



Achieving SDG4 for Children and Youth Affected by Crisis



Inter-agency
Network for Education
in Emergencies

The Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is an open, global network of UN agencies, NGOs, donors, governments, universities, schools, and affected populations working together to ensure all persons the right to quality education in emergencies and post-crisis recovery. To learn more please visit www.inee.org

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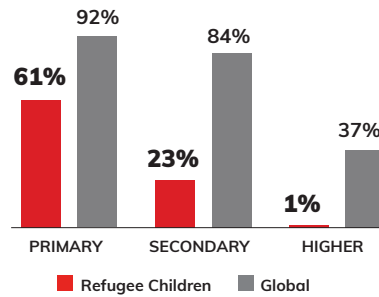
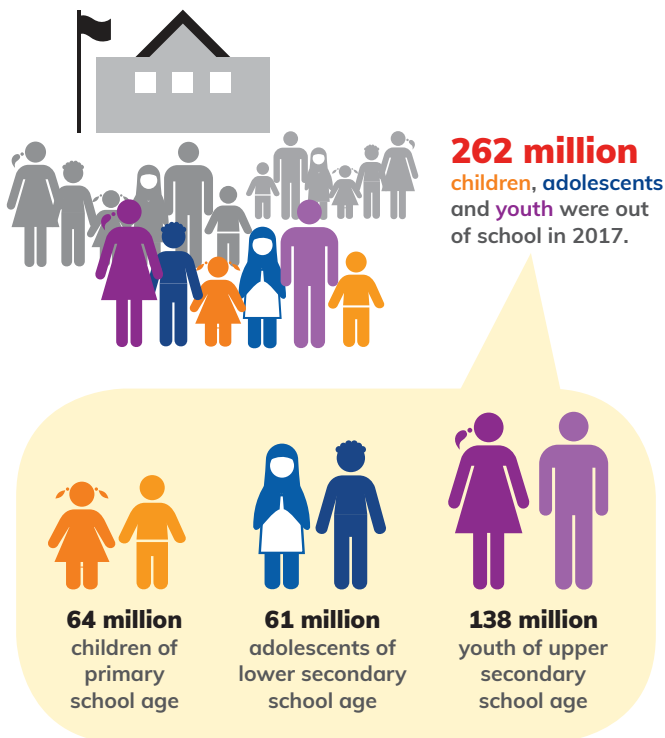
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Challenges

With the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), the global community committed to ensuring a quality education for all children and youth. Despite this promise, children and youth in crisis contexts continue to be neglected. We will never achieve SDG4 unless all children and youth affected by conflict and crisis are able to access and attend school and learn in a quality, safe, relevant and inclusive education environment. There is an urgent need for governments and the international community to make and adhere to political, financial and legal commitments if we truly are to leave no child behind.

More children and youth than ever before are now displaced and for longer periods of time, and they disproportionately lack access to quality education and other basic rights. Approximately 420 million children are currently living in a conflict zone, an increase of nearly 30 million since 2016 and a doubling since the end of the Cold War. Moreover, the average length of a crisis is now nine years.¹

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 262 million (1 out of every 5) children, adolescents and youth were out of school worldwide in both development and humanitarian contexts in 2017. This included 64 million children of primary school age, 61 million adolescents of lower secondary school age and 138 million youth of upper secondary school age.²



61% of refugee children attend primary school, compared to a global average of **92%**. At secondary level that figure drops to **23%**, compared to **84%** globally. For university it is **1%**, compared to **37%** globally.

