DELIVERING EDUCATION in the Midst of FRAGILITY, CONFLICT, and VIOLENCE (FCV)

Ensuring a safe environment for children to learn is more than a mission for the World Bank. It is an urgent imperative. In large part, the success of our FCV Strategy is predicated on education. There are few spheres of development with so much potential to contribute to violence prevention and peace building. Schooling, therefore, has a critical role in developing the social cohesion for stability, as well as the skill base needed for our client countries to advance in their development and achieve economic prosperity.

WITH INVESTMENTS TOTALLING $7 BILLION, THE WORLD BANK IS THE LARGEST EXTERNAL FINANCIER OF EDUCATION IN FCV SETTINGS

The World Bank, through technical assistance, loans, and grants, works in collaboration with humanitarian actors and other stakeholders to minimize these disruptions and advance education in FCV settings. Our education portfolio in Fragility, Conflict, and Violence settings has grown rapidly in recent years, reflecting the increasing importance of the FCV agenda in education. In fiscal year 2024 (FY24), our investment in FCV settings stands at 7 billion, accounting for about 27% of the World Bank’s education portfolio and representing 42 projects in 28 countries. This share will continue to grow under our Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence 2020-2025. An additional $1.2 billion in funding for education in FCV countries will be approved in FY24 and FY25.

NUMBERS TELL A SAD STORY ABOUT WORSENING DISPLACEMENT CRISIS

More than 50% of refugee children are OUT OF SCHOOL

ADOLESCENT REFUGEES in particular lack access to education

The average gross enrollment rate (GER) for refugees

65% at the primary level (compared to global GER of 101%)

41% at the secondary level (compared to global GER of 77%)

7% at the tertiary level (compared to global GER of 40%)

Girls are two and a half times more likely to be out of primary school if they live in conflict-affected countries.

NEARLY 90% OF GIRLS are more likely to be out of secondary school than their non-FCV counterparts

For children living in FCV settings, LEARNING POVERTY (share of children aged 10 who cannot read a simple age-appropriate text) almost always exceeds 90%

Today only 3% of humanitarian aid goes to education. Yet the children most in need of a good education are also at greatest risk of having their learning disrupted, whether by conflict, violence, pandemics, climate, or other crises.
Regional distribution of the education portfolio in FCV settings

In FY24, 33 out of 42 active portfolio projects are in Sub-Saharan African countries. In the Middle East and North Africa region, the ongoing Syrian refugee crises and other regional instabilities have led to an increase in projects.

PROGRESS IN EDUCATION WILL INCREASINGLY BE DETERMINED BY OPERATING EFFECTIVELY IN FCV SETTINGS

The current global situation, characterized by a changing climate, shifting geopolitics, and the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, is most likely a preview of the uncertainties that countries will face in the future. By 2030, more than half of the poor, and two-thirds of the extreme poor, will live in situations of fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV). For the World Bank to achieve its goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting prosperity on a livable planet, it will need to succeed in FCV settings.

Launched in February 2020, our Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence 2020-2025 is an important milestone in how the World Bank serves populations living in these settings. The strategy rests on four pillars. Our white paper “Safe and Learning in the Midst of Fragility, Conflict, and Violence” recommends actions across those four pillars.

PILLAR 01

Education has a key role to play in preventing violent conflict and interpersonal violence.

PILLAR 02

Remaining engaged during crises and active conflict requires new delivery modalities, mission-driven partnerships, and a greater tolerance for risk.

PILLAR 03

Helping countries transition out of fragility requires consensus on the sequence of reforms, and investing in state capabilities.

PILLAR 04

Mitigating the spillovers of FCV is key. Programs should address the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, as well as host communities.
EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN UKRAINE

In Ukraine, The World Bank’s education support includes financing of teacher salaries; support for a remedial online tutoring program for displaced students; and reallocating $100 million to support and protect academic scholarships for higher education students.

ENABLING SCHOOLS TO FUNCTION IN YEMEN

In Yemen, The World Bank’s Restoring Education and Learning Project provides a school package to over 1,100 schools. It includes four key elements: (i) teacher training and performance-based teacher payments; (ii) learning materials and school supplies; (iii) rehabilitation of school infrastructure; and (iv) school feeding. The project reaches almost 600,000 children, targeting the most vulnerable districts. It also supports delivery of remedial education for struggling students, as well as strengthening local capacity to manage education. The project includes close collaboration with UNICEF, the World Food Program (WFP), and Save the Children.

KEEPING ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN SCHOOL IN NIGERIA

In Nigeria, the AGILE project expands and improves secondary schools to ensure safe, accessible, and inclusive infrastructure. It also provides skills training for adolescent girls on digital literacy, health education, gender-based violence awareness and prevention, negotiation skills and self-agency. The project aims to benefit about 6.7 million adolescents and 15.5 million direct beneficiaries, including families and communities, in seven states.

INCREASING ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN SOMALIA

In Somalia, the Education for Human Capital Development Project aims to increase access to primary education in underserved areas, with a focus on girls, and improve quality of instruction. It includes (i) strengthening government’s stewardship role; (ii) establishing a national student learning assessment system; and (iii) strengthening system-level monitoring and evaluation.

HIRING AND TRAINING TEACHERS IN CAMEROON

In Cameroon, a World Bank project has supported the government in hiring over 9,000 primary school teachers—prioritizing zones that host refugees and internally displaced people. It provides training for almost 60,000 teachers in effective pedagogies and topics such as education in emergencies, gender-based violence and psychosocial support. The project also supports school grants as well as financial management trainings for school management councils in refugee-hosting areas.

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BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS TO REACH BENEFICIARIES

The World Bank’s growing investments in education in FCV settings mark an opportunity to partner with and learn from others who have a longstanding presence in this space, including both our traditional partners (e.g., UNICEF and UNHCR, international NGOs, bilateral agencies), and newer partners (e.g., municipalities or community-based organizations). We continue to expand our partnerships with humanitarian actors from civil society, including faith-based organizations and local entities like associations of women’s groups. These organizations have a strong presence on the ground in hard-to-reach areas and offer crucial contextual knowledge and technical know-how. Together, we can more effectively advance education and learning in the world’s most challenging settings.

EXPANDING AND SHARING GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE

The World Bank aims to inform evidence-based solutions for education in FCV settings. For example, recent case studies were conducted to analyze what works to include displaced populations within host country national education systems. In The Global Cost of Inclusive Refugee Education—a joint report of the World Bank and UNHCR—we estimate the cost of educating refugee children in host country systems. Our knowledge exchange events and publications seek to ensure that expertise and tools reach those who need them across countries.

PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

To strengthen our response, the World Bank is launching the Inclusion Support Programme for Refugee Education (INSPIRE). INSPIRE seeks to provide technical support to countries to help integrate refugee children into host country systems. It also promotes predictable concessional financing to countries that open their schools to refugee children. Working with partners, INSPIRE will help countries implement programs to help transition refugee populations into host country schools while strengthening the quality of education for all students.

The Bank has also mobilized an Education and FCV Response Team to provide just-in-time advice and support to country staff on operations in FCV settings. The support includes analytical work, distilling best practices and generating creative solutions for service delivery in these challenging contexts.

WORLD BANK’S WORK IN FCV SETTINGS RECEIVES STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

For more information on the World Bank’s work on Education, please visit: www.worldbank.org/education

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March 2024