With generous contribution from, and in partnership with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), the Global Education Cluster together with UNICEF, Save the Children, UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), REACH, NORCAP, and Translators without Borders developed this toolkit to address barriers preventing girls and boys living in situations of humanitarian crisis from realizing their right to receive quality education. The development of the toolkit was led by Julienne Vipond (Global Education Cluster) and overseen by the aforementioned entities through this *Strengthening Education in Rapid Response* partnership. Several organizations contributed to its development through extensive consultations and reviews, including Education Cannot Wait (ECW), and members of the GEC Strategic Advisory Group: the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Plan International, Nile Hope, Restoration of Hope Initiative, Save the Children, Translators Without Borders, UNESCO, UNHCR, and UNICEF.

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Graphic Design:
John McGill
# Toolkit at a glance

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Why this toolkit?

An estimated 222 million crisis-affected children and adolescents need education support, of whom more than two thirds live in the ten countries most affected by conflict, and more than 78 million are children out of school\textsuperscript{1}. Despite these high needs, and the strong correlation between humanitarian emergencies and children out of school, education is rarely included in the first phase of humanitarian responses, even though education is critical to reduce vulnerabilities, and to help children cope with and recover from crises.

This toolkit is the first of its kind for rapid education response. It aims to improve children and adolescents’ access to safe and quality education in the first phase of humanitarian emergencies by encouraging the inclusion of education in multi-sectoral Rapid Response Mechanisms (RRMs). RRMs are operational, programmatic and partnership models designed to increase the available capacity of humanitarian actors to respond to the acute needs of vulnerable populations quickly and efficiently. They define response thresholds, provide a platform for nimble data collection and needs assessments, and ensure the right people with adequate training are available to respond. RRMs are generally multi-sectoral and are often used by coordination entities to provide a rapid injection of resources during the critical first phase of a humanitarian crisis, the escalation of an existing crisis, or into limited geographic areas most affected by crisis.

Historically, education has only been included in a select few formalized RRMs. Despite a wealth of evidence that education both saves and sustains lives and is prioritized by communities during humanitarian crisis and beyond, it is not always seen as life-saving in comparison to other sectors such as health, shelter, nutrition, and WASH in humanitarian action. For other sectors, RRMs have proven to be effective in reaching the most vulnerable people; however, this modality needs to be further developed for education. While education should be included in all multi-sectoral RRMs, this may not always be the case due to in-country constraints. In these contexts, a complementary but separate education rapid response should be planned, coordinated, and implemented through the education coordination entity and its partners to ensure the most vulnerable children are quickly reached with life-saving and life-sustaining education interventions.

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\textsuperscript{1} Education Cannot Wait 2022

\textsuperscript{2} Please see Rapid Response Mechanisms, Global Mapping and Lessons Learned (REACH)
This toolkit serves as a practical resource and advocacy tool to empower country or field-level Education teams to ensure education’s inclusion in first phase humanitarian responses, to strengthen rapid education response capacities, and to improve coordination and quality of education rapid responses. This includes demonstrating and advocating to non-education actors the importance of including education in RRM as part of a holistic and child-focused response.

The toolkit is not intended to be prescriptive, but rather to provide a strategic direction on how to develop a rapid education response, inclusive of preparedness, needs assessments, response planning, advocacy, resource mobilization, and monitoring. The tools are indicative and should be contextualized for each response.

How to use this toolkit

This toolkit is designed to be light and nimble to facilitate ease of use at country and/or field level. The package is comprised of three key components:

1. easy-to-use tools which serve as an example and can be adapted to the country/field context
2. supplementary resources for additional information
3. links to relevant platforms hosting a wide range of Education in Emergencies (EiE) resources

Toolkit resources include templates, guidance, country examples, and research/policy documents. Some of the tools included have been developed or tailored specifically for this toolkit, while others are drawn more broadly from RRM and EiE resources. Resources included directly in the toolkit are those that are easy to use and appropriate for the first phase of a humanitarian response, while specific supplementary resources and additional multi-resource platforms are included for further reading.

The target audience for this toolkit is primarily education partners at country and field levels, under the leadership of the Education Cluster Coordinator or equivalent. Where clusters are activated, it is anticipated that Coordinators would lead a harmonized rapid education response or integrate education into a formalized RRM; however, in contexts without a cluster or equivalent working group, or in situations in which a collective response is not organized, partners can use this toolkit individually to develop their own response. In all cases, this toolkit can be used to advocate both internally (within one’s own organization) and externally (with OCHA or other relevant multi-sectoral coordination bodies, education partners, and donors) for the inclusion of education in rapid responses.

This resource is intended to complement the GEC’s toolkit, which covers all aspects of EiE programming, aligned to the Humanitarian Programme Cycle. This toolkit should serve as a resource for the first phase of the response, typically the first three months and/or limited to a specific narrow geographical area, whereas the GEC EiE toolkit typically follows the one-year cycle of a Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).
Section 2
Rapidly understanding needs

Understanding children’s immediate education needs following a shock is fundamental to shape relevant, effective, and accountable rapid education responses.

Section 1
Preparing to rapidly respond

Establishing key preparedness actions is key to ensure impactful and effective rapid responses to sudden onset crises and shocks.

Introduction
Making the case for education in RRM

Making the case for education in RRM is grounded in robust country-based evidence.
Section 3
Rapidly responding to needs

Meeting children’s immediate education needs in the first three months after a shock should be explicitly reflected in a rapid education response plan, with an emphasis on protective, life-saving and life-sustaining activities.

Section 4
Advocacy and resource mobilization for rapid response

Advocating and mobilizing resources is critical to ensure children's education needs are prioritized in the first phase response to a sudden onset emergency.

