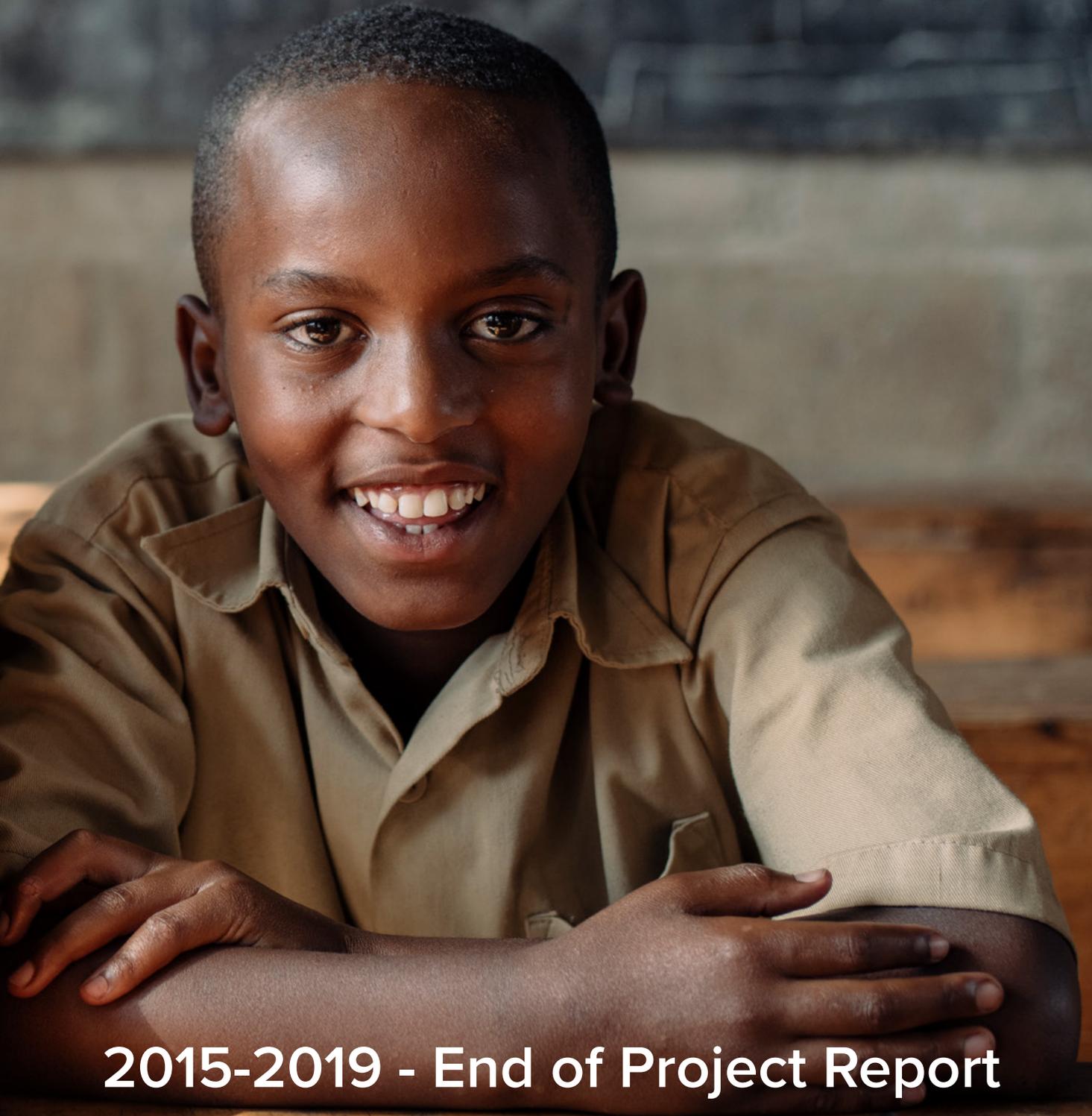




**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency



**2015-2019 - End of Project Report**  
UNHCR – Educate A Child Programme

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*Cover photo: The two boys study at GS Gasaka School, in the Nyamagabe district, in Western Rwanda. In this school, more than half of the children are refugees. Refugee and Rwandan children learn together and build friendships, paving the way for a peaceful society. © UNHCR/EAC/Paddy Dowling*

*Design: Fanni Uusitalo, Partnership Support Unit, Private Sector Partnerships Service*



Margetu, 14, is a student at Mogadishu Primary School in northwestern Kenya's Kakuma Refugee Camp. She was forced to flee conflict in Ethiopia's Oromia Region with her family, and has lived in the camp ever since. Margetu has been blind since she was a baby, and uses assistive devices including a braille machine in her classroom. One of her best friends, 15-year-old Natasha, helps her navigate the camp's winding roads and paths on their way to school. Despite her challenges, Margetu is at the top of her class in school, and aspires to be a human rights lawyer when she's older so that she can "stand up for the truth." © UNHCR/Hannah Maule-finch

## PROJECT COVER SHEET

### Basic Project Information

#### COUNTRIES

Chad  
Ethiopia  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
Kenya – Dadaab  
Kenya – Kakuma  
Malaysia  
Pakistan  
Rwanda  
South Sudan  
Sudan  
Syrian Arab Republic  
Uganda  
Yemen – Aden  
Yemen – Sana'a

#### PROJECT NAME

UNHCR-EAC Programme 2015–2019  
*Educate A Child: Enabling, Encouraging & Excelling*

#### IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

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

#### AGREEMENT PERIOD

21 October 2015 – 31 December 2019

#### CONTACT PERSON

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Private Partnerships Officer  
Private Partnerships and Philanthropy, Division of External Relations  
UNHCR, Copenhagen

### OOSC Enrolment Targets and Achievements

#### LIFE OF PROJECT OOSC ENROLMENT – TARGET

935,000

#### LIFE OF PROJECT OOSC ENROLMENT – ACTUAL

949,028

# MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Key Project Achievements per location

### CHAD

- 225 classrooms constructed/rehabilitated
- 54,954 students provided with books and other reading materials
- 395 teachers benefiting from certified teacher training

### ETHIOPIA

- 76 classrooms constructed
- 447,081 textbooks, exercise and reference books provided to teachers and learners
- 2,630 desks provided to schools

### IRAN

- 35 schools constructed
- 2,645 over-aged learners annually supported through literacy training
- 659 students annually provided with transportation services to and from school

### KENYA-DADAAB

- 137 classrooms rehabilitated
- 151 PTA and SMC members trained on school governance
- 100 tablets purchased and 10 schools equipped

### KENYA-KAKUMA

- 1,154 children with special needs supported
- 559 teachers trained on safe learning environments and child friendly activities
- 5,723 school bags purchased

