

#SaveOurEducation



Save the Children

**BUILD BACK**

**AMW**

**FORWARD**

**BETTER**

How the global community must act now  
to secure children's learning in crises

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

# 1 Introduction

“Because we dream of a better future, because we want to succeed, we want your support to make our voices heard and our demands realised. Be with us to create a strong and effective generation.”

Mya, a girl from Lebanon

Education is a fundamental right for every child.<sup>1</sup> It is crucial for their learning and development. It is the foundation for delivering upon all the Sustainable Development Goals.

Even before the Covid-19 global education emergency, 258 million school-aged children – one child in six – were already denied their right to education.<sup>2</sup> Now, even more children are impacted by the learning crisis. **Particularly in low-income, fragile and conflict-affected countries with weak education systems, the pandemic has compounded the education inequalities and discrimination so many children face.**

**Almost two years since Covid-19 first disrupted schooling in parts of Southeast Asia, no national education system in the world is back to ‘normal’.**

**In the face of huge challenges, children have demonstrated remarkable resilience and agency.** But the pandemic has had a devastating impact on their learning and wellbeing. It is estimated that, because of the economic effects of Covid-19, at least 10–16 million children are at risk of not returning to school, with girls worst affected.

The pandemic also made the inter-dependencies between education, protection, health, nutrition and poverty in children’s lives increasingly apparent. And as a result, Save the Children adapted quickly by working across all sectors in an integrated way. We’ve learned how to respond holistically to crises, and increase our impact for children.