Section 5
Monitoring rapid response

Monitoring the response ensures its efficiency, effectiveness and continued relevance.
Toolkit at a glance

**Toolkit icons**

Each section includes a collection of practical tools aimed at empowering practitioners to strengthen the inclusion of quality education in the first phase of a humanitarian response. Tools include:

- **Templates**
  Resources for practitioners to use and adapt to execute their rapid education responses

- **Guidance**
  Resources to guide practitioners in executing their rapid education responses

- **Country Example**
  Resources to illustrate concepts and approaches in a practical and contextualized way

- **Policy/Research**
  Evidence, findings and recommendations outlining a strong case for rapid education responses

- **Supplementary**
  Additional external resources, tools, and guidance to complement the Strengthening Rapid Education Response Toolkit

**Complementary platforms**

In addition to supplementary resources under each of the toolkit sections, please consult the following collection of curated platforms hosting current and expert-vetted resources to further support your rapid education responses.

- **Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation**
  https://www.adolescentkit.org/
  Collection of guidance, tools, and activities to promote psychosocial wellbeing and learning during crisis.

- **Education in Crisis and Conflict Network (ECCN)**
  https://www.eccnetwork.net/
  Community of practice providing information, tools, and resources on education in crisis and conflict. ECCN features three comprehensive toolkits covering: Safer Learning Environments (SLE) Assessment, Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA) and Recommended Indicators.
Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) Hub
https://www.flnhub.org/
Platform offering resources and guidance to build foundational literacy and numeracy skills for children around the world. The focus areas include formative assessment (reading, numeracy, and additional resources from diverse contexts such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Sri Lanka), parental engagement, early childhood education, Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach, language of instruction and digital learning.

Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience (GADRRRES)
https://gadrrres.net/
A detailed and updated database of resources relevant to education, disaster risk reduction, resilience and school safety. The Comprehensive School Safety Framework 2022-2030 may be of particular interest.

Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA)
https://protectingeducation.org/
Resource center which includes the Safe Schools Declaration and accompanying guidance, a toolkit for collecting and analyzing data on attacks on education, and existing data reflecting attacks on education between 2014 and 2022.

Global Education Cluster (GEC)
https://www.educationcluster.net/
Website housing critical coordination resources, including extensive core coordination toolkit organized around the Humanitarian Programme Cycle areas. Navigate to the Library and Initiatives pages for additional thematic resources on areas such as child protection-education in emergencies collaboration, localization, child protection and child safeguarding, and cash and voucher assistance.

Integrated Rapid Response for Children (RIRE)
View resources here
The RIRE is part of Save the Children's Pilot Programmatic Partnership with ECHO. It is a type of RRM that integrates education with child protection and MHPSS. It can then either be included into existing, inter-sectoral RRMs or be conducted as its own RRM to help children return to learning in a protective environment within 3 months of displacement.

Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)
https://inee.org/
With an extensive, expert-vetted resource bank, INEE is the go-to guide for all technical education in emergencies content, including the cornerstone EiE text – the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook, guidance on gender, disability inclusion, and other topics.
Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
https://www.mhpss.net/
Access various resources such as the MHPSS emergency toolkit and connect with some 123 members, including a dedicated MHPSS and Education in Emergencies Community of Practice.

Save the Children’s Child Rights Resource Centre
https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/
E-library where users can access curated sampling of materials, including ready-made resources for caregivers, teachers and children on a variety of topics around education in emergencies and beyond.

The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action
https://www.alliancecpha.org/en
A global network of operational agencies, academic institutions, policymakers, donors and child protection practitioners, the Alliance features extensive resources and webinars on topics including child protection and education in emergencies collaboration.

Key terms

Education in Emergencies (EiE): refers to the quality learning opportunities for all ages in situations of crisis, including early childhood development, primary, secondary, non-formal, technical, vocational, higher and adult education. Education in emergencies provides physical, psychosocial, and cognitive protection that can sustain and save lives. Common situations of crisis in which education in emergencies is essential include conflicts, situations of violence, forced displacement, disasters, and public health emergencies.3

Rapid Response: Providing quick humanitarian assistance at the onset of a new emergency or the escalation of an existing humanitarian crisis. The initial response is usually limited to three months, and targets the specific geographic areas of the crisis.

Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM): Operational, programmatic and partnership models designed to increase the available capacity of humanitarian actors to respond to the needs of vulnerable populations quickly and efficiently. They establish assessment and response tools, response thresholds, pre-position supplies and train response teams. RRMs are generally multi-sectoral and are often used by coordination mechanisms to provide a rapid injection of resources when necessary.4

### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEWG</td>
<td>Accelerated Education Working Group</td>
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<td>CASEL</td>
<td>Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning</td>
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<td>CBPF</td>
<td>Country-Based Pooled Funds (UN)</td>
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<td>CCCs</td>
<td>Core Commitments for Children (UNICEF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CERF</td>
<td>Central Emergency Response Fund (UN)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<td>ECW</td>
<td>Education Cannot Wait</td>
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<td>EiE</td>
<td>Education in Emergencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>EiE Hub</td>
<td>Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies</td>
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<td>ERM</td>
<td>Emergency Response Mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>DG ECHO</td>
<td>European Commission’s Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FER</td>
<td>First Emergency Response (ECW)</td>
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<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
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<td>GEC</td>
<td>Global Education Cluster</td>
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<td>HC</td>
<td>Humanitarian Coordinator</td>
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<td>HH</td>
<td>Household (interviews/assessment)</td>
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<td>HPC</td>
<td>Humanitarian Programme Cycle</td>
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<td>HPD</td>
<td>Humanitarian Programme Document (UNICEF)</td>
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<td>HRP</td>
<td>Humanitarian Response Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>IIEP</td>
<td>International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO)</td>
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<td>IM</td>
<td>Information Management</td>
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<td>IMO</td>
<td>Information Management Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>INEE</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JENA</td>
<td>Joint Education Needs Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>KI</td>
<td>Key Informant (interviews/assessment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MHPSS</td>
<td>Mental Health and Psychosocial Support</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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**Toolkit at a glance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLG</td>
<td>No Lost Generation</td>
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<td>NORCAP</td>
<td>Norwegian Capacity (NRC)</td>
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<td>NRC</td>
<td>Norwegian Refugee Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSS</td>
<td>Psychosocial Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>RNA</td>
<td>Rapid Needs Assessment</td>
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<td>RR</td>
<td>Rapid Response</td>
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<td>RRM</td>
<td>Rapid Response Mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDR</td>
<td>Secondary Data Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEL</td>
<td>Social and Emotional Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>TiCC</td>
<td>Teachers in Crisis Contexts (Training Package)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children's Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</td>
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Introduction: Making the case for education in RRM

