manner with key stakeholders and actors supporting the education sector. The lack of clarity regarding school reopening was associated with delays in procurement, as procurement of teaching and learning materials for alternative learning modalities (e.g., solar-powered radios) was not initiated until after plans for reopening were shared in mid-September. Procurement was further delayed by the high demand for COVID-19 response and prevention items. After the Government of Uganda and the MoES approved the second round of HLPs in late October, UNHCR planned and coordinated printing and distribution with partners and stakeholders in November and December.

Many refugee children were not able to benefit from the MoES programme supporting the continuation of learning and were not learning effectively while out of school. The pandemic exacerbated existing societal inequalities, especially for the poorest households. Refugee children from low-income households experienced difficulties learning from home due to low household literacy levels, no or limited access to electricity, connectivity, and devices, and increased domestic demands.

School closures were associated with an acute surge in child protection incidents in Uganda, including GBV, child labour and exploitation, illness, and early pregnancies, that are having detrimental effects on child learning, development, and wellbeing. Regarding the increased rate of teenage pregnancies in refugee settlements, a rapid assessment carried out by a partner organisation, AVSI Foundation, with sexually active adolescent girls (10-19 years old) who are married, unmarried, in school, and out of school highlighted *“that majority of the male sexual partners are people who should be at the center of protecting these teenagers; being teachers, health workers and humanitarian/NGO workers. Most sexual partners are above 25 years of age”*.¹ With the high over-age population in primary schools in the settlements, UNHCR is working with partners to ensure robust child protection guidelines and teacher code of conduct are in place.

A significant gap remains within the education sector in the capacity to support children with special learning needs and disabilities. The National Curriculum Development Centre developed HLPs in Braille and

large font for children with visual impairments; however, the HLPs were not released until October and were sent largely to parents and caretakers who have low literacy levels and who do not know how to read Braille. Children with special learning needs and disabilities have therefore lost out on a significant amount of learning and are at risk of dropping out of school or of not re-enrolling. As schools reopen with a staggered timetable in 2021, children with special learning needs will be targeted to return to school with support from EAC.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

The government, UNHCR, other education actors, and communities in Uganda united to ensure that refugee and host community children continued to learn throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government of Uganda demonstrates exemplary practices in hosting refugees in that its national policy and emergency preparedness create the conditions to include refugees in education. Indeed, since July, its national and district development plans² have included refugees and have improved the alignment of approaches to education across the humanitarian and development sectors. Its COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan, which was co-led by UNHCR and the MoES/District Education Offices in the Education in Emergencies (EiE) Working Group, strengthened coordination between the education actors, identified and filled gaps, and prevented overlaps to ensure a comprehensive education response during the pandemic. The EiE Working Group used community-based approaches to reach OOSC, to encourage children to listen to radio-broadcast lessons, and to engage with HLPs. Notably, the group leveraged the strengths of the Village Education Committees and Refugee Welfare Committees to identify vulnerable learners and children increasingly engaged in domestic and/or economic duties during school closures and to engage parents on the importance of establishing a daily study routine with children.

The flexibility and adaptability of all actors involved in education in Uganda were integral to meeting children's needs during the dynamic implementation context. The flexibility of the UNHCR-EAC Programme to respond to emerging needs was key to maximising possible learning opportunities for children during school closures. At

the programme level, the ability to shift from providing textbooks to HLPs, maintain payment of teacher salaries, and procure solar radios were vital to ensuring continuity of learning. At the praxis level, the flexibility of teachers to provide support to home learning within the parameters of the COVID-19 guidelines and SOPs kept children and parents engaged in learning. In addition to developing and recording lessons for local radio transmission, teachers facilitated cooperative learning between groups of five to 10 children to help them use their HLPs and, in some districts where COVID-19 numbers were very low, went house to house to explain the HLPs and expectations for learners and their families. The latter forms of support were particularly important in refugee settlements and rural areas where internet access is difficult, non-existent, or expensive for users. Such community engagement, information sharing, and mobilisation ensures that all children and their communities can benefit from education, understand changes related to COVID-19, and participate in decisions that affect their learning and lives.

¹ AVSI Foundation (2020), Teenage Pregnancy Assessment Report for Lamwo, Arua, Maracha, Zombo and Kikuube Districts.

² Government of Uganda (2020). National Development Plan (NDP, III, 2020/21-2024/25). District Development Plans (DDPs).

