

2019

YOUTH REPORT

# Migration, displacement and education:

Building bridges, not walls



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Acknowledgements go to Rooftop Production, South Africa, for collating much of the photos and case study material contained in this Report. Thanks are also extended to the Aga Khan Development Network, the Canadian Teachers’ Federation, the Erasmus Student Network, the Maya Foundation, Refugee Rights Centre, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF and Windle International for assisting with access to carry out the interviews and photography for this publication.

**The Global Education Monitoring Report team**

Director: Manos Antoninis

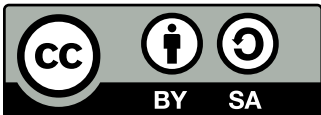
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The *Global Education Monitoring Report* is an independent annual publication. The GEM Report is funded by a group of governments, multilateral agencies and private foundations and facilitated and supported by UNESCO.



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This publication can be referenced as: UNESCO. 2018. Global Education Monitoring Report Youth Report 2019: Migration, Displacement and Education – Building Bridges, not Walls. Paris, UNESCO.

**For more information, please contact:**

Global Education Monitoring Report team  
UNESCO, 7, place de Fontenoy  
75352 Paris 07 SP, France  
Email: [gemreport@unesco.org](mailto:gemreport@unesco.org)  
Tel.: +33 1 45 68 07 41  
[www.unesco.org/gemreport](http://www.unesco.org/gemreport)

Any errors or omissions found subsequent to printing will be corrected in the online version at [www.unesco.org/gemreport](http://www.unesco.org/gemreport)

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First edition  
Published in 2018 by the United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
7, Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

Illustrations by Housatonic  
Typeset by UNESCO  
Graphic design by FHI 360  
Layout by FHI 360

Printed on recycled, PEFC certified paper,  
with vegetable inks.

ED/GEMR/MRT/2018/B/2

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# Foreword


by Vivian Onano

**I remember leaving my hometown at the age of 13 to go to the Starehe Girls Centre, a centre for excellence for academically talented girls from disadvantaged backgrounds, more than 8 hours' drive from my hometown in Kisumu. It was my first time leaving home.**

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I had never been to this part of Kenya, but this was my only opportunity to attend high school. Even though English and Swahili were the official languages for communication, most of the students were from the region and spoke the regional language, so it was hard to mingle after school hours. As a student, when you are homesick it's always much easier to express yourself fully in your own language than it is in the official language of communication.


The situation got worse during the post-election violence in 2007. I happened to belong to one of the ethnic groups involved, but I was living in the region of the opposite ethnic group. On our way back to school from the holidays, we were stopped by rogues, who asked each passenger their full name before they would allow us to proceed with the journey. I made up a last name just to feel safe. And it helped that I knew how to respond to greetings in their language. Incidents like that can be very discouraging and frightening to a student, yet even in these kinds of conditions, many still manage to leave their homes and travel far away to try to get access to a safe and quality education. Access to education should never be a matter of life and death, or of social status – education is every child's birthright.

[This report on #EducationOnTheMove is about those of us as young people who have had to move from one region or country to another in search of education, work or security.](#) 

Some of the stories are disheartening because young people have had to face violence, hunger and lack of shelter or proper clothing just to have access to an opportunity that

could lift them out of poverty, take them away from threats and give them dignity. Such stories remind us of the reforms that need to be carried out in education across the world to make it inclusive and to promote social cohesion.

The hope is that you will use this report to recognize where injustices are happening to you or those around you and empower yourself to speak up. The report includes recommendations for governments to help them address the education needs of migrant and displaced populations.

[As the next generation of leaders, we must use the power of our voices to hold our leaders accountable and make sure they deliver for migrants and refugees.](#) 

Lots of positive things are happening to help migrants and refugees today, from new global compacts committing countries to education improvement, to regional declarations on inclusive refugee education, and countless innovations aimed at making things better by countries such as Canada, Chad, the Philippines, Turkey and Uganda.

I count on you to use this report to inform yourself, share your story and be vocal on the importance of proper education and learning for everyone, including migrants and refugees.



**Vivian Onano**


Youth Representative,  
*Global Education Monitoring Report Advisory Board*

*Our world is experiencing the biggest migration in history, from villages to cities and from one country to another. We must ensure that no-one is left behind.*

Click to play video  
in your browser

## Leave no one behind

This is among the most aspirational global commitments of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Migration and displacement are two global challenges the agenda needs to address in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 4: 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'.

**Migration and displacement interact with education in many ways.** [These links affect those who move, those who stay and those who host](#) 

immigrants, refugees or other displaced populations. Internal migration mainly affects many rapidly urbanizing middle income countries, such as China, where more than one in three rural children are left behind by migrating parents. International migration mainly affects high income countries, where immigrants make up at least 15% of the student population in half of schools. It also affects sending countries: More than one in four witness at least one-fifth of their skilled nationals emigrating. Displacement mainly affects low income countries, which host 10% of the global population but 20% of the global refugee population, often in their most educationally deprived areas. More than half of those forcibly displaced are under age 18.

### **Migration and displacement affect education.**

They require systems to accommodate those who move and those left behind. Countries are challenged to fulfil the international commitment to respect the right to education for all. They must often act quickly, under severe constraints or even opposition from some constituencies. They need to address the needs of those cramming into slums, living nomadically or awaiting refugee status. Teachers have to deal with multilingual classrooms and traumas affecting displaced students. Qualifications and prior learning need to be recognized to make the most of migrants' and refugees' skills.

### **Education also affects migration and displacement.**

It is a major driver in the decision to migrate. Domestically, those with tertiary education are twice as likely to migrate as those with primary education; internationally, they are five times as likely. Education affects not only migrants' attitudes, aspirations and beliefs but also those of their hosts. Increased classroom diversity brings both challenges and opportunities to learn from other cultures and experiences. Appropriate education content can help citizens critically process information and promote cohesive societies; inappropriate content can spread negative, partial, exclusive or dismissive notions of immigrants and refugees.

## COUNTRIES ARE INCLUDING IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS


[Governments have taken increasingly bold steps to assume education responsibilities previously provided for only in international agreements.](#)  In recent years, the world has moved towards including immigrants and refugees in national education systems. Exclusionary practices are being abandoned as a result of forward-looking decisions, political pragmatism and international solidarity. Countries party to the 2018 Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, which extensively refer to education, recognize education as an opportunity.

**Historically, assimilation was the norm in most high income countries hosting foreign workers** in the post-war period. Among 21 high income countries, Australia and Canada had adopted multiculturalism in their curricula by 1980. By 2010, it had been adopted in Finland, Ireland, New Zealand and Sweden as well, and partly adopted in over two-thirds of the countries.

**Historically, most governments also provided parallel education to refugees**, but such systems usually lacked qualified teachers, examinations were not certifiable, and funding risked being cut at short notice. Rather than keeping the hope of return alive, parallel education during protracted displacement diminished the chance of a meaningful life in first countries of asylum. Today, however, countries such as Chad, the

Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey shoulder substantial costs to ensure that Sudanese, Afghan, Syrian and other refugees attend school alongside nationals. In the 2017 Djibouti Declaration on Regional Refugee Education, seven education ministers from eastern Africa committed to the inclusion of education for refugees and returnees into sector plans by 2020. Uganda has already fulfilled the promise.

**Education for the internally displaced is vulnerable to intractable conflicts.** Colombia, with the world's second-largest internally displaced population, suffers the continued operation of armed groups. Yet, for the past 15 years, it has taken measures to ensure displaced children are treated preferentially in terms of access to education.


[Internal migration is also challenging inclusion in education. Rural migrant workers constitute 21% of the Chinese population following the largest wave of internal migration in recent history.](#)  Residence permit restrictions introduced in an attempt to control the flows led the majority of migrant children in cities including Beijing to attend unauthorized migrant schools of lower quality. Since 2006, the government has progressively revised the system, requiring local authorities to provide education to migrant children, abolishing public school fees for them and decoupling registered residence from access to education for migrants. In India, the 2009 Right to Education Act legally obliged local authorities to admit migrant children, while national guidelines recommend




flexible admission, seasonal hostels, transport support, mobile education volunteers and improved coordination between states and districts.




