

**ALARMING NEW GLOBAL ESTIMATES:**

# 222 MILLION

## **Crisis-Affected Children and Adolescents are Now in Need of Education Support**

**Education Cannot Wait – but around the world, the number of girls and boys missing out on an education because of armed conflicts, forced displacement, climate-induced disasters and protracted crises is increasing dramatically.**



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According to a new Education Cannot Wait study<sup>1</sup>, the number of crisis-affected children and adolescents who need education support is estimated at 222 million. This is much higher than a previous estimate of 75 million from 2016<sup>2</sup> and indicates an alarming trend.

Children should not have to wait for wars to end or for the climate crisis to be resolved to have the opportunity to learn and thrive – it will be too late.

**We must act now to empower them with the education they need to achieve their dreams and become positive changemakers for themselves, their families, their communities and our world.**

Access to a quality education in times of humanitarian crisis is not only the right of every child, it can also be both life-saving and life-sustaining. Education offers a sense of normalcy and protects children's physical and mental wellbeing. Education represents hope to children whose lives and futures are threatened by crises.

More than ever before, vulnerable girls and boys trapped in emergencies and protracted crises need our attention and urgent support to ensure they can enjoy their right to a safe, inclusive quality education and are no longer left furthest behind. As the United Nations global, billion-dollar fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises, Education Cannot Wait (ECW) reaches children and adolescents in need with quality education, no matter who or where they are.

It is against this backdrop – and utilizing an **innovative methodology** that shines a light on those left furthest behind – that ECW and the INEE reference group on EiE Data developed the new estimates on crisis-affected children and adolescents in need of education support. For the first time, EiEPC stakeholders can rely on a common methodology to ensure these children are 'visible' in global education data.

### **INNOVATIVE METHODOLOGY**

Until now, there has been no consistent, harmonized methodology among education in emergencies and protracted crises (EiEPC) partners to count crisis-affected children in need of education support. This resulted in millions of crisis-affected children being 'invisible' in global education data. This study marks the first attempt across EiEPC partners to agree on such global headline figures. This new comprehensive methodology sets a consistent process for data collection – leveraging high-quality existing datasets and approaches that will show comparable trends over time to accurately capture the magnitude of this global education crisis and support evidence-based policymaking.

<sup>1</sup> Global Estimates: Number of crisis-affected children and adolescents in need of education support, ECW, 2022

<sup>2</sup> While the 2016 estimate used a different methodology and data source—see the full study for more information—the latest estimates in the new study reflect a serious deterioration of the scale of crisis-affected children globally.



**EDUCATION  
CANNOT  
WAIT**



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## SPECTRUM OF EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Number of school-aged children & adolescents trapped in emergencies and protracted crises in need of education support:

**78.2 million**

(35%) out of school

54% females,  
17% with functional  
difficulties,  
16% forcibly displaced



**24.2 million**

(11%) in pre-primary  
school or in primary  
or secondary school  
achieving minimum  
proficiency in  
mathematics or  
reading but still  
affected by crises and  
in need of support

**119.6 million**

(54%) in school, but not  
achieving minimum proficiency  
in reading or mathematics

Priority 1 Priority 2 Priority 3

Estimates for minimum proficiency levels are in the lower bounds as they don't include the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic. Initial analyses suggest that COVID-19-induced learning losses are more pronounced amongst the poorest and amongst those who were already lagging in terms of learning prior to the pandemic; two categories that typically include children in crises.

Together with strategic partners, our collective commitment is to uphold crisis-affected children's fundamental right to education by providing them with quality learning opportunities, including whole-of-child, holistic learning approaches to help them overcome the specific challenges they face amidst crises and achieve learning outcomes.

Behind these numbers, millions of vulnerable girls and boys around the world await our collective action. From inside makeshift refugee settlements, damaged walls of classrooms and communities torn apart by war and disaster, these children are desperately holding on to the hope that education will allow them to realize their dreams of becoming a doctor, an engineer, a scientist, a teacher ...

Each of them has an inherent right to equitable, inclusive, quality education. We must act now to ensure that the dreams of these 222 million girls and boys are realized. The need has never been greater, nor more urgent.

**WE MUST RESPOND TOGETHER WITH  
THE FIERCE URGENCY OF NOW!**

#222MillionDreams



## EDUCATION IN PROTRACTED CRISES

**84%**

of out-of-school,  
crisis-affected  
children &  
adolescents live in  
protracted crises.

**2/3**

Of these, about two thirds are in  
ten countries alone: Afghanistan,  
Democratic Republic of the Congo,  
Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan,  
Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Yemen.



ECW already has multi-year  
investments (MYRPs) in these ten  
countries. However, reaching all of  
these children will require urgent,  
additional financing to scale-up  
results aligned with the MYRPs.



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