### MALAYSIA

- 2,120 children annually provided with transportation services to and from school
- 3,801 students annually benefiting from extra-curricular activities
- 7,288 children annually participating in standard literacy and numeracy assessments

### PAKISTAN

- 9,446 attendance-based incentives provided to students
- 99 SMCs annually supported to increase the enrolment of out-of-school girls
- 167 school enrolment campaigns conducted in refugee villages

### RWANDA

- 14 blocks of latrines and 20 hand washing facilities constructed/rehabilitated
- 20,278 children annually provided with school feeding
- 1,102 teaching material kits provided

### SOUTH SUDAN

- 113 semi-permanent classrooms constructed
- 12,512 over-aged learners supported through Accelerated Education
- 40 sensitisation and awareness campaigns conducted on the importance of education

### SUDAN

- 1 school and 100 classrooms constructed
- 5,543 students supported through the payment of school grants, school and exam fees
- 927 teachers and educational personnel trained

### SYRIA

- 119 schools rehabilitated
- 135,473 IDP and refugee students annually benefiting from the provision of remedial and catch up classes
- 4,427 educational personnel trained on psychosocial support

### UGANDA

- 326 classrooms and 117 teacher accommodation rooms constructed
- 1,755 teachers recruited and deployed
- 932 children with disabilities and children from vulnerable households supported

### YEMEN-ADEN

- 9,122 children provided with uniforms, shoes and school bags
- 170 teachers and educational personnel annually paid incentives
- 107 meetings organised with the MoE and other educational stakeholders

### YEMEN-SANA'A

- 295 children with special needs identified and supported
- 10 child protection committees established and supported
- 50 trainings organised for 1,219 teachers, educational personnel, social workers, health workers and community members

## Key Project Achievements across locations

**1,071** classrooms constructed

**43,642** desks provided

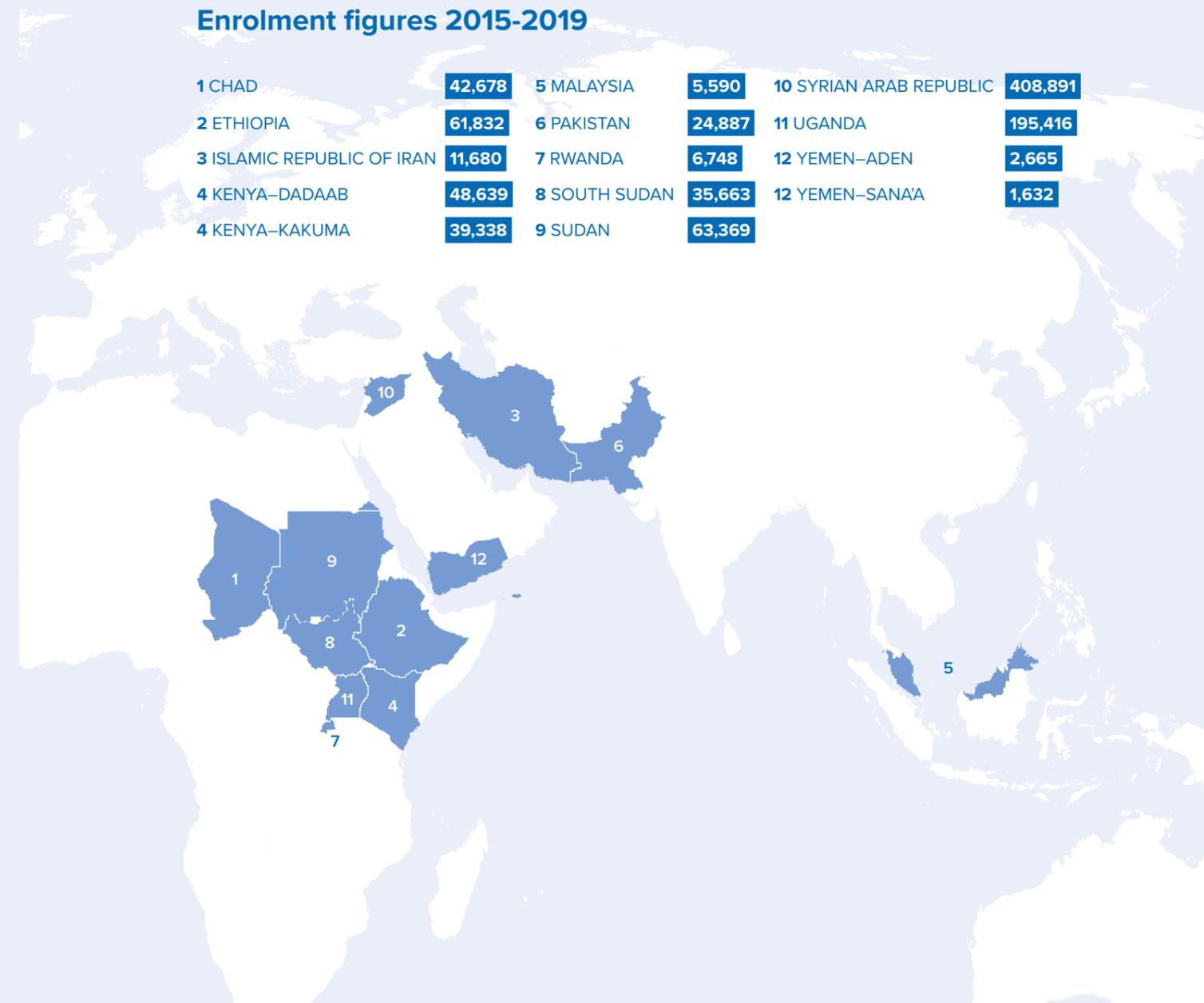
**17,361** teachers and education personnel trained

**5,259** children with special needs supported

**347** education sensitisation campaigns conducted

## Enrolment figures 2015-2019

1 CHAD	<b>42,678</b>	5 MALAYSIA	<b>5,590</b>	10 SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC	<b>408,891</b>
2 ETHIOPIA	<b>61,832</b>	6 PAKISTAN	<b>24,887</b>	11 UGANDA	<b>195,416</b>
3 ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN	<b>11,680</b>	7 RWANDA	<b>6,748</b>	12 YEMEN-ADEN	<b>2,665</b>
4 KENYA-DADAAB	<b>48,639</b>	8 SOUTH SUDAN	<b>35,663</b>	12 YEMEN-SANA'A	<b>1,632</b>
4 KENYA-KAKUMA	<b>39,338</b>	9 SUDAN	<b>63,369</b>		



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



Time to go to school for the students of Ali Dinnar school, in Goz Beida refugee camp. The two girls are refugees from Darfur, Sudan, and found safety in Eastern Chad where they continue their education.  
© UNHCR/Frederic Noy

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

By the end of 2018, almost 70.8 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations. 25.9 million individuals were refugees, 20.4 million of them under UNHCR's mandate, with children representing about half of the refugee population. The statistics presented in UNHCR's 2019 education report [Stepping Up: Refugee Education in Crisis](#) show that refugee enrolment in primary school rose up from 61 to 63 per cent between 2017 and 2018, thanks to the impressive efforts of host governments, donors, UNHCR and partners. While this represents a notable improvement, the numbers are still far below the global average of 91 per cent, as huge gaps continue to prevail between refugees and their non-refugee peers when it comes to accessing education.