### MAJOR BARRIERS TO EDUCATION FOR IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES PERSIST

Immigrants may be nominally included but practically excluded. They may be kept in preparatory classes too long, for instance.  In Austria's Styria state, children above age 15 not deemed ready for secondary school are not entitled to attend and, after assessment, are transferred to special courses. Some countries separate students with lower academic ability, often those with immigrant backgrounds, into less demanding tracks, which compromises subsequent opportunities. Moroccan and Turkish second-generation immigrant students in Amsterdam were five times as likely as natives to enter lower secondary vocational tracks at age 12. Tracking starts as young as age 10 in Germany. In addition, immigrants tend to be concentrated in specific neighbourhoods and in schools with lower academic standards and performance levels, which negatively affects their education achievement. Segregation is exacerbated when native students move to wealthier neighbourhoods or their families evade policies to maintain a diverse student body.

**Barriers to immigrant education may persist despite efforts towards inclusion.** In South Africa, education legislation guarantees the right to education for all children irrespective of migration or legal status, but immigration legislation prevents undocumented migrants from enrolling. School gatekeepers may insist on complete documentation, believing the law requires it, as with Central Asian immigrants in the Russian Federation. In the United States, anti-immigration raids led to surges in dropout among children of undocumented immigrants wary of deportation, whereas an earlier policy providing deportation protection had increased secondary school completion.

Immigrant children may advance relative to peers in home countries but lag behind peers in host countries. 

In the United States, children of immigrants from eight Latin American and Caribbean countries had 1.4 more years of education, on average, than those who had not emigrated. Yet their attainment and achievement often lagged behind those of host country peers. In the European Union, twice as many foreign-born youth as natives left school early in 2017. In 2015, in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries, first-generation immigrants were 32% less likely and second-generation immigrants 15% less likely than natives to attain basic proficiency in reading, mathematics and science. The point in the life cycle at which people ponder or undertake migration is a key determinant of their education investment, interruption, experience and outcomes. In the United States, 40% of Mexican immigrants who arrived at age 7 did not complete secondary school, compared with 70% of those who arrived at age 14.

Asylum-seeking children and youth are detained in many countries, often with limited or no access to education.  including in Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Nauru and Thailand. In Hungary, asylum-seeking families with children, and unaccompanied children above age 14, stay in one of two transit zones without access to education, except that provided by civil society organizations (CSOs), while their applications are processed.

**The degree and evolution of refugee inclusion in national education vary across displacement contexts,** affected by geography, history, resources and capacity. Concentration of refugees in remote camps, as in Kenya, may result in only partial inclusion and geographical separation. Resources can be a key constraint: Lebanon and Jordan, with the most refugees per capita, have adopted double-shift education, producing temporal separation. In several contexts, refugees continue to be



educated in separate, non-formal community-based or private schools, the largest recent displacement of Rohingya fleeing Myanmar for Bangladesh being a prominent case. Such schools may be initiated and supported by international organizations or refugees and local communities themselves, and may or may not be certified. In Pakistan, the primary net enrolment rate of Afghan refugee girls was half that of boys and less than half the primary attendance rate for girls in Afghanistan.

**Refugee education remains underfunded.** Although the two main databases are inconclusive, this report estimates that US\$800 million was spent on refugee education in 2016, split roughly equally between humanitarian and development aid. That is only about one-third of the most recently estimated funding gap. If the international community employed humanitarian aid only, the share to education would have to increase tenfold to meet refugees' education needs.

**Improving refugee education funding requires bridging humanitarian and development aid** in line with commitments in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework since 2016 to operationalize these commitments in 15 countries is generating useful lessons, although the withdrawal of the United Republic of Tanzania has drawn attention to improvements still required. The Education Cannot Wait fund for emergencies, and its potential to mobilize new, predictable, multiyear funds, should support closer cooperation between humanitarian and development actors and the inclusion of refugees in national education systems.

### EDUCATION IMPROVEMENTS CAN HELP MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES FULLY REALIZE THEIR POTENTIAL

Curricula and textbooks often include outdated depictions of migration and displacement, despite broad public support for change in some contexts:  81% of respondents in EU countries agreed school materials should cover ethnic diversity. By not addressing

diversity in education, countries ignore its power to promote social inclusion and cohesion. A global analysis showed that social science textbook coverage of conflict prevention and resolution – e.g. discussion of domestic or international trials, truth commissions and economic reparations – was low at around 10% of texts in 2000–2011.


**Teachers affected by migration and displacement are inadequately prepared** to carry out the more complex tasks this entails, such as managing multilingual classrooms and helping children needing psychosocial support. In six European countries, half of teachers felt there was insufficient support to manage diversity in the classroom; in the Syrian Arab Republic, 73% of teachers surveyed had no training on providing children with psychosocial support. Teacher recruitment and management policies often react too slowly to emerging needs. Germany needs an additional 42,000 teachers and educators, Turkey needs 80,000 teachers and Uganda needs 7,000 primary teachers to teach all current refugees.

**Schools with high immigrant and refugee populations need targeted resources to support struggling learners.** Only a handful of high income countries explicitly consider migration status in school budgets. Other dimensions of disadvantage, including the neighbourhood deprivation and limited language proficiency often associated with these students, typically trigger higher per-student funding in schools with higher concentrations.



**Adult migrant and refugee education needs are often neglected.** Non-formal education programmes can be critical for strengthening a sense of belonging, and much rests on municipal initiatives. Literacy skills support social and intercultural communication and physical, social and economic well-being, but significant barriers limit access to and success in adult language programmes in some countries. A 2016 survey of asylum-seekers in



Germany showed that 34% were literate in a Latin script, 51% were literate in another script and 15% were illiterate. Yet the latter were the least likely to attend a literacy or language course.

**[Financial literacy can protect migrants and help households make the most of remittances.](#)** 

Remittances increased education spending by over 35% in 18 countries in Africa and Asia and by over 50% in Latin America. Reducing transaction costs to 3%, from the current global average of 7.1%, could provide an additional US\$1 billion for education every year.

**[Recognition of qualifications and prior learning can ease entry into labour markets, especially concerning professional qualifications.](#)**  If migrants and refugees lack access to employment that uses their skills, they are unlikely to develop them further. However, less than one-quarter of global migrants are covered by a bilateral qualifications recognition agreement. Existing mechanisms are often fragmented or too complex to meet immigrants' and refugees' needs and end up underutilized. Countries also must harmonize tertiary education standards and quality assurance mechanisms to recognize academic qualifications at the bilateral, regional or global level. **[Adopting the Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications, expected in 2019, will be key.](#)** 

The two new compacts on migrants and refugees recognize education's role and set objectives aligned with the global commitment to leave no one behind. This report makes seven **recommendations** that support implementation of the compacts:

- Protect the right to education of migrants and displaced people
- Include migrants and displaced people in national education systems
- Understand and plan for the education needs of migrants and displaced people
- Represent migration and displacement histories in education accurately to challenge prejudices
- Prepare teachers of migrants and refugees to address diversity and hardship
- Harness the potential of migrants and displaced people
- Support education needs of migrants and displaced people in humanitarian and development aid.



# Sazhida runs a **Kindergarten for pastoralist children** in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan during the summer


## **JAILOO KINDERGARTENS PROVIDE EDUCATION FOR THE CHILDREN OF PASTORALIST FAMILIES**

who move to mountain pastures (*jailoo*) in the summer to fatten their livestock for the winter. The kindergartens ensure that children do not fall behind in their studies while their families are on the move. Lessons are designed to match the lifestyle of the children and teachers are equipped with culturally responsive teaching materials.

'I teach lessons related to livelihoods,' Sazhida told us. 'For example, we hold a lesson on the topic of kurut, and so we teach how to cook it. Children develop their speech and learn diligence, and also learn to count and establish order and cleanliness.'

Also, in lessons, children learn to paint on stones, and make a herbarium; in this way, we develop a love for nature. In lessons, we also teach national traditions and national games.'

Pioneered by the Aga Khan Foundation Mountain Societies Development Support Programme, 21 *jailoo* kindergartens are currently operating. They follow the national pre-school curriculum and employ teachers trained in current best practices for early childhood development. An internal assessment found that children attending these kindergartens scored significantly higher in their tests in autumn than those who did not attend them.

[Governments should consider implementing flexible school calendars and education tracking systems and designing curricula relevant to the livelihoods of children of nomads and seasonal workers.](#) 

**#EducationOnTheMove**



GEM Report/Askar Nuraken

**Most education systems are not well adapted to seasonal movements.** Rigid school calendars are a barrier for pastoralist children who must move because of their parents' seasonal work. [🐦](#)

Pastoralist learners also challenge traditional teaching. Teachers may be reluctant to re-enrol temporarily absent children or feel that taking extra measures goes beyond their responsibility.

