Education in Emergencies (EiE)

What is it?

The EU aims to help children affected by humanitarian crises to have access to safe, quality, and accredited primary and secondary education. Since 2015, almost 60% of education in emergencies projects focused on helping crisis-affected children out of school back into education. Many of them also received support to succeed in their learning and continue their studies in higher grades. As the quality of education greatly depends on teachers, EU action supported teachers with different types of trainings and coaching as well as protection actions. In emergencies, education actions go hand in hand with protection, providing safe and healing learning spaces and, where needed, links to specialised child protection services. Over 75% of EU-funded education in emergencies actions have integrated protection elements. The EU is increasingly focussing on the protection of education from attack. Every EU action takes into account the different needs of children based on their age, gender and other specific circumstances.

Why is this important?

In 35 crisis-affected countries around the world, humanitarian emergencies and protracted crises have disrupted the education of 75 million children between the ages of 3 and 18. Among refugees, 39% of primary school-age children and 77% of secondary school-age adolescents are not enrolled. Moreover, girls living in conflict-affected countries are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than boys.

Education is crucial for both the protection and healthy development of girls and boys affected by crises. It can rebuild their lives, restore their sense of normality and safety, and provide them with important life skills. It helps children to be self-sufficient and to have more influence on issues that affect them. It is also one of the best tools to invest in their long-term future, and in the peace, stability and economic growth of their countries. Yet it is one of the most underfunded areas of humanitarian aid: only around 3% of global humanitarian funding is allocated to education.
How are we helping?

Policy
The EU is one of the top donors and policy shapers in the field of education globally. By making education in emergencies a part of its humanitarian response, and linked closely with development cooperation, the EU makes full use of its humanitarian and development funding instruments to support children affected by crises. The following priorities help the EU support the continuity of quality education in crisis contexts:

1) partnerships for a rapid, efficient, effective and innovative education response
2) promoting access, inclusion and equity
3) championing education for peace and protection
4) supporting quality education for better learning outcomes.

They are set out in the European Commission’s Communication on Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises of May 2018, endorsed by EU Member States in Council Conclusions in November 2018. In March 2019, the Commission published its guidance document on Education in Emergencies in EU-funded Humanitarian Aid Operations.

Funding
The total amount spent on education in emergencies reached €290 million between 2015 and 2018, including €34 million through the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey and €25 million through the Emergency Support Instrument for Greece.

The share of the European Commission’s humanitarian aid budget allocated to education in emergencies has increased from 1% in 2015 to 10% in 2019, with an unprecedented funding target of €164 million for 2019 alone.

Over 6.5 million girls and boys in 55 countries around the world have benefited from EU-funded educational projects between 2015 and 2018. The Commission’s funding is delivered through its humanitarian implementing partners, notably NGOs, United Nations agencies, and international organisations carrying out humanitarian projects.

Actions
The EU supports a variety of education in emergencies actions, with over half of them promoting education for girls. The EU has supported children and teachers in both formal and non-formal education, including through accelerated education programmes that condense several years of curriculum to help children reach the grade corresponding to their age faster. Common activities of EU-supported actions include:

- trainings and additional support such as mentoring for teachers and other education personnel;
- psycho-social support and life skills training (including health and hygiene awareness, mine risk education, conflict and disaster risk reduction activities, and personal resilience and recreation sessions);
- community sensitisation and awareness raising;
- school infrastructure rehabilitation and improvement;
- provision of teaching and learning materials.

EU-funded actions also support parent teacher associations, community based school management, student/children clubs, as well as peer-to-peer training and activities. About one fifth of all actions include innovative solutions for students and/or teachers.