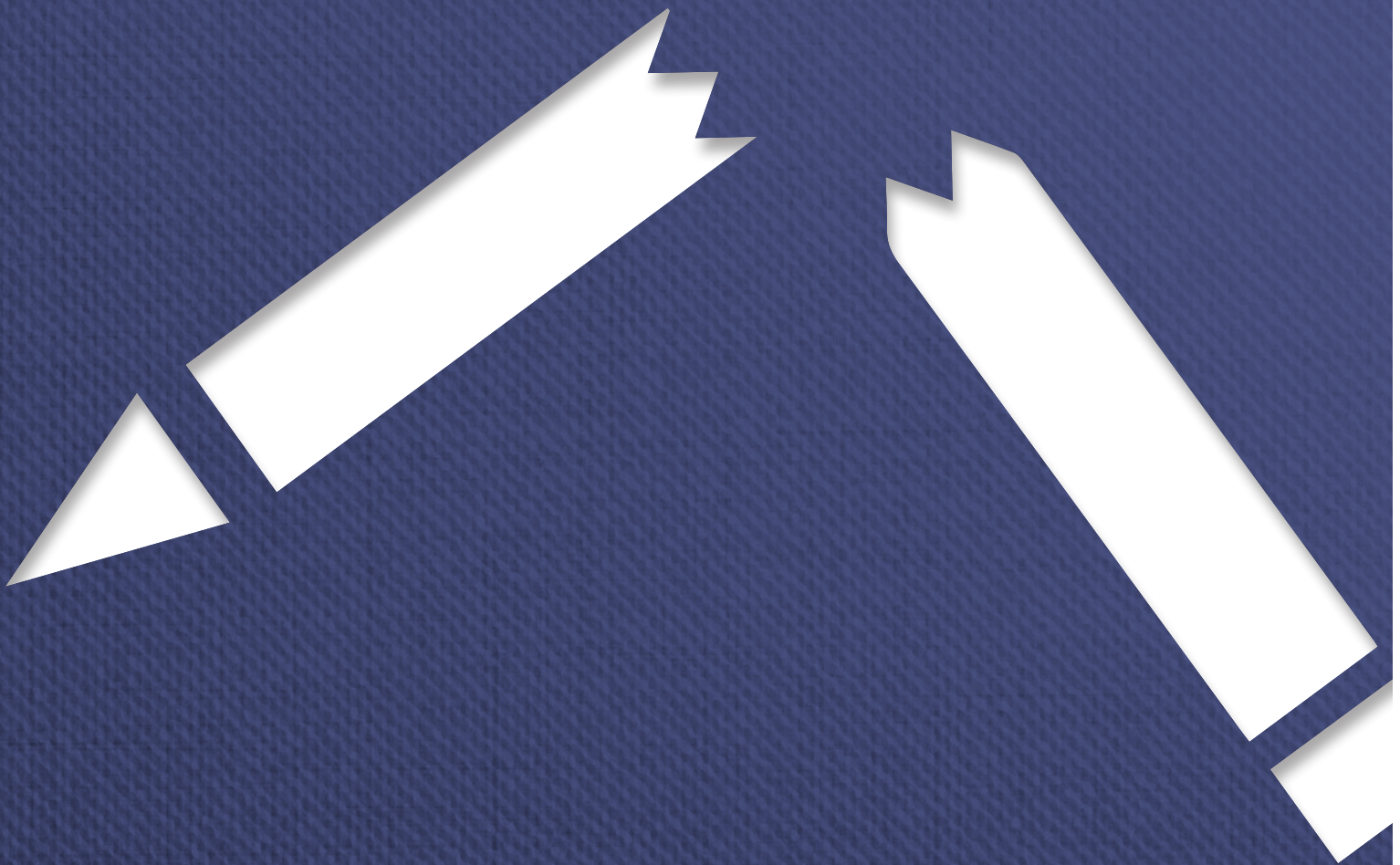




EDUCATIONⁱⁿ CRISIS

Improving the well-being of
displaced children and youth



Summary



About us

The Fostering Resilience Initiative:

Our interdisciplinary team works to ensure positive outcomes for children and youth facing adversity.



By measuring and addressing risks and assets at the child-level, as well as within homes, schools, and communities, we promote a holistic approach to child and youth development. Our goal is to create environments that not only fulfill children's and youth's basic needs, but also promote nurturing relationships, socio-emotional skills, and civic engagement.

We work with non-governmental organizations, policy makers, communities and other stakeholders in seven countries: Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, India, Kenya, Tanzania, and Peru. Our initiative focuses on three key areas:

1. Learning and Development

Improving learning and development of children and youth, both at school and outside of school.

