

EDUCATION FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN



Three students from Hidassie School hugging each other during recess in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
Credit: GPE/Midastouch

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) works with governments to include refugee children and youth in national education systems and helps strengthen capacity and resources to meet the education needs of refugee children.

THE CHALLENGE

Developing regions host 86% of the world's school-age refugees (2021). Half of school-age refugee children were out of school in 2020 and only a third of refugee youth have access to secondary school. Seventy-seven percent of refugees are in a protracted situation, meaning they are in exile for at least five consecutive years in a given host country. Moreover, displacement exacerbates gender disadvantages for girls; enrollment rates for girls living in forced displacement are far below national rates.

EDUCATION CAN HELP. In times of crisis and uncertainty, refugee and internally displaced children have the right to education. Education provides stability and gives a sense of hope. Refugee education is an opportunity for all: for host countries, investing in the inclusion of refugees in the national education system also benefits underresourced host communities.

GPE RESULTS

- **62% of GPE implementation grants** were allocated to partner countries affected by fragility and conflict in 2021.
- Refugees have access to public schools in **20 of GPE's partner countries**, where GPE is supporting governments to build more **inclusive and equitable education systems**.
- **\$79 million in accelerated funding** supports education needs of refugee children and other crisis-affected children in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, DRC, Sudan.

GPE APPROACH

- **GPE aims to accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century.** In line with the Global Compact on Refugees, GPE works with governments to include refugees in education systems and helps strengthen capacity and resources to meet the education needs of refugees. GPE partner countries are home to almost 4 million refugee children, about 45% of the world's refugee children population.
- **Collaboration with UNHCR.** GPE and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have been working together since 2016 to improve support to refugee education, including to support UNHCR's participation in local education groups in countries hosting refugees.
- **GPE, Education Cannot Wait and the World Bank** jointly committed in 2019 to improve collaboration, coordination and financing of global efforts in support of education for refugees and host communities.
- **GPE and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)** have been working together since 2019 to provide technical advice to IGAD member countries and facilitate good practices on including refugees and displaced populations in education systems in East Africa. GPE's work builds on the efforts of humanitarian partners to improve linkages and joint planning between humanitarian and long-term development efforts and to avoid fragmentation of education planning and financing.
- **GPE can provide accelerated funding to countries experiencing crises in as little as eight weeks,** including to respond to the education needs of refugee and displaced children.

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia is the third largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, with more than 800,000 refugees mainly from the neighboring countries of Eritrea, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.

Ethiopia adopted the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework in 2016 and made commitments for refugee protection, including to increase enrollment of refugees in primary, secondary and tertiary education. In 2019, the government of Ethiopia made provisions to provide refugees with access to pre-primary and primary education in the same circumstances as nationals. The government is using \$20 million in GPE Multiplier funds to improve equitable access and support the extension of key services to refugee schools; to support the long-term goal of integrating refugee education in the national system, serving both refugee and host communities in the same schools; and to address the barriers and challenges faced by girls to improve their learning and participation.

To access GPE's grant, the country identified cofinancing of \$60 million from the World Bank and Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These resources all contribute to a single program on refugee integration, totaling \$80 million. The program focuses on the regions of Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Somali and Tigray.



Fourth grade students use their textbooks during class in Felege Abay Elementary School, Bahar Dar, Ethiopia.
Credit: GPE/Kelley Lynch