



### **The Global Campaign for Education Statement On the Occasion of the World Teachers' Day 2021**

On World Teachers' Day, the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) reiterates its support and solidarity with the teaching profession, recognising that their work is essential and invaluable for realising the right to education and lifelong learning for all. This day is also a uniquely significant opportunity to highlight the fundamental role teachers play worldwide to protect the right to education of people living in emergencies.

However, recognising the value of the teaching profession and the work delivered by teachers in emergency and non-emergency situations requires more than words and political declarations but concerted action to tackle the challenge of protecting the human right to education. Teachers, particularly in low and middle-income countries, earn an income that is often insufficient to meet their own needs and educate their children. Additionally, as recent reports demonstrate, the lives of people living in emergencies are often at risk<sup>[1]</sup>.

The Global Campaign for Education is particularly concerned about the persecution and murder of teachers in many conflict situations and call on governments and the international

community to advocate and develop comprehensive policies to protect their lives and working conditions. As a society, we cannot simply expect those teachers - living without the necessary protection and training - can successfully undertake the responsibility of educating children, youth, and adults in emergencies. Teachers require special training for supporting communities affected by war, climate change, disaster, and amongst other emergencies, hunger. As we continue to witness emergencies such as the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh<sup>[2]</sup>, the massive displacement within and across national borders of civilians in Afghanistan<sup>[3]</sup>, and people facing food insecurity in the Horn of Africa<sup>[4]</sup> these emergencies often intersect.

Teacher support should be considered a primary action for preparedness and recovery in chronic crises and emergencies. All planning activities should count on the direct participation of teachers and school personnel. The COVID19 pandemic and ongoing global health crisis have not only shown all of us the critical importance of teachers to keep our societies going, but it has also shown us the urgent need to bridge the digital divide by securing teachers with access to technology and in-service training to make the best use of it according to their working conditions in emergencies including refugee camps.

The work of teachers in emergency contexts is not limited to schools. It includes enabling non-formal education programmes, youth and adult education, and lifelong learning processes.

Gender-responsive education policies; financial investments to protect teachers' lives and secure them a decent living standard; access to technology and pedagogical training to teach in the most diverse and complex situations are however only some of the policy gaps that governments should urgently address to secure everyone's right to education, including people with disabilities. We should not forget that teachers in refugee camps teach in overcrowded environments and poor sanitary conditions that make their work considerably complex and substantially limit the children, youth, and adults' possibilities to learn.

**Given the previous considerations, the Global Campaign for Education wants to celebrate World Teachers' Day by urging all states to:**

- Adopt legal frameworks and concrete policies to ensure teachers the best working conditions and preparation in emergency contexts.
- Endorse the Safe Schools Declaration.

- Guarantee the necessary conditions for teaching work in refugee camps, migrants and asylum seekers shelters, and similar facilities, with special protection to female teachers and learners.
- Promote concrete plans for emergency preparedness in schools, with the vital participation of teachers, including the production of learning materials.
- Include teachers and their representative organizations in decision-making structures at all levels, including the design of teaching and learning plans during and after emergencies.
- Education and lifelong learning are human rights that should be guaranteed to all people in all contexts of emergencies are no exception. Teachers being the main actors to realize these rights, their work must always be protected and guaranteed.

**End**

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<sup>[1]</sup> Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (2020). Education under attack 2020.

<sup>[2]</sup> M. Mahruf C. Shohel (2020) Education in emergencies: challenges of providing education for Rohingya children living in refugee camps in Bangladesh, Education Inquiry.

<sup>[3]</sup> See UNHCR (2021). Urgent: Rapid escalation in Afghanistan;

<sup>[4]</sup> Brain, L, and Hammond, L. (2020). Food security during the COVID-19 pandemic: overlapping challenges, emerging responses in the Horn of Africa. SOAS.