



South Sudan

This is the only cluster co-led at the global level by a United Nations agency and a non-governmental organization: UNICEF and Save the Children.¹¹ The Education Cluster brings together partners under the shared goal of ensuring predictable, well-coordinated, and equitable provision of education for populations affected by humanitarian crises. The Education Sector is a good entry point for integrating gender equality measures with other sectors such as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), menstrual hygiene management, livelihoods (vocational training), and health (adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights).

GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

The Education Cluster works to uphold education as a basic human right and core component of humanitarian response; it is also an indispensable means of realizing other human rights. It plays a vital role in empowering women and girls, and it has the potential to lift economically and socially marginalized adults and children out of poverty.¹² Crises have serious and different impacts on the lives of women, girls, boys, and men. Accessing education can be a dangerous or difficult experience where SGBV exists or where sanitation facilities are not adapted for menstruating girls. During a crisis, schools are often transformed into shelters or destroyed, forcing deprivation or, at a minimum, interruption in regular education cycles. Educational needs change, and the ability of girls and boys to attend school changes. Male and female teachers also have different gender experiences and priorities that need to be addressed when teaching.

PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EDUCATION CLUSTER

- Gender responsive nexus programming that links quality education in emergencies to women, peace and security or health related initiatives;
- Education in emergencies is protective, providing life-saving and life-sustaining psychosocial, physical, and cognitive support. For example, a “school walking buddy” or a “walking school bus” as protective measures and to increase school attendance;
- Gender positive curriculum development can help to reduce barriers to education and even the negative impact on male and female learners. For example, culturally adapted images that reinforce gender equality;
- Ensuring continuous, quality education can save lives by providing physical protection from the risks arising in emergencies, such as sexual or economic exploitation, or forced recruitment;
- Education interventions provide learners with life-saving skills so that they can protect themselves from risks. For example, sexual education or community-based first aid as part of life skills curricula can empower girls and boys to make informed choices and reduce risks. Diverse platforms (theatre, peer education) to engage learners of varying education levels on SGBV, gender equality, and other sensitive topics is also critical; and
- Flexible hours in schooling to ensure that children who have to work within or outside the home during the day can attend school.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES

- Education in emergencies should be recognized as a core and integral part of an emergency response and should be integrated into longer term development strategies – Ministry of Education policy can facilitate enabling factors for stabilization and longer-term alternatives;
- Community sensitization and engagement strategies should include gender equality messaging related to the benefits of girls’ and boys’ education. For example, “Keep your daughters in school”;
- Barriers to attending and remaining in school should be analysed and solutions informed by that analysis: increase the number of female teachers, add more protective measures for students, address physical access needs for children with disabilities, ensure safe, dignified and clean school latrines separated for girls and boys and, if safe and appropriate, for children who do not identify as male or female. Coordinate with the Ministry of Education to address these needs;
- There should be an emphasis on education for all ages and abilities (children, adolescents, adults and older persons, of different languages, learning abilities, and literacy levels); and
- Vocational training should be linked to market needs.