Since its launch in 2015, the UNHCR-EAC Programme 2015–2019 has helped 949,028 out-of-school refugee and internally displaced children access primary education. The Programme not only reached its main objective of expanding access to education for out-of-school children (OOSC), as reflected by enrolment numbers, but also succeeded in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning and ensuring safer learning environments in all programme locations. Additionally, awareness and advocacy on the importance of education were promoted, data collection, management and analysis enhanced to support learning and better programming, capacity and partnerships with Ministries of Education (MoEs) and other actors strengthened, community engagement emphasised, and innovative approaches in education promoted.

Various challenges were faced over the lifespan of the UNHCR-EAC Programme, as a number of country operations had to cope with new refugee influxes and changing operational contexts that resulted in additional educational needs, placing a huge strain on already stretched infrastructure, services and resources. Violence, armed conflict and heightened security concerns, as well as inflation and currency volatility, also affected the implementation of activities. Additional factors that impacted the operational environment included sudden changes in government policies, as well as lengthy administrative processes and problematic access to key information held by MoEs. Absenteeism, school dropouts and difficulties to reach out-of-school children, especially girls, children with disabilities and over-aged learners, were faced across locations.

Despite these challenges, UNHCR implemented the vast majority of educational activities planned under the Programme and met or achieved most life of project targets.

# PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

## Project Description

The overall goal of the UNHCR-EAC Programme 2015-2019 was to provide access to quality primary education for out-of-school refugee and internally displaced children, and to support their retention once enrolled.

The Programme was implemented in 14 different locations in 12 countries across Africa, Asia and the Middle East: Chad, Ethiopia, Iran, Kenya (Dadaab and Kakuma), Malaysia, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Uganda and Yemen (Aden and Sana'a). While the Programme came to an end in 13 locations in December 2018, it continued to support targeted education activities in Kenya-Kakuma in 2019.

Activities that took place under the Programme were organised under 8 different objectives:

### Objective 1: Expanding access to education

- Construction and rehabilitation of classrooms, provision of school furniture and other resources
- Payment of school, exam and transport fees and cash grants to enable children to enroll and remain in school
- Provision of assistive devices for children with disabilities
- Enrolment of children in Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs)

### Objective 2: Improving the quality of teaching and learning

- Teachers recruited and deployed
- Provision of textbooks, library books and other teaching material for schools
- Topic-specific teacher training carried out, including providing scholarships for teachers to enroll in certified training programmes
- Support to extra-curricular activities

### Objective 3: Ensuring safe learning environments for children

- School uniforms provided to protect children on their way to and from school
- Provision of psychosocial assistance for children in need

### Objective 4: Promoting awareness and advocacy on the importance of education for refugee children

- Sensitisation campaigns conducted
- Provision of education counselling and case management

### Objective 5: Improving data collection, management and analysis to promote learning and better programming

- Teachers trained on data management
- Improvement of data management systems
- Out of school assessments conducted

### Objective 6: Strengthening capacity and partnerships with MoEs and other actors to enable more refugee children to access school

- Regular coordination meetings with key education stakeholders
- Partnerships with national, state and local education authorities strengthened

### Objective 7: Emphasising community participation in education

- Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) supported with grants and trainings
- Student Management Committees (SMCs) developed, trained and supported

### Objective 8: Promoting innovation in education programming and interventions

- Improve teaching and learning as well as data management through the provision of computers and internet access.



A busy grade 4 class at Mogadishu Primary School, in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya. In early 2017, the school counted 34 teachers for over 2,700 children. In Kakuma, less than 1 in 4 primary school children reach secondary school. © UNHCR/Antoine Tardy

### Expanding access to education

Most activities were implemented under objective 1, which has been the main objective of the UNHCR-EAC Programme since 2012. Key activities such as classroom construction and rehabilitation, the provision of school furniture, the organisation of transportation services for learners, and the payment of cash grants, school and exam fees all directly contributed to increased enrolment of OOSC.

**Classroom construction** was carried out in 10 locations (Chad, Ethiopia, Iran, Kenya-Kakuma, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda and Yemen-Aden) and took place in all targeted regions, except in Kampala, Uganda, due to delays in receiving the necessary approvals from local authorities. This hindered the timely completion of procurement processes and funds were redirected to cover construction activities in other regions, where targets could be exceeded. Construction targets were met in Kenya-Kakuma, Pakistan, South Sudan and Yemen-Aden. Overachievements took place in Chad, where the involvement of the community helped reduce costs and made it possible to build more classrooms than initially planned, and in Sudan, where the construction of additional classrooms was prioritised over rehabilitation work and other types of construction work, in order to be able to cope with the educational needs of new arrivals. On the other hand, in some locations, targets could not be met, due to various challenges. In Rwanda, due to land scarcity, the Government mandated the construction of double-storey classrooms instead of the single-storey structures that had been built in the past, which led to large additional costs. As a consequence, and despite additional funds being redirected from other activities, targets were under-achieved. In Iran, high inflation rates and acute price increases in the construction sector led to significant delays in school construction as well as underachieved targets; in Ethiopia, construction activities could not be completed by the end of 2018 due to security concerns and major difficulties in accessing the sites.

While the expansion of learning spaces through the construction of new classrooms was key in many locations, construction work also included other activities that contributed to support the enrolment and retention of children as well as supporting teachers. **Latrines** were built in Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya-Kakuma, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda and Yemen-Aden. In almost all cases, targets were met or exceeded, with the exception of Rwanda, where the construction of latrines and hand-washing facilities was deprioritised, as a result of classroom construction being more costly than anticipated. The construction of **teacher accommodation rooms** was of crucial importance in West Nile

in Uganda, where targets could be exceeded thanks to the construction of semi-permanent structures as opposed to permanent structures, as well as funds being redirected from other regions. The construction of **teacher offices** was prioritised among other construction activities in Sudan in order to be able to meet increased needs following new arrivals, thus leading to overachievements. Other activities undertaken included the construction of two **libraries** in Ethiopia, one **school kitchen** in Kenya-Kakuma, integrated **recreational facilities** in two locations in Rwanda, as well as **school fences** in Kenya-Kakuma, Rwanda, Sudan and Yemen-Aden.