Making the case for education in RRM is grounded in robust country-based evidence.

Section 1: Preparing to rapidly respond
Section 2: Rapidly understanding needs
Section 3: Rapidly responding to needs
Section 4: Advocating and mobilizing resources for rapid response
Section 5: Monitoring rapid response

Introduction: Making the case for education in RRM

The body of evidence on issues and challenges of education rapid response has been limited and anecdotal, drawn mainly from research and evaluation of RRMs or other emergency response mechanisms in humanitarian action.

To better understand education’s unique position in rapid response, the Strengthening Education in Rapid Response partnership developed new research over a two-year period (2020–2022) to expand the evidence base in this important area.

The research clearly underscores that to overcome challenges of including education in RRMs, it is important that country/field education teams can clearly articulate, both internally and externally, what separates a rapid education response from a broader EiE response. Typically, a rapid response is limited to three months or less and is restricted to the geographic areas of humanitarian crisis. Additionally, it is important that education teams explain the specific ways in which education can be life-saving, such as:

- providing girls and boys with the protection of adult supervision with due diligence to child safeguarding in situations that are chaotic and often dangerous.

Key takeaway

Toolkit resources

- REACH Rapid Response Mechanisms: Global Mapping and Assessment Lessons Learned
- University of Sussex Strengthening Rapid Education Responses In Acute Emergencies: Synthesis Report
- Strengthening Ministry of Education Engagement and Leadership in Rapid Education in Emergencies Responses: Policy Brief
Introduction

Making the case for education in RRM

- providing girls and boys with life-saving messages such as how to stay safe during disease outbreaks, natural disasters, or conflicts, including in situations where there may be the presence of unexploded ordinances and heightened risks of children being subjected to gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, child labour, trafficking, and recruitment into armed forces or groups

- providing girls and boys with improved access to critical goods and services such as school feeding, improved water and sanitation, family tracing and reunification services, health and protection referrals including for survivors of gender-based violence, and psychosocial support

Education teams will also need to consider the balance of supply versus demand-driven interventions, thinking through an appropriate timeline for moving from providing urgently needed supplies to enhancing teacher capabilities through financing, trainings, and system strengthening support.

This section includes resources produced by the University of Sussex, UNESCO IIEP and REACH uniquely for the Strengthening Education in Rapid Response partnership.

Recommended Use of Tools

- Use the evidence base, grounded in country experience, to make a strong case for the inclusion of education in rapid humanitarian responses

- Findings and lessons learned from this evidence base can also be used to inform advocacy and resource mobilization efforts outlined in Section 5 of this toolkit

Supplementary resources, tools, and guidance to complement the Strengthening Rapid Education Responses Toolkit can be found at the end of this section.

REACH Rapid Response Mechanisms: Global Mapping and Assessment Lessons Learned

This visual, easy-to-read mapping of RRMs provides a quick overview of established mechanisms and practice. Information was collected about RRMs in 14 countries during 2020. A total of 33 country-level Key Informant (KI) interviews with Education Cluster Coordinators and RRM Focal Points were conducted, as well as 4 global-level interviews with KIs with significant experience with strategy and management of RRMs globally.

This mapping can support country teams to obtain a bird's eye view of diverse RRM compositions, including response modalities, timeframes, partnerships, engagement with government, coordination, funding mechanisms, and the types of interventions identified and implemented. The mapping can be used to make a strong case for the inclusion of education indicators in rapid multisectoral needs assessments.
University of Sussex Strengthening Rapid Education Responses in Acute Emergencies: Synthesis Report

This report synthesizes key findings from five case studies encompassing six countries – South Sudan, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central Sahel (Niger and Burkina Faso), and Yemen – which focused on strengthening the role of education in the first phase of acute humanitarian responses, where RRMs exist or where other emergency response coordination mechanisms are in operation. The aim of this research was to support RRMs and similar humanitarian response coordination mechanisms to better integrate quality education activities that are responsive to different crises and contexts, and to produce actionable evidence to inform guidance, tools, and training packages to enable professionals working on the frontline of rapid crisis responses to better integrate educational programming.

This report and accompanying body of country and regional case studies identify key challenges, including how they can be overcome, and outline important recommendations to ensure education is recognized as a priority in the first phase of education response. This can support country teams to strengthen the case for education in RRMs by using the research to help articulate, both internally and externally, what separates a rapid education response (typically first three months or in limited geographic areas affected by a new or worsening crisis), from a broader EiE response, as well as the specific ways in which education can be life-saving (entry point to critical goods and services – including school feeding, family tracing and reunification, health and protection referrals – provision of psychosocial support, protective nature of adult supervision in contexts that are often chaotic and present a multitude of protection risks to girls and boys). While this research was initially directed to understanding how education could be strengthened through integration into existing formalized multi-sectoral RRMs, it became clear that a more flexible approach whereby a rapid EiE response is designed as complementary but external to a formalized RRM may be more appropriate in some countries due to contextual factors.