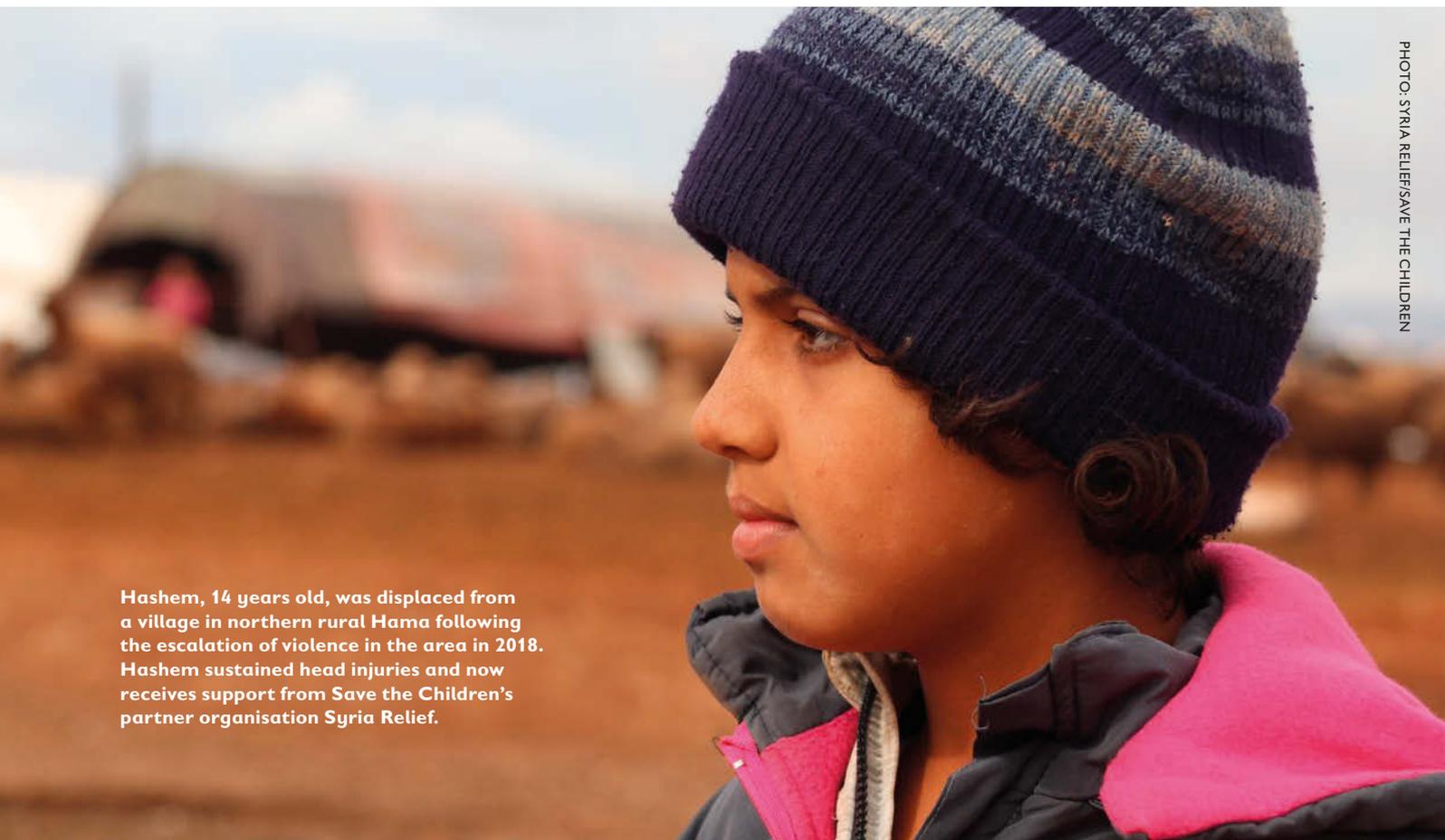


PHOTO: SYRIA RELIEF/SAVE THE CHILDREN

Hashem, 14 years old, was displaced from a village in northern rural Hama following the escalation of violence in the area in 2018. Hashem sustained head injuries and now receives support from Save the Children’s partner organisation Syria Relief.

Children at a village early childhood education centre supported by Save the Children outside the city of Sikasso in Mali.



## BUILD BACK BETTER – AND DIFFERENTLY

In July 2020, we launched the Save Our Education global campaign.<sup>3</sup> It aimed to push children’s learning and wellbeing up the global political agenda – and put education at the heart of the pandemic response and recovery. The campaign has three pillars:

1. Keep learning alive while schools are closed
2. Prepare for the safe return of children and staff to school
3. Build back for better learning.

**The idea of ‘building back better’ has long been applied to responding to crises globally – and is being used frequently today. However, given the scale of the learning crisis that existed before the pandemic, and has now become even more severe, it’s vital that we do not limit our ambition to building ‘back’ to how things were. Now it’s imperative we build forward better and differently. We must question the foundations of the systems that have proven so fragile in the face of this level of**

disruption. We must also recognise that this crisis is an opportunity for hope and positive change.

The climate emergency, conflict and displacement are already affecting education systems and economies in some countries. It is likely that the frequency and length of these kinds of crises are increasing.<sup>4</sup>

**Our *Build Forward Better* report explains what Save the Children and others have learned from the response to this pandemic. And what needs to happen now to ensure that education systems are better prepared, resilient and inclusive as they respond to future crises.**

**We will not reach Sustainable Development Goal 4 in 2030 – inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all – unless we act now to learn and recover from the Covid-19 education emergency, and prepare more effectively for the risk of future crises.**

**A child’s right to an education does not end in times of emergency.**

## 2 The status of global education

### THE LEARNING CRISIS BEFORE COVID-19

In 2019, despite the 2030 global goal of a good-quality education for every child, education projections were dire. A total of **258 million children and young people remained out of school – around one sixth of the global school-age population.**<sup>5</sup> Despite some progress in early-years education, nearly 40% of all preschool-age children globally were not enrolled in preschool. The proportion in low-income countries was 80%.<sup>6</sup> Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, UNESCO predicted there would be almost no progress on reducing the number of children out of school by 2030.<sup>7</sup>

Among children who were in school, the trends in learning were also alarming. With so many children missing out on a good-quality education, it is forecast that **globally, in 2030, 20% of young**

**people aged 14–24 and 30% of adults will be unable to read.**<sup>8</sup> Girls face some of the greatest barriers – and from a young age, with 9 million primary school-aged girls likely to never set foot in a classroom, compared with 3 million boys.<sup>9</sup>

*“For some, a girl’s only place is at home near her mother to learn how to do housework, prepare meals, do laundry, etc. to be able to manage her marital home in the future. A girl who goes to school will know how to read and write and will not always be dependent on others. Nowadays, we can see girls becoming journalists, lawyers, teachers, doctors or even president of the republic; and it is thanks to school that they have these functions in society. Schooling is a fundamental right for all girls of school age to become someone important in today’s and tomorrow’s society. For it is said in Africa that if a girl is well educated, a whole generation will be well educated.”*

Aduna, a girl from Senegal

Kadidia, 14, and her friend Mariam studying after school at her home in Mopti region, Mali

*“With the outbreak of the conflict, my parents said they didn’t want me to stop going to school. I didn’t want to stop school either. That’s why they brought me here.”*

Kadidia now attends a Save the Children-supported school, which is helping children caught up in the violence.