Many locations also implemented **rehabilitation activities** in order to improve existing school infrastructure, further contributing to enrolment. In Chad, Kenya-Dadaab, Malaysia, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan and Yemen-Aden, classroom rehabilitation took place as planned, with most targets being met as well as a few overachievements where renovations were less costly than planned. In contrast, in Syria the level of damage to school infrastructure was much higher than anticipated, and the number of rehabilitated schools had to be revised downwards. In addition to classroom rehabilitation, additional activities also included the maintenance of **WASH** facilities and fences, which was carried out as planned across locations.

The **provision of desks**, as well as other pieces of school furniture, took place as planned in most locations. Underachievements were observed in Rwanda, where the provision of desks was deprioritised, as a result of classroom construction and other activities being more costly than anticipated. In South Sudan, the target could not be met by the end of 2018 due to logistical challenges compounded with a serious security incident that took place in Maban in July 2018, where the UNHCR operation was suspended for three months. In Uganda on the contrary, the target was exceeded by almost 10 per cent, as some funds from other activities were redirected as a result of reprioritisation, due to the very high demand for school furniture to ensure newly constructed or rehabilitated classrooms were appropriately equipped.

While the **provision of transportation services** to and from school in Iran and Malaysia reached more beneficiaries than initially planned without significantly increasing the costs, as more children were using the same transportation services (e.g. buses), the **payment of cash grants, school and exam fees** on the other hand was impacted by various challenges and often saw targets being unmet. In Chad for example, the payment of school grants could not take place in two camps, as refugee communities were reluctant to accept the harmonisation of community contributions, while the number of beneficiaries had to be revised downwards in another camp, due to the fact that many refugee families had settled down with their children outside of the camp in

order to pursue livelihood activities; in addition, the payment of exam fees for children from vulnerable households was impacted by prolonged strikes that resulted in a significant number of dropouts. In Sudan, school grants were provided to a lower number of learners, due to high inflation rates that affected the price of the scholastic materials that the grants were meant to cover. In Syria, the complexity of education in the northeast was a major concern, due to the presence of non-accredited curricula; as a consequence, and to avoid creating any tensions, the education cash grant was not provided in 2018 to refugee children living in these areas, as families were required to present certificates of enrolment for their children to collect the education cash grant.

Some activities implemented under objective 1 also contributed to expand access to primary education for some of the most vulnerable groups of refugee children: girls, children with special needs and over-aged learners.

**Activities aiming at specifically expanding access to primary education for girls** were implemented as planned. In Pakistan, sanitary supplies were distributed to girls, female teachers' stipends paid, and home-based girls' schools and satellite classes supported in order to provide alternative education opportunities to hundreds of girls who would otherwise not have had the opportunity to access school. Targets for activities focusing on girls' enrolment were also met in South Sudan, where different events were organised throughout the duration of the programme, as well as in Rwanda, Sudan and Yemen-Sana'a, where sensitisation and awareness campaigns focusing on the importance of girls' education were conducted as planned.

**Targeted support to refugee children with special needs** also helped expand access to education, especially through the provision of assistive devices (e.g. glasses, hearing devices, wheelchairs, crutches, etc.) which took place as planned in Kenya-Dadaab and Pakistan. In Uganda, funds that had been allocated to Accelerated Education (which eventually was not supported under the UNHCR-EAC Programme) and to activities undertaken under the urban Refugee Programme in Kampala (where major challenges were faced, as one of UNHCR's partners was unable to operate) were redirected to activities supporting children with special needs and children from vulnerable households in West

Nile, Mid West and South West, where the number of beneficiaries was revised upwards.

Access to primary education for over-aged learners was expanded through **Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs)** that were supported in Iran, Kenya-Kakuma, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Yemen-Aden. In Syria, over 100,000 children annually benefited from remedial and catch up classes at governmental facilities and within the network of community centres, which contributed to facilitate the reintegration of OOSC into the public education system. In South Sudan and Sudan, new arrivals in the camps and awareness-raising campaigns organised to encourage parents to send their children to school resulted in increased numbers of over-aged learners enrolling in AEPs, thus requiring increased support from other partners in order to cover additional needs (e.g. in Sudan, additional textbooks were provided by the Government). On the other hand, enrolment targets in AEPs could not be met in Iran, where high inflation rates impacted the cost per learner, and in Yemen-Aden, due to the high mobility between camp and urban settings. Lastly, in Uganda, Accelerated Education was not undertaken under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, as UNHCR's education partner was successful in gaining complementary funding, which led to direct partner implementation; as a consequence, funds were redirected to activities targeting children with special needs.

## Improving the quality of teaching and learning

Improving the quality of teaching and learning was the second objective of the Programme, through activities such as the recruitment, payment and training of teachers and education personnel, the provision of teaching and learning materials, as well as support to extra-curricular activities.

The **recruitment and payment of teachers**, one of the most important activities implemented across locations, was often prioritised when needs were acute and when funds could be redirected from other activities. This was the case for example in Malaysia, where more teachers than planned could be financially supported as funds were redirected from an activity that could not take place in 2018 (provision of refugee health insurance), or in Uganda, where the remuneration of teachers was reprioritised in order to enhance the use of the double shift school system, aiming at reducing the extraordinarily high pupil-teacher ratios. Underachievements were observed in several locations, partly due to increases in the amounts of provided incentives, which resulted in decreases in the numbers of teachers and education personnel financially supported (e.g. Kenya-Kakuma in 2019). The low number of available qualified teachers willing to teach in refugee settings appeared as one of the most striking challenges in a number of locations, including Kenya-Dadaab, where the teaching workforce was also impacted by voluntary repatriation and high attrition rates. In Chad, the number of teachers financially supported in 2017 and 2018 was close to 20 per cent lower than in 2016, as a significant number of teachers were admitted to university or training institutions to continue their studies, while others left the country under the resettlement programme.

