



EIE GLOBAL ADVOCACY MESSAGING AND RESOURCE BANK

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The **EiE Global Advocacy Messaging Bank** contains chapters of messages for clusters and partners to use in their advocacy and communications. While designed to provide coherence across sector actors, they should be adapted to each country context and/or thematic stream. These top-line messages, bolstered by supporting evidence, are meant to succinctly spell out assertive, persuasive arguments for why EiE is lifesaving and should be prioritized in humanitarian action, why donors should invest in EiE, and the value-add of the clusters, with the overall objective of mobilizing collective action from all stakeholders.

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2-minute pitch

- EiE is a **lifesaving, protective intervention** that keeps children physically and mentally safe during a crisis.
- Education is **a multiplier**: it saves and sustains lives by facilitating access to other sector services in an emergency, imparts lifesaving knowledge and skills, and is the bedrock of recovery in the wake of a crisis.
- **EiE is a wise and transformative investment** with the potential to unlock positive, multisector impacts for generations to come, and builds resilience for children and communities in the long term.
- **Coordination ensures EiE interventions are strategic, agile, impactful and efficient.** Clusters work smarter by harnessing the power of the collective and optimizing resources for maximum impact so that every penny is spent wisely.
- We need to **work together to secure the right to an education for the 234 million children** in crisis are lacking quality education.
- Education is not just a right—**children and their caretakers prioritize it**. The international community must urgently scale up its support for EiE, politically and financially, to stop this crisis from reaching a boiling point. The education sector calls on decision-makers to join the race against the rising needs and prevent lost generations.



EDUCATION IS LIFESAVING AND SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED IN THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Education is lifesaving

EiE is a lifesaving, protective intervention that keeps children physically and mentally safe during a crisis. Education is a multiplier: it saves and sustains lives by facilitating access to other sector services in an emergency, imparts lifesaving knowledge and skills, and is the bedrock of recovery in the wake of a crisis.

Education has always had an integral role in emergencies: CERF lifesaving criteria and HRP indicators have established education activities as lifesaving and protective. Education is consistently cited as a top priority for children and families in an emergency. In a humanitarian reset, schools as hubs for multisectoral services, provide built-in ways for the sector to prioritize community-led solutions, and efficient and effective use of resources to deliver results for children and youth.

Supporting evidence:

- [CERF lifesaving criteria](#) (originally established in 2010 and updated in 2020) relating to EiE: Establishment of temporary learning spaces; Provision of WASH facilities and safe drinking water at the learning site; Teacher training in emergencies; Teaching essential life-saving skills and support provision of information on GBV and other forms of violence, anti-trafficking, unexploded ordnance, diseases, nutrition, health, hygiene and psychosocial health.
- According to the [GEC's](#) global HRP indicators registry, nearly all countries with activated Education Clusters included activities at least once under the HRP Life-Saving and Protection objectives (2018-2023). Nearly 50% of education indicators in the 2018-2023 HRP fell under the Life-Saving and Protection objectives.
- A [statement](#) from members of the Geneva Global Hub for EiE advocates for the prioritization of EiE from the first day of every crisis.
- The GEC developed a paper outlining why [EiE is lifesaving](#)

Education is lifesaving because...

It provides protection

Education shields children and youth from the dangers of conflict-affected surroundings, offering them physical protection. Safe learning environments reduce their exposure to threats such as recruitment into armed groups, child marriage, sexual exploitation, abuse, child labor, trafficking, and gender-based violence. In crisis contexts, continuity of education fosters a sense of normalcy and hope for the future.

Increased educational enrolment and quality correlate with decreases in child marriages, child labor, adolescent births and child homicides ([Save the Children](#)).

Country example: According to a [2023 needs assessment](#) from the Global Education Cluster and Central African Republic Education Cluster, certain child protection risks such as child marriage and child labor occurred at higher rates for children out of school in CAR.