Yemen

NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUPPORTED



31 five schools in the South and 26 schools in the North

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION LOCATIONS



- Kharaz refugee camp, Lahj Governorate
- Urban areas of Basateen in Aden Governorate and in Sana'a Governorate

EDUCATION PARTNERS IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES



- South: Ministry of Education
- North: Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF) in collaboration with the Education Office at Sana'a level

Yemen continues to face an unrelenting conflict, triggering what the United Nations describes as the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with some 66 per cent of the population estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance. The country continues to host 126,482 registered refugees and 10,997 asylum-seekers from the Horn of Africa as of January 2021, the majority of whom are Somalis and Ethiopians. Most refugees live in the urban areas of Aden and Sana'a, as well as in Kharaz refugee camp in Lahj Governorate. After years of conflict, the majority of them are in a very precarious socio-economic situation and remain amongst the most vulnerable populations in the country.

While efforts to systematically mainstream refugees are ongoing, a significant number of children remain out of school and the country faces considerable challenges in establishing and maintaining a fully functioning education system across the country. On top of this, due to COVID-19 preventive measures, schools were closed between mid-March and mid-September/October 2020, which resulted in a shortened schooling period and affected the quality of education. When schools reopened, enrolment rates stood at 94 per cent in Kharaz camp, 56 per cent in Aden, and 34 per cent in Sana'a.

Through the UNHCR-EAC Programme, a total of 31 public primary schools were supported countrywide. Five

schools were supported in urban areas of Basateen and in Kharaz refugee camp, which accommodate a total of 4,616 refugee children (2,107 in Aden and 2,509 in the camp) and 5,745 Yemeni children. The remaining 26 public primary schools (including six literacy centres) are located in Sana'a and accommodate a total of 1,073 refugee and 35,098 Yemeni students. In southern governorates, the signature of a new education agreement with the Ministry of Education (MoE) of the Internationally Recognised Government (IRG) was affected by COVID-19 related delays, which led UNHCR to implement all procurement activities through direct implementation.

Implementation Progress and Impact

A total of 2,274 refugee children were newly enrolled in targeted primary schools during the 2020 implementation period. The annual enrolment target was slightly over-achieved despite the challenging implementation context thanks to efficient awareness-raising sessions on the importance of education and the identification of additional out-of-school children (OOSC) through a survey conducted in 2020.

INDICATOR

LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)

ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020

Goal: Targeted out of school children receive equitable quality primary education

Indicator 0.a: Retention rate of cohort(s) of OOSC newly enrolled in primary education programmes 80%

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 1.a: Number of out of school children newly enrolled in primary education	5,910	Male 1,268	Female 1,006	Total 2,274
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Output 1.1: Educational infrastructure newly constructed

Indicator 1.1.f: Number of schools provided with furniture	31	Newly built schools 0	Existing schools 29	Total 29
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Output 1.2: Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated

Indicator 1.2.a: Number of schools/learning sites refurbished or renovated	3	Total 0
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Indicator 1.2.b: Number of classrooms refurbished or renovated within the existing schools/learning sites (1.2.a)	20	Total 0
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Indicator 1.2.c: Number of latrines refurbished or renovated	20	Total 37
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Indicator 1.2.d: Number of water points refurbished or renovated	12	Total 18
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Output 1.3: Material/financial assistance provided to students and schools

Indicator 1.3.a: Number of students supported by material assistance	5,910	Male 2,039	Female 1,761	Total 3,800
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Output 1.4: Equitable access to primary education provided for students

Indicator 1.4.a: Number of over-aged students (under the age of 18 years) supported	165	Male 137	Female 114	Total 251
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Indicator 1.4.c: Number of children with special needs supported	310	Male 47	Female 61	Total 108
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OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

Indicator 2.a: Proportion of qualified teachers in target schools	100%	Male 100%	Female 100%	Total 100%
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Indicator 2.b: Number of children benefitting from the provision of learning materials and/or support classes	3,210	Male 2,039	Female 1,761	Total 3,800
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Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity to teach and learn

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of teachers successfully trained	655	Male 15	Female 25	Total 40
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Indicator 2.1.b: Number of person-hours individual teachers successfully trained	46,650	Male 300	Female 500	Total 800
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Indicator 2.1.d: Number of teachers receiving an incentive or salary	144	Male 102	Female 42	Total 144
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Indicator 2.1.e: Number of textbooks and schools kits distributed	3,210	Total 3,800
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Indicator 2.1.f: Number of schools provided with teaching and learning materials	9	Total 29
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Output 2.2: Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools

Indicator 2.2.a: Number of individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	9	Male 10	Female 2	Total 12
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Indicator 2.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals successfully trained on data collection/monitoring and evaluation	270	Male 140	Female 28	Total 168
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Indicator 2.2.c: Number of schools monitored and/or provided with instructional support at least once per year	3	Total 3
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Indicator 2.2.d: Number of schools supported by the project with a data collection system in place	26	Total 17
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OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Indicator 3.a: Number of sensitisation and awareness raising sessions/meetings organised to engage the community	42	Total 31
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INDICATOR	LIFE OF PROJECT TARGET (LOP)	ACTUAL 12 JUNE -31 DEC 2020		
Output 3.1: Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced				
Indicator 3.1.a: Number of individuals (community group members/parents, school management committee members, and student leaders) successfully trained	1.140	Male 182	Female 240	Total 422
Indicator 3.1.b: Number of person-hours individuals (community members, school management committee members, student leaders) successfully trained	22.800	Male 3.640	Female 4.800	Total 8.440
Output 3.2: Local and national partnerships on education strengthened				
Indicator 3.2.a: Number of partner personnel (including MoE and local/national partners) successfully trained	60	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0
Indicator 3.2.b: Number of person-hours individuals (MoE personnel and local/national partners) successfully trained	600	Male 0	Female 0	Total 0

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION

Construction activities, which had not initially been planned, were implemented under output 1.1. (Educational infrastructure newly constructed) to increase schools' capacity, reduce class sizes, and allow for physical distancing measures. During the construction of seven classrooms and 12 latrines in two primary schools in Basateen, UNHCR, due to limited expansion space, and upon request from the MoE, also initiated the construction of a new primary school with eight classrooms and 12 latrines. All construction activities were affected by delays due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context.¹ The three targeted schools in Basateen were provided with furniture for school management, teachers' offices, and IT equipment (printers, projectors, etc.). The 26 schools in Sana'a were supplied with desks and a wide range of equipment (IT, recreational equipment, energy installations, etc.).

Among the rehabilitation activities planned under output 1.2 (Educational infrastructure refurbished or renovated), classroom rehabilitation was deprioritised while the rehabilitation of latrines and water points, which had not initially been planned, was prioritised following a needs assessment for the COVID-19 education response that highlighted the urgent requirement to improve WASH facilities in primary schools. As a result, a total of 37 latrines and 18 handwashing facilities were rehabilitated, contributing to improved hygienic conditions and safer learning environments.

Students were supported with uniforms, school bags, and other supplies under output 1.3 (Material/financial

assistance provided to students and schools). A total of 3,800 refugee and asylum-seeking students were assisted countrywide. Despite the annual target being met for this intervention, many additional refugee and asylum-seeking students remain in need of material assistance due to increased socioeconomic vulnerabilities which have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Over-aged learners and children with disabilities benefited from targeted support under output 1.4 (Equitable access to primary education provided for students). In Basateen, 138 OOSC, including 74 girls, were enrolled in a new Accelerated Education Programme (AEP) targeting OOSC aged 9-12 years and were supported with scholastic materials. All the 65 students enrolled in existing AEP classes in Kharaz camp were integrated into schools. In Sana'a, 113 refugee children enrolled in literacy classes for over-aged learners, including 26 OOSC newly enrolled during the 2020 implementation period, were supported with scholastic materials. Annual targets were over-achieved thanks to the identification of additional over-aged learners. Furthermore, 108 children with disabilities also benefited from the provision of assistive devices (mostly glasses and hearing devices) and from targeted awareness-raising sessions on the importance of education.

OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE TARGET SCHOOLS

The provision of teaching and learning materials was prioritised under output 2.1 (Enhanced capacity to teach and learn). In addition to the planned support to the three primary schools in Basateen, the 26 schools in Sana'a were also supported with a wide range of teaching and learning materials and stationery, which led to a significant over-achievement of the 2020 annual target.

In Aden, a total of 144 teachers were supported with incentives as planned and 40 teachers participated in a training conducted by the MoE on the production of teaching aids.

Activities implemented under output 2.2 (Enhanced instructional support and data collection in target schools) contributed to strengthened data collection systems in a total of 17 primary schools. In the South, UNHCR established a new education data collection system in the five targeted primary schools. Thanks to the new system, schools were able to collect enrolment data disaggregated by gender and grade level, track movements between camp and urban schools, and monitor dropouts. Data management rooms in the targeted schools were provided with equipment and training on the new data collection system was conducted for data staff in Aden and camp schools. In Sana'a, 11 schools and one literacy centre were supported with ICT equipment in order to enhance data management.

As part of various assessments conducted by UNHCR in 2020, an OOSC survey was undertaken in Sana'a. A total of 1,013 OOSC children aged 6-18 years were identified, of whom 48 per cent were girls and 52 per cent boys. The main reasons identified for non-enrolment and school

dropout were the lack of awareness of the importance of education, the inability to cover associated costs, the lack of required documentation, perceptions of teaching competency (including the frequent absence of teachers), as well as inadequate educational programmes for children with disabilities.