**Capacity-building of the teacher workforce** was a key area of focus in many locations, with specialised trainings being organised on topics such as curriculum delivery, literacy and numeracy methodologies, participatory pedagogy, special needs education, learning assessments, classroom management, lesson planning, as well as broader issues such as education in emergencies and child protection. Surveys such as the one carried out by UNHCR and its education partners in Chad revealed that the trainings played a major role in empowering teachers in their pedagogical practices and had a positive impact on the quality of teaching. In most locations, trainings took place as planned, and targets were met. In some cases, targets could be exceeded, for example in Ethiopia, where teacher trainings were carried out at camp level and were supported by experts from the Regional Education Bureaus, which significantly reduced transportation costs and made it possible to increase the number of teachers trained

from 293 in 2017 to a total of 599 in 2018. Sometimes, needs assessments led to small readjustments that made it possible to extend capacity-building support to an increased number of individuals, as was the case in Kenya-Kakuma, where a special needs education component was included in different teacher trainings (whereas until 2016, a separate training was conducted on special needs education for a small number of teachers), and in Yemen-Aden, where specialised trainings were organised for both teachers and school management staff, following a needs assessment carried out by the MoE. While most capacity-building activities were not affected by any major challenges, it is worth mentioning that in Yemen-Sana'a, delays in obtaining the mandatory pre-approvals from the authorities resulted in attendance being significantly lower than planned, as participants' lists could no longer be updated by the time approvals had been received.

The **provision of teaching and learning materials** also played a crucial role in enhancing the quality of education, as the distribution of reference books, teaching aids, textbooks, exercise books, reading materials and school supplies contributed to increase the accessibility of resources and reduce the need to share materials. Targets were met in most locations and were sometimes overachieved, as was the case in Ethiopia, where the number of textbooks and reading materials distributed in Gambella was around 40 per cent higher than planned, thanks to bulk procurement and reduced unit costs that the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and UNHCR negotiated with regional authorities. In some contexts of severe shortages of scholastic materials (e.g. Uganda), the provision of teaching and learning materials was prioritised and funds were reallocated from other activities. Underachievements could be observed in a few locations, due to different reasons: in Pakistan, UNHCR negotiated the provision of free textbooks by regional education authorities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and funds were thus reallocated to cover increases in teachers' incentive amounts; in Sudan, targets for some of the implemented activities could not be met, due to inflation rates impacting the prices of materials; in Rwanda, the distribution of teaching materials to schools could not take place as planned in 2018, due to the fact that other activities supporting teachers were more expensive than anticipated, with

UNHCR having to continue providing support to a total of 330 teachers (instead of 200 initially planned), as the Government's direct support did not increase to the expected level.

Finally, the **provision of educational, IT and sports equipment**, as well as support to the organisation of extra-curricular activities, contributed to improving

children's well-being and social inclusion at school, and thus helped enhance the quality of learning environments. While high inflation rates affected the provision of equipment and materials in Iran, activities implemented in other locations (Kenya-Dadaab, Kenya-Kakuma, Malaysia, Pakistan and Yemen-Aden) saw their targets met, and in some cases overachieved, thanks to an efficient use of resources.

## Ensuring safe learning environments for children

In addition to physical improvements of school infrastructure undertaken under objective 1, which contributed to ensure safer learning environments for both children and teachers, other activities, implemented under objective 3, focused on improving the safety of children on their way to and from school, as well as on improving their physical, psychological and developmental well-being.

The **provision of school uniforms**, which play an important role in protecting children on their way to and from school, was supported in Ethiopia, Kenya-Kakuma, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda, Yemen-Aden and Yemen Sana'a. While most targets could be met, and in some cases exceeded in contexts of increased needs, the activity saw its target underachieved in Pakistan, where the provision of uniforms was deprioritised in 2018 and funds reallocated to support the distribution of school bags and lap desks so as to better address the actual needs, as well as in Sudan, where the distribution of school uniforms was directly funded by another donor in two locations, thus leading to funds being reallocated to other activities.

Trainings of teachers and education personnel on **psychosocial support, mental health and life skills** were conducted in several locations, with the aim of addressing the devastating consequences of violence, conflict

and displacement on the children's well-being and development. In Syria, the number of beneficiaries of the trainings was over 50 per cent higher than planned, thanks to an efficient use of resources in the organisation of the sessions across the country, whereas in Yemen-Sana'a, the number of sessions and beneficiaries had to be revised downwards, as the trainings turned out more costly than anticipated. In Malaysia, health education sessions organised at school reached more beneficiaries than anticipated without any additional costs. In Iran on the other hand, the organisation of hygiene awareness sessions and the distribution of hygiene kits reached fewer beneficiaries than planned, due to high inflation rates that affected the costs incurred by the activity. In a few cases, the unavailability of speakers and facilitators, due to competing priorities, resulted in some events being cancelled in 2018 and postponed to 2019, as was the case for example in Uganda with the organisation of school-based child protection initiatives.

## Promoting awareness and advocacy on the importance of education for refugee children

Awareness-raising and school enrolment campaigns highlighting the importance of education for refugee children took place under objective 4 in many locations and have often been pointed out as a key factor directly contributing to facilitate new enrolments.

Targets related to the organisation of **awareness-raising and school enrolment campaigns** could be met across locations, and in a few cases exceeded, as no major challenges impacted their implementation. In Pakistan for example, school enrolment campaigns, which took place as planned before the start of new academic cycles in the different refugee villages, combined with the engagement of refugee committees through social mobilisation meetings and School Management Committees (SMCs), directly contributed to the new enrolment of 24,887 children, which is over one third more than the initial life of project target. In South Sudan, the number of campaigns conducted was higher than anticipated, as the choice was made to conduct smaller but more frequent campaigns, in order

to support strategies for enrolment, attendance and retention throughout the year.

The provision of **education counselling and case management** was undertaken in Syria, where the number of refugee students reached was higher than anticipated, as a result of the expansion of outreach volunteer networks, mobile units and satellite centers, as well as improved dedicated education hotlines, which made it possible to reach students also in remote areas. These activities turned out to be key in raising awareness on the importance of education and its role in the mitigation of child protection concerns and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).



Seven-year-old Mohamad is from Syria. His family returned to their home city of Aleppo, where Mohamad has started taking English classes at a UNHCR-supported community centre. He dreams of becoming an English teacher. © UNHCR/Antwan Chnkaji

## Improving data collection, management and analysis to promote learning and better programming

Enhancing the quality of data collection, management and analysis, in order to better inform education programming for OOSC has been an increasingly important focus area of the Programme, which, under objective 5, supported the recruitment, payment and training of specialised staff, the establishment and improvement of tools and systems, as well as the conduct of various surveys and assessments.

The **recruitment, payment and training of staff specialised in data management** did not face any major challenges in the few locations in which the activity took place. In Malaysia for example, two short term team members were hired, while in Rwanda, seven data management assistants were financially supported. Trainings on data management took place as planned in Malaysia, where teachers were trained on data collection via education management information systems, as well as in South Sudan, where capacity-building support was provided to UNHCR, MoE and partner staff on UNHCR's Refugee Education Management Information System (REMIS). In Rwanda on the other hand, the REMIS training planned in 2018 was postponed, as the UNHCR Rwanda operation was still looking at the applicability of REMIS to its situation.