**The World Bank estimates that of the 720 million primary school-aged children, 382 million – more than half – are ‘learning poor’, either out of school or below the minimum proficiency level in reading.<sup>10</sup> The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic means that, rather than coming down, the number of children whose learning has been impoverished could actually increase by an additional 72 million children.**

**These global numbers paint a stark picture of how far off-track we were from meeting the global education goals even before the pandemic, particularly for the children most impacted by inequality and discrimination.**

However, what the global picture does not illustrate is the extent of the problem in regions and countries where children are hardest hit by the learning crisis – namely sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and fragile and conflict-affected countries.

Of the 63 million primary age, out-of-school children worldwide, more than half live in sub-Saharan Africa. **Sub-Saharan Africa also has the highest rate of children who are not learning.** In 2017, nine out of ten children aged 6–14 were not meeting minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics.<sup>11</sup>

## SHOCKS TO EDUCATION ARE NOT NEW

Crises, conflicts and emergencies are, of course, not new. Nor is the devastating threat they pose to children’s learning and wellbeing. Within the last three decades, there have been more than 100 systemic banking crises, 20 health epidemics, and thousands of climate-related shocks and food crises. In 2018 alone, there were more than 50 active state-based armed conflicts.<sup>12</sup> Despite huge progress in tackling hunger in recent decades, a catastrophic combination of Covid-19, conflict and climate change is pushing millions of people to the verge of starvation.

**Immediately prior to the pandemic, in crisis affected countries, 127 million primary and secondary school-age children were out of school** – almost half of the global out-of-school population.<sup>13</sup> And children in these countries were 30% less likely to complete primary school and 50% less likely to complete lower secondary compared with children in countries not affected by crisis.<sup>14</sup>

**Millions of children around the world, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, are bearing the brunt of a changing climate. This is denying them their right to learn.**

When resources are scarce, girls are often the first to be pulled out of school to help out at home. And as the financial strains on households increase, so do the risks to girls of child marriage – and, most likely, of losing the chance to continue their education.

Disruptions to everyday life during crises prevent many young children attending early childhood education. As a result, they may rely entirely on their caregivers for meeting their developmental needs.

## COVID-19 HAS EXACERBATED EXISTING INEQUALITIES

*“Covid-19 put every area of life in limbo, and education was a fundamental element because it is failing for many boys and girls in my country, and in the world. All of this has become quite routine: get up, put the computer on, start studying, study, study, study. In the end, the teachers are only a means, we are the ones who are going to be able to study. If we lose motivation, it will be quite difficult for us to continue learning. It is important to motivate everyone (parents, students, teachers, school head teachers) so that they can do their work in the best way possible, and so that we don’t lose out, or become afraid to study or go to our classes and end up learning nothing.”*

Paula from Colombia, Nicole from Guatemala, and Ana from Peru.  
All three girls are in GANNAR – Save the Children’s Regional Advisory Group of Children and Adolescents in Latin America.

In April 2020, mass school closures right across the world meant that for the first time in history more than a billion children were out of school.<sup>15</sup> At least a third of the world’s schoolchildren were unable to access remote learning.<sup>16</sup> The amount of time schools have been closed since then has varied widely from region to region.

**We know that the impact of a ‘missing year’ of education will be worst for the poorest children in low-income countries.** Children in richer countries attend school for 12 or 13 years; in some low-income countries it is less than five years. That means that, if their schools were closed for the same amount of time, children in poorer countries have lost 66% more of their lifetime number of school days during the Covid-19 pandemic than their

peers in richer countries. On average, girls in poorer countries missed 22% more days in school than boys. In Afghanistan, children have lost over 13% of their total lifetime of school days, with boys missing 9% of their school days, and girls missing 21%.<sup>17</sup>

**Our analysis shows that when children experienced long periods of school closure, their mental health tended to suffer.** Among those whose schools were closed for one to four weeks, 62% of children reported an increase in negative feelings, and for those whose schools were closed for 17 to 19 weeks, it was 96% of children.<sup>18</sup>

**Education has been disrupted for many children, but especially girls.** Gender norms in several countries and cultures can further restrict girls' access to the internet and technology.