Strengthening Ministry of Education Engagement and Leadership in Rapid Education in Emergencies Responses: Policy Brief

This policy brief outlines the role of the Ministry of Education in the planning, implementation, advocacy, resource mobilization, coordination, and monitoring of a rapid EiE response, as well as their role in uplifting the humanitarian response through enabling access to hard-to-reach areas. Refer to this policy brief for clarity on the role of the MoE from the very beginning of a rapid EiE response, through to the broader HRP EiE response, to longer-term development education planning.

Supplementary resources

- UNESCO IIEP Case Studies: South Sudan, Madagascar
- University of Sussex Case Studies: Sahel, Ethiopia, DRC, Yemen, South Sudan
- University of Sussex Strengthening Rapid Education Responses in Acute Emergencies: Mapping and In-depth Country Case Studies
Section 1
Preparing to Rapidly Respond

Putting in place key preparedness actions is key to ensure impactful and effective rapid responses to sudden onset crises and shocks.

Introduction
Making the case for education in RRM

Section 1: Preparing to rapidly respond

Section 2: Rapidly understanding needs

Section 3: Rapidly responding to needs

Section 4: Advocating and mobilizing resources for rapid response

Section 5: Monitoring rapid response

Toolkit resources

- Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Preparedness Checklist
- Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Emergency Preparedness Plan Template
- Democratic Republic of the Congo: Preparedness Plan Example
- Norwegian Refugee Council South Sudan Country Example: Education in Emergency Rapid Response Mechanism
- Education Cannot Wait Risk Assessment Matrix
- Sudan Country Example: Refugee Education Working Group Co-Coordination Structure (Terms of Reference and Shared Roles and Responsibilities)

Key takeaway

Prior to the onset of an emergency, whether it be conflict-related or due to natural/climate induced hazards, preparedness actions are critically important to ensure that the appropriate structures, including coordination entities, have been established to enable a quick and impactful Education in Emergencies response within the first days of a new humanitarian crisis or the sudden worsening of an existing crisis.

Operationally, preparedness should include an evaluation of available supplies, and efficiency of supply lines. To facilitate ease of procurement, and standardization across organization, materials should be grouped into kits. Suitability of cash and/or voucher assistance in lieu or supplementary to in-kind assistance should be assessed nation-wide in advance.
Additionally, coordination entities will need to ensure that resources, protocols, and staffing requirements are sufficiently available to facilitate rapid needs assessments and response in case of a new education emergency, and that communication lines with key education donors have been established in advance, communication is regularized, and donor relationships nurtured. Further, contingency plans should be developed which reflect plausible scenarios and accompanying responses, including situations whereby staff may need to be evacuated.

Engagement with the Ministry of Education at the national and sub-national levels should be a key preparedness activity. Education in Emergencies teams should be familiar with MoE long-term planning and strategic objectives, including as reflected in the national Education Sector Plan. Coordination entities and individual partners should have a solid understanding of MoE resources including curricula, language(s) of instruction, accelerated education programmes, and teacher availability and compensation structures, including recruitment and deployment of female teachers, and staffing schools in hard-to-reach locations.

**Recommended Use of Tools**

- Begin by regularly reviewing the Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Preparedness Checklist with partners to ensure you are ready to respond to shocks (recommended 1–2 working day workshop with partners).
- Update your Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Preparedness Plan Template to ensuring key actions from the preparedness checklist are reflected as relevant (as regularly as required, but recommended minimum once a year).

**Supplementary resources, tools, and guidance to complement the Strengthening Rapid Education Responses Toolkit can be found at the end of this section.**

The **Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Preparedness Checklist** provides a tool country teams should complete and regularly update. The checklist includes indicative information requirements such as needs assessment preparedness including maintaining an up-to-date Secondary Data Review (SDR), multi-hazard mapping (conflict, drought, floods, disease outbreak, etc), severity scoring of each geographic area, identification of triggers for an emergency response, partner presence and capacity mapping, as well as identification of most suitable first responders including considering the role of local actors for a faster and more impactful response, and preparing contingency planning if relevant. National and local actors are essential for rapid education response as they are usually present before the crisis, and remain long after; as such, engaging local actors in preparing for, responding to, and transitioning from a rapid to longer term response is critical. Individual partners who have been identified as first responders must have nimble internal processes activated which facilitate timely dedicated education responses to new emergencies.
The Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Preparedness Plan provides a tool to action key preparedness activities for an impactful and effective rapid response to sudden onset emergencies. This tool is intended to be used side by side with Preparedness Checklist to develop a robust preparedness plan for country teams. Each section of the Emergency Preparedness Plan template provides guidance, tips, and links to other relevant resources from the Strengthening Rapid Education Response Toolkit. For an example of a Rapid Education Response Preparedness Plan, consult the Democratic Republic of the Congo example.

The Norwegian Refugee Council example of an ongoing Rapid Response Mechanism in South Sudan provides an overview of key elements for consideration when designing your rapid education response emergency preparedness plan. This includes examples of rapid response triggers, delivery, activities and monitoring components.

Country teams must also consider the risk environment for anticipated new crises (programmatic, operational, safeguarding, institutional, and financial risks) as well as risk appetite for each risk type, and actions to be taken to mitigate risk. For an example of risk planning, please see the ECW Risk Assessment Matrix. It should be noted that while there must be zero tolerance for some risks, such as those related to child safeguarding, in the first phase of a humanitarian response or scale-up, there should be some appetite for resource-based risks that will facilitate a speedier response, which will save lives.

