

# Educational Barriers and Issues in Refugee and Internally Displaced Contexts

## Insights from the GPE KIX – Tuseme A voice for Refugee and Internally Displaced Children Project

Learn more about the context of education globally for refugee and internally displaced children

### REFUGEE & IDP POPULATIONS



- 52% of the global refugee population is under the age of 18
- 39% of refugees live in camps or collective centres - mainly in sub-Saharan Africa
- Prolonged displacement duration averages 10 to 26 years
- Refugees rely on host countries for education

### TRENDS IN REFUGEE EDUCATION



There's a historical separation of Refugee education systems. Recent consensus on inclusion into national systems for sustainability.



UNHCR's 2012-2016 Global Education Strategy marked a shift towards accredited learning opportunities

## BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

### Limiting Factors



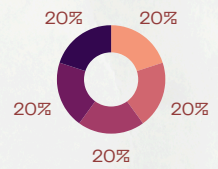
- Lack of documentation and local language knowledge
- Hidden education costs and inadequate teacher training
- Exclusion of refugee teachers from national training programs (3)

### Challenges to Quality Education



- Limited resources, overcrowding, and lack of training
- Misaligned curriculum and language policies
- Government policies hindering refugee teachers employment

### Data collection challenges



- Internally Displaced Person's (IDPs) are less visible compared to refugees
- Limited data on refugee education quality
- Low certification rates among teachers in refugee camps

### Adolescent girls vulnerabilities



- The research indicates a strong correlation between displacement and an increased risk of violence against women and girls, particularly adolescent girls
- Factors contributing to this heightened vulnerability include weakened protection mechanisms, financial instability, limited economic opportunities, and family separation

### Opportunities and focus areas



- **Follow the evidence:** Evidence suggests programmes creating safe spaces, teaching livelihood skills and financial literacy, building up social assets, and conducting self-esteem building activities support girl-specific empowerment and a reduction in sexual violence.
- **Address Gender Norms:** Addressing deeply rooted gender norms is crucial for creating lasting change.
- **Engage Community:** Active involvement of parents, local leaders, and girls is essential for programme success.
- **Adopt Holistic Approach:** Integrate education, community engagement, and economic empowerment to achieve gender equity in refugee and IDP school programmes.

## Target Country Overviews

### Kenya



#### Refugee Population:

Among the largest globally, with refugees mainly from Somalia, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Eritrea, Burundi, and Uganda.

#### Main settlement Areas:

- Dadaab (est. 1991) and Kakuma (est. 1992) refugee camps.
- 50,000+ refugees and asylum seekers live in urban areas across Kenya.

#### IDP Situation:

- Overall, 171,000 IDP's as of end 2023
  - 131,000 displaced by disasters (mostly floods).& 40,000 displaced by conflict/violence.
- Disaster-driven displacement has sharply increased since 2021

#### Education Management and Access:

- Schools must meet Ministry of Education standards and registration guidelines for alternative provision of basic education and training.
- Refugee girls' enrolment is a key concern - only 27% of girls in Kakuma transition to secondary school after Grade 5.
- In primary, only 40% of refugee girls take national exams.

#### Refugee Setting Education Challenges:

- High pupil-teacher ratios: Pre-primary 120:1 and primary 56:1 (vs. 49:1 in national schools)
- Only 8% of primary teachers are nationally certified.
- 60% of refugee teachers are untrained.
- Resources shortages. For example, on average 6 students per desk and 4 students per textbook.

### Uganda



#### Refugee Population:

Uganda hosts over 1.5 million refugees and asylum-seekers, predominantly from South Sudan and DRC. This makes it Africa's largest refugee-hosting nation.

#### Main settlement Areas:

- Primarily in northwest Uganda. However, Nakivale (south) and Kampala also host significant numbers.

#### Policy Response:

- 2018 Education Response Plan (ERP) for Refugees and Host Communities:
  - Supports 12 refugee-hosting districts.
  - Aims to improve access and quality of education.
  - Reaches 675,000+ students annually.

#### IDP Situation: (As of end 2022)

- 38,000 internally displaced due to disasters.
- 4,800 displaced by conflict and violence
- Reliable, updated IDP data remains limited

#### Refugee Setting Education Challenges:

- In West Nile, only 9% of refugees attend secondary school (vs. national rate more than double).
- Average pupil-teacher ratio is 113:1 compared to 57:1 outside settlements.
- 28% of refugee families live on one meal per day compared to 13% of host community families.
- Grade 5 reading proficiency is low for both refugees and nationals.

### Ethiopia



#### Refugee Population:

Ethiopia is one of the largest refugee-hosting nations in Africa. It hosts ~1.04 million refugees and asylum-seekers (as of Dec 2023), mainly from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, and Yemen.

#### Main settlement Areas:

- Refugees are located in five regions near their countries of origin.