As well as increasing poverty and inequality within countries and communities, the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated global inequality. Recent estimates show that Covid-19 school closures are likely to lead to a reduction in global economic growth equivalent to an annual rate of 0.8%, with losses in national income projected to be greater in low- and middle-income countries than in high-income countries.<sup>19</sup>

## THE CATASTROPHIC GAP IN EDUCATION FINANCING

**One of the key reasons we were not achieving the fundamentals of access and learning in basic education, even before the pandemic hit, was the dire global shortfall in funding.** A pre-Covid estimate of the financing gap to reach Sustainable Development Goal 4 in low- and lower-middle-income countries was \$148 billion annually.<sup>20</sup>

The overall annual spend on education for all countries is \$4.7 trillion. Of that, \$3 trillion (65% of the total) is spent in high-income countries and just \$22 billion (0.5% of the total) is spent in low-income countries – even though the two groups of countries have roughly equivalent numbers of school-age children.<sup>21</sup>

Additional costs due to Covid-19-related school closures risk increasing the financing gap by up to one-third, or \$30–45 billion. But investing now in remedial and re-enrolment programmes could reduce this additional cost by as much as 75%.<sup>22</sup>

## DOMESTIC FINANCING

*“I think more funds are needed from the fiscal budget to support our educational system.”*

Wesley, Zimbabwe

**Most of the burden of financing education will be borne by countries themselves.** To achieve this, governments in low- and middle-income countries need to expand their domestic tax base to at least 20% of gross domestic product (GDP), as set out in the *Incheon Declaration*. And they need to increase the share of spending on education to at least 20% of budgets, in line with the internationally agreed target in the *Education 2030 Framework for Action*.<sup>23</sup>

Government spending on education in low- and middle-income countries has been broadly maintained during the pandemic. **However, as the Covid-19 crisis continues to take a toll on economies, fiscal positions are set to be constrained for years to come, offering less potential to significantly scale up domestic public spending on education.** This outlook presents a major challenge to meeting Sustainable Development Goal 4, particularly given the increased costs in getting children safely back to school and learning,<sup>24</sup> which are widening the already substantial gap<sup>25</sup> between resource needs and availability.

## GLOBAL AID TO EDUCATION

The pandemic is already putting significant pressure on aid budgets. As a result of falling government revenue and increased demands for public spending, many countries saw their budget deficits increase significantly in 2020.

Even if we assume that education does not become a lower priority in total aid, squeezed budgets could translate into a fall for aid to education of up to \$2 billion by 2022 – at precisely the time when more, not less, is needed. **It may be six years until 2018 levels are reached again.** Covid-19 therefore poses a serious threat to aid to education. Difficult trade-offs will need to be made.<sup>26</sup>

To secure the required increase from international financing, all OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors and selected non-DAC donors should allocate 0.7% of GNI to aid, and 10% of their Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to basic and secondary education.

In response to rising needs, humanitarian support for education has increased in recent years. The increase is not only the result of greater volumes of humanitarian aid, but also of an increase in the share given to education. **Education’s share in global humanitarian aid has tripled from 1% in 2014 to 3% in 2019, but we remain a long way from the 10% target – and far from what’s needed.**<sup>27</sup>

## NEW RISKS TO EDUCATION INDEX

Our new **Risks to Education Index** ranks countries by the vulnerability of their school system to hazards and deficiencies in preparedness. This enables us to make a holistic assessment of the risks to education. It suggests which national education systems require increased attention and resources from national governments and international actors to mitigate crises.

It is important to note that high vulnerability and exposure to hazards does not always mean high risk. A country can have high risk exposure but good preparation reduces the overall net risk.

The index includes nine risk indicators grouped into the following six dimensions.

1. **Vulnerability to climate change** in combination with its readiness to improve preparedness.
2. Humanitarian factors – including **the scope and scale of attacks on education** and the **number of internally displaced children**.
3. Percentage of **youth unemployment**
4. Factors related to **learning outcomes** and **percentage of school-aged children with an internet connection at home**
5. Percentage of **out-of-school primary-school-aged children**
6. **Covid-19 vaccination coverage** among the population, and **whether teachers are prioritised for the vaccine**

While all children face risks to schooling, the table below ranks countries according to where girls and boys face the greatest risks. It highlights the eight countries with extreme risks to schooling. The data has also been gender disaggregated. (See full methodology and 100 countries with highest risk in the Report Appendix.)