According to UNHCR figures from 2018, only 61 percent of refugee children attended primary school, compared with a global average of 92 percent. As refugee children get older, the obstacles to education increase: just 23 percent of refugee children were enrolled in secondary school, compared to 84 percent globally. The situation is critical in higher education, as only 1 percent of refugees attend a university, compared to 37 percent globally.³

Girls living in conflict are almost two and a half times more likely than boys to be out of primary school and 90 percent more likely than their counterparts to be excluded from secondary education.⁴

Funding for education in crisis contexts is suffering because education is not seen as a priority for humanitarian aid, and because development donors do not always see the clear link between development and crisis contexts. Despite the tripling of humanitarian financial assistance in recent years, the share of the total that goes to education has barely risen, standing at a mere 2.3 percent in 2018.⁵

Despite efforts to build a strong foundation that can demonstrate the positive impact of education in emergencies, practitioners and policy makers continue to lack substantial evidence on what works, how, for whom and at what cost. The evidence that does exist has largely failed to translate into coherent, coordinated policy and practice by governments and their partners in terms of how to deliver quality education in emergencies at scale.⁶

This brief offers recommendations for addressing the disparities in safe, quality, inclusive education for children affected by crisis. It begins by highlighting key areas for policy and practice, and looks at ways to use the various tools developed by the Inter-agency Network of Education in Emergencies (INEE). It takes a look at overall themes and trends, as well as the specific issues of gender disparities, the importance of supporting teachers, children's psycho-social wellbeing and the protection and safety of education in conflict.

Promising Steps in the Right Direction

Despite continued challenges in finding sufficient funding to provide quality education in emergencies programmes, many governments, donors, UN agencies and civil society organisations are beginning to turn the tide. Thus, the need for more and better funding and more coherence across humanitarian and development actors are starting to be addressed more systematically.

For example:

- The Education Clusters, in consultation with development actors and local partners, now strive to develop comprehensive education cluster strategies that are aligned with existing plans at the national level.⁷
- The first dedicated global fund for education in emergencies, Education Cannot Wait, was established in 2016. To date it has provided education services to 1.3 million children and youth in crisis-affected areas.
- Traditional development-oriented donors such as the World Bank, the Global Partnership for Education and government aid agencies have significantly increased their work in fragile and crisis-affected contexts.
- The European Commission has committed itself to a significant increase (10 percent) of its humanitarian budget that is dedicated to education.
- The G7 Charlevoix Declaration of 2018 is a call for action to close the gap in access to education for girls and women and for refugees and the internally displaced living both inside and outside of camps, and to improve coordination between humanitarian assistance and development operations.

The importance of working across the triple nexus of humanitarian assistance, development aid and peace is now firmly recognised, and institutions are coming together in new ways across this nexus in countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence. Such commitments reinforce the development of regional and global cooperation in supporting those affected by crises, especially refugees.

Examples of these commitments include:

- The Djibouti Declaration and Plan of Action on Refugee Education, signed by ministries of education across the Horn and East of Africa, makes a commitment to include all refugees in national education sector plans by 2020.
- The UN Global Compact for Refugees was signed in 2018 by UN member states and pledged to strengthen the international response to the global refugee crisis and increase support for meeting the needs of both refugees and their host communities. It includes a strong commitment to education, including a promise to minimise the time refugee boys and girls spend out of school, and a commitment that governments will integrate refugees into their national education sector plans.
- A strategic partnership, funded by Education Cannot Wait, was formed between the INEE, the Global Education Cluster, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This partnership will provide a blueprint for improved coordination in the sector and is conducting a comprehensive review of the coordination, planning and response structures in the education in emergencies field.



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Solutions

If we are to meet SDG4 and the wider 2030 agenda, more must be done to increase funding, remove policy barriers and improve education programmes for crisis-affected children. Governments, donors and their partners need to take targeted collective action to respect, protect and fulfil the right to quality education for children and youth affected by conflict and crisis.

To see meaningful change in the lives and learning of crisis-affected children and youth, we must see a catalytic shift in approach and ambition.

Therefore, the INEE calls on crisis-affected governments, donors and the policy makers to implement the following recommendations:

Donors and policy makers should:

- Follow the lead of the European Commission and increase the percentage of humanitarian assistance to education to at least 10 percent of their budgets.
- Commit to flexible, multi-year funding for education in emergencies to ensure that children and youth in protracted crises can continue their education.
- Direct funding to education programmes designed to achieve access, and to provide learning (both academic and social-emotional) and safety outcomes for refugees and crisis-affected children and youth.
- Operationalise the Grand Bargain commitments and ensure that humanitarian and development assistance strategies for education are coordinated and coherent, both globally and nationally.