There will be a need to anticipate coordination requirements for the predicted new emergencies, including whether new coordination groups or entities should be established – for example, if a new influx of refugees is anticipated in a country with an activated Education Cluster, there may be a need for a refugee-specific working group; or, if an emergency is anticipated in a specific geographic area, there may be a need to establish a new sub-national working group or Education Cluster. For an example of establishing a new inter-agency co-coordination arrangement, please see the Sudan Refugee Education Working Group Terms of Reference and Shared Roles and Responsibilities.
Supplementary resources

- Accelerated Education Working Group Decision Tree
- Accelerated Education Working Group Ten Principles
- Alliance for Child Protection Competency Framework
- CASEL Distance Learning Teacher Assessment (SEL)
- CASEL Indicators School Wide (SEL)
- Education GBV Risk Mitigation Indicators
- Global Education Cluster Cash and Voucher Assistance Preparedness Brief
- Global Guidance School-Related – Gender-Based Violence
- IASC GBV Thematic Area Guide (Education)
- INEE EiE Competency Framework
- INEE Guidance Note on Psychosocial Support
- INEE Minimum Standards Reference Tool
- Plan International Adolescent Programming Toolkit
- Teachers in Crisis Contexts One Pager
- UNICEF Risk-Informed Education Programming for Resilience Guidance
- Washington Group set (Disability Inclusion)
Section 2
Rapidly understanding needs

Understanding children’s immediate education needs following a shock is foundational to shape relevant, effective, and accountable rapid education responses.

Section 2: Rapidly understanding needs

Introduction
Making the case for education in RRM

Key takeaway
In the first few months of a humanitarian response, data collection and needs assessments should be kept to a minimum, only collecting information which will directly shape a programme approach and inform specific first-phase response interventions, with a view to greater inclusion, particularly of girls, children with disabilities, and the most vulnerable children.

When data collection is done, it should be through a multi-sectoral rapid needs assessment (RNA), to minimize cost, increase efficiency, and reduce the burden on the population in need. In countries with an activated, formalized RRM, education questions should be integrated into the RRM assessment question bank.

Section 1: Preparing to rapidly respond

Section 2: Rapidly understanding needs

Section 3: Rapidly responding to needs

Section 4: Advocating and mobilizing resources for rapid response

Section 5: Monitoring rapid response

Toolkit resources

- Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Rapid Response Question Bank
- Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Rapid Needs Assessment Training Template
- Nigeria Multi-Sectoral Rapid Response Mechanism Assessment Questionnaire
- Afghanistan School-Level RNA
- Democratic Republic of Congo RNA (Children)
- Focus Group Discussion tools – Caregiver and Children
In some cases, it may be necessary to start programming before a needs assessment can be conducted, adopting a no regrets approach that may be more resource heavy with a greater likelihood of wasted resources and/or reduced efficiency and effectiveness of the planned programme, but which will reach children faster, save lives, and protect children’s overall wellbeing. In these instances, it will be important to rely on basic demographic information when available, including the number of people affected by the emergency, disaggregated by sex, age, and disability.

**Recommended Use of Tools**

- Leverage the Rapid Response Question Bank to contextualize education questions in RRM assessments (recommended to review annually)
- If required by your context, leverage the toolkit resources to undertake a rapid needs assessment (recommended 1–2 weeks following a shock)

Supplementary resources, tools, and guidance to complement the Strengthening Rapid Education Responses Toolkit can be found at the end of this section.

In conducting a rapid needs assessment, please make use of *Strengthening Rapid Education Responses: Rapid Response Question Bank*, which includes examples of questions and indicators for interviewing key informants (KIs) and households (HHs). KIs should be community representatives or leaders, ideally including education personnel, who are able to speak to the entire affected location; at the household level, it is usually caregivers and/or the head of household who are interviewed. When safe, possible, and appropriate, children can and should also be interviewed as part of data collection for a needs assessment. The questions and indicators found in this resource can be used directly if suitable or adapted as needed to better reflect the country/field context. The question bank should also be supplemented by the *Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Rapid Needs Assessment Training*, which can be rolled out to enumerators.

For country examples of an RNA, please see the [Nigeria](#), [Afghanistan](#), and [Democratic Republic of Congo](#) reports. The example from Nigeria is a multi-sectoral RNA, which is extremely light and nimble, only collecting information on the number of children out of school, why children are out of school, and water and sanitation facilities in functional schools. By contrast, the Afghanistan example is quantitative and quite detailed, collecting a range of key data to illustrate children’s pre-crisis level of education, children’s current access to education, the types of programmes offered at learning centres, and the risks to children. While this level of detail may be appropriate in a context of protracted crisis and when there are sufficient operational resources, in a new/sudden onset emergency, it would be advisable to reduce the questions to the minimum required to design the programme.
In the DRC example, a focus group discussion (FGD) is held with children; this example includes instructions to the facilitators as well as examples of activities that can be done with children to generate discussion. When interviewing or facilitating discussions with children, it is critically important that all safeguarding due diligence has been undertaken and that sessions are conducted in a child-friendly and age-appropriate manner.

For further resources on conducting FGDs, please see the template for conducting a session with caregivers as well as with children. These resources also provide instructions for setting up an FGD in the context of a rapid response and include questions on pre-crisis and in-crisis access to education, school attendance, and types of support most needed by children and their parents.

### Supplementary resources

- Global Education Cluster Cash and Voucher Assistance Considerations for Rapid Needs Assessments
- Global Education Cluster Needs Assessment Package
- Réponse Intégrée Rapide pour les Enfants (RIRE) needs assessment tools from the Sahel
Section 3
Rapidly responding to needs

Meeting children’s immediate education needs in the first three months after a shock should be explicitly reflected in a rapid education response plan, with an emphasis on protective, life-saving and life-sustaining activities.