It provides lifesaving information and facilitates lifesaving learning

During emergencies, EiE provides children and youth with lifesaving messages such as how to stay safe during disease outbreaks, natural disasters, or conflicts. Teachers use pedagogically appropriate methods to teach children the risk-specific knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves safe. This often has a cascading effect in which children bring information back to their families, benefiting the community as a whole. Education can also enhance critical thinking skills when it comes to political messaging or dealing with misinformation by enabling students to make informed decisions.

UNICEF, WHO and IFRC issued [global guidance](#) for school administrators, teachers and educational staff on implementing health education for students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Guidance included modeling good hygiene behaviors and integrating disease prevention in daily lessons and activities.



It is a hub for multi-sectoral service delivery and referrals

Learning spaces are **the** hub for multi-sectoral service delivery. Operationally, lifesaving humanitarian interventions that target children and youth are delivered through schools, and EiE activities are able to reach a large number of children efficiently and effectively, often through existing structures. Such interventions include school feeding, vaccines and other health services, WASH facilities, and referral to specialized MHPSS, protection, and gender-based violence (GBV) services.

Teachers are on the frontlines of service delivery, providing social emotional learning (SEL) and can identify children in need of specialized MHPSS or other services and assist them via school-based referral mechanisms.

Without schools as the humanitarian hub, efforts to reach children are bound to be more fragmented, with less reach and less efficacy.

According to [UNESCO's Ready to Learn and Thrive 2023 report](#), 90% of countries have some form of school health and nutrition program; over 100 countries have school-based vaccination programs; and more than 450 million school-age children are dewormed every year in schools in low- and middle-income countries. School feeding programs provide meals to almost one in two of all children in primary school worldwide.



Education should be prioritized in humanitarian action because...

Despite its lifesaving assistance, EiE is regularly deprioritized in the overall emergency response and country-based pooled funds in favor of other humanitarian services, limiting its potential impact. Education should be prioritized in humanitarian action because:

Communities prioritize it

Education is consistently cited as a top priority for children and families in an emergency. In times of crisis, education is one of the first services families and communities ask for. Education is seen as a path to recovery and a way to build community resilience. Even when official education services are halted, communities come together to fill the gap and continue schooling for children and youth.

The international humanitarian system is duty-bound to be accountable to affected populations (AAP) and their needs. However, there is too often a mismatch between people's needs and the aid that is delivered, which is a driving inefficiency in the sector.

In the context of the funding crisis and humanitarian reset, communities offer solutions for more effective and efficient humanitarian action. The priorities leading emergency responses need to be informed by communities.

- A Save the Children [survey](#) found that nearly **1 in 3 children (29%) cited education as a top priority in an emergency**. Education ranked higher than food (12%), health (12%), or water and sanitation (12%) as a primary concern.
- A [global analysis](#) from Ground Truth Solutions found that people across most countries surveyed (Sudan, Afghanistan, Syria, Chad, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Burkina Faso and DRC), reported that humanitarian aid services do not meet their most important needs.
- An [independent review](#) of the humanitarian response to IDPs from 2024 showed that IDPs prioritize jobs, education and safety when it comes to aid that they seek out, to also address their long-term needs and become independent. An example is cited in DRC where there are IDPs in camps who have been displaced for six or seven years with no chance of going home as ethnic killings continue daily. Over this time aid has slowly dwindled to the point where they no longer receive food or cash, yet concerned Congolese businesswomen formed a local NGO formed providing free education in the camps. However, it has never been funded.
- At the height of the conflict in Gaza, displaced teachers started a community schooling initiative, supported by the Palestine Education Cluster. [Gaza: Finding resilience in makeshift classrooms](#).

It is vital for multisectoral interventions

Saving lives requires integrated multisectoral responses for children. Learning spaces can be hubs for lifesaving multisectoral service provision, with universal and specialized services working together. They are the place where other sectors can reach large numbers of children and youth quickly and efficiently.

EiE responses work in a multisectoral way with food security and nutrition through school feeding programs; access to clean drinking water and handwashing facilities that lower disease

transmission through WASH; vaccinations campaigns and other health services; and child protection mechanisms to protect children from gender-based violence, abuse, or other forms of violence.