## THE EIGHT COUNTRIES WHERE CHILDREN’S EDUCATION IS AT EXTREME RISK

	All children	Boys	Girls
1	Democratic Republic of Congo	Democratic Republic of Congo	Democratic Republic of Congo
2	Nigeria	Nigeria	Libya
3	Somalia	Somalia	Nigeria
4	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Syria
5	South Sudan	South Sudan	Iraq
6	Sudan	Sudan	Afghanistan
7	Mali	Mali	Somalia
8	Libya	Syria	Sudan

# 3 Ten lessons for crisis-sensitive education planning

Emergencies already affect children's learning, protection and wellbeing. The likelihood is that over the coming decades, countries will be at increased risk of hazards that – without investment in national education systems, preparedness and anticipatory action – pose an even greater threat to children's right to a safe, inclusive and quality education.

**As the pandemic has shown, building resilient education systems in all countries is critical, and even more so in crisis-prone and low-income countries.** As part of an emergency response, education is life-saving and life-sustaining. **And we know it's what children and parents want:** our research in 2019 showed that, even when overwhelmed by crisis and displacement, nearly one-third of children (29%) identified education as their top priority.<sup>28</sup>

Save the Children has decades of experience in keeping children safe and delivering learning opportunities in rapid-onset emergencies and protracted humanitarian crises, as well as undertaking research and advocating to governments and donors. Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have worked with partners, children, parents and communities to capitalise on our experience. We have continued to innovate, creating effective distance learning programmes to prevent disruptions to education, keep children safe, and support their wellbeing. We also helped prepare children, teachers, and communities for the safe return to school.

## TAKE AN ANTICIPATORY APPROACH THROUGH CRISIS-SENSITIVE PLANNING

Every ministry of education, whether in a high-, middle- or low-income country, needs to be better prepared to respond to crises – to ensure that learning can continue and children's rights to education are fulfilled. Evidence shows that in response to the pandemic, the education systems that were best prepared and that were agile and adaptable were the most effective. **The pandemic has highlighted the need for iterative planning that is flexible enough to allow for**

**anticipatory action based on forecasted or real-time data.** For example, Sierra Leone's response plans for Covid-19 showed lessons had been learned from the Ebola outbreak, with a clear understanding of the impacts of school closures on learning outcomes and equity issues. The country's Teacher Service Commission drew on experience from the Ebola crisis by launching an educational radio programme within one week of school closures.<sup>29</sup>

Today, we can predict with increasing confidence the occurrence and potential impact of certain climatic shocks, political and conflict dynamics, and communicable diseases. Neither the shock nor the impact on communities without early action should come as a surprise. The available data can help decision-makers agree to release pre-arranged funds for pre-agreed interventions that take place before such shocks occur to mitigate their impact.

### DEFINITION OF ANTICIPATORY ACTION

Anticipatory Action is an approach which systematically links early warnings and triggers to actions designed to protect families, communities and public services, including national education systems, ahead of a hazard. It is crucial to act before a disaster strikes – **it can safeguard lives and livelihoods, build resilience to future shocks, and ease pressure on strained humanitarian resources.** An anticipatory action framework has three elements: forecast and decision-making rules (the data-driven model), pre-agreed action plans (preparedness and delivery) and pre-arranged finance (the money).



Mongrath, 7, at school in Kampong Cham, Cambodia.

Mongrath participated in Save the Children's First Read early years education programme before starting primary school. Her teacher, Vongsun Vath says: "The children who experience home learning or pre-school are confident and I hope in the future they will be clever and brave and have a better job when they grow up."

**By taking this anticipatory approach – using analysis of risk as well as need – ministries of education, along with the humanitarian community, can better realise children's right to safe, quality education.**

**Ministries of education should do this by institutionalising risk reduction and management in education planning processes – a process known as *crisis-sensitive education planning*.** Technical and financial partners should support a country's ministry of education, aligning short-term interventions with the ministry's medium- and long-term objectives and activities. Additionally, ministries of education should collaborate with child protection services and disaster management authorities, as well as education, child protection and health clusters or national school-safety coordination structures if activated.

**Crisis-sensitive planning in the education system aims to strengthen education planning and delivery before, during and after a crisis.**<sup>30</sup> It reduces the negative impact of crises on the delivery of education services, while promoting the development of education policies and programmes that will help prevent future crises.<sup>31</sup>

**This process involves analysing all existing and potential crisis risks and understanding their links with education by answering two key questions:**

- How do these risks impact on education systems?
- How can education systems reduce their impact and occurrence?