Toolkit resources
- Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Response Plan Template
- UNICEF Humanitarian Programme Document (HPD) for Ukrainian Refugees in Poland
- UNICEF Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) Summary

Key takeaway
A rapid response plan should be a condensed time-bound version of the broader EiE programme, as reflected in the HRP and/or Education Cluster Strategy or equivalent, and should capture only the activities that are appropriate for the first phase of the response (up to approximately three months). Response plans should also describe the humanitarian consequences of the shock (based on rapid needs assessments), outline the key strategic objective of the rapid response, describe the capacity to respond as well as any anticipated constraints, identify whether a formalized RRM inclusive of education is activated in the country and describe the relevant coordination mechanisms, and finally, the response plan should list activities with clear output indicators, as well as a monitoring plan which captures both quantitative and qualitative data.

While rapid response activities may differ from the HRP in terms of the quantity of items required, and the specifications of materials (often using more local resources than the broader EiE response), it is likely that the outputs will already be reflected in the HRP (e.g. provide temporary learning spaces), and can be drawn from this, ensuring a strong degree of alignment between the HRP and the rapid response.
Activities should be limited to those which are life-saving and immediately life-sustaining; activities should not at this stage include system strengthening components, although planning for bridging between emergency and longer-term programming, including improved learning outcomes and enhanced resilience, should be done as early as possible.

Recommended Use of Tools

- Building on your preparedness plan, develop an initial rapid response plan within 72 hours
- If a rapid needs assessment is feasible, update your rapid response plan to ensure needs are being addressed appropriately

Supplementary resources, tools, and guidance to complement the Strengthening Rapid Education Responses Toolkit can be found at the end of this section.

An initial rapid response plan should be developed within the first 72 hours of a new humanitarian emergency, or the sudden worsening of an existing crisis, and should reflect the first three months of interventions. Updates to the rapid response plan should be made if a rapid needs assessment takes place. Thereafter, the rapid response plan should blend into the broader existing HRP or Education Cluster Strategy. In developing a rapid education response plan, it is important that the aspects agreed during the preparedness phase are reflected, including adherence to the INEE Minimum Standards for Education, identifying the triggers for the response, engagement with the Ministry of Education, establishment of clear coordination structures, integration of disability inclusive activities, articulating response strategic objectives and activities, and specifying if and how cash might be used to support the rapid education response. Please use the Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Response Plan Template included in this toolkit to support the development of your response plan. This template can be adapted as needed to reflect the requirements at country/field level.

The UNICEF Humanitarian Programme Document (HPD) for Ukrainian Refugees in Poland UNICEF Humanitarian Programme Document (HPD) for Ukrainian Refugees in Poland can be used to help inform the development of rapid response plans, providing an example of response modality, partnership, activities, budget, and monitoring for consideration. While HPDs cover responses for maximum 24 months (inclusive of amendments), it provides useful examples and tips applicable for rapid response contexts for the initial 3 months.

In selecting the activities to include in your response plan, one source of indicative activities can be found in the Summary UNICEF Core Commitments for Children (CCC) in Humanitarian Action, which provides a condensed version of the CCC Indicator Guidance suitable for the first few months of an education response.
This guidance, tailored specifically for this toolkit, can be used to align planning, monitoring and reporting of education partner responses, ensure that education interventions are included in humanitarian response plans, and that schools provide an integrated service platform which links children to additional critical services (including health, child protection, water and sanitation, and nutrition).

The condensed education indicator guidance covers the following key areas:

1. leadership and coordination
2. equitable access to learning
3. safe learning environments
4. mental health and psychosocial support
5. community engagement
6. key cross sectoral indicators for health, WASH, Child Protection, Nutrition, and Disability Inclusion

The CCCs provide a menu of minimum commitments, activities, benchmarks, and standards to achieve in humanitarian settings, including RRM contexts, and contribute to collective response and coordination. They ensure partners are accountable for the equity of interventions for girls, marginalized groups, and those with disabilities. The CCCs are guided by international human rights law, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocols, international humanitarian law, the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS), the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards, and the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.

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**Supplementary resources**

- Accelerated Education Working Group Decision Tree
- Accelerated Education Working Group Ten Principles
- Alliance for Child Protection Competency Framework
- CASEL Distance Learning Teacher Assessment (SEL)
- CASEL Indicators School Wide (SEL)
- Education GBV Risk Mitigation Indicators
- Global Education Cluster Cash and Voucher Assistance Considerations for Response Planning
- Global Guidance School-Related – Gender-Based Violence
- IASC GBV Thematic Area Guide (Education)
- INEE EiE Competency Framework
- INEE Guidance Note on Psychosocial Support
- INEE Minimum Standards Reference Tool
- Plan International Adolescent Programming Toolkit
- Réponse Intégrée Rapide pour les Enfants (RIRE) response tools from the Sahel
- Teachers in Crisis Contexts One Pager
- UNICEF Core Commitments for Children
- UNICEF Risk-Informed Education Programming for Resilience Guidance
- Washington Group set (Disability Inclusion)
Section 4
Advocating and mobilizing resources for rapid response

Advocating and mobilizing resources are critical to ensure children’s education needs are prioritized in the first phase response to a sudden onset emergency.

Advocacy is critically important at the outset of a new or escalating education emergency, to raise the profile of the crisis, mobilize funds, ensure education's inclusion in the first-phase response, and forge linkages with other life-saving sectors such as nutrition, health, protection (including GBV) and WASH. Information Management personnel play a vital role in these functions.

To quickly mobilize funding for Education, please consider Education Cannot Wait (ECW), Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and/or Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) as appropriate funding mechanisms for education in rapid responses.