As the humanitarian sector undertakes reforms to become leaner, more focused and agile, EiE provides a built-in model for an effective, “Back to Basics” approach.

Multisectoral responses are shown to have greater impact than responses operating in silos, particularly in an emergency ([Save the Children 2019](#))

It is a human right

The international community has codified the right to education in emergency contexts and established education as an integral part of the humanitarian response, as well as a critical means to “building back better”.

Depriving children of education is a violation of their human rights, as much as depriving them of food is. Human rights are not ranked against each other – they are fundamental and mutually reinforcing, and education is an indispensable means to achieving other rights.

The right to education for all was enshrined in Article 26 of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and Article 28 of the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

The [UNGA Resolution on the Right to Education in Emergency Situations](#) established education as an integral element of humanitarian assistance, “to ensure that the best possible systems of education are in place, including through the allocation of sufficient resources, the appropriate adaptation of curricula and training of teachers, the implementation of risk assessments, disaster preparedness programmes in schools, the legal framework for protection, and health and basic social services, so as to withstand emergencies.”

The [Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action](#) enshrines EiE as a means to achieving SDG 4.

It has long-term life sustaining effects

Stronger education outcomes are linked to more durable health, social and economic outcomes for families and communities.

EiE supports children and communities in the longer term, not just in the emergency response. The global learning crisis, occurring in both development and humanitarian contexts, can be addressed through typical EiE approaches, such as teacher training, accelerated education, and catch-up and remedial classes.

Education is the crux of the humanitarian-development nexus. Without education, humanitarian responses remain nothing more than band-aid solutions, with no avenue to development goals. By integrating education into the first phase of emergency responses, communities can emerge from crises stronger, more resilient, more independent and better prepared for the future.

- Among children of less educated mothers, the malnutrition rate is 39%, compared with 24% for educated mothers. ([Global Nutrition Report 2022](#))
- Maternal education is one of the strongest predictors of child survival: If all women completed secondary education, child mortality rates could be reduced by 49%, saving 3 million lives annually, according to [UNESCO](#). Each additional year of maternal schooling is associated with a 7 - 9% reduction in under-five mortality, according to a [2010 study](#).
- In South and West Asia, the under-5 mortality rate would fall 62% if all girls reached secondary school. ([A World At School 2015](#))
- If only 10% more children enroll in secondary school, the risk of war drops by 3%. ([A World At School 2015](#))
- The Global Education Cluster developed [guidance](#) on what education clusters can do to strengthen the [humanitarian-development nexus](#).

It builds climate resilience

The climate crisis is an education crisis and the EiE sector plays a critical role in climate action, preparation and overall climate resilience. Not only is schooling disrupted for millions of students each year due to climate hazards damaging facilities, but climate-induced displacement increases the risks that students will not return to school after interruptions.

Education promotes climate action. Education equips students and communities with requisite knowledge, skills and competencies to address the impacts of disasters and find ways to adapt and innovate. Secondary education in particular plays a crucial role in helping adolescents adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and increases the likelihood that they will engage in political action and solutions related to sustainability.

Climate-resilient education systems support the continuity of schooling but also fortify communities to handle future shocks.

- UNICEF [reports](#) that nearly a quarter of a billion students in 85 countries had their schooling disrupted by extreme climate events in 2024.
- Almost all adolescents globally are exposed to at least one major climate hazard, with already marginalized and conflict-affected adolescents, particularly girls, disproportionately impacted ([UNHR SEWG 2023](#); [UNICEF, 2021](#); [Save the Children, 2021](#); [Plan International, 2022](#)).
- Investing in sustainability education can help reduce the threat of climate emergencies ([Plan International, 2022](#)).
- Providing education builds relevant knowledge, skills, and leadership capabilities can improve sustainability practices and reduce emissions at individual, institutional, and community levels ([UNICEF, 2021](#); [Plan International, 2022](#)).
- Quality education that involves teaching about environmental issues also fosters ecological awareness and promotes sustainable living practices ([Save the Children, 2021](#)).
- Research shows that individuals who have completed secondary education are 10% more likely to be concerned and engaged in political action than those with only primary education ([UNICEF, 2021](#)).
- The [Leveraging EiE for Climate Action](#) report from the Geneva Global Hub for EiE outlines the link between climate and education, with key messages.