Crisis-affected governments should:

- Include refugees and crisis-affected learners in their national education sector plans, set targets, and monitor progress toward learning, access and safety outcomes for refugees and crisis-affected learners.
- Include refugees and crisis-affected learners in voluntary national reviews when reporting on progress toward SDG4, and when reporting on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights and humanitarian legal commitments.
- Adhere to the Incheon Declaration and increase public spending on education in accordance with the country context. This implies living up to international and regional benchmarks of allocating at least 4-6 percent of gross domestic product and/or at least 15-20 percent of the total public expenditure to education.



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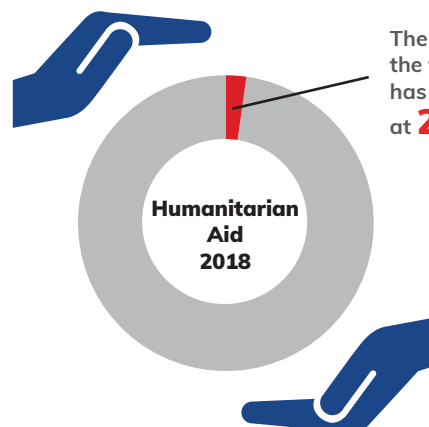
Four Areas for Targeted Action

SDSG4 will not be reached by 2030 unless much greater effort and investments are placed, toward the learning of children and youth affected by crises. In addition to a major investment and a focus on systemic needs, INEE has identified some core themes in education that are especially significant and on which INEE's members have amassed considerable expertise. These include:

- **Motivating, supporting and paying teachers.** During crises, there is often a limited number of qualified teachers. A lack of supervision and support for teachers' own wellbeing and a lack of sufficient incentives lead to low motivation and high attrition rates for teachers in crisis situations.
- **Providing psycho-social support (PSS) and social-emotional learning (SEL) opportunities.** Children and youth affected by conflict and crisis may be suffering from trauma that inhibits their ability to attend and learn in school. Classroom teachers with little knowledge of how to care for the psycho-social needs of such children and youth may find it hard to support them effectively.
- **Providing gender-responsive education.** During crises, the barriers girls often face in accessing and continuing their education are compounded. Concerns about safety and security, economic pressure and an increase in early marriage have a disproportionate impact on girls' education. Boys may be subject to forced recruitment or to working outside the home.

- **Providing greater protection for education.** During emergencies, security may deteriorate dramatically in and around schools, attacks on schools may increase and schools will often be used for military purposes. This puts children and youth at risk of harm, trauma, recruitment or exploitation, all of which are in direct conflict with international humanitarian and human rights laws.

The issues highlighted in these four areas are clearly not the only aspects that require attention in promoting the goals of SDG4. However, they present significant barriers to education which, if not addressed, will result in a failure to reach those goals. Each thematic area is presented in more detail below, where the key issues, recommendations and selected resources are highlighted.



1

Motivating, Supporting and Paying Teachers

A competent and skilled teacher is one of the most important aspects of any education system. In crisis and postconflict settings, teachers are often in short supply, and many are new recruits with minimal experience or education to prepare them for teaching in tough conditions with children who have complex academic, linguistic and psycho-social needs.

Teacher planning and management in these contexts often is undermined by poor coordination and a lack of data, and compromised by a fragmented education architecture. Teacher salaries are a long-term cost that poses a critical challenge for national education budgets already stretched thin, as well as for humanitarian partners whose short-term emergency funding cycles are incompatible with the recurring costs of teacher salaries.

Teacher professional development in these contexts is severely limited, which means teachers are ill-prepared to cope with complex multilevel, multilingual and multicultural learners. Teachers' qualifications are rarely recognised, and the refugee teachers who may be best placed to support these learners are often denied the right to work. Teachers in crisis-affected regions are likely to be suffering from the same traumatic stress as their students, but their wellbeing is frequently neglected.