2. Risk Measurement

Developing, validating and piloting measurement tools to assess risks, assets, and outcomes across several countries.

3. Global Network for Resilience

Building a global network of actors who foster systemic resilience.

Neil Boothby
Director, Fostering Resilience Initiative

Design: Green Communication Design inc. | www.greencom.ca

Introduction

In 2016, a record 65.3 million people were forcibly displaced around the world. UNICEF estimates that 17 million children are internally displaced by conflict. These children encounter abuse, trafficking, military recruitment, forced labor, and sexual violence that not only affects their well-being but also their ability to access quality education.

Photo by Neil Boothby



Conflict-induced displacement disrupts children's and youth's development and undermines their capacity *to reach their full potential.*



Refugees and the internally displaced either access schools managed by NGOs and UN agencies in camps or they access public schools managed by Ministries of Education in rural and urban areas.

Imagine a setting... in South Sudan, where 72% of the over one million internally displaced children are of primary school age and out of school. Or in Nigeria where only 10% of displaced children who live in camps have access to primary and secondary schools.

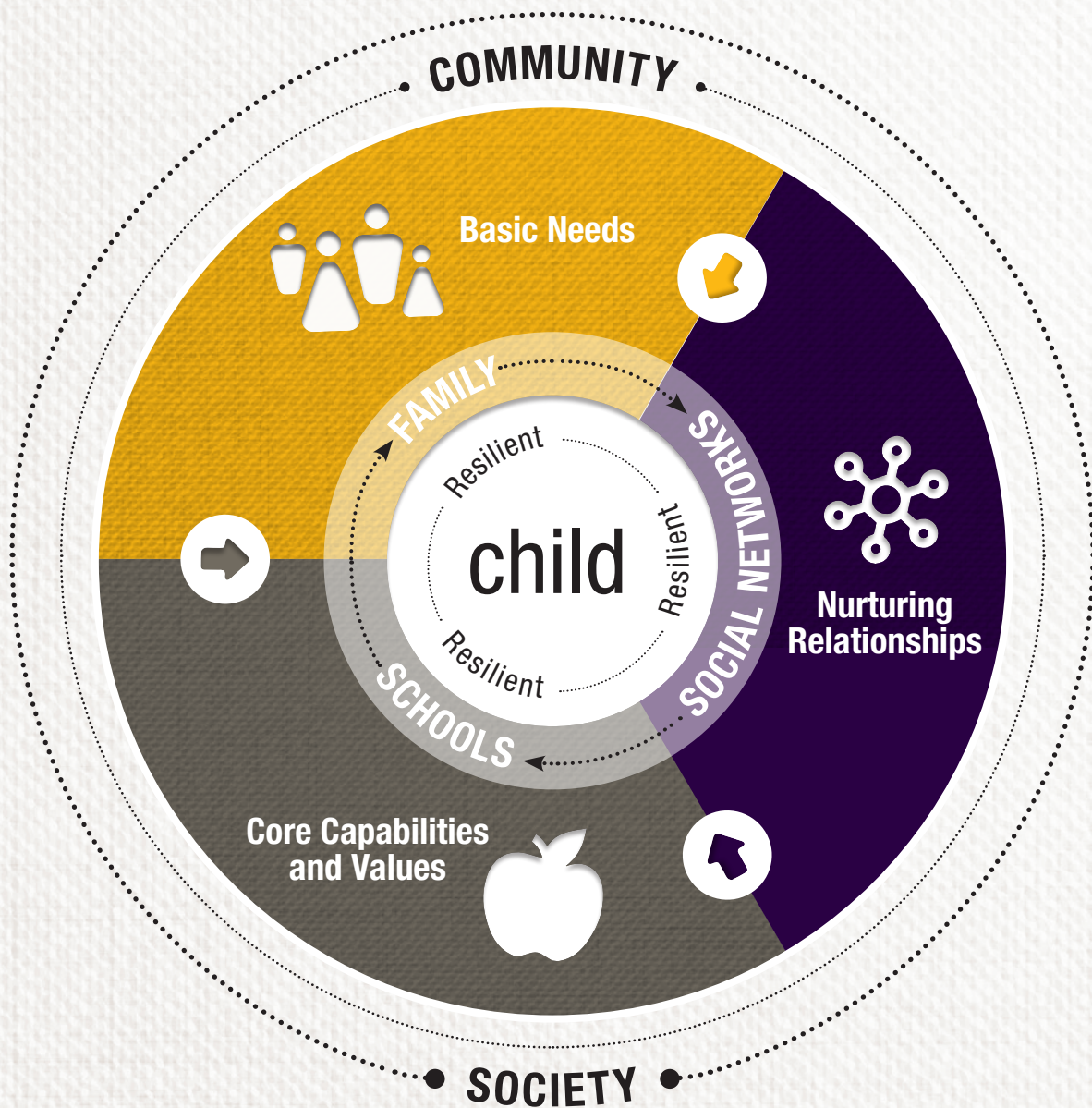
The purpose of this paper is to identify the most effective strategies for delivering quality education services to displaced children and youth.