**Toolkit resources**

- **Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Advocacy Tool**
- **Education Cannot Wait (ECW) First Emergency Response (FER):**
  - Instruction Manual
  - Application Template
  - Grantee Selection Guide
- **Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF):**
  - Handbook
  - Life-saving Criteria
  - Standard Indicators
  - Application Guideline
  - Application
- **Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs):**
  - About CBPF
  - CBPF NGO Perspective

**Key takeaway**

Advocacy is critically important at the outset of a new or escalating education emergency, to raise the profile of the crisis, mobilize funds, ensure education's inclusion in the first-phase response, and forge linkages with other life-saving sectors such as nutrition, health, protection (including GBV) and WASH. Information Management personnel play a vital role in these functions.

To quickly mobilize funding for Education, please consider Education Cannot Wait (ECW), Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and/or Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) as appropriate funding mechanisms for education in rapid responses.
It is important to liaise with ECW and OCHA early and regularly to better facilitate information sharing and fast resource mobilization in an emergency. It is also advisable to advocate for flexible funding for regular Education in Emergencies programmes, to allow some reprogramming of funds if needed for a rapid emergency response.

**Recommended Use of Tools**

- Use the Advocacy Design Tool to maintain up to date advocacy messages to reinforce resource mobilization efforts for rapid education response (as regularly as required, recommended minimum annually)
- Consult the below list of funding windows for rapid responses, including advocating for flexible funding in your applications

**Supplementary resources, tools, and guidance to complement the Strengthening Rapid Education Responses Toolkit can be found at the end of this section.**

**Advocacy**

In this toolkit you will find the *Strengthening Rapid Education Response: Advocacy Tool*, which has been adapted for rapid education responses. The tool provides examples of key advocacy messages that may be useful in the initial stage of response, with a focus on protection while also stressing the importance of establishing the building blocks of learning early on. The tool then shows the linkage between protection-focused early response messaging, and longer-term advocacy which addresses the need to provide education system strengthening support, and will join up with HRP and Education Cluster messaging.

**Resource Mobilization**

To facilitate a rapid response, it is important to make use of the funding mechanisms and windows which employ simplified processes to ensure quick release of funds. Resource mobilization can include education-specific donors, or multi-sectoral funding mechanisms. It is important that country coordination leads always advocate for EiE to be considered life-saving, and to therefore be included in RRM5s or any other multi-sectoral first-phase humanitarian response, and to be sufficiently funded, proportional to other life-saving sectors. To support the argument of education as life-saving, please refer to the CERF life-saving criteria (see below) and to the GEC key advocacy messages included in the above document, as well as the examples included throughout this toolkit.

It is particularly important that funding for EiE is specifically earmarked, as education remains one of the most underfunded sectors in humanitarian response; however, donors should assure budget flexibility within education funding to support nimble, responsive EiE interventions which are adaptable to an evolving context.
For a rapid education response, the most appropriate funding mechanisms are most likely to be one or more of the following:

**Education Cannot Wait (ECW) First Emergency Response (FER)**

ECW is the United Nations first global, billion-dollar fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises. Through its First Emergency Response (FER) window, ECW supports an immediate and rapid response to education needs in sudden-onset emergencies and in escalating crises. FER programmes also aim to protect and promote the wellbeing of girls, boys and adolescents – including those who are the most marginalized and hardest to reach. This window provides swift funding against an inter-agency coordinated proposal and is aligned with inter-agency planning and resource mobilization strategies such as Flash Appeals and Humanitarian Response Plans. As FERs fund interventions for a maximum of 12 months, this can be a great opportunity to both address immediate needs for up to 3 months, but also identify opportunities to sustain activities beyond the first phase of the response. FERs are prepared at the country level through a relevant coordinating body for education in the country affected, such as the Education Cluster, Education in Emergencies Working Group or Local Education Group (LEG). The focal point from the relevant coordination body (eg. national-level Education Cluster Coordinator) is responsible for submitting the FER proposal to the ECW Secretariat.

Prior to a new emergency or escalating crisis, communication should be well established with ECW country focal points, and regularly maintained. Coordination leads should ensure there is clarity on who is leading this engagement, and that all education partners in country are well briefed on ECW as a donor, as well as the specifics of their funding mechanisms and windows.

ECW funding appeals are lead through the coordination entity, and should be facilitated through inclusive and transparent processes, ensuring that partners have equal opportunity for participation and that the call for expression of interest and grantee selection processes are well communicated to all in advance of preparing a funding proposal. Funding requests should be initially communicated to ECW within the first few days of a new emergency or escalating crisis.

To ensure coherence of a planned, predictable, and accountable response, there should be consensus among education partners that the organizations/agencies previously identified during the preparedness phase as first responders in the event of an education emergency are best placed to apply for ECW FER funding, and should be supported to do so.

Prior to developing a funding proposal for the ECW FER, please ensure you review all relevant documents, including the [FER instruction manual](#), [application template](#) and the [grantee selection guide](#).
Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)

CERF is one of the fastest and most effective ways to ensure that urgently needed humanitarian assistance reaches people caught up in crises. Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005 as the United Nations global emergency response fund, CERF enables humanitarian responders to deliver life-saving assistance whenever and wherever crises strike. As an essential enabler of global humanitarian action, CERF’s Rapid Response (RR) window allows country teams to kick-start relief efforts immediately in a coordinated and prioritized response when a new crisis emerges. CERF rapid response funds help UN agencies and their partners respond quickly to new humanitarian needs. Rapid response funds help support life-saving humanitarian activities in the initial stages of a sudden-onset crisis or for slow-onset crises. They may also be used to respond to time-critical requirements or a significant deterioration in an existing emergency. Rapid response funds are disbursed as soon as possible. They can be used as soon as a disaster occurs and must typically be expended within six months.