CASE STUDY: Teachers For Teachers, Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya

During 2016-17, Columbia University's Teachers College collaborated with UNHCR, Lutheran World Federation, and Finn Church Aid to pilot a professional development initiative for teachers in the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya that included teacher training, peer coaching and mobile mentoring. The training model utilized the INEE TiCC Training Pack for Primary School Teachers in Crisis Contexts, as well as the Peer Coaching for Teachers in Crisis Contexts. Teachers who participated reported being better prepared, having greater confidence and a stronger sense of purpose, and said they were more aware of useful practices they could use in their classrooms.

Recommendations

We recommend that crisis-affected and host governments:

- Recruit a sufficient, gender-balanced number of qualified teachers who receive decent pay and have reasonable working conditions.
- Strengthen mechanisms to collect more accurate data on teachers working in crisis situations and use that data to support more effective and harmonized recruitment, management and support.
- Strengthen and improve the quality and coordination of teacher professional development opportunities.
- Ensure that teachers play a meaningful role in making decisions and choosing the interventions that affect them.
- Include refugee teachers in camp and host nation's teacher workforces and provide flexible pathways to certification, including cross-border recognition of teaching qualifications.

We recommend that donors:

- Provide sufficient multi year funding and establish concrete guidelines for effective teacher recruitment and management, relevant, quality professional development, and support for teacher wellbeing.

INEE Resources

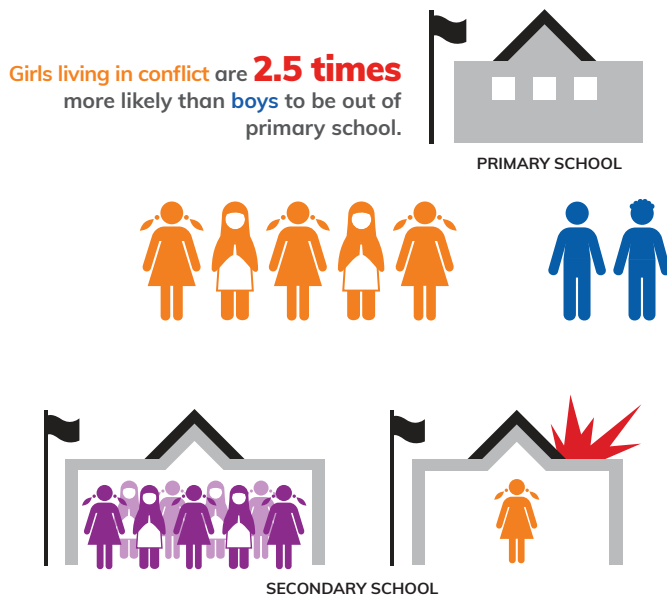
The [INEE Teachers in Crisis Contexts collaborative](#) is an inter-agency effort to identify problems and solutions in teacher management, training and support in crisis contexts.

- [Training for Primary School Teachers in Crisis Contexts](#)—builds basic teaching competencies for the unqualified or under-qualified teachers often recruited in emergency settings.
- [Peer Coaching for Teachers in Crisis Contexts](#)—strengthens teaching competencies through peer coaching between teachers.
- [A TiCC Brief](#)—includes a theory of change for quality teacher professional development in crisis contexts.

2 Improving Gender Equality in and Through Education in Emergencies

Girls and women face different threats and risks than boys and men, and they have different responses and coping mechanisms when dealing with the effects of crisis and displacement.

Girls face multiple threats to accessing safe and quality education, such as targeted attacks on girls' schools, school-related gender-based violence, and displacement. Such threats also can be indirectly exacerbated by an emergency that may result in early marriage, reduced availability of sexual and reproductive health services, increased disadvantage for girls with disabilities, and increased education costs that lead families often prioritise boys' education in such situations.⁸ Conflict also can have a serious impact on boys' education, due to their risk of being recruited into the armed forces or pressured to work.