Faced with limited data in a rapidly changing field, the study draws its findings from three sources:

- A desk review of scholarly articles and gray literature (e.g. agency evaluations, case studies, guidance notes) on education interventions for displaced children and youth;
- A global survey of members of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE); and
- In-depth interviews with 12 practitioners and researchers of education programs for the displaced.

Building blocks **for** children's resilience

A holistic approach—one that not only addresses children's basic needs, but also promotes nurturing relationships, socio-emotional skills and civic engagement—is the foundation to fostering resilience in children facing adversity.



Education **and** Displaced Children

at-a-glance

“

Although the dynamics of displacement differ by region, displaced children often experience severe challenges in accessing the education and training opportunities they need to **secure a better future**.

”

30 million **children**
forcibly displaced by conflict.



Photo by Julien Harneis



Only **1%** of **refugees** accesses higher education or skills-based education.

Only **50%** of **refugees** have **access to primary education**.



Displaced **children and youth** with **disabilities...**



...are often **excluded** from **programs and activities**.

How to improve access to education

- ☐ Double-shifts to accommodate more students
- ☐ Information campaigns
- ☐ Accelerated education programs
- ☐ Hiring more female teachers
- ☐ School feeding programs and take-home rations
- ☐ School materials
- ☐ Vouchers for private schools
- ☐ Public transportation
- ☐ Child-friendly spaces
- ☐ Scholarship programs and blended learning



Photo by Susan Warner, Save the Children

What is forced displacement **and** how does it impact children's well-being?

Forced Displacement

“Forced displacement or forced migration: refers to the movements of refugees and internally displaced people (those displaced by conflicts) as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects.”

– The International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM)

Forced displacement primarily affects low-income and middle-income countries, whose education systems already struggle to meet the needs of the most marginalized (UNHCR 2015).

At the end of 2015, Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan—Syria's and Palestine's neighbors—hosted 27% of all refugees worldwide; Pakistan and Iran, Afghanistan's neighbors, hosted 16%; and Ethiopia and Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan's neighbors, hosted 7% (World Bank, 2016).

Multiple displacements and protracted displacement that lasts three years or more are increasing, and the displaced are often living alongside host communities rather than in camp or camp-like settings.

How does it impact children's well-being?

Depending on context and permanency, displacement may lead to varying degrees of mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in both internally displaced and refugee children and youth.

Save the Children (2017) found that 80% of conflict-affected and displaced children and youth in Syria have become more aggressive, and

71% of them increasingly suffer from frequent bedwetting and involuntary urination – both common symptoms of toxic stress and PTSD.

Access to quality education for children and youth living in conflict affected-countries is much lower than for their peers in comparable contexts. Globally, refugees are five times more likely to be out of school than their non-refugee peers (UNESCO).



7 key challenges

01 Barriers to public education.

Common barriers preventing refugee and internally displaced children from enrolling in public education include:

- the inability of schools to absorb more students;
- lack of documentation requirements;
- school-related costs and fees;
- cultural barriers such as early marriage and lack of female teachers;
- lack of qualified teachers;
- long distances, high transportation costs, security concerns; and
- discriminatory practices against the displaced by local school staff.

02 Impact on health and well-being.

The cumulative effects of socioeconomic adversity and violence before fleeing combined with forcible displacement may lead to mental health problems in children that further undermine their development. The types of hardships vary significantly depending on context.

03 High drop-out rates. Displaced children and youth need support to avoid dropping out. They drop out because they need to attend to household chores or work to provide for their families. They are often unable to afford school fees. Overcrowded classrooms and academic underachievement also affect dropout rates.

04 Barriers to higher education

include language barriers, decentralized systems of university admissions in refugee host countries, and refugee difficulties securing up-to-date information on national policies and admission rules (Watenpaugh et al. 2015).

