The Impact of Climate Change on the Right to Education

A UNESCO-led Global Initiative (2020-2023)

Webpage: How climate change and displacement affect the right to education | UNESCO
The right to education is a human right for all persons

However, persons displaced of affected by the effects of climate change face significant barriers to education, such as for instance:

- Schooling infrastructure destroyed
- Language barriers for persons displaced in other regions
- Risk of dropout to pursue economic activity following climate-induced poverty
- The lack of legal residency rights for persons displaced internationally as a result of climate change

Given that 32.6 million people were displaced in 2022 alone as a result of natural and climatic disasters, the barriers to education faced by climate-displaced persons are affecting a larger portion of the global population each year.

(IDMC, 2023 Global Report on Internal Displacement)
Rationale for the Initiative

- **Thematic area** dedicated specifically to the effects of climate displacement on the right to education, building on previous work developed on refugees.

- The project “The Impacts of Climate Displacement on the Right to Education” - launched in 2020 - aims to improve the preparedness of States to ensure the inclusion of all affected persons in quality education, through developing policy guidance based on regional research and country case studies.
A three-step process

1. A policy paper
   Includes a literature review of climate displacement, affected populations, legal frameworks, impacts on education, and general policy guidance

2. Country case studies and regional reports
   - Country case studies carried out
   - Synthesis report published for each sub-region studied

3. A global synthesis report and toolkit
   - Trends in the results following the research in all four sub-regions
   - Policy guidance and recommendations
Regional research

Regional synthesis reports published, each focusing on a global sub-region and based on in-depth country case studies produced

Purpose:

- To gather empirical data on the barriers to education to fill in the data gaps in existing literature;
- To identify patterns of climate displacement and barriers for climate displaced persons in the different and unique regional contexts;
- To develop tailored operational policy recommendations for the different scenarios in each region.
Some common trends in the Asia and Pacific region

- Climate-displaced persons face administrative and language barriers to quality education, as well as trauma and discrimination.
- Climate-induced livelihoods losses, especially in rural areas, results in economic migration.
- Schools are often used as emergency shelters, preventing the continuation of education.
- Inconsistent and disintegrated disaster response policies and measures across government sectors, thereby delaying students’ return to learning.
- Pre-existing inequalities become structural barriers for CDPs to accessing and enjoying their right to education.
- Poverty exacerbated by the effects of climate change leads to lower resilience to climate-related barriers to education.
- Schools are damaged or destroyed by natural disasters, because of inadequate schools buildings and disaster management plans.
- Planned relocation plans do not address the continuity of education, or do not create the livelihood necessary to pursue education.
Global guidance for countries

- **A global synthesis report** will be published on the occasion of COP 28

- **Aims:**
  - Summarize the findings of each regional report;
  - Analyze the converging and diverging trends among the four regions;
  - Summarize the most common impacts of climate change and displacement at the global level;
  - Provide global policy recommendations on how to ensure the right to education in the face of climate change and displacement.

- **Policy recommendations** will span across multiple fields (from law and policy, to school-level recommendations, to cross-sector collaboration and financing).

- To improve the preparedness and resilience of education systems to the effects of climate change and displacement in all scenarios (temporary displacement, permanent migration, cross-border displacement, planned relocation)

- Important that policymakers and international community begin to integrate climate risk into all planning, discourse and action across the board.
Thank you

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