Girls are **90%** more likely than their counterparts to be excluded from secondary school in countries not affected by conflict.

CASE STUDY: Liberia

In Liberia, institutional structures have been created to specifically address girls' education and gender equality, such as the Girls' Education Unit in the Ministry of Education and an Adolescent Girls Unit at the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. These units established a resource centre to provide adolescent girls with access to information and communication technology, as well as links to support services for gender-based violence and child protection.

However, equitably available, good quality education that is relevant as well as conflict- and gender-sensitive can break cycles of violence, redefine gender norms, promote tolerance and reconciliation, and enable children and youth to contribute to promoting peaceful, gender-equal, prosperous societies.⁹ This fact has been recognized in the key global commitments made through the SDGs, the Education 2030 Framework for Action, the World Humanitarian Summit and the G7 Charlevoix Declaration.

Recommendations

We recommend that crisis-affected and host governments:

- Adopt gender-responsive policies and programmes on community engagement, financial or in-kind assistance to families, alternative education modalities and targeted strategies to address school-related gender-based violence.
- Ensure that policies and programmes focus on multisectoral collaboration to improve access to and quality of education for girls, and tackle discriminatory cultural and social attitudes and practices.
- Ensure that policies and programmes are informed by gender and conflict analysis and that a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework is integrated using a gender lens.

We recommend that donors:

- Strengthen collaboration globally across gender, education and humanitarian-development actors to promote advocacy and action that address gender equality in education in emergencies.
- Strengthen knowledge management systems to facilitate wide dissemination of proven interventions that address gender and girls' education in emergencies.
- Invest in gender-responsive education in emergencies policies and programmes along with research, monitoring and evaluation using a gender lens.

INEE Resources

The [INEE Gender Guidance Note](#) provides strategies to ensure that girls and boys and women and men living in contexts of conflict and crisis are able to enjoy the equal protection and learning outcomes that quality education can provide. It also outlines principles for gender-responsive programming in accordance with the [INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery](#).

3

Providing Psycho-Social Support and Social-Emotional Learning



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CASE STUDY: Lebanon

To foster social cohesion between host and refugee communities in Lebanon, 20 children's football teams were established to build peer-support networks in a refugee context. Six hundred children between ages 10 and 14 participated in the football games. The children were given a chance after the games to discuss issues of conflict and how to connect with their peers in a host community context. As a result, children felt better able to cope with daily challenges, develop trust, and recognise and manage their emotions and behaviours.

Emergencies and protracted crises have a measurable and profound effect on the wellbeing of children and youth. Science shows that prolonged severe exposure to adversity can cause children to have a 'toxic stress' response, which disrupts healthy brain development. This has both a short- and long-term impact on their physical and mental health, their behaviour and their ability to learn.¹⁰

However, evidence also shows that these effects can be reduced or reversed by having access to supportive, nurturing care and quality educational opportunities that include the development of social-emotional skills.¹¹ School-based psycho-social support (PSS) services and social-emotional learning (SEL) interventions are therefore essential to help children and youth affected by crisis to heal, learn and thrive.

Recommendations

We recommend that crisis-affected and host governments:

- Define education outcomes for children and youth that include PSS, SEL and overall wellbeing.
- Invest in monitoring progress toward these outcomes and communicate findings.
- Incorporate PSS and SEL activities into (a) teacher professional development programmes to strengthen teachers' own wellbeing, and (b) teacher training programmes that strengthen teachers' ability to tend to learners' wellbeing and social and emotional development.

We recommend that donors:

- Fund programmes that define education outcomes (not outputs) that include PSS, SEL and wellbeing outcomes.
- Require grantees to monitor and report progress toward these outcomes.
- Fund programmes that use the best available evidence in design and implementation to achieve these outcomes.