*Many countries with significant nomadic or pastoralist populations have dedicated government departments, commissions or councils, such as the federal Special Directorate in Ethiopia, the National Council for Nomadic Education in Kenya, the Nomadic Education Commission in Nigeria and the Department of Education for Nomads in Sudan.*

## RECOMMENDATION:

**Use flexible school calendars, education tracking systems and curricula relevant to the livelihoods of children of nomads or seasonal workers** [🐦](#)

Vocational education can be particularly relevant to pastoralists, especially when it provides students with agricultural skills useful in a nomadic lifestyle.

# John is a Cuban teacher who moved to Canada in 1997 and **faced difficulty finding work**

## ‘BECOMING A TEACHER IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY IS REALLY CHALLENGING.

I had two or three interviews where I said that I was not a Canadian citizen yet, and kind of never got a call again. Some universities' requirements are very strict for foreign teachers. Some would only grant me a quarter of a Canadian credit for every Cuban credit. Some thought that a teacher with an accent from a small Caribbean country did not have what it takes or have much to offer.

We, foreign teachers, bring our culture, different teaching perspectives, experiences and values from our old country to Canada with the end goal of helping our students become lifelong learners.'

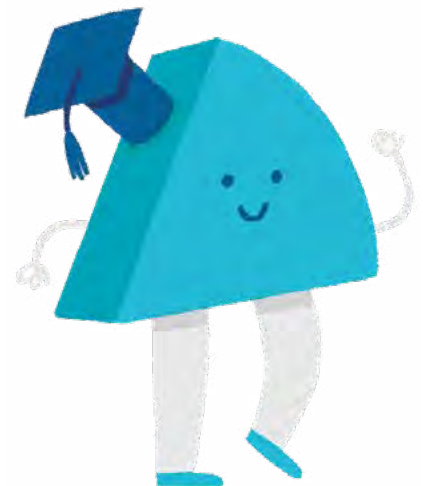
Countries need to harness the potential of migrant teachers. Migrants, including teachers, possess skills that can help transform not only their and their families' lives but also both host and home economies and societies. Mechanisms to recognize academic qualifications and professional skills, including those of teachers, should be made simpler, cheaper and more transparent and flexible. [#EducationOnTheMove](#)



Just over one quarter  
of countries see at least

**20%**

of their **highly skilled**  
emigrate 



Teacher migration can create shortages in the countries they leave. **CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES HAVE EXPERIENCED HIGH TEACHER EMIGRATION IN RECENT DECADES, NOT LEAST BECAUSE OF ACTIVE UK AND US RECRUITMENT EFFORTS.** Facing shortages in public schools in the early 2000s, the New York City Education Board increased international recruitment, attracting hundreds of teachers from the Caribbean.

## RECOMMENDATION:

### Harness the potential of teacher migrants

Migrants, including teachers, have skills that can help transform not only their and their families' lives but also both host and home economies and societies, whether they return or support from a distance.

[Countries need to follow up on the new commitments they made in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to improve the recognition of migrants' qualifications.](#)  Systems to recognize

people's previous academic qualifications and professional skills should be made simpler, cheaper, more transparent and flexible. Agencies working on this should harmonize procedures at national, regional and global levels, working with governments and international organizations.

### FOR SMALL ISLAND STATES, EVEN SMALL NUMBERS OF EMIGRATING TEACHERS CAN CREATE SIGNIFICANT SHORTAGES.

Commonwealth ministers of education adopted a Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP) in 2004 to respond to small Caribbean states' concern that they were losing their teaching workforce. However, the protocol is non-binding and so does not prevent individual teachers from migrating.




*The reluctance of some countries to recognize teacher qualifications across borders is one of the most important challenges for migrant teachers.*



# Undocumented children **cannot go to school** in South Africa: 'The system is letting them down'

**KUTENDA IS A 13-YEAR-OLD ZIMBABWEAN BOY** in South Africa who is lucky to be in school at all. He has no documentation because the country's permit requirements for Zimbabwean migrants have changed so many times. The last permit scheme specifically for Zimbabwean migrants expired in 2017, so families now have to apply for new permits, as well as new study permits for their children. These can take 6–12 months to be issued,

leaving a lot of 'illegal' Zimbabwean children in the country. Kutenda can continue his studies only because of a personal risk taken by his principal.

[Gary, the principal, risks a fine of 5,000 South African Rand \(US\\$350\) per undocumented child he lets attend his school.](#)  In the past, with 63 such children attending, he's been at risk of being personally fined up to ZAR315,000, or US\$22,150.

'I don't regard myself as the top guy. I'm just passionate about education. In many instances, schools will not allow them in because they're going by the book. I can't understand that. The system is letting them down. It is a constitutional right for a child to be educated, but it seems as if Home Affairs overrides the constitution. If they were not in school, where would they be? They'd be out in the streets; they'd become delinquents. So, having the children in the school – educating them, teaching them values and attitudes – they'll become better people, and that can one day be beneficial to the country and the economy of the country.'



GEM Report/Rooftop



Despite treaty commitments to non-discrimination, **MAKING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION CONDITIONAL ON CITIZENSHIP AND/OR LEGAL RESIDENCY STATUS IS MAYBE THE MOST COMMON WAY OF EXPLICITLY EXCLUDING MIGRANTS** 

in constitutions or education legislation.

South Africa's Constitution, as well as national education legislation, guarantees the right to education for all children, whatever their migration or legal status. However, the 2002 Immigration Act prevents undocumented migrants from enrolling. Provisional registration is allowed without documents, but this rule is often ignored.

## RECOMMENDATION:

**Protect the right to education of migrants and refugees, whatever their identification documents or residence status** 

Discriminatory barriers, which are prohibited in international legal and political agreements, should also be explicitly prohibited by law. Regulations should leave no grey areas for re-interpretation at different levels of the education system or by individual officers. Moreover, authorities should ensure that migrant and displaced families are aware of their rights and are provided with information on how to register and progress in school. The amount of time that migrants and refugees spend away from studying should be minimized, with the aim of having children out of school for **no longer than three months**.

*Governments must protect the right to education of migrants and refugees, whatever their residence status. Lack of identity documents and certificates must not be used to exclude migrant children from education.*

**#EducationOnTheMove**

# Teachers **multitask** in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar camps for Rohingya refugees

## ANOWAR IS A ROHINGYA REFUGEE WHO HAS BEEN LIVING IN COX'S BAZAR IN BANGLADESH FOR OVER A YEAR.

He is a learning instructor in the Burmese language. 'I'm happy. We Rohingya need education. If we don't get it, we'll suffer a lot.'

At the beginning, it was a bit difficult because children were scared by the things that had happened in Myanmar. They saw lots of people being slaughtered when they were fleeing, so they were depressed. We helped them come to school for education and helped cure them of the depression.'

*Teachers of migrants and refugees must be adequately prepared to address trauma and stress. Teachers in displacement contexts need to be sensitive to the particular difficulties faced by displaced students and parents, and must work with communities to support children. Teachers who work in very challenging and stressful environments need extra support themselves to deal with difficult working conditions.*

**#EducationOnTheMove**




GEM Report/Zhantu Chakma

**JUI IS A HOST COMMUNITY TEACHER IN CAMP #2, SUPPORTED BY UNICEF.** 'I noticed that the children haven't been able to get the love of parents. Now they are very excited about getting such love and caring.'

We go to them and ask if they have any problems, and after listening, we provide them with a lot of games that we have and if there is any serious issue then we go to their parents and solve it there. That is why they feel happy to come here in school, because we communicate well with them; they feel inspired, and that makes me feel very good. We don't just make them aware of education – we make them aware of health as well. For example, a few days ago we were told to prepare the kids to take the diphtheria vaccine.'



GEM Report/Zhantu Chakma

Teachers do not have enough training to teach in displacement settings, where **THEY OFTEN HAVE TO COPE WITH OVERCROWDED, MIXED-AGE OR MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS**, as well as children who have faced trauma. 