Crisis risks and measures to respond to them can be included in national education sector plans and/or education transition plans. This must include a participatory process, involving all organisations working in education and related sectors. It should include both development and humanitarian organisations, children, teachers, and their communities. **Participatory crisis-sensitive education planning plays an important role in making humanitarian development more coherent, by ensuring interventions are better aligned and complementary, and by reducing duplication.**

It can also help address inequalities and exclusion in the education sector by considering the risks and vulnerabilities faced by children who may be excluded by education policies – including internally displaced populations, out-of-school and over-age children, refugees, asylum seekers, girls, children with disabilities and other groups impacted by inequality and discrimination.

## 10 LESSONS FOR CRISIS-SENSITIVE EDUCATION PLANNING

**We have learned 10 lessons from our experience in delivering education in emergencies before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. These actions need to be taken by ministries of education, donors, civil society, and the private sector to ensure that national education systems are better prepared to respond more effectively and inclusively to ongoing and future crises. More detail on these 10 lessons can be found in the report.**

### 10 LESSONS FOR CRISIS-SENSITIVE EDUCATION PLANNING

1. Strengthen data collection to ensure marginalised children are visible.
2. Expand good-quality distance-learning modalities.
3. Plan integrated responses to create safe learning environments.
4. Plan and budget for mental health and psychosocial support within the education system.
5. Plan to get learning back on track.
6. Provide non-formal pathways to formal education.
7. Scale up teacher recruitment, training and wellbeing support.
8. Include early childhood development.
9. Reform the curriculum to ensure it is relevant to children's lives.
10. Involve parents and communities.

## HOW CAN WE PRACTICALLY ACCELERATE ACTION?

Based on these lessons, we have identified practical actions to better anticipate and respond to crises that disrupt children's learning and wellbeing:

- Strengthen humanitarian–development coherence
- Reach the most marginalised children first and use a social justice lens
- Shift power and resources to national and local civil society
- Act on children's demands
- Make links between the climate emergency and education
- Improve coordination
- Invest more and better
- Prioritise localisation, inclusion, equity and foundation learning
- Reform the global education architecture.

**Read more detail about these actions in the report.**



Jonathan\*, 15, takes part in a Child Rights group meeting to discuss issues affecting children in their community in Uganda.

# 4 An 8-point plan to build forward better

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated existing inequalities in education provision worldwide. To move effectively towards long-term recovery and to achieve our promises in 2030, we must tackle the pre-existing challenges, including the hundreds of millions of children who were not in school before the pandemic, and those not learning while in school.

All actors must recognise that education is protective, life-saving and life-sustaining during climate-related disasters, conflict, displacement and in hunger- and health-related emergencies. It is central to ensuring a sustainable future for all. Governments and donors must therefore work with communities, developing-country partners, other key stakeholders, and children themselves to make education a core part of Covid-19 recovery plans, strengthen education's role in responding to

future crises, and prepare learners to contribute to inclusive societies and a healthy planet.

If funding is allocated urgently, the impact could be transformative for the learning of many children affected by the pandemic.

Education must prepare learners of all ages to find solutions for the challenges of today and the future. It should be transformative. It should allow us to make informed decisions and take individual

## 8-POINT PLAN

The following 8-point plan brings together our ten lessons learned from the Covid-19 integrated response and the actions required to deliver them, as previously set out.

This plan should urgently be adopted by low- and middle-income governments, donor governments, international agencies and funders, civil society, the private sector, and philanthropy to build forward better education systems.

- 1. COVID-19 RECOVERY:** Ensure children can return to school safely and get their learning back on track.
- 2. PREPAREDNESS AND ANTICIPATORY ACTION:** Every country must have an integrated preparedness plan to secure children's learning and wellbeing in future crises.
- 3. TARGET OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN:** Ensure children who face discrimination and were out of school before the pandemic can access safe learning opportunities.
- 4. KEEP LEARNING SAFE:** Protect learning from violence and attacks, and from the impact of the climate emergency.
- 5. SCALE UP AND ADAPT FINANCING:** Urgently fill the education financing gap and adjust financing modalities to enable anticipatory action.
- 6. GET THE DATA RIGHT:** Collect more and improved data, and continuously share data widely for agile decision-making on preparedness and anticipatory action and policy making.
- 7. FOCUS ON EQUITY AND CHILD PARTICIPATION:** Reach the children most affected by inequality and discrimination first and include children in analysing, designing, implementing and evaluating programmes.
- 8. SHIFT POWER:** Move decision-making power and resources into national and local civil society.

and collective action to change our societies and care for the planet. Education for Sustainable Development is recognised as an integral element of SDG4 on quality education and a key enabler of all other SDGs.