INEE Resources

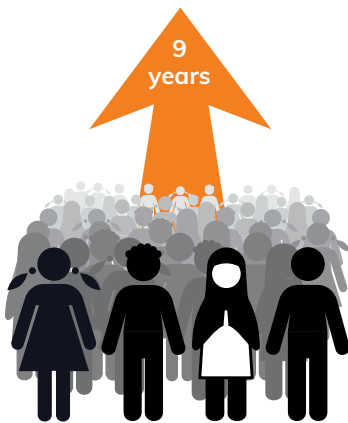
The [INEE Guidance Note on Psychosocial Support](#) is a key tool for supporting the delivery of PSS. It clarifies the importance of supporting the psycho-social wellbeing of children and youth and offers specific strategies for incorporating psycho-social support into education responses.

4

Providing Greater Protection for Education

SDG4 will not be achieved if education itself is not protected. Targeted and indiscriminate attacks on schools, universities, their students and staff have worsened over the last five years. From 2013 to 2017 there were more than 12,700 attacks that harmed more than 21,000 students and educators in 74 countries.

In the same timeframe, armed forces and armed groups used education institutions as barracks and bases, weapons stores, training grounds and detention centres in at least 30 countries. Such use by the military can convert schools from civilian to military objects, putting them at risk of attack and threatening the lives of the children and teachers within them. Schools are often closed down when they are attacked or used by armed actors, thereby denying access to education for thousands of students. The presence of armed forces and groups also creates a pervasive fear which can cause mass student dropouts and teacher absenteeism.



420 million children are living in a conflict zone, and the length of a crises has increased to an average of nine years.

Attacks on education and military use of schools can have a disproportionate impact on women and girls. Female students and teachers were directly targeted in at least 18 countries over the past five years, including by the bombing of girls' schools, and the abduction, rape and harassment at or on the way to and from school.

Recommendations

We recommend that crisis-affected and host governments:

- Sign the Safe Schools Declaration and incorporate the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use into legislation and military doctrine.
- Implement the Safe Schools Declaration using a gender-responsive lens.
- Systematically investigate attacks on education and prosecute the perpetrators.
- Improve efforts to prevent and respond to attacks on education by strengthening the monitoring and reporting of attacks on education, including disaggregating data by type of attack, sex and age of the victims, and type of school.

We recommend that donors:

- Sign and incorporate the Safe Schools Declaration and the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use into legislation and military doctrine.
- In donor policies toward recipient countries, systematically underline the need to adhere to existing international laws that protect education and strengthen international norms and standards.

CASE STUDY: The Safe Schools Declaration

States should endorse and implement the Safe Schools Declaration, an international political commitment to protect education during armed conflict which has been endorsed by some 90 states to date.¹² The Declaration includes a commitment to endorse and use the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict*. Each commitment within the Declaration must be implemented in a gender-responsive manner.