The **establishment and improvement of tools and systems** aiming at improving data collection, management and analysis, was also supported as planned. One of the most significant achievements was the establishment and implementation of an Education Management Information System (EMIS) for refugee education in Ethiopia, which was rolled out in camp schools at the

end of 2016 and was progressively being mainstreamed into the national education system, in collaboration with the MoE and Regional Education Bureaus.

Last but not least, the **conduct of assessments and surveys** that supported improved learning and enhanced educational programming was undertaken in a significant number of locations. Literacy and numeracy assessments of learners were carried out as planned in Kenya-Dadaab, Malaysia, South Sudan and Sudan, sometimes with notable overachievements, as more learners could be reached without involving high additional costs. One exception was Kenya-Kakuma, where Early Grade Reading Assessments and Early Grade Maths Assessments were not supported anymore under the Programme in 2018, as similar assessments were being conducted by another partner, thus leading to funds being reallocated to cover shortfalls in construction activities. Out of the OOSC assessments that were conducted, only 5 profiling exercises could be carried out in Rwanda instead of the 6 initially planned (one in each of the 6 refugee camps), as a result of the reprioritisation of some activities that were more costly than anticipated.

## Strengthening capacity and partnerships with MoE and other actors to enable more refugee children to access school

Activities organised under objective 6, aiming at strengthening partnerships and providing capacity-building support to MoEs and other local and national education stakeholders, were key in the efforts to pursue the inclusion of refugees into national education systems, which is at the core of UNHCR's education strategy.

All **coordination and capacity-building activities** that had been planned across locations saw their targets met or overachieved. Regular meetings and trainings turned out to be of crucial importance to develop a common vision, share expertise, establish coordination mechanisms, and ensure efficient implementation. Continuous advocacy efforts conducted by UNHCR led to noticeable achievements in many countries. In Chad, refugee camp schools were formally integrated into the national education system through ministerial decree in 2018, and refugees were included into Chad's 2018/2019 education sector plan. In Kenya, refugee

camp schools were registered as public entities, enrolment of host community children was encouraged and high-level MoE engagement took place, which were important steps for the policy of inclusion that was developed in 2019. Positive steps could also be observed in countries in which refugees were not included in national systems. In Malaysia for example, advocacy and capacity-building activities supported under the Programme played an important role in the MoE's decision to register and provide official licenses to all learning centres attended by refugee children.

## Emphasising community participation in education

Community participation was encouraged in all locations, through support provided to the establishment and development of community-based groups and committees, such as Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs), which played an essential role in the successful implementation of education activities, as well as social cohesion between refugee and host communities.

**Financial and capacity-building support to PTAs** was undertaken in Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya-Dadaab, Malaysia, Rwanda and Sudan, with most targets being met, and slight underachievements being observed in Sudan, where high inflation rates impacted the activity, and in Rwanda, where some PTA members did not attend the training that was carried out in 2017 due to family reasons or competing priorities.

**Financial and capacity-building support to SMCs** was provided as planned in Kenya-Dadaab, Kenya-Kakuma, Pakistan and Sudan. In Kenya-Kakuma for example, grants were provided to SMCs in order to implement projects aiming at improving school management and increasing livelihood opportunities for refugees, while in

Pakistan, SMCs were supported to organise enrolment campaigns across refugee villages. Community engagement was helpful in building ownership and sustainability of these interventions.

Community participation in education was also emphasised through other activities, such as the involvement of the community in construction and rehabilitation work in Chad, which helped expand and improve school infrastructure, or the implementation of community-based school feeding and nutrition programmes in Uganda, where not all targets could be met by the end of 2018 due to various reasons (unresolved land issues, organisational challenges, etc.).

## Promoting innovation in education programming and interventions

Activities aiming at improving learning, teaching and data management through the provision of computers and internet access were implemented under objective 8.

All activities implemented under this objective took place as planned in Ethiopia, Kenya-Dadaab and Malaysia where **access to internet, IT equipment and e-learning materials** was enhanced. Additional innovative activities included the Newspaper in Education (NIE) Programme in Uganda, supporting enrolment, retention and completion, while promoting a platform for community sensitisation; in addition, an innovative approach was adopted to improve community mobilisation through the use of “Boda Boda Talk Talk”, with motor-bike taxis known as “boda boda” visiting villages and

food distribution points to transmit education messages through speakers.

Although only a limited number of activities were implemented under this objective, innovative approaches and solutions have been an integral part of the UNHCR-EAC Programme throughout the years, as the different challenges faced often required creativity, flexibility, as well as increased engagement from host and refugee communities.



Schoolgirls smile at the camera at Vahdat school in Isfahan, Iran. The school was built with the support of the UNHCR-EAC Programme. © UNHCR/Mohammad Hossein Dehghanian

Fearing for their safety after the abduction of her father, Enhakole, her mother and three siblings fled Rwanda in 2010, seeking refuge in Uganda.

When they first arrived at Kampala Refugee Camp, life was not easy. Enhakole's mother struggled to find money to support them and send the children to school.

Unfortunately, Enhakole faced an additional challenge. She was born with a visual impairment, making it hard for her to see and use the learning materials at school.

Enhakole received support from Educate A Child and UNHCR through the provision of school fees, scholastic materials and 'thick lens' glasses to help her see.

Despite her disability, and the challenges she faced, this support has allowed Enhakole to complete her primary education and go on to attend secondary school. She is now one step closer to achieving her dream of becoming a doctor.

Enhakole is one of the 932 refugee children with disabilities and refugee children from vulnerable households that UNHCR helped to enrol in primary schools in Uganda between 2015 and 2018.

© UNHCR/Antoine Tardy



## Major Challenges

**New influxes of refugee populations and changing operational contexts** constituted a major challenge in Sudan, Uganda and a number of other programme locations, as they resulted in additional educational needs. This led UNHCR country operations to reprioritise some activities over others, in order to be able to address the most urgent educational needs, as was the case for example in Darfur in Sudan, where the huge need for additional learning spaces, following new refugee arrivals, resulted in UNHCR prioritising construction work over rehabilitation work. Similarly, classroom construction was prioritised in Uganda, especially in regions where the local government agreed with the choice to build semi-permanent structures.

In some locations, **armed conflict** took a heavy toll on education activities. The war in Yemen devastated the country's education system and left many government teachers without pay, causing frequent strikes and leading to severe interruptions in the educational process. The security situation in the country also limited UNHCR's movement to Kharaz camp, which affected regular monitoring of the implementation of activities, with UNHCR having to enhance remote communication and monitoring mechanisms. In Syria, the destruction of school infrastructure and the departure of teaching staff remained critical problems. More than two million children were estimated to be out of school in 2018, with many of them being forced to work to support their families, while others were living in besieged areas and were not able to access education. Through the expansion of outreach volunteer networks, mobile units and satellite centers, UNHCR succeeded in reaching a significant number of families, including in remote areas. The devastating psychosocial effects of conflict on children also compelled UNHCR to reinforce activities focusing on improving their physical, psychological and developmental well-being.