**In the coming months, there are several major global opportunities for collective action, where new agreements, commitments and funding pledges can and should be made to build forward better education systems.**

*“Governments should ensure they implement the Agenda 2030 aspirations and Children’s Charter to ensure the rights of children are advanced.”*

Wesley, a boy from Zimbabwe



Mary\*, 16, in her classroom with her daughter at school in a refugee settlement in West Nile, Uganda.

PHOTO: ESTHER RUTH MBABAZI / SAVE THE CHILDREN

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> As recognised in the UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Children and the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO (2019). *New Methodology Shows that 258 Million Children, Adolescents and Youth Are Out of School*

<sup>3</sup> Save the Children (2020). *Save Our Education* campaign

<sup>4</sup> IDMC (2021). *Global Report on Internal displacement 2021*

<sup>5</sup> UNESCO (2019). *New Methodology Shows that 258 Million Children, Adolescents and Youth Are Out of School*

<sup>6</sup> World Bank, *Early Childhood Development*

<sup>7</sup> UNESCO (2019). Meeting Commitments? Are countries on track to achieve SDG4?

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> UNESCO (2019). *New Methodology Shows that 258 Million Children, Adolescents and Youth Are Out of School*

<sup>10</sup> World Bank Group (2020) *Learning Poverty in the time of COVID-19: A crisis within a crisis*

<sup>11</sup> UNESCO (2017). *More Than One-Half of Children and Adolescents Are Not Learning Worldwide*

<sup>12</sup> CGD (2020). *What Do Past Shocks Tell Us About the Choices We'll Face After the Pandemic? A Series on Education Finance Post-COVID*

<sup>13</sup> INEE (2020). *INEE 20th Anniversary Report*

<sup>14</sup> Education Commission (2016). *The Learning Generation*

<sup>15</sup> UNESCO *Global Monitoring of School Closures*

<sup>16</sup> UNESCO & Save the Children (2020). *Impact of COVID-19 on multidimensional child poverty*

<sup>17</sup> Save the Children (2021). *COVID-19: Kids in world's poorest countries lost 66% more of their lifetime at school than richer peers*

<sup>18</sup> Save the Children (2020). *The Hidden Impact of COVID-19 on Child Protection and Wellbeing*

<sup>19</sup> University of Chicago Press (2020). *The COVID-19 Cost of School Closures in Earnings and Income across the World*

<sup>20</sup> UNESCO GEM (2020). *Act now: reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the cost of achieving SDG 4*

<sup>21</sup> UNESCO (2019). *Global Education Monitoring Report: Migration, displacement and education: building bridges, not walls*

<sup>22</sup> UNESCO GEM (2020). *Act now: reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the cost of achieving SDG 4*

<sup>23</sup> UNESCO, (2015). *Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action*

<sup>24</sup> Save the Children (2021). *Save Our Education Now*

<sup>25</sup> IMF (2021). *A Post-Pandemic Assessment of the Sustainable Development Goals*

<sup>26</sup> UNESCO GEM (2020). *COVID-19 is a serious threat to aid to education recovery*

<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> Save the Children (2019). *Education Against the Odds*

<sup>29</sup> GPE (2020). *Sierra Leone: The power of great teaching in times of crisis*

<sup>30</sup> UNESCO IIEP (2020). *Case studies of crisis sensitive education planning*

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

Cover photo: Taslima, 10, attends class at a community school in Sylhet, Bangladesh. (Photo: Tom Merilion/Save the Children)

Some names, including those marked with a \*, have been changed to help keep children and parents safe.

Save the Children exists to help every child reach their potential.

In more than 100 countries, we help children stay safe, healthy and keep learning. We lead the way on tackling big problems like pneumonia, hunger and protecting children in war, while making sure each child’s unique needs are cared for.

We know we can’t do this alone. Together with children, partners and supporters, we work to help every child become whoever they want to be.

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