THE CASE FOR INVESTMENT IN EIE

A transformative investment with lasting dividends

Education in Emergencies is one of the most transformative and reliable investments that can be made. Investing in EiE generates proven, positive ripple effects on economic development, social cohesion and longer-term resilience.

EiE yields both immediate and long-term dividends, with the potential to unlock positive, multisector impacts for generations to come – making it a strong value-for-money proposition relative to other humanitarian services.

Conversely, lack of investment in education in crisis-affected settings has proven consequences. It can increase risks to children and youth, but also threaten social cohesion, stability and security on a global scale.

An education crisis is an economic crisis. Decades of research shows that education plays an outsized role in overall economic development – particularly in low-income countries – so much so that growth cannot conceivably happen without investment in education in emergencies.

The evidence is undeniable:

- Education accounts for 50% of global economic growth, 70% of income gains among the world's poorest quintile, and 40% of extreme poverty reduction since 1980. ([Gethin 2024](#))
- Every \$1 a government spends on education increases GDP on average by \$20.36. ([World Bank 2022](#))
- By 2050, those who have been educated in the recovery program in Syria are projected to produce almost 40 per cent more GDP per year than had there been no recovery program. ([UNICEF Syria cost of inaction, 2023](#)).
- Foundational learning could lead to higher productivity and double the GDP per capita in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2050. ([World Bank Africa Pulse 2024](#))

The cost of not investing

Missing critical windows of opportunity to invest in education in emergencies could result in enormous, compounded setbacks for communities and countries.

Children and youth out of school face higher risks of child marriage, recruitment into armed groups, trafficking, and child labor. Education inequalities strain social cohesion and increase the risk of violent conflict.

What's more, education is a main driver of migration: lack of education opportunities in crisis-affected settings can prompt families to move across borders.

Recuperating learning losses from disruptions is far more costly and time consuming than investing in continuous interventions.

Data from both before and after the COVID-19 pandemic confirms that children and youth out of school are less likely to return to school, even after disruptions to education have ended, further driving up costs.

Providing quality education in emergency contexts at all levels is critical to resolving the global learning crisis, which afflicts both humanitarian and development contexts.

What does the evidence say?

- Out of school children and educational gaps cost the global economy USD \$10,000 billion a year ([The price of inaction, UNESCO 2024](#)).
- A [UNICEF study](#) shows that children across several countries did not return to school after COVID-19:
 - Data from Liberia show 43 per cent of students in public schools did not return when schools reopened in December 2020.
 - In Uganda, around 1 in 10 schoolchildren did not report back to school in January 2022 after schools were closed for two years.
 - In Kenya, a survey of 4,000 adolescents aged 10-19 years found that 16 per cent of girls and 8 per cent of boys did not return when schools reopened.
- A [Save the Children study](#) in fragile contexts shows that 1 in 5 children risk dropping out of school due to disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Prolonged school closures, including due to climate hazards, also make it less likely that children return to the classroom, according to [UNICEF](#).
- Even before COVID-19, the world was facing a learning crisis, with nearly 6 out of every 10 ten year-olds in low- and middle-income countries suffering from learning poverty— meaning they were unable to read and understand a simple story.” ([World Bank State of Learning Poverty](#))
- A [report](#) from UNRWA and the University of Cambridge states that the war in Gaza will set children's learning back by 5 years
- Girls with secondary education are 6 times less likely to marry as children ([UNICEF Annual Report 2016](#))
- Children not attending school are more likely to be engaged in child labor ([UNICEF data](#)).
- Grave violations against children in conflict have reached unprecedented levels, with a 21% rise in grave violations against children from 2022 to 2023. ([Children and Armed Conflict 2023](#))
- Rising inequalities in education can increase the risk of conflict. The likelihood of experiencing violent conflict doubles in countries with high education inequality between groups. Conversely, gender parity in education decreases the likelihood of conflict by as much as 37% ([EPDC 2016](#))
- Education and associated child-related concerns are one of the main drivers of migration ([UNICEF 2019](#))

Why EiE vs. other sectors? A race against the rising needs

Put simply, Education in Emergencies needs it more. Despite the proven benefits, EiE has been chronically underfunded compared to other sectors, especially given the setbacks and rapidly increasing needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, new conflicts and ever-increasing climate disasters.