**Violence and heightened security concerns** also impacted the implementation of activities in other locations. In South Sudan, inter-community hostilities affected educational activities, especially the production and transportation of school furniture; furthermore, the security incident that took place in 2018 in Maban resulted in the temporary suspension of UNHCR services directly affecting the implementation of all activities. In Kenya-Dadaab, security concerns associated with armed groups from Somalia limited access to some locations and affected the quality of monitoring of education activities. In Ethiopia, construction activities were delayed due to security concerns and major difficulties in accessing the sites.

In a few locations, **inflation and currency volatility** affected the costs of carrying out planned activities. In Iran, acute price increases had a significant impact on many educational activities, especially classroom construction, where targets could not be met. In Sudan, the economic crisis led to serious cashflow issues, which resulted in delays in the implementation of some activities, such as the payment of refugee teacher incentives, with UNHCR frequently having to negotiate with banks in order to provide support; for a number of other activities, the number of beneficiaries had to be revised downwards, as the allocated funds were not sufficient to reach the set targets.

**Sudden changes in policies** also had an impact on the implementation of activities, for example in Kenya-Dadaab, where the Government ordered the end of classroom construction in Dadaab in 2016, or in Rwanda, where the Government mandated double-storey classroom construction, which had a significant impact on the costs incurred by classroom construction, and led to the deprioritisation of other activities.

**Lengthy government processes and difficulties in accessing key information** also resulted in a number of activities being delayed or not undertaken. In Pakistan for example, the issuance of the 'Allowed to Work' permits for NGO partners remained a lengthy and inconsistent process, which led to disruptions and delays in the provision of education activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, despite UNHCR's continued efforts towards more streamlined procedures. In Uganda, education activities were affected in the urban setting, due to delays in receiving the necessary approvals from Kampala City Council Authority, which led UNHCR to redirect some funds to support activities in other regions.

**Absenteeism and school dropouts** were an ongoing challenge across locations, with the lack of clear and accessible educational pathways after completion of primary education often being a major demotivating factor affecting attendance, performance and completion rates at upper primary levels. Other reasons for high absenteeism and dropout rates included early marriage, teenage pregnancies, child labor and recruitment by armed groups. An increased focus on sensitisation campaigns, enhanced dialogue with community-based structures, as well as the provision of counseling and peer-to-peer support, often helped in addressing these issues.

Despite significant achievements in enrolling and retaining OOSC across all locations, many children remain extremely hard to reach and significant numbers of children still do not have access to primary education. Reasons for this have been well documented and include economic factors, as poverty, food insecurity and the perceived opportunity costs of schooling often

force children to contribute to household incomes or take care of younger siblings, as well as socio-cultural factors that often impact parents' perception of the importance of education, especially for girls. Poor school infrastructure, lack of qualified teachers, shortage of teaching and learning materials, insufficient WASH facilities and absence of school feeding were additional discouraging factors in some locations. In order to ensure quality education for all refugee children, additional resources are needed, as well as strengthened advocacy, coordination and partnership with MoEs and other education stakeholders.

## PROJECT M&E SYSTEM OVERVIEW

### Refugee Education Data Collection and Analysis

UNHCR uses a wide range of data management tools, including Focus, a programming and reporting portal providing an overview of protection risks that UNHCR's populations of concern face across the world, as well as regularly updated information about the organisation's programmes, operations, funding levels and donor contributions. The biodata of all registered refugees is being captured in ProGres, a database that allows UNHCR to determine the number and age of registered school-age refugee children. The use of ProGres for education programming varies a lot from one country operation to another. For example, some countries use ProGres to download lists of school-age refugees, while others use it to upload education data that they have collected through other tools; some countries do not use it for education programming at all.

Refugee education data is being collected and managed by a number of UNHCR's education partners including MoEs and NGOs in camp and urban settings. Data collection tools and M&E systems vary from country to country. In some cases, refugee education data is captured in national Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) and is part of standardised data collection using automated analysis tools. In most cases nevertheless, refugee education information is not captured in the national EMIS systems, which leads to significant gaps in national planning for, and implementation of, education activities.

UNHCR works in partnership with national MoEs to support the inclusion of refugee children in national education systems and advocates for refugee learners to be included in national data collection tools and M&E systems. UNHCR collaborates with governments on improving existing tools and systems, which in countries such as Syria or Yemen for example, continue to be weak, especially for schools and children in hard-to-reach locations.

With more and more countries successfully including refugees in their education systems, collecting data on refugees' education trajectories has become part of governments' responsibility to report towards Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) commitment on equitable, quality education for all.

### UNHCR-EAC Programme Data Flow and Responsibilities

For the purposes of reporting under the UNHCR-EAC Programme, data collection was organised to focus on the data needed in order to be able to report on the country-specific activities and against the targets. UNHCR country operations were using a variety of tools (Excel, Kobo, Toolbox, etc.) to collect data.

Data collection was organised in the following way:

1. Data collected at school level, either by teachers or by dedicated data collection/M&E specialists.
2. Information shared with partners, UNHCR sub-office or UNHCR country office data focal points (depending on the location and UNHCR's structure in the country).
3. Country level data collection:
  - a. UNHCR data focal points (or education focal points trained on education data management) at the country level were aggregating data, performing checks, cleaning the data if necessary and inputting it into the EAC online M&E tool, narrative report and Logframe (depending on reporting requirements), OR;
  - b. UNHCR focal points within country offices were using UNHCR corporate systems and partner reports to extract data on some selected indicators.
4. Final checks of data and global data aggregation into narrative and Logframe reports (depending on reporting requirements for each reporting period) were being made by UNHCR's team at Headquarters (data management focal point).
5. Country offices were responsible for inputting information into the EAC online M&E tool. The final submission was undertaken by the team at Headquarters.

## PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

The nature of the 2015-2019 UNHCR-EAC Programme facilitated the implementation of educational activities in a sustainable manner. As a **multi-year programme with guaranteed multi-year funding**, country operations were able to create multi-year plans that ensured the continuity of education activities over several years. In addition to being multi-year, cross-sectoral interventions were another strength of the UNHCR-EAC Programme and contributed to situating education within a wider protection and solutions framework.

The **degree of flexibility** in the planning and implementation of activities supported by the Programme has enabled operations to make a real difference by implementing activities that were tailored to the actual needs, with some activities being sometimes prioritised over others. As refugee situations constantly change, the revision process that was conducted in 2017 helped ensure that the needs on the ground could be addressed.