Please note only UN agencies are eligible to receive CERF funding directly, although international and national NGOs may be included as sub-grantees. It is therefore important that NGOs are sufficiently prioritized for direct funding through the relevant funding mechanisms for which they are eligible (ECW and CBPF for international NGOs; CBPF for national NGOs) and supported as sub-grantees when not eligible to be direct grantees.

Prior to developing a funding proposal for CERF, please ensure you review all relevant documents, including the CERF handbook, CERF life-saving criteria, CERF Standard Indicators, CERF Application Guidelines, and CERF Application. Please note that education is considered life-saving in CERF, with specific education activities and indicators pre-approved, which are reflected in the CERF life-saving criteria document.

Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs)

CBPFs are established when a new emergency occurs or when an existing crisis deteriorates. They are managed by OCHA under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and in close consultation with the humanitarian community. The funds support the highest-priority projects of the best-placed responders (including international and national NGOs and UN agencies) through an inclusive and transparent process that supports priorities set out in HRPs. (see About CBPF)
Education remains the least funded programmatic sector of the CBPFs globally, receiving only $13 million out of a total of $337 million (3.9%) allocated to CBPFs in 2022. It is therefore critically important that coordination leads advocate for education to not only be included in all CBPFs, but also that the Education sector receives an appropriate percentage of funding relative to other life-saving sectors such as WASH and Nutrition. The coordination lead should also advocate with OCHA Humanitarian Financing to ensure the process of developing the CBPFs is inclusive and transparent, and that the Education Cluster/Working Group is engaged at all points critical to the development of the CBPF allocation paper.

NGO partners, and particularly local actors, pre-identified as education first responders should be prioritized in CBPFs, and this should be reflected in scoring cards as part of the strategic review process. For more on the NGO perspective, including key recommendations to ensure greater participation, inclusivity, and transparency of the CBPF allocations, please see the CBPF NGO Perspective paper.

In designing a CBPF education appeal, coordination leads should ensure that CBPF indicators are closely aligned to those in the HRP, noting (for monitoring and evaluation purposes) which are the same as HRP indicators, and which should be considered as non-HRP.

### Supplementary resources

- [Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies Financing Study](https://cbpf.data.unocha.org/#cluster_heading)
- [OCHA Flash Appeal Quick Guide](https://cbpf.data.unocha.org/#cluster_heading)
Section 5: Monitoring rapid response

Monitoring the response is important to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

Introduction: Making the case for education in RRM

Section 1: Preparing to rapidly respond

Section 2: Rapidly understanding needs

Section 3: Rapidly responding to needs

Section 4: Advocating and mobilizing resources for rapid response

Section 5: Monitoring rapid response

It is important that monitoring of a rapid EiE response is quick, limited to capturing information that directly informs the programming, and is adaptive to the context, including accounting for challenges accessing geographical areas of intervention, security constraints, and limited partner capacity and/or human resources. Monitoring should be both quantitative (aligned to the HRP when possible), and qualitative (requiring feedback from the communities in need, inclusive of children’s participation).

Recommended Use of Tools

- Use the South Sudan RRM Modified 5W Template Example to help adapt your existing monitoring tools to capture rapid education interventions (immediately once a rapid education response has started)

- Consider using the South Sudan Mission Report as a template for your rapid response monitoring visits.

Supplementary resources, tools, and guidance to complement the Strengthening Rapid Education Responses Toolkit can be found at the end of this section.

Toolkit resources

- South Sudan RRM Modified 5W Template Example
- UNICEF South Sudan RRM Mission Report Template
- No Lost Generation Information Management Package
Country teams can adapt their existing monitoring tools, such as a 4 or 5 W, to incorporate their rapid response interventions. This is an efficient approach to ensure teams have a comprehensive overview of the full education response, whether it is a rapid intervention or regular EiE response. Refer to the South Sudan 5W country example to see how your existing tool can be modified by adding a column on response modality to capture whether specific activities are being monitored through a rapid response or the broader EiE programme.

Country teams can also use an RRM Mission Report to further capture results, progress, lessons learned, and constraints; see the template from UNICEF South Sudan for an example.

For a detailed example of outcome and output quantitative indicators that are appropriate for use in a rapid EiE response, please see the No Lost Generation (NLG) Information Management (IM) Package. These EiE indicators are linked to specific activities categorized and ordered along three goals:

1. access to education
2. quality of the education services
3. education system strengthening

When using this resource in a rapid response context, emphasis should be placed on goal one, access to education, while setting the foundation for goal two: quality of education services. To the greatest extent possible, indicators should be disaggregated by age, sex, and disability status; further disaggregation will likely be necessary to represent school type (formal/non-formal), level of education (pre-primary, primary, secondary, vocational, adult education), and types of education personnel supported (MoE teachers, volunteer teachers, facilitators, other school staff, etc). This guidance further seeks to align humanitarian EiE indicators with SDG4 reporting requirements at both national and regional levels. The package also gives a concrete example from the Syria crisis of the specific indicators used through both the 4Ws and ActivityInfo platforms, the frequency of data collection and reporting against each indicator type, the means of verification used by indicator, the entity responsible for data management, and the challenges securing access to learning pathways during a humanitarian crisis (including possible strategies for overcoming these challenges). This guide also links to further resources on school feeding, an intervention which should be considered in all rapid EiE responses, as the impact of malnutrition on children’s overall wellbeing, development, capacity to learn, and lifelong health can be devastating.
Robust information management can help raise the profile of the crisis through easy-to-read infographics which reflect the number of people in need, severity ranking of geographic areas, the types of hazards specific areas are experiencing or are predicted (conflict, drought, flood, etc), the number and type of partners present in each area (government, UN agency, INGO, NGO, CSO, etc), the financial requirement to reach the people in need, the funding secured to date, and critical funding and programmatic gaps. The accessibility and readability of this information is key to donor engagement to leverage financial resources and build political commitment to the rapid response.

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