GEM Report/Zhantu Chakma

## RECOMMENDATION:

**Prepare teachers of migrants and refugees to address diversity and hardship** 

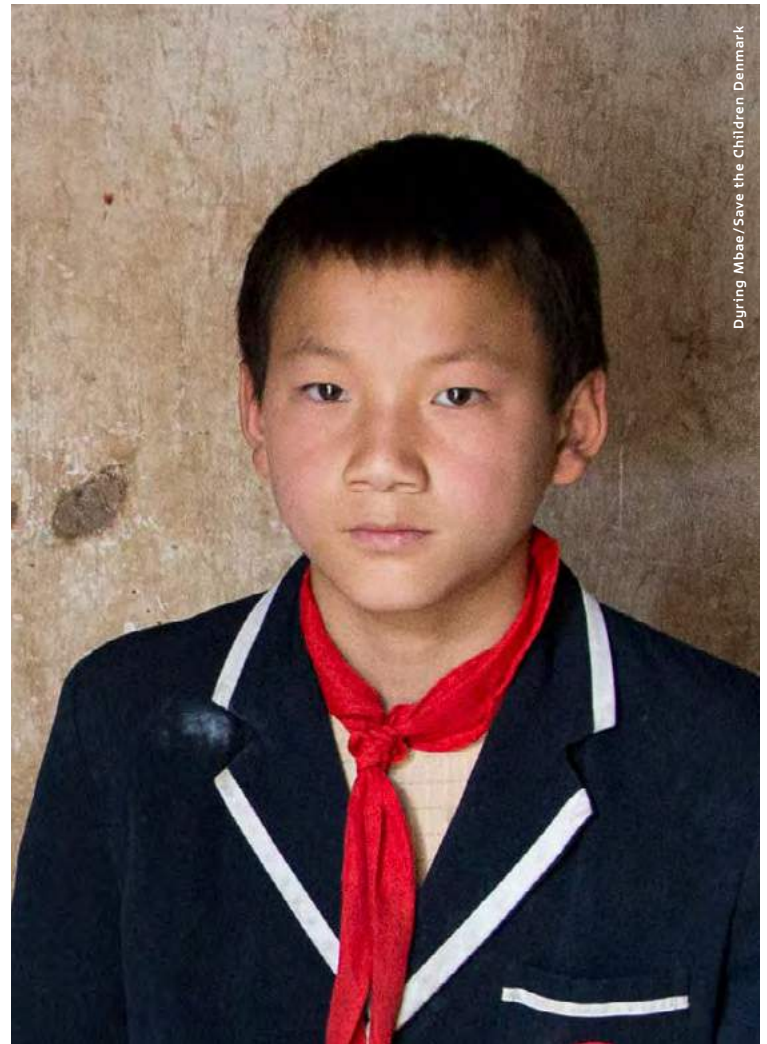
Teachers of refugees and displaced teachers need to be trained to deal with stress and trauma among their students, but they also suffer extra stress themselves. Management policies need to recognize and relieve the extreme hardships under which some teachers work; to regulate and ensure equality among types of teaching professionals to maintain morale; and to invest in professional development.

# Children in boarding schools in China want better facilities




Dyirng Mbae/Save the Children Denmark

**CHA QIAN IS 13 YEARS OLD AND HAS LIVED AT BOARDING SCHOOL SINCE SHE WAS 10.** She only sees her parents once a year. If she could change anything about the school, she would change the dormitories and the number of students in the class.



Dyirng Mbae/Save the Children Denmark

**ZHI HAS LIVED IN A BOARDING SCHOOL SINCE HE WAS NINE YEARS OLD,** when his parents moved for work. Now in grade five, he sees his parents, who work in Dali, at least three times a year, sometimes more. If he could change anything about the school, he would improve the equipment in the classrooms and the dining facilities.


**A REVIEW OF STUDIES** among left-behind children in China found that they had lower self-esteem and more mental health problems than children overall.  Teachers of left-behind children often lack the resources, understanding or opportunity to communicate to family or guardians the need for them to provide support and attention.

New analysis for the 2019 GEM Report found that children with absent mothers had lower grades in mathematics, Chinese and English. Children with one or both parents absent had more symptoms of depression than those with present parents. Analysis from rural Gansu province (2000 and 2015) found that children with absent fathers had 0.4 fewer years of education.

Dyring Mbae/Save the Children Denmark



## RECOMMENDATION:

**Improve the level of staff and equipment at boarding schools for migrant children, and emphasize psychosocial support and engagement with the community** 

Using boarding schools as an approach to internal migration can work. A study of junior secondary schools in five provinces in western China compared the mathematics and Chinese test scores of students who began to board at school between 2006 and 2008 with those of students who were not boarding. Students starting to board had lower scores at the beginning of the period, but two years later, they were performing better than their non-boarding peers. But, often, boarding schools are understaffed and underequipped. A recent analysis showed that boarding school students in 59 rural counties in 5 provinces had worse nutrition, health and education outcomes than non-boarding students.

In 2010,  
**61 million** children  
in China were left behind  
by families who migrated  
elsewhere for work.

Of these children,  
**23 million** were  
under the age of 5

# George teaches in a **double-shift** school in a refugee camp

in Kenya 



GEM Report/Nicola Simmonds

## IN KENYA'S KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP,

a 'two-schools-in-one' approach was tried to help make up for the lack of secondary schools. Two sets of students attend, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, each covering the eight lessons a day required by the curriculum. Each shift has its own deputy principal, heads of department, teachers and its own separate uniform. The scheme has been such a success that it has been copied in three other schools, and the number of students enrolled has gone up.

'The two-schools-in-one idea was intended to solve congestion in classes. However, the congestion problem has not been resolved. Next year, over 6,000 students will be competing for 2,500 spaces in the 5 secondary schools in Kakuma refugee camp. More classes need to be constructed.


Access to education enables students to acquire skills in peaceful living and conflict resolution, which is important for reconstructing their mother countries.'

'The two schools-in-one was to solve congestion in classes. However, the congestion problem has not been resolved. This is because students from 21 primary schools in Kakuma camp compete for space in 5 secondary schools.'

Countries need to commit to meeting the education needs of displaced people. Displaced people and migrants should be included in national education systems, through multi-year education sector planning and adequate budgetary provision.

**#EducationOnTheMove**

Low and middle income countries hosted 89% of all refugees in 2017.

**ABOUT 52% OF ALL REFUGEES ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 18,** and 1 in 6 are under the age of 5. 

Around 40% live in managed camps or collective centres, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa.

## RECOMMENDATION:

### Include displaced people in national education systems

This should be achieved through multi-year education sector planning with adequate budgetary provision. With most displaced people hosted in low or middle income countries, wealthy countries need to provide sufficient financial and technical support to ensure the right to education for all displaced people within a few months of displacement.

While exceptional circumstances – such as physical isolation of refugee communities or host system capacity constraints – may prevent full inclusion, governments need to minimize time spent in schools not following the national curriculum or not progressing towards recognized certificates, because such time compromises education trajectories.

In Kenyan refugee camps, schools must meet Ministry of Education minimum standards. But in the Dadaab refugee camp, there were

**120 pupils per teacher**

in pre-primary and 56 per teacher in primary. **Only 8% of primary teachers were certified national teachers**, and 6 out of 10 refugee teachers were untrained. On average, **six students shared a desk**.

Displacement increases the usual pressures on teacher management systems.  Coordination of teacher recruitment, compensation and development is often made even more difficult in fragile contexts where multiple humanitarian and development aid agencies operate under different rules.