Through the UNHCR-EAC Programme, UNHCR was able not only to sustainably expand access to quality primary education for refugee children, but also to increase its **wider advocacy efforts on the importance of sustainable inclusion of refugee children in national schools**. The inclusion of refugee children in national education systems, which goes hand in hand with the strengthening of existing systems and the creation of conditions that benefit both refugee and host communities, is at the core of [UNHCR's Education Strategy](#) and the [Global Compact on Refugees \(GCR\)](#). In many EAC locations, children now access local public schools, most camp-based schools have been recognised by the MoE and in some locations, refugees are now included in education sector planning. In countries where refugee children are fully or well on their way to be included in national systems, the UNHCR-EAC Programme has contributed to strengthening existing relationships with the MoE and promoting more ownership of refugee education by host governments. In other locations, the Programme has served as a springboard to start engaging with the MoE, which has led to positive developments. In Malaysia for example, the broader discussion with the MoE on the long-term sustainability of the community learning centres led to the MoE's decision to begin registering and providing official licenses to the learning centres.

Efforts to **promote community participation** through door-to-door visits, village meetings and outreach services led to the development of sustainable approaches. In Chad, local capacity was built at community and school levels through awareness campaigns and trainings, as well as the establishment of PTAs and other community groups, such as SMCs and Educating Mother Associations (AMEs). In Yemen-Sana'a, the refugee community engaged in back-to-school campaigns and sensitisation sessions on the importance of education. In Pakistan, school enrolment campaigns organised by SMCs together with community shura (traditional advisory) committees to help enrol out-of-school girls, proved effective in building ownership and sustainability of community-driven initiatives. Community participation was also enhanced in Uganda, where PTAs, SMCs and Village Education Committees played a key role in promoting the importance of education and ensuring future sustainability of education programmes within refugee settlements.

**Capacity building activities targeting UNHCR, MoE and partner staff** were critical to enhance project sustainability. Some trainings were conducted at country level, while others were organised by UNHCR's team at Headquarters, which conducted workshops for UNHCR staff, partners from NGOs and representatives from government ministries and departments of education, to discuss challenges and lessons learned in addressing the issue of OOSC and promoting the inclusion of refugee children in national education systems.



A South Sudanese pupil writes in a notebook at a primary school in Jewi refugee camp, Ethiopia.  
© UNHCR/Eduardo Soteras Jalil

## LESSONS LEARNED & INNOVATIONS

Greater **involvement of communities** proved pivotal to ensure local ownership and sustainability of education interventions. Sustained awareness efforts and initiatives such as awareness campaigns and sensitisation sessions on the importance of education brought about a change of attitude among community groups. UNHCR's support in establishing community groups such as SMCs, PTAs, AMEs and Village Education Committees, and the provision of trainings to enhance community leadership and advocacy capacity further contributed to reach more OOSC and promote education participation. These efforts proved necessary in order to address conservative socio-cultural norms affecting girls' enrolment, by mobilising the community and questioning gender-based preconceptions. In Iran, Malaysia and Pakistan, emphasis was put on community-based interventions in order to reach out-of-school refugee girls within conservative communities. It became clear that greater community mobilisation and increased parental participation were key to tackle the issue of OOSC, especially girls. In Iran, Pakistan and South Sudan efforts to encourage the participation of female students also included advocacy work with the MoE on the recruitment of additional female teachers, as they often act as important role models for girls.

All locations have highlighted the need to **strengthen advocacy, coordination and partnership, with the MoE and other education stakeholders**, including UN agencies, NGOs, national organisations and governmental entities. It became increasingly clear throughout the UNHCR-EAC Programme that the full inclusion of refugee children in national education systems requires joint efforts among all actors and stakeholders.

In addition to activities such as the construction and rehabilitation of school infrastructure, the provision of school furniture, and the provision of school, exam, transport fees and cash grants, which all directly contributed to facilitate school enrolment, it has become apparent that **efforts to support the improvement of the quality of learning and teaching must be stepped up**. In the future, activities like accredited teacher trainings, student support, language classes, AEPs and student counselling sessions will need to be continued in order to enhance the quality of education and make sure the children enrolled complete their primary education and transition to secondary education.

Different **innovative approaches** were adopted by country operations over the lifetime of the Programme. When operating in complex emergency settings, innovations and innovative thinking become an everyday practice to address barriers and improve primary education programming. Innovations delivered under the Programme demonstrated that innovation does not necessarily have to involve technology but is rather a matter of small details leading to significant transformations and improvements. Throughout 2016, Uganda launched the Newspaper in Education (NiE) Programme, which served as a platform for community sensitisation. The same year, the Boda Boda Talk Talk initiative promoted community mobilisation and sensitisation through the transmission of messages around the importance of education. In the Pakistani province of Balochistan, the distribution of lap desks in 2017 contributed to improve learning environments by offering school children their own workstation. In 2018, Rwanda launched an orientation programme which was designed as catch-up classes and aimed to welcome new arrivals and help them settle in the new learning environment. In South Sudan, a peer-to-peer scheme between teachers was set up whereby teachers could share tips on innovative teaching techniques and share mutual feedback, which led to lower teacher turnover rates and higher levels of satisfaction among teachers.

Although innovations are not always technical, in some cases the **smart deployment of technology** has proven important to enhance protection mechanisms, programme and data management. In Yemen-Sana'a, Child Protection Committees (CPCs) were trained to use a secure online platform that was accessible through laptops and smartphones where to record cases of child protection risks and incidents. In Chad, tablets were used to rapidly collect and process school and child protection data. In Kenya-Dadaab, primary schools benefited from the Instant Network Schools (INS) programme, integrating technology into learning.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

As we are witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record, UNHCR acknowledges the significant impact that the UNHCR-EAC Programme has had on the lives of hundreds of thousands of children, but also recognises the need to build on lessons learned and continue the commitment of expanding and maintaining access to quality primary education. UNHCR looks forward to continuing to contribute to the global efforts to address the crisis in refugee education through a renewed multi-year UNHCR-EAC Programme, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) and its promise to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, as well as the [Global Compact on Refugees \(GCR\)](#) affirmed by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2018, calling on the world community to respond to the refugee crisis with predictable and equitable burden and responsibility sharing, including through education.



*Hamid, 12, and Faisal, 11, are doing their homework together. The brothers found safety with their family near Aden, Yemen, after fleeing Somalia. After three years out of school they are thrilled to study again. “I want to be a doctor in the future and my brother a teacher” said Faisal excitedly. © UNHCR/Ammar Bamatraf*



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