THE CHALLENGE

More than 258 million children and youth worldwide are out of school and living in countries impacted by conflict and crisis.¹ Many other young people in these contexts are in school but not receiving the quality education they need to learn, develop and thrive. The world can either rise to the challenge of ensuring that the right of these young people to a high-quality education is honored or they can refuse to act, risking the creation of a global lost generation.

To truly reach children impacted by crisis with quality education, we must recognize that more financing is necessary but insufficient. Key stakeholders including policymakers, practitioners, researchers and donors increasingly recognize the importance of prioritizing learning outcomes for children in crisis contexts. This means ensuring that children are not just enrolled in school but are safe and developing the academic and social-emotional skills necessary to succeed in life. But these learning outcomes are complex and difficult to measure.

THE MENAT MEASUREMENT LIBRARY

The Middle East, North Africa and Turkey (MENAT) Measurement Library supports those working to promote the learning, well-being and development of children and youth in crisis and conflict settings. It provides the tools to collect the high-quality data necessary in order to make evidence-informed program, resource and policy decisions in the MENAT region. The tools available—including a curated collection of measures to assess children’s holistic learning and development and service provider quality—were developed and tested by a consortium of research-practice-policy partnerships led by NYU Global TIES for Children, in partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and in close coordination with the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE).

As the Library expands to include measures developed and tested in other regions, it will provide key stakeholders with resources to

generate the evidence they need to reflect on their work and identify critical gaps and solutions. With time, the Library will become a key resource for practitioners and researchers beyond the MENAT region. And from the very beginning, the Library will help move the entire field beyond relying on intuition and instinct toward acting based on data and facts.

### THE GOAL

A better approach to educating children in crisis contexts is possible. The MENAT Measurement Library places that approach within reach. Used correctly, the Library holds the potential to set a new and higher standard for how data are collected and used. Ultimately, this kind of knowledge can dramatically advance the goal of preparing children impacted by displacement and conflict for healthy, fulfilling and productive lives.

### THE LIBRARY’S CONTENTS

The Library contains three different types of materials:

- Measures that can be used within the context of education and psychosocial programs with accompanying evidence on their validity and reliability;
- General support materials to help guide those conducting assessments; and
- A database with a snapshot of 150 measures that have been used by practitioners and researchers to assess children’s holistic learning and development across the MENAT region.

In its current phase, the tools in the Library can be used to generate data on the quality of service provision within specific MENAT-based education and psychosocial programs, the skills young people in these programs have or have not developed and the necessity, quality and effectiveness of targeted interventions. It provides measures and evidence of these measures’ reliability and validity for use in the MENAT region.

The Measure Guidance is a key component of the efforts to help users make the most of their time working with the Library. This document helps users navigate the Library website’s interactive measure selection quiz and walks them through the process of measure selection, adaptation, and testing.
Basic research
These measures are used for studying the different factors that shape children’s development, which helps you better design and assess your program.

Formative feedback
These measures are used for observing and determining the skills and competencies children and practitioners have developed, and for providing feedback to direct service providers and teachers on how to adjust programming and practice.

Program evaluation
These measures are used for observing and determining whether or not those who are enrolled in your program are making the gains you hoped to see.

Program monitoring
These measures are used for observing and determining whether a program is being implemented as designed and intended.

Screening
These measures are used for identifying individuals who may need further support, including further testing and/or diagnosis.
Since its inception in 2016, the Measurement and Metrics Initiative has sought to promote quality learning for children in fragile contexts by facilitating the ability of stakeholders in this space to demand, invest in, generate, communicate and use evidence. With time, this led to the emergence of a Measurement Consortium comprised of eight research-practice-policy partnerships formed in early 2018 to rigorously develop, adapt, and test measures of children’s holistic learning and development (CHILD) and program implementation and quality (PIQ) outcomes in the MENAT region.

The Consortium consisted of local and international practitioners, researchers, and policymakers who are deeply familiar and engaged with the challenges of educating children in the MENAT region who have been impacted by displacement, either in host countries or as refugees. The members of the Consortium came together in response to a series of scoping activities. These activities underscored both the limited evidence base for children in these contexts and the pronounced desire for a system that could both deepen that evidence base and make it more accessible to the array of stakeholders working to address these challenges. Simply put, there was both a demand for and ability to execute this sort of initiative in the MENAT region.

