



UNESCO

Topic 1: The Suez Crisis (1956): The Rise of Diplomacy and the  
Recession of Colonial Power

## Committee overview

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) leads international cooperation on education, science, culture, and communication. In education, UNESCO is the custodian of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), which includes ensuring inclusive and equitable learning opportunities for all, especially during emergencies. UNESCO prioritizes education in humanitarian action, recovery, and resilience-building for crisis-affected populations. As education underlies human rights, economic development, and peacebuilding, the issue is central to global governance and development objectives.

## Background on the topic

Humanitarian crises, including armed conflicts, climate disasters, pandemics, and prolonged displacement, disrupt education systems and threaten the fundamental right to learning. Emergencies can destroy infrastructure, close schools, disrupt teacher capacity, and expose learners to safety risks such as exploitation or recruitment by armed groups, disproportionately affecting girls and vulnerable groups. According to Education Cannot Wait, 234 million school-aged children are affected by crises and need support for quality education, with millions at risk of being out of school entirely. In crisis contexts, education provides psychosocial protection, stability, and future prospects for young people, making it a lifesaving intervention equivalent in importance to food and health services.

UNESCO's work in education during emergencies is guided by international human rights frameworks and multilateral agreements, including the Safe Schools Declaration, resolutions such as UNSC Resolution 2601, and normative frameworks like the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards. UNESCO also launched the Strategic Framework for Migration, Displacement, Emergencies and Education 2024–2029 to strengthen crisis preparedness and long-term resilience in education systems.

## Key terms and definitions

**Education in Emergencies (EiE):** Provision of quality education during and after crises for all learners.

**Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):** People forced to flee homes but who remain within their own country.

**Psychosocial Support:** Emotional and mental health services in crisis contexts.

**Resilient Education System:** A system designed to withstand and recover from shocks.

**Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4):** UN target to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education.

## Relevant UN bodies and resolutions

### UN Bodies

- **UNESCO Headquarters & Field Offices** - Lead development and implementation of EiE programs, coordinate data and policy frameworks.
- **UNICEF** - Provides child-centered education, protection, and nutrition services in crises.
- **UNHCR** - Ensures access to education for refugee and displaced learners through policy support and funding.
- **World Bank Education Global Practice** - Finances resilience building and education system strengthening in fragile states.

### Conventions/Treaties

- Safe Schools Declaration
- Education 2030 Framework
- Global Compact for Refugees
- Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)

### Major actors and their relevance

#### Countries

- **Syria / Yemen / Ukraine** - Ongoing conflict zones where schooling and educational infrastructure are severely disrupted.
- **Bangladesh** - Host to large refugee populations (e.g., Rohingya), creating education delivery challenges in camps.
- **Germany / Canada** - Major financial contributors to global education in emergencies projects.
- **Kenya / Uganda** - Countries hosting large refugee settlements with complex education needs.

#### Organisations

- **African Union (AU)** - Supports member states in developing education policies during displacement.
- **European Union (EU)** - Provides regional funding and technical support for inclusive education.
- **NGOs: Save the Children, Norwegian Refugee Council** - Deliver education programs and psychosocial support on the ground.
- **Private Sector: Technology companies like Google and Microsoft** - Support digital learning access in remote settings.
- **Local Community Leaders and Teachers' Unions** - Critical in implementing community-based education and ensuring contextual needs are met.

### Guiding questions

- 1. How should UNESCO strengthen education systems to withstand current and future crises?

- 2. What policies can ensure continuity of learning during armed conflict?
- 3. How can digital learning tools be made accessible to refugees and displaced children?
- 4. What strategies can address the psychosocial needs of learners in crisis contexts?
- 5. How should global funding mechanisms for education in emergencies be structured and expanded?

## Works cited

UNESCO - Education in Emergencies. UNESCO summary of Education in Emergencies including crisis impacts, affected children, and UNESCO initiatives.

UNESCO - What you need to know about EiE. Detailed explanation on how emergencies affect education and UNESCO's role in response and resilience.

UNESCO Strategic Framework for Migration, Displacement, Emergencies, and Education 2024–2029. Context on UNESCO's long-term plan for education in emergencies.

UNESCO Disaster Risk Reduction for Culture and Designated Sites. Highlights cultural site exposure to hazards and risk management strategies.

UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Urban pressures report on pressures to World Heritage sites from development and urban growth.