Lack of funding for EiE has created a ticking time bomb: leaving millions of children and youth without much-needed education could pose serious risks to stability and security on a global scale and has the potential to set back hard-won human development gains.

The EiE sector requires urgent investment to stop this crisis from reaching a boiling point, and calls on decision-makers to join the race against the rising needs and prevent lost generations.

What does the evidence say?

- 234 million school-aged children impacted by crises worldwide require urgent support to access quality education, an increase of 35 million over 3 years. Of these, 85 million children are out of school. Nearly a third of crisis-affected children of primary school age – approximately 29% – are out of school (52% girls). Access to secondary education is equally dire, with 36% of children of lower secondary school age out of school and 47% of those in the upper secondary school age group unable to access education”([ECW Global Estimates 2025](#))
- The education sector still receives less than 3 per cent of humanitarian aid ([UNICEF](#)).
- The countries where children’s education is at greatest risk are the most underfunded in terms of humanitarian funding, according to a [2024 analysis of EiE funding](#) by the Geneva Global Hub for EiE
- A look at post-COVID EiE financing reveals that among UN-led humanitarian appeals, the education sector has become more seriously underfunded since 2018. EiE received 22% of the funds requested in 2021, **far less than other sectors**. ([Geneva Global Hub for EiE, 2022](#))
- CERF funding for EiE dropped to 1.8% in 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the downward trend has continued with only 1.7% of CERF funding going to education in 2023, according to a [2024 analysis of EiE funding](#) by the Geneva Global Hub for EiE
- A [survey](#) by Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action reports that 83% of child protection practitioners say funding cuts have significantly or very significantly affected children’s protection, including displaced children in need of family reunification, children at high risk of child, early and forced marriage, and sexual violence, children formerly associated with armed forces, and children’s access to essential services such as food, education, psychosocial support, and healthcare.



WHY COORDINATION IS ESSENTIAL TO THE EIE RESPONSE

Coordination ensures EiE responses are strategic, agile, impactful and efficient

Coordination reduces duplication of efforts and ensures humanitarian actors target the most impactful interventions with precision. In a well-coordinated response, all stakeholders are working from a common understanding with shared information and data, to produce consistent, high-quality responses.

Through Rapid EiE and Anticipatory Action, clusters work smarter – optimizing and leveraging resources for maximum impact so that every penny is spent wisely.

Without coordination, efforts become fragmented, duplicated and unsystematic, leading to wasted resources and fruitless outcomes.

Anticipatory Action is cost-effective– at least half of crises are partly predictable. Moving from a reactive to pro-active approach and scaling up action ahead of time can mitigate the worst impacts of a crisis, save costs and protect lives.

Clusters harness the power of the collective by leveraging a wide network of international, national and sub-national organizations, to coalesce around a unified vision and approach across the board.

- The Global Education Cluster produced a [Rapid EiE Toolkit](#), the first of its kind to guide the inclusion of education in the first phase of the humanitarian response, *updated version in progress*
- [Anticipatory Action Guidelines](#) from the Global Education Cluster help education clusters coordinate inter-agency efforts, enhance sector preparedness, support the provision of rapid and quality education responses in emergencies, strengthen education advocacy work, and contribute to nexus-focused programming.
- *Somalia Education Cluster case study TO BE FINALIZED*

ADVOCACY PRODUCTS AND TESTIMONIALS



[Bank of Testimonials:](#)

[Lifesaving EiE Impact Stories](#)



Video: [Education is: _____](#)

[So, what are the main reasons to invest in EiE?](#)

Video: [Investing in EiE](#)



Video: [Why Coordination Matters in the EiE response](#)

LIST OF GLOBAL RESOURCES

Including those linked in the messages as well as additional resources for further consultation as needed.