# Nesrin is the headmistress at a **girls' primary school for Palestinian refugees** in Lebanon

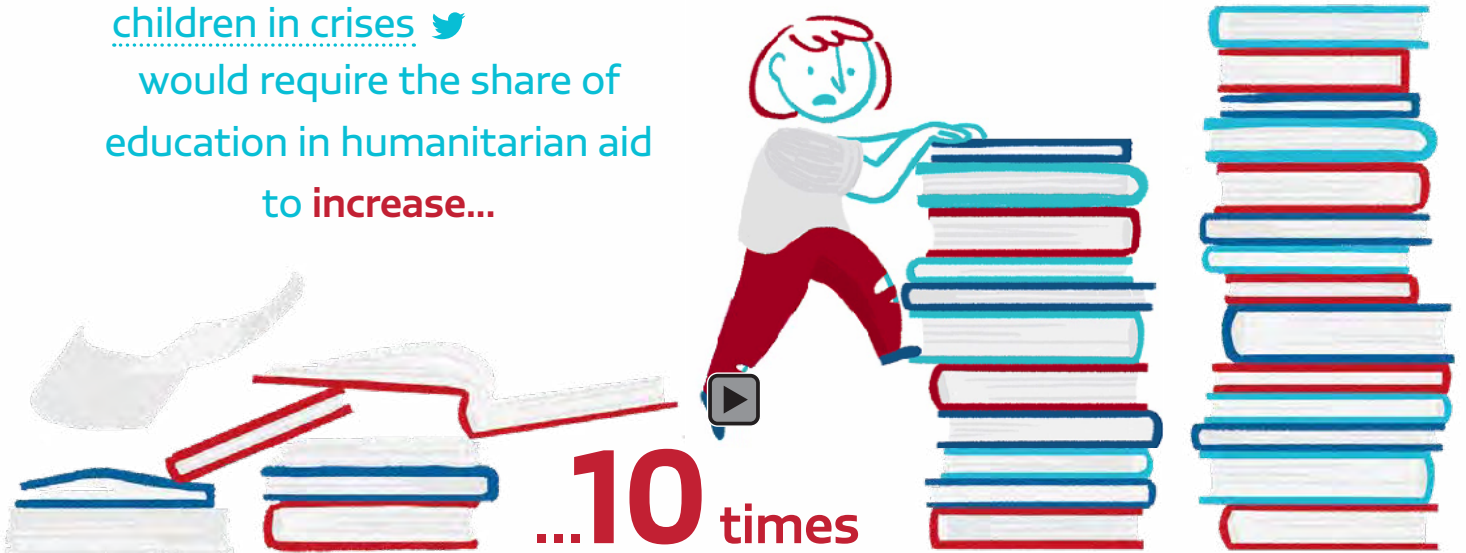


Nesrin Ayoub

**NESRIN WAS BORN IN A REFUGEE CAMP RUN BY THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY** for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the UN agency that provides free basic education and support to 526,000 Palestinian refugee children. She is now a headmistress in a school in the same camp. She is worried the school might have to close, and about the impact that would have on children's safety, because a key donor, the United States, announced in August 2018 that it would cease its support.

'People in Ein Hilweh Camp live in harsh conditions. Often individual feuds, assassinations and random shootings cause stray bullets to fly around my school. We lead students to safety areas until the feud ends. If there are armed clashes while we are at school, we evacuate students once we're sure they can reach home unharmed. Offering quality education to students at times of unrest is my main goal as a school principal. Each year I feel so happy when I see students feel safe to come back to school. Resilience, encountering challenges, coming up with new solutions, venturing into new paths are our defining characteristics as Palestine refugees.'

To meet even the most basic education needs of children in crises  would require the share of education in humanitarian aid to **increase...**





UNRWA

## RECOMMENDATION:

### Support the education needs of migrants and displaced people in humanitarian and development aid

Nine out of 10 refugees are hosted by low and middle income countries, which need support from international partners. Meeting needs would require education's share of humanitarian aid to increase 10 times. But humanitarian aid alone will not be enough. The funds provided by humanitarian donors and development donors need to be jointly planned and provided from the early stages of a crisis both for refugees

and host communities, recognizing that education saves lives. Education should also be part of a broader package of solutions along with shelter, nutrition, water, sanitation and social protection. Donors need to follow this model in their work, help train people on the ground to cost up the education needs of refugees, and provide predictable and multiyear funding.



The average cost of the UNRWA education programme is **US\$826 per child per year**. The main source of funding is voluntary contributions from UN member states. For the past 10 years, however, contributions have not kept up with the needs caused by an increasingly unstable context. Between 2011 and 2016, 44% of all UNRWA schools were 'directly impacted by armed conflict and violence'. In 2017, the United States contributed the equivalent of **25%** of the education programme and **32%** of the total budget of UNRWA. But in August 2018, the United States announced it would cease its support.

# Latika moved from rural India to Mumbai and ended up **living on the streets and finding work, interrupting her education**



GEM Report/Ikon Productions

**LATIKA WAS BORN IN MUMBAI**, but when she was one year old, she moved to a village called Nerli to live with her grandparents, while her parents stayed behind in Mumbai to work. When she was 11, her grandfather died and she moved back to Mumbai, living in a slum, working in a household, and forced to leave school. 'It was a very shattering change for us, but we did not have any option', she said.

An NGO supported by Save the Children helped her return to school, but she had to leave again to go back to the village for two years when her grandmother became ill.

'My mother insisted that I go and take care of her in the village because girls do all the domestic work, not boys. Girls are not allowed to study.

I should be able to dedicate maximum time to my studies. But I have to work throughout the day and then go to night school. My parents have spent most of their life in slums. I am very determined that I will study. I want to buy a room and settle them in it.'

*To improve the lives of the most marginalized, governments need to invest more in public education in slum settings, where many migrants and refugees settle.*

**#EducationOnTheMove**

## *Migrants in slums have fewer educational opportunities*

The out-of-school rate of primary school-age children and secondary school-age adolescents in Bangladesh was **twice as high in slums** as in other urban areas.

## RECOMMENDATION:

**Invest more in public education in slum settings to improve the lives of the most marginalized** 

Planning authorities should make sure that public schools are within reach of slums and that slums are not neglected in urban regeneration plans. Seasonal employers (such as construction and agricultural companies) need to work with governments and NGOs to ensure education is provided to children of seasonal migrant workers.



Froilan was born into a poor rural Filipino family and moved to the United States followed by the United Arab Emirates for **better opportunities** 

**‘I REFUSED TO ALLOW MY STATUS AS AN IMMIGRANT DEFINE MY LIFE GOALS.’**

Froilan’s parents left for the United States when he was just six months old to find better opportunities. Left behind, he worked in the flower fields with his grandmother earning around US\$2 a day. ‘I became a statistic, joining the ranks of the millions of children whose parents left the Philippines to work abroad.’

Froilan rejoined his mother in the United States, where he decided to enrol in a local community college and take an English course. ‘When I migrated, I struggled to express myself. When somebody would ask me questions, I would typically not even respond because I was afraid of not being able to finish the response.’

‘Fear of being poor again, fear of being discriminated against, fear of being left out triggered me to pursue the academic work that I’m doing right now. I refused to allow my status as an immigrant define my life goals.’

*Teachers of migrants and refugees must be prepared to address diversity. They should be trained to confront stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination so as to strengthen immigrant and refugee students’ self-esteem and sense of belonging.*

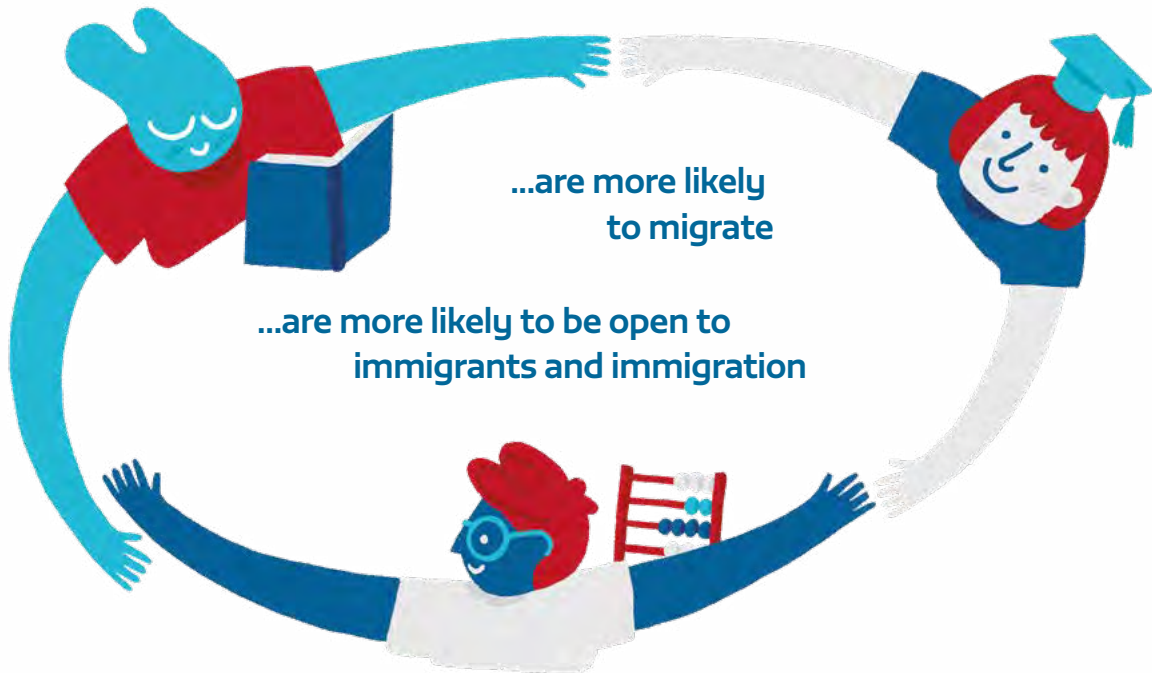
**#EducationOnTheMove**

## RECOMMENDATION:

**Understand and plan for the education needs of migrants and displaced people** 

Providing school places for migrants and refugees is only the first step to inclusion. School environments have to adapt to and support students’ needs. Those who are moving to a new language of instruction need bridging programmes with qualified teachers.

