

SUPPORTING EDUCATION IN CONTEXTS OF FRAGILITY AND CONFLICT



Primary students sit around their classroom with their books in Gudele West Basic School outside Juba in South Sudan.

GPE/David K. Bridges

The **Global Partnership for Education (GPE)** supports partner countries to strengthen and rebuild their education systems before, during and after conflict and crisis so that children's education is not interrupted.

THE CHALLENGE

- > **More than a third of GPE partner countries are affected by fragility and conflict.** Displacement, disasters induced by climate change and natural hazards affect many more.
- > An estimated **224 million school-age children** are affected by crises globally. Among them, 72 million are out of school.
- > **Girls** living in crisis-affected areas are **2.5 times more likely to be out of school** compared to boys. Their risk of early marriage, early pregnancy and dropping out of school completely increases during crises.
- > Despite increasing investments, education—including in emergencies—has been **chronically underfunded** since 2018. As of 2021, **education receives just 3%** of global humanitarian financing.

GPE RESULTS



106 MILLION

more children since 2002 are enrolled in school in partner countries affected by fragility and conflict.



68% OF CHILDREN

completed primary school in GPE partner countries affected by fragility and conflict in 2020, compared with 66% in 2013.



US\$857 MILLION

accessed by partner countries as of December 2023 to mitigate the impacts of crises on children's education, including natural disasters, armed conflict, displacement and health emergencies.

GPE APPROACH

GPE supports governments to **prepare for, respond to and recover from crises** through technical and financial support to sustain children's education. By advocating for the inclusion of emergency actors in national planning processes and local education groups, GPE promotes **coordination between humanitarian response and support from development partners**. In contexts where it is not feasible to work with governments, GPE supports elements of the education system closest to children and schools so that learning can continue.

- To support partner countries to prepare for crises, GPE promotes preemptive **long-term education planning** that keeps children in school during emergency situations.
- Once a crisis hits, partners can adapt GPE **grants to deliver education throughout emergencies** whether by modifying activities of existing programs, applying for accelerated funding or reallocating funds from one program to another.
- As of June 2022, 21 partner countries have accessed **\$277 million in GPE accelerated funding**. Accelerated funding provides rapid support for temporary shelters, classroom construction, teacher salaries as well as school meals, supplies and grants to ensure schooling continues during crisis.
- Through **partnerships** with Education Cannot Wait, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNESCO, UNICEF and Save the Children, GPE supports **effective education delivery during conflicts and crises by financing rapid responses and supporting multiyear planning** so that national education systems become more resilient to future crises and inclusive of refugees.

WHY EDUCATION MATTERS IN FRAGILE AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED COUNTRIES

Maintaining children's learning during crises **protects their right to education, instills a sense of normalcy and fosters resilience, inclusion and tolerance**, supporting long-term recovery and peace building.

High levels of education inequity between identity groups have been linked to a greater risk of violent

conflict compared with the global average. Equitable and inclusive education policies help all children enjoy their basic human rights without discrimination. Rebuilding education systems after crises can also restore hope as well as trust in and accountability for government.

SOUTH SUDAN

South Sudan has been a partner country since 2012 and is ranked as the third most fragile state in the world with an estimated 2.8 million children out of school. The country is experiencing a protracted situation of crisis due to climate change-induced flooding, displacement of its population, severe food insecurity, armed ethnic violence and gender-based violence. The GPE-supported program 'Building Skills for Human Capital Development' includes a \$12.33 million Multiplier grant in partnership with and cofinanced by the World Bank to strengthen teaching and learning in South Sudan through pre-service training, in-service teacher professional development and accelerated secondary education.

To address the impact of climate change across the country, BRACE (Building the Climate Resilience of Children and Communities through the Education Sector) was launched through a \$4 million GPE Multiplier grant that unlocked \$12 million from the Green Climate fund—a program coordinated by Save the Children that will closely align with GPE's Climate-Smart Education Systems Initiative (CSESI). CSESI provides technical assistance to promote partner country capacity to embed climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability within education sector plans, budgets, policies and programming.

GPE is also providing \$10 million in accelerated funding to align with Education Cannot Wait's \$40 million Multi-Year Resilience Programme to ensure the most vulnerable girls and boys impacted by crisis situations, including those with disabilities, have equitable and uninterrupted access to safe, quality learning opportunities.