International Day of Education

24 January 2025

Conflict and Access to Education

Why does it matter to speak about this?

Education is the cornerstone of progress. Yet, millions of children, youth, and adults remain trapped in the cycle of poverty, unable to access inclusive and equitable quality education.

Access to education is transformative. It equips individuals with the skills to rise above systemic inequalities, fosters critical thinking, and opens doors to opportunities that can break a cycle of poverty.

Education is critically important in the context of ongoing conflicts and war. Millions of children are being denied their right to education, while hundreds of thousands suffer the devastating loss of parents, siblings, family members, friends, teachers, caregivers, and other vital figures in their lives.

Afghanistan

The UN reports that Afghanistan is the only country in the world where girls are not allowed to access education after age 12.

According to UNESCO, this means that 1.4 million girls are barred from enrolling in secondary education and 100,000 young women are banned from attending universities.

Myanmar

For Myanmar, the World Bank reports that the population aged 6-22 years old enrolled in education institutions has declined from 69.2% to 56.8% from 2017 to 2023.

About 4.5 million children have insufficient to now access to education, according to UNICEF.

According to Save the Children and UNICEF, 95% of education facilities have been destroyed, and approximately 658,000 children are without any access to education.

Gaza has faced the fastest and most complete destruction of its educational infrastructure in recent history.

The term "scholasticide" describes the situation in Gaza:

> *... the systemic obliteration of education through the arrest, detention or killing of teachers, students, and staff, and the destruction of educational infrastructure*

Since the outbreak of civil war in Sudan in 2023, 6.7 million have been internally displaced and 1.9 million fled to Chad, Central African Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Uganda, of whom 51% are children, according to UNHCR.

Syria

Since the outbreak of civil war in Syria, more than 5.7 million Syrian refugees, including 2.7 million children, live in Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and Germany, according to UNHCR and UNICEF.

In addition to this, more than 7.2 million Syrians are internally displaced.

UNHCR reports that over 47% of Syrian refugees in the region are under 18, with more than a third of them lacking access to education

Inside Syria, the situation is equally dire, as over 2.4 million children are out of school, and 1.6 million more are at risk of dropping out.

In Ukraine, Save the Children reports that due to the ongoing war, at least 3,000 schools have been damaged and more than 300 destroyed.

Education provision has been shifted to makeshift solutions such as underground terminals and online education.

Education is a Human Right!

What must be done to guarantee it?

- Politicians must act now to stop the killings of children, teachers and whole families.

- Politicians must stop the destruction of education facilities.

- The international community must collaboratively rebuild education systems to ensure access to education for everyone.

Sources

Afghanistan

UN - Afghanistan: 20 years of steady education progress 'almost wiped out'
https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/08/1153191

UNESCO - Protecting education for all Afghans
https://www.unesco.org/en/emergencies/education/afghanistan

Myanmar

World Bank - Education in Myanmar: Where are We Now?
https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/

UNICEF - Myamar: Ensuring all children learn and develop their full potential
https://www.unicef.org/myanmar/Learning

Sources

Palestine

Save the Children - Education under attack in Gaza, with nearly 90% of school buildings damaged or destroyed
https://www.savethechildren.net/blog/education-under-attack-gaza-nearly-90-school-buildings-damaged-or-destroyed

UNICEF - Regular attacks put Gaza schools-turned-shelters on the "frontlines of war"
https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/regular-attacks-put-gaza-schools-turned-shelters-frontlines-war

UN - UN experts deeply concerned over 'scholasticide' in Gaza
https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/04/un-experts-deeply-concerned-over-scholasticide-gaza

Sudan

UNHCR - Regional Child Protection Brief: Sudan Situtation - June 2024
https://reporting.unhcr.org/libraries/pdf.js/web/viewer.html?file=https%3A%2F%2Freporting.unhcr.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2F2024-07%2FRB%2520%2520EHAGL%2520-%2520UNHCR%2520Regional%2520Child%2520Protection%2520Brief.pdf

Sources

Syria

UNHCR - Syria Refugee Crisis Explained
https://www.unrefugees.org/news/syria-refugee-crisis-explained/

UNICEF - Humanitarian Action for Children
https://www.unicef.org/media/112436/file/2022-HAC-Syrian-refugees.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Ukraine

Save the Children - Ukraine: Two in Three Children Out Of Schools in Frontline Areas
https://www.savethechildren.net/news/ukraine-two-three-children-out-schools-frontline-areas-save-children

AlexanderHauschild

Inclusive Development Consultant

https://alexanderhauschild.com

alex@alexanderhauschild.com

https://www.linkedin.com/in/athauschild