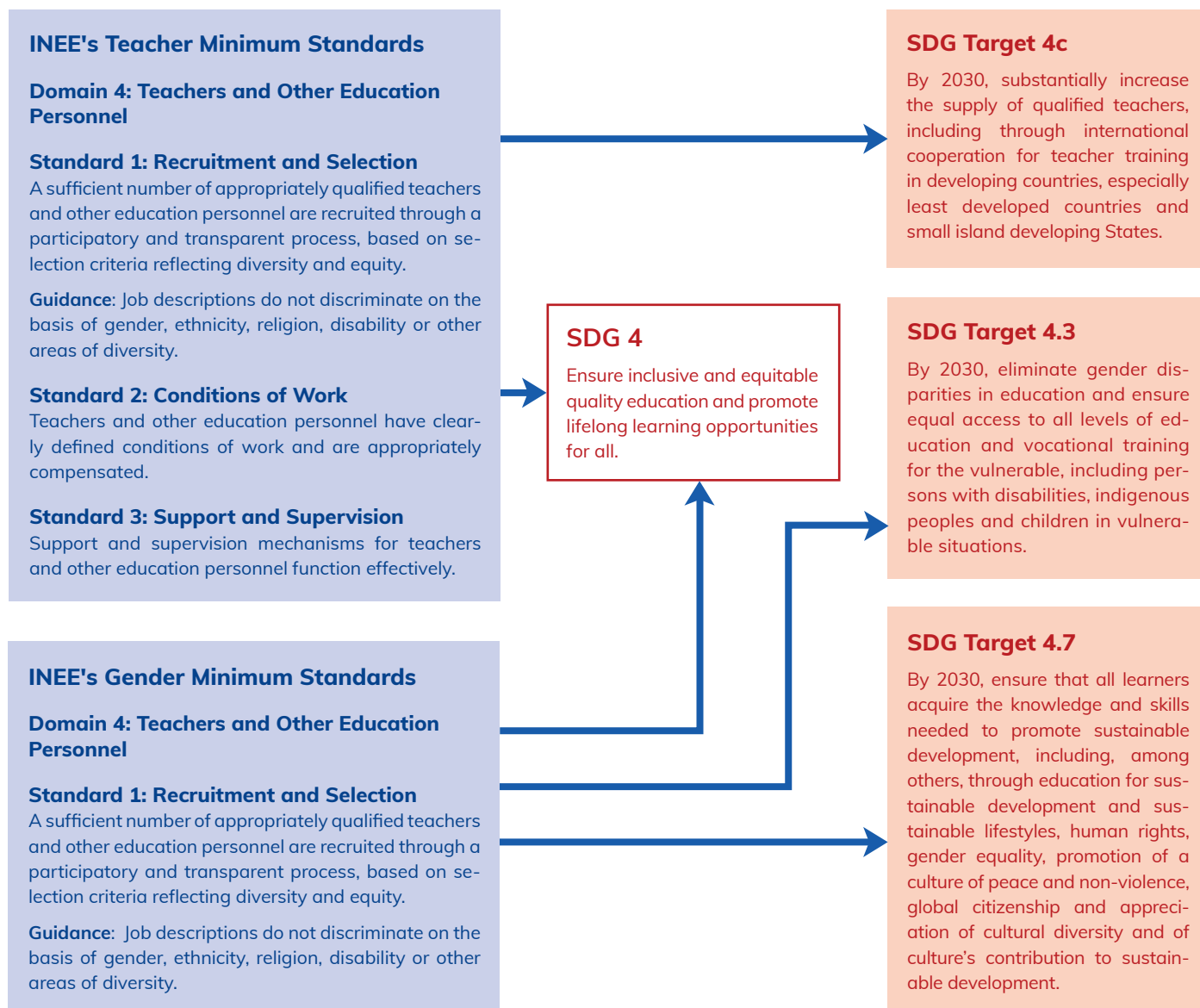
Resources

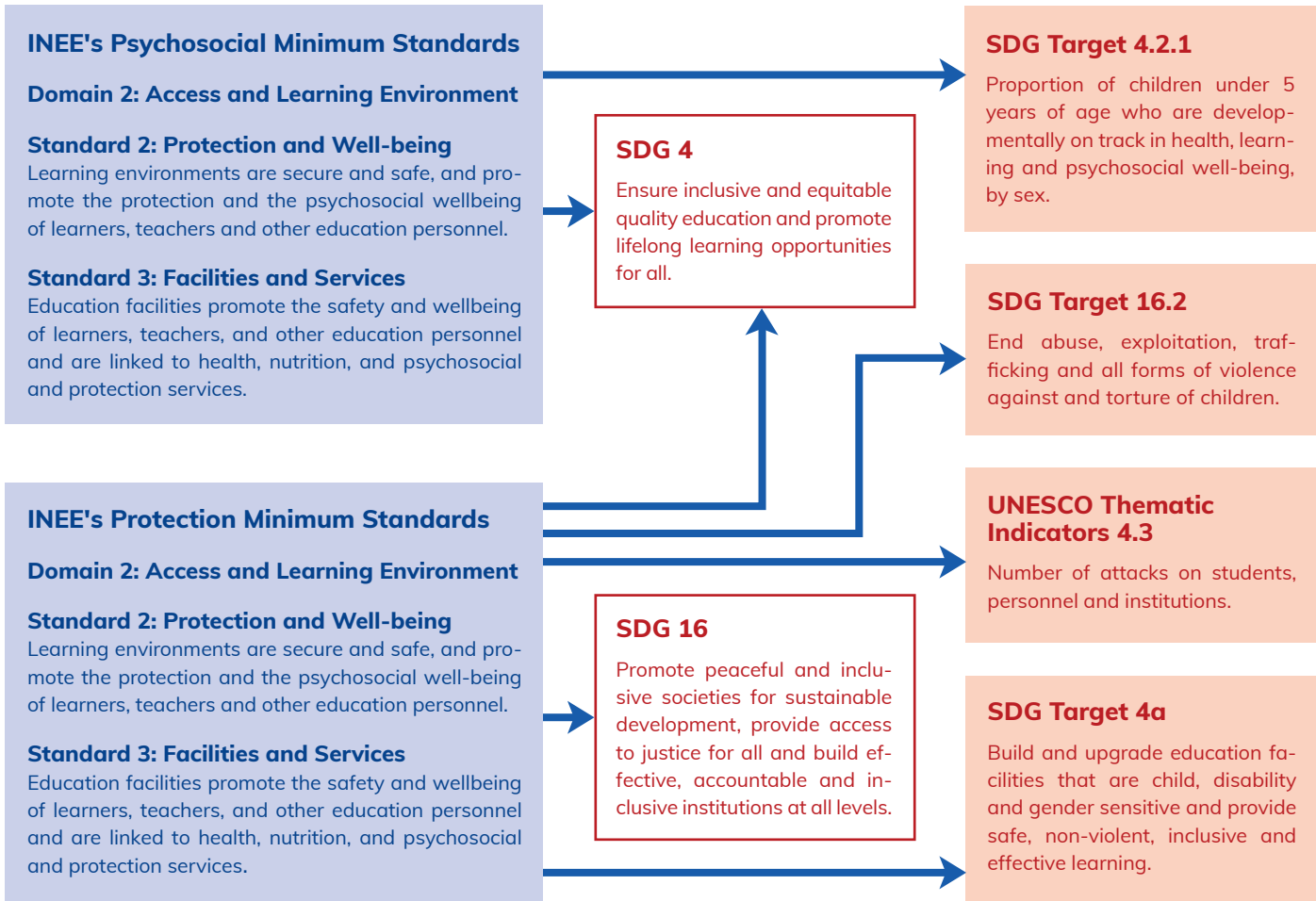
- [The Safe Schools Declaration: A Framework for Action \(GCPEA\)](#)
- [INEE Child Protection's collection of resources](#)

ANNEX: Using INEE Tools to Reach the SDGs

To support the above recommendations, and recognizing that the formation of resilient and peaceful societies requires an integrated approach, INEE urges the international community to use the [INEE Minimum Standards](#) as a tool to facilitate the achievement of SDG4. These minimum standards ensure that the delivery of education in emergencies is inclusive, safe, and conflict and gender-sensitive, thereby accelerating progress toward SDG4 and the 2030 agenda.

By matching each SDG4 target and indicator with key education in emergency actions and guidance notes informed by practitioners and policy makers, the development and humanitarian sectors can be brought together to focus on all children's right to safe and quality learning. While the INEE Minimum Standards are useful in supporting all the SDGs, this brief is focused on the four thematic areas highlighted above. Hence, the model below presents the relationship between the specific minimum standards on teachers, gender, psycho-social support, protection on the one side and the SDGs, especially SDG4, on the other side, and offers links to UNESCO's thematic indicators where appropriate.





To access and download any of the INEE tools referred to in this brief, including the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook, please visit www.inee.org. All our tools and resources are open-source and the result of an inclusive and participatory process of development, drawing on the expertise of INEE's 15.000 individual and institutional members.

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ENDNOTES

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