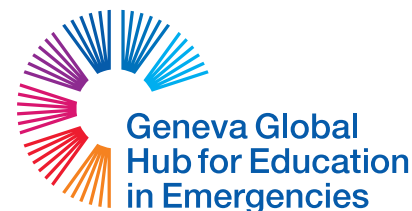


Leveraging Education in Emergencies for Climate Action



No time to lose: Commit to resilience and learning now

Topline Messages

Education for displaced and crisis-affected children and youth is crucial to promote climate action. Education helps people address the root causes and impacts of the climate crisis, empowering them with the knowledge, competencies and skills needed to adapt and take action, transform economies, and improve health, well-being and security. **However, the right to education – and the realisation of this potential of education for climate action – is denied to 224 million children and youth due to armed conflict, forced displacement, protracted crises, and increasingly, climate-induced disasters.**¹

Climate Impacts on Education in Emergencies²



There are growing numbers of crisis-affected and displaced children and youth, making it hard to meet diverse needs



The physical safety, mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of students and teachers are put at risk



Physical infrastructure and resources are damaged, destroyed or used as shelters



The teaching and learning environment is made unfit for learning



Household economies and livelihoods are undermined, leading to more school dropout



National education finances are strained, making it difficult to invest in resilient education

The climate crisis is an education crisis.³ Recurring, intensifying and multiplying climate-induced hazards – floods, droughts, fires, extreme heat – are heightening the already significant challenges in providing safe and continuous education (see box 1). Those disproportionately affected are the most marginalised, including children and youth affected by conflict and disasters, especially girls, minority groups, refugees and displaced children, and children with disabilities. The EiE sector is critical to reaching the most marginalised children and youth.

The Education in Emergencies (EiE) sector is implementing critical climate action. In crises, the EiE community has long worked to address the consequences of climate shocks on children's and youth's learning to ensure educational continuity in safe learning environments. This includes essential education support that can save lives. The EiE community works in close collaboration with the child protection sector and is strengthening joined-up approaches with food, water, sanitation and hygiene, health and other sectors. It is helping education actors – including Ministries of Education, local actors, teachers and civil society – to prepare and reduce risks, build resilience and deliver finance quickly. Anticipatory action before shocks is gaining momentum. **Greater investments in these areas will yield a higher return for climate action and help to build resilient and climate-smart education systems.**

Scan the QR code to access the full report:



¹ <https://www.educationcannotwait.org/>. See also: UN Secretary-General's Transforming Education Summit, 'Education in Crisis Situations: A Commitment to Action.'

² The provision of quality education opportunities that meet the physical protection, psychosocial, developmental, and cognitive needs of children and youth affected by emergencies, which can be both life-sustaining and life-saving.

³ This brief is based on the report: Leveraging Education in Emergencies for Climate Action. No Time to Lose: Commit to Resilience and Learning Now. Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies, 2023.

Education in Emergencies for Climate Action



Crisis-sensitive EiE policy and planning recognises the existential threat of the climate crisis



EiE, DRR and emergency preparedness are established, and anticipatory action gains momentum



Integrated, locally appropriate coordination supports the education of displaced and crisis-affected children and youth



Crisis-affected children and young people are taking leadership roles



The right of every child to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is reaffirmed



EiE is chronically underfunded and needs increased financing

The EiE sector is on the pulse of climate-related policy developments. In partnership with other sectors and across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, the EiE community is integrating climate change, disaster and environmental concerns into EiE policy and strategy at various levels. EiE policy and programming utilises the *Comprehensive School Safety Framework* to establish safer school facilities, school safety and educational continuity management, as well as risk reduction and resilience education; and the *INEE Minimum Standards: Preparedness, Response, Recovery* to establish learning environments that are secure and safe, and promote the protection and psychosocial well-being of learners and teachers.⁴

The scale and complexity of climate-related emergencies have put renewed emphasis on the importance of preparedness, anticipatory action,⁵ and risk reduction measures in building crisis-sensitive systems. Multi-hazard risk reduction, emergency preparedness and contingency planning are well-established components of EiE, and anticipatory action and climate change adaptation are growing in importance. In addition, there exists significant work on ongoing risk assessment at school, subnational and national levels that is critical for locally-led adaptation.

There already exist well-established EiE coordination mechanisms for humanitarian crises that are a strong foundation for climate action. Bringing together national and international actors, they allow for faster, more coherent, and synergistic action to ensure the right to education for crisis-affected and displaced children and youth. At the country level, Education Clusters and Refugee Education Working Groups are working to strengthen the nexus by engaging in joint needs assessment and planning, aligning humanitarian response plans with education sector plans, and building collaborative capacity between clusters/refugee education working groups, Ministries of Education and local education groups. However, **more can be done to strengthen coordinating mechanisms' collaboration across the nexus, including with those that work on cross-cutting topics, such as the environment, climate and DRR.**

Children and youth are leaders and change agents in addressing climate change in many places around the world, including in their schools and communities. However, children and youth in crisis contexts are not yet systematically included in climate policy discussions and actions at national and global level. **More can be done to ensure children and youth are at the center of EiE interventions, and that their right to participate in and influence education and climate policy decision-making is supported.** Further, there is a need for safe spaces where they can play, learn, be protected and be listened to throughout an emergency, and where they can access safe, participatory, and inclusive engagement opportunities to contribute to local DRR, preparedness, anticipatory action, and climate and environmental action.

Increased financing for the EiE sector is needed. As countries work to build climate-smart education systems, achieve quality education for all, and realise the right of every child to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, the role and contribution of the EiE sector should be recognised in global and national discussions, adaptation plans, and financing. Member States, donors and policy makers across the nexus should scale up finance for EiE, which is chronically underfunded. This includes increasing the proportion of predictable multi-year funding for EiE, and allocating funding to multi-hazard risk reduction, preparedness and anticipatory action, as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation, in EiE interventions. It also requires increased climate finance allocated to education, including in crisis contexts.

⁴ Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Education Sector, 2020. Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery. INEE, 2012.

⁵ Anticipatory action encompasses a set of planned and pre-financed measures taken when a disaster is imminent, prior to a shock or before acute impacts are felt. It represents a significant opportunity to put in practice the humanitarian-development nexus.