05 Displaced children and youth with disabilities

are often the most hidden, marginalized, socially excluded, and vulnerable. They face many barriers to education, including school infrastructure that does not cater to their needs; teachers who are untrained in inclusive education practices; and de-prioritization of education by parents for children with disabilities.

06 The right to education for refugees and internally displaced persons

is not enforced or applied uniformly because of government officials' lack of awareness and technical capacity, as well as rising xenophobia against refugees.

07 Funding for education.

There is a discrepancy between the short-term nature of humanitarian assistance and the long-term investment needed for education, particularly for children and youth who have been displaced for more than three years (protracted displacement).



Improving displaced children's well-being and access to education

Lessons from the field...

Secondary schools in **Kenya's Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps** introduced double shifts which facilitated education for two groups of students, one in the mornings and one in the afternoon. This increased enrollment, especially for girls because it allowed them to do their daily chores, and led to social cohesion because children from all backgrounds had equal access.



Photo: UNMISS



Photo: UNHCR

In **Lebanon**, the hiring of **Refugee Outreach Volunteers** and the use of SMS text campaigns increased refugee households' knowledge of education opportunities.



Photo: UNMISS

Led by community volunteers who were trained on children's protection and psychosocial needs, an early childhood development program in a camp in **Northern Uganda** found reduced reports of sexual violence (Kostelny & Wessells, 2008 in Burde et al 2015).



Photo: United Nations Photo

In **Jordan**, early childhood development programs, namely War Child Holland's Parents Deal and IRC's Positive Parenting, integrated positive parenting for caregivers in community-based organizations. The programs showed improvements in children's development skills and in parents' skills and coping mechanisms.

Save the Children piloted its Literacy Boost program in two refugee contexts in **Cairo, Egypt and in Maban, South Sudan in Doro refugee camp**. The program aims to increase refugee children's literacy, reading, writing and social and emotional skills; provide teachers with the skills and knowledge to promote social and emotional learning in the classroom; and engage the local community in literacy and well-being activities outside the school. The Ministry of Education of Egypt has expressed an interest in implementing the curricula with refugees in formal primary schools.



Photo: EU/ECHO/Malini Morzaria



Photo: Russell Watkins/
Department for
International Development

The **International Rescue Committee** delivered an after-school Healing Classroom program for Syrian refugees in Lebanon during the 2016-17 school year that focused on social and emotional learning principles in Arabic, math and second language instruction, and "Brain Games" for memory development.

Caritas Switzerland

developed a non-formal, 10-week education program, **Essence of Education, in Gaza** that provides children with learning strategies and resilience-promotion techniques, and encourages parental engagement.



Photo: Caritas Internationalis



Photo: GPE/Chantal Rigaud

Plan International's early childhood development

program in refugee camps in **Uganda** had a positive impact on children's psycho-social well-being (Shah 2017). Led by Sudanese refugee caregivers who sang songs and played games about health and hygiene, the program promoted literacy and numeracy, with weekly peer to peer parent support groups on child development, nutrition, hygiene and learning through play.



Photo by GPE/Chantal Rigaud

The way forward

The unprecedented scale of the displacement crisis **has raised new questions** about how to provide widespread, accessible, quality education for displaced children and youth that takes into account their specific experiences. This study mapped some of the gaps and the promising strategies in the current and rapidly changing field of education for refugees and the internally displaced.

Going forward, what is needed to deliver quality education services to displaced children and youth?

- Knowledge of the operational context to determine the most appropriate and relevant education strategies.
- Interventions that combat discriminatory practices barring refugees and the displaced from enrolling in public schools.
- Psychosocial support services, in and through education systems, including creative arts and play programs.
- Programs focused on inclusion of children with disabilities.
- Programs that encourage social cohesion between forcibly displaced populations and host communities.
- Professional teacher development in coping techniques to empower schoolchildren to deal with their ongoing fears and anxieties associated with conflict.
- Technical and vocational education training (TVET) programs sensitive to market needs.
- Research on factors that affect teachers' motivation and job satisfaction (i.e., pay, environment, classroom size, certification, status) and the subsequent effect on students' performance.
- Long-term, multi-sectoral development funding (rather than short-term humanitarian assistance) to strengthen educational systems for large movements of forcibly displaced in protracted situations.
- Research to identify interventions that improve access, enrollment, attendance, and completion of formal education, especially for internally displaced children and youth.
- Research on how to sustainably scale access to early childhood development programs that highlight tolerance, peace, inclusion, empathy, trust, respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and that correct negative stereotypes about other groups.



Photo by Axel Fassio/CIFOR



Photo by Shawn Harquail

fostering **RESILIENCE** initiative

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