Consortium members were awarded modest funding, invited to participate in three measurement-focused workshops, and were provided with targeted technical support in research design and psychometric analyses from NYU Global TIES for Children (TIES/NYU). The Education in Emergencies: Evidence for Action (3EA) partnership between TIES/NYU and the IRC served as both the conveners and members of the 3EA | MENAT Consortium, along with:

- American University of Beirut and the Ministry of Public Health in Lebanon
- New York University, Bahçeşehir University and Hacettepe University
- Norwegian Refugee Council and the Artic University of Norway, Tromsø
Consortium members were tasked with providing a set of open-source materials to be made publicly available through the MENAT Measurement Library, including a technical report detailing evidence on reliability and/or validity of at least one measure, supporting training materials, and a copy of the tool in the language of administration.

### THE MEASURES

The Measurement Library will be a living collection; the materials will change and grow over time based on the latest evidence as it emerges.

As of January 2020, users will be able to learn about and access six measures:

- **Academic Readiness of Children, or ARCH**: This measure gauges how ready children are for school and mainstream academic instruction through a combination of performance-based tasks (including visual and auditory perception, basic concepts, problem solving, attention and memory, and motor skills) and caregiver-report (including social and emotional skills and self-care). It is intended to be used for program evaluation and formative purposes and it was tested with Turkish and Syrian refugee children ages 4 to 8 in Turkey.

- **Early Childhood Behavior Questionnaire Short-form, or ECBQ-S**: This parent-report survey was designed to measure toddlers’ emotional and behavioral regulation skills and is intended to provide data for program evaluation purposes. It was originally developed for use in Western contexts but an adapted version was administered and tested with Lebanese parents of toddlers ages 18-36 months in Lebanon.
• **International Social and Emotional Learning Assessment, or ISELA**: This scenario- and performance-based measure is designed to assess the development of self-concept, stress management, perseverance, empathy, relationship management, and conflict resolution. It is intended to provide data for program monitoring and evaluation purposes and has been tested with Kurdish-speaking Syrian refugee children in Iraq ages 6-12.

• **Social-Emotional Response and Information Scenarios, or SERAIS**: A scenario-based student assessment designed to measure a suite of social and emotional skills among elementary school-aged children. The measure introduces children to six hypothetical social situations and prompts them to answer a series of questions asking what they would do in that situation in order to measure hostile attribution bias, emotional orientation, emotional regulation, and interpersonal negotiation skills. It is intended to provide data for program evaluation purposes and was administered to Syrian refugee children in Lebanon ages 5-16.

• **Student Learning in Emergency Checklist, or SLEC**: This is a self-report survey that was designed to measure adolescents’ sense of safety, self-regulation, self-efficacy, social support, academic functioning, and feelings of hope. It is intended to provide data for program monitoring and evaluation purposes and was first administered and tested with Palestinian students ages 12-16 in the Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, Hebron and other areas of the West Bank.

• **WE-ACT**: This measure assesses whether frontline workers in humanitarian settings have adequate competencies to provide the support needed to children in fragile contexts and is intended to be used for formative purposes. It was tested with providers of a life skills intervention in Gaza.
WHAT’S NEXT?

It is crucial that information generated by measures in the Library meets a high standard of reliability and validity. But we know that strong measures are not instantly created. They are developed and refined over time as evidence accumulates with new trials, in different contexts or for distinct purposes. Identifying stronger measures is like trying to identify what programs work best for children. It’s hard to draw broad conclusions from one or two evaluations of programs in different contexts; dozens of trials are needed to have confidence that the program is really working and achieving what is intended. The same is true for measures.

As you use the Library, please share your insights and experiences with us so we can continue building a stronger base of evidence and understanding for this field.

Get in touch at measurement.library@inee.org.

• A measure is “under development” when there is not yet sufficient certainty about the replicability and/or accuracy of the evidence it will generate if tested with a similar sample.

• Users should “proceed for purpose with caution and revisions” when a measure shows promising evidence of the types of reliability and validity needed for use of the measure for its specified purpose but that we encourage additional testing of the measure and sharing back of the results.

• A measure deemed “ready for purpose” has shown strong evidence of the types of reliability and validity needed for use of the measure for its specified purpose.