[A World At School, Policy Brief: The Consequences of Not Investing In Education in Emergencies, 2015](#)

[Children and Armed Conflict, Annual Report, 2023](#)

[Education Cannot Wait, Global Estimates 2022](#)

[Education Cannot Wait, Global Estimates 2025](#)

[Gakidou et al., Increased educational attainment and its effect on child mortality in 175 countries between 1970 and 2009: a systematic analysis, 2010](#)

[GEC Rapid Response Toolkit](#)

[GEC Anticipatory Action Guidelines](#)

[GEC Nexus Guidance](#)

[GEC EiE is lifesaving](#)

[Geneva Global Hub for EiE, Advocacy statement: A priority from the first day of a crisis, 2024](#)

[Geneva Global Hub for EiE, Financing for EiE, 2024](#)

[Geneva Global Hub for EiE, Leveraging EiE for Climate Action, 2024](#)

[Geneva Global Hub for EiE, Financing EiE in the wake of COVID-19, 2022](#)

[Gethin, Education and the Reduction of Global Poverty from 1980-2019, 2024](#)

[Global Nutrition Report 2022](#)

[GPE Education Data Highlights](#)

[GPE The Case for Investment](#)

[Ground Truth Solutions, What crisis affected communities need from a humanitarian reset](#)

[INEE minimum standards 2024](#)

[OECD, Economic impacts of learning losses, 2020](#)

[Plan International, From the Frontlines Youth Call for Action to Address Loss and Damage Caused by Climate Change, 2022](#)

[Save the Children, Against the Odds, 2019](#)

[Save the Children, Build Forward Better: How the Global Community can Protect Education from the Climate Crisis, 2021](#)

[Save the Children, What Do Children Want in Time of Crisis, 2015](#)

[UNESCO, EiE data](#)

[UNESCO, The price of inaction: the global private, fiscal and social costs of children and youth not learning, 2024](#)

[UNESCO, Act now: reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the cost of achieving SDG 4, 2020](#)

[UNESCO, Ready to learn and thrive: school health and nutrition around the world, 2023](#)

[UNESCO, UNICEF, Fixing the broken promise of education for all, 2015](#)

[UNESCO, Sustainable development begins with education: how education can contribute to the proposed post-2015 goals, 2014](#)

[United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

[United Nations Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action](#)

[UNGA Resolution on the Right to Education in Emergency Situations](#)

[UNHR Secondary Education Working Group, The missing piece: Secondary education in crisis contexts, 2023](#)

[UNICEF, Every Day Counts: The Costs of not investing in education \(Syria\), 2023](#)

[UNICEF, Learning Interrupted: Global Snapshot of Climate-Related School Disruptions in 2024, 2025](#)

[UNICEF, Education Inequality and Violent Conflict: Evidence and Policy Considerations, EPDC 2016](#)

[UNICEF, Are Children Really Learning? Exploring foundational skills in the midst of a learning crisis, 2022](#)

[UNICEF, The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index, 2021](#)

[UNICEF Annual Report 2016](#)

[UNICEF, Digging deeper with data: Child labour and learning, 2020](#)

[UNICEF, Child Related Concerns and Migration Decisions, 2019](#)

[UNICEF, Working paper on migration and education solutions, 2018](#)

[UNICEF, In Search of Opportunities: Voices of children on the move in West Africa, 2017](#)

[UNRWA and the University of Cambridge, Palestinian Education Under Attack in Gaza: Restoration, Recovery, Rights and Responsibilities in and through Education, 2024](#)

[UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, The State of the Global Education Crisis: A Path to Recovery, 2021](#)

[World Bank, World Development Report, 2022](#)

[World Bank, State of Learning Poverty, 2022](#)

[World Bank, Africa Pulse: Transforming Education for Inclusive Growth, 2024](#)

[World Bank Blog, To reduce poverty in Africa the focus must be on education and skills, 2024](#)