#### IDP Situation

- 2.9 million IDPs due to ethnic conflict as of November 2023.
- 1.1 million IDPs are climate-displaced.
- 59% of IDPs are school-aged, but enrolment data is limited. However, there is data to suggest internally displaced girls are less likely to enrol than boys. For example, in Gambella, overall secondary enrolment was 25% in early 2023 and 78% of those enrolled were boys.

#### Challenges:

- Limited resources and infrastructure.
- Few secondary school opportunities.
- Impacts of conflict, economic hardship, and climate-related displacement.
- Gender parity, with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 0.64 at the primary level and 0.39 at the secondary level, compared to the national GPI of 0.90 and 0.87.

#### Refugee Setting Education Challenges:

- -Refugee and host schools use the same national curriculum. However, only 40% of school-age refugee children enrolled in school in 2022/23.
- -Primary level is managed by the Refugee and Returnees Service (RRS) with NGO support.
- -Secondary level is currently managed by the RRS. However, it is transitioning to the management of the regional bureaus by the end of 2025.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

**The GPE KIX: Tuseme – A voice for internally displaced and refugee children** project, is partnership between the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), ACER UK, and the Higher Education Resource Services – East Africa (HERS-EA), which aims to address gender related challenges faced by refugee and internally displaced children across East Africa. This three-year project, funded by GPE KIX explores the scalability of FAWE's Tuseme girls empowerment clubs from mainstream school settings into refugee and internally displaced communities. It does this by researching the enabling and disabling factors of the current model, which is achieving impact in mainstream schools, in conjunction with two additional FAWE gender focussed models: Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) and Centres of Excellence (CoE). The learnings will then be used to develop and test an adapted Tuseme model, which is tailored to the unique challenges faced in refugee and internally displaced communities.

### Research Phases

- 1. Model Learning:** Identify the enabling and disabling factors of the three models in mainstream settings.
- 2. Scoping:** Identify information on existing conditions and needs in refugee and IDP communities.
- 3. Model development:** Triangulate phase 1 and 2 data, to create a revised Tuseme model tailored to the specific context.
- 4. Deployment & Monitoring:** Implement the model and track its effectiveness.
- 5. Evaluation:** Assess the impact and outcomes to inform future scaling and improvements.

## MODEL 1: TUSEME CLUBS

### Overview

Tuseme means "Let Us Speak Out" in Kiswahili. The club aims to empower girls and boys to build self-esteem, leadership, life, and social skills in order to address gender-based challenges and promote gender equality and equity.

### Reach

Tuseme was first developed in 1996 at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. In 1999 it was officially adopted by Tanzania's Ministry of Education, and since this time it has expanded into over 20 Sub-Saharan African countries, impacting 80,000+ students.

### Methodology

Uses creative arts (drama, song, performance) to inspire dialogue and action.

### Impact

Improved attitudes toward gender, reduced teen pregnancies, enhanced academic and social development

### Core Process

- 1. Familiarisation:** Students are encouraged to identify the problems hindering their academic and/or social development.
- 2. Data analysis:** Students identify the "root causes, effects, solutions, and the responsible person".
- 3. Drama creation,** drama performance, and post-performance discussion: Participants integrate the ideas that emerged from the analysis into a theatrical performance and stage it, which is immediately followed by a post-performance discussion.
- 4. An action plan** is drawn to ensure effective implementation of the decisions made by the community.

## MODEL 2: GENDER RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY

**Overview:** A rights based and participatory pedagogy in which teaching and learning practices address the specific needs of both girls and boys. As such, the aim of the model is to equip teachers with skills, knowledge, and attitudes to ensure gender-equitable classrooms.

**Focus Areas:** Considers materials, methods, content, activities, language, classroom setup, interaction, and assessments through a gender lens.

#### Challenges Addressed:

- Gender-based barriers like poverty, harmful practices, poor puberty management, HIV/AIDS impact, and teenage pregnancy.
- Classroom inequalities such as male-dominated interactions and lack of female educators.

#### Reach:

- Implemented in 30+ countries through teacher training and workshops.
- Recently integrated into Burkina Faso's national teacher training programme.

## MODEL 3: CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

**Overview:** A school accreditation programme, which uses gender-responsive approaches to deliver quality, inclusive education. The accreditation requires specific standards soft and hard infrastructure to address the physical, academic, and socio-cultural needs of both girls and boys in disadvantaged areas.

**Origins:** Launched in 1999 in Rwanda, Kenya, and Tanzania.

**Target Areas:** Schools facing poverty, gender inequality, low female secondary enrolment, early marriage, and post-conflict challenges (e.g., orphans in Rwanda).

#### Core Features:

- Gender-responsive school management and policies.
- Inclusive teaching methods.
- Gender-friendly infrastructure.
- Community and school engagement.

#### Impact:

There have been reported improvements in accredited CoE schools in access, retention, and academic performance for girls in countries like Gambia, Rwanda, Namibia, and Chad.

#### Challenges:

- Many schools lack the basic standards needed to implement the CoE model.
- Limited impact data. However, there are evaluations ongoing in Mali, DRC, Senegal, and Burundi.

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