OUTCOME 3: IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

A total of 31 awareness-raising meetings and sessions took place in 2020. In the South, five meetings were organised with parent committees in targeted schools to familiarise parents with the work of the committees, discuss planned activities, and raise awareness on girls' education. In Sana'a, 26 sessions focusing on COVID-19 prevention measures reached a total of 1,453 par-

Shereen, 10-year-old Somali refugee, standing outside her classroom where she attends an Accelerated Education Programme in Basateen, Yemen. After missing out on a few years of schooling, Shereen is now catching up on missed schoolwork and moving towards her dreams.

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ticipants. To respect physical distancing measures, the number of participants per session was reduced and a higher number of sessions was organised. As part of the activities implemented under output 3.1 (Training and support of education stakeholders enhanced), 20 student councils and 20 student health and volunteer groups were supported in Sana'a, and all 422 student members benefited from training on child protection issues, child rights, emergency evacuation, first aid, and psychosocial support.

While trainings for partner personnel had to be cancelled due to challenges linked to the COVID-19 context, other activities were implemented under output 3.2 (Local and national partnerships on education strengthened). UNHCR continued to work with the MoE in the South on mainstreaming refugee education into the national education system. Furniture and IT equipment were also provided to the Office of Education in the Da'ar Sa'ad district in Aden. In the North, two government education offices were supported with office furniture, IT equipment, and the establishment of a central network connecting all education offices in the provinces, which will facilitate registration and enrolment, as well as the obtainment of Acceptance for Admission Forms. Regular meetings were also held with key stakeholders to coordinate the implementation of activities supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme.

Main Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected the education sector. Children's study hours were shortened as schools adopted a three-shift system as part of COVID-19 preventive measures. A lack of internet access prevented many children from accessing distance learning opportunities. Congested classrooms and inadequate WASH facilities in schools remain a major challenge. The ongoing construction of additional classrooms and latrines, supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, will help reduce class sizes, improve social distancing measures, and increase access to adequate WASH facilities in primary schools.

Yemen's education system continues to be affected by an overall lack of resources, which severely hampers the quality of education. Despite efforts to enhance refugee children's access to schools and to support the enrolment of OOSC, full inclusion and dropouts due to administrative barriers, socio-economic vulnerabilities, and discriminatory attitudes remain major challenges. Many families are unaware of the importance of education and/or are not able to cover associated costs

such as transportation, daily meals and school uniforms. Refugees also face administrative barriers because they are often not able to provide the documents required for school enrolment (e.g., birth certificates). Advocacy work will prioritise the enhancement of access to schools by refugee children. UNHCR will also continue to organise awareness-raising sessions and is planning to conduct another OOSC survey in 2021.

The recruitment of new teachers to replace retired ones remains a key challenge due to a persistent lack of funding. The financial support provided to teachers under the UNHCR-EAC Programme in the South contributed to filling this gap. While continuous strikes of teachers requesting salary increases negatively affected the quality of education, teachers supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme did not stop teaching in the targeted primary schools. Insufficient numbers of textbooks for students remain a challenge in all schools in Yemen.

The absence of a quantitative data collection tool to capture school enrolment and retention and track school dropouts has remained a challenge for UNHCR in the Northern part of the country. With the humanitarian crisis in Yemen entering its six year, the MoE remains unable to conduct surveys or collect education-related data, due to a lack of resources, proper infrastructure and adequate funds.

Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Innovations

One of the good practices from Aden and Kharaz camp was the establishment of a student tracking system aiming at preventing school dropouts. The following process was put in place: 1) School staff identified children who had been absent from school for one week and referred them to UNHCR's protection partner; 2) UNHCR's protection partner conducted home visits through its network of volunteers to find out the reasons behind student absenteeism, and then carried out targeted interventions (e.g., referrals to health services, provision of cash assistance, family counselling); 3) UNHCR followed up to ensure that action was taken in an appropriate and timely manner. Between October and December 2020, out of the 53 children reported as absent by the three schools in Basateen, 38 children returned to school thanks to the follow-up and support provided. The system in place prevented a significant number of dropouts and allowed for children at protection risk to be identified and supported.

In Sana'a, the MoE-certified literacy programme rolled out in the Family Center supported by UNHCR led to the enrolment of over-aged learners in appropriate education courses. It also served as a child protection tool by supporting unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and children at risk (e.g., children exposed to negligence and domestic violence) who missed years of education through a comprehensive case management plan. The assistance provided helped children to overcome language barriers through intensive Arabic classes, to stay in a safe space, to develop enhanced self-esteem, and, in some cases, to join the formal education system.

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