## THE MORE EDUCATED...



**1 in 30**

*people in the world are international migrants, of whom 64% reside in high-income countries*



### Lack of language proficiency is an education disadvantage

Proficiency helps with socialization, relationship-building and sense of belonging. Lack of proficiency increases the risk of discrimination, bullying and low self-esteem. About 60% of first-generation and 41% of second-generation immigrant students in Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development countries who took part in the 2015 Programme for International Student Assessment survey did not speak the language of assessment at home.

# For Venezuelans arriving into Colombia, school can help them fit in

## ANGELA IS A PRINCIPAL AT A SCHOOL IN EL SANTUARIO IN COLOMBIA.

'The biggest challenge for refugee children when they get into our school system is to adapt to a school world that is very different because the topics and other curricular issues are totally different. We have built a dictionary with Venezuelan terms and idioms that has allowed us to understand each other better.'

*Countries must understand and plan for the education needs of migrants and displaced people. Lack of language proficiency is an education disadvantage, so intensive language classes should be offered to prepare migrants to enter public education.*

**#EducationOnTheMove**



## BESEM WORKS FOR UNHCR IN COLOMBIA:

'There is a lack of knowledge of the right that refugee children have to enter the education system. They often do not have access to enough money to buy school supplies or to pay for transport.'

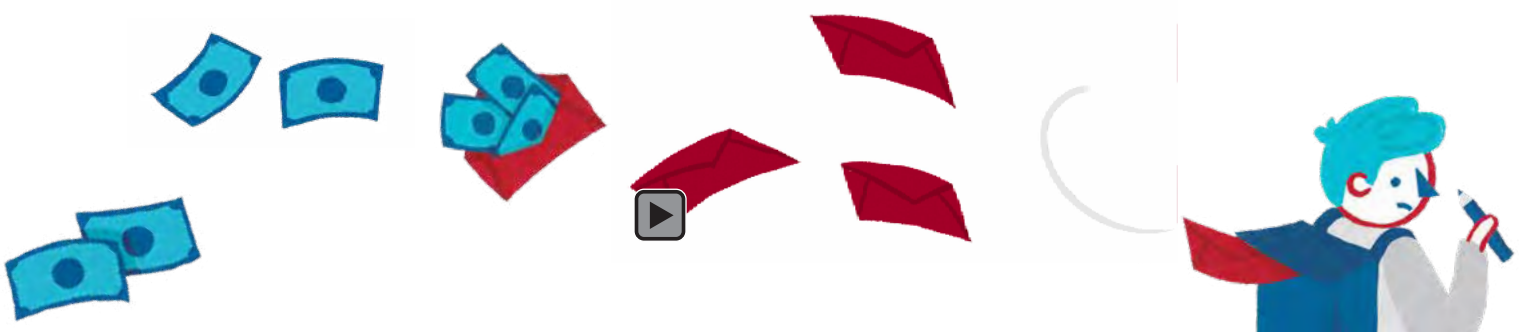


## RECOMMENDATION:

### Prepare teachers of migrants and refugees to address diversity and hardship

Teachers need support to become agents of change in school environments increasingly shaped by migration and displacement. Current teacher education programmes addressing migration are ad hoc and not part of main curricula. Governments need to invest in initial and ongoing teacher education that builds ability to manage diverse, multilingual and multicultural contexts,

which also affect native students. Aspiring and practicing teachers and school leaders should be given the tools to confront stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination in the classroom, the schoolyard and the community so as to strengthen immigrant and refugee students' self-esteem and sense of belonging.



**THE COST OF EDUCATION FOR THE DISPLACED IS NOT LIMITED TO FEES.** *Lebanon offered cash to primary school children to cover transport and compensate households for income they would not get because children were attending school instead of working. ATTENDANCE INCREASED BY 20%. *



GEM Report/LaRuta Films

**ROBINSON, A MATHEMATICS TEACHER:**  
 ‘The challenges for us as teachers are helping to build protective environments where students can first of all achieve an appropriation of academic content that is important for their life, but where we can also achieve social adaptation and a family environment in which they can feel good.’

# Sofia was born in France to Moroccan parents, and **struggles with prejudice**

## SOFIA'S FATHER CAME TO FRANCE

to continue his studies. Her mother joined him. Sofia is in her second year in university. 'It's hard to study in another country. In school you hear subtle stereotypes mentioned like "Oh, you eat couscous every day?"

The biggest difficulty is to try and get over our own feelings that we can't succeed because we are immigrants. Even though I'm French – I live here like everyone else, I study here, I'm in classes just like others – I'm always asking myself whether I'm going to be accepted by others or not. However, we know that France is a country that offers many more opportunities than less wealthy countries like Morocco. I keep on telling myself that I deserve to be here and that I have what it takes to succeed.'

*Cities should carry out awareness-raising campaigns to encourage meaningful interaction with immigrant communities. Teachers should be trained to cope with diversity and teaching materials should be adapted to accurately represent migration. #EducationOnTheMove*


## RECOMMENDATION:

### **Represent migration and displacement histories in education accurately to challenge prejudices**

Building inclusive societies and helping people live together requires more than tolerance. Governments should review education content and delivery, adapting curricula and rethinking textbooks to reflect history and current diversity. Education content needs to bring to the fore migration's contribution to wealth and prosperity. It should promote values of living


together and the benefits of diversity. Educational approaches should challenge prejudices and develop critical thinking skills so students can overcome uncertainties in interacting with other cultures and resist negative media portrayals of immigrants and refugees. Governments need to draw from the positive experiences of intercultural education.



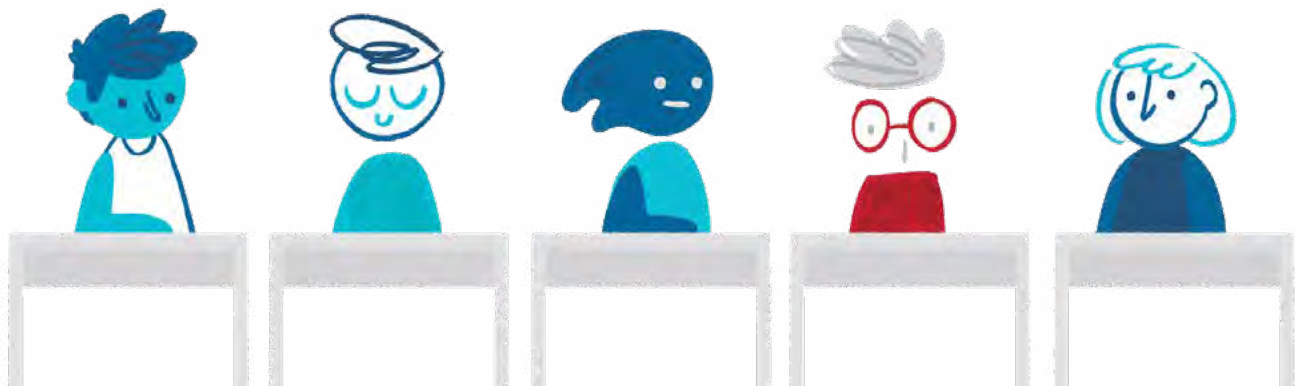
Immigrant students in high-income countries are nearly twice as likely as natives to repeat a grade.  In France, 15% of children of French parents repeated at least one secondary grade, compared to 27% of children of Moroccan parents.

Migrants and refugees perceive themselves, in part, according to how they are perceived or labelled. Analysis of the 2014 World Values Survey for the 2019 GEM report showed *migrants were less likely than natives to see themselves as belonging to the host country in **34 out of 43 countries.***



A 2015 study showed that **27 out of 38** mainly high income countries provided intercultural education as a stand-alone subject or included it in the curriculum.  France did not.

France scored only 38% in a global index assessing whether immigrant children and their teachers are 'entitled to have their specific needs addressed in school'.



## Richard, aged 21, is an asylum seeker from Chad, who recently arrived in France and **wants to continue his education**



Richard was stuck in Libya for 10 months, waiting to reach Europe. And he was one of the lucky ones – of the 171 on his boat, only 41 migrants survived the crossing, after being rescued. Back home, Richard had completed one year of a degree in Communications. Now, he is impatient to resume his studies, but although he has passed all the tests and has officially enrolled at the University of Perpignan, he has been told that until his refugee status is confirmed, he is only a guest student: no residence status means no diploma. Education opportunities were part of his motivation for undertaking a

hazardous journey through Africa and across the Mediterranean, but now he is blocked by administrative process.

'Why isn't there more help for asylum seekers who want to study at universities? This should be guaranteed for those who have already begun higher education, then been forced to leave their countries. I've been through inhuman experiences – I found myself floating in the sea with dead bodies when I crossed the Mediterranean. I am haunted by these images. The only way to make myself feel better is to do what I love best – to start studying again.'

### RECOMMENDATION:

#### **Protect the right to education of migrants and displaced people and include them in national education systems**

Some education systems treat immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees as temporary or transient populations, different from natives. This is wrong; it holds back their academic progress, socialization and future opportunities, and undermines diverse, cohesive societies. Public policy must include them in all levels of national education, whatever their residence status or documentation.

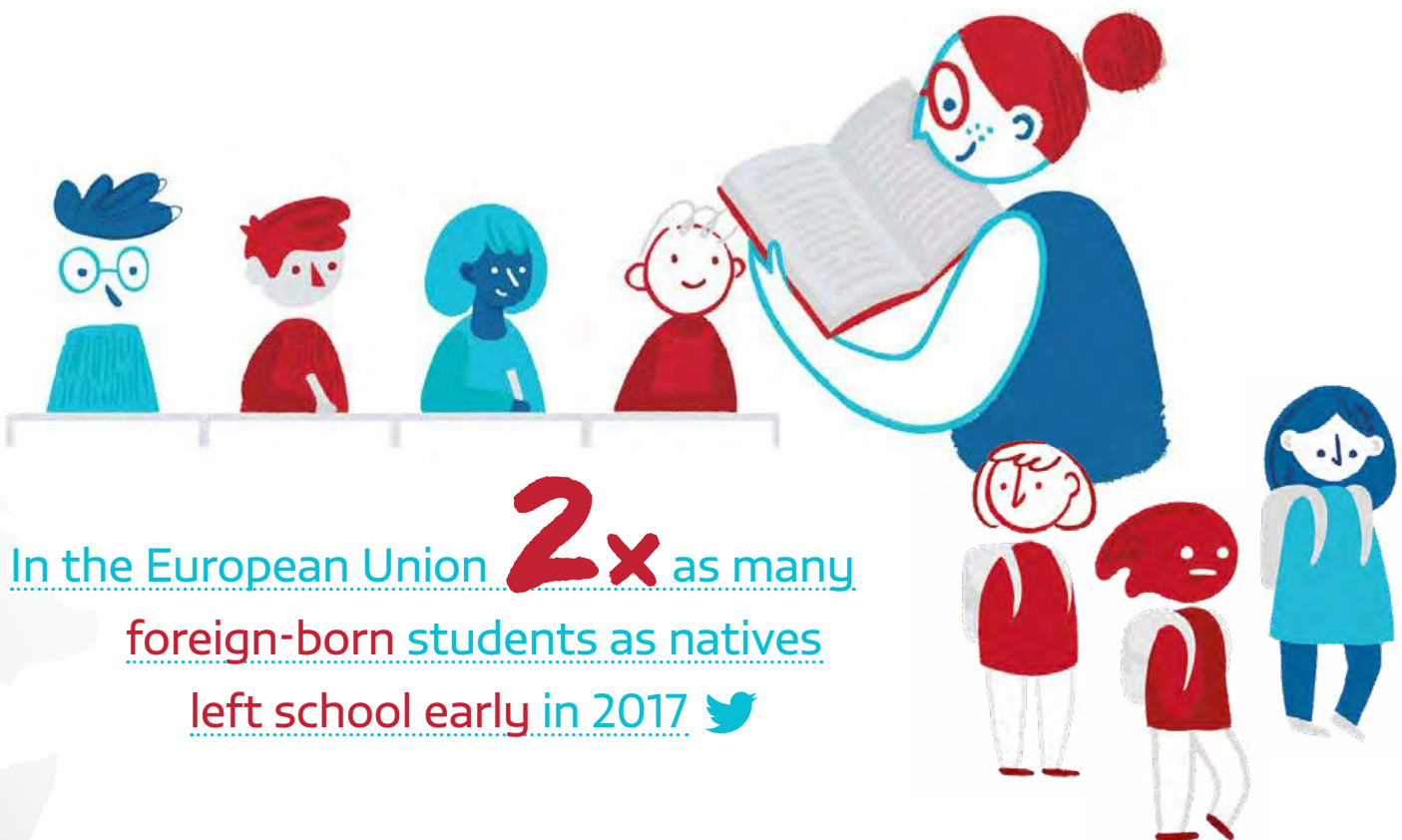


Those who move for better work or life opportunities often find that their ability to enrol in education and use their skills is **HELD BACK BY LEGAL, ADMINISTRATIVE OR LINGUISTIC BARRIERS AND DISCRIMINATION.** 🐦 Knowing they may be unable to obtain a diploma, many children and youth disengage from education.


The EU Reception Conditions Directive says EU countries have to grant asylum seekers access to the education systems 'under similar conditions as nationals' no more than three months after their application. In practice, **CHILDREN AND YOUTH HAVE WAITED MONTHS OR YEARS TO ATTEND SCHOOL.**

Undocumented migrants and asylum seekers may not have a legal right to work, restricting their participation especially in employer-based vocational training, since **EMPLOYERS ARE RELUCTANT TO HIRE THEM.**

In **Ireland** and **Lithuania**, the undocumented have no access to the labour market until they are granted asylum and become refugees. In the **United Kingdom**, asylum seekers wait 12 months to obtain the right to work, while countries including **Greece, Norway, Portugal** and **Sweden** grant the right to work when individuals claim asylum.



In the European Union **2x** as many foreign-born students as natives left school early in 2017 🐦

Ricardo worries about the impact that the **threat of deportation** has on his students 



Mexico to the United States is the largest migration corridor in the world, with **12.7 million** migrants in 2017 

**RICARDO WORKS IN A SCHOOL IN LOS ANGELES.**

The majority of the students there are a mixture of documented and undocumented Mexican children.

“When Immigrations and Customs Enforcement arrested a father, the school took the lead in educating and empowering families about their rights.

As a school leader, it is troubling that students are going through so much and how it affects their learning. One of the best weapons we had was to let our students speak up, let us know how they were feeling, to let them know they were in a safe space. It’s not as


**#EducationOnTheMove**

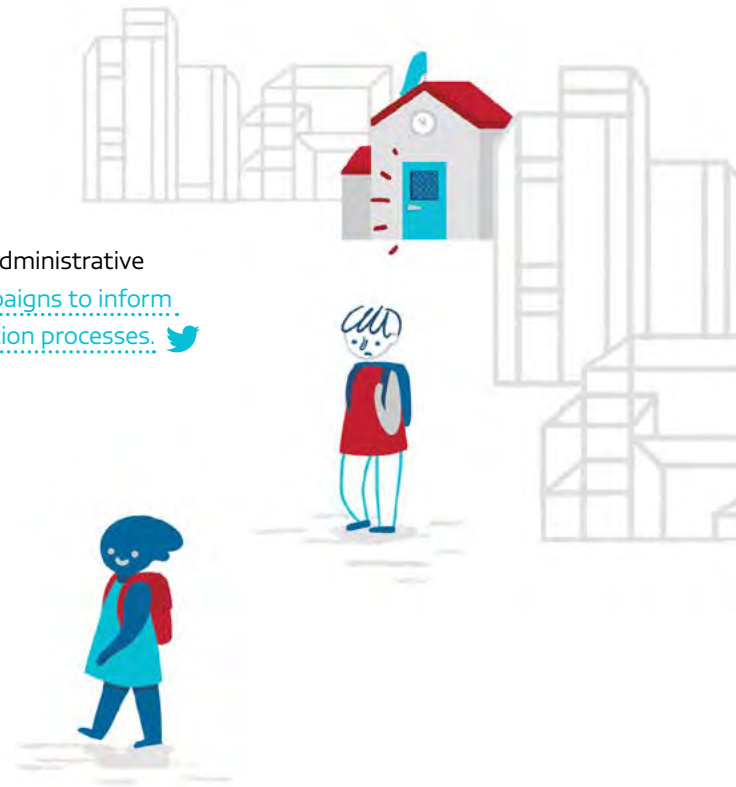
bad anymore but we did see less parental involvement, we did see students being afraid to come to school.

‘I actually have kids asking me to call halfway during the day just to make sure that their parents made it during their shifts, because they’re worried something might have happened to them along the way.’


## RECOMMENDATION:

### Protect the right to education of migrants and displaced people


Respecting the right to education must go beyond legislation and administrative process. [National authorities should mount awareness-raising campaigns to inform migrant and displaced families of their rights and of school registration processes.](#) 



**IN THE UNITED STATES**, structural discrimination against students from immigrant families takes several forms. *Lack of bilingual programmes* puts young children from non English-speaking households at a disadvantage. They are often misdiagnosed as having special education needs, partly due to literacy tests that are not in their home language. Immigrant parents may *not feel as welcome* to engage with schools as native-born parents and may feel they have little influence on how their children are treated or taught in schools. Such discrimination can be intentional or unintentional and comes from factors including lack of connection with immigrant communities, *inadequate teacher education* and a testing culture focused on narrow learning metrics.

[It is estimated that 7% of all children in the United States are born to unauthorized immigrants.](#) **IN SOME CASES, THE THREAT OF DEPORTATION KEEPS CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL.** 

In **April 2018**, 20% of Hispanic students in Hamblen County, Tennessee, missed school following an immigration raid. In **February 2017**, absenteeism in the Las Cruces, New Mexico, school district increased by 60% after an immigration raid. The school board amended its policy, saying that schools had to stop collecting student immigration status information and should reject federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent requests for access to school grounds without a judicial warrant.


 Busra has been trained to help Syrian children in Turkey who are suffering from the trauma of the war



**'IT WAS ONE OF THE BEST TRAINING SESSIONS I'VE EVER ATTENDED.** I can intervene more professionally with traumatized students. It helped us to approach students in a more sensitive way when dealing with their problems. It helped on separating problems, determining whether the issue is trauma-based or not. For example, it is important to tell the difference between whether the students' failure is based on trauma or just laziness.

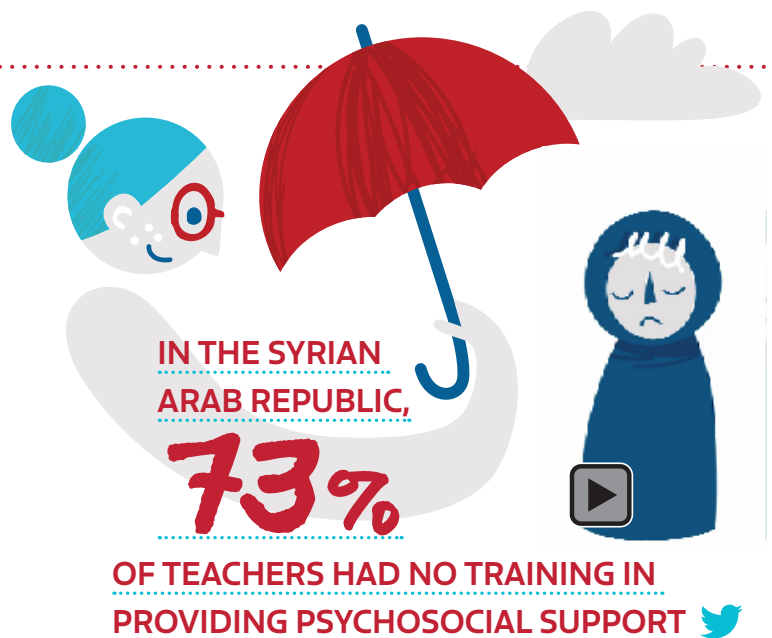
The better the pupils are spiritually, the better their behaviour in the classroom, the better their friendships, the better they can relate to the teachers and the better they achieve in their lessons.'

## RECOMMENDATION:

**Prepare teachers of migrants and refugees to address diversity and hardship**


Teachers in displacement situations need to be sensitive to the particular difficulties displaced students and parents face, and be able to reach out to their communities. While teachers are not counsellors, they can be trained to recognize stress and trauma and to refer those who need help to specialists. Where there are no specialists, teachers should be able to serve as some families' only access to such services.


*Displaced learners have often had traumatic experiences of violence and conflict. Studies in high income countries have reported post-traumatic stress disorder rates ranging from 10% to 25%. In low and middle income countries, rates as high as 75% have been reported.*

Photos on this page: GEM Report/Fabio Duque-Frajndtso



Erasmus is the largest and most famous student mobility programme in the world. Participants study up to 12 months in another European country, which home institutions recognize towards students' degrees. Evaluations of the programme suggest that it has a positive effect on employment, career opportunities and personality traits relevant for employers, as well as a major influence on participants' social lives.

Roxana is a Romanian student on an Erasmus exchange programme to Portugal, where she **'learned to look beyond stereotypes'** 

**'ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES** was to get out of my comfort zone. One of the things that I learned is tolerance and how to better understand the past, the future and the behaviour of a nation.

I learned to look beyond stereotypes. I understood that it is not always about the nationality, but also about the personality. Living in an international community improved my analytical skills, by causing me to always try to understand the reason before judging. Also, this helped me develop my willingness to take risks in my professional and personal life.'

## RECOMMENDATION:

**Develop common degree standards, quality assurance mechanisms and academic exchange programmes to facilitate student mobility** 

Many important structures are in place in the European Higher Education Area to facilitate mobility, including diploma supplements, the European Qualification Framework, quality assurance registries and networks, the European Credit Transfer System and compatible academic calendars. Replicating that success in other regions, such as South-eastern Asia, will require sustained investment in robust coordination mechanisms.

**The European Union's higher education strategy includes a target that at least 20% OF GRADUATES should experience part of their study or training abroad.**



@IOM Greece

# How you can use this Report

Youth can use this Report to inform their campaigns and advocacy, while the stories can teach about the education status and challenges of their peers around the globe.

Teachers can use this Report in classrooms to discuss key issues on migration and displacement around the world, taking each story in turn, discussing the context, the implications and the solutions.

**Actions you can take to support these recommendations include:**

1. **Tweet the stories and recommendations** using the hashtag #EducationOnTheMove
2. **Find more stories and associated calls for change on our campaign homepage:** [bit.ly/2Adeyo8](http://bit.ly/2Adeyo8)



#EducationOnTheMove



Key moments to talk about these issues on the annual calendar:

**June 20** – World Refugee Day

**August 12** – International Youth Day

**October 5** – World Teachers Day

**December 18** – International Migrants Day

3. **Share your own story of what it's like accessing education when on the move via the campaign homepage,** [bit.ly/2Adeyo8](http://bit.ly/2Adeyo8), and help us raise awareness of the issues needing attention.
4. **Work up an advocacy campaign around one of the recommendations in this Report,** sharing the key facts, statistics and calls for change with youth networks and the media and at events.



#EducationOnTheMove

This Youth Report tells the stories of people as they move around the world in pursuit of their education, work or security and of those tasked with helping refugees and migrants re-enter and feel included in school.

It is designed to tell the real stories behind the recommendations and messages in the [2019 Global Education Monitoring Report, Migration, displacement and education: Building bridges, not walls](#). It brings to life a series of recommendations and calls on youth and teachers to share and discuss the stories, to use them in campaigns and as a teaching tool in class.

Read the voices of teachers coping with overcrowding in refugee camps in Kenya and teachers helping Rohingya, Syrian and Palestinian refugees cope with trauma.

Hear the stories of an asylum seeker looking to continue his studies, second-generation immigrants still feeling excluded and students benefitting from scholarships to study abroad.

Look out for teachers of pastoralist children during their parents' seasonal moves for work, about domestic workers living in slums seeing their schooling interrupted, and teachers doing everything to help undocumented children access school and feel like they belong.